

Teaching, Learning and Leading
Together:
The Remarkable Story of the
Eastern Ontario Staff Development
Network

Dedication

This book is dedicated to those many educators who have been active in teaching, learning and leading within the Eastern Ontario Staff Development Network these past 25 years.

(Kingston, Ontario – May 28, 2014)

The Contributors

It is truly reflective of the nature of the EOSDN itself that this book was compiled from the input and reflections of so many who contributed to the Network over the years. That being said, the data-gathering efforts of Reg Shadbolt, Dona Cruickshank, Eleanor Newman and Deborah Pennell deserve particular mention. The finished product, however, would not exist without the authorship of Greg McNally, who has ably applied his talents as raconteur to the telling of The Remarkable Story of the Eastern Ontario Staff Development Network.



Greg McNally,
Author and
Longstanding
EOSDN Supporter

EOSDN Board of Directors' Message

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As educators, we know the opportunity to participate in meaningful professional learning is key to sustained improvement. Learning is hard work! It's about thinking, understanding, discussing, researching, practising and reflecting. Through EOSDN, we network and interact with colleagues within our region, to share expertise and build new knowledge and understandings that lead to changes in practice that in turn result in benefits to staff and students in our member organizations.

For the past 25 years, EOSDN, which currently comprises nine school boards in Eastern Ontario and the Faculty of Education at Queen's University, has facilitated professional learning and collegial sharing for the purpose of improving student achievement. The Network provides opportunities for educators to work with outstanding experts and encourages professional discourse and peer support. Our members are challenged, inspired and motivated to develop new skills, to gain new insights and to apply these learnings in their practice.

On behalf of all members of the Network, the current EOSDN Board of Directors is pleased to present Teaching, Learning and Leading Together, which chronicles and embraces the history of our Network. The book captures the professional and personal accounts and reminiscences of a diverse group of people which reveal the commitment to professional learning and student achievement. It is clear that collegial working relationships are at the centre of the work we do in the Network, developing and sharing resources and fostering professional relationships among peers and colleagues.

As we celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the Eastern Ontario Staff Development Network (EOSDN), we gratefully acknowledge and applaud the accomplishments of those whose passion and action led to the design and advancement of this very unique and profoundly impactful professional learning Network.

On behalf of the Network,



Charlotte Rouleau, Chair
Catholic DSB of Eastern Ontario



Pino Buffone, Vice Chair
Ottawa Carleton DSB

Acronym Alley

Here is a list of acronyms used throughout the book for easy reference for the reader:

DSB – District School Board
EOSDN – Eastern Ontario Staff Development Network
EQAO – Education Quality and Accountability Office
EWAP – Education With A Purpose
GST – Goods and Services Tax
HST – Harmonized Sales Tax
LNS – Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat
MISA – Managing Information for Student Achievement
NASSP – National Association
of Secondary School Principals
NPO – Non-Profit Organization
OCT – Ontario College of Teachers

PC – Projects Committee
PLC – Professional Learning Community
PLP – Professional Learning Program
PNC – Professional Network Centre
PWT – Planning Work Team
RCSS - Roman Catholic Separate School
REC – Regional Executive Council (Directors of Education)
RHRW – Reaching Higher, Reaching Wider
SB – School Board
SDCC – Staff Development Coordinating Committee
SOQP – Supervisory Officers' Qualification Program

Table of Contents

Chapter One: The Beginning	7
Chapter Two: 1989-1999: The Early and Formative Years	12
Chapter Three: 1999-2009: Into the Millennium	24
Chapter Four: 2009-2014: Five More and Counting	36
Chapter Five: The Supervisory Officers' Qualification Program	45
Chapter Six: Bits and Pieces	51
Chapter Seven: Into the Future	59

Chapter 1

The Beginning

The right idea at the proper time is a powerful force. Just such an idea in the late 1980s led to the formation of an education organization which would come to be known as the Eastern Ontario Staff Development Network. What was that idea? Why did it succeed?

As we examine how the Network began, a quick look at the times might serve as a good basis for understanding how such an entity would come into existence. The amalgamation of school boards in Ontario in 1969 brought more opportunities for curriculum and professional development as boards designed departments to serve the ever-growing need of resources for classroom teaching and learning. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s the level of board-based curriculum and professional development became more detailed and sophisticated. Board documents supported the Ministry of Education directives, with board-wide Professional Development or Professional Activity days, introduced by Ontario in the 1970s, serving as one major means of providing teachers and administrators with the latest in curriculum materials and teaching methods.

Increasingly, the conversation among leaders in school boards centred on ways boards could share knowledge and experience to broaden the scope of

resources. When directors and superintendents of education throughout Eastern Ontario gathered for regional meetings in the mid-1980s, once again thoughts turned to ways they could share resources and best serve students in all boards. This was not an easy concept to bring to reality. Boards, both public and separate (Catholic), had their own identities, their own personnel, their own costs, their own way of approaching and delivering curriculum and professional development. Quite often the concluding answer was the usual “We have tried to do this before but it just won’t work” response. Despite the fact that there was much agreement on the many benefits of “re-inventing the wheel together”, the process just seemed too indomitable.

More and more, though, the formal and informal conversations about

the sharing of resources took place among board leaders in Eastern Ontario. Today, board personnel at that time, people such as John Graham, Reg Shadbolt, Phil Rocco, Marg Werkhoven, Lorne Keon, Marc Schaefer, and Greg McNally, recall that these conversations led to initial incidents of sharing among boards. A starting point was an invitation from John Graham and Frank Kinsella of the Leeds Grenville Public Board to Eastern Ontario supervisory officers to a meeting in Brockville. Nineteen leaders attended that session which was dedicated to the concept of the sharing of curriculum and expertise across boards. The group even came up with a name for the entity, the Regional In-Service Council (RISC). Although nothing formal came from that gathering, the impetus toward further cooperation was noticeable.

Reflections

“When Paul Park asked me what I thought about putting money and space resources behind the EOSDN idea, I heartily supported the idea. This kind of support from the Faculty of Education would add to the mosaic that included the Faculty’s Teacher Education Advisory Committee and the local OTF Teacher Education Committee. I saw EOSDN as an opportunity for faculty members to become engaged with people and emergent programs in the field. As well, I saw EOSDN as an opportunity for participating boards to share expertise, cross-pollinate ideas and thereby, as a group, become a more powerful ‘economy of scale’.”

-Gar White, Faculty of Education, Queen’s University

John Graham puts it this way: “The kayak or canoe was launched and grew into what is thriving today – an armada!!” The Brockville meeting led to a shared board-wide professional development day for three boards – Lanark Public, Leeds Grenville Public and Lanark Leeds Grenville Separate – in the spring of 1989. This joint day in Brockville, Smiths Falls and Carleton Place was planned in partnership with Paul Park, Gar White and Barbara Park of Queen’s University in Kingston. The success of that gathering and of similar shared ventures across boards carried a momentum into larger ventures, one which most everyone would agree proved to be the catalyst for the creation of the Eastern Ontario Staff Development Network!

Reg Shadbolt of the Frontenac County Public Board in Kingston enjoyed the experience of interacting with the staff and superintendents from other jurisdictions to pro-

duce quality instructional units for teachers, especially in history and geography. He saw the potential of this type of partnership in assisting in effective teaching and learning in schools. Reg had been trained as an assessor by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) in the United States to run assessment centres for prospective principals. He felt that strong leadership in the classrooms, schools and boards was essential for successful learning and, to make matters even better, the educational research showed this to be true. In the fall of 1988 Reg arranged for a four-day assessor training course through NASSP at Caiger’s Resort on the beautiful St. Lawrence River. Thirty-two principals and supervisory officers from across Eastern Ontario attended the course. As all who were present recall, the image of a few days of relaxed shared learning at a resort was quickly replaced with the reality of a few days of endless mind-expanding tasks, assignments and role-playing on the leadership topic, from the ringing of the infamous wake-up bell at 5:30 in the morning to the last session late in the evening, followed by homework! This time together had two major effects: firstly, the NASSP assessment centre program was gruelling but first-rate (to this day the twelve NASSP-identified leadership skills impact the Network); secondly, the thirty-two participants formed professional, personal and survival-support bonds that have lasted over the years! Even more importantly, these days together clearly demonstrated the strength and value in working together on a meaningful project across jurisdictions. Many Eastern Ontario educators firmly believe that the Network may never have begun had it not been for the positive impact of that NASSP session along the river!



Reg Shadbolt

In 1989, when Reg Shadbolt announced his upcoming retirement to a group of district supervisory officers and Queen’s University Dean Paul Park, who were meeting at the Frontenac County Board Office, they wanted to know what his plans were for retirement. The group suggested that he continue working with them to assist their teachers with curriculum units and best practices while still operating the assessment centre for prospective principals. Here is Reg’s recollection of what happened next:

“After a few exciting discussions with Dean Park, Jim Gardiner, Greg McNally and others, the seeds were sown for what would become the Eastern Ontario Staff Development Network, chaired first by John Graham, an enthusiastic superintendent from Brockville. Dean Park offered space in Duncan MacArthur Hall in Kingston; each supporting board would pay a proportionate share, according to its size, of the operating costs of the office. I vol-



When it first launched, the EOSDN created this brochure to highlight its mission, values, intentions and structure.

unteered to start it as its executive director, to be remunerated after some revenue sources were identified as I desired to travel, if funds permitted. To ensure initial independence, it was decided that no additional funding would be requested from the usual sources, such as the Ministry of Education or the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE)."

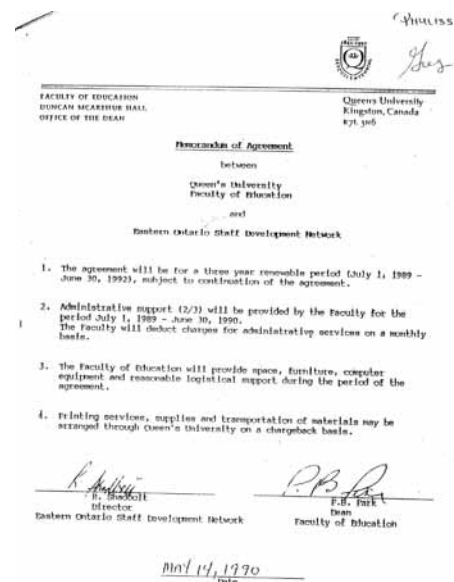
The major concept was for exemplary teachers in each supporting board to collaborate, share their best practices, and, to attend sessions in locations close to where they lived in order to reduce expensive hotel bills. The new network was underway quickly and supported by 23 school boards east of Oshawa and the two Faculties of Education at Queen's University and Ottawa University. Dean Park assigned Jill Wing to assist and run the office and EOSDN was ready to go. Queen's would look after the organization's financial affairs from the perspective of a research project on campus. Vinnie Rebelo, the General Manager of The Ambassador Hotel, was most cooperative when accommodation was required at a reasonable cost.

Initially, the assessment centres were the first services provided and located according to demand, in Belleville, Cobourg, Renfrew, Ottawa, and Kingston. More assessors were trained from various local boards in London, Ontario. The determination to move these centres closer to the participating boards was an organizational nightmare! Jill was overwhelmed and Reg's van was overloaded! Interest declined as more boards were required to organize their own centres and they did not have the extra resources to provide the necessary clerical support services required at each. Assessment centres faded, but some local boards did create their own training programs and short lists for

prospective principals. The process and content had been very useful and validated by research by at least one superintendent. Glen Watson from Hastings County concluded that trained principals were more effective school leaders.

The Network really started to operate effectively when the key liaison persons were identified by the partners and assembled with their needs in hand to discuss what assistance could be delivered across such a large geographical area. It was thrilling to observe how these leaders grew from their interactions, how quickly they developed action plans, and how thoughtfully they identified the most appropriate people to present best practices. The EOSDN Office would organize, market, and deliver - which it did with enthusiasm! Further it was agreed strategically that the sharing workshops would be offered in different locations across the Network to enable ready access. Presenting teachers were provided accommodation and meals and credits to attend future events, without cost; hotels and catering services offered very good prices if the events could be planned for their down periods in February or March. The organizers made every effort to include both the Faculty of Education at The University of Ottawa and the Faculty of Education at Queen's as major partners in the learning.

It was not quite as easy to start the Network as it might seem from the previous few paragraphs. As one would expect, there were many sceptics, as there should have been, who gave this venture initial support with the idea being to evaluate the Network's impact before committing for the long term. School boards had to be convinced that this money was well invested, that students and staff were benefitting from the local dollars going to this fledgling organization. Some initial concepts



The 1990 Agreement for service and space at Queen's University was signed by EOSDN Executive Director Reg Shadboldt and Queen's University Faculty of Education Dean, P.B. Park.

of how EOSDN was to function in its first stages of existence proved to serve the enterprise well. The Network would be supported by its own members only, not by outside funding. The rationale behind this was that government funding for projects can change in an instance, especially during tough economic times, which seem to be the norm rather than the exception in educational financing. Once established, should outside funding for projects become available to the Network, then related decisions would be made. Each board would be assessed an annual fee based on student population ranges. All projects, such as workshops and conferences, would be made available to all board personnel throughout Eastern Ontario and would be based on cost-recovery budgets.

The Network would be administered by a Project Director (in later

years, the title was changed to Executive Director) with an office assistant, each on a part-time basis. A Board of Directors with a representative from each school board in Eastern Ontario, Queen's and Ottawa Universities would make decisions for the Network, with well-considered advice from the Project Director. Each member of the Board was to be the decision-maker for his or her home board in regard to Network activities, thus ensuring little delay in moving forward with

projects. All members of the newly-formed EOSDN were considered to be on equal footing, whether from a large or small board, regardless of the amount of fees paid. The thinking behind the Network was that it would speak with one voice, always for the betterment of teaching, learning and leading. These were high standards indeed, but they have endured to this day in one form or another. Those people closely connected to the Network over the years would say that the

original design and accompanying actions are why EOSDN was successful from its beginning and why it is so today.

The right idea at the proper time. The rest is history, as one might say. We will do our best to highlight that history of the Eastern Ontario Staff Development Network in the following chapters. Please join us in our journey down memory lane from 1989 through 2014 as the success story that is EOSDN unfolds.

Reflections

"My thoughts on EOSDN go back to the beginning when it evolved from the Ministry P.D. Committee. Some of us thought that it would be beneficial to all if we pooled our resources. I recall Jim Gardiner (Carleton Public), myself (Carleton Catholic), Reg Shadbolt (Frontenac Public), Russ Holmberg (Renfrew Public), John Graham (Leeds Grenville Public) and Paul Park (Dean of Queen's) as being there in the beginning. Paul Park gave us seed money, free office space at Queen's and secretarial support. We hired Reg, who was newly retired, as the first Project Director."

*-Phil Rocco,
Carleton Catholic Board*

~

"My fondest recollections of EOSDN revolve around the Assessment Centre experience. I was assessed at the London Centre before becoming an assessor myself and found the feedback very useful. I enjoyed the camaraderie with other administrators from Eastern Ontario as we conducted assessments on candidates from our region. I believe those candidates found the results of the assessments as useful as I had."

*-Marg Werkhoven,
Hastings Public Board*

~

"I participated in the NASSP Assessment Training Program in 1988 at Caiger's. This turned out to be a seminal event because it brought together SOs (Superintendents and Directors) from several Boards in Eastern Ontario. Although it was a gruelling baptism by fire (boot camp – here's a quarter) exercise, it planted the seed of an organization involving all Boards."

*-Marc Schaefer,
Stormont Dundas Glengarry Public Board*

~

"Of particular note was the National Association of Secondary School Principals' (NASSP) administrators effectiveness program. This program was not only an excellent professional development tool for those taking the training but also provided an effective means of making decisions when a school-level leadership opportunity presented itself. As a Board, we were very proud of the quality of our school-level leadership which, in large part, was due to this EOSDN program that allowed us to develop a basis for our decision-making in this area."

-Larry Langdon,
Prince Edward County Public Board

~

"The meetings in Kingston did represent the early beginnings of the Network. During these meetings, I was impressed with the passion of all who attended, with the sharp focus on improving the teaching/learning dynamics in the classroom, with the determination to provide training opportunities in Eastern Ontario that reflected the financial and pedagogical needs within the region, and with the involvement of personnel from both the public and separate school boards. What a refreshing approach! What a motivating and invigorating opportunity! With objectives such as these, it was easy to secure support for the Network from my Board."

-Russ Holmberg,
Renfrew Public Board

~

"At a meeting with Paul Park (Dean of Faculty of Ed at Queen's) he offered his support philosophically and financially (to the tune of \$15,000) for the Network. My recollection is that Gar White, Reg Shadbolt and I were present. At a later date, Paul Park and I met with Michael Fullan, Dean of the Faculty of Education at the University of Toronto, to share the concept we were developing in Eastern Ontario. He, too, expressed a strong interest in and support of the concept. The larger boards had their own R & D (research & development) sections so the concept may not have been as important to them. In smaller boards we had to use the S & R procedure (steal/share & revise!)."

-John Graham,
Leeds Grenville Public Board

Chapter 2

1989-1999: The Early and Formative Years

The first official meeting of the Eastern Ontario Staff Development Network in the fall of 1989 marked a new era in cooperation among school boards in the eastern part of the province. Original members of EOSDN recall the confidence and trust that the group had in the Project Director, Reg Shadbolt. His experience in educational leadership, curriculum and professional development would no doubt serve the Network well. The fall of 1989 brought a sense of anticipation that the organization about to unfold would make a difference in the educational life of schools and boards. That first meeting would set the tone for years to come – one of invention, clarity, respect and purpose. With Reg as the Network's leader, the journey started!

Chapter One has outlined briefly the activities of the Network in its early years. In London, Ontario there was a Western Ontario Staff Development Network so Reg Shadbolt, considering our geography and purpose, suggested the Eastern Ontario Staff Development Network as the new entity's name and thus it was approved and became officially the Network's moniker. From the beginning there was a concerted effort to ensure the organization succeeded. The plan called for carefully considered action within a structured framework. The design was simple yet effective. The Board of Directors,

as mentioned earlier, consisted of the leaders from the 23 boards and the two university faculties of education (see end of this chapter for list) who were the decision-makers for the group.

The Board of Directors would have an executive consisting of the Board-elected Chair and Vice-Chair. Under Support Services came the Project Director and Assistant, yet in reality these two roles were major leadership positions as they conducted the daily business of the Network, always in keeping with the Board's philosophy and direction.

Leadership initiatives were viewed as integral to the Network but the Project Director and Board members knew from experience that school and system leadership was not restricted to administration but included the classroom as well. The Network design would have to reflect this and a solution came within the first year. The term 'in-service' was common then in the language of educators to refer to professional development activities so EOSDN established the In-Service Institute to serve and represent teachers, consultants and department heads. The Leadership Academy was created to address the needs of principals, vice-principals and supervisory officers.

This governance and program structure of the Network has had

some alterations in titles and membership since its establishment in 1989-90 but it basically has remained the same, testimony to how well it has served the organization.

With the structure in place the Network spent some time in the early 1990s to put into writing its vision and mission. Through consultative processes, following the creation and approval of Our Structure came Our Valued Cornerstones, Our Intentions and Our Operational Guidelines, each heading accompanied by detailed descriptors of its purpose. The cornerstones outlined five points of belief and advocacy; the intentions detailed ten methods by which to realize the Network's mission; the operational guidelines outlined 14 points of the daily workings of the organization. Our Mission read as follows:

The Eastern Ontario Staff Development Network, a consortium of school boards and faculties of education, is committed to helping staff to improve student learning in schools in Eastern Ontario by using networking strategies and resources more efficiently.

With its mission, design and guidelines in place to support its activities, the Network was prepared to move forward into the 1990s!

John Graham of Leeds Grenville Public Board served as the first Chair of the Network from 1989-

1992. These were certainly key years in the formation of the organization. A good start would mean success; a poor one would most likely result in its demise. John, along with Reg Shadbolt and the Board of Directors, set a course that was one of well-considered action. The Network knew that it had to have immediate impact on the educational scene and met the challenges of organizing conferences and workshops for a new entity with gusto. Looking back it appears that the Network was just underway when the events started. Although it seemed to some educators that the formation of such a network had been discussed for years and took forever to get established, once it was formed and running, it took on a life of its own quickly. Not only was there exemplary professionalism among the members, there was also a camaraderie that flowed throughout the proceedings which made the work not just effective but enjoyable. John Graham reflects on the immediate success of the group:

"I had the pleasure of being the chair of the group of representatives during the early formative years. The Network's many activities met a need for a great many educators. The opportunity to be part of the dynamic group of Supervisory Officers who were so 'like-minded' was a high point for me in my years in education. Looking at the list of friends you are now contacting brought back fond memories for me of our personal & professional time together. The friendships that were developed through our productive efforts as we launched EOSDN remain as my fondest recollection of our times together."

As noted earlier, the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) leadership course carried on throughout the jurisdiction in the early to mid-1990s. Although there are limited records from 1989-

Reflections

"Julie Clarke began as Project Assistant in 1992 and jumped in immediately to organize multiple meetings and workshops, prepare budgets and process all financial transactions through Queen's, make frequent contacts with the partners and their representative, and to arrange accommodations that hosts required to offer workshops throughout the geographical area of the Network. Interacting well with the computer staff in the Faculty of Education, Julie quickly developed a useful website for the Network and replaced piles of paper communiques with electronic interactions. Appreciation for her fine efforts were expressed frequently by all, with the Network showing its collective appreciation when Julie was selected unanimously for its Outstanding Service Award which she received at a special dinner meeting at the Calabogie Lodge. After a highly successful, diverse experience with EOSDN, in 2001 Julie went to work within Queen's in a new position, but she left a history of good will and accomplishment across the Network. Julie Clarke richly deserves a place of special recognition in the history of EOSDN."

-Reg Shadbolt, Project Director, EOSDN



Julie Clarke, second from left, listens to words of gratitude from the Network as she is named the 1998 EOSDN Outstanding Service Award recipient.

94, we do have the recollections of people involved with the Network at those times as well as newsletters and memoranda from the mid-1990s which clearly reference the dates and times of conferences and workshops of that beginning era. The May 1994 Network News provides an insightful snapshot of that year, citing the boards and people leading the events. This newsletter included a reference to the fourth annual Transition-In-Action Conference, thus chronologically placing the first conference for that group in 1991. The 1994 conference had almost 400 attendees, demonstrating the high regard in which this gathering was held, especially by teachers of Grade 7 to 10.

The content of the 1994 newsletter clearly demonstrates the extensive growth within EOSDN over its first five years. It lists conferences, workshops, carousels, people involved in the workings of the Network. In this newsletter more than 175 people are recognized for their contributions to committees, conferences, programs and so forth. The sheer volume of numbers indicates the role EOSDN was playing in the region by that time. The tone

of the newsletters reflected an active organization, one instilled with energy, knowledge, enthusiasm... great characteristics for success!

From Day One, the Network stressed financial interdependence among its members and independence from the usual sources of monetary support, for example, special Ministry of Education grants. In the first few years the budgets set for such an expansive group would have to be considered 'bare-bones'. Queen's University Faculty of Education gave the fledgling organization \$15,000 to the cause, so confident was the university of the educational potential of the Network. Queen's and EOSDN signed a Memorandum of Agreement for a three-year term, from 1989-1992. The document, signed by Paul Park and Reg Shadbolt, consisted of four points – the duration of the agreement; the office administrative support (a two-thirds position); space, furniture, computers and technical support; printing services, supplies, transportation of materials on a charge-back basis for EOSDN. This brief Agreement illustrates the trust between the two entities and supports opinions often offered by Reg

Shadbolt and others...without the generous commitment of Queen's University at the beginning, the Network may never have got off the ground. That relationship built on mutual purpose and professional understanding remains strong to this day. Queen's still houses the Network office and offers printing and some administrative services at the Faculty of Education Centre in Kingston.

As noted, the regional school boards committed funds to EOSDN from the start. The Sponsorship Fees Chart from 1992 indicated four levels of annual fees charged to boards and Ottawa University for their membership and participation in the Network. The range of payment per year was, from small to large boards, \$500, \$1000, \$1500 and \$2000, for a total income from 23 boards and Ottawa University of \$28,000. All conferences and workshops were operated on a cost-recovery basis. The small budget is but one other indication of the dedication of people to the concept of a network, as so many gave freely of their time and expertise to participate in committee and professional activities work. Needless to

The Letter

"We, the members of the Eastern Ontario Staff Development Network, welcome the many recommendations concerning professional development in the recent Royal Commission Report, *For the Love of Learning*. We agree with the Royal Commission that 'together we have a chance to fashion something new and dramatic in the world of learning'. Indeed, we have been doing that for quite some time and provide a model of effective collaboration. The EOSDN can continue to serve Eastern Ontario by facilitating the implementation of some of the changes that are proposed in your Report....We direct your attention to the recommendations we made in our submission to the Royal Commission, (asking the Ministry) to recognize EOSDN as an effective model of Boards working collaboratively and to examine ways in which consortia like the EOSDN could be more involved in Ministry plans regarding professional development and educational services. Is there a future for an existing collaborative structure such as EOSDN in your plans? We await your response to our willingness to collaborate and to work with you and your Ministry."

-Excerpts from EOSDN letter to David Cooke,
Ontario Minister of Education and Training – February 22, 1995

say, Reg Shadbolt and Jill Wing offered their services at a fraction of what people in their positions would normally receive as remuneration. They worked tirelessly to make the enterprise a success in its first stages and afterward, keeping the organization ever-growing in professional development opportunities as they worked hand-in-hand with the Board of Directors and committees.

As noted earlier, timing is important in achieving success in any endeavour. Professional Development was a priority for the Ministry of Education, boards and schools across the province at that time. So an organization focussing on educational workshops, in-services and conferences in the late 1980s-early 1990s was certainly on the right track. Another provincial initiative arrived just at the proper time for EOSDN in 1990. The Ontario government for decades had administered the examinations for certification as a supervisory officer (superintendent and director). In the late 1980s discussions around the process of certification resulted in the publishing of a provincial document entitled *The Way Ahead*. The result of the consultation meant that the government was going to turn over much of the certification process to groups which were to be called 'delivery agents'. The Ontario government called for applications to offer the new supervisory officer program and EOSDN immediately answered the call. More information about the Network's Supervisory Officers' Qualification Program will be outlined later in this book, but the initial steps leading to Ministry of Education approval will be briefly touched upon here.

On August 15, 1990, 17 representatives of the Network met with Evelyn Shapka from the Ministry of Education in Toronto to discuss EOSDN's submission of a proposal to the Ministry regarding the train-

ing of candidates for Supervisory Officers' Certification. When the meeting ended, the Network had decided that the organization would move forward with the proposal and established a working committee to prepare a proposed framework and one module to bring back to the entire group before submitting the proposal to the Ministry of Education. The committee consisted of Ed Klymko (Lanark Public), Bruce Mather (Durham Public), Leila Metcalf (Carleton Public), Molly McClung (Frontenac Public), Greg McNally (Lanark Leeds Grenville Separate), Ruth Rees (Queen's) and John Reid (Northumberland Newcastle Public). The letter of intent to submit a proposal was presented by August 30, a progress report by October 1 and an overall framework with one draft module by October 29. Over the next year three other program modules as well as a practicum and internship outline were sent to the Ministry. All of these were prepared by members of the Network. In 1992 EOSDN was selected by the Ministry as one of the four agencies (three English and one French language) in Ontario to be a provider of this important educational service. Over the next few years the EOSDN Supervisory Officers' Qualification Program met all of the requirements for continuing approval for the program. This accomplishment was a huge step in the journey of the Network as the approval established the place of EOSDN in offering provincial courses, while opening the doors for future projects of a provincial scale in the 1990s right through to today. In 1990 as in 2014, the right place at the right time...with the right people leading the way!

The In-Service Institute, which addressed the needs of teachers, consultants and department heads, established a planning committee for an annual conference called

EOSDN's First Conference

"Planning for the first Transitions Years Conference started on March 25, 1990. I think this was the first Network activity or conference where teachers were the focus; it was my first involvement in EOSDN. The name of the conference was Education with a Purpose. I recall several meetings with Bill Carlyle (Leeds Grenville Public), John Aikman (Lanark Public), Bill Roddy (Storront Dundas Glen-garry Public) and Paul Tovey (Lanark Public) regarding the workshops and carousels. We were developing the program and were inviting people from the school boards as presenters. People were working on Ministry-funded Transition Years projects and we drew on those learnings in developing the conference."

-Eleanor Newman,
Lanark Leeds
Grenville Separate SB

Mappings

From its earliest years to 2006, EOSDN offered *Mappings*, a three-day summer leadership institute for school leaders, facilitated by school leaders. Facilitators for the course in its early days included Julian Hanlon, Julie Tuepah (both of Carleton Catholic), and Moe Daniel (Frontenac Lennox and Addington Catholic). From 1999 to 2004 David Fox (Hastings Prince Edward DSB) and Margaret Fancy (Catholic DSB of Eastern Ontario) facilitated *Mappings* with the support of school and board leaders from across Eastern Ontario. Deb Robinson (Ottawa Carleton Catholic) joined the team in 2004. *Mappings* provided an opportunity for school leaders to come together just before the start of a new school year. Topics for the three days were always current and provided opportunities for inquiry, reflection and skill building. The atmosphere was one where participants felt safe to ask questions, and seek advice and support. There was always lots of humour. *Mappings* attracted many new administrators, a number of whom commented on the mentors they gained through the institute. People came together as colleagues and often left as friends.

Keynote presenters at *Mappings* included: Lorne Keon (Renfrew Catholic DSB); Lauren Wilson (Renfrew DSB); Ian Carswell, Catherine McVie, Eleanor Newman (Upper Canada DSB); Greg McNally, Sheila Farris, Brian Peters (Catholic DSB of Eastern Ontario); Julian Hanlon, Denise Andre, Lucy Miller (Ottawa Catholic SB); Michele Babcock, Barry O'Connor (Limestone DSB); Barbara Day Wills (Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic DSB); there were many others. Topics ranged from reflections on models of leadership to strategies for conducting effective meetings. Participants were asked to come to *Mappings* with a question related to their practice that would be addressed by the group over the course of the three days and also to bring a best practice to share. In addition to the presentations/discussions, there was always an Open Space opportunity to address topics identified by participants. The venues (Donald Gordon Centre, then Four Points Sheraton in Kingston) provided an atmosphere that was conducive to sharing best practices and building a peer network.

Principals Learning Together

“I had the privilege of being a participant in the first *Mappings* as a new Vice Principal, and a facilitator for six years. Each year I learned new skills and built on my reflective practice thanks to the generosity of colleagues from across the Network. We planned, questioned, clarified and laughed together... some of the best professional and personal growth of my career.”

-Margaret Fancy,
Catholic DSB of
Eastern Ontario



Keynote presenters at *Mappings* provided ideas, humour and guidance for school leaders from across Eastern Ontario. From left: Deb Robinson presents to the group as Marg Fancy, long-time *Mappings* organizer, sits in the foreground; Bill Gartland presents to the group in 2004; That same year, two colleagues work on an activity designed to ignite dialogue and inspiration.

Education With A Purpose, sometimes affectionally referred to over the years as EWAP. EWAP was the first conference intended for teachers – there were ‘real’ teachers on the committee and ‘real’ teachers presenting at the conference, sharing ideas from their own classroom practice through workshops or carousels. The context was the research that the Ministry had commissioned on the Adolescent Experience. The Network conference over the years provided a means for the learning within each board to be shared with other boards – fairly powerful and much less expensive and more accessible (meaning more teachers could attend) than sending folks to Toronto provincial gatherings of the ‘leaders’ of the Transitions projects. This conference’s success paralleled the almost instant, positive growth of the Network in education circles throughout Eastern Ontario and beyond. A real strength of EOSDN was that it cut across all grade levels, from kindergarten through to graduation. Ideas appear to have moved seamlessly through divisions and across educational roles. The ‘Train the Trainer’ model, that is, educators presenting to colleagues from across the region who would then go back to their boards and schools and share the message learned, created energy as it expanded expertise throughout the Network.

Brian Gilmour of Stormont Dundas and Glengarry Public Board, chaired the first four Transitions conferences from 1991-94. This conference served the Network from 1991-1999, a tribute to its effectiveness. In 1999 it became the Ideas Conference, a gathering to share practical ideas that work, by teachers for teachers of Grades 7-10. Brian remembers the effect of the conferences on education in Eastern Ontario as such:

“The Transitions Conference was organized to help Eastern Ontario educators address requirements of the Ministry’s Grades 7 to 9 transition program including: de-streaming, integration, outcome-based education and new assessment and instructional strategies. Changes, which at the time seemed insurmountable to many educators! In excess of 1,000 educators attended the conference and over time many thousands of students benefitted from the successful changes that were implemented. As is most often the case, the value of sharing the planning and implementation process with others is most rewarding. EOSDN created an environment that promoted vision, an environment that valued individuals and which allowed for creativity, innovation, risk taking and honest mistakes.”

The Transitions Conferences were but one good example of how EOSDN was fulfilling its mission to help staff in improving student learning by using networking strategies and resources more efficiently. There were many others.

The organization’s newsletters of the times clearly indicate the high level of activity throughout the jurisdiction. In 1994 a ‘What’s being planned’ column listed in some detail these events for people to mark on their calendars - Mappings ’94 Summer Institute for School Leaders, In-service for Supervisory Officers, Reflections (annual review of the Network), golf tournament, Equalizing Educational Opportunities led by Marc Schaefer and Colin Vickers, the electronic version of the Presenters Directory/Infoshare (listing colleague leaders in Eastern Ontario who would share their message with others), the first Network newsletter on Assessment and Evaluation, the fifth annual Transitions Conference, CAMCRY (Creation and Mobiliza-

tion of Counselling Resources for Youth), the 40% Factor Newsletter (strategies and resources for anti-violence programs, cultural change models, junior achievement programs, etc.), a Summer Institute on Planning Integrated Curriculum with Susan Drake, Round Two of the Supervisory Officers’ Qualification Program, and the 2nd National Summer Institute for Educators on Employability Skills at Queen’s University, coordinated by Gar White. The 1996-1997 EOSDN Advance Planner lists 19 opportunities for learning and networking for members of the Network.

Paralleling the In-Service Institute’s busy schedule of activities was the work of the Leadership Academy. Regular workshops and conferences included: Mentoring and Coaching, Assessment Centres, Assessor Training Centre, professional development for supervisory officers, Leadership Implementation Series, Leader 1-2-3 Centres, Leadership Early Assessment Program, and New Principals In-Service – Quality School Leaders Series.

Nadine Cuccaro of Renfrew Public Board and later of the Ministry of Education in Ottawa, served in many capacities as a member of EOSDN, mostly within the In-Service Institute and the Leadership Academy in those early years. She recalls how active the Network was in planning activities for teachers and administrators by adapting to the ever-occurring changes in provincial education requirements and initiatives. Nadine credits this creative, open approach to adaptation and change as crucial to the success and sustainability of the organization:

“As a representative of my board at EOSDN, I had the occasion to chair and present at a number of Summer Institutes. At EOSDN, we ‘lived

A Lesson in Technology!

"I recall one satellite conference on secondary schools which was province-wide with many sites participating. A group of us from the Network was in downtown Ottawa at the Bell Canada teleconference centre. The conference was clear in picture and sound...it seemed as if we were all in the one room. During the 'question and answer' period we lost our sound feed but could still see the conference presenters. As time passed we talked more and more among ourselves, sometimes on topic, sometimes not. While watching the screen we could tell that there was a lull in the conversation as people had stopped interacting and were looking back at the camera. The moderator held up a sign which read, "We can hear you!" Our room went suddenly silent! We learned a few lessons that day about technology and life, perhaps the most important being that in a teleconference you may be off-line in some ways but still connected in others, so watch what you say!"

-Greg McNally,
Lanark Leeds Grenville
Separate Board

through' the Transition Years, the Common Curriculum, Outcomes-based Education, just to name a few of the significant educational reforms that began in the 1990s. Regardless of the change in focus of planning, program delivery, or assessment and evaluation EOSDN found value in the need to advance educational practices and support teachers as they moved to adopt these refinements... and therein lies the greatest strength of the inception of EOSDN."

One happening has been vital to the life of the organization since the early 1990s. Annually the Board of Directors along with members of the In-Service Institute and Leadership Academy have gathered to review the accomplishments to date and to plan for the future. This gathering came to be known as 'Reflections', and it was instrumental in moving the Network ahead in a planned, contemplative fashion. The first Reflections on record took place on August 11, 1994 at the Parkway Inn in Cornwall where seventeen members came together. Using a 'Stop-Start-Continue' format to move the discussion forward, this group developed a draft Action Plan for the Network. The EOSDN Board of Directors and Committees reviewed the proposals in the fall of 1994, made changes, then the Board finalized the Plan for implementation. There were a few 'Stops', many 'Continues' and 'Starts', with examples from the latter two dealing with communication, new technologies, partnerships, conferences for primary through senior divisions, leadership, summer institutes, budget, and submission of a report to the provincial Royal Commission on Learning.

The good news in all of this well-considered planning was that the suggestions came to fruition over the next year or so, to be re-enforced, modified, continued or stopped as a result of the next year's 'Reflec-

tions'. Originally this review was done in the summer with the idea that people could take a refreshed look at the Network after a bit of a break from the regular routine. Leaders from those early days are high in their praise of how Reflections kept the organization renewed and purposeful in its planning and decisions. In one way or another, Reflections has continued as part of the EOSDN culture, sometimes called by its original title, at others by terms such as Review and Visioning. In any case the concept of coming together to review, revise, plan and implement has ensured the growth and relevance of the Network, no matter what the landscape of provincial education issues at the time.

When EOSDN began in 1989, the newest means of fast communication for the printed word was the fax machine which allowed for the transmission of the written word via telephone lines. The fax served EOSDN well, reducing the number of phone calls across the region and permitting members to communicate by one missive to all of its members! This means of contacting boards and universities allowed for information on meetings, dates, conferences and so forth to be sent out immediately. By the mid-1990s advances in technology opened many doors for the Network and the committees were quick to latch onto these innovative communication tools. As the Network's main focus was professional development for educators, the opportunity to share the latest in curriculum and research presented itself in the form of the video conference. The format for such a conference was for participants from a distant location to sign into a site where the main speaker was addressing an audience on an educational topic, view the presentation on a large screen at a local video-conference centre, then actually participate in

the group discussion or question/answer session over the air waves. To people today, familiar with web conferencing, live-streaming and the like, this would naturally be old technology but to the participants in 1995 such video conferences around eastern Ontario were the state-of-the-art and amazing.

As is its custom, the Network looked within its members for expertise to lead in the offering of such experiences. Bob Leitch, a member of the Leadership Academy from Lanark Public Board, was one of the pioneers for expanding telecommunication services in Lanark County through a group known as the Lanark Communications Network (LCN). Bob recalls the initial

forays into video-conferencing as follows:

"In the spring of 1995, I made a presentation to the EOSDN Leadership Forum about the Integrated Community Network concept and in the fall, the LCN's Distance Education and Training Working Group organized two video conferences: An Owner's Guide to The Future: Trends Towards Success and Families and Literacy. These live interactive workshops were delivered via satellite to teachers at sites in Carleton Place and Smiths Falls. Truly innovative at the time, they opened a whole new world of potential for education and training. In 1996, I was asked to present the Integrated Community Network concept to

the EOSDN Supervisory Officers' Qualification Program. The EOSDN facilitated professional learning and offered a forum in which to share innovative ideas. It enabled us to collaborate with colleagues in a congenial environment and work towards common goals. Certainly, the LCN coalition was made stronger because of organizations like the EOSDN."

The 1995 Network News spring newsletter tells of how EOSDN was fulfilling its goals in response to recommendations from Reflections 94, one of which was to demonstrate and provide leadership with new and projected technologies. In 1995 the Network carried Peter Senge's Applying the Principles of the Learn-

Reflections

"My involvement with the EOSDN began in the early 1990s when I was a consultant and later a co-ordinator with the then Lanark, Leeds & Grenville RCSSB. My participation included regular networking meetings with colleagues from the other Eastern Ontario boards where we shared our own board's staff development and training initiatives and collaborated on common needs in the staff development arena. I was privileged to have served for several years on the then 'Transitions Conference Committee' which attempted to meet the needs of teachers of Grades 7 to 9. It was our responsibility to plan, organize and facilitate the annual conference for Grades 7 to 9 teachers in eastern Ontario. This conference was considered by many to be the flagship event of EOSDN in the mid-nineties. I have pleasant memories of many professional collaborations with excellent educational leaders across eastern Ontario while participating in the EOSDN organization."

~Betty Pullan, Lanark Leeds Grenville Separate Board

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"Whether it was the In-Service Institutes which provided exemplary in-service for Early Years to Secondary School Teachers or the Leadership Academy providing professional activities for Senior Administrators as well as School Level Administrators, EOSDN was a leader in the service delivery field. My involvement with EOSDN allowed me the opportunity to network with outstanding educators throughout the Province. One of the people who had an enormous impact on my educational journey was Barry O'Connor. He was an incredible mentor and really pushed me to the next level of learning.

Reg Shadbolt's vision of ensuring that the Managing Changes to Secondary School Leadership workshop would be available to a wide audience introduced me to the world of telecommunications. It was a challenge to determine where to hold the workshop as Michael Fullan and Andy Hargreaves were our presenters and were located in Toronto. After many discussions with the various stakeholders, it was decided to host the conference as an interactive telecommunications telecast broadcasting from various sites such as Belleville, Ottawa, Pembroke and Peterborough, to name just a few. I had never used technology in this way so my learning curve was tremendous. This conference again demonstrated the very essence of what the Network is all about – a dynamic, visionary organization which promotes a high level of professional development."

~Donna Commerford (Conway), Peterborough Victoria Northumberland Newcastle Separate Board

ing Organization satellite broadcast for over one hundred members at four downlink sites in December and March, with Part 3 scheduled for May. EOSDN also established its own 'Conference' on the Ontario Teachers' Federation's Electronic Network. In November of 1996 the EOSDN Secondary School Reform Committee, chaired by Donna Conway, held a successful video conference for 169 participants, followed by the Invitational Leadership video conference in April of 1997. The Western Ontario Staff Development Network and the Northern Ontario Instructional Leadership Centre were also active participants in this conference, clearly demonstrating the potential of networking via the air waves. Bob Leitch, Donna Conway, Dave Parker, Tom Clifford, Bruce Brydges, John Nightingale, Dale Midwood, Dave Steele, Andy Ringlet, Michael Howe and Mary Durst coordinated the plans for these interactive events. Local universities, colleges and businesses offered the Network the use of their video conference sites so that these initiatives could take place, another sign of the growing partnering between the Network and the community.

The mid-1990s brought rumblings from Toronto, the seat of provincial government, of the possible amalgamation of school boards, a further reduction of the number of boards established at the first amalgamation in 1969. This did not bode well for the Network. Should the amalgamation happen, the realignment of boards could mean the reduction of sponsors for EOSDN and therefore a decrease in the revenue required to keep the organization functioning. The Network had carefully planned its finances so that the membership fees from the boards would pay the basic expenses and the conferences were operated on a cost-recovery ba-

sis, but each year was a struggle. The 'best-guess' thinking around the Board of Directors table was as follows: amalgamation would be discussed by the government as it had been a few years earlier and things would remain the same, that is, no amalgamation; should amalgamation occur, EOSDN had to make certain that it was seen as an integral part of professional development in Eastern Ontario, thus gaining support from the new board entities.

AMALGAMATION

Amalgamation did come, with most boards in the Network being affected, the only exceptions being Renfrew Public, Renfrew Separate, Durham Public, Durham Separate and Peterborough Separate. As of January 1998 the 23 school boards in the Network were reduced to 13. (As the Ice Storm hit Eastern Ontario at this exact time, some people, in a jokingly, macabre fashion, stated that this was a sign from above that amalgamation was not the way to go!). The government did reduce senior administrative positions, thus somewhat hurting the continuity of leadership in the Network. However, there were still leaders in each board with experience and connections to EOSDN and the organization continued to be supported by the new boards. This continuance doesn't mean that it was not a time of turmoil and turbulence. It certainly was, yet EOSDN survived because it was viewed as essential to teaching, learning and leading in Eastern Ontario. Eleanor Newman (Leeds and Grenville Public Board), Chair from 1996-98, agreed to stay on one more year as Chair to lead the Network through the amalgamation period. Reg Shadbolt, Eleanor and the Board of Directors did remarkable work in addressing and accommodating the changes

brought by school board amalgamation.

Once more an early decision and direction of the organization served it well. As noted before, EOSDN was independent of direct Ministry funding and interdependent on local funding. This model very likely allowed the Network not only to survive the reduction in board sponsors, but caused it to thrive. The EOSDN was well positioned to serve the east as newly formed larger boards coped with fewer system program personnel. The nine Eastern region school boards resulting from the 1998 amalgamation are members of EOSDN to this day, a tribute to the boards and to the Network.

Just before the time of school board amalgamation, the Network engaged in Constructivist approaches to reviewing, planning and implementing initiatives. This approach builds knowledge from what is already known, and what one wants to learn to design a plan for moving forward. One reason that Constructivism is being highlighted here is because it gives insight into how the Network made decisions about professional development opportunities and how these decisions often had a long-term impact on teaching and learning within the organization. EOSDN looked both within and outside for its ideas and inspiration. Leaders within EOSDN were intrigued by the positive influence that a Constructivist project could have on learning in schools, in boards and within the Network itself.

In the summer of 1996, EOSDN sponsored four members to the Constructivist Conference in Grand Island, near Niagara Falls, New York: Nadine Cuccaro, Dona Cruickshank, Sue McKenna, and Eleanor Newman. The use of the Constructivist approach was so ef-

fective that it has been used since those first days, in curriculum, in planning, in setting direction for the Network itself. Nadine reflects that she has “no doubt that Constructivism has had a significant impact on the work that we have done at EOSDN. It gave us a model to follow that really had the potential to move our work forward - and an opportunity to look at a ‘problem’ from a number of perspectives, usually enhancing the path to a solution or action plan.” Just one example of this movement’s impact appears much later in 2008 when the Network employed a Constructivist activity to examine the learning opportunities in the Network, focusing on current research, market realities and member interest. The approach the organization took in implementing the Constructivist concept over the years points to a consistency in decision-making and direction-setting – search for innovative ideas, implement them, continue to expand upon them to serve the Network, making certain the innovation meets the mission, structure, operational guidelines, valued cornerstones and intentions



Marilyn O'Connor accepts the 2010 EOSDN Outstanding Service Award on behalf of her late husband, Barry O'Connor. Lorne Keon (right) won the award that same year. Both Barry and Lorne have been leaders within the EOSDN community.

of EOSDN.

So, the Network did not become a casualty of the many reductions brought about by the provincial school board amalgamation. In 1998 EOSDN showed no lapse in organizing and planning events across the jurisdiction. The In-Service Institute May 14, 1998 Report to the Board of Directors details the work of the Elementary Curriculum Council, Early-Junior-Transitions-Secondary initiatives, structure, communications, community partnerships, information technology. The Leadership Academy planned sessions for the NASSP Leadership Assessment Program (LEAP), Leader 1-2-3, supervisory officer field day, programs for new principals and vice-principals, and the four-day summer institute ‘Leadership for the Millenium’ program at the Donald Gordon Conference Centre, Queen’s University.

SELF-ASSESSMENT

In October, 1998 Project Director Reg Shadbolt presented a proposal for reviewing EOSDN to the Board of Directors for its consideration. A special committee was to be struck, consisting of ten members with representatives from directors of education, superintendents, principals, teachers and faculties of education, plus the present Chair of the Board of Directors. This Review differed from the annual Reflections exercise in that it was to look at the very existence of the Network itself. The Board of Directors approved Reg’s recommendation of such a Committee. The names of the Committee members and their newly-formed boards show how the players may have remained the same but the jurisdictions had changed. District School Board (DSB) was the new terminology to describe boards of education in Ontario. Review Committee members were Barry



Greg McNally and Eleanor Newman served as Past-Chair and Chair of the Network from 1996-99 – a period of substantial change in education.

O'Connor (Limestone DSB), Phil Rocco (Ottawa Carleton Catholic SB), Greg McNally (Catholic DSB of Eastern Ontario), Russ Holmberg (Renfrew County DSB), Catherine Kasparzak (Renfrew County Catholic DSB), Eleanor Newman (Upper Canada DSB), Dick Malowney (Kawartha Pine Ridge DSB), Barbara Day Wills (Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic DSB), Helen Beck (Hastings and Prince Edward DSB), Margaret Dempsey (Ottawa Carleton DSB), Dr. Brad Cousins (University of Ottawa).

This in-depth self-assessment for EOSDN was timely for many reasons: with reduced numbers of supervisory officers and system staff following amalgamation, fewer representatives were available to lead in the Committee and Board of Directors work; the Network was approaching its tenth anniversary and it is always good to check the status and health of an organization at important intervals; finally, and definitely most importantly, Reg had made it known that he would be retiring from his role as Project Director in 1999. He wished to ensure that all was in place for continuing success when he officially left the organization. Needless to say, Reg’s influence on the development and growth of the Network was outstanding. His presence would be greatly missed yet, as usual, he

was planning for the success of the organization immediately and in the longer term. We will speak to this topic in more depth later in this chapter. In the meantime, what were the recommendations of the Review Committee?

During the fall, winter and spring of 1998-99, the Committee met with and welcomed input from educators and partners across Eastern Ontario. The main work of the Committee centred on the Mission Statement, Our Structure, Our Valued Cornerstones, Our Intentions, Our Operational Guidelines, budget and new directions. In most cases the present compositions and details were altered slightly to reflect changes which had occurred over a decade. The Mission Statement was revised to the following:

The Eastern Ontario Staff Development Network, a consortium of school boards and faculties of education, is committed to improving student learning in schools in Eastern Ontario by providing educators with professional development and

training.

Three points were added to the Cornerstones and four to the Intentions. The Operational Guidelines had the most revisions which is logical in that the organization had grown, resulting in expanded roles and responsibilities. Promoting the sharing of current research and practice, developing and maintaining a website and recognizing outstanding contributions within the Network were but three new items added. Three decisions were reached fairly early in the deliberations: EOSDN would continue to exist; the present EOSDN structure would remain; and, EOSDN would continue to respond to emerging needs in its programming. With Reg's impending retirement, the Board of Directors was asked to seek nominations for the next Project Director by contacting each member institution of the Network. Julie Clarke, Executive Assistant since 1993, would remain in her important central position. One major recommendation for structural

change came in the spring of 1999 – that EOSDN merge the In-Service Institute and the Leadership Academy to form a single Staff Development Coordinating Committee. This suggestion was brought forth by the In-Service Committee and was passed by the Board of Directors, with the understanding that this Committee be reviewed in 2001.

PASSING THE BATON

Reg Shadbolt had notified the Board of Directors almost a year in advance of his impending retirement at the end of August, 1999. At its May meeting, the Board of Directors appointed Dona Cruickshank, who had served for many years as a curriculum leader with the Stormont Dundas Glengarry Public Board, as Project Manager of the EOSDN for a term of three to five years, beginning September 1, 1999. This recommendation had been brought to the Board by the Review Committee. Dona had been active in the Network throughout the



Reg Shadbolt, as the EOSDN's first Project Manager, has played an integral role in the success of the organization. In 2013 Reg addressed the group at the annual dinner in Kingston, as Norah Marsh, Manon Seguin and Roger Clarke listen in, enjoying Reg's recollections and humour.

1990s, serving as a member of the In-Service Committee since its earliest days and chairing that Committee for many years. The torch was being passed along to a leader with a solid reputation as someone who shared in the organization's mission and vision, a leader well respected by colleagues throughout Eastern Ontario.

The Network celebrated its tenth anniversary at its annual dinner in May, 1999, at the Ramada Inn in Belleville. As well as many reminiscences of the organization's beginnings, hiccups and successes being shared at tables and at the podium, the Network took this occasion to recognize the outstanding contributions of Reg Shadbolt to EOSDN over the past decade. Although he has always been quick to point out the impact of others on the growth and success of the entity, people connected to the organization know that, without Reg's leadership from the initial idea of such a network through to 1999, there would be no Eastern

Ontario Staff Development Network. In Belleville that May evening, Reg was presented with the Outstanding Service Award by the Network, recognizing in this small yet significant way his unique contribution to professional development and learning in Eastern Ontario. In his words of presentation for the Award, past Chair Greg McNally stated, "The EOSDN is unique in all of Ontario and Reg Shadbolt has been instrumental in setting its direction and maintaining the momentum. He has kept us moving ahead together throughout all kinds of changes in education." Those words could not be truer.

The closing words for the first 10 years belong to Reg in his letter of farewell in Network News:

"I can hardly believe that I have been the project director of EOSDN for so many years...Dona Cruickshank is a fine educational leader, who will take the Network to new levels of enthusiasm and accom-

plishment. I want to congratulate and thank each of you for making so many dreams come true, especially, for the continuous support, encouragement and inspiration that I have enjoyed for the last ten years. I know that Dona will receive no less.

As I reflect upon the highs, and lows, of the short history of the Network, I could write a book about so many great people who have given so much to their colleagues. It has been a wonderful experience that I will always cherish. I will miss you, and I will continue to be your best supporter...I do want to thank Julie Clarke and all others who made the decade so memorable.

Follow your dreams and ideals. Remember that the journey is always more fun than arriving at the destination. All good things...Reg."

All good things, indeed – from the right person at the proper time.

EOSDN Original Members

When the EOSDN first launched, it comprised of 23 school board members as well as two university members. These members included:

- Carleton County Board
- Carleton RCSS Board
- Durham County Board
- Durham Region RCSS Board
- Frontenac County Board
- Frontenac-Lennox & Addington RCSS Board
- Hastings County Board
- Hastings, Prince Edward RCSS Board
- Lanark County Board
- Lanark, Leeds & Grenville RCSS Board
- Leeds & Grenville County Board
- Lennox & Addington County Board
- Northumberland & Newcastle Board
- Ottawa Board
- Ottawa RCSS Board
- Peterborough, Victoria, Northumberland & Newcastle RCSS Board
- Prescott & Russell County Board
- Prescott-Russell English RCSS Board
- Prince Edward County Board
- Queen's University, Faculty of Education
- Renfrew County Board
- Renfrew County RCSS Board
- Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry County Board
- Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry RCSS Board
- University of Ottawa, Faculty of Education

Chapter 3

1999-2009: Into the Millennium

Dona Cruickshank, who officially became the Network's second Project Director on September 1, 1999 shared her anticipation of moving into her new role in a column in the Network News entitled Looking Back...Looking Ahead. In this article Dona expressed her gratitude to Reg Shadbolt and other key members of EOSDN for the solid foundation they had built. She referred to Reflections '99 in Arnprior where colleagues discussed the new structure of the organization and four areas to address in the upcoming year: communications, links to be strengthened, activities to revisit, and potential areas to explore. As noted earlier, the Board of Directors approved a two-year pilot whereby the In-Service Institute and the Leadership Academy would merge. Nadine Cuccaro of Renfrew Public Board became the Chair and Katherine Kasprzak of Renfrew Catholic Board the Vice-Chair of this combined group, newly called the Staff Development Coordinating Committee (SDCC).

1999 through the early 2000s was certainly a time of change in education. The question probably comes to mind as to whether or not there has ever been a time in education that wasn't rife with change, innovations and financial crises. Yet a cursory glance at the time around the millennium certainly seems to stand out. The new District School Boards had sharply reduced the number of

senior administrators, leaving those remaining to deal with these issues among the many: school board amalgamations, new elementary curriculum, secondary school improvement initiatives, new financial structures, increased accountability from provincial testing by the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO), the establishment of the Ontario College of Teachers, new principal associations arising from changes to legislation, efficiency pressures resulting in school closures, transportation and operation reviews, local negotiations with provincial employee associations as a result of changes to legislation concerning bargaining agents. As if these were not enough areas to address, along came the very real worry that entering the year 2000 would completely wipe out computer information as the clock struck

midnight! The Y2K (Year 2000) dilemma, as it became known, took untold hours and dollars to plan for and hopefully resolve. As we all anxiously watched Australia ring in the first year of the new millennium with no negative effects on the computer information world, we breathed a collective sigh of relief in anticipation that this continent would have the same results, as it did. Y3K seemed a long way off and not an immediate concern!

With so much diverse activity in each school board, EOSDN viewed the landscape, then developed and followed a plan. As the government became more directive, the Network adapted by becoming a regional leader in provincial literacy, numeracy and research initiatives and in providing sessions for leaders, aspiring leaders, central curriculum staff, and teachers. EOSDN



EOSDN gatherings are great opportunities for educators to network and reflect on their practice with peers from across Eastern Ontario.

sought to adjust its governance and financial structures to accommodate new realities. It also sought to work within the new accountability structures regarding program accreditation and teacher certification requirements. Dona Cruickshank, the Board and Committees worked hard to keep the Network relevant to boards and succeeded in doing this by addressing the needs of teachers. The early years of the Network's second decade were turbulent times for the organization and it is a tribute to all associated with EOSDN that it survived. As one examines the highlights of that particular part of the Network's life, the minutes of meetings reflect an entity that is keeping the best of the past while moving forward into new education ventures. In a way, this has been always so.

The Network forged ahead with a full agenda of events for 1999-2000. Highlights included the New Principals In-Service – Quality School Leaders Series, The Ideas Conference (formerly the Transitions Conference), Secondary School Improvement Series: Session Three – “Sustaining the Momentum”, and the Supervisory Officers' Qualification Program. The regional Ministry of Education in Ottawa had worked closely in partnership with EOSDN for a few years, with Jean Stone-Seguin and Patricia Warren-Chaplin as Ministry liaisons with the Network. Around the time of school board amalgamation in 1998 the Network became the coordinator for Regional Curriculum and Special Education Council meetings. Jean or Pat, or both, were present at these meetings to give an update on Ministry initiatives and to hear of the issues from the Councils' perspectives. The Ministry often served as hosts for these gatherings in their Ottawa office. This partnership built on a trusting relationship has served the Network and the Minis-

try very well over the years.

The SDCC wasted no time during 1999-2000 in examining its needs and priorities. Its Fall planning schedule addressed activities and responsibilities for administration, school councils, aspiring system leaders, program staff, consultants and coordinators, secondary, elementary, French and new school teachers, supervisory officers, NASSP trainers. The minutes of the initial meeting on October 15, 1999 in Brockville augured well for the life of the organization. Dona Cruickshank provided an overview of the new EOSDN structure as well as a detailed description (the Who, What, When and How) of

each structural body. Representatives of the SDCC were responsible for ensuring that all the necessary information (conference flyers, brochures, etc.) was disseminated throughout their boards. Energy and purpose sprang from the summary pages, with tasks assigned for completion before the next meeting on November 30. The committee structure was in good hands!

EOSDN established its new website in 2000, part of its marketing plan for the organization. That same year Marc Schaefer of Upper Canada DSB began as the new SOQP practicum coordinator, succeeding Vic D'Amico of Carleton Catholic who had been in that role

Reflections

“I experienced many highlights during my time as Chair of EOSDN but working with very fine people like Dona Cruickshank and having Dan Pennell and then his sister, Deborah, join the team certainly stand out for me.

With the departure of Julie Clarke after her years of exemplary service we were in need of an executive assistant. What a fortunate circumstance for us that Deborah Pennell agreed to step in; subsequently in May 2001, she accepted the Board's offer and assumed the position. Not only did she bring the necessary skill set but so much more. Her competence, confidence, East Coast humour and keen sense of knowing exactly what needed to be done proved invaluable. As our ambassador in this new setting Deborah was outstanding!

As we grew so too did our need to keep our finances in order and to assist with all those successful grant applications which Dona and Deborah became expert at developing. If we were to continue at the level we had achieved it was critical that our financial reporting be above reproach. Dan Pennell, recently retired from the Armed Forces, was more than qualified. He had been contracted in 2000 to put the books in order, and fortunately was willing to take on the task on a more permanent basis. Thus, the “D” Team was in place. Dona, Deborah and Dan, the Network owes you great praise for jobs so very well done. It was most certainly my pleasure to have worked with all of you.”

-Barbara Day Wills, Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic DSB

since 1995. In the first three years of SOQP, Bernadette McNeill of Carleton Catholic had served as the coordinator (the Network is indebted to these three for the professionalism and continuity they brought to the program for 20 years!). Plans continued in Mappings, Aspiring Leaders, Ideas, Secondary School Improvement, and Assessment-Evaluation-Research Forum. Discussions on how to address the professional development needs of the French Language teachers were highlighted by the SDCC.

Prior to the November 2000 Board of Directors' meeting, a Directions (formerly 'Reflections') session was held, resulting in a recommendation that the executive review the organizational structure, job descriptions and tasks for the effective management of the Network.

In May 2001 recommendations on the following items were presented for consideration of the Board: membership and duties of the Board of Directors, Executive, Staff Development Coordinating Committee, working committees, and office staff. Policies were developed to formalize practices already in place: sponsorship fees, honoraria and expenses for pre-

senters, activity fees/cost recovery events, associate status for affinity groups, outstanding service award and leadership incentives (assisting in covering the cost of a Network member attending a session outside the organization for the purpose of bringing information to the Network).

At this time Julie Clarke, who had served the Network so well for nine years as Project Assistant, resigned from her position. Deborah Pennell assumed the duties of this important role and has remained in that capacity to today. Indeed, EOSDN has been fortunate in the high calibre of professionalism and competence of the office staff who have served the organization and boards in such exemplary fashion throughout these 25 years. Each person added to that feeling of purpose, of team, almost of family - three strong, ever-present traits of the Network.

LEGAL MATTERS

At its beginning, EOSDN was a tightly-knit group with little legal organizational definition. The legislative world in Canada changed dramatically during the 1990s and

into the 2000s as far as definitions of organizations were concerned. Strict guidelines were placed on entities that were listed as not-for-profit structures, as the Network was. Members of the board and office staff recall the ongoing discussions with government personnel as the Network attempted to ensure it met all requirements of the legislation. These considerations included whether or not EOSDN should pay the 7% federal Goods and Services Tax (GST) in its financial dealings, mostly from income from conferences. As mentioned the Network was a very 'bare-bones' organization, with annual fees for boards and 'break-even' prices for conferences. The question arose as to potential exemption from GST as it was an educational institution. The discussion as to where we should go from here, weighing the organization's vulnerable financial situation with the desire to follow the legislation, carried throughout the middle to late 1990s and into the 2000s. Much correspondence and conversation flowed between the offices of Revenue Canada in Ottawa and the Network in Kingston. The audit firm of KPMG was contracted by EOSDN to provide advice on these taxation matters:



From 2002-2004, the EOSDN Board of Directors included: (front row) Barbara Day Wills, Eleanor Newman, (back row from left) Vanessa Taber, Bill Gartland, Linda Wilson, Myles Sabourin, Peter Hiscock, Paul Lattanzio, David Fox and Dona Cruickshank. The group met here in 2004 at the Glen House for its annual meeting.

the organization's compliance as a not-for-profit group; GST requirements and the filing of returns for Revenue Canada. The KPMG report in 2002 showed two options – to become a charitable organization, with all supplies GST exempt, or remain a non-profit organization (NPO), register for GST and follow the guidelines. The Board of Directors' decisions led to the Network's incorporation as an NPO in 2006 and shortly thereafter the GST issue was resolved with the organization to pay the tax on specified items. Here is how Dona Cruickshank remembers the culmination of the GST quandary:

"In 2005, the Network instituted annual audits and hired the firm Collins Blay for that task. We continued the GST conversation with that group and received more input but no decision. Fearful that Revenue Canada would come knocking on our door, the Board of Directors, Dan Pennell, Deborah and I spent much time researching and discussing our position. Finally to resolve the situation, Dan filed his first GST papers in September 2006 to register for and collect the GST.

Then about a year later, we were notified of an audit on the now combined Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) to determine what type of organization we were. Luckily, there was a HST office in Kingston and our auditors set up a meeting with representatives from that branch. Dan and I and the auditor had a very friendly meeting with the HST people – they weren't the big bad wolves that we feared – but when we left the meeting we still had no idea which way the ruling would go for the Network. Almost a year later, the happy day came in the form of a cheque for \$23 that finally gave us a ruling that Dan had filed correctly. Dan was one thrilled person when he finally knew that he could process documents in total compliance with Rev-

Heather Highet (left), Doris McWhorter (centre) and Marg Stewart (across the table) all from the Limestone DSB are enjoying the company of colleagues at a regional secondary schools event in 2003.



enue Canada requirements!"

More than a decade of dialogue and correspondence between EO-SDN and the government was resolved and the Network moved onward.

OCT PD REQUIREMENTS

In 2002, the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) implemented direction from the provincial government entailing mandatory ongoing professional development for teachers. Basically each teacher in the province was required to successfully participate in and complete recognized accreditation courses, totaling seventy hours over each five years. Needless to say, the legislation created quite a furore across the province. The compulsory nature of the Professional Learning Program (PLP), as it was called, was viewed by many in education as being too heavy-handed. On the other side of the coin, people, while perhaps not appreciating the mandatory nature of the program, reasoned that teachers were already taking an active part in professional learning on a continuous basis, so why not receive credit for it. Caught in the middle of this discussion and these reactions was EOSDN. As its committees and events already provided opportunities for professional learning, the Network could

be a source of PLP credits. In November of 2002, to address the situation around the PLP, the Network established an 'ad hoc' Professional Learning Committee to examine the OCT accreditation of courses as it might apply to EOSDN and District School Board (DSB) offerings. Chaired by Bill Gartland of the Ottawa Carleton Catholic School Board, the Committee invited all Network DSBs to discuss common issues and potential regional approaches to the PLP requirements.

"The Staff Development Coordinating Committee provided an opportunity to work with all Boards in Eastern Ontario. We had a network of educators providing Staff Development in a variety of boards talking about issues. We were able to share and learn from each other," explains Bill Gartland. "When the Ministry of Education came out with an initiative, representatives from all Boards came together to identify best practices. We looked at opportunities to deliver P.D. together. We reviewed resources and talked about the best way to implement them. Some of the topics that were dealt with included literacy and numeracy and leadership. This committee was exactly what would later be described as a PLC (Professional Learning Community) once again EOSDN was ahead of its time!"

In February, 2003 when EOSDN hosted its annual Ideas Conference in Kingston, 15 per cent of the teachers participating opted for this professional learning activity to 'count' as a PLP credit, complete with an evaluation component and a cheque to cover the \$25 provincial fee. This proved to be a very unsettling time for all members of the Network. In protest of the government legislation, teacher unions picketed the Kingston conference. Some publishers and presenters withdrew from Ideas at the last minute. The Ideas Conference team

filled the program gaps and the event took place. The Secondary School Conference slated for May, 2003 was cancelled due to lack of registrations. This conference was held in Gananoque that fall with 33 teachers in attendance. The regional Professional Learning Committee continued to meet, developing plans which would attempt to meet the requirements of the legislation and the needs of educators, a real balancing act. During 2003 four EOSDN events offered a PLP credit.

The establishment of the College of Teachers also impacted delivery

of the SOQP, as there were new accreditation requirements to be met. Eleanor Newman (Renfrew County DSB) led the round eleven (2003-04) SOQP course facilitators in the preparation of the EOSDN submission to the College for accreditation as a program deliver and for approval of the EOSDN version of the SOQP. The team developed a new SOQP candidate handbook as well as a revised leadership practicum handbook, both aligned with the new OCT guideline, complete with procedures and forms.

The fall of 2003 brought a change of government for the Province. In December of that year, the Professional Learning requirements were suspended and, thus, the Network ceased to be a "PLP provider". It did not cease, however, to offer professional development opportunities. At the Board of Directors meeting in May, 2004 the Innovation Fund CD Series 3 was launched, providing each DSB with 28 additional online courses for teachers and administrators, bringing the total for each board to 79 such courses. The Reaching Higher, Reaching Wider Conference (focusing on literacy and numeracy for Grades 4-10) attracted 350 participants from within the Network and beyond. The Ideas Conference which centred on the sharing of practical classroom ideas for Grades 7-10 teachers drew large numbers as well, with Denise Andre of Ottawa Carleton Catholic as the keynote speaker. The Aspiring Leaders Conference in Kemptonville, chaired by Ann Perron, Tom Duggan and Shawn Lehman, welcomed 37 registrants. The Secondary School Conference held in Pictou in November, with Ivan Saari and Alan Perry as Chairs and Michael Baine of Ottawa Carleton Catholic as Keynote, hosted 73 registrants. All in all, 2003-04 was a difficult period for the Network as it addressed the issues of the day.

Reflections

"The Network began as a collegial professional group informally structured. When the SOQP started in the early '90s, Industry Canada granted the Network an "educational institution" status. This allowed candidates to apply for tax credits for their module fees, but the EOSDN really did not exist in any legal form. The 2002 EOSDN internal review identified that we needed to formalize our structure and apply for incorporation as a not-for-profit. As luck would have it, Deborah Pennell had been involved in the process while working for a previous group and brought a lot of expertise to the task. Deborah knew how to work through the process, the complicated forms and definitions as to "what" we were and also was instrumental in wordsmithing our by-laws necessary to the application.

Without Deborah, the Network would again have had to access outside resources to complete the application. With her experienced completion of the necessary materials and after all boards had signed off on the new by-laws, the Network was granted status as a not-for-profit organization in 2005. The hard work of so many Board members- Catherine McVie (Upper Canada), Barbara Day Wills (Algonquin and Lakeshore), David Fox (Hastings and Prince Edward), Bill Gartland (Ottawa Carleton Catholic), to name a few - and staff had paid off.

Part of the process as well was the obtaining of insurance for the Network to protect Directors and Officers as well as offer liability coverage to the actions of the Network.

In a few short years, the EOSDN went from a loosely knit collaborative group to a legal entity with stringent financial policies, identified protocols and procedures as well as the appropriate protection for our people and activities. The same people were doing the same great things but now working within a framework that provided accountability and legal protection for its members."

~Dona Cruickshank, EOSDN

It would be too frivolous to say in regard to the Professional Learning Program that, as in all things, “this too shall pass”, as it would not recognize the strain it placed on relationships within the Network at that time. One point will be emphasized here: the strength of long-term respect among members of EOSDN served the organization well, plus the Network’s concentration on planning, adjusting and moving forward while keeping the main focus on teaching, learning and leading.

THE PROJECTS COMMITTEE FORMATION

As a result of the 2003 EOSDN Review, the Network’s organizational structure was modified and the Staff Development Coordinating Committee became the Projects Committee. Next to the Board of Directors, the Projects Committee was the most important group in reviewing and planning the directions taken by the Network. This committee received reports on all of the previous year’s activities, made suggestions for improvement and/or continuation, and most importantly identified key areas or initiatives where EOSDN could most benefit its member boards. Board

Reflections

“I not only loved the people that I got to work with but I believed in the “Ideas” Conference. The first years, the Transitions Conference, catered to Grades 7-10 teachers and offered a series of workshops that were of a practical nature. Over the course of two days, teachers could experience a number of new strategies, share best practices and then could go home with an excited and renewed passion to teach in a better way. In those days, there were 2 or 3 members from each of our EOSDN member boards around the table. As we left the 90s, we changed the conference name to the Ideas Conference: Practical Ideas that Work. Intermediate teachers were coming back from year to year to seek out new ideas that they could take home with them and try the next day in the classroom. Each year seemed a little harder to get the numbers as board budgets became more of a factor and committee members started to decrease. Even with these hardships, the Ideas always made a little money and we were very proud of that.”

*-Patti Greer,
Algonquin Lakeshore Catholic DSB*

representatives to that committee provided not only a system perspective but also were knowledgeable on current board initiatives and goals. It was an excellent opportunity to build leaders within boards and provided members with a regional perspective on issues and resources.

The Committee was capably chaired for many years by Deb Robinson, Ottawa Catholic School Board, followed by Lauren Wilson of Renfrew County District School Board. It was a dynamic and committed group of representatives who initiated several successful events responsive to the evolving needs of the Network: the Consul-



In this photo, educators from the Ottawa Carleton Catholic School Board show that while professional development activities involved a good deal of work, a spirit of camaraderie and laughter accompanied all events, a trademark of the Network.

tants' Conference, Assessment and Evaluation Study Groups, French-as-a-Second-Language Teachers Conference and the Support Staff Conference. The last two are still part of the Network's offerings. The Projects Committee continued until the 2012 Review results were implemented. The committee provided invaluable input to that Review process and was part of a focus group that met with the external reviewer where the members provided an informed perspective of the value added by the Network as well as ways that EOSDN could improve to meet future needs.

The following is the section from

Reflections

"Specifically, the secondary school conference is a highlight as it was an event (100 people) with great engagement. I recall one participant saying that they hid the invitation when it came to their school as they wanted to go every year and didn't want anyone else to be competing for the school-supported position! Feedback always indicated that the event was stimulating and the organizing committee members were truly outstanding individuals. The best evidence that the event made a difference was represented in data collected in exit responses.

Passionate people were on the planning committee and energetic participants filled the event with productive dialogue."

*-Ivan Saari,
Renfrew County DSB*

the EOSDN policies and procedures of 2003 that outlined the duties of the Projects Committee:

The Projects Committee:

- As a member of the Eastern Ontario Staff Development Network, each member/board/faculty will have a minimum of one and a maximum of three representatives to the Projects Committee (SDCC).
- Appointed representatives are expected to attend on a consistent basis
- Boards sending more than one representative should consider both a system and a school focus, e.g., a mix of principals, vice-principals, consultants, coordinators, and special assignment teachers.
- Each representative will serve on at least one working committee
- The committee meets three times a year (fall, winter & spring) for a full day

The Projects Committee in consultation with the Board of Directors works to:

- identify professional development needs and opportunities for Network members
- develop comprehensive long-range plans for delivering professional development
- create, serve on, and monitor working committees
- operationalize budget amounts for events/initiatives
- provide for communication of EOSDN and member professional development activities
- prepare reports to the Board of Directors.

Another rewarding partnership was with the NECTAR Foundation in Ottawa. NECTAR was developed to create educational materials mostly online and electronically. NECTAR approached the EOSDN with the idea of developing online courses that the Network boards would



Assessment Literacy was a major focus for the EOSDN as new provincial policies came into place. Pat Warren Chaplin (second from left) a strong supporter of the Network while at the regional Ministry office and the Limestone DSB, engages with educators from the region on that topic. Sadly, Pat passed away in 2013.

produce and then share equally in the products. A proposal with Ottawa Carleton Catholic as the Lead Board and under the guidance of Bill Gartland was submitted to the College and approved for funding in 2003.

Over the next two years, an innovative plan was put in place. EOSDN and NECTAR developed a list of potential course titles based on feedback from boards. Then boards identified topics and teams that would come together to write the courses. When the teams came together, the first thing they did was learn all about writing online courses – screen layout, limited text, creating multiple choice features and links to resources. What a learning curve for some – to develop their ideas for their courses into a format that would work online. After a weekend's concentrated efforts, all went back to their boards to continue development. The courses were then submitted to NECTAR for transferring to the online format. The waiting for the final products was like an incubation period and wondering when the due date would be. When the teams saw the final products they couldn't believe how professional they looked. Copies of dvds were created for each board as well as print manuals for usage. Boards were free to use the dvds as they wished. Ottawa Catholic

Reflections

"In 2002, EOSDN partnered with NECTAR to develop and produce 28, five-hour multimedia, online professional development courses for teachers. Called "Ontario Learning Courses" and covering a wide variety of professional development areas, the courses were provided free to all Ontario teachers. Funding was provided by the Ministry of Education of Ontario. The courses were developed by the NECTAR Foundation with curriculum expertise and writers from all Eastern Ontario school boards.

Examples of courses that were developed include: Literacy Across the Curriculum; Addressing Different Learning Styles; Behaviour Management; Teaching Mathematics in the Junior Division; and Inclusionary Practices.

In total, the NECTAR Foundation coordinated the development of 79 online courses for teachers. These projects were completed on time, on budget and were very well received by client users. Available free to Ontario teachers, the programs were also sold to educators in Canada and the USA."

-Vic D'Amico,
originally with Carleton Catholic, later the Director of NECTAR

also posted the courses online so the Network boards could access them. Twenty-seven courses were developed the first year, followed by 26 in the next session.

The courses are still in use in some boards and two have been adapted for use by the MISA initiative and are on the misaeast.on.ca web site.

Another lasting and positive outcome of that project was the camaraderie developed among the teams of teachers, administrators, consultants and technicians who came

together to develop the courses. It was an intensive and complex task but everyone left with a feeling of accomplishment and pride in a job well done.

The Ministry of Education began to fund Board Capacity Initiatives in the mid-2000s to support innovative practices in literacy and numeracy in the primary and junior grades. The Network became the lead organization for the Ottawa region with the Renfrew Public DSB handling the financial aspects of the provincial funding for training sessions. EOSDN was also the lead organization for the Ontario Managing Information for Student Achievement (MISA) project with the Hastings Prince Edward DSB acting as the 'banker board' in this instance.

Managing Information for Student Achievement (MISA) was a Ministry initiative that began in 2005. Each board received local funding and along with that each region would create a Professional Network Centre. This centre would consist

Reflections

"The Board meetings and the planning sessions that resulted from our work were the events that stood out for me the most. In 2004, we started a Visioning exercise that required us to reflect on where the organization needed to go. I was impressed by the knowledge and wisdom of our committee members. Dona Cruickshank, our Executive Director, ensured the 'corporate memory' of the organization was reflected in our future. EOSDN was an inclusive organization well before the Ministry knew what one looked like."

-Roger Clarke, Renfrew County DSB

MISA Musings

"I had been appointed to the Provincial MISA Advisory Committee, which gave me a head start on the idea of EOSDN coordinating professional development for Eastern Ontario Boards, related to technology. Working with Dona, our Executive Director, we were able to convince the Ministry that EOSDN was a viable organization. Our Director, Kathy Soule, was also very supportive and agreed, along with Dave Ruthersford, our Business Superintendent, to act as the Lead Board (treasurer) while an EOSDN committee carried out the planning. Darryl Denyes of our IT Department offered to assist in writing the proposal, along with Dona. Darryl had already written a well received plan for HPEDSB. At future Provincial Advisory Meetings in Toronto, I was able to speak proudly about the EOSDN implementation. EOSDN was the only organization of its kind at that point so there was a lot of interest."

*-David Fox,
Hastings Prince Edward DSB*

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"I had the good fortune after retiring in 2005 to undertake the role of MISA project coordinator with the EOSDN Executive Director at the time, Dona Cruickshank. Many of our early activities reflected that mutual interdependence of our member Boards. Some of our larger Boards were able to provide much needed technology infrastructure advice, support and resources to our smaller member Boards. Keeping in mind that electronic data capacity was in its infancy at the time, the trading and sharing of resources, both human and technical, ensured that all Boards attained an even footing as we moved forward. Member Boards were most supportive in ensuring that our coordinating committee had constant high level representation at our monthly meetings. We used EOSDN's model of consensus in reaching decisions on next steps. The Ministry was impressed with our progress when we regularly outlined the many initiatives undertaken to bring data informed decision making to Senior Administration, Board departments, and classroom teachers in Eastern Ontario.

The MISA project continues to this day, and its success in Eastern Ontario has been largely due to the commitment of EOSDN's member Boards to work together cooperatively in the best interests of students. There are no silos in Eastern Ontario, thanks to EOSDN."

*-Michael Strimas,
Ottawa Catholic School Board*

of MISA Leads from every board developing and sharing resources, and identifying strategies to move the goals of the initiative forward at the local level. The Ottawa Region boards decided that EOSDN was well suited to lead this PNC. Hastings Prince Edward DSB with David Fox and Kathy Soule as liaisons fulfilled the Lead Board role and the PNC came into being. Mike Strimas, from the Ottawa Catholic Board and a former EOSDN Board representative, was hired as coordinator of the PNC. This group led the committee through the first formative years of the Centre, sharing resources to ensure that the infrastructure developed in boards would enable everyone to have the technology in place to ensure clean data and systems.

The Ottawa Professional Network Centre has always been held in high regard in the province and perhaps it is only natural. Many of the principles of the PNC, collegiality, resource sharing and responsiveness to member needs, are embedded in the Network. After nine years, the PNC is still a vibrant entity with Ottawa Catholic Board now assuming the Executive Lead Board role and EOSDN performing the coordination, administration and accounting roles.

Even though the political realities of the decade caused some discomfort, the show went on for the Network. A glance at the 2006-2007 Planned Events List demonstrated good planning and much activity. From August 2006 with the Mappings Summer Institute for Principals and Vice-Principals through to the March 2007 Reaching Higher, Reaching Wider Conference, no fewer than ten major conferences took place! The MISA website housed training modules for school leaders as well as three of the courses developed in partnership with NECTAR. All school boards received funding for action research, a priority for the Network. In July 2006, EOSDN supported the cost of



Sometimes, you just have to dance! Attendees at EOSDN workshops experience a range of learning activities which often require active involvement, as these participants demonstrate.

two teams to attend the Constructivist Conference in Potsdam, New York. The Network determined the research questions in advance, questions relevant to Board and Ministry priorities: student transition from Grade 8 to 9; effective learning strategies related to curriculum/program; leadership in helping teachers with new assessment and evaluation policies. *Le français à cœur* Conference was a big success in its second year. Life in the Network was busy and productive.

Prior to the November 2006 Board of Directors meeting, Madelaine Tarasick, past retired EOSDN Chair from Limestone DSB, led a formal review and visioning exercise for the Network. The Board minutes reflect that the Network was asking itself what EOSDN was all about and what it should/should not be doing. The discussion was of a serious nature in that it centred on the very existence of the organization. Part of the concern arose from new people at the table trying to understand the nature of the Network, part from the worry that three original members had withdrawn from EOSDN. The

minutes of meetings reflect a wondering as to the relevance of the Network, given how the Ministry of Education was becoming directive regarding what teachers and learners needed to learn and even the ways in which learning was to be organized. Once again the ability to ask the tough reflective questions and respond thoughtfully stood the Network in good stead.

The key observations and ideas around the visioning focused on conferences, Ministry partnerships, increasing work demands for EOSDN staff, funding, keynote speakers (balance of regional and outside the region), invitation to school boards no longer in the Network to join/participate, communications strategies, SOQP and operational considerations. A Visioning Action Committee was established from the Board of Directors with its task to act upon a report which was to be written following the November meeting. By May, 2007 this Committee had met twice with a facilitator, producing a draft document updating Mission-Values-Goals for the spring Board meeting. The EOSDN Board of

Directors reviewed and made suggestions about the Mission and Values Statements with debate about whether the Network 'leads' or facilitates professional learning. The Committee took the original recommendations from Madelaine's report and organized them according to Goals, prioritizing these from high to low. The Board in general agreed with the prioritization. The process and initial draft was presented to the regional Directors of Education for their input, along with this question – 'How does the Network help District School Boards do their work?' The Directors of Education suggested that the EOSDN activities should be sent to DSB executive councils for discussion, that activities should be 'cutting edge' and not just repeat year after year. More communication between the Network and school boards was seen as essential for the Network to be effective and meaningful.

In the fall of 2007 the progress report was approved at a special Board of Directors meeting. Many topics referred to in preceding paragraphs were addressed. At the December 6 Board meeting Mission, Vision, Values and Goals were approved.

At that meeting, the EOSDN board of directors agreed that support from Directors of Education was critical and that it was also important to hear other voices in DSBs. The EOSDN agreed to prepare a feedback document for the DSB representative on the EOSDN board to use to gather feedback from within their system and particularly from Executive Councils. The feedback would go from the EOSDN board rep to the Visioning Action Committee and they would compile it into a report for the Board of Directors. The December 2007 Visioning to Reality Report included the following:

EOSDN Mission Statement

EOSDN is a consortium of educators that facilitates collegial sharing and professional learning on behalf of regional interests for the purpose of improving student achievement.

EOSDN Values

- Continuous effective professional learning and training is necessary to improve student learning.
- Networking and collaboration among educational partners are the most effective and efficient strategies for delivering services.
- High quality services and development programs will be planned collaboratively and efficiently across the region.
- Professional learning needs to be tailored to the diverse needs of educators in the region.
- Members accept the responsibility to cooperate fully and participate actively.

EOSDN Vision Statement

School Boards in Eastern Ontario leading the way in building dynam-

ic, collaborative partnerships focused on learning.

EOSDN Goals

- Provide a regional voice, through the Board of Directors, on educational issues and initiate problem solving strategies when necessary. (Lead)
- Build, support and maintain a flexible infrastructure of collaborative systems that promote the exchange of effective practice and shared decision making. (Build)
- Establish, maintain, strengthen and broaden networks to respond to local needs regionally and within boards, set direction, and/or implement provincial mandates. (Lead)
- Provide diverse and high quality professional learning opportunities on the principle of cost recovery. (Learn)
- Foster and support the best models of learning opportunities that are based on current research. (Learn)
- Facilitate the exchange of information about locally organized activities and ensure accessibility of all members. (Build)

Each of these six goals had accompanying, detailed recommendations for actions, responsibilities and timelines to ensure their implementation. The year-long Visioning to Reality process placed the Network in a much more viable position in regard to purpose, activities and communication as it neared the end of its second decade.

Somehow, it was the year 2009 and 20 years in the life of the Eastern Ontario Staff Development Network had passed. The Executive Director's Report to the Board of Directors on May 15, 2009 provides a snapshot of the activities within the organization. The Network was continuing to offer a variety of professional learning opportunities for its members: collaborative learning activities, a needs assessment sent out to Queen's University and school boards, plans for support staff professional learning, partnership with the Ministry of Education's Literacy and Numeracy Capacity Building initiatives, web conferences, summer programs, Managing Information for Student Achievement (MISA) Report (now entering its fifth year), Leading for Success (Principal and Vice-Principals), Reaching Higher, Reaching Wider Conference (with over 300 in attendance), and SOQP delivery.



EOSDN has often coordinated Ministry sessions across the region. Here, Terril Butterworth from the Upper Canada DSB facilitates a summer session for teachers studying the Guides to Effective Instruction.

In her final report for this second decade, Dona Cruickshank ends with these words of gratitude for the past and present and of hope for the future:

“Thank you to Roger Clarke for your commitment to the Network during your time as Director and now Chair. You have ensured that you are always available for the Network and go the extra mile in promoting the success of EOSDN. I look forward to working with Diane Jackson as she assumes the Chair of the Network and we continue to build a stronger but still responsive professional learning organization. Please extend my thanks, as well as Deborah and Dan’s, to the many people in your boards who work on

our planning committees and give of their time not only to create quality learning opportunities that meet current educational needs, but who are also eager to share their expertise with other colleagues in Eastern Ontario.

Our Network is a model of true collaboration because we do not look only at what EOSDN gives us, but we look more at what we can give to assist others through our working together. We lead the way in the province in that, and now with alignment a current theme, our model may well be adopted by others.”

References are made here and there in board minutes and reports to the accomplishment of the Net-

work in celebrating 20 years of service to the region. In many ways it had been a struggle just to survive as so many outside influences in provincial education dictated changes which threatened the very existence of the Network. Many of these have been listed in this chapter, ranging from financial reductions to ever-increasing reporting/data requirements of Boards, all items which could have caused the cessation of the Network. But these threats did not see the demise of the organization, perhaps because members of EOSDN adapted to the changes and saw the ever-evolving landscape as a field of opportunities. Twenty years down and the future ahead!

Chapter 4

2009-2014: Five More and Counting

The start of EOSDN's third decade in the fall of 2009 shows a continuation of many of the activities outlined in the previous chapter. This makes sense, really, when one considers that the events had been planned in the spring of 2009 and throughout its history the timing of Network meetings and conferences followed a fairly set pattern. One new area for discussion was the thinking that it was time to host a conference for the Support Staff in school boards, a group with many responsibilities in the schools and offices throughout the region. Assessment and Evaluation workshops were gaining support from teachers across Eastern Ontario.

Highlights of the meeting summary of December 1, 2009 include Le français à cœur conference, partnership activities (Managing Information for Student Achievement- MISA- now in its fifth year of Ministry funding, Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat), the development of Data Mapping, a Research and Evaluation Project, Reaching Higher-Reaching Wider Conference, and a Constructivist activity for school boards. Marc Schaefer continued to coordinate the SOQP and facilitate the Leadership Practicum associated with the Program. Denise Andre of Ottawa Catholic SB, a module facilitator, represented the Network in Toronto as a writer for the revisions to the SOQP

provincial guideline. The EOSDN Board of Directors met with the Small World Media Group, to develop a communication plan for the Network. The detailed discussion and summary examined the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for the organization through the use of current and future communication methods and vehicles.

On February 8, 2010 Barry O'Connor, a long-time leader and avid supporter of EOSDN, passed away. Barry's death was a great loss for his family, friends, school board, community, the province and the Network. In recognition of his many contributions to EOSDN, the Board of Directors approved a donation in his memory to the Limestone Learning Foundation, which Barry had established to support students in the Limestone District School Board. The Network named Barry, posthumously, the recipient of the 2010 Outstanding Service Award. He shared this Award with his good friend and colleague, Lorne Keon of the Renfrew County Catholic DSB. For the better part of fifteen years Barry and Lorne facilitated Module B – Leadership Management of the Supervisory Officers' Qualification Program for EOSDN. Marilyn O'Connor, Barry's wife, accepted the Award on his behalf, an honour so fitting of his outstanding service in education. Barry O'Connor was a leader among leaders.

In May of 2010, Dona Cruickshank announced her intention of retiring as Executive Director of EOSDN, effective at the end of the next fiscal year in August of 2011. Dona spoke of the enjoyment she had experienced in her leadership role for the Network, citing the support and dedication of so many people to the mission of the organization as a major highlight of her career. Dona had been part of EOSDN in one capacity or another for 20 years, having served as Executive Director since 1999. At that May meeting the Board thanked Dona for her strong leadership and commitment to the Network. The Directors asked Dona to assist them in the succession planning for her position, which Dona was pleased to do. For 22 years the Network had been served by only two executive directors, Reg Shadbolt and Dona Cruickshank. The two of them had led in the establishment and operation of a unique and effective educational organization. Each of them at their retirement allowed the Board sufficient time to find a new leader for the Network, a position vital in achieving its accomplishments and in assuring its longevity in an ever-changing world.

Each year since 1994 the Network has taken a look at itself through the exercise of its annual Reflections gathering which basically examines what the organization does



Members of the Catholic DSB of Eastern Ontario, Amy Doyle Dixon (left), Charlotte Rouleau and France Dupuis, complete an analysis of the Language curriculum during the Schools in the Middle Conference in February 2010.

Reflections

"I can still remember, just like it was yesterday, the first meeting I attended for EOSDN français à cœur Conference. The members were so cheerful and welcoming that it felt as if I were already a part of the family. Everyone was open in expressing their thoughts and opinions and including me in their conversations. I continue to build on my learning through a cultivated and supportive environment of collegial sharing, professional collaboration and reflection. EOSDN allows me to expand my thinking and deepen my "wonderings" on how to best respond to the needs of all students. The 'NETWORK'ing of EOSD'N' broadens my understanding and encourages me to continue to inquire about education, and, all of this side by side, with my Eastern Ontario colleagues."

*-France Dupuis,
Catholic DSB of Eastern Ontario*

well, what it should change, what it might begin. A few times EOSDN has conducted a more in-depth review of its operations, asking many of the same questions but in much greater detail. One of these more thorough reviews was conducted in 1998-99 at the request of Reg Shadbolt just prior to his leaving the role of executive director. In 2010 with a new executive director soon to be appointed, the Directors of Education for the supporting school boards, represented by Michael Schmitt of Algonquin Lakeshore Catholic DSB and Brenda Hunter of Limestone DSB, made a presentation to the Board of Directors at its December, 2010 meeting wherein they requested another review of the state of the Network. Whereas in the past, the reviews had been conducted internally, the Directors of Education made a strong case for this one to be done by an external consultant. The school boards wished to know the role, purpose and function of the Network and to assess the Network's relevance to

its member boards in professional development. The new executive director, the Directors of Education stated, should not be appointed until a full review had been completed and a clear model of how the Network would operate had been developed.

At this meeting it was noted that some school boards had withdrawn from the Network and that these boards needed to be re-engaged. The Directors of Education empha-

sized that while there was support for EOSDN there were questions about continuing the status quo. While the Network was recognized as an organization that was filling the role of provider of professional development, there was a question whether the Network might look different in its operations as Ministry expectations and educational needs were changing. Directors of Education wanted to be certain that EOSDN was meeting these needs.

Reflections

"Much of my last two years as Executive Director was spent supporting Michael Smith's review of the organization and his later facilitation of the review process. Michael's review and development of an action plan provided the Network with direction and focus for the upcoming years. When Eleanor Newman came on as Executive Director in the spring of 2012, she was the benefactor of the results of this review and a renewed commitment to the EOSDN from its members. Eleanor has added her own touches to this plan and the Network remains strong."

-Dona Cruickshank, EOSDN

An external reviewer could complete the work and write a report by May, 2011, it was stated. The Board of Directors, following detailed discussion with the representatives of the Directors of Education, agreed to contract an independent consultant to conduct an external review of the organization.

Although the external review was certainly the topic of discussion at the December meeting, these agenda items appeared among others: Chair Norah Marsh (Limestone), Treasurer Cal Bowry (Queen's) and Dona Cruickshank spoke highly of the professional manner in which materials for the annual audit had been prepared by Dan Pennell, the Network's finance officer; Dona Cruickshank reported of her visits to school boards within Eastern Ontario to present senior management with a plaque of appreciation for 20 years of support for the Network. While at the board offices Dona had the opportunity to dialogue with administration on the successes and the challenges of EOSDN. As well, there were reports from the various professional learning activities organized and coordinated through the Network.

Michael Smith, a retired superintendent of education with the Toronto DSB, was appointed as the external consultant for the review of the Network. He spent the winter and early spring (2011) meeting with Board and Network personnel. During the process, Michael interviewed 36 individuals and attended two EOSDN conferences (Ideas and Reaching Higher-Reaching Wider 2011) where he spoke with delegates and conference committee members. He visited the EOSDN office in Kingston where he familiarized himself with the operational side and reviewed various materials including the financial statements of the organization, the by-laws, and other relevant documents.

He found that "there is a great culture here (eastern Ontario) and it is manifested through EOSDN in a very collaborative way." He said that the overall goals of the review were based on the three review elements provided to him by the Regional Directors of Education. The three goals were to:

1. Conduct an external review of EOSDN to determine its contribution to the delivery of relevant and sustainable professional development to member Boards in eastern Ontario;
2. Ascertain the viability and value of EOSDN in the current educational and economic landscape;
3. Make recommendations and suggest next steps for the future of EOSDN.

While conducting his interviews, Michael focused on six questions:

1. *What is currently working in EOSDN and how does its original purpose match current needs and opportunities?*
2. *What is the current decision-making process for organizing conference topics? How are speakers chosen and decisions made?*
3. *What is the role of the Executive Director?*
4. *Does EOSDN continue to offer value-added services to its members? What could be changed? What aspects of the organization's strengths need to be expanded?*
5. *What processes are in place for decision-making, financing and effective team decision-making among member boards?*
6. *What reasons caused former member boards to withdraw from the Network?*

Michael noted a number of the key

points included in the Review Report and stated that he didn't recommend that EOSDN be phased out or dismantled. It is a rather unique collaboration network in the province, he said, and should be re-tooled to provide leadership opportunities for members in the future. According to his conversations with members, the Network is trying to "do too much." It needed to re-focus.

Michele Arbour, member of the REC and representative on the EOSDN Board from Renfrew Catholic DSB, reported that the REC (comprised of all regional Directors of Education) had copies of Michael Smith's Review Report and discussed the four options proposed for re-organization of the Network at the REC meeting. The REC voted in support of Option Two: Retrofit of the Report which proposed the transition and revitalization/repurposing of EOSDN over a two- to three-year period. Directors of Education agreed with recommendations in the Report that the Network prioritize its activities and select those that meet the needs of member boards, aligning with Ministry and Board initiatives; that communication back to boards be improved; and that there be a uniform and transparent way of deciding presenters/participation and topics for events. Further, the Report suggested that every board needed to try to develop a common way of addressing support for approved EOSDN activities, including conferences.

In concluding his presentation to the directors, Mr. Smith noted that in a time when collaboration was being strongly encouraged by the Ministry, EOSDN found itself in a position of strength and that with a concerted effort to re-focus and align with current and future board/Ministry initiatives, the Network would stand as a model for other regions in the province. The organi-

zational structure had not kept pace with the demands being placed on the Network, he added, and this needed to be resolved. Mr. Smith thanked everyone for their input into the review process and indicated that he felt very optimistic about the future of the organization.

The Board of Directors approved a motion to accept Option Two of the Report. The process of external review was completed to the satisfaction of the school boards and the Network. Many of the points covered in the 2011 report had appeared in the Network's internal reviews, and were confirmed and added to by the external review. With this stage of the review completed, the Board of Directors now turned its attention to the hiring of a new Executive Director, a process which had been put on hold until the completion of the Report. Dona Cruickshank agreed to stay on past her August 31, 2011 retirement date to lead the Network until a new Executive Director was in place. The Board appointed a Search Committee to hire a new leader for the organization. Bill Gartland of the Catholic DSB of Eastern Ontario was named Chair of the Search Committee with these representatives of the Board of Directors as committee members – Norah Marsh (Limestone DSB), Debra Rantz (Renfrew County DSB), Jody DiRocco (Algonquin Lakeshore Catholic DSB). Michael Smith was hired to assist in the transition period of the Network during its search, helping with the job description for the Executive Director's role as well as addressing ways to implement some of his Report's recommendations, including information technology and communication areas. The fall and early winter were spent on developing the package which detailed the role of the Executive Director, on advertising for the position and on interviewing candidates. In Febru-

Reflections

"I attended my first EOSDN meeting in 2000 as the staff development officer for the Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board with, now retired, Superintendent David Fox. The topic of the meeting was leadership training for principals. As non-teaching staff, I felt INTIMIDATED and out of place amongst this group of leading principals and superintendents from across eastern Ontario. I didn't feel like that for long. I met Dona Cruickshank who welcomed me to the meeting and sought my input, along with the others, on leadership topics and conference ideas. I left the meeting feeling very much included and inspired by the group. To this day, I continue to feel the same way, perhaps even more so as I have been a part of the committee that began the Support Staff Learning Assembly which has been running since 2010."

*-Gillian McCurdy,
Hastings Prince Edward DSB*

~

"I remember the 'moment' at the Board of Directors' table when the idea of a regional conference for school board 'support staff' was born. We became 'excited' over the possibility of providing a professional development experience for staff who supported our education systems-but may not work with students directly. What might this mean for heightening the sense of 'value' and 'contributions' non-teaching staff make to our collective work?"

Planning for the conference included bringing together support staff expertise and voices from each member board of EOSDN, who would be key in facilitating the conference. While attending the first conference it was obvious, while observing the facilitators-presenters-and participants, a sense of pride and belief that their work and learning matters!"

*-Diane Jackson,
Ottawa Catholic School Board*

ary of 2012, the Board of Directors of EOSDN announced the appointment of the Network's third Executive Director in 23 years, Eleanor Newman.

ELEANOR NEWMAN BRINGS EXPERIENCE TO THE TABLE

Eleanor Newman was certainly well known to the Network, having been an educator within Lanark Leeds Grenville Separate Board, Leeds Grenville Public Board, Up-

per Canada DSB and Renfrew County DSB. Her latest assignment had been with the Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat in Toronto, a position from which she had recently retired. Eleanor was, and is, a much-respected leader in education throughout Eastern Ontario and the province. Bill Gartland stated that the Selection Committee knew that Eleanor Newman, with her leadership experience at the Board and Ministry levels, was the best candidate suited for the

position of Executive Director at that time in the Network's history. Chair Norah Marsh reflected the opinion of the Board when she said that this was an exciting time for the Network, stating, "We are delighted that Eleanor will be joining the Network in this capacity. She is certainly not a stranger to the work of the EOSDN. Since its inception in 1989, Eleanor served on EOSDN conference committees, facilitated workshops and did keynote addresses. She was Chair for a period of three years, and for more than a decade taught a module of the EO-SDN Supervisory Officers' Qualification Program." Eleanor Newman was well prepared and well suited for the task-at-hand as she began her new role within the Network.

FURTHER STRUCTURAL CHANGES

The committee structure of the Network has been an ever-evolving aspect of the organization. In 2012 the Board replaced the Projects Committee and its associated event committees with the Planning Work Team (PWT) whose purpose was to propose and design a "learning opportunity" in the fall of 2012 with a focus on professional and student thinking. All other Network activities were suspended so the Board of Directors could make thoughtful decisions regarding future Network offerings. Although internal structures changed from time to time as far as committee design and purpose were concerned, the constant was that the leadership came from the people across the region in delivering professional development for educators.

During 2012 the Board discussed at length a list of priorities for the Network which included 12 areas for consideration. Many felt that this was too long a list and that they perhaps should concentrate on a few

areas to begin and see how these developed. The priority needs of member DSBs resulted in support for learning opportunities that went beyond single events. In the fall of 2012 the 'Thinking Symposium' with Lucy West as facilitator began on September 12-13 in Kingston, with more than 300 in attendance. The symposium continued through electronic means with a subsequent gathering of participants in spring 2013. With new curriculum and changing emphasis in second language programming, Le français à coeur continued the theme of 'Cultiver la collaboration', with participants focusing on a year-long collaborative classroom inquiry about communication of thinking en français. The Board also identified a need to provide a program of learning for support staff, an evening and day session entitled 'Taking One Small Step: Connecting People and Ideas'. A Leadership Academy for principals, managers and supervisors was proposed, a design that would offer an 18-month program for about 30 participants.

The Board passed a motion that the Executive Director assume the coordinating responsibilities of the SOQ Program with the Network's Manager continuing with the current Program management duties. The Steering Committee (consisting of Module facilitators, executive director and manager) for the SOQP was revived and scheduled to meet prior to Cycle 20 of the Program in order to review the scheduling format and content of modules. The process for selecting module facilitators for the SOQP became the responsibility of the Network's Executive Committee. The Executive Committee approved the selection of David Fox to assume the role of SOQP Practicum Coordinator, taking over from Marc Schaefer who had served so well in the role for the past 12 years. Plans began to

A New EOSDN Website

"The Network's new website was unveiled in October of 2013. This site has retained the same amount of copy as on the original version but with major restructuring of the content and featuring professional photography and a clean, modern layout which is much easier to navigate. Additional professional photographs and content will be added and changed over time to reflect current programming.

In addition to the re-development of the site, EOSDN installed a Content Management System which allows EOSDN staff to upload, update and change or enhance existing and new pages. The developers of the site will also provide additional training to EOSDN, as required, and assist with on-going maintenance."

*-Deborah Pennell,
EOSDN Manager of Events
and Administration*

mark the celebration of the twentieth anniversary of SOQP in Eastern Ontario, a program which had seen more than 200 graduates during the two decades. The November Board minutes in 2012 reflect positive reports in regard to financial matters including the annual budget, corporation status, by-laws review. The Ottawa region Managing Information for Student Achievement PNC was now in its eighth season of promoting the use of evidence-based decision-making in the improvement of student achievement. MISA in 2012 was administered by EOSDN and coordinated by Dona

Reflections

"Now I know what it means to be part of a Professional Learning Committee." These words from a secondary teacher of French Second Language in eastern Ontario continue to resonate. It was the conclusion of the inaugural EOSDN Building Bridges, though not the end of the positive energy and dialogue as colleagues exited the room. If being part of a Professional Learning Community was a lingering experience from this session, then the bridge, designed and constructed by the 'engineer' teams of Français à cœur and Assessment & Evaluation, had indeed done what bridges do. Communities and individuals were linked.

Building Bridges occurred in the spring and brought together participants from September Assessment & Evaluation and October Français à cœur sessions. The agenda was designed to incorporate student learning and educator practice from the classroom time in-between. With the inclusion of current research, teacher participants and members of the planning team learned with and from facilitators such as Karen Hume and Damien Cooper. Though Building Bridges is no longer scheduled on the EOSDN calendar, the essential elements of the session continue to connect eastern Ontario school districts. Like that teacher, I know from this work what it means to be part of a responsive, collaborative, and thinking learning community. Happy memories and future best wishes for EOSDN!"

-Sharon McNamara-Trevisan,
Algonquin Lakeshore Catholic DSB

Cruikshank, with the Ottawa Catholic SB serving as the Lead Board.

In January of 2013 the Board of Directors held its second annual Think Tank meeting. Prior to this meeting, representatives from each school board had gathered input from colleagues and reviewed their Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement (BIPSA). The Board of Directors then clustered the identified needs and priorities of the boards for the 2013-14 school year. 'Teaching and Learning' and 'Leadership' were the broad headings for these very detailed priorities which included the following:

Professional Mindsets – orientation to the work of 21st-century teaching and learning

Leadership – of the Learning – BIPSA/SIPSA, implementation and

monitoring

Student Voice – making thinking visible K-12

Assessment and Feedback K-12

Mathematics K-12

Critical Literacy K-12 (includes inquiry)

Thinking – Integrative, Reflective, Critical, Creative, Innovative

Mental Health and Well-Being, Resiliency.

The Board of Directors determined that the 'Thinking Symposium' continue in 2013-2014, that changes in French curriculum be the focus at the Le français à cœur conference, and that the Support Staff Assembly continue with a focus on well-being. The Board also supported the idea of a regional mathematics project



Four longstanding members of Le français à cœur planning team, Deborah Pennell, Sharon McNamara-Trevisan, France Dupuis and Joanne Pratt, celebrate at a recent EOSDN Awards dinner.

that would align with and augment district and provincial work in mathematics. As the first cohort of the Leadership Academy was underway, the Board asked that feedback on that offering be collected to inform future offerings. The Board's guidance and direction from the January Think Tank would inform the work of the EOSDN Planning Work Team, its staff, and any ad hoc committees.

The November, 2013 Board meeting referred to the successful celebration of the 20th anniversary of the SOQP held in May in Kingston at the EOSDN annual dinner. At that gathering the sharing of stories on the life of the Network led to a conversation which resulted in the proposed writing of the history of the Network to mark its 25 year anniversary in 2014. The Board of Directors approved the writing of such a book at this meeting. Greg McNally, a long-time Network supporter who had retired from the Catholic DSB of Eastern Ontario, volunteered to do the writing of this anecdotal history, with support and input from the three executive directors, Reg Shadbolt, Dona Cruikshank and Eleanor Newman. Plans called for the book to be completed



In 2012, the Reaching Higher, Reaching Wider planning team surprised Jeffrey Wilhelm, conference facilitator, with a birthday gift that acknowledged his passion for the Leafs. Front, from left: Susan Davidson, Sarah Pope, Jeffrey Wilhelm, Jackie Stadnyk and Cathy Amini. Back row: Michelle McGrath, Eric Blemke, Dona Cruickshank and Lisa Smith.

in time for the May, 2014 Network dinner in Kingston.

At its fall 2013 meeting, the Board received the annual audit report which showed the organization's finances to be in order. The proposed 2013-14 budget was \$175,094 with \$354,824 listed as net assets, similar to past years. However, funds received in the course of operations for the school year included over a million dollars from the Ministry of Education to support a regional mathematics project on proportional reasoning, representing mathematical thinking and professional fluency. Through the project these funds provided additional expertise, inquiry time, and resources within each of the Eastern Ontario school boards.

At the meeting, the Planning Work Team presented detailed reports on learning activities, outlining planning around the Thinking Symposium, Le français à coeur, the Support Staff Professional Learning Assembly and the Leadership Academy. Ministry and other partnership reports highlighted the MISA PNC,

the Mathematics 'Closing the Gap' project, and Student Achievement Division regional sessions. As well, the Network was continuing the tradition of providing opportunities for Eastern Ontario to hear and work with big name speakers and researchers.

COMMENTS TODAY

As this book goes to print, below are a few reflections from present-day EOSDN members active in the Network and their view of the positive impact of initiatives presently underway.

Their reflections tie in nicely with responses from people across the years wherein members speak of the way the Network influences teaching, learning and leading across eastern Ontario:

"During the 2013-14 year the Ontario Ministry of Education funded the EOSDN K-12 Mathematics Project. This opportunity has enabled the nine Eastern Ontario district school boards to network across

the region and within their districts with a collective focus on Proportional Reasoning, the Process of Representation and Educator Fluency in Mathematics. System math leaders from each DSB have met on a monthly basis to learn more about strategic implementation and monitoring with support from recognized experts in the teaching of Mathematics, Queen's Researchers, Ministry Student Achievement Officers, and an EQAO School Support and Outreach Education Officer. As a result, Eastern Ontario math leaders are enhancing their own fluency with regards to facilitating and supporting educators within each of their district school boards. The 700 teachers involved in the project are collaborating within and across schools focusing on local specific needs that relate to the parameters of the regional project. All participants have had access to math experts to develop, refine and reflect on math content knowledge and instructional strategies both at regional and district gatherings. The EOSDN approach to inquiry – focus on a few key ideas in Mathematics and support learning across the region, within districts and in schools – is having an impact on professional discourse and practice."

*-Tammy Billen,
Project Coordinator Hastings and
Prince Edward DSB*

"The EOSDN Math Project (Study) has aligned beautifully with our work as facilitators of professional learning in mathematics in the Limestone DSB. The project has provided an opportunity for consultants, administrators, teachers and students in Limestone DSB to delve deeper into the Mathematical content related to Proportional Reasoning. The expert days (Marian Small and Cathy Bruce) helped build our capacity as facilitators, lead learners and par-

ticipants in Collaborative Inquiries. The collaboration with Queen's researchers has strengthened our understanding of evidence, monitoring and the components within the Theory of Action cycle. The project's flexibility allowed us to align and continue to build on the CILM model we use in Limestone. The common goals and K-12 focus of the project has strengthened and made more meaningful the partnerships of secondary and elementary Math Leads both within our board and throughout the Eastern Region. Our journey toward fluency in mathematics teaching and learning has been greatly enhanced by our participation in this Eastern Region initiative."

*-David Stocks,
Stephanie Raeburn-Gibson,
Karen Leggett, Limestone District
School Board*

"As research partners in the EO-SDN Math project, we have had the opportunity to learn from and with a dedicated group of educators, committed to improving math teaching and learning across the region. Through this work we have started to identify the structures that can support educators' efforts to further their professional learning and inquiry. The project has provided all of us with valuable information to help educators collect purposeful data, analyze data systematically, and use their evidence to inform next steps in classrooms, schools, and districts.

Through our work with the EOSDN Math project, we have developed valuable relationships with educators across the region. One of the important messages we have learned is that these collaborative partnerships can support both teaching and research. These professional/academic collaborations are key to ensuring that research is

The Math Project



Members of the EOSDN Math Project Steering Committee (pictured left) work together when planning to engage teacher participants in a regional consolidation day. Members include, from left, Tracy Joyce, Jackie Stadnyk, Karen Leggett, Lynn Crawford Beare, Sharon McNamara-Trevisan, and Vicki McGinn. On the right, Renfrew Catholic Steering Committee members, Heidi Ferguson and Tracy Joyce, in consultation with Queen's researcher, Danielle LaPointe (middle), make sense of data coming from the Regional Math Study.



relevant and used in current educational settings, ultimately to support enhanced instructional practice and learning."

*-Don Klinger, Danielle LaPointe
and Chris DeLuca
Queen's University
Faculty of Education*

"As educators, we need to model on-going learning and professional growth for our students. Over the years there has been a gap in training available to support staff compared to that which is offered to teachers. EOSDN made the decision to support learning and growth for school board support staff including custodians, secretaries, educational assistants, child and youth workers, library technicians, information technology services staff and more.

The Support Staff Assembly has become a sought-after training event for this group of employees over the past few years. I have had the pleasure of acting as an organizer, facilitator and participant at the Support Staff Assembly! One

of the best features is that the sessions are comprised of employees from different boards and various employee groups. The learning is rich, the networking is invaluable and there are a breadth of learning opportunities that support the Ministry's goals and objectives for student achievement. I feel that the assembly provides the forum for support staff to come together from eastern Ontario to share in learning, networking and, more importantly, provides recognition and value to the role of support staff in boards of education. I am honored to be a part of this endeavor and I applaud EOSDN for their support of learning and networking for support staff".

*-Gillian McCurdy,
Hastings Prince Edward DSB*

"The Thinking Symposium is taking Eastern Ontario educators in a bold and exciting direction. Participants attend as a member of a collaborative inquiry team working on an identified inquiry/question/problem of practice that relates to an ongoing focus of improvement planning within their school board. Regional

two-day sessions are held in both fall and spring to allow for concentrated time for teams to dig deeply into their work. Between these sessions, the student and teacher learning continues with opportunities for educators to connect on-line as well as within schools/districts. Participants engage with facilitator/provocateur Lucy West and the EO-SDN Planning Team, both during and after the symposium, and participant questions and ideas generate the themes for next steps in the learning.

The Symposium has challenged our thinking and practice through in-depth study of the following: classroom discourse/talk moves, explicit instruction/teaching through inquiry, and assessment for and as learning strategies/going beyond “pencil and paper”. Collaborative teams are encouraged to place new thinking and ideas within the context of the classroom/school based work that they bring with them. Rather than being on the receiving end of a “canned” presentation or viewing the symposium as a single event, participants

enhance their professional thinking and experience through ongoing collegial interactions, creating something entirely new - and yes, generating even more questions and wonderings to consider.”

*-Lynn Denault,
Renfrew County Catholic DSB*

“As one facilitator of the recent Leadership Academy with Michelle Lamarche (Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic) and Cathy McCann-Kyte (Renfrew Public), it has been a pleasure to create a program to inspire and challenge others in their leadership journey. Through our ongoing collaboration the content and delivery process evolved to create a program to meet the needs of a very diverse group, of principals, vice principals, managers and supervisors intent on improving their leadership practice. During this process, I became a better leader through additional knowledge and reflection, and we grew together as partners.”

*-Jennifer Perkin,
Catholic DSB of Eastern Ontario*

As the Network moves into 2014, its 25th year of connecting people and their thinking, the dynamic collaboration continues: The Thinking Symposium 2013-14 where 350 educators came together to learn strategies that embed thinking into their teaching and leadership practice; The Leadership Academy where school and system leaders studied and practised the personal leadership resources identified as important by current research; Le français à cœur and the Support Staff Learning Assembly which provided opportunity for distinct groups to gather around the unique aspects of their work; the Mathematics project engaging 700 practitioners in school-based inquiry connecting research and practice. The Board of Directors, at its next meeting in May 2014, will consider the continuing and emerging needs of the region, the opportunities and challenges presented in the tasks of the time, and will make decisions and give directions that guide the Network forward. Still, the right ideas at the proper time!

In April 2014, 25 school and system leaders from six Network boards celebrated their ‘graduation’ as the first cohort to complete the EOSDN Leadership Academy. At right, Jeremy Nowiski, Stacey Kay, Christine Kessler, Andrea Williams, and Christopher Toivonen from Ottawa Carleton DSB. Below left, Mary-Anne Cowan, Denise Andre, Denis Charette, Suzanne Fitzgerald, Karin Guite, Michael Raso, D’Arcine Thompson, and Manon Seguin from Ottawa Catholic SB. Jennifer Perkin, Michelle Lamarche and Cathy McCann-Kyte served as facilitators of the innovative EOSDN Leadership Academy. Here, they share a moment with Elaine Molgat from the Leadership Branch of the Ministry of Education.



Chapter 5

The Supervisory Officers' Qualification Program

Chapter Two of this book provides some background on how the Supervisory Officers' Qualification Program (SOQP) came to be a part of the Network. A summative statement as to why the organization thought for a minute that it could successfully operate such a demanding program might come down to this: in the short time of one year as an entity, the Network had experienced the many educational benefits of professional development and leadership headed by its own members, so why not do the same for the supervisory officer program? In fact, it is the impressive quantity and quality of EOSDN in-service and leadership activities that gives the Network its credibility as a worthy provider of accredited programs. The SOQP drew its existence from the success of these events and the Program reflects the professional character of the Network, as do the conferences, workshops, committees, board of directors meetings and office staff achievements.

As noted earlier, the application and approval process through the Ministry of Education was grinding, detailed work, yet the Network received approval in 1992 from the Ministry to offer the course and the rest, one might say, is history. When

EOSDN first started on its trek to providing this qualification program, a good deal of time was spent on the nature of the new way for supervisory officer accreditation, as compared to the pre-1990 provincial method of evaluating candidates for that qualification. For decades supervisory officer candidates were required to pass a comprehensive three-hour written examination and, if successful, to pass a one-hour oral exam. The knowledge gained about the Education Act and Regulations was without question outstanding but the process did not seem to encompass the whole aspect of preparation needed to be a supervisory officer in Ontario. In particular, engaging in a strong interpersonal, practical component and building a professional collegial network was not part of the process. The provincial government knew a change was necessary as well and set up topics for modules, the practicum and a yearlong schedule.

The successful delivery agent (which the Network was to become in 1992) had to fill in the contents of these components to receive approval. This was a two-year, detailed process for the Network but it was a good one. As in practically every EOSDN endeavour, this project brought the members closer together

as they worked furiously to meet timelines and course outline demands. People gave freely of their time and knowledge in the design of the program. The energy level was high, and even higher when in 1992 the Ministry of Education lent its approval to the Network to offer the program. EOSDN was one of four delivery agents in the province to receive such approval, a real coup for the organization in its fledgling years. The content and design presented to the Ministry was built on a solid foundation. One proof of that lies in the longevity of the course design, as it still exists in 2014 to a large extent as it did in 1992.

As in all things 'Network' in 1990, the key instigator of the idea to apply to offer the SOQP in Eastern Ontario was the Project Director, Reg Shadbolt. Reg led the charge to realize that goal, tapping people on the shoulder to lead or help in the process of application to the Ministry of Education in Toronto. As in most cases, when Reg did the 'shoulder-tapping', people responded. Dozens of leaders in school boards and within EOSDN met, planned and finalized proposals together over those two years of writing and planning. No stone, it would seem, was left unturned, thus resulting in a positive nod from

the province to go ahead in 1992. In his usual straight-forward, unassuming way of explanation as to how this all came about, Reg provides this recollection:

“A key element of the Network was the unqualified support we received from the Directors of Education in Eastern Ontario. I shared openly with them the highs and lows of the operation, requested their support and listened to their needs and suggestions. From one of these useful meetings, it was determined informally that at least fifteen new supervisory officers would be required in their boards in the near future. The Directors wondered if the Network might offer these qualification courses for the Ministry in Eastern Ontario. I liked the idea very much, contacted both the Ministry officials and the Director of the Supervisory Officers’ Qualification Program for the Catholic Boards, James McGirr, and another gem was created without conflict! Selecting key staff from both systems, EOSDN began to offer the supervisory courses at different locations and attracted many fine candidates. Initial leaders like Lorne Keon, Colin Vickers, Greg McNally, Marc Schaefer, Sister Joan Cronin, Frank Kinsella and others made it as realistic as possible, often including live Board and senior staff meetings. The feedback was most positive and valid because many of these graduates have become highly effective superintendents and directors across the Province.”

What stands out from Reg’s reflection is that the application succeeded because it followed the pattern of all successes within EOSDN - a need was identified, a plan was put in place, people worked tirelessly and together, the outcome attained, all for the betterment of education. That pattern of collaboration and mutual purpose has been re-enacted each year in many different ini-



The first SOQP graduating class members from 1994 include: Front row, from left: Bob Schaefer, Helen Lalonde, Monica Krawetz, Donna Belanger and Susan Marcino. Middle row from left: Robert Theobald, Ann Munroe, Daniele Geoffrion, Robert Campbell, Glenn MacLeod, Dr. Donaleen Hawes and Glen Williamson. Back row from left: Bill Coombs, Nancy Bahn-iuk, Rick Gales, Brenda Malloy, Margaret Wicklum, Paul Wubben, and Glen Wiley.

tiatives for the past 25 years. The creative, shared process has really been a recipe for success and each era has those who stir the pot at just the right time, as Reg did to get the SOQP going in Eastern Ontario.

Marc Schaefer, of Stormont Dundas and Glengarry Public Board and then Upper Canada DSB, has been an active leader in SOQP since its inception. Marc was a facilitator or instructor for many modules and from 2001-2013 served as the coordinator of the practicum for the program. When the twentieth anniversary celebration for SOQP took place in Kingston in May of 2013 at the annual EOSDN dinner, Marc was honoured for his outstanding contribution to SOQP. When Marc Schaefer was asked for his remembrances of the program over the years, he came up with a creative response by writing a review of SOQP in an artistic manner, as if the history of the program were a play, a drama. Following is a brief summary of his submission. The summary captures the nature of the program – the setting, the circum-

stances of the times, the producers (Reg Shadbolt and initial team), the actors (supervisory officers as facilitators of the modules), supporting cast (Julie Clarke, Deborah Pennell,), the audience (graduates of EOSDN SOQP), the location (Eastern Ontario centres), and, of course, the star characters without whom no play would have run, the candidates. One major point to note is the detail of the script throughout the play. As a general outline, it remains the same in 2014 as it was in the first year of 1992. Here is how Marc describes that aspect of the program:

“Although the script has evolved throughout the Acts, it has been intrinsically true to the mandate of ‘a comprehensive program designed to prepare members of the College for the supervisory officer’s role in Ontario’. The script for each Act is evidenced in seven scenes:

- An Entrance Interview for candidates new to the program. This component is exclusive to EOSDN and is designed as a



Top: Many SOQP facilitators, administrators and candidates attended the 2013 EOSDN dinner celebrating the 20th anniversary of EOSDN as provider of the SOQP.

Bottom: Callie Markotich, Barry O'Connor, Andre LaBrie, Eleanor Newman, Ann Perron, Laura McAlister, Marc Schaefer celebrating Andre's completion of the SOQP.

welcoming exercise.

- Module A – The Personal Perspective - focuses on opportunities to increase self-awareness and self-understanding.
- Module B – The Leadership and Management Perspective – focuses on opportunities to enhance knowledge of curriculum leadership, administration and business practices.
- Module C – The Provincial Perspective – focuses on opportunities to expand and apply the

knowledge of statutes, regulations, legislation, and related issues in Ontario education.

- Module D – The System Perspective – focuses on the refinement, application and integration of knowledge, skills and attitudes in complex educational environments.
- Module E – The Leadership Practicum – an in-depth experience, a significant practical project that incorporates knowledge and management of program, personnel, finance and facilities.
- An Exit Exercise for graduating candidates in an interview format involving current and recent module facilitators, SOQP coordinator and EOSDN Executive Director. This exercise is exclusive to EOSDN and has been recognized throughout Ontario."

It is quite amazing that the format and focus of the modules and practicum have remained almost constant for over two decades. Naturally, the content evolves as issues and changes arise in education; new technology has allowed for varying approaches to presentations, communications and long-distance learning; facilitators/instructors, of course, have come and gone as the years pass. The practicum has been further developed over time. Yet the hours of instruction (50 per module), course structure and even the titles of the modules remain remarkably intact.

Marc ends his creative writing in this way:

"Act III:.... and the drama continues to unfold ...

Credits:

Production Company: Eastern Ontario Staff Development Network

(EOSDN)

Creative idea and inspiration: Reg Shadbolt

Directors:

-Early Years: Bernadette McNeill, Vic D'Amico, Reg Shadbolt

-Glory and Consolidation: Marc Schaefer, Dona Cruickshank

-Act III: Eleanor Newman, David Fox

All scenes were filmed on location, including sets at Pembroke, Ottawa, Smiths Falls, Kingston, Cornwall, Napanee, Kemptville and Brockville. Kudos to all who have been engaged in a variety of roles as actors, star participants, support staff, company employees and volunteers."

The offering of the SOQP program in Eastern Ontario had a significant impact on boards of education in the region. Candidates did not have to travel to Toronto to take their supervisory officer qualification; candidates saved time and expenses associated with travel by attending the course within their own region; by hosting the program in many centres throughout the jurisdiction, candidates, facilitators and communities got to know each other better, another real benefit of the local program. When graduates of SOQP were asked for their reflections, many noted this 'community' aspect of the courses. Professional relationships and lifelong friendships grew in these settings. One feature of the Network which differed from all other program providers in Ontario was the make-up of facilitators or instructors for each module. The facilitators were all practicing or recently-retired superintendents and directors but what was unique in Eastern Ontario was that each module had two instructors, one from the Public system and one

from the Catholic, reflecting the nature of the make-up of the Network boards. The course content, classes, hours, locations were the same for each candidate, making no distinction between boards

in that regard. Candidates from each board, Public or Catholic, in their recollections expressed appreciation for this particular staffing design for the program as they learned about their own system

but also their neighbouring one. EOSDN has had a history of all boards working together for a common purpose and the SOQP was another good example of this spirit of unity and cooperation.

An Educator's Point of View

Educators connected with the Network's SOQP offered their views of this qualification program in individual written reflections gathered from them as this book was being written. Their submissions provide a broad look at the program from individual perspectives, with many similarities in their recollections. The following quotes assist in describing the nature of the program, their roles in it and the impact of EOSDN's supervisory officer program on their educational journey:

"For five years, I was responsible for the Practicum unit of the SOQP offered by EOSDN. Students enrolled in the Supervisory Officers' Qualification Program were required to complete a major educational project under the supervision of a supervisory officer from their board. The project had to be a realistic, practical program that dealt with an educational situation in the school board. Research, planning, development, implementation and presentation were all part of the requirements. The practicum was designed to provide a real-life experience to the candidate and to illustrate an aspect of the supervisory officer's position."

*-Vic D'Amico,
Carleton Catholic Board*

~

"One could spend hours listing these recollections, but for me the fondest highlight about the EOSDN centres around my Supervisory Officer colleagues. Literally, over a fifteen year period (1993-2008) thanks to my involvement with the SOQP Module B, I had the chance to work with every newly-appointed Eastern Ontario Supervisory Officer. This opportunity to get to know the future leaders of our region was a privilege and extraordinary networking reality. As well, it has ensured that not only are these folks great professional colleagues, but also wonderful friends. How good is that!

Being a facilitator in the SOQP Program was one of the wisest decisions I made in my career. It allowed Barry O'Connor and myself to stay on top of all educational materials as well as the latest leadership theories in the world of business. From Peter Senge to Stephen Covey to Michael Fullan, and so many in between, we not only used the work of these individuals for the module, but also incorporated these materials in PD sessions with our respective school boards. Simply stated, we used the courses as professional development time for ourselves as well as for the candidates. Lifelong learning at its best!"

*-Lorne Keon,
Renfrew County Catholic DSB*

~

One of the best memories for me was facilitating the SOQP and the opportunity to meet so many talented people each of whom was so different in personality, thinking and knowledge. They contribute so much to education. With the various presenters and the format of our module, we explored provincial perspectives, not just those of our local boards, which we all found so enriching. I can selfishly say that I learned as much as the candidates and would not have missed this opportunity for the world. I was so lucky to have been invited to participate in this program. I can only hope that many more educators will avail themselves of this phenomenal learning environment.

*-Laura McAlister,
Ottawa Carleton DSB*

~

The challenging experience of enrolling in the SOQP modules with EOSDN was one of the most rewarding of my professional career. The modules gave me the opportunity to meet and befriend exceptional system leaders: Jamie McCracken, Laura McAlister, Colin Vickers, Marc Schaefer, Lorne Keon, the late Barry O'Connor, Julian Hanlon, Greg McNally and Eleanor Newman. I am not surprised that my fellow participants within the modules have assumed Supervisory Officer and leadership positions today. From the friendships developed during the SOQP experience we were comfortable and able to consult with these colleagues as required in a collegial, honest and trusting dialogue on a number of issues as we assumed various positions of responsibility within our respective school boards. These connections only strengthened in 2003 when I was appointed as Superintendent of Program for the Upper Canada District School Board and later became the school board representative on the Board of Directors for EOSDN.

*-Catherine McVie,
Upper Canada DSB*

~

"Aside from the many wonderful conferences offered by EOSDN, the quality of the SOQP program continues to astound me. I've never worked with such caring and professional educators as those entrusted by the organization to lead the SOQP Modules. It's a testament to the quality of our leadership development initiatives in our various districts that we continue to graduate dynamic educators poised to take on superintendent roles anywhere in the province".

*-Roger Clarke,
Renfrew County DSB*

~

"I was a participant in the second cohort to complete the SOQP offered by EOSDN. I was very impressed that the quality of the instructors was outstanding, i.e., Bill Crossan, John Beatty, Lorne Keon, Frank Musca, Greg McNally. Later I had the opportunity to become an SOQP facilitator for five years. It was a pleasure to see so many candidates become Superintendents and Directors of Education in Eastern Ontario".

*-Julian Hanlon,
Ottawa Catholic School Board*

The comments from participants reflect the impact of the Supervisory Officers' Qualification Program on the lives of educators throughout Eastern Ontario. The SOQP, now in its twenty-first year, stands as another Network triumph which grew out of careful planning, hard work and mutual purpose.

SOQP Facilitators

Over the past 20 years, the Eastern Ontario Staff Development Network has witnessed great leadership from those who have contributed as SOQP Facilitators. They are listed below in alphabetical order.

- Denise Andre
- Rob Andrews
- John Beatty
- Natalie Bohnen
- John Cable
- Roger Clarke
- Sr. Joan Cronin
- Bill Crossan
- Vic D'Amico
- Barbara Day Wills
- Ron Denyes
- Jody DiRocco
- Joanne Fisher
- David Fox
- Bill Gartland
- Julian Hanlon
- Brenda Hunter
- Diane Jackson
- Lorne Keon
- Frank Kinsella
- Paul Lattanzio
- Barbara Lynn
- Laura McAlister
- Ron McKelvey
- Greg McNally
- Bernie McNeill
- Callie Markotich
- Jamie McCracken
- Frank Musca
- Eleanor Newman
- Barry O'Connor
- Ann Perron
- Jaimie Perry
- Richard Roth
- Katherine Saunders
- Marc Schaefer
- Barbara Stollery
- Michael Schmitt
- Stephen Sliwa
- Madeleine Tarasick
- Colin Vickers

SOQP Memories



Over its history, those engaged in the SOQP as facilitators and as candidates have celebrated many special moments, including our unique exit exercises and the 20th anniversary celebrations.

Chapter 6

Bits and Pieces

In this chapter we will touch briefly upon items which have most likely been mentioned briefly somewhere else in this book but perhaps require a bit more explanation and recognition.

THE OFFICE STAFF

The Network has been run so well for 25 years by an office staff that would best be described as small in number but mighty. The list of personnel within the Network's office

for this many years contains seven people in total, augmented from time to time with occasional support. From 1989 through to today, these people have provided the Network with leadership and service of a remarkable quality. For many calling the EOSDN office, first it was Jill Wing, then Julie Clarke and now Deborah Pennell who have come to be recognized as the voice of the office and in that way of the Network. On two occasions, Anabela Videira has provided extended administra-

tive support. Their interaction with boards, universities and other educational bodies has assured the successes which followed at Board, Committee and Conference tables and events.

Reg Shadbolt, Dona Cruickshank and Eleanor Newman have provided strong leadership and wise counsel enabling people to make informed decisions resulting in the best of experiences for school board staff in teaching, learning and leading. Dan Pennell, EOSDN Finance Officer, has provided sound financial management and record-keeping, ensuring the Network meets its legal requirements and the Board has information needed for budget decisions.

All those connected to EOSDN are indebted to this group for their superb leadership. For the record here are the names, titles and years for those we know as the 'office staff':



The EOSDN staff have played an integral role in its success. Deborah Pennell, EOSDN Manager of Events and Administration, has been with the Network for 13 years. She earned the EOSDN Outstanding Service Award in 2012 and following the award ceremony, she stands beside two supportive friends and colleagues, Debra Rantz and Norah Marsh.

- *Reg Shadbolt – Project Director – 1989-1999*
- *Jill Wing - Project Assistant –1989-1992*
- *Julie Clarke – Project Assistant - 1992-2001*
- *Dona Cruickshank – Project Director, (then Executive Director)-1999-2012*
- *Deborah Pennell – Project Assistant (then Manager of*

*Events and Administration,
2001-present*

- *Dan Pennell – Finance Officer
2000 -present*
- *Eleanor Newman – Executive
Director – 2012-present*

Deborah Pennell offers the following reflection on her 13 years with the Network:

"I met with EOSDN Project Director, Dona Cruickshank, in April 2001 to determine whether or not I would be interested in a temporary position for approximately 6 weeks. Julie Clarke, the Project Assistant at the time, had taken a new position and the job at EOSDN would be filled on a casual basis. Following our meeting, I agreed to start at the Network in March 2001. Working with EOSDN was, for me, an unconventional experience as I wasn't certain how I could apply my skill sets of communication and management planning. Dona's portrayal of the organization's Mission and Goals was intriguing enough that I figured I could contribute to a rather distinctive network of professionals who were willing to collaborate and

share resources and understandings for the betterment of all its members.

I was enthusiastic to contribute and after a short period of time was impressed by the unique collegial nature of the Network and the willingness of its very diverse members to work as a team to advance professional practice and student learning. This lean, people-powered Network, captured my attention and after the six weeks were completed, I agreed to remain for a year. It's May 2014 now and here I remain. To echo Reg Shadbolt, I was in the 'right place at the right time'."

EOSDN has transformed significantly since I came on board. With an understanding that the Network needs to remain relevant, the organization has been re-configured, re-designed and reviewed several times over the years. For me, one of the great characteristics of EOSDN's leadership is a willingness to stop and take stock – to examine its *raison d'être*. We have been fortunate to have leaders who challenge and question commonly accepted practice and inspire a shared vision for the Network thus influencing

all of us to accomplish goals that coherently meet the needs of our members.

"It is only as we develop others that we permanently succeed." (Harvey S. Firestone) In the Network, our people continue to grow and foster thinking and creativity. Our commitment to one another and to the learning needs and aspirations of all students in eastern Ontario prevails – a cornerstone established by the visionaries who created the Network – people like Reg Shadbolt, John Graham, Paul Park and Greg McNally.

I have witnessed the building of extraordinary Network moments over the years – moments that have enriched my own professional experience and learning. I have been privileged to work with some of the great teachers, thinkers, planners and visionaries to be found anywhere in education! I am grateful to the wonderful people with whom and for whom I work and have worked. I especially appreciate the leadership of Dona Cruickshank and Eleanor Newman with whom I have enjoyed the journey. I am still enthusiastic and learning every day!"



When educators come together from across the Network to learn with and from one another, a productive synergy fills the room. It is the creation of such opportunities that has motivated planning teams over the years.

OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD

As noted in this book many people associated with EOSDN have given tirelessly of their time and knowledge to serve the Network. In its early days, the Network from time to time would recognize individuals through words and presentations but not in a formal, prescribed way. However, when John Graham retired in 1994, the Board of Directors wished to honour John for his many contributions to the Network, from its earliest days as just an idea through to its formation into an entity.

In 1995 the Outstanding Service Award was approved by the board, with the notion being that each year EOSDN would recognize a person or persons who had made outstanding contributions to the life and success of the Network. The first recipient of this honour was, naturally, John Graham of Leeds Grenville Public School Board. Since then the Outstanding Service Award has been presented annually. The following list contains the names of these most worthy recipients:

Year	Recipient	Position	Board/Network
1995	John Graham	Superintendent	Leeds & Grenville Public
1996	Brian Gilmour	Principal	Stormont Dundas & Glengarry Public
1997	Dona Cruickshank	Curriculum Coordinator	Stormont Dundas & Glengarry Public
1998	Julie Clarke	Assistant to the Project Director	EOSDN
1999	Reg Shadbolt	Project Director	EOSDN
2000	Marc Schaefer	Superintendent	Upper Canada DSB
2001	Russ Holmberg Greg McNally	Superintendent Director of Education	Renfrew County DSB Catholic DSB of Eastern Ontario
2002	Eleanor Newman	Superintendent	Upper Canada DSB
2003	Queen's Faculty of Education	EOSDN Member Organization	Queen's University
2004	Barbara Day Wills	Superintendent of Education	Algonquin & Lakeshore Catholic DSB
2005	Margaret Fancy David Fox	Principal Superintendent of Education	Catholic DSB of Eastern Ontario Hastings and Prince Edward DSB
2006	Michele Babcock	Principal	Limestone DSB
2007	Patti Greer	Principal	Algonquin & Lakeshore Catholic DSB
2008	Deborah Robinson	Principal	Ottawa Catholic SB
2009	Lauren Wilson	Principal	Renfrew County DSB
2010	Lorne Keon Barry O'Connor	Director of Education (retired) Director of Education (posthumously)	Renfrew County Catholic DSB Limestone DSB
2011	Deborah Pennell	Manager, Events & Administration	EOSDN
2012	Dona Cruickshank Hélène Coulombe	Executive Director Manager of Student Success	EOSDN Ottawa Catholic SB
2013	Sharon McNamara-Trevisan	Program Coordinator	Algonquin & Lakeshore Catholic DSB

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Each year since its inception in 1989 EOSDN has set its direction through a process of planning and decision-making, accompanied by the official approval, of its Board of Directors. The Board has relied on input and advice from senior board teams and from the various Network Committees associated with teaching, learning and leading activities. The Board is headed by a Chair and Vice-Chair, with the usual term lasting two years.

Year	Name	Organization
1989-1992	John Graham, Chair Russ Holmberg, Vice Chair	Leeds and Grenville County Board of Education Renfrew County Board of Education
1992-1994	Russ Holmberg, Chair Greg McNally, Vice Chair	Renfrew County Board of Education Lanark Leeds Grenville Separate School Board
1994-1996	Greg McNally, Chair Eleanor Newman, Vice Chair	Lanark Leeds Grenville Separate School Board Leeds and Grenville County Board of Education
1996-1999 1996-1998 1998-1999	Eleanor Newman, Chair Marc Schaefer, Vice Chair Barbara Day Wills, Vice Chair	Leeds and Grenville /Upper Canada DSB Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Board of Education Algonquin & Lakeshore Catholic District School Board
1999-2002 1999-2000 2000-2002	Barbara Day Wills, Chair Chris Ward, Vice Chair Paul Lattanzio, Vice Chair	Algonquin & Lakeshore Catholic District School Board Durham District School Board Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario
2002-2003	Paul Lattanzio, Chair David Fox, Vice Chair	Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board
2003-2005	David Fox, Chair Madeleine Tarasick, Vice Chair	Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board Limestone District School Board
2005-2006	Madeleine Tarasick, Chair Roger Clarke, Vice Chair	Limestone District School Board Renfrew County District School Board
2006-2009 2006-2007 2007-2008 2008-2009	Roger Clarke, Chair Bill Gartland, Vice Chair Catherine McVie, Vice Chair Diane Jackson, Vice Chair	Renfrew County District School Board Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario Upper Canada District School Board Ottawa Catholic School Board
2009-2010	Diane Jackson, Chair Norah Marsh, Vice Chair	Ottawa Catholic School Board Limestone District School Board
2010-2012	Norah Marsh, Chair Debra Rantz, Vice Chair	Limestone District School Board Renfrew County District School Board
2012-2013	Debra Rantz, Chair Charlotte Rouleau, Vice Chair	Renfrew County District School Board Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario
2013-2014	Charlotte Rouleau, Chair Pino Buffone, Vice Chair	Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario Ottawa Carleton District School Board

THE EOSDN LOGO

The Network was in its infancy when Board of Directors' Chair John Graham thought the organization needed a logo, an image that people would associate with the entity. John and Reg Shadbolt passed some ideas by the Board and soon came up with a design which was to serve as EOSDN's logo for more than a dozen years. The logo was in the shape of the geography of the Network itself, that is, Eastern Ontario as it would appear on a map. One word appeared on the logo – Network. That design became the symbol of EOSDN on its newsletters, correspondence, brochures, conference literature and programs, golf shirts, etc., and the logo came to represent EOSDN.



Leading up to the 2003 structural review, some discussions around the planning tables concerned the Network's logo. At board meetings and committee planning meetings, participants were asked for key elements of a new logo. Words like fresh, modern, easily identifiable, could be used in a variety of different modes, were offered. The Board asked for submission of any designs. With this feedback, Deborah Pennell and Dona Cruickshank played around with the letters 'E-O-S-D-N' to see how they could work. Dona contacted a graphics friend in Cornwall to see what design she could create. The results were four or five different layouts using our letters. Some were quickly rejected, but one had possibilities. They

made a few versions of that design created with different colours and then the brilliant idea of a swoosh added through the letters came up and voilà, the logo came to life. The prototype was presented to the Board of Directors and, with more tweaking about colours, the size and the placement of the swoosh, the new EOSDN logo was born in 2003. The new logo was met with positive feedback and gave all communications a fresh and up-to-date look. The old logo had served the Network well for 14 years. The new logo continues to be part of our Network image.



PARTNERSHIP

When reflecting on the story of EOSDN, the existence of the organization in many ways is based on partnership. The initial conversations around creating such an entity took place among leaders of school boards who shared administrative and curriculum initiatives at the regional level. Before the Network could even contemplate getting started, the school boards had to come to an agreement, at least in concept, of forming a partnership for professional development. They then took the notion one step further by partnering with Queen's University and the University of Ottawa. Over the years the Network has developed formal and informal partnerships with the Ministry of Education, the provincial Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat (LNS), the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP, from the United States), principal asso-

Reflections

"Many of the school boards that made up EOSDN, could only support small curriculum departments, and travel to large conferences was somewhat prohibitive, and often of limited benefits. Once EOSDN came along, boards now had an opportunity to share the wealth and expertise of hundreds of teachers and school administrators. It was like hitting the mother lode! What fun! We shared ideas, frustrations, resources and built lasting personal and professional relationships.

When I travelled the province as an Education Officer with the Ministry, I can say with confidence the teachers in Eastern Ontario were current in their practices, innovative in their professional development and shared a camaraderie that was remarkable. Much of the credit for this must go to the EOSDN, its leadership and those Board representatives who work tirelessly on behalf of educators in the Region."

*-Nadine Cuccaro,
Renfrew County DSB and
Ministry of Education*

ciations, teacher federations, arts, science and mathematics councils, educational associations.

The partnerships with the Ministry have proven valuable to Network members. EOSDN has planned professional development activities which have been supported by provincial funding. Ministry branches know that one contact with the

Network means they are automatically connected with each school board in Eastern Ontario. Key board and school provincial initiatives are listed throughout this book and include Managing Information for Student Achievement (MISA) and Mathematics 'Closing the Gap' projects. However, the partnership with the Ministry is not all about financial agreements. For 15 years EOSDN hosted the Regional Curriculum Council for the Ministry of Education. Ministry officials share the latest in provincial undertakings at these meetings and EOSDN updates the Ministry on initiatives and issues in the school boards and Network.

EOSDN was established as a partnership among equals and that inclusive and flat-lined type of thinking and doing has stood the test of time. The Network began as an independent and interdependent body, relying on its school board and university members for financial support. Over time funds have also come from the provincial government for specific tasks in professional development. In every decision around partnerships, the Network relied on being true to its original purpose in any partnership, that is, to provide educators in Eastern Ontario with the best possible professional development for teaching, learning and leading in schools and boards. Judy Speirs, Student Achievement Officer, Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat, reflects on the Ministry's partnership with the EOSDN:

"The Ministry of Education has enjoyed a long partnership with the Eastern Ontario Staff Development Network. The Network provides an incredible service in arranging venues for Ministry professional learning initiatives, ensuring that all materials are at the site and not only handling all of the registration details but answering questions from

participants and making sure that participants are warmly welcomed. Without EOSDN we would not be able to provide the calibre of professional learning that folks from Eastern Ontario have come to expect. It is a partnership that the Ministry values."

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

The EOSDN regularly includes key thinkers, authors, and researchers in its sessions – a cost effective way for Eastern Ontario educators to have access to outside expertise. Here is a selection from the past 25 years:

- Peter Senge: Systems Thinking series (via video)
- Pat Wolfe: Brain Research series (via video)
 - Covey Institute: Seven Habits
 - Michael Fullan: Systems and Change
- Miriam Trehearne: Early Literacy
- Lorna Earl: Data Collection and Evidence
- Doug Wilms: Student Engagement
- Kylene Beers: Adolescent Literacy
- Jeffrey Wilhelm: Inquiry-Based Learning
- Carmel Crevola: Breakthrough: Transforming Learning
 - Chris Tovani: Purposeful Reading
 - Karen Hume: Differentiated Instruction
- Max Valiquette: Learning in the 21st Century
 - Frank Serafini: Contexts for Teaching Literacy
- Myles Turnbull: Teaching French as a Second Language
- Damien Cooper: Assessment

and Evaluation

- Cathy Fosnot: Mathematics
- Victoria Bernhardt: Multiple Measures
- Garfield Gini-Newman: Critical Thinking
- Cathy Nunley: The Adolescent Brain
 - Craig Featherstone: Math Problem Solving
- Maureen Smith: FSL: Quality Instruction
- John Van de Walle: Mathematics
 - Dianne Heacox: Differentiating Instruction
 - Sandra Herbst: Feedback and Feed Forward
 - Leo-James Levesque: FSL: Practical Classroom Applications
 - Jim Howden: Collaborative Planning for Communication in French
 - Bruce Ferguson: Mental Health and Wellbeing
 - Alan Luke: Pedagogy
- Janet Allen: Vocabulary Building
- Lucy West: Thinking Coaching Mathematics
- Katie Arnett: FSL: Addressing All Learners
 - Marian Small: Proportional Reasoning in Mathematics
 - Cathy Bruce: Supporting Teachers of Mathematics
 - Steven Katz: Professional Learning Community
 - Wayne Hammond: Strength Based Leadership
 - Mike Moore: Resiliency and Humour

FINANCE AND BUDGET

The financial state of the Network has been briefly outlined here and

there in this anecdotal history. The decisions of the founding members to financially support the organization by themselves has served it well. This independent/interdependent approach allowed EOSDN to survive when outside funding may not have been available due to funding cutbacks, had the Network originally decided to follow that route of external financial support. Over the years the Board of Directors approved projects with government monetary support which helped in delivering educational events and in meeting the operational costs of the organization. Initially conferences were designed to 'break even' or make a small profit, so as to keep the cost of the conferences low, thus allowing for more participants. As the numbers attending conferences increased, the profit level increased as well, thus assisting in balancing the Network's budget.

It was never the aim of EOSDN to be a big money-maker; it simply wanted to provide exemplary services and survive. The initial budget of \$28,000 in 1989 was a big investment for school boards and universities as they were investing scarce money into an unknown entity. Careful managing of the dollars in those early days by Reg Shadbolt and the Board of Directors meant that EOSDN remained solvent. This same careful, reasoned approach to budget planning and operation has continued through each administration of the Network to this day. In 2013-2014 the overall budget of the Network, taking into account annual member fees, conferences, meetings and government projects is more than a million dollars. As happened from Day One, the money is spent on Network professional development activities, and there are many. Good fiscal management by the Board of Directors and thorough accounting procedures implemented by Dan Pennell have allowed the

organization to realize its purpose and achieve its goals. As Dan says, "The organization went from being a small club with a book-keeper to a full-fledged organization that must comply with all government reporting and taxation requirements." A review of EOSDN's financial picture over these 25 years attests to that fact.

THE CHANGE GAME

In the early 1990s the Durham Public School Board extended an invitation to members of EOSDN to participate in a training session for a research-based, team-oriented board (as in cardboard) game called The Change Game. Some boards accepted the invitation and were very impressed with the content and effectiveness of the Game in assisting people in understanding the nature of change as it applies to school, board and community settings.

Those Network members who had been "trained" recommended to Reg Shadbolt and the Board of Directors that EOSDN purchase the product for use across Eastern Ontario. In no time, it seemed the Change Game appeared at leadership events across the region, so much so that the demand for the game far exceeded the availability of the one

set of the board game, so two more sets were ordered. Julie Clarke coordinated the schedules for the Change Game and the sets found their way to boards via committee and board of director members. For more than a decade the Change Game was housed in western, central and eastern board offices of the Network, being 'played' at SOQP sessions, leadership courses, staff meetings and Network gatherings.

The purpose of The Change Game was to broaden the players' understanding of how change works, of personal leadership traits, with the resulting realization leading to the ultimate goal of the game, increased student benefits (called stubens). Basically players moved the people on the board through stages of understanding and acceptance of a change, trying to get all 26 to the fifth stage in the change process. The game was two and one-quarter hours in length and the results were always the same – participants got right into the game, and the action and tension in the room increased as collaborative teams of four people worked to acquire stubens. People reading this might recall how chance played a role in the success of their choices for implementing change. One groaning example was when a team had everything in place for

Reflections

"I found the Change Game to be an inspiring exercise that enabled growth for the participants in the valuable leadership strategy of implementing change in the workplace with support, precision, and sustainability. I have been both a participant and a facilitator on many occasions, and I have always benefitted from the Change Game experience, no matter which role I played. I have taken away new ideas each time I have been involved in the process, and I have expanded my EQ, my competence in building relationships, and my ability to capitalize on the strengths of those I lead."

-Jennifer Perkin was one of the many Change Game facilitators, Catholic DSB of Eastern Ontario

the big presentation and the room was not available because that day the building's boiler had burst! The game was a very effective tool for learning and it fit the approach of the Network in many ways – it was based on solid research, it required team skills to be effective and it was fun. Trained leaders from one board often led the activity in a neighbouring board.

The Change Game was another of those EOSDN experiences which came to be because of an invitation and came to thrive because it met the needs of educators in an ever-changing school and board landscape.

THE SOCIAL NETWORK

EOSDN became a social network long before that term came to be used in our modern-day electronic communications world. Reflections by members from across the region

indicate the high value they have placed on the friendships gained and the good times celebrated over the years. There were many 'likes' before this term took on its present meaning. People speak of the conversations over dinners, the shared libation at the end of a long day, the walks together, the warm welcomes, the camaraderie and good spirit which formed the heart and soul of the Network. One annual event begun in 1994 was the summer-time golf tournament, usually taking place after a morning of Reflections in mid-August. As with all things Network, the tourney moved across the counties, each course and area adding its own flavour to the event. The golf was hosted in Arnprior, Upper Canada Village, Ottawa, Kingston, Brockville, Smiths Falls, Westport, Pembroke, to list but a few. Dona Cruickshank remembers the days of pouring rain in Westport and thunderstorms in Pembroke as but two dubious golf

highlights. In Westport, she recalls, golfers waited in anticipation of the grand view of the Rideau Lake from the 8th hole, only to be so soaked by six holes that they sloshed back to the clubhouse, hole unseen. In Pembroke, Peter Hiscott insisted the storm was not nearby, his reassuring statement followed almost immediately by a jolting thunderclap that drove everyone indoors! Many recollect the day on #18 in Smiths Falls that Dona showed the men in her foursome the way golf was to be played by sinking a hole-in-one! Fore!

The workload was full but that never took away from that comforting feeling of familiarity and friendship ever-present at meetings, workshops and conferences. The 'we are all in this together' concept allowed for meaningful relationships and happy times, a hallmark of the Network for the past 25 years...and counting!

Chapter 7

Into the Future

Having looked at the story of EOSDN, now, as we close, we look to the future. We asked those associated with the Network over the years of the impact that the organization has had on their professional lives and, finally, their opinion as to what EOSDN should do to ensure its effectiveness and survival in the years ahead. Regarding the impact query, certain patterns showed themselves in the responses. People said that the Network had provided them with so many opportunities to grow as an educator, whether in the classroom, school or board. These opportunities happened in surroundings where they felt comfortable sharing, planning and presenting. In the Network each member seemed to have a job to do but it was the importance of the Network which carried the day, not the importance of one particular person or role.

People used expressions such as ‘we were all in this together’, ‘the energy was contagious’, ‘there were no silos in EOSDN’, ‘friendships formed have lasted a life-time’ and so on. Contributors expressed amazement as to how educators could come together from diverse backgrounds and immediately get to the business of the Network. It seemed to take no time for the organization to take its place in the world of education in its first years. It was as if it had been in existence for ages when it was really only months.

Reflections from contributors illustrate that it was a healthy combination of dedicated people, quality programs and conferences, and shared purpose which has made the Network so successful for the past 25 years and counting. References are made to the fun that was had as the work progressed. There were special social times, such as dinners, golf tournaments, evening chats, times when laughter and camaraderie filled the room, a sure sign of a healthy organization.

Names of influential leaders appear, those responsible for the day-to-day running of the entity, to board, committee and conference members. Names too many to mention here, but we can say that in each year and decade of the Network’s life, people came forward to make a difference in teaching, learning and leading throughout Eastern Ontario in large and small ways, all in the name of the Network.

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“For me, EOSDN was a huge opportunity to interact with educators in others Boards.....which certainly served me well when I was at the Ministry of Education , and when I changed Boards. The EOSDN provided me with foreknowledge of some of the people and practices in my new areas. I was much impressed with the synergy which occurred when progressive thinkers gathered. Certainly teachers and students received benefits from the sharing of practices and ideas which occurred in this forum.”

*-Judie Martin,
Catholic DSB of Eastern Ontario*

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"While the details blur, I treasure the overarching memory of working across the desks from Reg Shadbolt and Dona Cruickshank in our EOSDN 'suite', on West Campus. My time at EOSDN (1992 through to April of 2001) provided the opportunity to work and interact directly with diverse groups of educators and senior administrators across Eastern Ontario ... at both big events and smaller meetings, at home base in Kingston and in venues across the Network. My biggest take away from those years is the acceptance, trust and respect afforded me from every spoke on the Network. I was entrusted to manage tasks and projects and I believe that my opinion was welcomed. The supportive environment countered the fear to explore new processes. The willingness of all to share and explain, allowed me to more fully participate and contribute. Although a formal operational chart would show a hierarchical structure, I always felt that I was working alongside members of the Network ... at every level."

*-Julie Clarke, Project Assistant,
EOSDN*

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"I learned quickly that EOSDN was a loosely connected, highly professional group of individuals who shared a common vision around what professional learning needed to look like for their respective districts. Board and committee members were unselfish with their time and boundless in their energy for the work of the EOSDN. Through the network, I have met many exceptional people that I wouldn't have met otherwise. As a smaller rural Board, we have benefited greatly from the professional learning offered by the network.

Research has pushed our thinking on what effective professional learning looks like, while declining enrolment and funding adjustments has forced us to be thoughtful around how we use our resources. The need to collaborate, share resources and build on the ideas of others, continues to be as important today as it ever was. I see the future as bright for EOSDN. It will continue to evolve as an organization, reaching out to new stakeholders in education and continuing to provide exceptional job-embedded professional learning well into its next 25 years."

*-Roger Clarke,
Renfrew County DSB*

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"In my thinking EOSDN influenced boards positively in so many ways, perhaps the most important one being this: the Network showed us that we could do it! Never before in Eastern Ontario had such an enterprise been undertaken and to have it succeed so well led others to believe that they could do it, too. I firmly believe that the Eastern Ontario Catholic Curriculum Cooperative, started five years after the Network began, saw what EOSDN had done in professional development, and reasoned that it could do likewise in curriculum."

*-Kevin Lydon,
Catholic DSB of Eastern Ontario*

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"As is most often the case, the value of sharing the planning and implementation process with others is most rewarding. EOSDN created an environment that promoted vision, an environment that valued individuals and which allowed for creativity, innovation, risk taking and honest mistakes. EOSDN was a place where I could go to view the balloons. I believed that a leader's role involved searching the environment for the right options (balloons). Once the right balloon was found the challenge was to bring it back and work with staff to launch it."

*-Brian Gilmour,
Stormont Dundas Glengarry Public Board*

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“EOSDN played a major role in meeting the professional development needs of our Board and continued to serve the needs of the Hastings Prince Edward District School Board from amalgamation up to the present day.”

*-Larry Langdon,
HPEDSB*

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“The EOSDN has played a major role in my own personal professional development. As a participant in numerous workshops, institutes and programs, I was able to develop a network of contacts I still see today; I had the opportunity to listen to outstanding presenters and to continually challenge myself. As a facilitator, I expanded my network and really had the opportunity to develop my presentation skills. In addition, I got to work with many top educators.”

*-Julian Hanlon,
Ottawa Catholic School Board*

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“The EOSDN has been an integral part of my Professional Life for 25 years. It has been most enriching and comforting to be ‘part of a team’ with colleagues throughout Eastern Ontario. Although amalgamation has reduced the number of participating Boards and the Ministry priorities continue to evolve, EOSDN remains a relevant player in many areas including leadership qualifications, curriculum, program initiatives, and Ministry ‘test’ opportunities. EOSDN by its nature can also perform a gentle lobby function in representing the Eastern section of the province. Through continued affable and wise leadership, the Network should continue to be a ‘Centre of Excellence’. In the near future, the focus may be coloured by fiscal pressures, which may cause the participating Boards to assess their priorities. EOSDN should continue to be well positioned to offer cost-effective services.”

*-Marc Schaefer,
Upper Canada DSB*

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“The Network has endured, I believe, because of the nature of educators in eastern Ontario. No matter which system they work for, they seem to share a spirit of survival, one that comes from having fewer resources than some larger Ontario Boards, and a realization that through sharing there is strength. Whenever I had the opportunity to speak of the Network at provincial meetings, I would be proud to describe what EOSDN was accomplishing. The MISA project is only one example, but I recall getting surprised reactions from colleagues in other boards when I described the collaboration within EOSDN.”

*-David Fox,
Hastings Prince Edward DSB*

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“The quality and relevance of each and every workshop, assessment centre, SOQP course, and responses to a multitude of Ministry proposals, in turn, enhanced the credibility of the Network. To top it all off, these achievements were/are being realized with a flat-line organizational structure. It almost defies the accepted theories of successful organizational models. But after 25 years, something right is in place. This “something right” includes a well defined purpose, an inclusive outlook and an ability to attract highly competent professionals to fill key Network roles. The Network has significantly enhanced the leadership capabilities of many individuals within the Renfrew County District School Board. I am one who has reaped such benefits! The Network provided me a broader perspective on certain issues and yet, at the same time, helped me to crystallize other matters into clearly articulated directions. Over the years, the people and faces have changed. However, the passion and commitment to improving the experiences for the “kids” has endured.”

*-Russ Holmberg,
Renfrew County DSB*

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“The friendships that were developed through our productive efforts at launching EOSDN remain a highlight for me! The network has endured because its many activities meet a need of a great many educators, the quality of people involved and their commitment along with the support of the boards, and because “new blood” is added (as can be seen from the number of names I do not recognize!). The adding of new people “forces” an ongoing evaluation of what is being done AND what needs to be done.”

-John Graham,
Leeds Grenville Public School Board

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“When I became Chairperson of the Projects Committee, I valued the incredible support of Deborah Pennell. She guided me through that whole experience. I was so fortunate to work with her, Dona, Michele Babcock, Lauren Wilson, and Charlotte Rouleau among other dedicated and talented educators. I also got to experience Board of Directors meetings and met amazing superintendents and directors. I believe that that experience helped me to further develop my leadership skills and it provided me with an opportunity to see “the big picture” in education. I think that really helped with decision-making and gave me a perspective that most educators may not develop – that when it comes to all of our students, effective practice must be shared and that there is a huge discrepancy in the level of resources each Board has to get the job done. I think my empathy and appreciation rose for those Boards that achieved so much with so little. That was the beauty of the Network. We were a community and community members help each other when there is purpose to their work – when the members are on the same mission. If we could lighten the load for others – well, that was where it was at in the Eastern Ontario Staff Development Network.

The Network has been a positive and substantial influence in my life. I believe that by being able to share challenges, solutions, ideas and forward practices in an environment that is risk free with folks who provide so many interesting perspectives is a gift. I am so grateful that I had the opportunity to be part of EOSDN for so many years. I only hope that I was able to help out as much as so many others helped me.”

-Deb Robinson,
Ottawa Catholic SB

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“Kudos is extended to the countless legions of teachers, principals and supervisory officers who have worked tirelessly over the years creating, modifying, enhancing and upgrading EOSDN professional development activities. The fact that these enterprises are still in such high demand throughout the Eastern section of this Province is a tremendous statement to the high quality and timeliness of your work. Your continued, unwavering dedication to the advancement of staff development will further ensure the continuance of the exemplary work of EOSDN! Good for you!”

-Lorne Keon,
Renfrew Catholic DSB

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“I believe that the Network has endured because it recognizes the need of all teachers to ensure that all students are successful and to ultimately improve student achievement. The topics are current and new Ministry initiatives are mirrored in the programs offered by the Network. It allows for the sharing of ideas of educators across Eastern Ontario. It provides a venue for the educators’ voices to be heard. It models what a successful classroom and school across Eastern Ontario represents and provides that venue for all educators while taking part in programs at EOSDN. The future that I envision for the Network is expansion. This is the only network of its kind in Ontario. The professional learning that I received has made me a better educator in so many ways. I was truly a better educator and school leader because of the experiences that I enjoyed while involved with EOSDN.”

-Donna Commerford (Conway),
Peterborough Victoria Northumberland Newcastle Catholic DSB

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“Thank you to Reg, and his able and patient assistant Julie, for launching us on this educational journey. If I can borrow from Eleanor Newman’s graphic of the Common Curriculum roadmap, EOSDN gave us a road to travel, benchmarks to achieve and friends to share the journey with. Thank you to Dona Cruickshank for taking EOSDN through its own transition years. Now to Eleanor- whose wisdom, enthusiasm and insight will guide EOSDN into its future. I hope that the teachers and school administrators of the boards of Eastern Ontario can see that EOSDN has earned this well-deserved praise over its 25-year history and that it can continue to play an important role in their on-going professional growth.”

*-Nadine Cuccaro,
Renfrew County DSB; Ministry of Education*

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“The Eastern Ontario Staff Development Network (EOSDN) has been instrumental in shaping my journey in education! The network has provided high-quality professional learning opportunities, including the Supervisory Officers’ Qualification Program, that has influenced my perspective as an educator. In particular, the Network has provided an authentic, engaging environment to share thoughts and opinions, and, to learn from one another in a safe and caring milieu, where we are comfortable taking risks and committing to a ‘learning stance’ together. I have benefitted tremendously from the network’s initiatives, both personally and professionally.

Moving forward, I believe that the Eastern Ontario Staff Development Network (EOSDN) will continue to provide meaningful professional learning for educators in the region. The Network will, no doubt, complement the direction provided by the Ministry of Education’s Student Achievement Division in order to address the needs of our students across the region. This ‘synergy of alignment’ will continue to position the organization as a leader of professional development in Eastern Ontario.”

*-Pino Buffone,
Ottawa Carleton District School Board*

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“Being associated with EOSDN was the beginning of an amazing journey for me in my personal and professional growth. Over the years as a member of the Projects committee, I was fortunate to work with folks like Deborah Pennell, Greg McNally, and Dona Cruickshank. I met some incredibly talented teacher leaders – people who were so generous with their time and who freely shared their expertise. I cannot begin to tell you the enormous impact it had on my abilities as a teacher, vice-principal and principal. Folks were always so willing to share their expertise and I am sure I learned more from them than they me. I guess it was impressive to see that we were all focused on providing the highest standards of education for our students. It was a true Professional Learning Community – we left our egos at the door and allowed ourselves to be vulnerable and say that we really needed help in implementing the constant stream of changes required of us from external agencies and our own Boards. What a relief to know that we were not alone in our endeavours. There was little whining and lots of excitement as we came together to explore possible solutions to our challenges. There were no silos and folks across the Eastern Ontario Region saw the Network as a place to get new ideas, share resources, grow as professionals and help others in our Boards do the same. Kids are kids, no matter in Renfrew or Kanata – all deserving of the best, all deserving of equal opportunities to learn and grow.”

*-Catherine McVie,
Upper Canada DSB*

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“During my career as a superintendent with the Limestone District School Board, I found that my membership and participation in the Eastern Ontario Staff Development Network was one of the most professionally rewarding aspects of my career. At the regular meetings, I found it very professionally enriching to hear from my colleagues from different school boards about policy and program initiatives as well as some of the challenges faced in their boards. My EOSDN colleagues provided a very rich professional resource and operated as a genuine network,

as intended, with fellow supervisory officers being a phone call away. Of course, my involvement escalated as I eventually spent a term as chair, and also led a visionary exercise with my colleagues when we arrived at a juncture where it was time to review the practices and operations of the network. Again, another highly enriching opportunity to work with very committed critical thinkers.

Of course, as I reflect back on my involvement with EOSDN, I would be remiss not to acknowledge the work of staff, especially Dona and Deborah, as they functioned as the glue to hold everything together – with great efficiency, patience and hard work. Congratulations to all as EOSDN celebrates its 25th anniversary!”

*-Madeleine Tarasick,
Limestone DSB*

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“My fondest memories are of the people involved in EOSDN - they were (and are) keen professionals, profoundly interested in improving their practice, and in sharing their learning with others so that others may improve as well. And they had fun doing it! My role with the EOSDN was as board contact, and participant in a variety of workshops and conferences.

I think the Network gave me both very useful opportunities for direct learning and, more importantly, reflection on my practice. It also gave me a supportive group of people throughout the region that I could draw on for inspiration, advice, and insight. I think it has endured because it successfully fulfills the needs of its members for those things I have identified, as well as its leadership.”

*-Geoff Williams,
Renfrew County DSB*

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“EOSDN needs to ‘stay the course’ while increasing the awareness and participation of its members:

Continue to maintain partnerships that create funding for growth opportunities locally; increase the visibility of the Network by promoting the benefits of Network involvement beyond the Board reps who serve on committees; and expand the modes of support to include on-line interaction, webinars, and video conferences so that the Network can reach more participants.”

*-Jennifer Perkin,
Catholic DSB of Eastern Ontario*

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“EOSDN has been my extended professional family. Through all stages of my career, it has provided a framework for collaboration that was characterized by positive dialogue, best practice sharing, idea generating and deep thinking about improving the student experience and outcomes. The Network reaches across boundaries (geographic, socio-economic, etc.) to bring together educators as a true learning organization.

The Network endures as it removes political affiliation, federation allegiance, Board/School culture, pay/role, language, religion and size/population dynamics from the shared experiences. A governance structure that affords equal representation from the (current) nine Boards and one university has been instrumental in keeping a focus on collaborative learning. There is one direction – towards better student outcomes. There are many roads in that direction which could include: e-learning, social media, data feeds, webinars, technological connectivity, bringing ideas from around the world “into the room”.

However, one of the defining features of EOSDN is our proximity and ability to meet in person; we must continue to harness the rich conversations that can approximate the complexity of teaching/learning as this is sometimes a compromise with distance-connected events. EOSDN events must continue to allow people to talk to each other.”

*-Ivan Saari,
Renfrew County DSB*

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"I am proud to have been a part of the EOSDN Network. I have heard nothing except positive things about this unique partnership among the eastern boards of Ontario. The sharing, the collaboration and the planning that is done together truly exemplifies "two heads are better than one". The trust and the teamwork authenticated between our boards is what make us an outstanding group. As long as we see ourselves as team players we will remain steadfast on our educational journey.

I see the Network as a leader in the educational field with current practices. What I like best is the "meeting of the minds" on several occasions during the year where we can share with each other, question each other's practice and spend time discussing important issues and concerns. As technology becomes more prevalent, I see challenges and obstacles that need to be overcome but I have no fear that our Network won't be able to rise to the occasion, conquer and surpass all hurdles."

*-Patti Greer,
Algonquin Lakeshore Catholic DSB*

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

As we close this chapter of our EOSDN history book, we are presenting the views of the three executive directors – Reg Shadbolt, Dona Cruickshank and Eleanor Newman – on what they see as the impact of the Network to date and its future. Reg has provided an in-depth reflection on the Network's impact but says that he will leave the predicting up to Dona and Eleanor who have been there recently.

Reg Shadbolt

"Although there is no formal research to support many of the following impressions, this writer believes strongly that many teachers, principals, and supervisory officers were influenced very positively by what they learned during the extensive opportunities provided by the Network to interact at peer level with many other well respected educators who volunteered, often with little or no remuneration, to share their ideas and best practices openly with others.

Classroom teachers have always searched for better ways to engage their students in the learning process, but during the early days of The Network many teachers felt isolated and without support as they had to adjust to dramatic changes in both the curriculum and its delivery system, or lack of, to the classrooms. Traditional instructional strategies to entire classes had to be adjusted to accommodate the diverse needs and interests of the individual students in their care; skills were learned from more integrated learning experiences, as classroom sets of textbooks were obsolete; multiple resources were necessary for different groups of students learning at their level of achievement, curriculum guidelines were thinner and less directive, and external resource staff seemed to be only possible within the larger financial base of the larger school boards.

It is little wonder against this rather bleak support background that the services and programs provided initially by the In-Service Institute were applauded and overly subscribed as keen teachers rushed to hear respected peers outline what they were doing differently to successfully meet the wide range of student abilities and interests. In addition, the larger boards opened their surplus places to welcome other teachers from the Network, especially those from the smaller boards. No wonder that the sessional evaluations were most positive and grateful! An added bonus was the professional growth experienced by the planners and presenters from the different boards as they collaborated to ensure that each session offered to others was practical and presented by a highly-respected peer whose only label was that she/he was an excellent teacher or school leader.

Similarly, the Leadership Academy provided a variety of requested programs and services by school principals and supervisory officers. The NASSP model of principal assessment made a significant impact on both the participants and the assessors from the different boards who were trained to observe desirable behaviours from six candidates who were attempting to show what effective principals would do in selected common situations for school leaders. Although the process was perceived to be too demanding for the individual boards to offer inter-



**Eleanor Newman, Reg Shadbolt
and Dona Cruickshank**

nally, all benefitted greatly from the training received, along with the accumulated list of skills and sensitivities that effective school leaders would use in certain situations. In fact, several boards modified their development of internal programs for aspiring principals in their schools.

When the Network was granted permission by the Ministry to offer Supervisory Officer Certification Courses in Eastern Ontario, the results were very dramatic. The impact is still very obvious today as many of the current superintendents and directors of education are graduates of this program and speak very highly of their experiences, which were planned by the Network and the presenters to be more practical in nature, within the existing provincial framework of the Education Act and the various Regulations. Once again, no history of EOSDN would be complete without paying tribute to the several highly respected leaders from the different boards who volunteered to mentor aspiring systems' leaders and while they grew even more effective personally from the experience, their personal lives had to be adjusted. This writer was personally thrilled to see so many pairs of highly respected superintendents from both the Catholic Boards and the "Public" Boards working so well together to effectively present the required modules in harmony with the overall mission of the Network!

In conclusion, EOSDN worked well and has made a significant impact upon many. Students of the Classical Change Process would be most impressed when they realized that the Network was driven by the wishes of the participants who were assisted by a responsive administrative arm that successfully brought all of the players together in comfortable surroundings, so that they could learn so much from each other when all are treated equally, with mutual respect. Upon reflection, it should not be surprising that it worked so well when so many have stated so often that this is the only model that results in significant changes to people."

*-Reg Shadbolt,
Project Director, 1989-1999*

Dona Cruickshank

When asked to reflect on my time with the Network, I hadn't quite realized that I have been connected to EOSDN for almost a quarter of a century. That sounds such a long time, but it seems that it flew by. The many memorable people that moved through the Network, the innovative ideas that came to the table and were put into action, the friendships that were made for life, and the open sharing of so many resources – all just some of the thoughts that came flooding through my mind as I went back over the past two decades.

I am afraid to start naming the people who come to mind because as soon as I write them down, a dozen more will come flooding in to be added to the list. I will mention the first names that surfaced from over the years – Barbara Day Wills, whose vision led to our first review that gave us NFP status, Catherine McVie, David Fox, Russ Holmberg and Greg McNally, Linda Wilson, SOQP facilitators par excellence Barry O'Connor and Lorne Keon, Mark Joel and Joni Heard who shared expertise from Durham, LeRoy Whitehead and Cal Bowry who were strong proponents of the Network at Queen's, and on and on – I now have a page filled with names and I am just starting.

I have always said that the strength of EOSDN is its people who come together to share equally and return to their boards enriched. I see a long and successful future for the Network as education moves to collaboration and inquiry learning. It seems that those two pieces have been key components of every action the Network has taken over its 25 years. Added to that, the Network values its ability to be quickly responsive to emerging needs and to shedding those things that don't work anymore. We have re-invented the organization several times over our history, but we have never really strayed far from our original tenets. That combined with the focus on the people of the Network are certainly ingredients for its continued success.

In many of my reports to the Board of Directors, I talked about our Network's endeavour to be "reflective of its guiding principles and the vision of those who created this organization" and the importance of "no matter how we change or grow, that those original concepts still hold true today". People involved in the Network today know that these words are still true and the richness of the sharing is unlike that found anywhere else.

*-Dona Cruickshank,
Executive Director, 1999-2012*

Eleanor Newman

As the current Executive Director of the Eastern Ontario Staff Development Network, I look back in awe at the tremendous synergy that propelled the Network through its history. This history is populated by busy, intelligent and dedicated individuals from classrooms, schools, and districts who generously contributed time, energy and expertise to a larger common good. Too numerous to name, they organized opportunities so that they and their colleagues could learn with and from each other, and also from key minds of the time who were invited to Eastern Ontario as keynote speakers and facilitators. Having this record of our history is inspiring and perhaps a little daunting to those who now carry the torch: the EOSDN Board of Directors that sets direction, members of the Planning Work Team who operationalize that direction, the ad hoc committees who lend their talents to planning various initiatives that respond to current identified needs, those who coordinate or facilitate programs and sessions, and the small yet highly effective Network staff.

History offers its lessons and we have learned the importance of some key elements of a thriving Network: annual reflection/visioning where direction is set based upon input from senior teams in member organizations; ongoing communication between and among the EOSDN Board of Directors, the Planning Work Team and decision-makers in each District School Board; learning opportunities that are relevant to participants and link research, practice and inquiry over time; cost-effective access to “big-name” thinkers; adding value to the good work already underway within the nine eastern region DSBs and Queen’s University through alignment and synergy; and finally, being nimble, fiscally responsible and accountable. The current collective leadership of the Network will be mindful of the lessons drawn from the rich legacy it has inherited as it constructs the future.

The future success of the Eastern Ontario Staff Development Network rests, as did past successes, on the creative and dynamic collaboration of folks of good intention who see value in building a whole that is greater than its parts and believe in the power of “better with”. Fortunately, Eastern Ontario is well-populated with such innovative and thoughtful professionals so the future holds great promise.

*-Eleanor Newman,
Executive Director, 2012-present*

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The reflections in this chapter and others emphasize the theme of this book, apparent from the 1980s to today – EOSDN has always had outstanding leadership from people who reflect the notion that ‘the right idea at the proper time is a powerful force’. Teaching, learning and leading together will serve education well through the innovative initiatives of the Eastern Ontario Staff Development Network. The good work continues!

