



LEADERSHIP TIMES

*The newsletter of the Council on School Administration
of the Alberta Teachers' Association*

June 2007

President's Message

Kathleen Murphy-House

Dear Fellow Administrators,

As president-elect of the provincial Council on School Administration, I have the honour of working for you to promote professional development and to be an advocate for administrators around the province.

I am stepping into the position of president earlier than anticipated, due to the fact that our current president, Johanna Juergensen, is taking time away from her duties to have her first child. Johanna has worked to promote the Council on School Administration around the province and across Canada at the Canadian Association of Principals meetings. Johanna's quiet and gracious manner will be missed around the CSA table. We wish her all the best in her new role as a mother. Her multitasking

abilities as a high school principal and CSA president will serve her well in her new parenting role.

We have had some other changes around our provincial specialist council executive. Our treasurer, Neil Fenske, has decided to step down from the role of treasurer. Neil has served as our treasurer for six years, and we have benefited from his very wise financial guidance and decision-making ability. Losing Neil meant losing a great resource person and advocate for school administrators. Fortunately, he has graciously agreed to remain on our council for one more year as our acting past president, in Johanna's absence. Thank you, Neil, for being an excellent treasurer, making sound financial decisions and balancing our budget. I will appreciate Neil's assistance in the next year to continue to steer our council in the right direction for administrators.

During the winter mailout of our newsletter, the CSA sought nominations for the position of treasurer. None were put forward to the council. At the recent Council on School Administration executive council meeting in Banff, our council made a second call for nominations for the treasurer's position but, sadly, received no responses. Fortunately, one of our outgoing regional presidents, Eileen McClean from Fort McMurray, has agreed to accept the role of provincial specialist council treasurer. Eileen has served as a member of the CSA for many years, and her positive attitude and hard work ethic will serve our council well. We are very grateful to be able to fill Neil Fenske's very big shoes. When a council has changes, the opportunity to have transitional supports

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for the executive positions is wonderful. Thank you, Neil and Eileen.

So many changes have occurred during these recent months. We will be reporting in the near future another change that may occur for all of us regarding our ATA membership on specialist councils. The proposed change is universal membership, an opportunity for all ATA members to have automatic membership on a specialist council. The Blue Ribbon Panel recommended that all ATA members have, as part of their membership fees, free membership in a specialist council. Over the past few years we have watched our CSA membership decline. Yet, when we were in the precarious position of possibly being removed from the ATA by the government, administrators around the province voted overwhelmingly in favour of staying in the ATA. This loud voice of support is not reflected in our membership numbers. This newsletter reaches only those who have paid to become members of CSA. We would like to be able to reach all of Alberta's school administrators, to hear your professional development needs and to advocate on your behalf to the ATA and to Alberta Education. If the resolution is passed at the Annual Representative Assembly (ARA), in May, we hope that you choose the Council on School Administration as your specialist council. [Editor's note: the resolution was approved at ARA.]

The president of the specialist council attends many committee meetings throughout the school year. One such committee is the School Administrator Issues and Concerns Committee. Our president, Johanna Juergensen, reports that the most recent meeting highlighted the *Principal Quality Practice Standard* document. This document is in its final draft stage and will soon move to the Minister of Education for final approval. When it is approved, principals will need opportunities to familiarize themselves with the standards and procedures for goal-setting. The ATA Professional Development program area will support principals by providing workshops related to the new document and expectations for principals. More information will come in the fall.

I would like to thank our conference director of WCEAC '06 and Banff Spring

Leadership Seminar '07, Lorianne Tenove, for providing our members with two wonderful professional development opportunities. WCEAC '06 was held in Kananaskis in a beautiful setting. The mountains always serve as a wonderful retreat atmosphere for our very busy administrators. The Banff Spring Leadership Seminar captures the beauty of the mountains and provides the convenience of shopping and fine dining. Thank you, Lorianne and your committee, for your hard work during this past year. It takes a great deal of work to plan two major professional development conferences and to be a school administrator at the same time, and you did a wonderful job.

We look forward to our two upcoming professional development opportunities: the Educational Leadership Academy (ELA), in July, and WCEAC '07. This ELA will be in a new location—the Banff Centre for the Arts. In previous years, ELA was held in Devon and, most recently, at Lily Lake. You can find more details about this wonderful summer session in this newsletter as well as in the recent *Leadership Update*. Our ATA Member Services representative for administrators, Konni DeGeoj, is the director of the superb ELA leadership session.

In October, the CSA will host WCEAC '07 in Edmonton, at the Fantasyland Hotel. The organizing committee is led by our talented director, Jennifer Lawley. This conference draws delegates from all over Western Canada due to the excellent work of Jennifer's committee, and also to the attraction of the West Edmonton Mall. Delegates have an opportunity to bring their families and to participate in excellent professional development while enjoying the huge variety of shops and activities that the mall has to offer.

I look forward to the next few years as your president and hope to have the opportunity to meet you at our conferences. We encourage our CSA members to reach out to new administrators and mentor them, just as we mentor our new teachers. Please encourage them to get involved in their association by joining our Council on School Administration specialist council.

Have a wonderful summer.

CARCSA Brings Assessment to Administrators

Brent Galloway

What does it take to acquire good assessment practices in school? Here's what is on our list:

- Dedicated teachers—check
- Research on current assessment knowledge—yup, thanks to AISI
- A willing audience of students—generally, on good days
- Time for collaboration—it's getting better

What is missing? Well, if we don't have strong leaders to help carry out all of the above, it will be difficult to move in new directions in assessment.

This was the thought that led the Central Alberta Regional Council on School Administration (CARCSA) to bring Cassandra Erkens to its fall event in November 2006. Approximately 100 central Alberta administrators and assessment school leaders gathered at the Capri Centre in Red Deer on the eve of the second annual Leading and Learning Conference to hear her talk about "Assessment for Leaders." Her guiding question was, How can administrators ensure that authentic assessment is being carried out in our schools?

Cassandra spoke of three essential activities for educational leaders:

- Have a clear focus with set targets and measures.
- Monitor what matters by examining results.
- Manage change through an unwavering commitment to improvement by helping

teachers understand what the research says, and by focusing more on *learning* and less on *teaching*.

Cassandra stated that assessment is a necessary journey. She stated that if we want good, authentic assessment we need more disciplined inquiry, more construction of knowledge, a sense that school is connected to the real world and more higher-order thinking skills. She explained how we need to use a more cooperative approach to teaching and learning (as opposed to a competitive one) so that more people can experience success. Success will be achieved through more assessment *for* learning, using formative assessments, in combination with assessment *of* learning, using summative assessments. After all, as Cassandra stated, "We did not go into teaching to complete paper and pencil tests." We need to keep kids engaged in meaningful, relative tasks, and we do this by identifying the learning targets that kids need to hit and having more conversations about good assessment. Her message was well received.

CARCSA's main professional development session for administrators this year was a definite success and resulted in many conversations about assessment. CARCSA would like to thank the Central Alberta Regional Consortium (CARC) for helping to bring Cassandra to our specialist council. In particular, we wish to acknowledge the former executive director of CARC, Shirley Van Eaton, who passed away earlier this year. Shirl was instrumental in building sound professional development practices throughout central Alberta, including the second annual Leading and Learning Conference. Thank you, Shirl—we miss you.

CARCSA will finish its year with its annual spring event, a celebratory occasion when we recognize the distinguished leaders in our central Alberta schools.

Banff Leadership Seminar 2007 Highlights from the Keynote Speaker: Ian Jukes

Kathleen Murphy-House

In March 2007, the Council on School Administration presented the annual Banff Leadership Seminar. Our conference director, Lorianne Tenove, promised that Ian Jukes would be a motivational speaker—and she was correct. Ian not only motivated us to become familiar with our students' technological world, he also awakened us to the realities of the future digital world that is rushing towards us at breakneck speed. The following excerpts from Ian's presentation are reprinted with permission.

Understanding Digital Children (DKs): Teaching and Learning in the New Digital Landscape

Children today are different! But not just because they mature years earlier than children did even a couple of generations ago. Not just because of the clothes they wear or don't wear. Not just because they dye their hair and style it differently than we did when we were that age. Not just because they seem to have more body parts than we did—which they seem to want to pierce, tattoo and/or expose.

No, today's Instant Messenger Generation has grown up in a new digital landscape. For most of them, there's never been a time in their lives when computers, cell phones, video games, the Internet and all the other digital wonders that increasingly define their (and our) world haven't surrounded them.

Constant exposure to digital media has changed the way children think, interact and use information. As a result, they communicate in fundamentally different ways than any previous generation.

Meanwhile, many of us, the Digital Immigrants, struggle as we try to come to terms with the rapid change, powerful new technologies and change in thinking that are native to their world—a fundamentally different world than the one in which we grew up. Our world was low tech. Do you remember Etch-A-Sketch, Mr Potato Head or Slinkies? Back then, communications were basic: telephones (party lines for some), letter writing and telegrams, used only for important events. Information was limited. We had only a few radio stations and even fewer TV stations. Back then, doing research meant going to the library and using the Dewey Decimal system to search the card catalogue. In more ways than many of us can remember or measure, the world of today is a *very* different place than the one we grew up in.

What does the latest neuroscience and psychological research tell us about how the Instant Messenger Generation's brains are being rewired? Eighty-two per cent of American children play video games on a regular basis—an average of 8.2 hours a week. Today's children have access—and take that access for granted—to computers, remote controls, the Internet, e-mail, pagers, cell phones, MP3 players, CDs, DVDs, video games, Palm Pilots and digital cameras. What are the implications of this new digital landscape for teaching, learning and assessment of that learning? Our students can be doing their homework, talking on the phone, listening to music, downloading movies, surfing the Web and maintaining multiple simultaneous conversations on a chat line. And they're still bored! Comparing these experiences to our experiences growing up, these activities have increasingly become their replacement for what we did many years ago.

What strategies can we use to appeal to the new learning preferences and communication needs of our digital students?

Teachers must learn to communicate in the language and style of their students. This doesn't mean changing the focus on what is important or what is going to be measured, but it does mean that we have to change our instructional styles:

- Learning must be more fun and more relevant to them and their world.
- We must go faster so they can receive information quickly. Digital learners prefer receiving information quickly from multiple multimedia sources. Many teachers prefer the traditional approach of slow and controlled release of information at conventional speed and from limited sources.
- Children need less step-by-step instruction and more random-access, hyperlinked, just-in-time learning experiences.
- There will be less text and more pictures, sounds and video whenever possible. Digital learners prefer processing pictures, sounds and video before text. Many teachers prefer to provide text before pictures, sounds and video.
- We must provide more opportunities for multitasking, networking and interactivity. Digital learners prefer active, engaged learning. Many teachers have more experience with passive learning, such as lectures.
- We must apply what we now know about learning from brain and mind research.

The bottom line is that there must be a fundamental shift in how teaching and learning take place in schools. We must look for alternatives to the traditional organization of schools. We need to reconsider our longstanding assumptions about teaching and learning, about what a classroom looks like, where it is and the resources that are used to support it. We need to re-examine the use of time—the length of the school day, the school year and the school timetable; we need to re-examine the traditional methods of instructional delivery and consider the potential of online, web-based, virtual learning that can be used to augment, extend and transform the role of the traditional classroom teacher.

If we want to unfold the full intellectual and creative genius of *all* of our children—if we are going to march through the 21st century and maintain our tradition of success—if we want our children to have the relevant 21st-century skills, we must create a bridge between their world and ours.

Educators' energy, creativity, commitment and hard work every day build the bridge for children to cross the gap between the present and the future. Teachers and school administrators are our country's greatest hope and most important professionals.

Ian Jukes has been a teacher, an administrator, writer, consultant, university instructor and keynote speaker. He is the director of the InfoSavvy Group, an international consulting group that provides leadership and program development in the areas of assessment and evaluation, strategic alignment, curriculum design and publication, and professional development, among others. His blog, The Committed Sardine, is reached through www.ianjukes.com (accessed May 30, 2007).

News from the Regionals

Edmonton

James Fraser

One of our key goals this year as a regional was to complete a survey of the member administrators of the regional in the areas of professional development and advocacy for administrator issues, to better gauge the need for service in those areas. Forty-three surveys were returned in November, and the results guided the subjects chosen for our winter PD session, Dialogue Day for Administrators. More than 75 administrators attended the February 26 session at Barnett House, where Alberta Education personnel presented sessions in the morning on the subjects of Grade Level of Achievement, Computer Adaptive Assessment and the *Guide to Education*. ATA Member Services personnel led sessions in the afternoon on “Accountability Pillars—Implications for Administrators” and “Legal Issues for Administrators.” Feedback was very positive on this Dialogue Day for Administrators, and we hope to craft our PD offerings for 2007/08 in a similar way, to open the dialogue on educational issues between school-based administrators and the personnel at Alberta Education and the ATA.

We were also pleased to host a session on November 29, 2006, at the Royal Glenora Club on the subject of “Administrative Courage,” with Dr Karla Satchwell of Elk Island Public Schools; we hosted 35 administrators for this session. Dr Satchwell reviewed some of her research that identified key factors for administrators who act courageously in all areas of their multidimensional professional service.

We had four goals for our regional executive for this year:

- To provide at least two quality PD opportunities for regional administrators within topics consistent with the provincial PD goals of CSA. *Achieved*: In October, we hosted Resiliency for School Administrators, and on February 26, we held the Dialogue Day for Administrators.
- To increase CSA membership in the regional by ten per cent this year. *Not Achieved*: While GERCSA membership has increased, we did not accomplish our ten per cent growth objective.
- To ask each executive member in GERCSA to encourage one newly appointed administrator in their district to become a CSA member. *Achieved*.
- To have one Administrator of the Year nominee for each of the two categories. *Not Achieved*: We received no nominations this year.

Central Alberta

Carol Johnson

Here are some highlights from CARCSA's 2006/07 year:

- On September 19, 2006, we had a supper meeting at a restaurant in Red Deer, at which we planned and set dates for our year's activities. New members were introduced and encouraged to get involved.
- On November 30, 2006, we partnered with Central Alberta Regional Consortium and its Leading and Learning Conference. We started the conference with a session for administrators and lead teachers. Our speaker was Cassandra Erkens, who spoke on “Assessment Through the Eyes of Administrators.” It was an appropriate launch to the conference and an opportunity for administrators and lead

teachers to socialize, win a few prizes and listen to a thought-provoking keynote speaker. Approximately 90 people attended.

- On January 16, 2007, the executive had a supper meeting and reviewed the fall event. At this meeting all the information sent to us from CSA was handed out; presidents were requested to take it back to their regions and share it with their administrators.
- CARCSA held its spring event on May 30, 2007, at Sylvan Lake Golf Course. We began with a luncheon, after which the Distinguished Leadership Awards were presented. Many members took advantage of the opportunity for an afternoon of golf following the ceremony.

Southwest

Holly Godson

The Southwest Council on School Administration has continued to work towards its goals of

- providing administrators with a wider variety of professional development opportunities,
- increasing administrator attendance at professional development activities,
- advocating for administrators in the Southwest region,
- working cooperatively with the Southern Alberta Professional Development Consortium and
- increasing awareness of CSA within the Southwest region.

Southwest CSA has been struggling to increase membership, and we have really questioned how we can better serve our principals, vice-principals and other administrators. Following the lead of GERCSA and adapting that survey to meet

our needs, we sent surveys to all principals and vice-principals throughout the region through superintendents and regional representatives. Unfortunately, we received very few responses in the first round, so we decided to resend the surveys and to sweeten the pot by entering the names of people who returned their survey into a draw for a free registration to the Western Canadian Principals Conference, being held at the Fantasyland Hotel in October 2007. We compiled the surveys and announced the lucky winner—Larry Holland of Enchant School, in the Horizon School Division. We would like to thank all administrators who took the time to complete the surveys!

Knowing that administrators are extremely busy people and are out of their schools a lot already, SWCSA worked cooperatively with the Southern Alberta Professional Development Consortium (Gary Heck, director) to organize and facilitate professional development activities that are meaningful and that coincide with teacher workshops during the day-to-evening activities for administrators. In February, we cosponsored an Interactive Innovations presentation (featuring Dr Michael Fullan and Dr David Sousa) via webcast from Vancouver, British Columbia. General response was good, and administrators appreciated the value of speaker for money paid. Certain technological glitches needed to be ironed out, but everyone appeared to be pleased with the day overall.

For the South Western Alberta annual Teachers' Convention (February 23–24, 2007), SWCSA organized two sessions:

- Accomplish the Impossible: Schoolwide Change, with Wayne Neilson, Principal, Wetaskiwin Composite High School
- Building Relationships in a Classroom: Fundamentals to Teaching, with Barry Litun, Superintendent, Lethbridge School District No 51

On April 26, 2007, the Southwest Council on Administration celebrated excellence in leadership by honouring three of southern Alberta's finest:

- Lloyd Yamagishi, Wilson Middle School, Lethbridge School District No 51
- Carmen Mombourquette, Catholic Central High School, Holy Spirit Roman Catholic Separate Regional Division No 4
- Carol Steen, Lethbridge Alternative School, Lethbridge School District No 51—Outstanding CSA Service Recognition



Council on School Administration (CSA)

The CSA advocates for school administrators and speaks on behalf of children through the Alberta Teachers' Association.

The CSA supports the professional development of its members through the creation and delivery of a variety of events and activities. A special program acknowledging contributions to the field of educational administration recognizes and rewards excellence among members at both the local and provincial levels. CSA develops and maintains national and international links with other school administrator organizations. In addition, the CSA promotes lifelong learning and strives to maintain and foster close relationships with the colleges and universities of Alberta. To foster knowledge and professionalism in the field of educational administration, the CSA encourages and supports both theoretical and practical research.

The annual WCEAC conference provides an excellent opportunity for networking and communication among members.



Educational Leadership Academy Update

Konni deGoeij

During the Banff Spring Leadership Seminar '07, three lucky delegates were chosen to attend this year's summer Education Leadership Academy, July 8–12. Congratulations to

- Deb Weir, Assistant Principal, Lakeland Ridge School, Sherwood Park,
- Jerry Pon, Alberta Distance Learning and
- Jake Warkentin, Alberta Distance Learning.

The Educational Leadership Academy is a five-day, in-residence professional development program for current and aspiring school administrators. The academy provides excellent educational leadership training to participants, who are often the role models and community leaders who will have the greatest impact on future generations' ability and motivation to strive to be the best they can be. Recipients have the opportunity to attend the summer conference or, if they are unable to attend, they can give their free registration to another administrator. The Council on School Administration is very excited to provide this wonderful *free* professional development opportunity to our members.

The Educational Leadership Academy will feature Dr Joseph Murphy, an internationally recognized author, speaker and educational leader. Joseph Murphy is a professor of education at Peabody College of Education of

Vanderbilt University, in Nashville, Tennessee. He has also been a faculty member at the University of Illinois and at Ohio State University, where he was the William Ray Flesher Professor of Education. In public schools he has served as an administrator at the school, district and state levels, and was appointed executive assistant to the chief deputy superintendent of public instruction in California. His most recent appointment was as the founding president of the Ohio Principals Leadership Academy. At the university level, he has served as department chair and associate dean. He is past vice president of the American Educational Research Association (AERA) and the founding chair of the Interstate Schools Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC).

His work is in the area of school improvement, with special emphasis on leadership and policy. He has authored or coauthored 13 books and 3 major monographs in this area, and edited another 11 books. He has also published over 200 articles and book chapters on school improvement and leadership. He is coeditor of the *AERA Handbook of Research on Education Administration* (1999) and editor of the National Society for the Study of Education (NSSE) yearbook, *The Educational Leadership Challenge* (2002). For more information on Dr Murphy please visit <http://peabody.vanderbilt.edu/x4942.xml>.

If you are interested in attending this year's Educational Leadership Academy, you still have time to register by contacting Leslie Kaun at leslie.kaun@ata.ab.ca or 1-800-232-7208. For program information, contact Konni deGoeij or Joyce Sherwin at (780) 447-9400 or toll free at 1-800-232-7208.

CSA Executive 2006/07

Acting President & CAP Representative

Kathleen Murphy-House
Bus (780) 799-5752
kmurphy@fmcsd.ab.ca

Acting Past President

Neil Fenske
Bus (780) 955-6028
neil.fenske@blackgold.ca

President-Elect

TBA

Secretary

Maureen Ference
Bus (780) 826-3323
maureen.ference@nlsd.ab.ca

Treasurer

Eileen McClean
Bus (780) 799-5760
emcclean@fmcsd.ab.ca

WCEAC 2007 Director

Jennifer Lawley
Bus (780) 448-5000
jennifer.lawley@epsb.ca

Communications Officer

Linda Dudar
Bus (403) 279-3777
linda.dudar@cssd.ab.ca

PEC Liaison

H Jim Black
Bus (403) 793-2025
jim.black@teachers.ab.ca

ATA Staff Advisor

Konni A DeGoeij
Bus (780) 447-9472
or 1-800-232-7208
konni.degoeij@ata.ab.ca

REGIONAL PRESIDENTS

Calgary

Shawna Kinzer
Bus (403) 293-6600
shawna.kinzer@cssd.ab.ca

Central Alberta

Carol Johnson
Bus (403) 227-0060
cjohnson@chinooksedge.ab.ca

Central East

Maureen Ference
Bus (780) 826-3323
maureen.ference@nlsd.ab.ca

Fort McMurray

Trudy Dwyer
Bus (780) 799-5720
trudydwyer@fmcsd.ab.ca

Greater Edmonton

James Fraser
Bus (780) 962-1585
jfraser@ecsr.d.ab.ca or
jfras@shaw.ca

Peace Area

Rodney Lee
Bus (780) 831-3061
rodneylee@pwsd76.ab.ca

Southeast

Therese Bullin
Bus (403) 527-3730
therese.bullin@sd76.ab.ca

Southwest

Holly Godson
Bus (403) 223-8971
holly.godson@horizon.ab.ca

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