

New principal at Castleton P.S. likes to teach with music

By Eileen Argyris

David King, B.A., B. Ed., M.Ed., the new principal of Castleton Public School, comes to this community with a long, strong background in education.

Dr. R.H. King Academy in Scarborough is named for his grandfather who was the principal of Scarborough Collegiate when Scarborough was a rural township, and he later became Scarborough's first director of education. A number of other family members are in teaching, and King has been with this board since 1975.

King says he has "taught all subjects, including physical education, special education, industrial arts," but, as principal at Castleton, he will be doing almost no teaching, "except by design or when needed for coverage."

Last year, King was acting principal at Camborne Public School, and prior to that, he spent five years as vice-principal in various board schools. Before that, he was a versatile classroom teacher.

His special loves? "English — I majored in that," and "I like teaching through music."

King plays a number of instruments, including piano and string bass. He plans two assemblies a month in the school's mini-gym so the children and staff can enjoy music together. At the assemblies, King will play string bass and Heather Stubbs, French teacher who also coaches the choirs, will play guitar.

The new principal lives in Cobourg. He is father to three youngsters: Elisabeth, 13, Andrea, 10; and Thomas, 7.

school, there are changes that are coming down from the province that will affect Castleton school and all schools, says King.

"The 'benchmarks' method of measuring performance of schools at specific levels will involve every school in the province." He sees it as his role, "to make sure the parents are informed and kept up-to-date."

Also, "destreaming" the province's new mandate for the "transition years" of Grades 7, 8 and 9 will affect the senior students in this JK to Grade 8 school.

His goals? "To get to know the community and the needs

of the school and the individual children." He cautions, "You can't assess them immediately."

He says his will be an "open door" policy, with freedom for parents, teachers, students and other staff and community members to come into his office to ask about anything that concerns them. Also, he says, he plans to continue with monthly newsletters as former principal Morris Tait did.

The school staff, he says, "does a lot of professional development outside school hours. It shows a high degree of professionalism."

But, principals must all be able to accept and

implement change, says King. "These children are not going to live in the same kind of world we lived in. We can't afford for the children's sakes to fall back on doing everything the old-fashioned way."

"We take risks when we do something different. And, that is part of what education must teach children — not to be afraid to be risk takers."

He approves highly of the school's motto: *Courage, Perseverance, Success.*

"I have to buy into the school's culture. That's part of my job."

Sailing, he says, is his "outside passion," and he regularly sails as a crew member out of the Cobourg Yacht Club. In addition, he enjoys "travel, photography, reading and writing."

He looks forward to facilitating the Parent Support Group already in place at the school. He says he has been very impressed with the parents he has met, including the outgoing chairperson of the parent group, Donna Dishart, and the "lady who co-ordinates all the volunteers, Arlis Klein."

He describes the children of Castleton school to be "well-behaved" and the teachers to be "talented and dedicated" and he made special mention of the "immaculate school buses."



Castleton's new principal -- David King is an amateur musician and a professional teacher who loves using music to communicate with youngsters. He plans to introduce bi-weekly assemblies to enjoy music. Photo by Eileen Argyris