

Creating a “Community of Learners” Through Cultural Mediation: A School’s Perspective

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Abstract

Schools in diverse settings pose leadership challenges with the principal. They also afford opportunities. A principal who asserts a leadership role and takes the risk of reculturing the school engages students and teachers as well as the community at large in the educational endeavor. Through a case study of Rideau High School, Ottawa, this article explores interventions that help build a “community of learners.” In this case, the principal taps on the uniqueness of the community by linking outside and inside resources in the school through cultural interpreters.

Résumé

Les écoles situées dans des environnements multiculturels posent des défis de leadership aux directeurs d'école. Elles fournissent aussi des opportunités. Un directeur qui impose un rôle de leader et prend le risque de remodeler la culture de l'école, entraîne avec lui les élèves et les enseignants, ainsi que la communauté en général, dans la belle aventure de l'éducation. À travers l'étude du cas de l'école secondaire Rideau (High School), située à Ottawa, cet article examine les interventions qui aident à construire une « communauté d'apprenants ». Dans ce cas précis, la directrice exploite le caractère unique de la communauté en reliant les ressources externes et internes, à l'intérieur de l'école, par le truchement d'interprètes culturels.

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Introduction

According to Nieto (2000), education for a culturally diverse community is a process and it is pervasive. It affects all school structures and because schools are so much at the heart of what we call community, virtually all other aspects of social, political and economic life as well. Of course, districts and schools experiencing increases in linguistic and cultural diversity may and do respond differently to those challenges and opportunities. In this, as in other aspects of educational life, principals can play important leadership roles and are faced with important responsibilities.

This article discusses one school and its principal's efforts to meet these challenges. It is a case study of the programmes and leadership approach developed at Rideau High School in Ottawa. It focuses on the fact that meeting the challenges and capitalizing on the opportunities presented by growing numbers of refugees and immigrants requires leadership efforts beyond business as usual. It is critical to create a community of learners built upon the strengths of diversity and the involvement of students, parents, teachers and community organizations working together in new ways. In our efforts to achieve these results, we have found that Multicultural Liaison Officers (MLOs) have played a significant role in promoting and supporting a community of learners among immigrant and refugee students and their families (Vargas 1998, 1999, 1999a).

First, this article introduces the community of Rideau High School. Second, we visit the community of learners concept and the interventions we have developed in cooperation with the Multicultural Liaison Officers (MLOs) to achieve that goal. Finally, we present a brief analysis of what works and why.

While recognizing the role of the principal, it is important to address the need to expand MLO resources as well.

Based on this discussion, we conclude that school principals who embrace a leadership role with certain features contribute to a community of learners in schools with significant numbers of refugee and immigrant students. Among those leadership features that contribute to a community of learners are: a) tapping creativity among staff; b) taking risks to reculture the school culture (Hargreaves and Fullan 1998); c) daring to “fight for lost causes” while holding on to hope (Hargreaves and Fullan 1998); d) upholding cultural competence; and e) building on the ability to deal with complexity.

Welcome to Rideau High School

Rideau is an “inner-city” school of 800 students in the northeast end of Ottawa. It has been designated as a “Focus” school and as such receives funding to provide breakfast, bus tickets and other staples for needy students. The population is diverse both culturally (with 45 language groups represented—the three languages most commonly spoken after English are Arabic, Somali and Portuguese) and economically. Some students come from the Vanier area, where 70 percent of the population lives below the poverty line and others are from families associated with embassies. Many students are self-supporting; some are single parents. These latter students feel fortunate to have their children in a pre-school programme in the Rideau Child Care Centre, a facility governed by the Day Care Act, attached to the school. Many of these students proceed to college and university after high school and without exception, all maintain that they feel that by continuing their education and by giving their children a head-start on literacy they will be able to “break the cycle.”

As well, Rideau is home to five classes of Adult ESL (English as a Second Language) students. Their programme is funded by the federal government. Our students occasionally assist in these classes as "reading buddies" or computer advisors.

For the past year and a half, Patricia Irving has held the position as principal at Rideau High School.¹ "My mission was to transform the image, but most important the culture of the school so that it would be inviting to all community members and would encourage all of us inside to become actively involved in the school and out as learners." The young learn from elders (as well as from teachers) while elders play an active role imparting their knowledge and experience to young ones. Although there is a great deal of overlap in the liaison work with various parties in this complex learning enterprise, the work of the Multicultural Liaison Officers (MLOs) is apparent and significant throughout. What is evident is that their work is always for the good of students—to keep them in school and then to provide them with equality of opportunity. They are also aware of the importance of the special needs and challenges some students face and help us to address these equity issues.

What is the Principal's Challenge and What is Required to Meet It?

Before turning to the specific ways in which we have worked to develop a learning community at Rideau, let us consider briefly what the literature suggests is important to this kind of change process: first, in terms of the changes involved and second, in terms of the attitudes and skills required to meet them.

Hargreaves and Fullan (1998) argue that in responding to such challenges with sensitivity and commitment, principals may have to explore management approaches other than "business as usual." Buffering and fostering a community of learners calls for a principal who can integrate certain components—tapping creativity among staff, taking risks to reculture the school culture and daring to fight for lost causes while holding on to hope (Hargreaves

and Fullan 1998). Although seemingly a risky proposition, the challenge of stimulating the creative talent of administrators, teachers, parents and learners to foster a community of learners among immigrant and refugee students is essential to advance the Canadian policy of a multicultural society (Elliot and Fleras 1992). Above all, it is essential if we are to meet the needs of all students, including refugees and immigrants. Although there is uncertainty and insecurity in dealing with new cultures, new languages and new world views, the prospects of doing nothing are unthinkable. From a more positive viewpoint, meeting the needs of refugees is a way of putting our moral and ethical principles to work towards social justice (Freire 1970, 1998, 1998a; McLaren 1998). Engaging the community means that all of us reap benefits from the contributions of the many ethnocultural groups represented by our students. As Hargreaves and Fullan put it,

[T]he principal's task is to combat cultures of fear and hopelessness. . . this can be achieved by developing strong collaborative cultures among the staff and with the community to build a sense of hope, security and strategy in which good things can be achieved educationally despite the conditions. (1998, p. 110)

Batsis (1987) points to several characteristics common to principals in successful culturally diverse schools. They include: "high levels of job satisfaction, being involved with the teaching staff, and concerned about and involved with the future direction of education," (Batsis 1987, p. 7). More specifically, the effort to re-culture the school calls for school principals to exert leadership to implement changes in curriculum, school climate and pedagogy (Lee 1993). Of course, for principals to deal effectively in diverse school settings, they need to have cultural competence. That does not mean detailed knowledge of all cultures, but respect for and sensitivity to differences among cultures. They also need to work toward developing communication skills appropriate to deal with the complexity posed by representation of non-western world

views in the school community (Batsis 1987). Reculturing, in sum, is a process by which principals integrate rational as well as social processes.

Reculturing by contrast [to restructuring], involves changing the norms, values, incentives, skills and relationships in an organization to support (and prod) people to work differently together. The goal is to create more collaborative work cultures. Reculturing does make a difference in teaching and learning. The cumulative evidence is that students learn much better when principals, teachers and others develop a professional learning community among themselves, focus on improving teaching and learning, examine and act on assessment data in relation to what students are learning, and connect with external communities and resources to support them in their efforts. (Hargreaves and Fullan 1998, pp. 118-119)

To be sure, in the current environment school administrators must meet the challenge to implement change and generate opportunities for growth in the face of difficult barriers that include: decreased funding; increase in demands for services beyond standard schooling; the needs to offer English as a second language classes; pressures to ensure availability of child care; and the urgency to gain the trust of a sometimes disenchanted community. Such a setting calls for a leadership style infused with "hope" and a willingness to "fight for lost causes."

From a practitioner's perspective, Pat Irving identifies other equally important challenges to school principals. Among them, she considers the following crucial: supporting ongoing communication with parents and guardians; creating and fostering a safe environment for all learners and staff; providing opportunities for professional development and in-service (around issues of diversity and community outreach for staff); ensuring that no student falls through the cracks; and accountability to staff, students and parents. These elements call on a principal "to operate within parameters of funding, resources and school board

backing for initiatives." As a school leader, Irving sees her responsibilities to include "embe[dding] a philosophy of acceptance, equity and accountability into all aspects of school life." Just as important to her is "to foster school-community relations and partnerships."

According to Hargreaves and Fullan, "principals will be much more effective (and healthier) if they develop and pursue high hopes as they re-culture their schools and their relationships to the outside" (1998, p. 120). This need for a hopeful climate calls upon principals to be leaders who project, as well as embrace, and convey hope to their students, teachers, parents and the extended community. Such an approach is particularly important when working with refugees who have often felt betrayed, disenfranchised and violated by government officials in their homelands and sometimes even in their new country. What factors, then, facilitate engaging the school community and the community at large? The next section explores four areas in which we have restructured the school community to integrate the MLO Programme as a way to promote and support a community of learners: a) interaction with families; b) staff; c) students; and d) other social service professionals—efforts supported and endorsed by school principals.

Building "A Community of Learners"

What is a community of learners and how has Rideau sought to achieve it? Let us consider first the elements of a learning community, the voices of families in it, the critical participation of students, the role of school staff and essential relationships with other service providers.

The Elements of a Community of Learners

In a community of learners, everyone's talents are tapped—parents, community members and leaders, teachers and non-teaching staff—to collaborate in the educational enterprise (Kahin 1998; Phuntsog 1998; Richman 1998). It is a

fluid and permeable conception of schools. Instead of viewing schools as closed and impervious to the surrounding environment, an open systems approach is embraced. What goes on outside the school clearly affects what happens inside it. Educators cannot do the job alone. And, beyond that, it is clear that in a rapidly changing and complex world: "To educate an increasingly diverse student population, schools must look to families and communities to help in fostering academic success" (Osterling et al. 1999, p. 64).

In such a community view, the deficit approach that sees students and parents who do not speak English as deficient is abandoned in favour of a growth model. In a growth model, parents and students who speak languages other than the dominant language are viewed as community members who bring to the school their knowledge and experience as experts of their native languages and cultures. Not only can first language skills be used to foster second language learning, but refugees from diverse backgrounds can help each other acquire or improve literacy. "Immigrant families are eager to participate in the education of their children by using their language abilities, skills and funds of knowledge" (Moll, Amanti, Neff and Gonzalez, cited in Osterling et al. 1999, p. 64). Although refugee and immigrant students' educational needs differ, a learning organization is flexible in serving those needs while benefiting from the wealth of experiences and know-how or professional expertise they bring.

A principal whose leadership style views his or her school as a learning community is open to input and contributions from any representative of the community. Rather than a top-down approach in which top management dictates, the principal is a leader who invites everyone to join and partake in the educational journey. In such a context, the human and personal interaction is decisive, whether it is with parents or students who bring with them other frames of reference, talents, expertise, as well as baggage from their refugee experience. The principal sends

a message of a welcoming environment in many subtle ways, but may trigger the opposite effect just as strongly. How then, can principals re-culture their organizations to maintain high academic standards and ongoing programmes while accommodating the needs of refugee and immigrant students and their families as well as gain from their talents? The next section explores the ways that Rideau High School does it.

Giving Voice to the Voiceless: Interactions with Families

Creating a welcoming and inviting environment for parents and families plays a significant role in engaging parental participation in the school (Holman 1997). According to Holman this can be accomplished by "Lessening [the] intimidation factor and removing [the] language [and culture] barrier" (Ibid, p. 37). There are a number of ways that MLOs champion parents' input and dreams and desires for their children's education. Though not an exhaustive list, these are some of their interventions. They organize "parent discussion groups" and suggest reading materials for discussion. Second, "MLOs help us to be proactive, telephoning parents of ninth grade students to welcome them to the school." This contact also helps in anticipating specific cultural and religious concerns. Third, to ensure a broad representation of the families in the school MLOs encourage parental involvement in School Council.

Fourth, due to their excellent communication skills and insightfulness, MLOs identify issues of concern, e.g. police presence in schools in order that we can clarify, explain and allay fears. Fifth, they assist in explaining the Canadian school system and the differences in schooling in their home country and Canada. Since some of our parents are refugees and have little or no experience with a school system, MLOs can help explain equivalency determinations. This means that the teacher-counsellors sometimes have to determine whether the student has the language skills and the pre-requisite knowledge to be successful in the

courses that they select. In some instances they have to make hard (difficult) decisions when the learning that had occurred in their own country does not align with the prior learning of their Canadian counterparts. MLOs also help ease the reluctance of parents to send their children to vocational schools, for example. The reluctance is often due to a sincere desire to give their children every opportunity to take courses that lead to post-secondary education. There appears to be somewhat more reluctance among immigrant parents than most other parents towards sending their children to a vocational school. There is also the (erroneous) perception that all students attending vocational schools have behavioural problems

In general, they help parents make informed educational decisions by explaining streamed courses and course selection. They can call home to explain the permission form required for testing before it arrives home, as well as interpret test results to parents. To help children with special needs and their families, MLOs attend, as integral team members, the Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) process to determine whether children need special education services, or placement in a gifted programme. Teachers benefit from the help of the MLOs when ESL issues need to be addressed and the parents' input is also necessary.

Other ways in which MLOs facilitate communication with parents are in conveying educational or behavioural concerns to the parents in an ethically sensitive and respectful manner in which confidentiality is protected. MLOs explain effective discipline practices used in Canadian schools. If a child is experiencing problems or off the school yard, MLOs assist in getting a plan of action in place that the parents can understand and support. Seventh, MLOs help school officials ensure the general well-being of the child. For instance, informing parents that their child has bumped his or her head on the play structure and, although the child may appear to be fine, he or she should be monitored at home.

By lending assistance in bridging the cultural as well as linguistic gap between parents and children, MLOs also translate the desire of the adolescent to enjoy a social life away from the home (as illustrated in some of the examples described below). They explain custody policies to parents in conflict. Last, but equally important, MLOs provide counselling when a student is self-supporting.

In sum, the interventions of the MLOs, in general, give voice to the voiceless by creating an inviting school atmosphere for parents and community members, or supporting what Vargas (1999a) calls "institutional communications building" and "institutional adaptation." "Personal outreach in the form of home visits, phone calls and personal greetings at school events also will send a strong message of welcome" (Holman 1997, p. 37). These are ways that we infuse hope and encourage parents to overcome fears and make their voices heard in what can appear to be lost causes.

Students at the Heart of the Learning Community: Promoting Academic Success While Decreasing Racial, Ethnic, and Religious Tensions

In school, socio-cultural and religious factors affect academic performance (Zhou and Bankston III 1998; Nieto 2000; deMarrais and LeCompte 1999). The refugee experience may also affect the school experience (Leavitt and Fox 1993; Boothby 1994; Lübben 1996; Hyman et al. 1996; Richman 1998; Phuntsog 1998; Bayer and Brown 1999; Vargas 1999). Since the policy of education in Canada is to afford equal educational opportunities, mainstream schooling is not enough. In working through differences, the MLOs have played a central role in resolving unintended but conflictive messages that impede or detour academic endeavours. As cultural interpreters, they are important resources for students with whom they can identify. Since some MLOs were refugees themselves, they understand the struggles in the acculturation process, which can be as diffi-

cult for immigrants also. Equally important, MLOs provide reassurance and direction when students have concerns of an academic, social, or personal nature. Thus, students seek MLOs out to get help in conveying their opinions about various issues to their teachers. Consider the following examples.

Challenges on how assignments can have meaning for the students are explained through the MLOs. For example, writing assignments on Christian holidays may be totally meaningless for students from other religions, making the assignment an insurmountable task. MLOs also help students problem solve about appropriate academic courses. Physical education for instance has been substituted for computer science courses for Muslim students with the principal's sanction.

In the North American educational context, development of leadership skills is very important. However, for newcomers, the language and culture may lead them to retreat from visible roles. Through the MLOs, students avail themselves of leadership opportunities. Among these, was a racism awareness camp organized for 25 high school students last year. Sometimes certain cultural groups ask us to recommend students to represent that group at round table discussions, community forums etc. In other instances, with the encouragement of the MLO, students will have the confidence to put their names forward for student government positions. In other cases, immigrant and refugee students who have blossomed through the interventions of the MLOs, now assist and partake in peer mediation. Since the inception of the programme, students have asserted leadership roles in doing presentations to staff on events such as Ramadan and Eid (Eid is an important and big celebration at the ending of the fasting period [Ramadan]). Last year when Christmas, Eid, and Chanukkah all fell within days of each other, our students presented the commonalities that exist among all three at a school ceremony.

Other educational considerations with which MLOs help students is in facilitating access to resources. They

connect students with experts in certain fields to aid them in thinking about career choices. The library and computer resources are no longer foreign when MLOs provide tours or arrange schedules to work in the computer rooms. MLOs also encourage students to give a cultural focus to their independent study in senior courses, for their own pride and the enrichment of others. "[G]reat strides in learning, including basic skills can be expected when instruction is compatible with natal-culture. In reading instruction, for example, the inclusion of students' prior life and cultural experiences was found to enhance their comprehension and critical skills (Mason and Au, cited in Phuntsog 1993, p. 38).

But MLOs are also available to intervene when students' social or personal life affects their academic work. Interracial or interdenominational dating sometimes erupts in conflict at home. Even the idea of dating may be severely sanctioned by students from more traditional cultures. In sum, as "principal—and previously as vice-principal—I have seen the dramatic impact of the MLOs." As I quote the principal at my previous position: "The arrival of the MLO at our school resulted in a racial conflict free school within a period of three months."

Interactions with School Staff: Towards A Multicultural Pedagogy

Cultural mediators, in this case MLOs, respond to concerns and questions school staff may have around cultural issues which impact on students' participation. Through their expertise, they provide advice to teachers regarding selection of reading materials for appropriateness of content or potential for parent disapproval. Specifically, issues arise regarding dissection of frogs in biology classes. Rather than doing it on a real animal, the school has purchased computer programmes that accommodate religious precepts regarding dissecting animals. Teachers have become sensitive and understanding of feast days observed by Muslims Bhuddists, as well as Jewish or Christian holidays, by not scheduling tests or field trips on

those days. Since observing Ramadan requires fasting from sunrise to sunset, teachers have learned not to place physical demands on those fasting.

An important role of the MLOs is to educate the staff. They do this by providing information regarding faith and cultural practices. Last December, Jewish, Christian, Muslim feasts coincided, so we held an information session highlighting the commonalities. MLOs often make presentations at staff meetings or provide in-service training for staff. At the same time, our staff educate students and parents about Canadian holidays and invite them to join us, for example, in Remembrance Day ceremonies.

When creating a student's individualized learning plan (ILP), MLOs are an integral part of the team. Thus, they help members of the school Multi-Disciplinary Team navigate through cultural nuances that may have important impact on the diagnosis (or course of action) made by social workers, psychologists and guidance counselors. When a need arises, they may make a home visit to the family to gain insight about what the real issue is.

The academic activities organized by teachers incorporate a crucial cultural and linguistic component. The MLOs support these activities with translation for Student-Led Conferences. In fact, MLOs of all linguistic groups attend. They provide translation for some items in the school newsletter and make signs for certain ceremonies and school events. Student leadership is tapped by helping teachers in the creation and sponsorship of Multicultural Club activities. Given that there is a police presence in our schools to educate our communities, we anticipate the responses of fear by refugee children and their parents with the assistance of the MLOs. We work with the police by explaining refugees' apprehension of authorities due to abuses they may have endured in their homeland. Sensitivities regarding the canine unit have also been worked out since routinely "drug dogs" come into the schools to check. The MLO will caution officials that Muslims are uncomfortable with dogs around.

Let us consider one other example that illustrates how MLOs' practical help can be useful in preventing difficult or potentially embarrassing situations. Irving explains: "We had planned a trust exercise at our ninth grade orientation camp. Each student was to fall backwards into the arms of a classmate. When the MLO saw how the game was to take place, she quickly and discreetly, drew to the side the Muslim girls who would not have wanted to do this exercise with boys. They all proceeded as a group to enjoy the game (girls with girls)."

In sum, MLOs positively affect the pedagogy by helping teachers in various aspects and thus avoid potential conflict. However, in order for MLOs to be accessible to teachers, MLOs must be given access to the internal e-mail system so that teachers and MLOs have ready communication.

Working Relationships with Service Providers: Services that Reinforce a Multicultural Commitment

The effort to create a community of learners entails creating linkages with community organizations and professionals in other social service arenas. Some of these liaisons are for the purpose of supporting academic endeavors while others are intended to nurture the well-being of all learners. Academic work at school is advanced through the homework groups created at community centers. MLOs have been influential in the implementation of these programmes. These efforts have been complemented by the work of cultural groups with whom MLOs have worked diligently encouraging them to recognize academic excellence. For instance, the Somali cultural group awards certificates in recognition of academic achievement and grants scholarships.

Research in support of maintaining the native language abounds (Genesse 1994; Christian et al. 1997; Nieto 2000; among many others). In this respect, MLOs have been instrumental in liaising between heritage language programmes and regular day school programmes to ensure that students

maintain and strengthen their native language.

The link between good health and academic performance is one that we take seriously. However, refugee children and their families may not know where or how to access services, or may lack the language skills to communicate with health care providers. In many instances MLOs accompany parents to the doctor, dentist or hospital. They assist, according to Irving, with difficult health care issues to more common ones, "from the toothache that requires attention to making an adolescent aware of the services of the Board sexual-health clinics in schools."

It can be said that MLOs are multi-talented individuals who have the capacity to manoeuvre through a number of social, psychological or emotional issues as they help students and parents find the appropriate services. Among those is providing intervention for students and parents around drug-related issues. They also help when involvement of the Children's Aid Society (CAS) becomes necessary.

Although it is more common to have separate programmes for children and for adult learners, at our school MLOs create opportunities for both age groups to interact with each other. This is done through connections for our parents in LINC (Language Instruction for New Comers) programme and our students at the school. Auerback asserts that learning "is a collective process, where participants share and analyze experiences together in order to address concerns, relying on each other's strengths and resources rather than addressing problems individually or relying on outside experts to solve them" (cited in Osterling 1999, p. 65). In our school, the presence of parents and grandparents who are students in the ESL classes, enhances the school as a learning community for all. Their presence as role models for the younger students has had a positive effect. At the same time, high school students reap the benefit of contributing to the learning of their elders as well as the children in the child care centre housed in the school.

MLOs as Role Models: The Highlight of Last Year

When the MLO at Rideau High School became a Canadian citizen, we held a party for her. Many students were thrilled to share stories of their citizenship ceremony. Others asked how to begin the process.

The Challenges Yet Before Us

For the future, we envision the opportunity to serve more students and serve them better. At the same time, our entire school community also learns, grows and develops. We see the need to serve students, but not just on a "case by case" basis. It is clear that school principals must adopt appropriate leadership styles to meet the particular challenges of diversity. Nonetheless, it is equally clear that principals and their staff, however skilled, are unlikely to succeed without help. While the contributions of students, parents and the community are important, it is also essential to address the need for cultural liaison and interpretation.

For example, it is sometimes difficult to keep our communication with families clear and consistent. In some instances, parents bring personal friends with them to help. However, there are "too many people involved," not all seeing the issues in the same light. Because of the Freedom of Information Act, we, school officials, cannot always discuss all of the details of the case. While some cultures see an individual student's issues as of concern to a group beyond the nuclear family, an ability to share information is constrained. Even more difficult, we need to preclude thorny ethical dilemmas that arise when relatives, students or community members are used to translate (See Vargas 1998). With the assistance of the MLOs, we can ensure confidentiality and effective communication. These are only a few of the many reasons we need their help.

Of course, MLO's resources are relatively limited. The availability of more MLOs could help us develop the trust that would allow parents to permit their children to avail themselves of opportunities of which they are now skeptical, such as leadership camps, educational

exchange programmes, or after school programmes. As Phuntsog asserts "After school community-oriented programmes must be developed to forge stronger school-community relationships" (1993, p. 38). If more personnel were devoted to this initiative, we could capitalize more on the individual strengths of the MLOs. For example, the success of our literacy initiatives at Rideau could certainly be enhanced by the contribution of one of the MLOs who has her master's in library science. Other MLOs could go into classes to lecture on "world religions" or "world issues," if they were not so few in numbers and with such a huge mandate.

Conclusion

As with any case study, this discussion of how we have tried to build a community of learners at Rideau offers lessons for analysis and for possible use elsewhere. Even so, each school and each community is unique and it is an important lesson from this study that those elements of uniqueness are important to consider in any leadership effort. The challenge is not to homogenize each school or community but to build on their diversity and to work effectively with those inside and outside the school to address the challenges that arise along the way. The risk of reculturing opens the door to possibilities for refugee students and their families by affirming their cultures, lighting a ray of hope in what appears to be "a lost cause." ■

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Note

The thoughts expressed here also reflect the input of fellow principals at the elementary and secondary levels. □

The Upcoming Issues of Refuge

- Religious Refugees
- Refugee Return

Somali Refugees in Toronto: A Profile

By Edward Opoku-Dapaah, 1995
ISBN 1-55014-278-x, 130 pp., \$12.95.

This is the first comprehensive study of Somali refugees in Toronto. It examines the social, residential and linguistic characteristics of Somalis, their participation in the local economy and the activities of Somali community organizations. The report also contains valuable suggestions and recommendations concerning suitable and more efficient service delivery to this community.

Available from:
Centre for Refugee
Studies