



LEADERSHIP TIMES

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

May 2010

From the Editor's Laptop

Kerry Coxen

Wow! It is 2010. We are 10 years past Y2K! Just think about how our world has changed in 10 short years. We now have smartphones; HDTV; wireless Internet; digital music, photography and books; Google; YouTube; iPad; SMART Boards; globalization; Bluetooth; Blu-ray and so on. How have our classrooms changed? They haven't. We still have desks in rows, teacher-centred instruction, bells, schedules, report cards, attendance and students who don't fit the mould. Do we welcome these new innovations into our schools and classrooms? No. Most of us ban them.

What should classrooms in the 21st century look like? Will the classroom of the past do the job for our upcoming digital generation? Will children who have been bathed in bits be nurtured and grow in our Industrial-Age classrooms?

Maybe it is time to start contemplating these questions. If we allow students to bring their devices into schools, we will have new problems to deal with that we have had no experience with to date. We will need to put together acceptable-use policies that

acknowledge that the student owns the device. We may need to put curriculum together that will help students learn to use their devices in an ethical manner. We will find that students know more about this technology than many staff members. We will need to find a way to bring staff up to speed on this new reality.

Yes, new issues will arise, and we will need to adapt and learn to deal with them. We will also find that there is a whole new way of teaching and learning. Exciting new learning tools are available for students. Don't you agree that it is time for us to start taking advantage of them?

If I have managed to get you thinking about change in your school, please don't leave it at that. Go to Google and YouTube and search 21st century learning, or check out some of these resources:

- *Digital Citizenship in Schools*, by M Ribble and G Bailey. Washington, DC: ISTE, 2007.
- A Vision of K–12 Students Today. www.youtube.com/watch?v=_A-ZVCjfWf8
- 21st Century Pedagogy. www.youtube.com/watch?v=l72UFXqa8ZU&feature=related

These are meant to whet your appetite. Please feel free to search for your own. If you like, send them to me and I will post them on our website or include them in this newsletter. I am more than happy to hear from you at kcoxen@gmail.com.

Renew your CSA membership.

Even though you can join one specialist council free of charge every year, the membership expires in August and must be renewed. To renew your membership or to join CSA, go to the ATA website (www.teachers.ab.ca) between June 1 and August 31, click on "login" at the top right of the page and follow the prompts.

President's Message

Garnet Goertzen

I would like to recognize and thank Kathleen Murphy-House, past president of the Council on School Administration (CSA), for many years of commitment to this council as she leaves our executive. Kathleen has served on every executive position on the council (except treasurer) over the past several years and has dedicated hundreds of hours in support of school-based leaders in this province. I have had the opportunity to work with Kathleen for the past four years and know her as a wonderful person with a warm smile, pleasant disposition and caring heart. She always makes time to carefully consider and provide her thoughts on the issues of school administrators. She has been integral to this council for over a decade. She steps up to challenges and never dodges things that need to be said or done. Her guidance is impeccable. I have learned much from Kathleen and congratulate and thank her for her time with CSA. She is a true professional, and we owe her a great deal for her service.

I would also like to welcome Holly Godson as president-elect. Holly has served on the CSA as the southwest regional president and now, as president-elect, ensures that there is continuity in the endeavours of our council.

Being involved in the CSA is a wonderful professional development opportunity. The collegial networks provide access to a wealth of information and ideas contributed by school leaders who share the same issues but are at different stages in their solutions. As administrators, we need to expand our current circles if we are going to have opportunities to see things in a different way. Being on the CSA executive provides those opportunities. I encourage you to become involved in your CSA regional executive and take advantage of the connections and opportunities to share professional experience with others in the province. The time is well worth it.

This year the CSA continues to bring valuable PD opportunities to your area of the province in addition to hosting the structures and committees that bring the Western Canadian Educational Administrators' Conference and the Banff Leadership Seminar to you. Please remember to renew your CSA membership on the ATA website when it expires at the end of August. All CSA memberships expire on August 31 and even though they are cost-free, they must be renewed each year.

CSA is building the capacity of our existing school leaders and supporting leadership development for future school leaders. The work we do now is for the future.



Thank You

News from the Regionals

Calgary

Lindy Arndt

Calgary Regional has had a very positive and involved year. We are excited about our progress and the direction we are taking.

Our dinner/speaker evening, "School Leadership ... The Future" on April 14 was very successful. Thirty-two people attended the complimentary event, and they were delighted to hear Ann Sherman, from the University of Calgary, and Bob Garneau, from Alberta Education, speak on this timely topic. The fact that the Alberta Teachers' Association and Alberta Education collaborated to address the challenges facing school leaders sent a very good message. Christine Thornborough, of CSSD, won the door prize draw—a registration for WCEAC in Edmonton in October.

Next year's executive has increased because of the involvement of new members from CSSD, CBE and Foothills School Division. We are looking forward to another positive year. We are already planning for a dinner/speaker presentation in October. Watch for registration information.

Calgary CSA has been invited to have a member sit on the joint ATA and CSSD PD committee, which is looking for ways to offer effective, embedded PD to teachers and administrators. Other partners on this team include the University of Calgary, the Calgary Regional Consortium and the Alberta Assessment Consortium. This is an exciting opportunity for our regional as we work with a team to provide optimal professional learning.

Central Alberta

Dave Khatib

I would like to start by thanking the Central Alberta Regional (CARCSA) executive for all their hard work this year. Without hesitation they promote CSA activities and work within their own school divisions spotlighting our events. A big thank you goes to Pat Maschio, Ian Wilson, Jeff Anderson, Clint Saunders, Donna Johnson, Brent Galloway and Sonja Dykslag.

Distinguished Leadership Awards

In November six administrators from the Central Alberta region received Distinguished Leadership Awards from CARCSA.

Nominated by their colleagues, these awards are a tribute to the hard work and dedication that these people place into their position.

Here is a list of the 2009/10 CARCSA

Distinguished Leadership Award winners:

Gloria Thompson, Chinook's Edge School Division

Karen Norton, Chinook's Edge School Division

James Gascoyne, Wolf Creek School Division

Ian Wilson, Wolf Creek School Division

Cathy Cameron, Red Deer Catholic Regional Division

Donna Leontowicz, Red Deer Catholic Regional Division

Congratulations to all recipients for their dedication to our profession!

Canada's Outstanding Principals Award

We are very proud that one of the 2009/10 COP Award winners is from the Central Alberta region. Kathleen Finnigan, principal at St Patrick's Community School, in Red Deer, was declared a winner in Toronto. This prestigious national award is presented by the Learning Partnership. The award recognizes the unique and crucial contributions of principals in publicly funded

schools. It is presented annually in February to 30 Canadian principals. Winners are treated to a four-day executive leadership training program at the Rotman School of Management at the University of Toronto, a gala celebration banquet and awards presentation. Congratulations, Kathleen!

Real Learning First: Round Two

The Red Deer Catholic and Public locals initiated a follow-up to last year's CARCSA-sponsored Real Learning First speaker series with Stephen Murgatroyd. As the regional CSA we supported this event by promoting it to our membership and sending participants. Again, Murgatroyd led the discussion in the speaker series; Pasi Sahlberg was also on hand. The series attendees included Paulette Hanna, superintendant of the Red Deer Catholic School Division; Joel Ward, president of Red Deer College; David King, former minister of education; and Morris Flewwelling, mayor of Red Deer. Many school administrators, board members and ATA members were also in attendance. The day was a great success. It was highlighted by great discussions, and we left the speaker series with some "Next Steps" for our Association to take.

Fort McMurray

Valerie Dyck

In December 2009, we held our supper workshop with Wayne Harlton who presented a session entitled "Building Resiliency for School Leaders—Setting Leadership Priorities." About 20 members attended this PD. We enjoyed the presentation and the chance to connect with colleagues in an informal setting.

Our executive meeting was held on January 12, 2010. We reviewed Principal of the Year nominations and made plans for one of our regular supper PD sessions in April.

Greater Edmonton

Jeffrey Johnson

Greetings from the Greater Edmonton Regional (GERCSA). We are continuing to host a variety of successful dialogue events for school and district leaders. The success of these events has been greatly enhanced by support and assistance in planning from the ATA's Professional Development program area and the umbrella CSA executive team. Our first such event of the 2009/10 academic year was held on February 24 at the University of Alberta's Faculty Club. GERCSA hosted a dialogue dinner with Dennis Shirley, of Boston College, that was thoroughly enjoyed by 100 guests including Dave Hancock, minister of education; Janice Sarich, MLA/ parliamentary assistant to the minister of education; and a wide range of district and school-based leaders. As with last year's dialogue dinner event, February's evening with Dennis Shirley was highly successful.

On April 15, GERCSA hosted a full-afternoon leadership dialogue event at Edmonton's Santa Maria Goretti Centre. This dessert and coffee afternoon was led by Ann Sherman (University of Calgary) and Bob Garneau (Alberta Education), both of whom made very interesting and relevant presentations and led a discussion on the latest research on the evolving role of the principal, succession planning for school leadership in Alberta, the Principal Quality Practice Guideline and the emerging School Leadership Framework. The event was attended by over 100 educational leaders from the Greater Edmonton area, including principals, assistant principals and school district superintendents. A number of Alberta Education leaders were also in attendance.

The GERCSA leadership dialogue events have been very well attended. Thanks for the great support, everyone.

I encourage all leaders to take a few moments to become a member of the CSA.

To do so, visit www.teachers.ab.ca and click on the login link at the top right-hand corner of the home page.

Renewing your membership is easy to do by following the links. First, you must log in. Your username is your `firstname.lastname@teachers.ab.ca`; for example, `john.smith@teachers.ab.ca`. You must also enter your teaching certificate number. Once there, it is a matter of a few clicks of the mouse to renew or sign up for membership. Also, make sure you choose the right region. On the website, look for GERCOSA. A convenient pull-down menu will tell you what region you belong to.

I am looking forward to continuing to serve you as president of GERCOSA and to grow professionally with you through some well-directed professional development.

Northeast

Morris Holota

I have just returned from the Banff Leadership Seminar “Leading Schools for the 21st Century.” This working session was chaired by Sharon Friesen, Dot Negropontes, Ann Sherman and Candace Saar. A lot of reflection on personal practice and great discussion on charting leadership into the future made for a great learning experience.

We had our CSA provincial meeting before the evening start of the conference and discussed a number of items related to professional development for administrators over the next few years. The highlight of our discussion was the decision that we would sponsor the Canadian Association of Principals national conference in 2013. This will be held at the Banff Springs Hotel Conference Centre and will give Alberta school administrators a chance to attend a national conference without a great deal of travel. More details will be coming out as plans progress.

On May 5 in St Paul the regional hosted a presentation by Ann Sherman, from the University of Calgary, and Bob Garneau, from Alberta Education. Sherman shared her research on the experiences of school administrators, and the audience felt somewhat consoled that their frustrations were shared by administrators throughout the province. Garneau described how Alberta Education is taking steps to ease the impending shortage of school leaders; he also outlined the School Leadership Framework. The presentations were followed by a wine and cheese reception, which allowed administrators to meet one another and network.

If you have not yet renewed or obtained your free CSA membership, please go to the ATA website and do so. Our regional grant depends on numbers, so the more we have the more resources we receive.

Peace Area

Rodney Lee

The major event for the Peace Area Regional (PARCSA) is the fall conference, held annually in Grande Prairie. PARCSA 2009 “Leadership Challenges of the Future” was held on September 14–15 with 124 members in attendance. Konni deGoeij and Joyce Sherwin presented the ATA workshop on Teacher Growth, Supervision and Evaluation, which included the new component on practice review. Monday evening’s banquet was followed by Ken Valgardson’s “Observations of a Polyester-Clad Chalk-Dust-Encrusted Educator,” which was enthusiastically received by all in attendance.

The AGM on September 15 saw the election of a full executive. We thank our former executive members for their years of service and heartily welcome a new generation of leaders for PARCSA. The

March 25 executive meeting focused on planning for PARCSA 2010.

PARCSA organized a session with Ann Sherman and Bob Garneau on April 21 with the cooperation of the three Grande Prairie area boards in the PARCSA region. Most administrators and trustees from these boards were in attendance.

PARCSA continues to award a \$500 scholarship each year to a deserving education student on behalf of our members.

The Peace Region continues to support the CSA. Communication is always a problem in the north and we appreciate the efforts of our jurisdiction contacts to ensure that information reaches all current and potential members.

Southeast

Therese Bullin

Greetings from the Southeast Regional CSA. We had our first meeting in October and discussed plans for an upcoming workshop.

The committee decided to continue hosting dessert evenings because they are fairly successful in attracting both administrators and teachers. On November 19, 2009, at the Holiday Inn Express, ATA staff advisor Konni deGoeij spoke on the Principal Quality Standard. Principals were given an idea about the quality and standard that they are expected to know and understand. A good debate ensued and many good questions were asked.

We continued our talk on Real Learning First and hosted a great speaker by the name of David Berliner to speak on the topic "What Counts as Learning in Alberta?" The presentation, which was followed with a reception, was held at the Callaghan Inn in conjunction with the Medicine Hat Teachers' Local and SEARCSA on the eve of our teachers' convention. David discussed

testing and why it is not important. The push for higher content and performance standards in basic subjects is not compatible with the mission of schools. His message focused on the meaning of accountability and test scores. David highlighted what he called the collateral damage of tests, including loss of teacher morale, diminution of creative teaching and restricted learning opportunities for children. His new book entitled *Collateral Damage* talks about the corruption of professional educators through high-stakes testing. We were happy that about 35 people were in attendance, including teachers, administrators, parent council reps and teacher assistants from all four districts. There were some great discussions and questions.

We have not received any nominations for the Dr Julius S Buski Leadership Grant. We continue to suggest online renewal of membership through the ATA and hope to see more administrators join the CSA as their choice of a specialist council. We are dedicated to providing opportunities for administrators to network and discuss important issues in the workplace.

Southwest

David Fender

November 30, 2009: Jim Parsons presented at the Sandman Inn in Lethbridge

**Introduced by Carol Henderson
Bringing Life to Instructional Leadership**

The presentation highlighted the initial findings of a research project focused on the role of instructional leadership in building the capacity of school administrators. Sponsored by the Alberta Teachers' Association, Parsons showed how the

Principal Quality Practice Guidelines present an opportunity for school administrators to support quality instruction and assessment practices that promote real learning in Alberta classrooms.

February 19, 2010: Catherine Moir presented at the Southwest Alberta Teachers' Convention

School Administrators and Collective Agreements

This session was designed to assist school administrators in working through issues relating to their collective agreements. Information was provided regarding the appropriate role of a school administrator in relation to the employer and their colleagues.

January 20, 2010: Engaged in a Fourth Way book study with Palliser Regional School elementary school administrators.

February 23, 2010: Dennis Shirley presented at the Coast Plaza Hotel, in Lethbridge

Engaging in a Conversation: Real Learning First through the Fourth Way was cohosted by the Southwest Regional and the southern Alberta locals of the ATA. It was intended as an evening where school-community leaders would talk about what they value in our schools and what they consider authentic indicators of success. Shirley challenged us as education partners: "The current reliance on tightened testing regimes has narrowed the curriculum and diverted teachers and policy-makers from innovation and risk-taking. Our students deserve better. *The Fourth Way* releases schools from the bureaucratic grip of government control where professional responsibility precedes and supersedes accountability. Parents become more involved in their children's education, community members become more visible and vocal in schools, and the public engages more often in determining the purposes of education together rather than simply consuming the services that are delivered to them."

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