



DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF NIAGARA
Achieving Success Together

Media Release

November 26, 2007

For Immediate Release

Award-Winning Play Helps DSBN Students to Understand and Cope with Social Issues

Helping elementary students and teachers understand and cope with social issues such as child and family poverty is a key goal of a tour of the award winning play *Danny, King of the Basement*, sponsored by the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO).

Danny, King of the Basement, tells the story of a young boy whose spirit and imagination triumph over the challenges of homelessness and life in a single-parent family. "The play also demonstrates that while teachers cannot control the make-up of their student population, they can make a significant impact on the lives and learning of their students," says Sharon Aloian, president of the Niagara local chapter of the ETFO.

The program stems from a request made by the Ministry of Education for the ETFO to lead an initiative that would focus on professional development for members to support students and schools that face challenging socio-economic circumstances. The play forms a major component of this initiative, which has been named **The ETFO Education and Poverty Project**.

The play will be shown at three DSBN schools, including **Simcoe Street Public School (Niagara Falls)**, **Empire Public School (Welland)**, and **Connaught Public School (St. Catharines)**. These "*Danny Schools*" were nominated and selected in consultation with the Ministry of Education, local ETFO president Sharon Aloian, and the Director of Education, Warren Hoshizaki.

Professional development and programming for students is another aspect of the ETFO Education and Poverty Project. "Through an anti-poverty grant awarded by the ETFO, the presentation package comes with pre and post activities for teachers to share with their classes, so that the program will have an even bigger impact on their understanding of the issue," says Patrice Johnson of Empire Public School.

The Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario represents 70,000 elementary public school teachers and education workers across the province and is the largest teacher federation in Canada.

Performances:

Simcoe Street Public School - November 26 – **11:20 a.m.**

4760 Simcoe Street, Niagara Falls

Principal: Carl Scott - 358-9121

Empire Public School - November 27 – **1:00 p.m.**

Principal: Patrice Johnson - 735-5764

(Performance will be held at Welland Centennial Secondary School)

240 Thorold Rd. West, Welland L3C 3W2

Connaught Public School - November 28 – **1:00 p.m.**

Principal: Kelly McDonnell

28 Prince Street, St. Catharines 682-6609

Media Inquiries:

KimYielding, Manager, Communications and Public Relations

District School Board of Niagara

905-641-2929 ext. 4160

kim.yielding@dsbn.edu.on.ca

191 Carlton Street

St. Catharines, Ontario L2R 7P4

