

Summary of International Exchange
Toronto – Arnhem School Leaders
March, October 2007

A dozen Toronto-based, elementary school leaders worked with elementary principals from Arnhem, The Netherlands through a Critical Friends program developed at Cambridge University and used extensively in Holland and the U.K. The focus of this one-week exchange was to look at effective practices on improving literacy outcomes for elementary students in diverse areas of Toronto.

The school leaders involved built on the skills and competencies developed by the Toronto District School Board through the Literacy/Numeracy Secretariat's Ontario Focused Intervention Partnership (OFIP). The selected administrators used their Cognitive Coaching, Change Leadership course work from Harvard University and training specific for effective mentoring and research practices.

On-going results of this international exchange include tri-level participation between the two countries by students, teachers and school leaders through Internet technologies. As well, there has been significant and on-going outreach with the Toronto Catholic District School with schools in the original exchange working closely with Catholic schools and administrators in their neighbourhoods.

Comments from all involved report their practices are richer because of the experiences in exploring out-of-Ontario practices, working in high quality professional learning teams incorporating the European Critical Friends model of mentorship and supporting colleagues in an interactive, global world.