



Master Teacher Lorraine Mandelbaum directs three of her artistic students in the finishing touches of a giant mural they painted on a classroom wall. The scene is an abstract of Toronto — the road is the Don Valley Parkway.

Grade 10 Thornlea Secondary students are Lori Longstaff, 16, John Connor, 18, and Gary Curley, 15, (background). (Liberal Photo by Steve Pearlstein)

Master teachers: specialists who do prove their skills

By STEVE PEARLSTEIN
Liberal Staff Writer

After a decision last week by the York County Board of Education, to discontinue the secondary level of the Master Teacher Program, taxpayers might view this move as a money-saving effort.

Naturally if there are fewer positions, fewer salaries have to be paid out. However, if parents and anyone else concerned did not ask themselves what a master teacher is or does, before passing off the decision as a natural one during a time of cost cutting and fiscal restraint, they were missing something in their understanding of education in York County.

Sam Chapman, director of education for York County, was instrumental in developing the concept of the master teacher. It was actually an idea he came up with when he was superintendent of education for the old York Central District High School Board of Education in 1962, one of the boards amalgamated into the York County board in 1969.

Back in the early '60s, the teachers under the old board were inspected and received an average rating of 4.3 on a seven-point scale. Mr. Chapman felt this meant either there were as many poor teachers as there were good ones or that most of the teachers in the system had only average ability. In keeping with the board's policy of high quality education for all students, it was Mr. Chapman's task to hire better new teachers, retain good teachers (many of whom were often attracted to Toronto) and improve the quality of the teachers already on staff. It was this latter goal that gave rise to the master teacher program.

A master teacher has a dual role in that 40 per cent of his or her time is spent actually teaching in the classroom. For that part of their job, they are treated like any other teacher in the school — directly responsible to the principal and having no special classification.

The other 60 per cent of their time, the portion designated as the main business of the program, is spent consulting with other teachers on a wide range of important subjects recognized as professional development.

If the concept of professional development was relatively new in 1963, then the master teacher program had to be viewed as the most innovative of its kind.

Three years after Mr. Chapman made his assessment of the York Central teachers and initiated the first five master teacher positions, teacher ratings rose to an average of 5.6.

It is clear master teachers are more than the regular classroom teachers. "Back in 1963, I defined the job before I went looking for people," said Mr. Chapman. "They are obviously specialists but they also had to be generalists — the best of what all the other teachers could be." He said he didn't want master teachers to have authority, something that could be used as a threat against the teachers they had to consult with. A third criterion he set down was that master teachers had to be close to the rest of the teaching population, to be readily available at all times. Mr. Chapman frowned on the idea of making the master teacher a "head quarters person".

Finally, it was decided master teachers would not be co-ordinators or consultants in the normal sense but be able to prove

what they talked about by actually doing the work in the classroom.

"That's why a master teacher can be holding a class at any given time during the teaching portion of the assignment," said Mr. Chapman, "and invite other teachers in to demonstrate their abilities and let others learn by example. This also tends to keep the master teachers involved with the system."

Financially, master teachers do not cost the board or the taxpayer an exorbitant amount, on a per capita basis. For budget purposes, the board always isolates these teachers' salaries because they really come from two different expenditure accounts. They are paid out of the same school operating budget as other teachers for the time they spend in the classroom (40 per cent).

They also get an allowance of \$3,700 per year for the 60 per cent of their time spent for professional development and consulting. These allowances are drawn from that line of the budget having to do with planning and development.

She claimed that in 1964, there was a lot of money being spent in education, that there was all kinds of money available in the '60s.

"He had the foresight to see it was going to get cut off someday or trimmed and he created a type of consultant that wouldn't cost our school system as much as it costs other boards. Yet the quality of his consultants is even better than those other boards in some ways because it's enhanced by our constant experience in the classroom," said Mrs. Mandelbaum.

Besides their teaching role, master teachers

spend the greatest portion of their time aiding and consulting with regular teachers. Some of the finest teachers in York rely on their services.

Those who are secure in their jobs don't hesitate to call on a master teacher to discuss their needs or improve their classroom techniques.

The principal is the person responsible for all the education that goes on in his school. If he is in charge and there is a weak teacher or weak program, the onus is on him to correct that situation. Although that teacher may be struggling in his daily work, the principal cannot call up a master teacher and ask him or her to go into the class and help out. Because of

the way the program is designed, the teacher must make his own realization that help is needed and request the aid of the more experienced, generally seasoned master teacher.

If a school and, ultimately the board, realizes an inept teacher is not using the available resources to help himself improve, his position could very well become untenable. It is the teacher who is responsible for his own professional growth and, if he doesn't do anything about it, he'll have problems because the demands of education are steadily increasing.

Pondering the dilemma the board has created by eliminating the secondary panel of master teachers, Mr. Chapman said: "There are things that have to be done. We will get them done, possibly by inventing other programs — but they will get done."

When Sam Chapman gets that twinkle in his eye, you can bet the education wheels of motion are seldom at rest.

Bridge winners are announced

Wednesday, March 15: North-South — Patsy Bean and Verda Moore; Sharon Menczel and Rita Pariseli; Cleta Dieken and Pat Rawlinson.

East-West, 1. Ann Payment and Rose Morrell; 2. Bernice Mackie and Judy Atkinson; 3. Marion Fahner and Mavis Ball.

Friday, March 17: North-South, Stewart and Marie Cole; Pat Rawlinson and Cleta Dieken; Kathy Rawlinson and Carol Geddes.

East-West, Bob and Ann Manning; Fred and

Theresa Tierney; Miquette DeBac and Klara Mezie.

Monday, March 20: North-South, George Newton and Omar Khamissa; Gerry Browning and Cleta Dieken; Edyth Turp and Edith Hobson.

East-West, 1. Ray Kyte and John Shearer; 2. Ross Jenkinson and Richard Charlebois; 3. Bob Dunn and Fred Dieken.

Monday night Open Pairs Trophy Winners by a narrow margin were Ross Jenkinson and Richard Charlebois.

The runner-ups were Barbara and Peter Lariviere.

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TRANSIT REVIEW STUDY

The Council of the Town of Markham is considering changes in the transit system but before doing so Council is interested in receiving public input. If you are interested in the matter the following public meetings will be held at which time you may make your views known:

Thornhill Community Centre April 3rd, 1978
(Bayview Avenue and John Street) at 8:00 P.M.

Markham Centennial Centre
(8172 McCowan Road)
April 5th, 1978
at 8:00 P.M.

A. Roman Mayor
Diane E. Smith, (Mrs.) Town Clerk

March 22nd, 1978
March 29th, 1978

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panel: J. MARSHALL M.D.
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TOWN OF VAUGHAN PUBLIC HEARING
- LAND SEVERANCE POLICY -

April 4, 1978, 7:30 P.M. in the Council Chambers, Maple

The Vaughan Planning Committee will hold a Public Hearing to consider an Official Plan amendment setting out a comprehensive land severance policy.

The proposed Official Plan amendment deals primarily with severances in the rural areas of the Town and is intended to provide the Regional Land Division committee with a basis for considering consent applications.

Details of the proposal are available by visiting or phoning the Planning Department of the Town of Vaughan.

The meeting is scheduled to commence at 7:30 P.M. in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building, 2141 Major Mackenzie Drive, Maple, Ontario.

All those in favour of or opposed to the proposed policy are invited to attend, or if unable to attend, may file written comments with the Director of Planning prior to the date and time of the Hearing.

Chairman
Vaughan Planning Committee

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Rev. William Prentice 883-4149
Rev. Fred Jackson 884-2418
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Wednesday 10 a.m. - 12:15 (noon)
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9:15 a.m. Morning Prayer
9:15 a.m. Nursery School only
11:00 a.m. Morning Prayer
11:00 a.m. Church School, Kindergarten & Nursery School
7:00 p.m. Youth Service
Wednesday - 10:00 a.m.
Holy Communion

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Minister: Rev. Dana H. Lamb
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11:00 a.m. - Morning Worship

RICHMOND HILL BAPTIST CHURCH
50 WRIGHT STREET
TELEPHONE: 884-3091
Rev. E. Corbett, Pastor
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7 p.m. Evening Service
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7:00 P.M. Evening Service
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8:00 P.M. Bible Study and Prayer

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9:30 a.m. Sunday Church School
11:00 a.m. Worship Service

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WEDNESDAY
8:00 p.m. - Bible Study
SUNDAY 12:30 p.m.
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