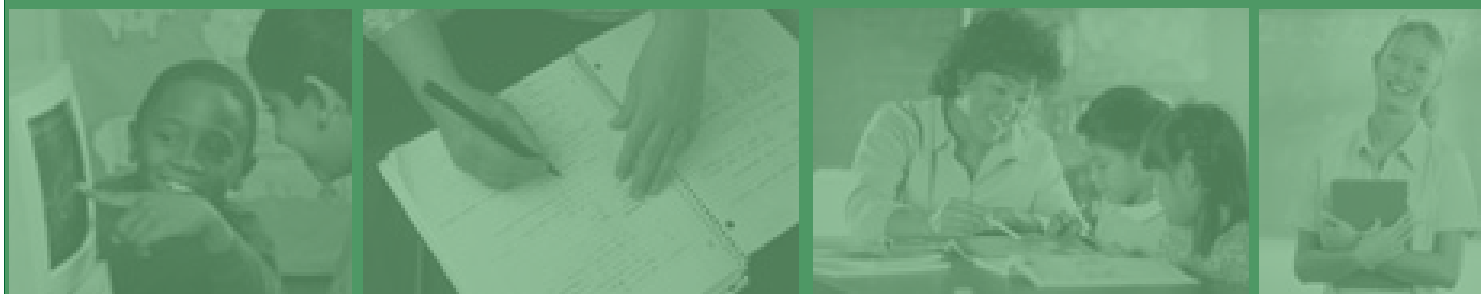


Curriculum Services Canada

A History: 1993 to 2008



A HISTORY OF CURRICULUM SERVICES CANADA

In less than a decade, Curriculum Services Canada (CSC) evolved from its establishment in 1994 as a service to Ontario to its unique position on the national scene as a pan-Canadian agency for the evaluation of learning materials. This evolution was the result of vision and commitment on the part of educators throughout the Ontario education system.

Background

Although the earliest configuration of the CSC did not appear until the 1990s, the need for a centralized operation that could collect and disseminate education documents and help avoid the expense of duplicated efforts had been acknowledged by the Ministry of Education a few decades earlier.

In the early 1960s, a number of school boards - particularly large boards like the Metropolitan Toronto (Metro) School Board - became active in funding educational research, an activity that was also carried on by the Ministry of Education. By the early 1970s, there was a lot of research but it was not being disseminated. Reports indicated that research dollars in education in Ontario were being spent ineffectively. In response to this situation, the Ministry made a grant available to the Metropolitan Toronto School Board to develop a printed index of research produced and funded by the Ministry. In November 1974, the Ontario Education Resources Information System (ONTERIS) database began operation, housed at the Ministry of Education, with Barbara Beardsley, a researcher with the Metro board, as Principal Investigator of the project. (In 1980 the Ministry took ownership of the project.)

The Ministry collected the documents, which soon included curriculum as well as research produced by both Ministry and school boards. Surrogate documents - bibliographic information and an abstract for each of the originals - were created by ONTERIS and entered into the database. In the late 1970s the Ministry purchased software that would put ONTERIS online and by the early 1980s the database was being distributed.

While ONTERIS was seen by some teachers as a potentially useful resource tool, it was also thought to be too research focused and academic, not "teacher-friendly." The very fact that it contained a full, unvetted spectrum of resources made choosing good material difficult. And though state-of-the-art electronically, it doubtless suffered from the fact that few people knew how to operate a computer, much less how to access and manipulate a database.

In 1992, ONTERIS was moved to the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) and although still online, became increasingly outdated, partly due to decreased funding, and partly by the very natural evolution of computer technology where there was a movement to providing both the surrogate and the actual documents.

I. The “Clearinghouse” Concept: A Convergence of Interests

The Increasing Need for Learning Resources in the Education Community

Although the Centre franco-ontarien de ressources pédagogiques (CFORP) in Ottawa had already been developed, as the 1990s approached Anglophone teachers in Ontario still had no convenient way to access each other's materials, no way to stay abreast of what was being developed in other boards, and little useful information about the resources they were seeking. It was difficult for them to find the materials they wanted and needed to enrich their classrooms. As well, the duplication of effort in curriculum development was costing all boards valuable time, money, and human resources.

At the same time, school boards were coping with both diminishing funds for curriculum development and mandated changes in curriculum that rendered many existing teaching tools and aids obsolete. Their only official source for texts was the Ministry's C-14 document, which listed but did not describe approved texts and offered no critique of their strengths and weaknesses. Not only were entries frequently out-of-date, but while the list included texts, it did not include other types of classroom resources - supplementary or “second generation” materials upon which teachers rely to enrich their classes.

Thus in 1986, after lengthy discussion, a meeting of the Ontario Teachers' Federation (OTF) Curriculum Forum resolved to investigate the feasibility of developing a mechanism—“a clearinghouse”—that would enable teachers to share materials. Fortunately, a successful model already existed in CFORP.

The “New” Curriculum

In the early 1990s, the “transition years,” grades 7-9, were the focus of a new curriculum that was the first major step in Ontario's preparations for the termination of grade 13. Under the NDP government of Bob Rae, two funds were created to help school boards make the adjustments necessary to accommodate the impending changes. The first and larger of the two, the Transition Assistance Fund—\$50.2 million—was to be distributed to school boards entirely in 1991¹. It was targeted to help them move from the old way of doing business to the new by supporting projects for such things as the acquisition of new computers, the implementation of labour adjustments, and the formation of partnerships with other boards and the community. As a Ministry official later confirmed, these dollars were intended to provide “a one-time opportunity for boards to downsize and learn to save money.”

The second, smaller Transition Years Implementation Fund of \$10-12 million was allocated in 1992 to support Transition Years curriculum. Jim Sebastian, an education officer at the Ministry of Education, managed this project and its dollars flowed through the Ministry's regional offices to the province's school boards.

During this time, Mr. Sebastian had occasion to liaise with members of the various education associations, many of whom formed part of the review board for the 1991-2 project. It was during one of these discussions, with Ruth Baumann and Pierre Lalonde of OTF, that the idea of sharing information among teachers re-emerged. As a former teacher in a small board, Mr. Sebastian recalled wanting to increase his ability to do his job professionally in the classroom but being frustrated by the difficulty in sharing curriculum and good ideas. While large boards produced second-generation curriculum documents for sale, and small boards purchased them, no central agency co-ordinated the collection and dissemination of curriculum materials for the province as a whole.

As discussion continued, all three individuals became increasingly excited about the potential for an agency that would help teachers "share anything, everything good." With this vision in mind, Mr. Sebastian first consulted with other education associations and then took the idea to the Ministry's regional offices. Enthusiasm was universal. The final consultation would be with the Assistant Deputy Minister, Carola Lane, who would then contact the Minister.

The timing was clearly right. The Provincial Auditor's Report 1993 had called for a more effective balance between the need to develop curriculum and other resource documents and the cost of having 170 boards developing it independently.² The Ministry was favourably disposed toward collaborative curriculum-based projects that held the promise of future savings to the education community, and the education community had long been looking for ways to develop a central curriculum sharing agency. Moreover, the NDP government of the day was anxious to reward teachers for their support. The lack of opportunity for teacher input into the C-14 process was a rather sore point and the clearinghouse project offered an ideal solution. The new project would provide teachers with the ability to influence the curriculum process by producing materials to fill the gaps not covered by C-14 and have those materials marketed to teachers throughout the province.

Thus, with the alignment of political, bureaucratic, and community aspirations, \$500,000 was committed by the Ministry to bringing a curriculum clearinghouse to life.

II. First Steps

The very first step was to assemble a working group to develop the parameters of the new organization. On August 4, 1993, Jim Sebastian and Caroline Di Giovanni of the Ministry of Education and Training (MET)* met with Gail Anderson of the Ontario Public School Board Association (OPSBA) and a representative of the Ontario Catholic Supervisory Officers' Association (OCSSA).

At this seminal meeting, much of the future shape of what would become OCC was discussed. The make-up of membership was the first consideration and several organizations, including Ontario Teachers' Federation (OTF), Ontario Public Supervisory Officers' Association (OPSSA), and Ontario Separate School Trustees' Association (OSSTA), were discussed as potential members.

The clearinghouse was to operate as a partnership among the stakeholder groups and it was determined that the working group should function as a management body, rather than as an advisory panel. The potential for this work group to become a Board of Directors “at arm's length” from the Ministry was also considered.

As their primary functions, the work group identified co-ordination of marketing, contacts, catalogue development, and the organization as a whole, together with "delivery" of the database - abstracting, cataloguing, and storing. One of the group's first actions was to meet with CFORP representatives to learn how their organization functioned and how their model might prove helpful in developing the clearinghouse. Many recommendations were forthcoming relating to funding, staffing, management, and the collection, pricing, vetting, production, and distribution of materials.

CFORP had started small and remained modest in its approach, gradually winning the trust and support of teachers and the education community. This same approach was recommended for the new clearinghouse. CFORP also emphasized quality control. While it would likely be necessary in the beginning to accept most materials in order to establish a database, it was acknowledged that quality controls should be introduced as early as possible. Stress was also placed on the need to keep the new service separate from CFORP's service to francophones.

To meet the immediate needs of teachers in Ontario, the initial focus of the clearinghouse would be the establishment of a mechanism for the sharing of English-language Transition Years resource materials developed by boards and teaching federations. Early visions for a catalogue included a list of human resources, notably Transition Years speaker/specialists, in addition to traditional print resources. As a result of their research, the work group deemed it essential that every resource listing be accompanied by an abstract (to be produced in house), together with basic information about the material—number of pages, authors, publication date, etc. The group wrestled with the question of user fees, resolving to keep them as low as possible and, to this end, the option of negotiating copyright waivers from boards was discussed.

Also discussed in initial meetings were key linkages to organizations such as ONTERIS, CFORP, the OTF's "Creating a Culture of Change" initiative³, various provincial organizations, and curriculum consortia. Many debates centred on the services that might ultimately be provided to educators. Several were considered especially important:

- evaluating resources
- developing materials (as CFORP does)
- providing electronic and on-line versions of the catalogue in addition to print
- accepting orders and packaging and distributing materials
- becoming a nexus for information related to learning materials
- establishing a role in identifying and addressing needs related to learning materials (e.g., supporting the development of new resources) and,
- providing a feedback mechanism to ensure that needs were met effectively.

Many of the ideas discussed at this time were broad-based and far-reaching. Although some were to prove too ambitious for the fledgling organization, many re-emerged in later years to become fundamental components of the clearinghouse service.

A Framework Emerges

Before any of the initiatives developed by the work group could proceed, the mechanics of establishing a formal structure had to be addressed. Several models were considered. Under one, the clearinghouse would be a physical operation, warehousing materials and providing full customer service. Another model called for a simple information service, while a third placed the clearinghouse in the role of broker between developers and users. This was the model eventually chosen.

Throughout the remainder of 1993, the work group dealt with issues ranging from the physical location of the clearinghouse offices and its day-to-day operations, to scope and vision statements, to consideration of how to develop the project into a long-term service to teachers. (It was suggested that future funding might come directly from boards, which would develop new curriculum co-operatively through the clearinghouse, rather than inhouse.)

The proposed operational structure that emerged included a not-for-profit Board of Directors to manage the clearinghouse project. It was recommended that fifteen members be selected from MET, OTF and its affiliates, and the supervisory officer and trustee associations. The Board would be responsible for policy directions, operational issues (including staffing), and funding decisions. One of its primary tasks would be to enter into a funding agreement with MET. Also addressed was the need for an executive director, who would likely be a member

of the work group acting on secondment. Physically, the organization was to be housed in an existing facility.

Shortly after this proposal was presented, the Catholic community voiced a concern that the proposal for the new clearinghouse had not addressed the specific needs of Catholic educators and indicated a desire for a separate catalogue to address Catholic curriculum issues. A representative of OCSOA, who had taken part in the work group meetings, was officially appointed to the Steering Committee for the Proposed Clearinghouse and to the Work Group that was soon to be established. With that help, the needs of the Catholic system would have to be addressed if the project were to survive. Over the years, OCC would face many similar challenges. Only by proceeding carefully and dedicating its efforts to high quality, inclusive service to teachers and the education community would the OCC prevail.

A second though smaller stumbling block centred on the funding mechanism for the project. While \$.5 million was approved, newly mandated provincial restrictions on transfer payments for new programs made it necessary to obtain a special exemption to ensure that money would continue to flow throughout the term of the pilot project. This required that budgets be immediately developed for the first two years. One of the not-for-profit stakeholders was required to act as receiver for the funds MET would provide. This group would, ideally, supply office space and equipment to the project for a fee, as no capital purchases were permitted in the pilot phase. They would also be accountable to the Ministry for the administration and supervision of use of the funds, providing appropriate financial statements as required. Finally, they would be responsible for ensuring that MET was appropriately recognized for its role.

The precise status and role of the clearinghouse in the curriculum resources development and delivery process would remain unclear for many years to come. On the one hand, the Ministry was anxious to support a potentially money-saving co-operative venture that would help meet the rapidly growing demand for new classroom materials and had potential for long-term service in the education community. On the other hand, it was the Ministry's responsibility alone to mandate curriculum.

Moving Forward

By the late fall of 1993, a formal Clearinghouse Work Group was constituted with two members from MET, two members from OTF and affiliates, and one member from each of OPSBA, OSSTA, OCSOA, and OPSOA. With Lyn Sharratt (OPSBA) appointed as chair and Jim Sebastian (MET) continuing as secretary,⁴ things began to move quickly.

Three task forces were created. The first was to advise on the role of the management team, while the second would consider operational issues, such as staffing, procuring an office and equipment, finalizing an agreement with MET and overseeing the transfer of funds. The third group was to report on issues related to information gathering, dissemination, and access. This

addressed the core business of the clearinghouse and included identifying learning materials and establishing criteria for their inclusion in a catalogue, identifying from whom material should be collected and to whom it should be distributed, and determining the scope of the first catalogue, how to handle orders, updates, and French-language and Catholic materials.

Although a task force for communications and marketing was not officially formed at this time, some members of the Work Group did meet with the Executive Director of the Canadian Book Publishers Council and representatives of the publishing industry on December 13. Again, the group heard a variety of concerns. Publishers were worried that materials for student use, collected through the clearinghouse, might not be vetted through the Circular 14 process. Moreover, these materials could be distributed in direct competition with materials that publishers were producing, which would constitute unfair trade practice. And finally, publishers were concerned about the potential for copyright infringement, particularly in materials assembled from multiple sources.

The Work Group considered several options to address these concerns, including providing a list of teacher needs to publishers, connecting publishers directly with the consortia, and collecting and sharing only materials developed for teachers. The latter would prove most effective. This led the group to consider the classifications that might best apply to catalogue materials, e.g., "C-14", "board-developed", "teacher-developed", and "published but not on C-14".

As the year ended, each of the three task forces presented recommendations for budget proposals and both short- and long-term mandate/role issues. The three budget options each included two staff members and also allotted funds for the purchase of some small capital equipment (computers, fax, printer, etc.). The long-term mandate recommendations called for the Work Group or its successor to assume primarily a policy function. This would include developing policies and procedures on staffing, operations, accountability processes, identification of curriculum and resource materials, evaluations, and pricing, as well as approving the budget, developing agreements with other parties, and encouraging the sharing, co-operative development, and low-cost distribution of materials.

For the short-term mandate, the Work Group combined policy and management functions. These functions included preparing and approving budgets for two fiscal years (1993-94 and 1994-95) and a Framework for Action Plan. The plan included many recommendations, notably that agencies or individuals submitting materials should bear responsibility for copyright compliance. It was also suggested that the catalogue should contain sections for Transition Years, the Common Curriculum, and various grade groupings (K-3, 4-6, etc.); that a disclaimer should be added regarding the "quality and pertinence" of materials listed; and that a feedback mechanism be developed to gauge the usefulness of materials.

Another recommendation contained points related to staffing: to develop criteria for an application, to advertise, and to interview for a co-ordinator (probably seconded) and support staff. These positions should initially be for a specified period of time. With this in mind, work

began on a recruitment policy, applications forms, and interview questions for two positions to be advertised in the new year. Also, before the close of 1993, negotiations were entered into for the use of the ONTERIS database capabilities and expertise.

* The education ministries combined and became known as the Ministry of Education and Training (MET) from February 3, 1993 to June 17, 1999, when they were separated and the elementary-secondary education ministry again became the Ministry of Education (EDU).

III. 1994

The Work Group lost no time in moving ahead. The new year brought with it a preliminary decision to contract with ONTERIS for data entry and an exportable Dbase file.

Staffing was the group's next initiative. Job descriptions for a "Clearinghouse Co-ordinator" and an "administrative assistant" were finalized and advertising options discussed. A selection team was appointed and application forms, advertising copy, advertising venues, and guidelines for recruiting, interviewing and selecting candidates were proposed.

With a Co-ordinator soon to be hired, the Work Group determined that the time was right to shift its primary focus to policy making. Its first directives, issued in a February 1 policy statement, were that "only the best material" should be included in the catalogue and that the needs of all the stakeholders should be addressed.

Meanwhile, OPSBA was chosen as the not-for-profit project "banker" to receive transfer payments from the Ministry and to administer the project's funds under the direction of the Work Group. Peter Brown, of Corporate Services and Accounts, was invited to address the Work Group on the Ministry's position. He advised that MET would try to keep the project in a positive cash flow position, that accountability mechanisms were key, and that the project should request its funds in phases, as needed. If they believed their work should extend into the future, a business plan would be required before current funding ran out. It should include potential cost savings to boards and strategies to address long-term costs. He also stressed the need to keep the Ministry fully informed about the progress of the project at all times.

With February came good news. The Toronto Board of Education was interested in listing its materials in the catalogue. The clearinghouse had its first indication of potential buy-in! The Work Group now began in earnest to address the logistics of soliciting, receiving, and processing materials.

Further consideration was given to how publishers might become involved with the clearinghouse. However, in March 1994, the Canadian Book Publishers' Council - School Group formalized its opposition to the project. While the Council supported sharing "best practice" teaching strategies among boards, it felt that the clearinghouse was redundant. ONTERIS already had a database of materials, some of which were published, together with the C-14 list, on OTF's *Electronic Village*, which served the entire province. In addition, the Council reiterated its concern about the circumvention of the C-14 process and the potential for copyright infringement.

On March 24, while this situation was developing, the selection/interview team recommended to the newly dubbed "Ontario Curriculum Clearinghouse" (OCC) Work Group that Susan Langley be appointed as Co-ordinator (seconded from the Peel Board), effective 15 April 1994 to 30 June 1995. A press release would announce her acceptance. At the same meeting, the Policies

and Regulations that would govern OCC were presented, outlining the make-up of the Work Group and its mandate. The following points were included:

- To identify and encourage sharing of curriculum and resource materials developed by teachers, boards, federations, and other educational partners related to the Transition Years (extending to all elementary and secondary education later).
- To encourage co-operative development of curriculum and resource materials.
- To ensure easy access to information about materials.
- To give teachers and boards access to materials at low cost.
- To set policy directions.
- To represent stakeholders and ensure that the respective stakeholder groups are kept informed of the progress of the project.
- To approve the annual budget.
- To establish the regulations for the Clearinghouse Work Group.
- To hire staff.

Under these policies, the Co-ordinator would become Executive Director and Secretary of the Work Group, and two Standing Committees—Finance, and Policy and Regulations—would be struck.

Finally, “housing” was addressed. Office space for OCC was secured at 439 University Avenue in Toronto, in a small section of the 18th floor offices of OPSBA, who had offered space in the fall of 1993.

Complex Beginnings

At the 15 April meeting⁵ of the Work Group, the first attended by the new Executive Director, the results of another meeting with the Canadian Book Publishers Council were reported. The Council remained unhappy about OCC's apparent duplication of services, unclear about the role of C-14 in the OCC process, and concerned about evaluation and copyright issues. However, potential for co-operation was perceived in the limitations placed on the materials eligible for C-14. The Clearinghouse would explore ways in which to assist publishers to list software and other non-eligible resources. It also agreed to work with the Council to find solutions to the Council's other concerns.

Meanwhile, despite the February 1st policy statement that the Clearinghouse would address the needs of *all* stakeholders, the Catholic community was reiterating concerns about the handling of Catholic resources and the intentions of the Clearinghouse.

On the operational front, work proceeded on the hiring of an administrative assistant, identifying

the process by which the Executive Director's role would be clarified, and arranging to occupy the new offices on 25 April. The Work Group continued finalizing policies and regulations related to governance, resource materials, staffing, remuneration, reimbursement, travel, and so on. Proposals were developed for the gathering and dissemination of information and the final details of the agreement between MET, OPSBA and the OCC Work Group were ironed out.⁶ Though not all concerns were laid to rest, sufficient progress was made toward resolving the issues raised by the Catholic community to permit the venture to proceed.

This first year had been a difficult one, trying to determine and define the appropriate role for the Clearinghouse and manoeuvring through political and ideological roadblocks to identify and establish a place for OCC in the education community. At last, on Tuesday, 3 May 1994, in a ceremony with the Minister of Education and Training, the Agreement between MET, OPSBA, and the OCC Work Group was signed and the Ontario Curriculum Clearinghouse went into business.

It is interesting to note that, while the formal Agreement made no mention of delivery mechanisms, stipulating only that there be "access to materials at low cost" and "easy access to information about materials," it did specify a 1-800 number to serve as a point of contact for boards seeking materials for fall 1994. OCC would have to work quickly.

New Kid on the Block

“The Clearinghouse co-operative is an example of how partners can work together to achieve a more cost-efficient system.”

The Honourable Dave Cooke in the first OCC press release entitled “Ministry Funds Education Partnership That Will Save School Boards Money And Cut Duplication”. 3 May 1994

“You can see that from the start this is a lean and cost-effective operation.”

Work Group Chair Lyn Sharratt - same release.⁷

By the first official meeting of the new organization's Work Group on 10 May 1994, an OCC letterhead had been created. It included the new address, a 1-800 number, and a logo. (In June, the process to register both name and logo was initiated, though it would take two years to complete the latter.)

In response to its request to participate in the Work Group, a motion was made to invite the Canadian Book Publishers' Council to a future meeting. Later in May, following a meeting between Executive Directors, the Council tentatively accepted OCC's plans for a first catalogue—particularly as materials to be listed were for teacher rather than student use—but cautioned that publishers would sue boards whose resources included published materials.

The Chair also reported that several meetings had taken place with the Executive Director of OCSOA to discuss ongoing issues around recognition of the Catholic community. This community was pleased with OCC's undertaking to meet its needs and recommended that this would be best accomplished by printing two separate catalogues—one for public schools and one for separate schools. Continued support for the Clearinghouse project would be subject to a review of its policies and operations before the end of year one.

At the same time as these issues were being addressed, another challenging situation relating to mandates and territory was developing. Extensive research, carried out in the education community to determine what OCC should be doing and what was most worth doing, showed that boards were opposed to having OCC develop learning materials. And though some of the associations were willing to consider developing materials in co-operation with the Clearinghouse, this was not a high priority for most boards and was viewed with suspicion by those that had working co-operatives and/or their own marketing mechanisms. Most boards and organizations were also unwilling to make available for free materials they had produced for sale, even though larger boards often provided these resources to smaller boards at little or no cost.

These attitudes left OCC with limited prospects for a significant role in either curriculum development or in the reproduction of materials for low-cost redistribution. Rather, the education community envisioned OCC as a "best practices" organization that could collect good materials, publicize them to educators, and perhaps play some limited role in distribution.

Meanwhile, ONTERIS was continuing to collect materials for their database. This created a potential problem for OCC because, without a distinguishing role in development or distribution, OCC could well be undermined by confusion among developers over the apparent similarity between their service and that of ONTERIS. In addition, because many developers were unwilling to provide free copies of their material to more than one agency, there was the real possibility that resources could be split between the two services. Clarification was needed and a meeting was scheduled with MET, OCC, and ONTERIS. In this meeting, ONTERIS expressed a clear willingness to work with OCC and declared no intention to compete. ONTERIS' expertise lay in its technical ability; its mandate was broader than curriculum alone. The strength of OCC, on the other hand, lay in its curriculum expertise, access to clients through stakeholder groups, and ability to deal with issues such as copyright and curriculum criteria.

Whether with ONTERIS or another service, a database had to be developed quickly. The Work Group had agreed that the first catalogue would be issued in January 1995 and the ability to

achieve this goal rested directly upon the successful development of a database. Criteria for both the catalogue and the resource materials to be listed therein had already been drafted. Dubbed Phase 1, this initial catalogue would focus exclusively on the Transition Years. The catalogue would include "... any curriculum resource material that has been created by a consortium that has received Transition Assistance Funding from the Ministry of Education and Training ... subject to the criteria established by the OCC."

To help ensure that the best database was chosen or developed to support the catalogue and future website, extensive research was done into existing educational databases from places as far flung as California and England. Numerous ideas derived from this research would eventually be incorporated into the OCC database and website facilities. During the summer, meetings took place with Réseau Interaction Network, Inc. in Ottawa. This company had designed the *Electronic Village* for the OTF's "Creating a Culture of Change" project and provided insight into building databases and mounting them on an electronic network.

Before breaking for the summer months, the Work Group reviewed a Draft Implementation Plan that would form part of the business plan submitted to the Ministry with their request for the second half of the project's funding. This plan included several far-reaching items of interest, for example

- under the heading "Catalogue":

- the translation of all versions of the OCC catalogue into French
- development of a registry of curriculum resource materials that are currently in development
- broadening of catalogue records to include full text or samples of documents
- expansion of the OCC catalogue to include educational materials created by the broader public/private sector, e.g., CBPC, commercial software producers, Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Health, etc.

- under "Distribution and Marketing":

- distribution of the OCC catalogue to a broader base (e.g., the public, other provinces)
- marketing of OCC services through newsletters, electronic conference, media contacts, etc.

- under "Partnerships":

- Curriculum resource materials produced by teachers and groups or individuals outside the education sector will be vetted according to the OCC criteria using the "train the trainer" model. This process will include members of the outside community and will be organized by region.

Clearly OCC planned to expand and extend its operations well into the future. With this in mind, the Work Group discussed plans to meet with Deputy Minister of Education and Training to consider possible models to move the OCC toward a more self-supporting future and reduce dependence on MET funding. The Clearinghouse also acknowledged that to build support within school boards would be essential to its success.

In early summer 1994, the first Vision and Mission statements for OCC were completed and read as follows:

Mission Statement - Stage I

The Ontario Curriculum Clearinghouse is the central point of contact for sharing information about transition years curriculum resource materials among teachers and school boards throughout Ontario.

Vision Statement

The Ontario Curriculum Clearinghouse is the central point of contact for facilitating the sharing of curriculum resource materials among teachers and school boards throughout Ontario.

The Clearinghouse is accessible, responsive, and interactive. We work in co-operation with educators to foster the timely development and delivery of innovative, high quality resource materials to meet contemporary curriculum needs.

The Clearinghouse uses a variety of communication methods to ensure equity of service to all teachers in Ontario.

The Clearinghouse includes curriculum resource materials from the broader public and private sectors as part of our continued effort to provide teachers with access to the knowledge and expertise of the community as a whole.

With the development of these Mission and Vision statements and a firm commitment to a catalogue for January, OCC's tasks for the remainder of the year became more clearly defined. Work began immediately to develop the catalogue. Final criteria for material submissions (adapted from C-14 eligibility criteria in consultation with MET) plus release forms covering copyright clearance and availability guarantees were prepared, together with forms for submitting details about the resource material and for ordering it from the developer. A thesaurus would be created to help users find material using key words and a concepts index was also planned to aid teachers in identifying appropriate materials.

To ensure maximum teacher access to the catalogue, several output formats were selected. These included print, a FileMaker Pro version on diskette for both MAC and PC platforms, a CD-ROM entitled ONeducation (a partnership venture by MET, OCC, ONTERIS, and

TVOntario), and an online version to be available through the OTF *Electronic Village* and the MET gopher. ONTERIS was contracted, through OISE, to build the prototype OCC database (which would be a new and separate mechanism, solely owned by OCC) and to enter the data provided by OCC. Once all of this work was under way, the task of collecting began.⁸ Materials were gathered from school boards, teacher federations, curriculum consortia, subject/special interest associations, faculties of education, and Ontario government ministries.

Outreach was conducted around the province to build support for the Clearinghouse. Focus groups were assembled, information sessions held, meetings attended, and presentations made to describe the project and its activities. Meetings were also held with members of the OTF's Curriculum Forum and with curriculum consortium groups to explore ways to work co-operatively. The Executive Director outlined the organization's operations and catalogue plans, and solicited feedback. OCC was offered as a co-ordinating body to help consortia connect with one another to develop ways in which to encourage sharing and promote the development of good teaching materials.

In addition, articles were written for association magazines, and meetings of school boards, associations, and federations were attended. Teacher needs were assessed through presentations, mailings, an online conference, one-on-one conversations, and through surveys conducted with all public and separate school boards. Throughout the autumn, the catalogue and database evolved in response to these feedback sessions and research efforts.

Also through the fall, concerns re-emerged around recognition and vetting of Catholic materials. The need for a Clearinghouse was again questioned and it was requested that a model of the print and electronic catalogue sections designated for Catholic use be prepared for review. These requests were met and representatives of the Catholic community were invited to attend a demonstration of the database as it was developing.

Meanwhile, throughout the latter half of 1994, the Work Group continued to develop policies and procedures that would provide guidelines for the Executive Director. Proposed policies were taken by group members to their associations for feedback and then returned to the Executive Director for further development. As well, brainstorming sessions were held around marketing and future planning, and especially around strategies for increased self-sufficiency. Everyone in the Work Group was committed to finding a future for OCC. At the same time, rapidly diminishing transfer funds at the Ministry caused the Work Group to give higher priority to their three-year plan for ongoing funding.⁹ The plan was submitted to the Ministry in late November and returned for revision after consultation with senior Ministry officials. Emphasis was placed on the need for OCC to demonstrate initiative in forming partnerships.

In late November, the Clearinghouse learned that the Ministry had included, as one of the criteria for grants for "Co-operative Staff Development Projects Related to Integration," the following: "commitment to share with the Ontario Curriculum Clearinghouse all resources that are developed through the project." This was a very positive sign. Less encouraging was research

that showed that fewer than two percent of teachers had modems. OCC hoped to move the education community to a higher level of technological facility, as this would not only help raise the level of professionalism but would also obviate the need for a print catalogue, which was physically cumbersome to manage and expensive to produce and update.

Perhaps even more disturbing was the realization that, after myriad meetings, widely disseminated articles, and strong efforts to promote OCC by MET, the member associations, OCC staff, and others, teacher awareness of the organization and its service was still very low and often mistaken. As the year ended, a poster was sent (piggybacked on OTF affiliate mailings) to all teacher representatives, announcing the impending arrival of the catalogue and providing a space to indicate where it would be kept in their school. OCC wanted every classroom teacher to anticipate the arrival of the new resource and hoped that this mailing strategy would help prevent the “disappearance” of catalogues in the mass of information that bombarded schools.

Meanwhile, the Work Group was grappling with the question of how best to re-structure itself for the future in response to the organization's growth and to the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Learning, which was about to publish its report. The possibility of incorporation was seriously examined, and partnership policies were discussed (TVO, the Independent Learning Centre, and CFORP were contacted to feel out possibilities). Questions arose about the effects of incorporation on each of the stakeholder groups and some sought legal counsel. Stakeholders needed to understand how participation in OCC might affect or be affected by their governing legislation, incorporating documents, and by-laws, and also what ramifications resulted from various restructuring options. 1995 promised to be a busy year!

IV. 1995

First Catalogue Launched in Rapidly Changing Times

Launch day for the Transition Years Catalogue finally arrived on 17 January 1995. The Catalogue was a colourful, single volume of loose pages in a binder, with a clearly defined section dedicated to Catholic materials. It listed 260 resources from forty sources and the Minister of Education described it as “an important resource for all Ontario teachers.” This day would be a highlight in a challenging year.

Early 1995 was a time of diminishing funds for provincially funded projects throughout Ontario, and many that had seemed secure were in jeopardy. In this environment, it became increasingly important to demonstrate the measurable value of every project. Deliverables and deadlines gained immediacy, and the ability to prove a project’s overall worth and efficiency was key. This being the case, a number of mechanisms to provide feedback on the catalogue were aggressively pursued. Forms had already been included in the binder and these were actively solicited. Feedback protocols were built into the online and CD-ROM versions (both still in development), follow-up questionnaires were sent to schools, meetings were held with educators, an evaluation project was developed, and third-party evaluation was considered. Also, the trips made by the Executive Director over the months to encourage buy-in from developers and users proved very helpful in providing feedback and support for OCC once the catalogue was distributed.

But problems were arising on various fronts. With distribution, fifty-three hundred catalogues were scheduled to be sent in mid January, through MET, to publicly funded, English-language schools, along with *The Common Curriculum, Policies and Outcomes, Grades 1-9*. This would have been a favourable conjunction for OCC, as the catalogue materials directly supported the Common Curriculum. However, when the curriculum document was delayed until early February, it was deemed more important to meet the published deadline for the catalogue than to wait for the curriculum document. Thus OCC’s Transition Years Catalogue was distributed in late January with a less topical MET document - *Information Equity and Equitable Access*.

Meanwhile, the ONeducation CD-ROM was also in trouble. Technical challenges were slowing the project as a whole, and glitches and inaccuracies in the OCC database were slowing the export of its data, creating serious concerns about OCC's continued participation in the project. Clarification of responsibilities resulted in OCC and ONTERIS agreeing to work toward completion of the online catalogue and the ONeducation CD-ROM.

The Royal Commission on Learning

Meanwhile, things were changing quickly throughout the education community. On 26 January 1995, the Royal Commission on Learning published its findings. These were the product of eighteen months of public consultations and deliberations during which approximately 5000 oral

and written submissions were considered. The report would directly affect Ministry policy over the next several years and would have long-term implications for education in Ontario and for OCC. The Clearinghouse was mentioned under "Success Stories" (Vol. 4, p.116):

The Ministry provided start-up funds for a co-operative venture of (list of partners), to establish the Ontario Curriculum Clearinghouse, an organization to help boards buy curriculum materials from each other, rather than develop all their own materials independently.

and under "Efficiency" (Vol. 2, p.5):

We recognize the validity of recent attempts by boards and the Ministry of Education and Training to share the work of each board among all boards (e.g., the Curriculum Clearinghouse), and encourage continuation of that effort, as a result of which many valuable resources have already been developed.

The Commission also noted the following in its comments:

... given the constant pressure they operate under, the seriousness of their responsibilities, the never-ending new obligations society foists on them and the never-ending new changes that boards or the Ministry impose on them, the anxiety about keeping up with their subject and with good practices that result from the explosion of knowledge both in their disciplines and in teaching methods - given all this, even the ordinary teacher seems heroic to us.

This last statement made OCC's service, directed specifically to teachers, all the more timely.

On 7 February, the Minister announced a new centralized curriculum development initiative that, he said, would save Ontario taxpayers \$30 million. OCC recognized that it would have to find a role in this new initiative if it were to survive. In a letter to the Minister on 8 February, OCC recalled the value of their "initial contribution to curriculum development on a provincial scale" as recognized by the Royal Commission and by the Minister himself at the recent catalogue launch. This was followed with a list of services OCC was poised to provide "to ensure that the 'heroes in education,' our teachers, are properly equipped for the future." OCC was cited as a model for partnerships, with broad-based curriculum expertise deliverable through an expandable, interactive database capable of serving all Ontario teachers.

Representatives of each of the stakeholder groups, together with the Business Planning Team, offered to meet with the Minister "to outline the role that OCC might play in assisting (the Minister) in the enormity of the task of centralizing curriculum development in the province of Ontario."¹⁰ As a result, a meeting took place on 20 February. The Ministry outlined its commitment to help teachers meet the challenge of implementing curriculum derived from "outcomes." It would deliver "classroom-ready" support materials for teachers for 1996 and

intended to work with boards and stakeholders (among whom most of the development and sharing expertise resided) to develop these curriculum supports. MET asked how OCC could help with this.

The first services identified were a gap analysis to determine what materials teachers needed (this was already in progress) and an overview to learn what materials were currently being developed. OCC was cited as the agency best positioned to co-ordinate curriculum development, especially as many boards were pulling back from this activity. Real concern focused on the ability to meet teachers' needs with materials of high quality, given the timeframe and the decrease in curriculum activity in boards.

At the very least, the need for an evaluation process was deemed essential to establishing long-term credibility. OCC indicated that while it had not conducted in-depth evaluations of the Transition Years Catalogue materials, it had established basic criteria and was providing teachers with the opportunity to comment on materials they had used. The OCC was also prepared to develop more extensive criteria. Inclusivity and absence of bias were cited as especially important issues for new materials. Also at this meeting, OCC members strongly suggested that they be given a clear mandate and a manifest role in the curriculum process to help maintain teacher confidence and ensure success.

An indication that OCC had succeeded in asserting its demonstrated and potential value came with news that \$500,000 would likely be approved for their second year of operation. With this support, the Executive Director continued to explore partnership models and opportunities and to develop guidelines for partnerships and/or sponsorships that would help OCC achieve partial self-sustainability. Work also proceeded on the CD-ROM version of the catalogue and on an update to the existing version. Third party evaluation proposals were considered, too, and were deemed valuable even if OCC was not able to sustain operations into the future.

In light of the Royal Commission's Report, many potential roles for OCC were considered; however, it was recognized that until the Ministry declared its intent on a number of issues, defining OCC's future would be difficult.

Thus, at the end of almost a full year of official operation, the future role of OCC was still unclear.¹¹ What was clear was that the way in which curriculum was managed in Ontario was changing. The Ministry was moving toward a consistently implemented provincial curriculum with standards for all aspects of curriculum development, implementation, and assessment. Curriculum was becoming less teacher centred and content based and more learner centred and results based. With the move to this "outcomes-based" curriculum, in which learning was defined in terms of teacher design and student performance, learning resources would be critical. The Ministry wanted high-quality learning materials and partnerships among teachers, students, parents, and the community that would result in savings across the system.

It was unclear exactly how these goals were to be achieved. How would these new initiatives affect and/or interact with existing ones? Stakeholders at all levels needed to understand how changes would be implemented, who would have input into the development of implementation processes, and how these processes would affect them. They wondered where the new teacher and student materials necessary to support these curriculum changes would come from - and when.¹²

Meanwhile in March, OCC hosted a meeting of the OTF Curriculum Forum as part of the feedback process on the Transition Years Catalogue. They learned that, despite their considerable efforts, very few teachers had actually seen a copy, though those who had were pleased to see their input reflected in the final version. After examining the catalogue, Forum members reiterated strongly the need to include only the best materials in future versions. They also questioned how teacher-developed materials might be incorporated and whether a reward could be established for excellence. Many suggestions were made for ways to bring the catalogue into better focus and for ways to expand its usefulness.

The Forum also expressed interest in an online catalogue that teachers with computers could access from home. With most schools not yet “online” and many without even a single computer, the issue of equality of access was troubling. On 2 March, Premier Bob Rae announced a major initiative, “To Prepare Ontario Schools for the Information Age.” As part of this program, the Education Network of Ontario (ENO) would receive \$5 million from the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade “to expand system capacity and access.” (This funding was part of a \$15 million jump-start through Ontario Network Infrastructure Program (ONIP)¹³ and was in addition to \$4.25 million already committed by MET to ENO). Shortly thereafter, MET issued an Information Technology announcement that would result in increased hardware and software purchases for schools around the province. While all of this support was positive, the problem of how to ensure *equality* of access remained.

As March ended, the Work Group learned that the ONeducation CD-ROM would be ready for distribution in late April and that FileMaker Pro diskette versions of the catalogue could be ready by the end of June. This would provide all MAC users, as well as PC users, with electronic access. The online version, however, was less certain. Problems at ENO led OCC to consider having a “front end” or user interface created for their STAR database (still in development at ONTERIS/OISE). This would make it possible to access the catalogue from the ENO site and/or have another server host a dedicated “OCC site.” In the meantime, the Work Group contracted for a newsletter-style colour insert to serve as the first print catalogue update.

Providing the catalogue in multiple formats was in line with the results of the survey initiated in June 1994 (published 31 March 1995 as *Ontario Curriculum Clearinghouse Curriculum Resource Materials Survey 1994/95*). School boards, teacher federations, subject/special interest associations, faculties of education, consortia, and Ontario government ministries were asked five specific questions and also invited to provide comments and suggestions. The five questions

sought to determine:

- What materials they were willing to list in the OCC catalogue.
- What materials suitable for the OCC catalogue were currently in development.
- What standards guided their production of curriculum.
- In what formats the OCC catalogue should be provided to ensure equal and universal access.
- What materials they would like the catalogue to include.

Approximately 30 percent of those surveyed responded. Analysis showed that:

- While fewer than half of all boards were actively producing curriculum, many other organizations were producing materials appropriate for the catalogue. (OCC would have to make greater efforts to access these.)
- The greatest concerns when developing curriculum were working with *The Common Curriculum* and an outcomes-based approach to learning, and meeting all current Ministry guidelines. Equity—gender/religious/ethnocultural—was also a significant concern.
- A print catalogue was still essential, though the need to move to electronic delivery was acknowledged.
- The catalogue should be accessible at the school and teacher levels, not just in board offices.
- Teachers need access to a wide variety of curriculum and support materials from a wide variety of sources.
- Assessment and evaluation, integration of curriculum, teaching to “outcomes,” teacher-ready materials, and the usefulness of materials were all issues for teachers.
- Cost and copyright issues had to be resolved, especially for smaller boards.
- Respondents wanted OCC to avoid duplication by working with existing consortia and services such as ONTERIS.
- The Royal Commission on Learning had created an atmosphere of uncertainty in the education community.
- There was a pressing need for a service such as OCC.

This survey represented a significant step in demonstrating OCC’s determination to respond to the needs of the education community. It provided a framework of information on which to build future initiatives and was the first of many feedback exercises OCC would conduct in the coming years.

Also as the fiscal year ended, internal matters such as performance appraisals and policy issues were addressed. One significant change to the existing policy “Each voting member of the Work Group is expected to serve on one of the Standing Committees,” added “Any of the eight voting members of the Work Group can attend any Standing Committee meeting

and vote at that Standing Committee meeting.” A further motion required each partner organization to nominate one representative to the Work Group for a two-year term (to a maximum of four years). Differing agendas and goals for OCC were causing strain among the partners. These measures would help ensure that each member had equal opportunity to participate fully in all aspects of OCC board activities.

The Work Group discussed questions about the liability of Work Group members and of partner organizations for activities conducted by OCC. As a result, incorporation was moved up on the list of priorities and liability insurance was sought to protect all members. Another ongoing problem for the Work Group was job security for OCC staff. As no clear role for OCC had yet been identified, no avenue upon which to achieve self-sufficiency had emerged, and MET funding, uncertain beyond the coming fiscal year, could not be expected to continue long into future.

On a positive note, catalogue feedback was coming in from boards, teachers, consortia, subjects associations, and others. Response levels varied, but comments were very positive:

“The catalogue is fantastic ... consider this call a vote of confidence for expansion!”
Teacher-librarian, Ottawa

“We at our public school really support this initiative. It’s the way of the future!”
Principal, Parry Sound

“Impressive job ... the OCC name is out and around.” Consultant, Nepean

“The catalogue is fabulous ... wonderful!” Nurse, James Bay

Even more exciting were indications of interest from other organizations. TVOntario’s Head of Youth Programming, Kathryn McFarlane (who would later become OCC’s Executive Director), was considering including TVO materials in the OCC catalogue. The Asia-Pacific Foundation also indicated that it would like to explore partnership possibilities.

Joint Venture CD-ROM Distributed to Teacher-Librarians

With April came the launch of the ONeducation CD-ROM. The disk represented a significant accomplishment in the emerging world of technology for educators. It included the OCC Transition Years Curriculum Resource Materials in a searchable database and a number of other key documents and databases, such as MET’s Common Curriculum Policies and Outcomes Grades 1-9, 1995, Circular 14, the OESS database of provincially licensed software, ONTERIS’ Education Research, Reports, and Curriculum Resources, and TVOntario’s Primary/Junior Catalogue. This partnership venture was important for OCC. It aligned them with principal members of the education community and positioned them as a key player in the world of technological service to education. The ONeducation CD-ROM was produced by ONTERIS (OISE) and was distributed, free of charge, to teacher-librarians

in all Ontario schools, boards, and faculties of education.

The Executive Director took every opportunity to demonstrate the use of the catalogue to education associations. She distributed multiple copies of the CD-ROM and discovered that its searchable database was very popular among those who were computer literate. Also popular among those who could access it was the online *curr_clearinghouse* conference OCC was running on OTF's ENO site, through which teachers interacted and provided feedback. Moderation of this conference had recently been taken over by Rose Dotten, a teacher-librarian, who helped to raise its profile in the education community, drawing favourable attention to OCC. And, though use of the Internet was still relatively limited, its potential was increasingly apparent.

In April, issues between OCC and ONTERIS re-emerged, once again jeopardizing ongoing work on the database. On 23 May, Susan Langley met with Jim Sebastian of MET and Ruth Marks, Institute Librarian at OISE. Their discussion proved successful, and negotiations resumed on the OCC/ONTERIS contract. Shortly thereafter, ONTERIS staff demonstrated the developing STAR database and their new web capability, which was of increasing interest to OCC since the ENO online project was still experiencing problems.

Despite these ongoing electronic initiatives, however, print was still the most popular format for the OCC catalogue. The first update, a sixteen-page colour insert with 61 new resources¹⁶, was ready in early June and 6000 copies were sent, through MET, to all schools. In addition, OCC created a condensed version—eight pages with an introduction, update, and information, but no resources—and partnered with OTF to distribute 135,000 copies directly to all Ontario teachers. At the same time, surveys were sent to developers requesting materials for the Stage II catalogue. It was scheduled for completion in January 1996 and would include materials for teachers of grades JK-6 plus any new Transition Years materials.

As the school year came to an end, OSSTA reasserted its concern over OCC's duplication of effort with its curriculum consortia, its desire for a review of OCC's first year of operations, and its requirements for the upcoming catalogue. OCC addressed each of these concerns in turn.

First, they would willingly meet on a regular basis with the Ontario Catholic Curriculum Co-operative (OCCC) to establish ways to work together. Second, a review of their operations would take place, but in the fall, after teachers had had an opportunity to work with the catalogue. They noted that during the summer there would be a pilot project to teach teachers how to evaluate materials using resources produced by *Co-operative Staff Development Projects Related to Integration*. Feedback from this project would be valuable in measuring OCC's value and impact. Finally, they agreed that the new catalogue would have a separate section for materials developed by Catholic boards and that this section would be subdivided, as the Public boards' materials section was, into Core Program Areas.

On 22 and 23 June, the Work Group held a retreat in Toronto to create an agenda for 1995-96. Horst Schweinbenz, of OTF, was elected Chair of the Work Group for the coming year. Also in June, on the provincial scene, Premier Bob Rae's NDP government was defeated by the Conservatives, led by Mike Harris. John Snobelen replaced Dave Cooke as Minister of Education and Training, and a new era of change began.

V. 1995-96

Part of the summer of 1995 was spent completing projects related to the Transition Years Catalogue. From the accumulated data on the 364 resources collected over the previous sixteen months from over 60 sources, a cost analysis and gap analysis were prepared. The *Cost Analysis Report: Transition Years*, officially published on 31 October, provided valuable information about the relative cost of available board materials, including copyright pricing that allowed purchasing boards to reproduce a resource for use in all of their schools (this option was not available for all materials). The largest group of resources was shown to cost less than twenty-five dollars per copy and under \$250 for copyright. However, some resources, especially certain more substantial materials, were clearly priced beyond the reach of smaller boards. For them, low-priced and shared materials were of key importance.

The *Gap Analysis Report: Transition Years*, published first on 23 October, and again in January 1996 with an added Executive Summary, was a strategic tool for school boards planning to develop curriculum. Throughout the summer of 1995, OCC used the raw data for this report to help boards make planning decisions. Armed with both catalogue information and gap data, it became much easier to determine what to develop and what to simply purchase. Some boards also bought materials for comparison with their existing resources and as a guideline for the development of newer materials. For the first time, because of the province-wide “Common Curriculum,” they were able to plan from a provincial perspective, rather than from a board perspective.

During the summer, OCC also participated with the Federation of Women Teachers’ Association of Ontario (FWTAO), the Ontario Association of Deans of Education (OADE), the Ontario Parent Council, OPSBA, and OPSOA in a “Partners in Education” project called “The Common Curriculum – Making It Yours.” This initiative provided Curriculum Implementation Funding of between five and eight thousand dollars each to projects to develop “innovative, hands-on, teacher-driven, classroom-centred professional development programs.” The opportunity to apply for funding was open to any Common Curriculum teacher (Grades 1-9) in any teacher federation who was employed by a public school board.

Projects were to focus on assessment strategies for an outcomes-based approach to learning, on practical ways to implement the Common Curriculum in the classroom, and on classroom management skills and techniques for the 90s. Completed projects would be made available through OCC, free of charge, to all Ontario teachers.

At the same time, OCC continued to work with teachers to develop a tool to evaluate existing curriculum and to inform the development of new materials. This seminal project would prove significant to the long-term success of OCC, forming the basis for OCC’s first inhouse “product,” the Evaluator.

Help Wanted

Since the publication of the Transition Years Catalogue, hundreds of calls had come to OCC's 1-800 number to order materials, request copyright guidance, seek help co-ordinating curriculum development projects, and so forth. Over the summer, many teachers also visited the office to examine inhouse copies of the materials listed in the catalogue. Temporary help was hired to manage the increased load, but it was becoming clear that more permanent help was needed, along with more office space. Thus, negotiations began with OPSBA for more space and clarification of the respective responsibilities of the two organizations within the lease arrangement. Staffing was put on the Work Group agenda for the fall.

The greatest concern during the summer months, however, was the change in government and its potential ramifications. News of impending funding cuts left OCC vulnerable. On the positive side, OCC had been identified by MET as the agency for sharing resources produced by numerous curriculum co-operatives and by projects related to the Common Curriculum Innovation Fund. The Royal Commission on Learning had cited the Clearinghouse as a success story and over 400 teachers actively participated in their ENO and e-mail conferences. Moreover, at the Annual Meeting of the FWTAO in August, the new Minister, John Snobelen, placed great stress on the importance of teachers and of technology as an aid to effective teaching. OCC could point proudly to its consistent focus on teachers and to its growing use of technology to provide pan-provincial, equitable service to the teaching community. On a more cautious note, the Ministry "strongly advised" that OCC develop self-sustainability and an online presence separate from that of ENO. No workable plan for self-sufficiency had emerged and ENO alone had been contracted for online services.

Thus, when the Work Group met in the fall, there were many issues pending. One of the first motions taken was to identify a management communications consultant to assist in the development of a self-sufficiency plan. Instructions were also given to hire a secretary and to look into developing a distinctive home page for the OCC website. Partnership initiatives—in aid of both self-sufficiency and the development of a "one-stop shopping" service for teachers—were given new urgency. In early October, a memorandum of understanding was signed with the Asia-Pacific Foundation in which they agreed to list their materials with OCC and to track all orders channelled through OCC for the first year. They also indicated their willingness to pay a commission on future orders. This was encouraging. Perhaps a revenue stream could be developed through partnerships.

Meanwhile, MET affirmed that it had no objection to OCC becoming incorporated, so the pursuit of name registration was abandoned in favour of a name search for incorporation. The latter outweighed the former legally and would ensure that the name "Ontario Curriculum Clearinghouse" was protected. The Work Group resolved to incorporate as quickly as possible and to achieve complete self-sufficiency by the year 2000. They hoped that MET would provide at least base funding until that time, since the process for developing self-sufficiency within the education community was unproven.

Second Update Released

October and early November 1995 brought a flurry of activity with the release of the second Transition Years Catalogue print update and the FileMaker Pro for MAC version of the catalogue, which was distributed by MET with a FileMaker Pro training video and by TVO (free of charge). There followed a deluge of orders, many of which were processed and tracked by OCC staff, which now included a secretary.

While the expanded staff processed the many small-quantity orders, most bulk requests were placed directly with the developer boards. The Northern Ontario Catholic Curriculum Co-operative (NOCCC) reported being “swamped” with orders far beyond their expectations and the *NOCCC Update* praised the OCC listing:

“Thanks to the Ontario Curriculum Clearinghouse listing our materials in the Fall edition of its catalogue, over the past month NOCCC has become partly a publishing house. We have received 359 orders for copies of our curriculum items. It has kept staff and volunteers hopping to fill these requests.”

This was one of many indications of the catalogue’s impact and importance. It also helped demonstrate that OCC supported, rather than challenged, existing curriculum co-operatives.

Support would prove to be the key to OCC’s survival. On 2 November, the Minister announced a sweeping change in whose wake the Clearinghouse would eventually thrive:

“Beginning immediately, a new, four-year secondary school system will be developed to provide more focused, relevant and meaningful programs for all students entering Grade 9 as of September 1997. Once a four-year secondary school program is fully implemented by 2001, savings will amount to some \$350 million annually.”

The Minister specified “high graduation standards for all students” and promised that university-bound students would continue to get “the high quality instruction they need to meet university entrance requirements.” To accomplish these goals, teachers would need radically different teaching materials for the fall of 1997. The OCC would play a critical part in making this possible.

However, this future role was not yet clear and work continued uninterrupted. At the same time that OCC was sending orders to developers to be filled, new entries for the JK-9 catalogue were being received. The deadline for the submission of worksheets to ONTERIS (for entry into the database) was 15 November. These worksheets were part of a full submission package that had been developed for Stage II. It included:

- A more detailed criteria sheet
- A release form
- Copyright confirmation forms
- Display permission forms
- A worksheet for database information about the resource—title, developer’s name, unit and copyright prices, grade level, core program area, dates of publication and revision, language, a brief description, and an indication of whether or not the material had been field tested (a feature specifically requested by teachers)
- A form for ordering information, including shipping and handling particulars and copyright permission policy.

In all, 519 new resources from over 70 sources were processed for the new catalogue. It would include a Concepts Index and feedback forms, like the first catalogue, together with a revised Catholic section, as requested by the Catholic community. Materials developed by Catholic boards would now appear only within a separate section of the catalogue. (They had their own section in the Transition Years Catalogue, but had also been integrated into the main section with the other resources.) Also, like the section for “Public/Other Resources,” the “Catholic Resources”¹⁵ section would now be subdivided into the four core program areas of the revised Common Curriculum—Language, The Arts, Personal and Social Studies: Self and Society, and Mathematics, Science and Technology—with a section for Cross Curricular material at the end. Each section would be colour coded.

While work on the print catalogue was moving well and on schedule, the situation was not so promising for the online version. The Transition Years Catalogue was supposed to go live on the ENO site on November 27, but was again delayed owing to problems at the network. Taken together with the advice from the Ministry, this new setback caused OCC to give higher priority to the search for another venue for the online version of the catalogue.

In mid November, with orders slowing down and the new catalogue materials safely in the hands of ONTERIS, the Work Group heard a preliminary presentation on self-sustainability. The bywords of the new government were “*affordability, accountability, and quality,*” and the Work Group planned to reduce its funding request for 1996-97 by thirty percent. Urgency around the development of alternative revenue sources was growing. But, as a new concept in education, self-sufficiency had to be approached carefully. One of the first requirements would be to establish clear definitions for “partner” and “sponsor” and to develop policies around each. The Work Group agreed to develop a comprehensive self-sufficiency plan and to actively seek sponsorship for OCC.

At the same time, the group resolved to continue the ONeducation partnership for the coming year and to investigate potential web links—SchoolNet, the Ontario Institute for Information and Communication Technology Mediated Learning (OIICTML), TVO, and

others—to help position themselves quickly as a key education site when the time came to go live. They also resolved to investigate the implications of expanding the catalogue to include private sector materials. (This would pose no problem on a website as commercial activity had recently begun to be accepted on the Internet, subject to certain guidelines.)

In early December, an additional small office was leased from OPSBA, along with storage space in the basement and a site agreement was pending. Good news also came about the FileMaker Pro version of the JK-9 Catalogue - it would be ready for distribution to computer consultants by the end of February in versions for both Windows and Mac. And the ONeducation CD-ROM was due in April, complete with a new search engine that would provide results from all the catalogues with a single search. Technology was advancing steadily, making it possible to provide a wider variety of options and better service more quickly. In a community where both computer and Internet access and computing capabilities varied radically, this was a very positive step forward.

Also encouraging were the results of a meeting with MET in early December. The Ministry was giving serious thought to linking its website to the future OCC website and was also considering listing its materials in the OCC catalogue. These actions would help to legitimize OCC in the eyes of those who were still unclear about its “official” role. However, they would also make it more difficult to function, and to be seen to function, at arm’s length from the Ministry. This troublesome paradox in OCC’s relationship to and with the Ministry would be ongoing.

Meanwhile, work on the evaluation tool had continued throughout the fall. Teachers, curriculum consultants, superintendents of program, supervisory officers, Circular 14 representatives, Rochelle Rabinowitz, who was responsible for MET special education projects, and an evaluation team of fifteen representative members solicited from the federations all worked together over the months. The final draft was ready in early January. In the spring, the tool would be validated with the materials produced by schools and boards under MET’s Special Education Integration Fund, and all materials that met the tool’s criteria would be included in the OCC catalogue.

However, OCC was not sure how best to use the evaluation tool once this initial project was completed. There were concerns that while it would ensure high quality, it would slow the process of sharing curriculum materials. Could these concerns be met? And should OCC sell the tool, share it, or give it to those purchasing curriculum. They considered developing a team that would use it to help individual boards evaluate existing materials and choose new ones. They also thought about training those people to train others. And certainly it would be wonderful to use the tool to vet all the materials submitted for the catalogue, but this was time consuming and costly. Who would do the work and who would pay? These were difficult questions. The only certainty was that an evaluation tool was important for Ontario educators. OCC believed that it was accomplishing a valuable first step in what would be an evolving process.

In a meeting on 8 January 1996, the evaluation tool draft was submitted, together with a three-year business plan, to Ministry personnel—ADMs Mariette Carrier-Fraser and Jill Hutcheon, as well as Pauline Laing, Director of the Ministry’s Curriculum Branch, and Gerry McIntyre, Manager, Elementary Education, Curriculum Branch. The business plan called for a \$350,000 investment from MET for 1996-97, rather than \$500,000 as in the current year. Despite this, it was made clear that OCC’s support might well be cut altogether since that support depended on a fund of money that was itself in jeopardy. Still, the tone of the meeting was generally positive and MET personnel carefully examined all of the proposed activities and outcomes for the coming three years.

Among those proposals were several that would not come to pass, at least not within three years, but which articulated the thinking of the OCC Work Group. They included:

- Development of a plan to become a distribution centre for curriculum resource materials (MET was especially interested in the potential for this to save time and money at the board level)
- Co-ordination and alignment of already existing resource agencies for “one-stop shopping”
- Enhancements to the database and all versions of the catalogue, e.g., adding full text or samples of documents.
-

While these would not be realized, several proposed initiatives— to provide access via the World Wide Web (www), to expand the catalogue to include senior grades, to list materials from a broader range of sources, to become self-sustaining¹⁶—would succeed.

The first of these initiatives was put on the road to completion just four days later. On the recommendation of the Executive Director, the Work Group contracted with ONTERIS to produce a graphical user interface (GUI) through which web users could access and view the catalogue information stored in OCC’s STAR database. This would require a search mechanism, the selection of appropriate display fields, and the development of a format in which to present the information. In addition, a new database was commissioned to accept teachers’ comments and link them to the relevant resources in the main database. Eric Lee of ONTERIS, who had built the main database, would be responsible for most of the work on these new projects.

Two other important events occurred in January. The first was the launch of the JK-9 Catalogue.¹⁷ This colourful edition was enhanced with teacher comments on the use of materials that had appeared in the Transition Years catalogue. At the same time, the FileMaker Pro for Windows version of the Phase I catalogue was finally completed and distributed. (Both the Windows and Mac versions of the JK-6 Catalogue were ready for the end of February and the ONeducation CD-ROM, with CFORP as a new partner, was completed for 1May. It included the OCC Catalogue in both FileMaker Pro and DOS

formats.)

The second important event was the news that Executive Director, Susan Langley, had been offered the position of Secretary Treasurer of OTF and might be leaving OCC. The Work Group responded by forming a committee to consider her replacement and by making the necessary arrangements to allow Chair Horst Schweinbenz to function as Acting Executive Director in the interim (Earl McCabe (OCSTA) would take over as Acting Work Group Chair during this time). In March, Langley resigned effective 30 April.

Much of the remainder of the winter and spring of 1996 was taken up with decisions and actions around incorporation. The first order of business was to choose the most appropriate incorporation status—“for profit,” “not-for-profit,” or “charitable.” To do this required a careful examination of the tax, liability, and functional implications of each. Next, each partner organization had to weigh the relative merits to decide which option worked best for them and indeed, whether they would support incorporation at all. Meanwhile, new by-laws had to be drafted.

Work also continued on other initiatives. Hundreds of orders were processed for new catalogue materials. A colour brochure was produced to solicit corporate partnerships,¹⁸ a new site agreement signed with OPSBA, and an agreement reached with CFORP to cite each others catalogues as resources. A comprehensive manual of all of the Policies and Regulations developed since the beginning of OCC was compiled and a new motto adopted—“Helping Teachers Make a Difference for Students.” To help promote OCC, a folder and postcard were created and one postcard was sent to every Ontario teacher in May. OCC also hosted its second curriculum forum.

At the same time, Kent RCSSB was solicited for an inservice pilot (14-15 May with feedback 5 June) to help teachers access information electronically. This project would prove very useful to teachers and also to OCC as a feedback mechanism on the electronic version of the catalogue. TVO was approached to conduct a video teleconference on this pilot, for later sale.

At the suggestion of members of the Canadian Teachers’ Federation (CTF), the British Columbia Teachers’ Federation and the Council of Ministers of Education (Canada) were contacted about the possibility of developing a national database. As it turned out, SchoolNet, which was further along in its electronic evolution than OCC, had already proposed doing something similar, so no further action was taken. Meanwhile, OCC worked with the Ontario Teacher Education Librarians’ Association (OTELA) to develop a purchase plan that would allow Ontario education faculty libraries to buy school board documents listed in the OCC catalogue at greatly reduced prices. This initiative succeeded. Many boards and consortia bought into the concept and, over the summer, a large number of resources were purchased.

Throughout the spring, materials were gathered for the spring catalogue update—94 new listings plus announcements, teacher comments, and an article about curriculum development by Sylvia Lee of the Metro Toronto Board. Work also began on creating index terms for the catalogue’s Catholic resources. After a home page had been designed, the new OCC website went live at www.curclear.org on 20 March!

Also in the spring, MET was invited and agreed to participate in a pilot project for the Evaluation Tool. The pilot produced helpful feedback and the tool was generally considered extremely promising. OCC received many requests for copies, but decided to hold distribution until the final version was ready in late fall.

MET also agreed to link their new website to the OCC home page. (TVO did the same and created a special announcement for OCC.) In addition, the Minister agreed to send a representative to attend Work Group meetings. At OCC, MET’s continuing participation engendered cautious optimism about the 1996-97 funding.

Meanwhile, Paul Kropp, who had done work with OTF, was brought in to help develop an OCC communications plan. The Clearinghouse needed a higher profile among teachers who were not involved in curriculum development and among non-mainstream educators.

April was the Executive Director’s final month and the Work Group realized they would have to advertise for a replacement even though funding had not yet been approved. Advertisements were prepared and placed in appropriate venues.

The remainder of the year was very busy. With a web page and handy CD-ROM and diskette versions of the catalogue to display and demonstrate, OCC participated in many conferences—Educational Computing Organization of Ontario (ECOO), Manitoba Librarians’ Association, OPSOA, and others. As well, extensive follow-up work was done on the various spring initiatives—especially, fine tuning the Evaluation Tool and analysing feedback results on the different versions of the catalogue. And, of course, the web version of the catalogue was in development for September.

As for incorporation, once all of the options had been considered, the Work Group had determined to seek “not-for-profit, charitable” status. Papers were filed at the end of June, after approval in writing was received from each of the partners. At the same time, after little success, the pursuit of corporate sponsorship was put indefinitely on hold.

At the final meeting of the Work Group on 21 June, Kevin O’Connor was elected by acclamation as Chair for the coming year, while Janice Crawford (MET) would chair the Policy Committee and Margaret Aubé (MET) the Finance Committee. And so the year ended with funding for 1996-97 still unconfirmed. Fund-raising initiatives had been deeply discouraging and a workable plan for self-sufficiency was urgently needed. Though the year had been successful in many ways, profound challenges faced the new Executive Director.

VI. 1996

The consuming activity of summer 1996 was the search for the new OCC Executive Director. The successful candidate required a background in and dedication to education, sufficient business acumen to establish and run a not-for-profit, charitable corporation, and the ability to overcome obstacles like OCC's undefined product and uncertain position relative to the Ministry. He or she would also have to handle the challenge of the province's new education agenda, which was polarizing the teaching community, and the dilemma of how to develop sufficient independent income to keep the corporation alive.

MET had established the Clearinghouse to make the development and distribution of curriculum materials more cost effective but had given OCC no official role in the curriculum process. OCC's principal product, its catalogue, was a convenient reference for teachers and boards but was not a mandatory source for curriculum resources. No imperatives existed for developers to list materials in it or for teachers to choose materials from it. As OCC was still relatively unknown to most educators, any attempt to make its catalogue revenue-generating - either by charging boards for listings or by charging schools for its use - might well result in its rejection by both. As for OCC's other activities—coordinating curriculum development, offering teacher training, etc.—these either did not readily lend themselves to revenue generation or were in sectors with already well-established competitors.

At the same time, tension was growing in the education community. On the recommendation of the Royal Commission, a new “College of Teachers” had been created, with a broad mandate that left many traditional education organizations, including OTF, scrambling to redefine and consolidate their positions. Rhetoric from the Minister's office hinted at sweeping changes that would restructure education in Ontario on a more business-like model.

This escalating climate of suspicion and mistrust placed OCC in a difficult position. To survive, it needed MET's endorsement and support, but to maintain teacher confidence, it had to function demonstrably “at arm's length” from the Ministry. To build a viable, “new” business in this untested, volatile marketplace would be profoundly challenging.

It was to meet this challenge that Kathryn McFarlane was asked to join the OCC in the position of Executive Director. Ms. McFarlane was Director of Marketing Services (Ontario) for TVOntario and had been Creative Head of TVO's Youth Programming. She had also been a director of public relations for Canada Trust. As well, she was a teacher with extensive elementary and secondary classroom experience. Ms. McFarlane took up the challenge and began her work at OCC on September 1, 1996.

September - December

A New Director and a New Vision

Kathryn McFarlane's mandate as Executive Director of OCC was to clarify and expand OCC's role in supporting the Ontario curriculum and to sell a more highly visible concept that could result in OCC's financial independence. Such a vision drew heavily upon Ms. McFarlane's marketing experience.

Thus a good part of the time between September and the end of the year was devoted to reviewing OCC's original goals and developing a new business plan that could effectively place the organization on a more stable and independent financial grounding. The early days were spent meeting with the original founding members, teachers, consultants, superintendents, directors, trustees, and representatives of member groups in an attempt to better understand the initial purpose, expectations, and perceived problems of the organization's concept to this point.

By November, a new business plan had been drafted, and selected ministry officials, including the Minister himself, were approached in an attempt to gain support for this expanded vision of OCC. To the same end, a response to the Secondary School Reform Discussion Paper was submitted. OCC was still dependent upon funding from the Ministry, yet to maintain that support in the short term, it was important to demonstrate long-term measurable objectives which would ensure OCC's eventual independence. This approach reflected the new government's commitment to cost-effective education in Ontario.

Since it was necessary for OCC to market its products and services in support of the Ontario curriculum, more emphasis was placed upon the importance of The Evaluation Tool in sorting out quality curriculum materials. This tool was still in its packaging stages, with December 1996 as its expected date of completion. As indicated earlier, despite the extensive body of materials collected over the previous years from various boards, none of these materials had been evaluated by an external evaluation process. Thus the relative value of such materials remained unknown.

Additionally, because of the government's planned changes for a shorter secondary school curriculum, it was pointed out that this evaluation tool could be more quickly and efficiently applied to the new curriculum materials. OCC could thus present itself as an organization of expert consultants, able to offer its centralized evaluation services to both the Ministry and other organizations. The long-term goal, however, was to train teachers and other clients in the education field to be able to use The Evaluation Tool themselves in the ongoing process of achieving consistency in the selection and evaluation of learning resources. The implementation of such a goal would help to ensure that eventually resource development would be initiated with an evaluation component included at the outset, rather than having a scenario where materials would have to be altered at a later stage in their development. Advantages would be gained in time, money, quality products, and teacher education.

The idea of copyrighting all materials and creating an electronic Central Registry on the Web,

available to users who would pay a subscription fee, was also put forth. It was argued that users could then have access to a range of information, from work-in-progress to objectively rated materials to training opportunities in education. The plan was to continue expanding the range of products offered online, at the same time as expanding the range of potential clients. Concurrent with this plan was the idea of taking selected materials and packaging them in a user-friendly format for easy classroom application.

OCC could thus be marketed as a one-stop shopping service for teachers and others in the education community in Ontario, with a plan to eventually be marketed elsewhere in Canada and worldwide. By centralizing advertising, promotion, standardization, management, sales, distribution, and the process of curriculum development itself, OCC could reduce duplication, maintain consistent pricing and formats, increase accessibility of products and services, and ultimately reduce costs to both the Ministry and individual school boards. The net profits would be shared by reinvesting in further resource development.

To increase the size of OCC's client group was also an important goal. Up to this point, elementary school teachers comprised the largest section of the OCC's client group. To include secondary school learning materials in the catalogue would of course greatly increase OCC's client group. But the expanded client group now envisioned included a new focus on organizations in the private and corporate sectors. The promotion of a publicly accredited evaluation tool was seen as a potential drawing card for this new market and advertising in a range of forms - trade shows, conferences, and article submissions to professional magazines and journals - was suggested as a means of expanding the client population. Related to these promotional suggestions was the idea of selecting appropriate learning materials and packaging them in a way that would maximize their market value beyond the classroom. In the case of remedial or supplementary assistance, it was pointed out that a registry of materials for parents and students could also be developed.

Two important practical ramifications of the new vision included the need for personal and corporate protection from liability. Initiating copyright for all materials in the catalogue meant that OCC itself was protected against any claims of infringement or "any defamatory, obscene or otherwise offensive or unlawful matter contained in any of the works referenced". Additionally, official steps were taken to protect OCC's Directors and Officers against personal liability.

The new vision of OCC raised many important questions for its members. A discussion of the appropriate form of "partnership" with OCC for raising money continued with the concept of partnership itself under question. Under the new incorporation it must be determined whether OCC should be actively seeking partnerships, sponsorships, alliances, or some other kind of business relationship.

Other questions were raised around 1) the perceived role of OCC as a physical warehouse and/or distribution centre for all its developers; 2) the concern of publishers if OCC stepped into the business of curriculum packaging and/or re-selling of materials; 3) the issue of appropriate charges for its services and materials, given its status as a not-for-profit organization; 4) the possibility of negotiations with the Ontario College of Teachers for accreditation for some of its materials; 5) copyrighting implications of The Evaluation Tool, and the distinction between the rights of OCC and those of the Ministry in this regard; and 6) a change in the name of the organization, given that OCC planned to expand its former mandate.

In addition to contacting MET officials concerning the new vision of OCC, the new Executive Director made presentations to both the public and separate school directors of education in an attempt to seek their endorsements. OCC's Board was also presented with the new business plan in November and all directors were also asked to take the plan back to their organizations for information and feedback.

Other initiatives towards financial independence were also taken before the end of the year. These included work on a funding proposal with external contacts in an attempt to persuade corporations of the benefits of funding curriculum development. Outside experts were also consulted in this regard.

Other activities within OCC itself in the final few months of 1996 included a successful presentation of The Evaluation Tool to the Peel board's Principals' and Vice Principals' conference in November. Positive feedback on this presentation suggested that there was a great need for the tool. The tool itself was in the process of being packaged as a laminated wall-chart poster, the format being determined by research and evaluation feedback.

Also in the fall, the World Wide Web version of the OCC catalogue became available on the Internet on September 9, an exciting step for OCC. A comprehensive communications strategy was prepared to promote the website.

The results of a telephone survey and focus group of OCC catalogue users in Ontario were presented at the November board meeting. The survey indicated favourable responses to the resource materials. Also, teachers were shown to be the primary purchasers of the materials. These results confirmed that OCC was on the right track.

The OCC's internal organization was also reviewed. In order to avoid duplication in discussions of OCC business, the Executive Director recommended streamlining by decreasing the number of board committees and the number of board meetings to be held during a year. A motion to this effect was passed at the October Board of Director's meeting.

The year ended with the perceived role of OCC still in question. In no doubt, however, was the requirement that OCC must include a training component in order to fulfill the conditions of its non-profit status. Thus, for OCC, the need for public presentation and support was still a priority.

VII. 1997

January - March

The new year began optimistically with the issue of copyright for The Evaluation Tool finally resolved. OCC had written agreement from MET to sell The Evaluation Tool for a period of two years, from 1 January 1997 to 31 December 1998. This tool, now renamed The Evaluator, was in its final design stage and was to be presented by the end of the month for final review. Advertising for The Evaluator had been ongoing during its development stage and OCC was now keeping a list of potential orders.

A list of potential commercial and corporate buyers for the learning materials was also being developed, and the decision was made to hire a member of the former Evaluation Team on secondment to set up a review team which would review all materials and develop and deliver training programs. Early feedback indicated that many of the materials in the catalogue did not meet the evaluation criteria and were thus unacceptable. It was suggested that OCC's efforts to establish product endorsement could be assisted by providing developers with specific criteria before products were submitted to OCC for review.

The first steps toward revision of OCC's policies and by-laws were also taken in January. These changes were necessary to fulfill the new legal status of incorporation, and it was agreed that subsequent updates would be initiated over time as needed. Amongst the changes addressed was a conflict of interest clause specifying the parameters of directors' responsibilities to OCC, a concern raised in 1996. Also of relevance was the change in voting status for Ministry representatives now that OCC was incorporated. Although MET representatives were now no longer able to vote or chair committees, their physical presence on the Board was actively encouraged in an attempt to maintain strong relationships with the Ministry.

Funding, however, remained the main agenda of the new year. OCC's three-year funding agreement with MET and OPSBA was coming to an end on 31 March 1997. A business plan presentation to MET officials was scheduled for February, with OCC's financial requirements from MET rationalized in detail and forecast to the year 2001. Included in this plan was the idea that OCC would take over ownership of assets from OPSBA.

Initial response to the presentation was very positive. Ministry officials were favourable towards the idea of seeking private sector partnerships and suggested that, in future, representatives of the private sector should be included on the OCC board and more actively involved in OCC. The Ministry also liked the idea of using revenues for merit awards and for funding the development of learning resources in schools and boards, thus focusing on more grassroots development. Questions were raised about the process (e.g., electronic "connectivity") by which OCC could work with other organizations and consortia, and stronger connections with ILC were encouraged. This last point came out of MET's ongoing concern for more connectivity

amongst teachers, schools, and boards and with sectors outside the education field. Despite this initial positive feedback, it was recommended that another presentation be made again following the departure of the ADM, Jill Hutcheon, in March.

Early feedback on the new business plan was also received from OPSBA. A suggestion was made that if the Board was to be expanded to include representatives from the private sector, member organizations would need to be informed.

The month of February ended with the first review of OCC's 640 materials completed. Cathy Telfer, a consultant from Kent County, not only reduced the inventory to approximately 200 materials, but also established and trained a review team of teachers from Kent and Essex, with plans for the team to review the new inventory in the March break. This was to be the first of many such training sessions.

Revisions of OCC policies continued in February with an emphasis on those related to human resources and the conflict of interest and indemnity clauses. Outside consultation specific to non-profit organizations was solicited and the rewriting of the by-laws resumed.

Similarly, ongoing revisions of the database continued, with the goal of training OCC staff in the management of the database, as co-partners with OISE. During this process it became apparent that OCC would have to update their computer systems to keep up with modern technology. Preliminary analysis of needs and pricing options thus began in conjunction with OPSBA.

The Evaluator was finally ready for distribution on February 21, after in-depth consultation with education design consultant Shelley Smith, on content, layout, design, print-runs, and pricing policies. Arrangements for handling orders were finalized with a firm in Oakville in March; advertising and promotional pieces, including the distribution of complimentary packages, were also completed. A complimentary Evaluator package was given to all OCC directors, guests, and development team members in an attempt to promote sales.

With respect to the ongoing pursuit of new client groups, an encouraging yet tentative link was made with a consortia of 11 major Canadian church groups working on Native curriculum. Another link was made with two independent educational television producers, who requested OCC's involvement in the management, sales, and distribution of their videos, subject to a preliminary evaluation.

Other promotional activities included presentations of the CD-ROM and The Evaluator to Plumtree Park Junior School and participation in a Private School conference and an OLA superconference. A presentation of The Evaluator was also made to a New Horizon's Principals' two-day conference in London, Ontario in April. Such activities resulted in discussions of new ways of expanding and promoting the creative possibilities of the CD-ROM.

March was full of activities geared to implementing the proposed Board membership and policy changes, and finalizing the necessary By-Law revisions. Included in the changes were: 1) the expansion of the number of directors from six to nine; 2) a new quorum (i.e., majority vote) of five out of the nine directors; 3) a requirement that attendance be regular, with directors who missed three consecutive meetings being removed from the board; and 4) the introduction of bi-monthly meetings, with two new committees - Curriculum and Business - meeting in alternative months, and the chairs of such committees chosen by the Board. The rationale for some of these changes was the need to establish some continuity on the board in order to ensure a collective memory, which would in turn preserve the history of the organization.

OCC presented its Business Plan to various groups. A presentation to the OPSBA Committee on Program in March met with encouraging responses. Almost every member of the group ordered a copy of *The Evaluator*, and a suggestion followed that a presentation be made to the executive of each Member Association to explain the new direction of OCC.

A major city school board was approached in March with the idea of a free cost assessment of its current curriculum marketing operations. It was chosen because of its quality curriculum and the fact that it performed its own marketing functions. The purpose of the assessment was to determine the extent to which OCC, as a centralized organization, could provide a more cost-efficient service. A more rural board was eventually contacted for the same reasons.

April - June

The best news in April was a confirmation from the Ministry for another year of funding. The amount of money requested (\$150, 000.00) was approved and the agreement was effective on 1 April 1997, continuing until 31 March 1998. This grant entitled OCC to centralize access to curriculum resources for school boards and educators across the country; evaluate and/or train educators to evaluate resource materials for consistency with Ministry curriculum policy and guidelines; and provide curriculum support services and develop new products to assist curriculum implementation and/or development of classroom-ready materials. The agreement was subject to the requirement that OCC continue its efforts to become a self-sufficient organization by entering into appropriate partnerships.

OCC's charitable status was also confirmed at this time by Revenue Canada, meaning that it could now seek corporate sponsorship. Thus, the focus on fundraising strategies continued into April with a search for possible business representatives and organizational partnerships. Informative meetings with directors of various fundraising organizations led to further ideas about potential qualifications of suitable directors from the business community. The idea of having a job description for such a director, with expectations of the position outlined, was strongly advised. It was also suggested that new directors be selected from three different areas including corporate banking, publishing, and the world of community volunteering.

The exploration of cost-saving initiatives was also a major focus of attention. In April, the Executive Director attended a conference on The Learning Partnership, directed at strategies for developing partnerships. The point was made that business in general has very little understanding of the educational world, an indication that education about education would be a very important strategy for OCC in its future negotiations with business.

A meeting with the Director of the Independent Learning Centre raised the possibility of sharing office and administrative space in future, as a way for both organizations to reduce expenses. In a similar attempt to minimize future costs, a review of database management systems was also initiated with the goal of finding the most appropriate system for OCC. Changing the format of OCC's Annual General Meeting in June from that of a retreat to a regular Board meeting was another attempt to minimize operating expenses. Ongoing changes in OCC's structure also led to savings in the area of human resources.

April brought the next stage of the development process of The Evaluator with a project on bias proofing initiated with the First Folio Resource Group Inc., a company staffed by teachers in the field of curriculum development.

Also in April encouraging letters of support for OCC arrived, including one from the Deputy Minister, Veronica Lacey. Such feedback reflected the ongoing hard work that OCC continued to exhibit.

May and June continued with many promotional activities as well as the more pressing drive to find new directors. Letters were sent to over 30 educational associations requesting that OCC be placed on their conference workshop agendas for the fall. Press releases announcing The Evaluator went to every English school board and Faculty of Education, and to other educational groups across Canada. Several conferences were attended with OCC displays included. As well, an important link was made with the University of Toronto's Faculty of Education, with The Evaluator being given full support and promotion in the faculty's workshops and courses. Essex County and Northumberland-Clarington Boards also adopted The Evaluator as their standard of excellence in curriculum development, and the Peel board showed its support by ordering 200 sets of worksheets for their evaluation process. Other boards beginning to show interest in OCC were Simcoe County and Northumberland-Newcastle.

By June, two new Associate Members representing the corporate sector had been appointed to the Board - Ayman Antoun of IBM and Tom Strong of CIBC. Both new members had demonstrated long-time support for public education and recognized the need to develop stronger ties between education and business.

Throughout the summer, a team of experienced teacher educators met with OCC and developed a plan for a series of workshops entitled "Reaching Curriculum Standards," based upon the guidelines of the Evaluator. A pilot presentation of these workshops was planned for October, with the Durham Board of Education offering to host the event. The idea was to have the workshops re-evaluated by outside educators and to further discuss design and marketing issues.

Discussions of the appropriate kind of partners for OCC continued, with the need for four distinct partners identified: 1) a marketing partner to market OCC catalogued materials on the Internet; 2) a publishing partner to manufacture products; 3) a “fulfillment” partner to take and fulfill orders, deposit revenues, and pay partners; and 4) a curriculum development partner that would co-fund and co-produce products. Compucentre Toronto, Inc. and Netscape Publishers were contacted as two such potential partners, and preliminary negotiations continued throughout the summer.

The need for stronger public relations was becoming increasingly apparent. Therefore, a public relations director, shared with OPSBA, helped in developing a more public profile for OCC. In late August, a Press Release describing the services and activities of OCC was sent out to all major editors of education materials, as well as to The Toronto Star. Contact was also made with The Honourable John Snobelen, Minister of Education and Training, with the intent of informing the Minister of recent developments, including the recent initiatives towards partnerships.

Invitations to meetings with Ministry officials in the summer of 1997, concerning the new provincial curriculum in Mathematics and Language, grades 1 to 8, were taken as a sign of government support and respect for OCC’s expertise and services. Similarly, a request from the Ontario College of Teachers to attend a meeting about pre-service and in-service teacher education and a favourable acknowledgment of OCC’s contribution at an annual OPSTF dinner confirmed OCC support at the non-governmental level.

Fall

By September, OCC’s website included a catalogue of over 500 materials. Thanks to an HRDC grant, a third-year engineering student was hired over the summer to update the website and develop a registry of key curriculum contacts. Contact was made with all school boards for new information for the OCC catalogue of school board developed resources, and a questionnaire was incorporated into the website in an effort to document much needed data on website users.

September also brought in the new schedule of board and business and curriculum committee meetings. Alternative months were set aside for Committee Meetings, with Board Meetings scheduled in between, and the Annual General Meeting scheduled for June. This arrangement meant that Board Meetings would be held six times a year while Committees would meet four times a year.

The fall of 1997 again raised the issue of OCC’s exact role vis-à-vis the Ontario curriculum. Government officials were aware of the need to review and the current process for the approval and acquisition of learning materials and compare it with the needs of the new curriculum. Close links were maintained with government officials to ensure OCC’s visibility.

In the meantime, OCC was discussing a new and changing vision of itself. In this new vision, OCC would be divided into two parts, with working titles as follows: 1) The Ontario Curriculum Standards Agency (OCSA); and 2) The Ontario Curriculum Development Foundation (OCDF).

The idea was that while OCSA would function to establish standards for the development and review of curriculum resources, OCDF could focus more specifically on fund raising. A variation on this vision would be fleshed out in the years to come.

Similarly, discussions of the purpose, responsibilities, and operating mechanisms of the Business and Curriculum Committees continued into the new year, with indefinite results for actual implementation.

A preliminary partnership agreement between OCC and Compucentre Toronto, Inc. Stone Soup Software Division (CTI/SS), was reached in late November. Under the agreement, OCC would review all school board learning resource materials reconfigured by CTI/SS from the OCC catalogue, while CTI/SS would focus more on publishing, marketing, distribution, and sales. This partnership would help to strengthen OCC's perceived commitment to exemplary standards in learning resources.

Other professional activities before the end of the year included a successful pilot workshop of the "Reaching Curriculum Standards" model to curriculum leaders in the Durham, Northumberland-Clarington, and York regions. An outcome of this workshop was a request for copyright of the model, to duplicate throughout the Durham schools. The possibility of mounting the workshop model on the Internet with the assistance of Knowledge Connection (a not-for-profit organization) was also discussed. A compressed version of the workshop was later presented to 60 Special Education Additional Qualifications (AQ) course participants with equal success. The momentum was gaining.

OCC was also approached by the Ontario College of Teachers, for the purposes of discussing ways of working together towards the goal of developing standards of practice for teachers.

In terms of product development, another OCC product was in its early stage of development. The Bias Assessor was developed with a volunteer team of bias experts, with the goal of helping educators test learning materials for bias. While recognizing that no material is bias-free, or without a point of view, the tool was designed with certain measurable guidelines for reducing the more obvious biases related to gender, race, and ethnocultural issues.

Finally, two consultants were hired to review and revise OCC's website listings of Language and Mathematics learning materials in light of the new Provincial Curriculum.

VIII. 1998

January

The new year began with the offer of a generous donation of \$25,000 from Compucentre Toronto. This money was to be put towards web support, including necessary changes in design, hosting, and ongoing technical operations.

Several professional projects were initiated in the new year. These included formal meetings with the Knowledge Connection team to develop a funding proposal for online Professional Learning opportunities for teachers. The goal of this project was to help teachers reach a common understanding of curriculum standards. Interlynx Multimedia was also contacted in an attempt to develop a proposal for the creation and mounting (on the OCC website) of parent materials for homework assistance and remedial help. Focus groups for this project were to be held in February.

The Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs approached OCC to develop teaching and learning materials on the Ontario Speaks: A Dialogue on National Unity Curriculum Unit, an MIA initiative. This unit was produced on the new OCC website in both English and French, by a team of teachers mentored by OCC and letters were sent to all principals and Social Science Department Heads to promote the materials. There were connecting links between the MIA and OCC websites.

It was also time to both revamp the OCC evaluation framework and refine the OCC review process so that it better reflected the changes in Provincial Curriculum. The consulting staff of the Halton Board of Education, under the leadership of Kit Rankin, Superintendent of Program Services for the Halton Board, was contracted for a period of two months to complete this task. The bias assessment tool was incorporated into the new evaluation framework at this time, following the recent success of its final review.

Discussions regarding who might be an appropriate Director from the volunteer community resumed in the new year, with Walter Gowing presented and later confirmed as an acceptable candidate. Gowing had previously been an OPSBA representative on the Board and also had extensive experience in the volunteer sector.

March 31 was fast approaching, with no apparent provisions for extended funding from the Ministry. In view of this situation, an unsolicited proposal was developed and submitted to the Ministry with the idea of reviewing learning materials on behalf of the Ministry. It was suggested that, if successful, OCC could be funded on a contractual basis, rather than under a grant structure. This proposal again raised the issue of OCC's role in the implementation of Ontario's curriculum, with the attendant concern for copyright of the Evaluator.

The idea of applying for an ISO 9002 number was put forth as a way of establishing OCC's organizational accreditation, and representatives of the Business Development Bank were contacted for preliminary assistance in this endeavour. Early feedback indicated that the application process could take up to a year, with outside consultation and training services requiring a certain standard procedure.

Although the partnership with Compucentre Toronto Inc. proved to be unfruitful, with copyright issues becoming the main stumbling block, other requests for OCC's evaluation services started flowing in from organizations such as the Bank of Montreal, the Asia Pacific Foundation, and the Rosetta Stone Language Library CD-ROM.

With the business partnerships beginning to expand, concerns about the need for more specific partnership guidelines were soon raised. Thus, work began on the clarification of OCC's business principles, and a draft proposal of the Ethical Guidelines for business partnerships was presented at the March Board Meeting. Feedback from board members was requested by the end of April, and it was suggested that additional feedback from a variety of outside business people would also be helpful.

April brought the good news that the Ministry (MET) agreed to a contract with OCC for the evaluation of learning materials for kindergarten and grades 1 to 8 in Mathematics, Science and Technology, and Language. This meant that OCC was now acting as an agent for MET, an initiative which was taken as a step towards the possible long-term management of a new Circular 14 process. It also meant that OCC was now generating substantial revenue to provide the kind of expert evaluation services that it had been working towards all along.

The new contract meant that an appropriate training package would need to be developed, and a partnership with First Folio Inc. was soon established for the purposes of handling the tracking of the review process, the training of reviewers, and the monitoring of revisions to the evaluation and bias assessor tools.

To fulfill the new contract, three subject specialists, well respected by educators and Ministry officials in Ontario, were contracted by OCC to act as Project Directors, and future plans were made for an all-day training session to include Lead Reviewers from various regions in the province.

Because the contract with MET was finite, other ideas for expanding OCC's client list were actively encouraged. One idea was to look outside of Ontario for possible contracts, while a new proposal for the Francophone curriculum unit was prepared in April, with two suggestions as to future partnerships. One suggestion was to hire OCC as an agency to review their materials, much like the contract already established with MET, while the other idea was to sell them a license to use OCC's measurement tools. The latter option was settled upon within the month.

A new Draft Business Plan for 1998 to 1999 was submitted to the Board Meeting in May and approved in principle at the Annual Meeting in June. This plan outlined six ways that OCC planned to generate revenue in future: 1) Through the Evaluation of Commercial and Non-Commercial Learning Materials; 2) Through the Management of Learning Materials Evaluation for MET (a plan still not confirmed); 3) Through Charitable Fundraising; 4) Through Teacher Training Programs; 5) Through Consulting Fees from commercial developers and publishers; and 6) Through License Sales of OCC developed tools such as the Evaluator.

Other goals outlined in the plan were as follows: 1) to secure the MET Management of Learning Materials Evaluation contract; 2) to continue with an effective public relations campaign; 3) to stay abreast of new and efficient technologies; 4) to make online Teacher-Training a priority; 5) to improve internal electronic communications systems by finding methods and carriers who have high client satisfaction records; 6) to reach out to parents, the community and other stakeholders in education; and 7) to continue to perform in a more business-motivated environment.

The contract with MET for textbook reviews was completed in the early summer, with a letter on behalf of the Canadian Publisher's Council arriving in late July congratulating the OCC team for the thorough and professional services rendered. And most encouraging of all, the letter indicated an intention of developing a mutually supportive relationship in future.

A more practical outcome of the contract experience was the realization of the need for a glossary of terms for evaluators, to ensure consistency of written reviews, and with logos to be used on approved learning materials. Thus preparation began on a measurement tool for software evaluation. The idea that there was potential for OCC to evaluate software for the provincial licensing process also arose, with developments in that direction commencing. Finally, the issue of redesigning American material to meet Canadian standards was raised as another possible marketing strategy.

Concerns about the future relationship with OTF took priority in the summer. OCC gave a presentation to the OTF Executive meeting in August hoping to show OTF that the ultimate intent of OCC was to work with and for the benefit of all teachers. OCC proposed the establishment of a committee in which OCC and OTF officials could come together to address the concerns of both organizations and provide a list of recommendations for a satisfactory solution by November 1998.

There was also movement in the summer to expand the size and range of membership of the Board. This initiative was in part a result of the ISO 9002 review. Suggestions were made that future board members should have skills from a variety of backgrounds, including corporate law, accounting, marketing, and/or public relations, textbook publishing, senior education management, and the volunteer community. Moreover, there was concern that if OTF did withdraw its membership, two practising teachers at large should be included on the Board.

On the administrative side, a new member was added to the Board of Directors in June, Lynda Bell of CIBC, who replaced Tom Strong. Thus the voice of the banking community would continue to be represented on the Board.

September - December

At the September Board Meeting, discussion arose about the need for a separate materials development arm of OCC. The structure of OCC was still clearly in an evolving phase.

In September the Ministry confirmed the awarding of the next phase of the textbook evaluation contract to OCC. This was good news for OCC and a natural step in the expansion of its evaluation consultation services. The contract included the review of 54 textbooks, with ancillary materials numbering 299 items. The review was completed within three months, meeting MET's deadline of January 5.

A related development was a request from the Canadian Publishers Council for a presentation to a large combined group of publishers to share the learning experience of the first Call For Resources. This was taken as a strong sign of support for the goals and process of OCC's evaluation services. The presentation was arranged for February 1999, and a booklet on best practices was prepared and sent to all publishers in advance.

Other good news was a large contract from York University for OCC to provide teacher education expertise. An appropriate consultant was hired on contract with OCC to fulfill this mandate.

Within OCC itself, other activities continued. These included continued work on online training, the installation of a new website computer management system, and discussions about an appropriate new database for the submission of new materials by publishers. OCC was also audited and established its Y2K certification. Finally, it was indicated that all new resources reviewed by OCC would be shipped to the Canadian Organization for Development through Education, Ottawa, for distribution to schools in third world countries. A total of 34 boxes of student textbooks and other printed resources were received and acknowledged by CODE in mid-October.

The withdrawal of OTF from OCC membership was formally announced and accepted at the November Board meeting, the first meeting without OTF representation.

On a more positive note, November brought another contract with the Ministry, this time the responsibility to manage a field test trial of the new tool for the review of Secondary School Course Profiles. Three Project Directors were hired in Science, English, and Health and Physical Education, and each Project Director subsequently recruited and trained a team to do two reviews each, for a total of six reviews. The work continued throughout December with draft reports produced, feedback given, and numerous revisions made. This process gave OCC

the experience it needed to begin the full-fledged review process of the Secondary School Course Profiles in January 1999, with the full support and validation of the Ministry. This review, for the first time ever, was to include an evaluation against Ministry curriculum development expectations and, where appropriate, against Catholic Graduate expectations.

IX. 1999

Overall, 100 secondary school curriculum specialists took part in the Course Profile review process. Team leaders in each subject area were recruited and trained by February 17, and reviewers were recruited and trained by March 1. Feedback sessions were to take place in March, while the whole process was to finish in April, with the final documents being mounted on the OCC website and printed by the Waterloo District Board.

An outside consultant was hired in January for one day a week for a period of six months, in order to review OCC's measurement tools, and to revise training manuals in all subject areas. Also conducted in January was a review of the database and administrative details related to the hiring of teachers for work on the review; this process was contracted out to the management services of First Folio Resources, Inc..

In order to protect itself from potential lawsuits arising from publishers who might not agree with OCC's evaluations, legal advice was taken, and a more appropriate reformulation of the original legal contract was made.

The month of January also involved some "house cleaning," with a focus on a review of the process and future goals of OCC. This resulted in a one-day Strategic Planning Workshop with invited participants from key membership groups. Pauline Laing, former Director of the MET Curriculum Branch, was invited to act as facilitator for the day. A large part of the day was spent developing a concrete vision of OCC, and this involved reviewing certain aspects of the operating history of the organization. The day also included a presentation on the future of education by Michael Fullan, Dean, Ontario Institute For Studies in Education of the University of Toronto. The day's work, including the rewriting of a vision statement and a mission statement, was incorporated into OCC's literature and submitted to the ISO 9002 application review process. The idea of producing a corporate brochure was also suggested and initiated, with a completion date set for April 1999.

In December 1998, OCC had been approached by the chair of Pathfinder Learning Systems Corporation (PLSC) to explore a partnership in online electronic learning for secondary school teacher training. This led to the development of a proposal and a preliminary meeting with Bruce Smith, the Executive Assistant to the Minister, who showed a keen interest in the proposition. A more detailed proposal was therefore drafted in the new year, outlining the advantages of a joint venture between MET, OCC and PLSC, whereby MET would assume the role of curriculum policy expertise, OCC would provide an infrastructure to support training (i.e., a database of training units linked to MET's requirements for the new curriculum and resources), and PLSC would provide the software technology (i.e., delivery systems and educational design solutions).

PLSC was proposing a search engine called Nautikos, which would allow greater electronic communication within Ontario and the possibility of connecting teachers to a variety of online

and offline learning resources such as the Internet, videos, audio tapes, course handouts, newspapers, books, and CD-ROMs. (The Software Assessor was eventually developed within this new system, giving OCC a new tool for evaluating commercial CD-ROMs.) This software package had the advantage of technological sophistication, allowing for the possibility of consistency in accessing quality materials across the province. Its user compatibility, including program availability in both English and French, made it an obvious choice for OCC. It would mean, however, that OCC would also have to invest in a much more powerful Internet server to accommodate this software package. A presentation of this joint venture to officials in the Curriculum Branch of the Ministry was set for the end of March.

In the meantime, the Ministry extended an invitation to OCC to make a presentation to The People's Education Press of China on March 2. Chinese education officials were interested in improving their standards in the 30 provinces across China and were looking for exemplary models to help them with their own vision of change.

OCC reviews of learning materials in the private sector and not-for-profit organizations included training materials developed by the Royal Bank for use in high school classrooms, substance abuse prevention materials for Renascent House, "heart smart" education for the Heart and Stroke Foundation, and elementary Science CD-ROM for Flying Rhino, a division of Disney.

Also in March, the Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE) was invited to become a member of OCC, filling the OTF vacancy, with the position of one directorship accepted by the end of the month. Another change was the resignation of Ayman Antoun, who was being relocated to New York by IBM, and his replacement in the person of John Kutcy, also of IBM.

At the Annual Meeting in June several structural changes in OCC were implemented. These included dissolving the Curriculum and Business Boards and establishing instead 1) an Education Advisory Committee, to advise the board on educational matters or to research and make recommendations to the board on issues identified; and 2) a Business Advisory Committee. Both boards would meet twice yearly.

Also presented was a new vision of OCC, which showed it divided into four corporations, as follows: 1) Canadian Curriculum Services Corporation (CCSC) (a new corporation); 2) Ontario Curriculum Corporation (OCC re-named only); 3) The Curriculum Foundation (TCF); and 4) pdstore.com. All new titles were agreed upon in the meeting as working titles only, until further legal consultation could be undertaken. The main purpose of the reorganization was to develop an umbrella Canadian organization that could compete internationally, as well as nationally and locally. While TCF would be the charitable arm of the corporation, supporting learning resource development initiatives, pdstore.com would represent the e-commerce arm, offering a one-stop source for curriculum resources, and OCC would function as it always had, but with CCSC now responsible for the overall management and philosophy, operating systems, guidelines, and by-laws.

Included in this vision for the future was the “global store” concept, in which the Corporation would undertake to serve all schools through a central ordering system which would be linked to the existing website. Also raised at this meeting was the possible franchising potential of the CCSC model in other provinces.

By August, letters had been sent to all member organizations and to Ministry of Education (EDU) officials informing them of the corporate changes that had been introduced and inviting them to arrange a meeting in which a more detailed presentation could be conducted, and organizational questions raised.

By 27 August 1999, OCC officially became incorporated as Curriculum Services Canada (CSC). TCF and pdstore.com would be filed for incorporation in the months to come.

With the implementation of pdstore, it was necessary to hire three full-time employees - a website manager, a database manager, and a business administrator. Suggestions were made at the September Board Meeting to conduct educational presentations in future on the pdstore.com concept.

Negotiations in the summer months also resulted in the donation of an IBM server to host the OCC database. This donation was initiated by the new Board Director, John Kutcy. By mid-October, 56 Grade Nine Course Profiles were ready to be posted on the OCC website.

Franchising discussions with other provinces also began in the summer. After a preliminary meeting with an advisor to the BC Ministry of Education, an informational presentation was given in October, in Victoria BC, to Directors of Curriculum for the Western Protocol (which includes four provinces and three territories). Another presentation was made in October to 18 curriculum staff in Edmonton, Alberta, in October, which resulted in a request from Alberta Learning (Ministry of Education) to evaluate Health resources for Kindergarten to Grade 10. New Brunswick also indicated interest in CSC’s franchising concept.

Progress on the ISO 9002 application was announced at the September Board Meeting, with a first audit anticipated by December 1999.

OCC also started evaluations on the Grade 10 Course Profiles in September, a larger contract than ever, because of the fact that there were more electives in Grade 10 than in Grade 9. Other evaluations included some of the contents of the EDU CD ROM Curriculum Planner.

Meetings with potential partners for the central purchasing system for pdstore.com continued into November. Project Management Groupware Inc. (PMG) was the favoured software joint venture partner, with their product “Central Store”. A Power Point presentation was made to CODE officials, who expressed a keen interest in becoming a joint venture partner, acting as ambassadors for CSC. The Canadian Association of School Administrators (CASA) agreed to the joint venture on the November 17. Further presentations on the “Central Store” were

planned for later in November to the Edutech Conference and to the Education Improvement Commission (EIC).

Several other organizations approached CSC in the fall, with plans for various kinds of joint ventures:

- The Independent Learning Centre (ILC) approached CSC with the idea of project-managing the development of all their Grade 9 courses. Because CSC was not in a position to undertake development, the offer was declined, with ILC agreeing to refer their materials in future for review instead.
- Classroom Connections, an organization that develops and distributes corporate and organizational materials to schools, as well as providing teacher and parent materials, approached CSC in November, in an attempt to get the CSC stamp of approval. Some form of partnership was suggested and put up for discussion.
- Magic Lantern, the largest distributor of classroom video resources to schools across Canada, approached CSC as a vendor, to load over 6000 videos that match the Ontario curriculum onto the website “Central Store” catalogue. There was a generous revenue share offer for sales attributed to the CSC website.
- Finally, the Ontario Physical and Health Educators Association of Ontario (OPHEA) approached CSC for a joint venture in helping to market Health and Physical Education resources on the CSC website by linking to their catalogue. This was a concept that CSC would explore with other subject associations in the future.

In the early fall, a presentation was made to the Institute for Catholic Education, at its request, to explain the general CSC management and process of the course profile reviews, including meeting the Catholic Graduate Expectations. The information provided was well received by Sister Joan Cronin, Executive Director of the Institute and her committee.

CSC was also approached by the family of the late Janice Thomson, a prominent Ontario educator, to set up a scholarship in her memory.

An important fact-finding meeting took place in December between the Executive Director and Monique Belanger, Co-ordinator, Elementary-Secondary Programs, Council of Ministers of Education (Canada). CSC was encouraged at this time to set up a meeting with curriculum leaders from all Canadian provinces and territories to establish criteria for the commonalities in curriculum across Canada. A date was set for February 2000 and invitations were sent out immediately, with 15 confirmed responses received before the end of the year.

December ended with interviews for a 5 month contract position, at the Director level, to establish The Curriculum Foundation. The position would begin in January 2000 and the successful candidate, Terry Lynch, was chosen for his outstanding record as a director of education, his experience in charitable foundation development and implementation, and his well-earned reputation in Ontario education.

X. 2000

Contacts and Contracts - and Website News

The year began with a meeting with the Minister of Education, Janet Ecker. Both the Executive Director and the President of CSC attended. The purpose of this meeting was to inform the Minister of the organizational changes in CSC, to document the positive track record in review services, and to determine the status of the Learning Resources Policy (formerly Circular 14), with a promotional push for OCC's continuing active role in the implementation of this policy. It was indicated that the Learning Resource Policy, after three years of development, was now finally in the process of being written.

Also in January, contacts were made with Bibliocentre, a not-for-profit organization that manages the acquisition and distribution of Community College textbooks across Ontario, with the idea that Bibliocentre would fulfill orders that CSC anticipated receiving if it partnered in a point venture with Central Store, an electronic order management system that kept an inventory of school supplies and resources.

The bid for CSC to manage the reviews of Health and Life Skills materials for Alberta Learning (Ministry of Education), K to 10, was also submitted in January, after extensive consultation and reviews of items and appropriate fees. Unfortunately, it was not accepted.

Confirmation from the Ministry came in January for the contract to prepare for the extension of about 24 partial secondary Course Profiles to full course profiles. Further contracts, tied to the Grade 11 Course Profile Process, were mentioned at this time and confirmed in June.

A central purchasing concept, using an active in-house software management system, was actively promoted in the new year, with presentations made to the Education Improvement Commission, the Purchasing Manager of Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board, and the Catholic Purchasing Consortium. Inquiries were also received from the Halton-Peel Purchasing Consortium. Plans to continue these presentations throughout the province were seen as a vital marketing strategy, given the proposed change in purchasing philosophy. Encouraging praise for the project was received from the EIC co-chairs, Dave Cooke and Anne Vanstone, both of whom promised to promote the scheme in their reports. Discussions also took place with the Canadian Association of School Administrators (CASA) to explore the possibility of a partnership for the unrolling of the central purchasing system across Canada.

As part of a campaign to promote the new pan-Canadian service and website facilities, a corporate launch date was established for February 29, 2000. As a follow-up on the promotional side, an outside consultant was hired to conduct focus groups to establish the corporate impact and impressions of the new organizations, and to solicit responses to the new website design.

The two-day pan-Canadian meeting in February was facilitated by Pauline Beggs, CSC's Director of Review Services, with representatives from 9 provinces and territories. There was general support for the idea of a central service for the evaluation of learning resources from across Canada, since differences in curriculum itself throughout Canada were indicated to be minimal, despite the regional social and economic variations. A follow-up meeting was suggested, which CSC promised to host.

The spring brought another new Ministry contract to OCC to evaluate and recommend Grade 10 textbooks in English, Mathematics, FSL (plus Grade 9 FSL), and History. New Ministry contracts included: 1) Grade 10 Textbook and Graphing Calculators Reviews; 2) Grade 10 Course Profiles Extensions and Full (31); 3) Grade 11 Course Profiles for Workplace Courses (6); 4) 6 Crossover Courses for ILC (Distance Education on-line); and 5) Grade 4 to 6 Implementation Resources (10 units) for the Elementary Curriculum Unit Planner.

To ensure that all written reviews for clients were consistent in quality and methodology, a Quality Control Panel was initiated and managed by Pauline Beggs and the Executive Director. This process was seen as key to the ongoing success of the evaluation process.

Meetings with key contacts at the Ministry also led to discussions of the possibility of another contract to review all curriculum planner units being written by school districts for elementary schools.

The first document audit for the ISO 9002 accreditation process was passed in February "with flying colours." A second staff audit, planned for mid-April, was also successful, with CSC and OCC becoming ISO 9002 registered by the consulting company, KPMG, on 18 April 2000.

Because of the changes in organizational structure of CSC, a preliminary meeting was held in March to begin to address the necessary changes in policy. A draft proposal was prepared and presented to the Board of Directors in April, with the suggestion that the Board use the Annual Meeting in June to continue with the policy writing.

The CSC website went live on April 28 and monitoring of the site between May and June indicated more than double the number of hits counted in the same time frame in 1999. Feedback from web users also indicated favourable responses to the website.

The Grade 10 Textbook evaluation contract was completed in June and the next month was spent monitoring the electronic ordering system for the Toronto District School Board, so that results could be presented to the Ministry.

Other efforts in the spring and summer of 2000 revolved around exploring possible partnerships. A promising link was made with le Centre de leadership en éducation (le CLÉ), and negotiations continued with the idea for the Bibliocentre to handle the fulfillment process for pdstore.com. Other contacts were made with the Canadian Education Association (CEA), ThinkQuest Canada,

OPHEA, and the English Language Arts Network (ELAN). ThinkQuest Canada, an organization with a collection of about 3000 prize-winning websites developed by children worldwide, also requested assistance from CSC but, being a small organization, did not have sufficient funding to pay for evaluations. The possibility of joint fundraising was explored but was not feasible.

The results of the focus groups and interviews concerning CSC's public profile were available in June. Teachers specifically indicated that materials offered on the website needed to be enhanced and more practically oriented. CSC established a website editorial team, which then responded by implementing new additions, and making adjustments and enhancements where possible.

The remaining months of 2000 were spent primarily in promotional activities. These included ongoing meetings with Ministry officials to negotiate contracts, partnership explorations, and educational presentations on the pdstore.com concept. Marketing efforts across Canada continued in the areas of review services and pdstore.com ordering systems, with an outside contract for services negotiated to fulfill this mandate. A full-time position of Administrative Assistant and Customer Service Representative was created in September.

In the fall, CSC attended the 14th Commonwealth Conference of Ministers of Education held in Halifax. This was the first attempt of CSC to reach out to other countries with its services, and its promotional booth at the conference received steady interest and inquiries.

A six-month follow-up internal and external audit, after the ISO 9002 accreditation, was successfully completed in October.

Planning sessions to address the CSC policy changes took place in October and November, and a Policy Manual was completed by the end of November. However, another strategic planning session was proposed for February 2001 to determine the direction the organization should take for the new fiscal year (1 April 2001 to 31 March 2002).

In December OCC received another contract to mentor the development of Workplace Textbooks in English, Science and Mathematics. Also in negotiation was a contract to conduct a peer review process on Grade 12 Course Profiles.

December ended with the resignation of Terry Lynch, Director of The Curriculum Foundation. It was suggested that, through Terry's new position as Executive Director of the Retired Teachers of Ontario, links could be maintained with CSC for the purposes of developing a volunteer network of retirees.

XI. 2001

January - June

The Curriculum Foundation

The new year started with The Curriculum Foundation finally receiving its new Charitable Number. This meant that fundraising could now begin in earnest. The goal of the Foundation was to present Curriculum Foundation Awards three times a year to practising classroom teachers across Canada, to help them develop classroom materials. Recipients of the awards would be chosen on the basis of the strength and practicality of their proposed curriculum ideas, and OCC review teams would be assigned to each recipient to help mentor the projects.

Promotional strategies for the Foundation included a Media Release, and advertising in the Ontario College of Teachers' magazine, Professionally Speaking. Funding for a Canada-wide gap analysis of needs for resource development was also sought. Two OISE Intern students were recruited for a month to coordinate this strategy and to provide additional information about learning resource evaluation.

An agreement was struck with Advance Planning and Communications Inc. to manage CSC's communication needs. The focus was to attract media interest and to provide public profiling of the website. Additional tasks would be to vet communication pieces that were developed in-house.

Part of the communication strategy encouraged was to send out a media release to refer to the Federal Speech from the Throne, with its emphasis on educational opportunities for high risk youth, Aboriginal children, adult literacy, early start programs and children in poverty. The media release would also draw attention to the shared goal of the promotion of "a strong global brand for Canadian excellence." (quote is from the throne speech)

CSC was also approached by a Federal registered lobbyist, Jim Head, who encouraged CSC to apply for funding from the National Children's Agenda Caucus Committee, to support the CSC's expansion across Canada.

A full-day staff planning session took place in January. The session was productive, not only because of the action plan developed, but also because it helped everyone to align themselves with the new organizational goals.

Certain partnerships took on new dimensions in the new year. A two-year Letter of Intent was renegotiated with le Centre de leadership en éducation, with the right to continue using CSC's evaluation tools and processes, as required by EDU, for francophone textbook evaluations.

Meetings with the Independent Learning Centre (ILC) were also held, in light of their recently announced merger with TVOntario. This merger was expected to expand the range and number of evaluations available to CSC. A Memorandum of Understanding for partnerships in learnware evaluation and for CSC evaluation of all ILC products for marketing outside Ontario was to be developed over the next few months. By April, 28 ILC self-study courses for Grades 1 to 8 were to be reviewed, and 97 Elementary Curriculum Units were reviewed by over 100 elementary educators across Ontario.

A review of the strategies for the review of Supplementary Materials was initiated in the new year, with the ongoing concern for more aggressive marketing procedures. Gina Melvin was given responsibility as Project Manager for this initiative, with a goal of raising \$55,000 in revenue. This market was expected to continue to expand.

Another initiative in the new year was the hiring of a French consultant, on a part-time basis, in an effort to provide curriculum services in French. This was a part of the more global strategy to expand the scope and range of services across Canada. In this initiative, six provinces were involved in establishing pan-Canadian English and francophone standards and a validation process for learning resources. In addition, a review team with western, eastern, and central representation was established and trained to pilot a cross-Canada review processes.

From March to June, Grade 11 textbooks for the Ministry Call for Resources were reviewed. OCC was also selected to conduct a review process for the development of Ministry funded Grade 11 and 12 Workplace Learning Resources from April 2001 to January 2003. Three Ministry contracts were also signed in the last week of March, ensuring a solid revenue base for the beginning of the new fiscal year (2001/2002) of about \$750,000.

Website hits continued to be monitored in the new year and, by April, 300,000 hits were recorded for the Grade 9 and 10 Course Profiles alone.

In April a Charity Gallery, worth an estimated \$98,000, was offered on the new website, with over 100 works of donated art scanned, as well as biographies about the artists. Funds raised by the Charity Gallery would be channeled back into The Curriculum Foundation.

There were several updates at the April Board Meeting regarding the website. A Learning Resources@Home project with the Waterloo DSB had been initiated and the groundwork for Learning Resources@Home across Canada was also laid. All major publishers except Scholastic had listings on the website. Marketing to school boards across Ontario to use pdstore.com as a “business to business” solution for procurement was begun. Finally, Ministry approval was given to market the optional services of pdstore.com to manage their Grade 11 textbook purchases. These were all important markers in the continuing success of the website.

Given the growing scope of CSC, concern was expressed regarding about the expansion of the

Board across Canada, and a meeting in May was tabled specifically for discussion of this possibility.

Another promotional strategy suggested at the April meeting was to distribute the Annual Reports more widely than previous years and to include them on the website.

The Canadian Red Cross became another organization to have learning materials evaluated and given the CSC seal of approval. Three of its Canada wide educational programs, PeopleSavers, On Board, and It's Not Your Fault, were successfully reviewed in June.

At the Annual June Meeting the year's activities were reviewed and documented with praise. With the expansion of the range and scope of services now offered by CSC, it was suggested that the Board investigate the possibility of adding two new director positions. An ad hoc committee was also formed at the meeting to address the idea of developing an advisory committee to the Board.

July - December

Promotion and Expansion

The summer of 2001 was busier than ever with continual monitoring and upgrading of the website services, expanding TCF activities, and involvement in Ministry funded and other review services.

Two HRDC funded student summer positions were granted for pdstore.com. An increasing function of the website would be the management of book and learning resources orders. As part of the promotional strategy, over 75,000 pdstore.com flyers entitled "Learning Resources for Home" were sent home with Ontario students at the end of June, and again in mid-September.

The Grade 11 Course Profile project was completed in July with 136 documents posted on the OCC website. The Grade 12 Course Profile project began soon after. A series of writers' preparation sessions for those involved in developing the 147 documents to support implementation of the courses at this level was also initiated by the review team. Reviews of submissions of Grade 12 learning resources in English, Mathematics and Science were planned for February and March 2002.

An elementary review team reviewed submissions of learning resources made in response to the Ministry's CFR for K-3 Early Reading which continued over the summer, with posting of the approved resources planned for the end of August, October, and November. Overall, 68 learning resources were eventually posted on the website.

The OCC team was also involved in a three-stage review of 96 units for Math, Science and Technology, and Social Studies at all grade levels from 1 to 8. This project was completed in late September, with the second phase scheduled to begin later in the fall. A review of units in Language Arts, The Arts, and Health/Physical Education for grades 1 to 8 was expected to continue into March 2002.

An additional contract with the Ministry was requested to provide a comparison of the International Baccalaureate courses and the Advanced Programming courses, with the Ontario Curriculum Policy for Grades 11 and 12 in 6 disciplines - English, French as a second language, Geography, History, Philosophy, and Computer Studies. This project was eventually completed in December.

The ILC partnership continued, with a request for ILC courseware for secondary curriculum reviewed through the OCC process. The first planned review of a Grade 11 course for Science was set for October.

A partnership with The Renascent Foundation was initiated in the summer to help determine the suitability and impact of its Road Toad program for elementary schools. This project involved conducting a survey of a selected number of schools who were participants in an in-school program about drugs, alcohol, and addiction in order to assess the value and impact of the program. The project was successful and OCC provided a full report with recommendations for enhancing the program by the end of the summer.

Review services also continued to evaluate supplementary materials. A review of a number of trade books (English and French) from Tundra was completed in the spring and then posted in a special section on the website entitled "Books For Young Readers." This marked the first initiative to provide a joint service for publishers between pdstore.com and the review services.

In the spring of 2001, CSC contacted the the Inukshuk Learning Fund with the offer, on a fee-for-service basis, to mentor the development of electronic learning resources which Inukshuk was funding. This led to CSC's proposal 1) to help review their submissions, particularly for the educational content; and 2) to work with Inukshuk to develop a needs assessment of the situation across Canada. Inukshuk responded favourably to CSC's proposal and a meeting with Inukshuk was set for October to work out the specifics of the proposal.

By September 2001, TCF's activities had expanded exponentially, and two active sectors within the foundation were becoming increasingly apparent. The first sector pertained to the activities of the Foundation Awards Process, which apart from the ongoing monitoring of the awards themselves, also required aggressive soliciting of granting foundations, corporate donors, individuals, and special target groups. A second sector was evolving into a training service, and these activities were eventually referred to as the Professional Learning Services. Subsequently, in replacing the former head of TCF, a slightly different position was created for the new incumbent, Lynne Hyne, as CSC's Director, Professional Learning Services, which was to

include the management of TCF's awards.

Promotional presentations continued over the summer in an active attempt to explore new partnerships with Canadian based organizations. These included meetings with the Education Research and Development Corporation (ERDI), the Council of Ministers of Education (CMEC), the Learning Materials Centre (for Quebec English schools) (LMC), and Ontario Heritage Foundation. While ERDI was in the service of providing advice to educational resource providers to Canadian schools, CMEC was approached to support resource evaluation for Early Childhood Education, and LMC was interested in training for resource development by CSC for their own staff. The possibility of developing a Native Resources website also followed from a meeting with an official of the Native Curriculum Department of the Ministry.

Media relations continued during the summer and fall, with active promotion of the new website, a promotional interview in the magazine, *Professionally Speaking*, and a submission on evaluating E-Learning Resources in the magazine *Education Canada*.

One of the highlights of September was the news that CSC's review services had been favourably evaluated by an outside organization. Indeed, the Nipissing International Research Institute for Teaching and Learning (NIRTL) submitted its final report on their independent evaluation of the Review Services for Curriculum Materials and Learning Resources provided by CSC, with the following recommendation:

It is our considered opinion... that CSC is well prepared to provide review services for educational jurisdictions across Canada. The recommendations are focused on improving what is already a highly effective enterprise; and on further expanding awareness among the teaching profession and the public of the service CSC is providing.

By the end of the year 2001, the success of CSC was beginning to show in new sources of revenue.

Professional Learning Services continued with its efforts on designing custom training packages to support the writing and review of quality education learning materials. These would be promoted in the new year, with an accompanying promotional newsletter, ppage, soon to be added to the website. A proposal to IBM for the use of 20 laptops (a wireless cart technology) in these training sessions was submitted to Board Director, John Kutcy.

Along these lines was the possibility of several new training contracts; LMC, the PEI branch of Education Research, and education officials from Hong Kong, all of whom expressed interest in the training packages.

A new initiative taken in the fall was the idea to submit a proposal to Rogers iMedia to evaluate an electronic library or research database of over 12 million entries. This would require a new

approach to the way evaluations were conducted. Related to this was a concern for copyright issues in electronic media; and CSC attended an educational presentation on this topic, provided by the Canadian Educational Resources Council.

CIDA was also contacted in the fall, with the idea to evaluate and mentor the development of projects submitted to their Global Classroom Initiative Awards Program. A one-day consultation and training day was scheduled for early December.

An agreement with le CLÉ, allowing them to act as a sub-contractor for CSC services across Canada, was being discussed by the end of the year. This followed CSC's earlier involvement, mentoring le CLÉ's evaluation services for EDU.

The idea of having honorary patrons to help raise the profile of CSC was discussed at the December board meeting, and two names were contacted: Dr. Michael Fullan, Dean, OISE/UT, and Rick Hansen, President and CEO, Rick Hansen Foundation, whose books addressing youth and self esteem had been evaluated by CSC and promoted on the website. Both men agreed to accept the honorary position.

In December, a communications consultant, Sean Meagher, was hired on a half-time basis, and on the basis of his recommendations, it was decided that only one name, CSC, should be used on all communications materials, with the seal also included. This meant that all CSC communication materials were to be redesigned with a simpler format.

An organizational change of the Board was initiated at the December meeting with the reinstatement of an Executive Committee, which could meet between Board meetings where necessary, to discuss emergent issues of a political, financial, organizational or legal nature. It was agreed that this committee would be composed of the President, Vice-President and two board members.

The year ended with the Executive Director of CSC initiating a meeting with OTF. However, no change of status was forthcoming.

XII. 2002

January - June

The year 2002 arrived amidst a flurry of activities. Review services and website monitoring and construction were ongoing. The awards process was in full swing, with more than \$50,000 having been distributed thus far, and CSC wanted to focus on promoting the Janice Thomson Memorial Award.

Professional Learning Services was now at its pilot testing stage, as training packages to support curriculum writing were now almost ready. School boards were being approached already and visits confirmed. This was part of the new Strategic Plan - to approach the grassroots of education through presentations with heads of curriculum in selected school boards. A keynote presentation and display was also made at OPSBA Symposium 2002.

Several presentations were made in the new year, with certain partnerships in mind. One of these was to the Dean, Associate Deans and Chairs of OISE/UT, where congratulations for CSC's accomplishments were given and serious discussions of a partnership made. A meeting with Crayola led to a partnership, through sales of selected products in pdstore. A presentation to GBS Securities was made in an attempt to get feedback on pitching to the corporate sector. Finally, another presentation to the Roots of Empathy Program for Parenting for Elementary Children was made, which resulted in an evaluation contract.

Proposals for business developments were also initiated and sent out. These included proposals to EDU for the evaluation of Grade 12 textbooks and E-ordering, and for extending the use of Course Profiles and marketing them on CD-ROM. A letter was sent to the Ontario Association of Career Colleges with the suggestion that CSC evaluate textbooks for all private colleges. A plan to import the ONTERIS database to CSC was in the process of being developed. And a proposal to the Children's Secretariat was submitted, with the idea of CSC managing the Call For Resources for Early Years Program. Six partners provided letters of support for this proposal (i.e., CERC, KPRDSB, NCDSB, OISE/UT Library, Roots of Empathy Program, TDSB).

Other proposals were in various states of development. The proposal to Rogers iMedia to fund the development of an evaluation tool for online databases was accepted in theory, with budgetary constraints holding up the venture. The Inukshuk partnership unfortunately was not realized, with lack of funding cited as the main obstacle.

Perhaps most critical of all, CSC was still waiting to hear about the Replacement Policy for Circular 14. When the official announcement finally came on May 31, it was good news for CSC. The Ontario Curriculum Centre (OCC), the provincial affiliate of CSC dedicated to Ontario Ministry of Education contract fulfillment, was designated by the Ministry as the evaluation agency to support curriculum in English-language schools. This new policy is referred to as "Guidelines for Approval of Textbooks" and listings of approved resources will be

renamed the Trillium List, replacing the former Circular 14 policy and list.

OCC will manage the evaluation process of textbooks and recommend them to the Ministry for approval and posting on the new Trillium List website. OCC will conduct this activity using processes similar to those used in managing evaluations for Ministry Calls for Resources, but the process for textbook evaluation will be ongoing and the Ministry will not directly reimburse school boards for these purposes. It is expected that Foundation Grant monies will be invested by school boards for the purchasing of textbooks on the Trillium List.

With this feather in its cap, and the ISO audit successfully passed again, giving CSC the right to ongoing ISO certification, the organization looks forward to the future as it continues to refine its vision and expand its horizons.

XIII. 2003

At the annual meeting of the Board of Directors in June 2002, the Executive Director, Kathryn McFarlane, presented the first edition of the CSC history, which is intended to be a living document, revised and updated on an ongoing basis.

Of various reports presented at the annual meeting, Evaluation Services listed the status of a number of projects. These included the following: the Grade 12 Course Profile (CP) project for the Ontario Ministry of Education was in its final stages. Of the 147 CPs developed, 40 percent had been published and posted on the OCC website. The remaining work would be completed by August. Thirty student learning resources to support grade 12 curriculum in English, Mathematics, and Science were reviewed, approved and posted on the OCC website by May 2, 2002. Evaluation Service continues to provide Pan-Canadian evaluations for supplementary resources. As the CSC Seal is becoming more recognized, the number of inquiries and requests for quotes for evaluations poses challenges for CSC to provide services that are time and cost efficient, and to continue to adapt processes to ensure quality standards and service.

The Ministry liaison's report indicated that CSC would be impacted by such Ministry business as the new Call for Resources for French As a Second Language (FSL).

With respect to grants and awards, the mentoring process is underway for the Janice Thomson Memorial Award Law Curriculum Project. Curriculum Services Canada Foundation award winners Gail Brant, Margo Southall and Barb McIlquham agreed to offer workshops through CSC's Professional Learning Services website.

The President discussed the addition of two new members to the board and the criteria for honorary patrons were reviewed. Additional requirements for board members are to be strong in fundraising skills and have a useful contact base.

The board also learned the Dr. Fraser Mustard, a leading expert in Early Childhood Learning, had endorsed the work of the CSC by becoming an honorary patron.

Finally, the new "corporate look" of CSC was displayed and discussed, incorporating the seal into the logo for higher visibility of our quality assurance symbol.

September – December

In September, responding to the perceived need for one or two new additional members to the Board of Directors, the nominating committee presented some recommendations which were discussed.

Review Services (re-named Curriculum Resource Services to reflect broader scope of evaluation and mentoring) reported on the status of various activities including Interdisciplinary Course Profiles (Grade 11 and 12), which will be ongoing through fall with a late winter completion target; Grade 11/12 Workplace Textbooks; TCF Awards Project (mentoring of four new projects started in March and on completion will be prepared for web mounting); and a major thrust of Evaluation Services to increase the evaluator “pool” with more people in other provinces trained as CSC evaluators.

In the area of Professional Learning Services (PLS), movement includes the following: a recognition event regarding the Janice Thomson Memorial Award Law Curriculum Project is scheduled for October; e-learning initiatives have possible opportunities to expand having been approached by Asylum software to be a provider for an online course; and OCT link, in cooperation with le CLÉ was established; and school board gap analysis research was completed.

Other projects (June 21 to September 20) include development of funding proposals to corporate funders, development of a process to complement OCC’s Trillium Process to include le CLÉ, and the search for new board members and honorary patrons. There were ongoing discussions with CSA/QMI about the potential for partnership, exploration of joint projects with CODE, and exploration of whether or not to apply for Standards Council of Canada status, partner with CSA, or stay with the grassroots approach. A focus of the Trillium Project continues to be careful monitoring and strengthening of the procedures of the evaluation process. To date a notification of intent to submit had been received from three texts (with mid-January intended submission date) and eighteen resources (under the CFR/FSL call for resources). Three resources had been submitted and evaluated, the remaining evaluation to occur January through May 2003.

By December the Executive Director was able to report that a search for a Francophone representative resulted in a meeting with the Guy Matte, past president of AEFO. The board unanimously agreed that he would be an excellent asset to CSC. Also although time constraints would not permit her to be a board member, Chief Roberta Jamieson accepted the position of honorary patron.

With Wendy Tilford, President, Quality Management Institute of CSA, very interested in pursuing the potential for partnership with CSC, discussions were held about the feasibility of a three-way partnership – CSC with CSA and EDU – to develop standards and an auditing system similar to ISO but tailored to school systems. Potential for such a partnership will continue to be explored in 2003.

In terms of the Pan-Canadian initiative, CRS is pursuing possibilities of working in the Atlantic region through APEF and the Ministry of Education in New Brunswick to provide evaluation, mentoring, and other services, as well as exploring ways of working with private schools. A teleconference discussion of Kathryn McFarlane and Pauline Beggs with the Director of Curriculum Barry Lydon, New Brunswick Department of Education, centred on whether the

Atlantic Provinces would be open to entertaining a proposal from CSC for managing the evaluation of learning resources. Mr. Lydon felt the timing was appropriate and would support placing CSC on the Atlantic Provinces Educational Foundation (APEF) Directors' agenda. Kathryn McFarlane was also in contact with the head of curriculum for Alberta Learning (ministry). Since Alberta's mandate has become to outsource as much as possible, this appeared to be an ideal opportunity for CSC.

Of considerable importance to CSC, on December 24, 2002, the PDF version of the Liste Trillium List was replaced by an interactive, searchable database. The Ministry of Education contracted with OCC for the development of the new version.

Fundraising remains a challenging process and the Executive Director continues to work on promoting the Foundation.

As 2002 drew to a close, many initiatives and ongoing projects on all fronts indicated that 2003 would be another busy and challenging year for CSC.

February

At the February 2003 board meeting, with the new director, Guy Matte, in attendance, Kathryn McFarlane presented the Strategic Plan and Budget 2003-2004. She suggested that the year would be one of re-examination as CSC continued to pursue an expansion across Canada while deepening and broadening its services. Also, without large contracts, the budget would be smaller. Effective communications and CSC promotional ideas were also discussed.

In terms of Ministry of Education activities, Early Math closed on February 21 for submissions. OCC cannot accept any resources that have not been approved by Shared Services at the Ministry. The Call for Resources for manipulatives was inspired by the EDU Expert Panel report for an early math strategy. Also, the board members received an announcement for Sustaining the Quality of Curriculum, a Ministry initiative for curriculum review which could mean contracts for CSC.

The Executive Director gave an overview of ongoing projects (including APEF, Liste Trillium List, FSL CFR, Alberta Learning negotiations) and an update on meetings noted that fifteen funding proposals had gone to corporate and foundation potential donors.

Progress on various initiatives of Professional Learning Services was reported E-learning initiatives included a NetMeeting course in web design, MarkBook Part One course in production; school board initiatives (e.g., Kawartha Pine Ridge DSB, Waterloo DSB); training and presentation requests (OPSOA Executive presentation and OPSOA Conference presentation and display – both for April).

April

April brought good news regarding the status of board members and honorary patrons. John Bernard, a Native and President of Donna Cona Inc., accepted the invitation to become the 11th board member. The Honourable Rose-Marie Losier-Cool, Senator and former New Brunswick educator, accepted the invitation to be the CSC's fifth honorary patron, thus completing the recruitment of honorary patrons.

April also brought a recommendation that the 2004 January/February meeting be an all-day workshop for all members to work into their schedules. There was general agreement that such a workshop would be beneficial.

Significant updates in the area of Professional Learning Services included:

- A face-to-face training session on Assessment and Evaluation with the Waterloo Region DSB
- The establishment of a link with Jim Sebastian, Ministry of Education (Private School Inspection), through whom CSC has been established as the point of contact for consultative and training services for developing and established private schools. As well, a plan to support private schools in Ontario and overseas is in development
- The OPSOA Conference

Regarding the Grants and Awards Program for Teachers and the resulting Teacher-Developed Resources, nine (of 14) projects have been completed and launched on the website. To date, there have been 28,406 total downloads for Teacher-Developed Resources. Plaques of recognition were forwarded to Tricia Slipacoff and Caroline White at Lambton Kent DSB for the successful launch of Building a Career and Personal Portfolio.

To date, OCC has evaluated three submissions to the Liste Trillium List with three more to be submitted in 2003-2004. Regarding the Early Math Call for Resources, six teams of three (18 educators) conducted the evaluations of the submissions to this CFR. For the first time, OCC partnered with le CLÉ for the recruiting and training of these teams. In this CFR, record 638 submissions were evaluated.

The board addressed plans for the upcoming Annual General Meeting and Luncheon to be held at Metro Hall in Toronto. This year the board will be able to invite up to 100 guests for the luncheon program with the expectation that more educators will become aware of the service of the CSC because 5 presenters representing various clients and stakeholders, will talk about their experiences with CSC. The program will be videotaped for future board use.

XIV. 2004

Another year of varied activities and projects was reviewed at the annual meeting on June 20, 2003.

The Executive Director indicated that most of the two and a half months leading up to the June meeting had been taken up with planning meetings, guest list development, program planning, and preparing the Annual Report. Also, to complement this activity, the Executive Director had been working with staff to revamp the organization of CSC mailing lists to ensure the best possible coverage of communications to stakeholders.

With respect to the CSC History Project, an additional chapter was added to the CSC history for the 2002-2003 operating year and a redesigned cover and binding were completed to provide a more finished product.

The Executive Director reported that, as a result of meetings with suggested “mentors,” she has reworked the fundraising proposal to reflect their feedback. A list of potential new funders was generated and letters prepared to solicit funds. Cheques totalling \$1500 were received from individual donors.

Of various reports presented at the annual meeting, Professional Learning Services (PLS) highlighted the following: E-learning initiatives (MarkBook Part One, eCollege, and NetMeeting); School Board initiatives, including a presentation at the OPSOA conference (with five boards represented); Other Educational Organizations (including participating in the OISE/UT internship program, discussions with Queen’s University Faculty of Education on a proposal for teacher training in China, and attendance at PLAR training hosted by Educational Seminar Services); and Private School Initiatives, including a link with Jim Sebastian, Ministry of Education, Private School Inspection, whereby CSC is recommended as the point of contact for consultation and training services for private schools in Ontario and overseas. Related to this was the development of resources to support Private Schools in Ontario and overseas and establishing a network of consultants and trainers. Training commitments were made to five schools; initial meetings re legislative requirements and consulting opportunities were conducted with five new private schools; and consultation commitments were made to three schools.

Curriculum Resource Services (CRS) provided an overview of its components. Some Ontario Curriculum Centre (OCC) highlights include: peer reviews of the Ministry’s TIPS project as it is developed and working on the final publication of the resource; publication on the CSC website of the three course profiles to support the curriculum policy document for Interdisciplinary Studies, Grades 11 and 12; and a comprehensive report to the Ministry of the Social Studies/History/Geography Benchmarking - a curriculum comparison, conducted by CSC, examining BC, Alberta, Quebec (English) and the Atlantic provinces curricula as part of the Ministry’s curriculum review process. This benchmarking was done for grades 1 to 12.

The Curriculum Services Canada Foundation (TCF) reported on the Grants and Awards Program for Teachers and Teacher Developed Resources. The status of fifteen projects was noted, nine of which had been completed and launched on the website. The Selection Panel had met and selected three grant recipients - Moira Skikavich (London DSB) for the Janice Thomson Memorial Grant, Barb McIlquham for the Elvina St. Jacques award, and Jennifer Cronsberry (Avon Maitland DSB) for the General Grant. Eight plaques of recognition were presented. TCF also provided a breakdown of 37,680 total downloads for 9 launched Teacher-Developed Resources.

The Manager, Trillium Project, indicated that the Math CFR had been completed and that the schools had completed their ordering. The evaluation of FSL CFR was also complete. Eighteen intentions of submission were received; eight resources were recommended. Six intentions of submission had been received for the Trillium List to date, five resources received and four recommended.

September - December

As fall arrived, a CSC Website Activity Report for September 1, 2003 noted that, at the beginning of September, the first e-learning course was in development - an online course that teachers wishing to learn MarkBook software can complete within their own timelines. MarkBook is sold through pdstore.com.

As requested and authorized by the Ministry of Education, CSC changed the Trillium Database and Website, extending until August 31, 2004 Ministry approval for the *Liste Trillium List* of all textbooks approved during the 1998-99 school year for Kindergarten to Grade 8. At the same time, CSC was updating its Oracle software in order to serve the public with increased reliability.

The report confirmed that pdstore.com continued to show significant growth, sales tripling those of the previous year. Total sales for 2002-03 were \$83,257.27. Analysis of sales indicated that customers recommend pdstore.com with great regularity. In fact, word-of-mouth appears to be the most effective form of marketing this resource.

At the September 2003 board meeting, many indications of progress were highlighted in the various reports.

PLS noted the development of MarkBook Part One in its e-learning update. In the private schools initiative, CSC participated in a Ministry orientation session for new private schools, and video resources were completed for elementary schools, secondary inspected schools, and the inspection process. Training sessions were held at four schools and consultation sessions held for a dozen schools.

With respect to Curriculum Services Canada, Evaluation Services continues to provide Pan-Canadian evaluations for supplementary resources. The report noted that as the CSC Seal gains more recognition, the CSC evaluation process is continually adapted to ensure quality standards and services. Curriculum Services, in collaboration with Professional Learning Services made a presentation to a Sri Lankan delegation. Finally, CRS was working closely with TCF in mentoring and processing the awards projects currently in development.

TCF reported on the status of 17 projects, of which 10 had been completed and launched on the website. There were 47,622 downloads in total for the ten launched Teacher-Developed Resources. The breakdown showed most for expository writing and narrative writing.

The Executive Director reported that her concentration during the summer was on fundraising activities. Between June and September, 17 proposals, each tailored to the specific targeted foundation or corporation, were distributed. Destinations included Apotex, Stephen F. Bronfman, and Home Depot.

Regular interaction with the Ministry of Education and consultations on CSC staffing were ongoing. Also, various presentations and meetings were noted, including work with the Minister's office on Trillium activities, follow-up on interaction with IBM regarding CSC's evaluation and assistance in their Learning Village program. A paper was prepared to encourage the Finance branch of the Ministry to use pdstore.com's electronic tracking for purchases of textbooks.

The EDU liaison updated the meeting on the status of the components of the Early Math investment and the Ministry's review of Math, Business Studies and Career Education curricula.

It was noted that pdstore.com had almost met its target for the year in the first six months, helped significantly by two large orders from an International School in China.

With respect to activity between the September and December 2003 meetings, the Executive Director's report listed numerous meetings on diverse business issues, including a meeting with First Canadian Place Investment Planning re evaluation of CSC's proposed fundraising materials, the Trillium list, partnership opportunities, a donor meeting, and a presentation to the new auditor.

Projects included the Nipissing International Research Institute on Teaching and Learning, re evaluation, and fundraising Direct Mail Campaign and commitment to Canada Helps organization.

Curriculum Resource Services (CRS) gave updates on TIPS - Math in Grades 7, 8 and 9 Applied and noted that the Ministry's project to support implementation of the Mathematics curriculum for grades 7-9 Applied was into its second phase. OCC was working with the Ministry to

finalize the remaining sections and prepare them for web mounting and publication in early 2004.

Evaluation Services continued to provide Pan-Canadian evaluations for supplementary resources. With respect to Supplementary Learning Resources, consultation was completed on a series of Canadian Social Studies videos being produced for children ages 7-10 in the United States and CSC was waiting to hear from two more developers who were considering our mentoring services. Re CRS, Curriculum Resource Services in collaboration with PLS made a presentation to a delegation from Jordan on how to provide quality learning resources to support their teachers in implementing curriculum.. Also CRS continues to work closely with PLS on the Ontario Ministry Inspected private School initiative. CRS is also working with TCF on mentoring and processing the three awards projects currently in development. A Supplementary Resource Status chart listed evaluations/consultations that had been successfully completed for fiscal 2003 to date (December 2003).

January

At the January 28, 2004 meeting, the Executive Director reported another busy schedule of meetings and developments since the December meeting. These included meeting with the Ministry's OKNL liaison, Margaret Wilson, and OKNL researcher Dr. Tony Tilly regarding a cross-Canada portal for Learning Objects. A meeting with the CSC Management Team was held to discuss revising the CSC profile.

In terms of projects and initiatives, a news release was distributed for a new teacher-developed resource on Deaf Artists. As a result of new federal privacy legislation that took effect on January 1, 2004, CSC worked with legal counsel on a draft privacy policy for presentation to the Board in April. CSC is now listed on the CanadaHelps website which matches potential donors to charities. CSC also continued to search for candidates for Lynda Bell who resigned from the Board in December.

The Director of Professional Learning Services (PLS) noted that a final decision on the OKNL training proposal was expected in December and that a meeting with the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) discussed services for Private Career Colleges. Discussions are ongoing and there are plans to meet with MTCU regional inspectors.

E-learning initiatives included collaborating with the Ministry of Education on web conferences for coop educators. Six sessions were planned (two for each of February, March and April) to be presented by Nadine Cuccaro, project lead of the face-to-face training sessions presented through Ministry field offices.

Many meetings and consultations were held relating to Private School Initiatives, from attending a meeting with Toronto Field Office inspectors to clarify expectations of inspections, to consultations on establishing a private school, and consultation advice to one private school on their new website and to another school on course outlines.

The Curriculum Foundation (TCF) reported on the status of 18 projects (10 of which had been completed and launched). *Assistive Technologies* is a new project funded by foundation money from Maple Lodge Farms Foundation and E.K. Morrow Foundation. Arrangements for the first mentoring meeting were being made. Since the last report, there were 27,000 downloads of 10 launched Teacher-Developed Resources. Almost 100 downloads of the newly-released Exploring the Work of Deaf Artists had been made in less than a month.

April

The April 2, 2004 meeting report of the activities of Professional Learning Services (PLS) indicated ongoing meetings, liaison, and consultation sessions relating to Private School Initiatives. Consultations for overseas school development included planning for a web conference session with Vancouver. Sessions were carried out on Building Effective Programs from Quality Assessment training with two schools, with others to follow. Again consultation advice was given to three schools.

In the area of e-learning, web conferences were hosted for Co-op educators using NetMeeting. On the collaborative project with the Ministry of Education (EDU), the March sessions were completed, April 13-14 being the next dates.

The Director of the Private Career Colleges Branch of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (TCU) requested a follow-up conversation in May regarding possible CSC services for Private Career Colleges.

The Curriculum Foundation (TCF) gave a summary of the Grants and Awards Program for Teachers and Teacher Developed resources (16 in total). All of the projects in development support the literacy and at-risk initiatives of the Ministry of Education.

Most of the work noted in the various parts of the CRS report at the January meeting was ongoing. A fiscal 2003/04 to date status report on evaluations/consultations was also presented.

As CSC approaches the close of another year, it can look back over the past twelve months and see all the challenges faced and the ongoing development of new initiatives, as well as the expansion of established programs. The staff, under the leadership of Kathryn McFarlane, Executive Director, continues to manifest its commitment, creative energies, and positive vision for the future.

XV. 2005

On June 18, 2004, CSC members gathered at the annual meeting to review the projects and accomplishments of the past year.

The Executive Director was pleased to report that, on the subject of fundraising, 100% of donors gave permission for their names to be published as donors to CSC. Also, two proposals were developed, one for the Ford Foundation to create an online library of early childhood resources, the other for Rogers Cable to support TCF Grants for Teachers which are downloadable.

During the year, many avenues toward achieving greater self-sufficiency were explored in meetings that discussed ideas ranging from a possible Continuous School Improvement Project, to possible partnership opportunities through Aboriginal funding sources, and possible partnership with TVO. Letters were sent to over 500 independent publishers to promote CSC's Supplementary Evaluation Services and new business was slowly coming in. Regarding a leCLE/OCC partnership, meetings were held to draft an agreement.

In terms of policy, a meeting was held with Jeff Holmes, OTF Executive Assistant, on the relationship between CSC and the federations. CSC continues to lobby for textbook funding by EDU. On the human resources front, CSC received HRDC funding to support a summer student to work with the Executive Director as Public Relations Assistant from May to August.

The Director, Professional Learning Services, reported on Ontario Public School Initiatives and Ontario Private School Initiatives. The former included a meeting concerning the British Columbia Critical Thinking Initiative and potential for training; also, in E-learning initiatives, CSC hosted web conferences for Co-op educators. In the area of private school initiatives, meetings were held with the Ministry's Private School Inspections staff to discuss a new level of in-depth services for overseas schools and recruitment of overseas educational staff commenced. Also, three new consultants had been added to the professional learning team.

A highlight of the Curriculum Foundation (TCF) statistics was that 37,318 resources were downloaded from 13 launched Teacher Developed Resources (as of June 4, 2004), an increase of over 7,000 since the last board report.

As of the meeting date, the Ontario Curriculum Centre had completed benchmarking Ontario Curriculum in the disciplines of Mathematics, Business Studies, and Guidance and Career Education. OCC was also working with the Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE) on a project that will result in the development of locally developed courses for Grades 9 and 10 English, Mathematics and Science. The project includes course profiles for these disciplines.

The April 1 to June 18 Website Activity Report noted that a new “Publisher” section had been added to the CSC website and that CSC was currently averaging 1,300 hits to the home page per day. A pdstore.com sales summary (March to May 2004) noted the popularity of some of the new resources and a new feature to help customers find CSC Seal approved resources more efficiently. A CSC Seal was added to the home page; by clicking on the Seal, customers can reach a link that generates a list of all CSC approved resources.

September – December

At the Board meeting on September 24, 2004, CSC activities since the previous June were reviewed. The Executive Director reported meetings with EDU on Trillium issues; interviews with two Toronto papers; a meeting with Dr. Fraser Mustard regarding the possibility of a joint research project; four funding proposals (including Ontario Ministry of Energy for evaluation of school resources on the environment); and TCF projects on literacy for at-risk secondary school students (including the Tree Foundation for Youth Development).

Professional Learning Services noted many Ontario private school initiatives as well as four overseas initiatives. E-learning initiatives focussed on web conferences to be hosted by CSC. The Liste Trillium List report noted number of materials in process since the June meeting and reported that there had been 8 requests to view the evaluation tools. Regarding website activity, a new reporting template for the Liste Trillium List, requested by the Ministry, was in development.

For December 2004, the Executive Director’s report focussed on business development, contacts, and human resources. Funding proposals and fundraising campaigns were featured in the first, EDU contact re status of school inspections and submissions for FSL in the second, and various HR related policies in the third, including revisions to the job profiles of the Executive Director and the President/Chair.

Professional Learning Services reported on the status of the project funded to provide Personalized Placement Learning Plan exemplars for Co-op teachers to use. Various conference activities were outlined; e.g., “Preparing for your Ministry Inspections,” presented by Jim Sebastian, Coordinator of the Private Schools and Attendance Unit at the Ministry of Education. Sample feedback submissions from participants in web conferences were provided for board members.

In the area of Curriculum Resource Services, OCC noted ongoing work regarding locally developed compulsory courses and course profiles. For Supplementary Learning Resources, Evaluation Services had completed five (5) evaluations and provided three (3) quotes for the period fiscal 2004 to the meeting date.

The Trillium update noted ongoing evaluations and continued work on ISO procedures for

Trillium and other processes. The Website Activity Report noted that the new reporting template for the *Liste Trillium List* had been completed and demonstrated. Some revisions, based on feedback from the demonstration, were being made.

Nineteen web conferences had been completed since the last meeting and this aspect of CSC business continues to grow. Pdstore.com registered a new affiliate website named pdstorechina.com. This site will feature English-language learning resources for schools in China and other parts of Asia.

A website activity report as of the end of January 2005 noted that the second version of the new reporting template for the *Liste Trillium List* was demonstrated to the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Branch of the Ministry and that it has been implemented for use by registered users at the Ministry and CSC. Also, members were advised that a newly installed web application would create a tracking sheet for the *Liste Trillium List* and facilitate reporting to the Ministry.

Following up on various highlights from previous meetings: pdstore.com China was actively promoted in the Chinese language newspaper in Toronto and on Omni Television; two Course Profiles to support two new Co-op Education related courses (locally developed) were completed and placed on the OCC website; OCC was benchmarking Ontario curriculum for Kindergarten, English as a Second Language and Language/English, this work to continue into February.

Re TCF Awards Projects, one of those currently in development, the ACE (Alternative Cooperative Experiential) Program, a model for a different school day to help students lacking in secondary school credits, was being tested by the authors in their board.

January – June

On February 11, 2005, the board met for the first time in the new calendar year. In terms of business development, the Executive Director highlighted the signing of a \$183,000 contract for LDCC teacher training, Roots of Empathy advised that the CSC Seal has worldwide recognition, and Classroom Connections committed to CSC mentoring development of their resources. On the Human Resource front, a Manager of Evaluation Services was recruited.

CSC (PLS) assisted with the revision of the Ministry of Education's "Private School Policy and Inspection Requirements" guideline via a series of web conferences. Discussions continued with potential Chinese partners interested in setting up educational services projects with CSC to meet Chinese teacher education needs. Training was provided for PLS trainers and senior educational supervisors on how to lead web conferences for small and large group training.

A CSC Website Activity Report covering February 12 to April 7, 2005, highlighted web conferencing activity. CSC acquired the technology and expertise to conduct "Live Video Streaming" and "Video on Demand." The first test of this service was for the April 1 Principals'

Conference on Numeracy and Literacy – a very successful debut.

On April 22, 2005, the Executive Director reported numerous activities relating to Business Development and Contacts. The former included a presentation to the Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat, a presentation to school board secondees working with OKNL, and a meeting with a Microsoft representative on potential partnership in training delivery. With respect to contacts, there were ongoing meetings and a review of textbook evaluations in preparation for delivery on April 15. On the HR front, a new FSL Senior Subject Specialist was recruited. The Director, Professional Learning Services, reported that many opportunities had resulted from the April 1 Principals' Conference and many CSC hosted web conference sessions were being discussed and planned for various parties – associations, boards, and individuals.

OCC continues its work with the Locally Developed Compulsory Courses project, the third phase of which involved the planning and implementation of seven regional professional development sessions. To complete the benchmarking project, OCC worked with teachers in the disciplines involved (Kindergarten, ESL, and Language/English). The final submissions of their work have been made.

By May 31, 2005, Trillium List postings for the CERC (Canadian Educational Resources Council, the professional association for major school textbook publishers) project, Phases 1 and 2, had been completed. Web conference training had been completed to more than 800 connections. Statistics of usage for “Live Streaming Video” and “Video on Demand” were positive. For the latter, between May 11 and May 31 over 6,000 connections were made.

On June 17, 2005, board members were advised of a meeting with McGraw-Hill Ryerson on the use of the CSC Seal across Canada on supplementary resources. Among various contact activities, the Executive Director had met with Dr. Michael Fullan on the evaluation of new education initiatives. The Curriculum Foundation selection process was completed with a subsequent news release and letters to donors. Two university student interns were recruited and began their term with CSC on May 2.

By June 17, a total of 34 Personalized Placement Learning Plan (PPLP) quality samples for Co-op teachers had been posted on OCC, Ontario Skills Passport training sessions via web conferencing had commenced, and new material was added to the CSC website to promote web conferencing activities.

The past year has seen the development and growth of a significant, new dimension of activity for CSC – web conferencing. The technology that is now in place, and being improved on an ongoing basis, offers a service that is in constant demand; feedback to CSC hosted conferences has been very positive. Thus, CSC continues to expand its horizons and looks forward to the opportunities that the coming year will bring.

XVI. October 2005-June 2006

Curriculum Services Canada and its affiliates were extremely active on all fronts during this period.

Starting with the activities reported at the Annual General Meeting on October 14, 2005, covering the period June to October 2005, the Executive Director noted that the main focus of the quarter was on Human Resources and Business Development. The Human Resources component included evaluations of two student interns, a part-time secondment of an eSolutions expert from York Region DSB, the hiring of a bilingual administrative assistant, and the transition of all evaluation responsibilities from Pauline Beggs to Keith Clark, Pauline now acting as consultant to evaluation and managing all mentoring.

On the Business Development side, CSC was engaged in responses to three Requests for Proposals, investigating possible joint ventures with TEACH and ENO/REO, and investigating e-strategies with the Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat.

Curriculum Resource Services highlighted various projects including: Math TIPS for English Language Learners, TIPS for Revised Mathematics, an electronic site providing resources for teachers; and a web page focusing on literacy for grades 7-12. Benchmarking of Ontario curriculum for Science and Technology Studies was scheduled to begin later in the fall.

The Curriculum Foundation awarded grants to five projects for the year's theme "Literacy and the Arts."

Highlights of the **Professional Learning Services (PLS)** report included the following: CSC hosted 33 web conferences, broadcast two web casts, received 24 private school contracts, and recorded professional learning material for video on demand. Perhaps the main accomplishment for the quarter was the completion of the Ontario Skills Passport (OSP) training delivered by web conference. All 72 school boards and 131 Job Connect agencies participated. Eighty-six web conferences were delivered, far exceeding EDU and CSC's projection of 50. In addition, PLS became totally self-sufficient at \$188,980 in contracts between April 1 and September 30.

Website activity included completion of the first stage of the CSC website update. Also, on contract, CSC had completed the design and implementation of four English and four French websites, as well as designing and implementing the main portal page for the eight sites on the Ministry of Education ("the Ministry") page at <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/studentssuccess/>. Live webcasts (four) were all made available as video-on-demand and pdstore.com reported a net income of \$29,241.18.

The Director of **eSolutions** commented on strategic planning and new ventures since his arrival in early October. A presentation to discuss strategic direction for all CSC e-related opportunities was tentatively scheduled for January 2006. The Gateway Fund (Canadian Heritage), a new

venture that many partners had already agreed to be part of, and the Inukshuk Fund (Fido/Rogers Wireless), whose main focus is the creation of relevant educational content for remote communities, were highlights. An Expression of Interest was being developed in response to a call by Inukshuk Internet Inc.

Finally, the meeting was given statistics for evaluations and approvals regarding the Liste Trillium List, as well as a brief description of additional projects (e.g., for the Ministry, gap analysis of 16 courses of study comparing previous curriculum with revised curriculum).

Between October 2005 and April 2006, the Executive Director's reports indicated that RFPs continued to be a strong focus. In addition, meetings were held with Microsoft regarding possible collaboration on the Gateway Project, followed by meetings and communications to solicit 19 partners for the project.

Over this period the following were among business development activities: Fundraising proposals for TCF; negotiations and meetings with le CLÉ concerning contract revisions and alignment of Liste Trillium List responsibilities; meetings at the Ministry regarding such business as Trillium operational issues, evaluation of resources for the Bullying Prevention Program; and webcasts (e.g., with Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat).

Between October and December, team meetings were a significant dimension of activities with various potential clients, for ongoing review of all evaluation reports, on re-organization of supplementary resources on the web site to enable searching. Between December 2005 and February 2006, activities included a planning session to set out a critical path for Gateway and to finalize contract requirements with Canadian Heritage. On the Human Resources (HR) front, the Executive Director and Gina Melvin had ongoing meetings with an HR consultant regarding the review of alignment of policies and contracts with the Employment Standards Act, plus subsequent revision to some contracts.

The Curriculum Resource Services report for December 2005 included the following activities: continued work with the Ministry in preparing materials (Math TIPS) to support implementation of the revised curriculum for Grades 7, 8, 9 and 10 Applied Mathematics; assisting the Ministry in developing content for and maintaining the web page Leading Math Success and a web page focusing on literacy Grades 7-12; and, with the College of Massage Therapists and Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, developing standards for evaluating massage therapy courses. Regarding the Curriculum Foundation (TCF) Teacher-Developed Projects, mentoring continued for four projects on the year's theme "Literacy and the Arts" – projects to be posted as they are completed.

Elaborating on the Executive Director's comments, Evaluation Services provided statistics (to November 24, 2005) for activities related to Liste Trillium List and reported ongoing liaison with the Ministry, le CLÉ, and publishers. Since the transfer of supplementary evaluations to Evaluation Services in September 2005, seven were in progress and four completed. Additional projects included the first evaluation of a Spanish resource.

Pdstore.com reported a net income of \$20,546.22, with sales \$26,000 higher than a year ago to the same date.

Also, at the December board meeting, the resignation from the Board of Directors of John Bernard was regretfully accepted by the President. At Mr. Bernard's suggestion, John Kim Bell was approached to replace Mr. Bernard. Mr. Bell accepted and attended his first board meeting on February 10, 2006.

eSolutions provided an update for December/05-January/06

Highlights: On January 25 CSC was advised that it was one of two successful applicants for the Gateway Fund. On December 21 an Expression of Interest was submitted to the Inukshuk Internet Inc.

Evaluation Services (**ES**) provided a report for this meeting, again with Trillium-related statistics and liaison activities, April/05 to February/06. ES also provided an amended report for April 1, 2005 to March 31, 2006, which indicated that for this period 179 evaluators were trained for the Trillium List. Since responsibility for Supplementary Evaluations was transferred to ES in September 2005, this report was based on data from the evaluations done September 1 to December 24 2005, which showed that 20 were completed.

Professional Learning Services (PLS) and pdstore.com provided year end reports (April 1, 2005 to March 31, 2006)

For fiscal year end, pdstore.com reported net income (excluding CSC management fees) at over \$11,600, marking three years of stable sales. Overseas private schools and MarkBook users continue to be loyal customers. Over the past five fiscal years, net sales increased by 85% and net income by 166% - a real success story!

PLS also had a busy and successful year, with 24 web conference demonstrations, 117 web conferences, 34 video recordings and 23 private school training and consultations contracts.

eSolutions also provided an update/overview for the period October 3, 2005-March 31, 2006, highlights of which are included in its final report for June 2006, which will be referenced below.

In **February-April 2006**, various aspects of business development were ongoing but a highlight was a meeting with Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat representatives regarding webcasts and web conferences for the 2006-07 fiscal year.

On April 28, 2006, the board received and discussed the CEO Succession Plan: Committee Structure. CSC received substantial funds from the Ministry for the Lighthouse Project, the Executive Director to meet with the Ministry to learn details of the funding.

The **Ministry liaison** noted a change of Ministers, the new appointment being Sandra Pupatello. She reported that 60 textbooks had been re-evaluated with the majority meeting a minimum of 85% of curriculum expectations for Canadian and World Studies and Mathematics. Also considered was the possibility of CSC expanding its services for French clients in the Health sector (already talks re delivery of web-based communications and training on domestic violence), and possible involvement with Federal ministries. The Executive Director reinforced the fact that the essence of CSC remains quality assurance through high standards. All CSC activities are standards-based.

Curriculum Resource Services (**CRS**) gave a “year in review” picture that included: working with CODE to complete the third phase of the locally developed compulsory course project. More than 1,000 educators attended the professional development sessions that were offered. CRS continued its work on Math TIPS when the Ministry furthered its initiative, particularly in refinement of original resources and preparation of new materials for posting on the web (TIPS4RM). This extension of the initiative gave CRS the opportunity to include further technology/media aspects, posting video and taped presentations, as well as branding for the program.

In addition, **CRS** had numerous major projects in the works – benchmarking Ontario curriculum by comparing it to that of a number of other jurisdictions in Canada and beyond. Science and Technology and Technical Education were undertaken during the year. CRS is providing peer review and mentoring for the Ministry writing teams who are developing descriptors for English-language proficiency of English-language learners at elementary and secondary levels. The Curriculum Foundation, in addition to projects mentioned earlier, was invited to present a proposal for developing and mentoring a resource on the Oak Ridges Moraine for Grades 9-10.

For June 2006, the Executive Director covered business development activities since April, among which were meetings with Agriteam Canada regarding a contract to assist with a curriculum review to match National Standards of Egypt with Agriteam’s policies and a meeting with Nipissing University regarding a program review of CSC. On the Human Resources side, performance reviews for management staff were conducted and CSC hosted a reunion of Public Relations (PR) interns, as well as training of two new university student interns as PR assistants. Adequate space for CSC operations had become an increasing concern and meetings with LNR Real Estate Brokers were held regarding space requirements.

The **Ministry liaison** noted continuing changes to the Liste Trillium List (e.g., upgrade of the search engine) and to ISBNs, which as of January 1, 2007 would change to a 13 digit number from a 10 digit number. There is also work on revising Trillium submission procedures to improve accuracy of information.

CRS brought the board up to date on projects outlined in its last report, most of which were entering a new stage; for example, CRS had begun to develop and mentor the resource on Oak

Ridges Moraine that was in the negotiation stage at the last meeting.

pdstore.com noted a promising start to 2006-07 with a net income of over \$5,500 since April 1 and suggested that International Private Schools and MarkBook customers would likely remain the most important clients. Several quotes for large textbook orders to private schools in Asia and for large MarkBook orders to Ontario school boards had been given and CSC was awaiting confirmation to process these orders.

Although effective May 1, 2006, the day-to-day operations of eSolutions were transferred to Keith Clark and Peter Sovran remained a special consultant to the project, providing an overview of its operations from its establishment in October 2005 to June 2006. Perhaps its most significant achievement, CSC was awarded one of two Canadian Heritage-Gateway Fund \$500,000 awards for building a Cultural E-Learning Content Aggregation Service for K-Grade 12. This funding will be used by CSC and its many partners to construct an online access point “Access Culture CANADA/Access a la Culture Canadienne,” using state-of-the-art web application tools. This project has the support of the Council of Ministers of Education of Canada (CMEC). In January and February 2006, the eSolutions unit secured two new projects for the production of a video CD and a video DVD for the York Region District School Board. The final video CD in the series was scheduled for completion September 2006.

Since June 2005, CSC business has continued to expand and new opportunities continue to be investigated. The possibilities in Educational Video/DVD production and distribution are, perhaps, among the most exciting signs of the future.

XVII. October 2006 – June 2007

AGM October 2006

At the Annual General Meeting in October 2006, the Executive Director highlighted business development activities between June and October. These included: a presentation to the Teaching Policy and Programs Branch of the Ministry of Education (EDU); numerous meetings and negotiations with partners on the Gateway Project; the development of a public relations plan, Gateway marketing plan, and a fundraising schedule, plus the development of a proposal for evaluation of Lighthouse projects for EDU; and other meetings with EDU on various initiatives.

On the human resources side, many communications with an HR Consultant concerned the development of salary grids, health and safety policies, and a job evaluation assessment tool. A Survey of Staff Satisfaction Levels was developed and administered, and registered positive results.

Evaluation Services reported ongoing clarification of policies with EDU regarding evaluation for the Trillium List. Additional EDU projects included harmonization of the Trillium List and the Curriculum Review Cycle and a contract to develop, update and maintain the Liste Trillium List. CSC also received its first offshore inquiries from England and Ireland. The Irish query led to a contract for evaluation.

Professional Learning Services (PLS) indicated that CSC had conducted web conferences for the Ontario Principals' Council, the Catholic Principals' Council of Ontario, and the Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat (LNS). CSC produced and designed web pages and hosted video for various groups (e.g., Leading and Learning interactive website), most of which projects are ongoing. Many project resources were produced, including Exclusion Training DVD materials for the Durham District School Board.

December 2006

In her report to the December 2006 meeting, the Executive Director highlighted the managing of media releases for pdstore.com and CultureSource in her review of business development activities and, on the human resource side, noted the introduction to staff of incentive guidelines, discussion with the HR consultant about developing a policy for flexible work arrangements, and regular Management Team meetings.

Professional Learning Services (PLS) reviewed webcast, web design and video activities, and web conference activities ongoing and undertaken since the October meeting. Among these, the continued development for CSC's support of the L&L: Student Achievement in Schools Facing Challenging Circumstances point project involving York Region DSB, Toronto DSB, OISE/UT, funded by the LNS, and CSC's continuing participation in the Leading Student Achievement project.

The Curriculum Resource Services (CRS) Unit reported that it had established a team of Arts educators to compare the Ontario curriculum for the Arts in Grades 1-12 with similar curriculum in six other jurisdictions. The comparison will result in comprehensive data supplied to EDU in February 2007 and will be used to guide revisions to the current curriculum policy for this area of study. CRS is also managing a thorough evaluation of the Lighthouse projects that are part of the Learning to 18-Pathways initiative. Other CRS initiatives include: conducting a field test of the STEP (Steps to English Proficiency) resource, and, in conjunction with the Ministry of Tourism, developing and mentoring a resource on Ontario's Greenbelt for Grades 7-9. Also noted was CRS mentoring of two teacher-developed projects that received TCF grants: "Traditional Careers," a co-op program for Aboriginal youth for Grades 9-12, and "Media Literacy within the Multicultural Classroom" for Grades 6 and 7.

Evaluation Services reported the training of eight evaluators, meetings with Trillium stakeholders, an extension for completion of the CultureSource.ca website, and, in business development, a quote provided to the Ontario Power Authority for the evaluation of learning resources associated with electricity, as well as a CSC presentation to the Auditor General of Canada regarding evaluation of federally funded learning materials.

February 2007

Between December 2006 and February 2007, Professional Learning Services (PLS) delivered four Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat webcasts (an ongoing project) and continued their work on producing and designing web pages for various websites on many ongoing projects (e.g., Managing Information for Student Achievement (MISA)—Barrie Region). Website conference activity was brisk, particularly for LNS, whose demo attracted 90 participants.

Between late November 2006 and mid-January 2007, Evaluation Services involved 30 evaluators in their Trillium list evaluations. Other projects and liaison activities were ongoing. CRS reported ongoing activity in all projects listed for the previous meeting.

April 2007

For the April 2007 meeting, the Executive Director highlighted the following in her report: regarding business development, ongoing meetings and communications with the Assembly of First Nations, the National Aboriginal Literacy Foundation, and the Chiefs of Ontario; an off-site annual planning session at the Millcroft Inn for the Management Team; and attendance at various events (e.g., the Canadian School Boards Association conference reception). In the area of Human Resources, there were many ongoing activities (e.g., meetings with HR consultant) and the recruitment of a new Scheduling Coordinator.

In addition to ongoing activities, CRS began working with the Council of Ontario Directors of Education on the development of two resources to support English language learners. CRS involvement includes: being part of the project team that is managing the project, doing peer reviews of the material during development, and preparing the documents for publication. CRS also developed reference charts of pertinent data for use by school administrators in granting

secondary school credits to students outside Ontario. CRS is currently mentoring resources under development for five different subject areas.

Evaluation Services reported the final results of the harmonization of the Trillium List and the Curriculum Review Cycle: the number of textbooks eligible was 70, the number submitted 54, and the number approved 54. The Gateway-CultureSource.ca website went live on March 31 with almost 100 linked websites and sample ways to use the sites.

Professional Learning Services (PLS) was extremely busy with webcast, website development, web conference and recording activities. One new project was the development of an interactive website for the Institute for Education Leadership. Again, LNS was at the fore in web conference activities. Video recording projects included the filming of the Ontario English Catholic Teachers Association conference.

June 2007

The Executive Director highlighted many very successful activities in her report to the June 2007 meeting. Of particular interest in business development, research contracts were finalized for a video series on using new classroom technologies, successful practices in teacher distance learning, the concept of a Learning Object Repository (LOR) for all video and distance learning initiatives and a Utilization Plan for all of the materials in the LOR.

Professional Learning Services highlighted many areas of activity, many with particular reference to LNS and Leading and Learning. Curriculum Resource Services reported ongoing activity in many of the projects already in place. Between the last board meeting and this one, Evaluation Services completed 10 evaluations from the Trillium List and EDU approved 10. Twenty-seven evaluators were involved in the various evaluation activities. Liaison activities were ongoing, while the Ministry of Education (EDU) made a decision to repatriate all Liste Trillium List web applications. Technology associated with the Liste/List will be moved to EDU over the next few months. The Curriculum Foundation selected three award winners: Kathleen Mannion for the Janice Thomson Memorial Grant, and John Patterson and Jennifer Gunion for General Grant awards.

XVIII. October 2007- June 2008

AGM October 2007

In its report to the Annual General Meeting, October 2007, the Executive Committee highlighted activities associated with the financial sustainability of CSC. Professional Learning Services conducted web conferences for various groups with a total of over 210 participants. Five LNS webcasts were delivered; all web design activities were ongoing; a large number of project resources were produced. Many CRS projects were ongoing as well, with CRS mentoring the projects that received TCF grants in 2007, this slated for completion in spring 2008. The Executive Director gave highlights of business development activities, including the honouring of CSC by the LNS.

The theme of this year's Annual Report and Annual Meeting Luncheon for stakeholders was "Learning...It's Second Nature", focusing on CSC's commitment to promoting a life-long concern for the environment through education and learning.

December 2007

In December 2007, the Executive Director's report highlighted a letter of interest signed between CSC and the Canadian Management Centre and presentations to educators from Egypt and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan on behalf of EDU international relations. Evaluation Services reported on its Trillium List evaluations and training of evaluators, its liaison activities, additional EDU projects, and supplementary evaluations, noting that a search engine that will allow for the searching of Recommended Resources as well as the teacher developed resources was under development and would be available soon. In Business Development, CSC received the contract for receipt and pre-screening of the Premier's Awards for Teachers. CRS, as part of its ongoing activities, is comparing the Ontario Physical and Health Education curriculum grades 1-12 with curriculum in six other jurisdictions as support for the Ministry's revision to current curriculum policy in this discipline. Professional Learning Services conducted many web conferences with a wide range of clients (e.g., for the Catholic Principals Council of Ontario, three sessions with 53 participants; for LNS four Literacy sessions and four Numeracy sessions with a total of 153 participants). Highlights in project resource production was a Leading Student Achievement Teacher Survey (new project) and for Woman Abuse, 5 DVD Modules for distribution (4000 copies).

February 2008

The February meeting of the Board included the CSC Management Team and addressed the topic of government relations and lobbying tactics.

There was no formal meeting, but reports were distributed to the Board as follows: the Executive Director highlighted the following business development activities: exploration of a joint venture with the Hospital for Sick Children and the Canadian Management Centre, a meeting with the China Association for International Exchange of Personnel to explore how CSC could develop standards for China to recruit ESL teachers in Canada, and the launch of the Curriculum Foundation private individual fundraising campaign. Evaluation Services reported that the

English site of CultureSource.ca became live in December 2007 and the French site went live this month (February 2008). The first Marketing and Public Relations Report was presented at this meeting. The Curriculum Foundation developed the “Honour Your Favourite Teacher” fundraising campaign and funding proposals were sent to foundations and corporations. In the area of promotion, the red promotional folder was revised to become a more economical, four-page newsletter style handout. CSC attended the Ontario Principals’ Council conference to promote the LNS webcast DVDs as well as Leading Student Achievement and Leading and Learning professional learning resources. A CSC Sales Summary for December 2007 to February 2008 was also provided. Professional Learning Services highlighted, in particular, many resources produced for the EDU Student Success/ Learning to 18 initiative.

April 2008

Highlights of the Executive Director’s report were news of the web meetings with Nipissing University’s Faculty of Education to develop a research proposal on teaching pre-service teachers and professors how to integrate new technologies into teaching and learning, and preparations for a meeting with the Minister of Education. CSC was a guest at the CareerEdge recruitment agency awards night for new graduates, new immigrants and people with disabilities.

CSC produced the promotional video shown at the event. Between February and April, Professional Learning Services conducted 27 web conferences and CSC was represented at a presentation to Kuwaiti principals, hosted by the Ontario Principals’ Council. Evaluation Services processed a total of 1,648 applications for the Premier’s Awards for Teaching Excellence. Twenty-four evaluators were recruited and provided with a scoring tool developed by CSC to assist in the ranking of candidates. After a short list of prospective recipients was determined, CSC facilitated the panel chosen by EDU to make the final selection of recipients. The Marketing and Public Relations (MPR) report highlighted advertising and promotional activities, but noted that sales were down from the last report. The MPR area also reported on the retirement event of Keith Clark, Director, Evaluation Services, on March 12. Keith had been a valued and highly competent member of the CSC management team for three years and a consultant to CSC for seven years previous. Curriculum Resource Services summarized ongoing activities.

June 2008

In June 2008, the Executive Director’s report highlighted various meetings concerning fiscal funding, communications with legal counsel for the Trillium agreement and many other contracts. On the HR front, orientation was done for the university intern who would be a public relations assistant, as well as review and revision of job descriptions for the positions of Accountant, Office Production Assistant and Administrative Assistant, and recruiting for these positions. Curriculum Resource Services was engaged in many initiatives with and for the Ministry of Education (EDU); for example, an electronic resource was developed to support principals in granting equivalency credits to mature students in the core disciplines of English, Mathematics and Science. Evaluation Services outlined Trillium List activities, supplementary evaluations, and additional projects. As well as summarizing promotional and public relations activities, Marketing and Public Relations noted a gift from the George Lunan Foundation to

fund the resource “Population Dynamics Watershed Field Study.” Also noteworthy was an upswing in sales figures, mainly due to the sale of over 1800 LNS webcast DVDs. Professional Learning Services noted web conferences conducted since April, in particular, five Ontario Curriculum Unit Planner conferences for the Ontario Principals’ Council, with over 100 participants. Many other projects were ongoing.

Endnotes

1. After funding all eligible projects, approximately \$20 million of the Transition Assistance Fund remained unallocated at the end of 1991. Minister Dave Cooke agreed to allow it to be carried forward into 1992, though it was subsequently cut to \$10 million in a sweeping provincial spending cut.
2. Recommendation of Provincial Auditor's Report, 1993: "To reduce and eliminate unnecessary duplication and to encourage consistent quality in the curriculum documents provided to teachers, the Ministry should co-ordinate the development by boards of curriculum and other resource documents useful at the classroom level. The Ministry should also ensure that these materials reflect the highest quality materials already developed by boards and are made available for use across the province."
3. "Creating a Culture of Change" (the 3 C's Project) was a Ministry funded project, in response to the Transition Years initiative, to help teachers accommodate extensive curriculum changes. Forty-five teachers were trained to become facilitators to implement change and an electronic discussion forum was developed. This eventually became ENO, the Education Network of Ontario.
4. Several people from MET were deeply involved in helping develop the clearinghouse concept. John Taylor provided electronic expertise, and Jim Sebastian served as lead and driving force for the group. However, as things progressed, it was decided that the Ministry should be more at arm's length. It was at this time that Lyn Sharratt was chosen as Chair.
5. The minutes of this meeting are the last to appear on Ministry letterhead.
6. The first \$250,000 of Year One funding was payable on 15 April 1994 (received in late May), while the second half of the first year funding was to be paid upon receipt and approval by MET of the business plan. The official term of the project was 1 April 1994 to 31 March 1997.
7. This press release also stated that while a catalogue would be made available in both print and electronic formats for now, only the latter would be supported in the future.
8. One very positive early outcome of this process was that boards began to vet material they had in house using the guidelines developed for the catalogue. At OCC, Susan Langley vetted all incoming material to ensure conformity to the guidelines.
9. The \$250,000 second installment for year one was received on 2 December.
10. Following its commitment to publishers, OCC's involvement in the production of any curriculum materials would necessarily be limited to those intended for teachers. This was one example of the kind of constraint that increasingly challenged and channeled the growth of OCC.
11. In Volume 2, No. 2 of *In Common* (March-/April 1995), it states that OCC was formerly

called “Clearinghouse of Resource Materials.” No other mention of this name was found.

12. It should be remembered that while people directly involved with curriculum policy, development, and implementation were wrestling with these issues, most teachers had neither heard about nor seen the revised common curriculum they would be expected to teach to in September.

13. OCC had considered applying for ONIP funding in light of its work to help form a curriculum network in Ontario, but had not done so because research indicated that they would not qualify.

14. In collecting these materials, several French-language resources were submitted for inclusion in the catalogue. It was decided that any necessary translation would have to come from developers as OCC funds were insufficient to cover these costs. In addition, CFORP was to be consulted for clarification on the inclusion of materials supporting French-as-a-Second-Language (FSL) curriculum.

15. OCSOA and OSSTA were consulted for the wording of the catalogue tabs.

16. In the Meeting Note prepared for 8 January, long-term sustainability was projected to include “the solicitation of corporate partners and the provision of consultative services to a number of public and private sector organizations.”

17. Additional copies of the Transition Years and JK-9 catalogues were made available in Ontario for \$25 and \$35 respectively and outside Ontario for \$50 and \$70. FileMaker Pro diskette versions were sold to Ontario residents for \$5 and to others for \$15 (to help recover development costs). The ONeducation CD-ROM could be purchased for \$24.95.

18. There was some concern about the corporate initiative and the Work Group asked if it would be possible to form a not-for-profit corporation with a charitable arm. They were advised by Ian Goldberg that this would not work well for OCC.