

# Chalk Talk

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PLEASE SHARE CHALK TALK WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES !!!

## Letter from the Editor

Dear Subscribers,

As the Chinese New Year approaches — the Year of the Rat begins February 8 — Ang Lee’s Oscar nominated film, **Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon** comes to mind. The title comes from Chinese mythology referring to hiding one’s strengths from others in order to maintain the element of surprise. This film is full of unexpected plot twists and gravity-defying action executed by highly skilled physically superior combatants reminiscent of Olympic Athletes.



This year, China, which is often referred to as “The Dragon”, will be host to the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games. For me, the true appeal of the Games goes beyond, **Faster, Higher, Stronger**. It’s not the medal tally but the individual stories — sometimes heartwarming as was the case with ski-jumper, Eddie “The Eagle” Edwards or the Jamaican bobsled team; often exciting as happened with the “Crazy Canuck” downhillers; and always dramatic as with the wins by Canada’s men’s and women’s hockey teams. It is as yet unknown which extraordinary ‘hidden dragons’ will soar, fight, and falter their way to triumph or tragedy, capturing our imaginations and carving an indelible place in our collective memories.

For Canada, the upcoming summer Olympics in Beijing are a prelude to the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Winter Games and a great time for students of all ages to become informed, excited and even involved. This week’s issue features a fun classroom activity and website that will encourage students to use their imagination and creativity to learn more about their world and the Olympic Games. There is also information about an important writing competition for Aboriginal students.

CoEd Communications is dedicated to supporting the important work of teachers by providing resources on a range of topics for the classroom. We invite you to visit our website at [www.4edu.ca](http://www.4edu.ca) to view the many free teachers’ resources on offer.

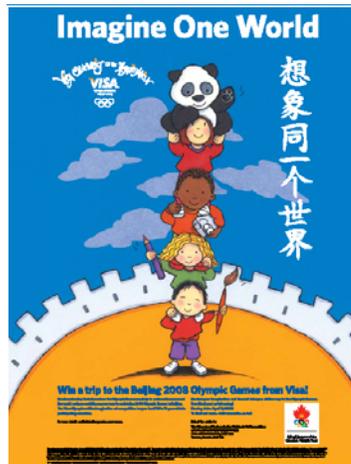
[Let us know what you think!](#)

*Mary Kornd*

## Visa ‘Olympics of the Imagination’ Challenge



Visa invites students between the ages of 10-14 to participate in the **Visa Olympics of the Imagination Art Competition** for the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games which take place in August.



Students are asked to create an original drawing based on the theme of this year’s Olympic Games—**One World, One Dream**. To help students to become inspired, samples of winning artwork from the Visa ‘Olympics of the Imagination’ art competitions from the Torino 2006 and Athens 2004 Games can be viewed online at [www.visa.ca/voi/gallery](http://www.visa.ca/voi/gallery).

**Four lucky Grand Prize winners from Canada will be flown to Beijing, China (along with a parent or legal guardian) to visit the 2008 Olympic Games as guest of Visa.**



The winning designs will be reproduced into fabric and flown at various venues at the 2008 Olympic Games. To help inspire your students, teachers are invited to view samples of winning artwork from the 2006 Torino Visa ‘Olympics of the Imagination’ children’s art competition.

**Packages containing a contest poster and challenge details will arrive in schools the week of Feb. 4, 2008.** Entry forms and full contest rules can be found at [www.visa.ca/voi](http://www.visa.ca/voi). Entries to be received no later than **April 4, 2008**, and should be submitted to:

**Visa ‘Olympics of the Imagination’ Art Competition**  
 c/o The Canadian Olympic Committee  
 21 St. Clair Ave. East, Suite 900  
 Toronto, Ontario M4T 1L9

[Source: [Visa Olympics of the Imagination Art Challenge](#)]

## Website of the week



**One World**  
**One Dream**



Every two years, The Olympic Games, the world's greatest sporting event, presents a wonderful opportunity for kids across Canada to learn more about other countries and to consider how the Olympic spirit can unite different cultures.

Educators are invited to explore the [Canadian Olympic Committee](#) website which is packed with information about the upcoming Beijing Games as well as past Games; background on Canada's talented competing athletes and resources and programs directed at youth of all ages.

In addition, take a look at the official [Beijing 2008 Games](#) site loaded with background on China, Beijing and the events and programs that are planned leading up to lighting of the Flame on August 8.

Do not forget to check out the [Vancouver 2010](#) website which provides information on the preparations being made for Canada's own upcoming Winter Games.

## OUR STORY

ABORIGINAL WRITING CHALLENGE

Win Cash Prizes  
Classes and  
Groups are  
Eligible for  
Additional Prizes

**The Canadian  
ABORIGINAL  
WRITING  
Challenge**

*A Project of the Dominion Institute*

Congratulations to the 2007 winners  
*Chantelle Cheekinev and Kerissa Dickie*

**What Story Will You Tell?**

**O**ur Story is a national storytelling initiative to educate Canadians about the defining moments in history that have shaped this country and its Aboriginal people.

The Canadian Aboriginal Writing Challenge is a short story contest for young Aboriginal Canadians (ages 14-18 and 19-29). Participants can showcase their talent and creativity and win great prizes.

**ATTENTION TEACHERS!** Use the new [Teacher's Guide](#) to engage your entire class in the Aboriginal Writing Challenge. Classroom activities will help your students brainstorm, debate and reflect on historical events. Group submissions are eligible to win additional prizes.

[Watch](#) the 2007-08 Canadian Aboriginal Writing Challenge PSA developed by Canadian Learning Television.

Read the fascinating [2007 Submissions](#) and find out more the [2008 Contest](#) by exploring this website or call us at 1-866-701-1867.



The deadline for this year's Writing Challenge is March 31, 2008.



A Project of  
THE DOMINION  
INSTITUTE

Betty Fei thought the Altitude Youth Experience would be a good way to meet new people. Now she's sitting on the Coquitlam Spirit of B.C. Community Committee and helping shape the legacy the city will hold after the Winter Olympics in 2010. Fifty-eight young people between the ages of 16 and 18 from across the province have been chosen to participate in the Altitude Youth Experience. The program is linked with Spirit of B.C., the province-wide program managed by 2010 Legacies Now, a not-for-profit organization that promotes opportunities arising from the 2010 Winter Games. Volunteers for the Games must be at least 18 years of age, cutting off younger persons who might be interested in helping out. "We needed a separate youth program that would fit into our overall Spirit of B.C. program and that's when we developed Spirit of B.C. Altitude Youth Experience," said Allen Langdon, director Legacies Now. "What we want them to do is go back into their communities and help connect their peer groups to what the Spirit of B.C. is doing." Each youth is expected to organize at least two youth-oriented events, one for Spirit of B.C. Week -- the annual countdown to the Olympics -- and another later in the year.

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[Board okays black-focused school](#) — Louise Brown, Brett Popplewell, Staff reporters, *The Toronto Star*, January 30, 2008

The black-focused school is a go. After a heated but civil debate, Canada's largest school board voted 11-9 last night to open an alternative Africentric school to help fight a 40 per cent dropout rate among Toronto's black teens. An elated parent, Donna Harrow, said she is thrilled the proposal she and fellow parent Angela Wilson had pushed for got through, despite fierce opposition and cries of segregation. "I'm ecstatic, but the struggle continues and we want this school to open in 2008, not 2009," said Harrow. Trustees voted on a sweeping package of programs to make schools more relevant to black students, including opening an Africentric school in September 2009.

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[Reject black-focused school: McGuinty](#) — Robert Benzie, Queen's Park Bureau Chief, *TheStar.com*, February 1, 2008

Premier Dalton McGuinty is urging Torontonians to pressure their school board trustees into overturning a controversial decision to create a black-focused school. While stressing his disappointment in Toronto District School Board trustees, McGuinty conceded he would not amend the Education Act to outlaw something he has likened to segregation. "The good news for Torontonians is they have now 18 months ... to put a stop to this," the premier told reporters yesterday. "Do they really feel strongly about this? Well, then they should speak to their duly elected representatives and tell them how strongly they are opposed to this proposal." Trustees voted 11 to 9 on Tuesday night in favour of an Africentric school to open in September 2009, among other measures to tackle the troubling dropout rate among black youth. Board chair John Campbell said he respects the premier's "important opinion," but the issue has been "blown out of proportion."

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