

# Leaders & Learners



**CASSA-ACGCS**  
Promoting Quality Education for Our Students

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Nominations are now open for the 2018 CASSA awards.

## Message from the President: Supporting Daily Physical Activity

DURING THIS SEASON of reflection, renewal and goal setting, there is no better time for system leaders to set the stage for success in every way possible. Research has shown the positive impact that well-being and the reduction of sedentary behaviour has on student achievement.

For 2018, I invite schools and systems across the country to join the movement in raising the profile of daily physical activity.

According to Statistics Canada, just seven per cent of Canadian children aged 6 to 19 participated in at least 60 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity at least six days a week.

All students, staff and administrators can become active role models and mentors in building and maintaining school cultures that support healthy behaviours and becoming more confident and competent in a variety



Anne O'Brien  
President

of activities in multiple environments for life.

The CASSA Executive is eager to reveal the theme for our upcoming conference. In the meantime, mark your calendars and save the date to join us in Ottawa from July 4 to 6, 2018, for our annual general meeting and conference.

You may also want to consider the innovative work of your own leaders and ideas they may consider presenting at the conference. We look forward to sharing more details

in the new year, with registration set to open in April.

Wishing you a warm winter holiday season and a happy new year filled with peace, joy and promise.

As we prepare for 2018, may you continue to celebrate the success of each student, one story at a time. I look forward to our ongoing dialogue as colleagues in educational leadership.

May you continue  
to celebrate the success  
of each student,  
one story at a time.

## OUR PURPOSE

CASSA is the Canadian organization of school system leaders that promotes and supports quality education for the success of each student.

## OUR MISSION

CASSA strengthens the capacity of school system leaders and influences the directions that impact education and student learning.

### Message from the Executive Director: The Importance of Play and Resilience

I RECENTLY ATTENDED two very significant and related conferences.

Thanks to the Lawson Foundation, I attended the International Play Association (IPA) Triennial Conference in Calgary, and thanks to CASSA and the McConnell Foundation, I attended the Towards a Better Way stakeholder meeting and the PHE Canada Healthy School Communities National Forum in Ottawa.

At the IPA Conference, we heard from psychologist **Dr. Peter Gray**, who has documented the rise in anxiety disorders among children over the last 50 years, directly corresponding to the decrease in children's free time to play (Dr. Peter Gray, *Freedom to Play*). Play was defined as an activity that is freely chosen, self-directed and intrinsically motivated.

The theme for each of the conferences was clear: Children's physical, emotional, spiritual, and mental health and well-being is enhanced through opportunities for play and physical activity. Our role as educators is to create the best conditions for that to take place!

In Ottawa, we also heard from **Dr. Michael Ungar**, who leads the Resilience Research Centre at Dalhousie University. Dr. Ungar defined resilience as "the capacity of individuals to navigate their way to the psychological, social, cultural and physical resources that sustain their well-being."



Ken Bain  
Executive Director

Excerpted from Dr. Ungar's book *I Still Love You* are nine things that all young people need to become resilient:

- structure
- consequences
- parent-child relationships
- lots and lots of strong relationships
- a powerful identity
- a sense of control

*Continued on page 3*

## Message from the Executive Director: The Importance of Play and Resilience

*Continued from page 2*

- a sense of belonging/culture/spirituality/life purpose
- rights and responsibilities
- safety and support

Do we see a responsibility to provide these in our roles as parents/guardians and educators?

The theme for this year's magazines and our annual conference is "Supporting Each Student." A previous phrase that CASSA had endorsed was "Supporting **All**

Children's physical, emotional, spiritual, and mental health and well-being is enhanced through opportunities for play.

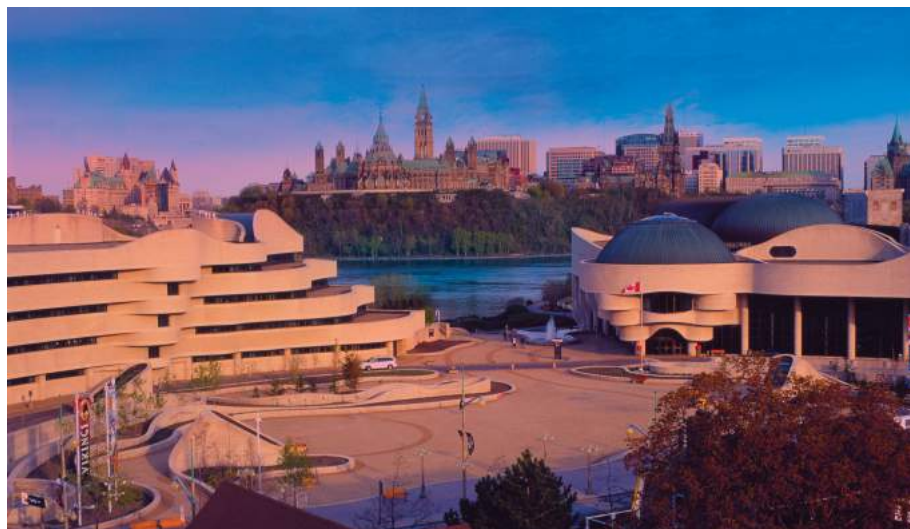
Students" but the Board of Directors changed it to "Supporting **Each** Student" very intentionally. The hope is that educators provide support that is individualized to each student's needs, interests and aspirations.

The articles in this month's issue of the *Leaders & Learners* magazine offer a glimpse into current practices across the country that exemplify support to students with a range of needs and interests. I thank the authors for their daily support to the youth of our nation

and for making time to share their inspirational stories with all of us!

Next year's CASSA conference will be in our nation's capital.

Be sure to bring your team to Ottawa for informative and engaging sessions, inspiring keynote speakers, world-class museums and cultural activities, and so much more.



## Faces in the Crowd: Profiles of Leaders

### Kevin Kaardal

Kevin is the Superintendent of Schools/CEO for Central Okanagan Public Schools, a position he has held for the last two years. He is also a Director at Large on CASSA's Board of Directors and a member of the Education Council for the EdCan Network. He serves on the executive of the BC School Superintendents' Association and has held positions as vice-president and a member of the Professional Development Committee. He is currently BCSSA's Treasurer and sits on its Strong Districts Research Advisory Committee.

Kevin has 32 years of experience in public education in Alberta and British Columbia as a teacher, school principal and district senior leader. He has also served as an assistant superintendent, a deputy superintendent and a superintendent of schools/CEO for the Burnaby School District.

Kevin earned his Bachelor of Education in Secondary Education from the University of Alberta and his Master's Degree in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Calgary. He has presented at a number of provincial, national and international conferences on various topics including organizing for change, personalized learning, creating cultures of inquiry and engaging communities to support vulnerable learners. He also takes part in many Ministry Advisory Committees including Enhancing Student Learning, Employment Liability Practices and Curriculum and Assessment.

A number of individuals have inspired Kevin to work in public education, including his maternal grandmother, **Rita Rogerson**, who spent a lifetime improving children's life chances. He has also been inspired by many school and district leaders. He strives to live up to their example by setting the conditions where each student is prepared to thrive and contribute to a civil global society in a rapidly changing future.

Kevin has been formally recognized for innovative programs from the Fraser Valley Cultural Diversity Awards, Scientific Learning as a National Reference Site and for service to the Industry Trades Association, the Sto:Lo First Nation, and the Mission Principals' and Vice-Principals' Association. He has received awards for excellence in teaching from the Council On Alberta Teaching Standards; Canadian Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance; Health and Physical Education Council of Alberta; and the Calgary Catholic School District.

Other points of professional pride for Kevin include writing the book *Learning By Choice in Secondary Physical Education: A Goal Directed Approach*, published by Human Kinetics, and seeing school and district learning results dramatically improve in the schools and districts that he has led.

Kevin believes that building positive, proactive, trusting relationships is the heart of any successful endeavour, and that this is particularly true of developing exceptional schools and districts that play a significant role in developing students who possess the attributes of a learner, thinker, collaborator, innovator and contributor. He also believes in



Kevin Kaardal

## Faces in the Crowd: Profiles of Leaders

working collaboratively with education and community partners to set learning conditions that personalize learning and lead to improved student achievement results. He believes that we must honour Indigenous perspectives and world views, and work toward reconciliation. In his career, through various roles, he has had the honour of doing significant work in this regard with local Indigenous communities in his districts.

He has a proven track record as an innovator, creative thinker and author who has developed programs and structures that personalize learning and improve student agency, voice, choice and student success.

Kevin believes in empowering leadership from where one is based on the idea of distributed leadership, where a clear collective vision guides the work, based on evidence and research, that is focused on learners' building competencies and attributes that enable them to thrive as positive global citizens in a fast-changing world.

He has been happily married for 33 years and has two beautiful, brilliant daughters who are beginning their life journeys. He enjoys the fine and performing arts, golfing, travelling and paleontology.

### Historic Election: First EdCan Indigenous Chair

THE ED CAN NETWORK recently announced that **Darren Googoo** has been elected Chair of its Board of Directors. Darren is the first Indigenous chair to be elected in the 126-year history of what was previously known as the Canadian Education Association. Darren has been the Director of Education for Membertou First Nation for 19 years. He also serves as Chair of the Council on Mi'kmaw Education and Chair of the Cape Breton Victoria Regional School Board.

The EdCan Network Advisory Council provides a forum for expression of country-wide issues and trends in education, and advises the board on the direction and priorities for the Network. Council members provide visibility and act as advocates for the EdCan Network within their respective professional communities. They are drawn from all regions of the country and serve a three-year term, which may be renewable for a second three-year term.



The 2017–18 EdCan Network Board of Directors, from left to right: Dr. Alexander McDonald, Yves Saint-Maurice, Dean Shareski, Roger Paul, Anne MacPhee, Darren Googoo, Rob Adley and Peter L. McCreath.

Darren will sit on this advisory council along with several individuals from the CASSA Board, including Director at Large **Kevin Kaardal** and Association of Directors General of English School Boards of Quebec Affiliate **Michael Chechile**. Longtime CASSA conference sponsoring partner Discovery Education Canada is also contributing to the Network, on the Board of Directors and Advisory Council, through its Community Manager **Dean Shareski**.

## Conference Sponsor Profile: FreshGrade

*In this issue, Leaders & Learners presents an interview with **David Haight** of FreshGrade, a company that has supported the CASSA conference since 2016. To learn more about the company, please visit [www.FreshGrade.com](http://www.FreshGrade.com).*

*It's important that our readers get to know our CASSA conference sponsors. Please tell our readers about your company.*

FreshGrade was founded in 2012 by a group of dedicated individuals who saw a better way to communicate a child's progress. It is now used in over 70 countries and boasts nearly 50,000 teachers coast to coast.

FreshGrade is a rich assessment for learning platform that promotes student ownership and parent engagement. Its robust portfolio platform allows teachers and students to quickly capture evidence of learning, provide feedback, and track progression of provincial learning outcomes and competencies as well as custom district objectives. The suite of mobile and browser-based applications specifically designed for Pre-K to 12 makes learning visible and immediate. Students, teachers, and parents develop a deeper understanding of their achievement and progress with a portfolio that documents the process, not just the product, of learning.

*Please tell our readers about yourself.*

I am the Director of Business Development for Canada and I've been with FreshGrade for just over three years. I'm a husband of 19 years, father of two amazing daughters, and I spend almost all my spare time with family or participating in or watching sports. My background includes 5 years of teaching middle school followed by 11 years in education technology.



It's no secret that having classroom experience has certainly helped me in my day job. Whether in the classroom or engaging with district administrators and educators, I find great intrinsic reward when I can help pave the way to those "aha" moments.

*Why is it important to you to develop a sponsorship relationship with CASSA?*

*What makes your company a good match with an organization like CASSA?*

FreshGrade's values align closely with CASSA's: to promote and support quality education for the success of all students. We want to strengthen the capacity of educators and believe that education needs to close the gap with 21st-century learning by taking action, not just words.

We believe the CASSA members are leaders truly searching for ways to move beyond the status quo, innovate, and better engage stakeholders in supporting teaching and learning.

*What were your impressions of the 2017 CASSA conference in Halifax and of CASSA members? What were the highlights of the experience for you? What would you tell other sponsors who are considering attending a CASSA conference?*

We were particularly interested in the theme "Healthy Schools, Healthy Communities, Healthy Future" and how FreshGrade could help educators facilitate that. It is something special that our message

## Conference Sponsor Profile: FreshGrade

of “communicating learning and better engaging parents and students” resonated strongly with every individual we encountered. As well as attending interesting sessions, we also met amazing people and, more importantly, built strong relationships with like-minded individuals.

*Any plans to attend the 2018 conference in Ottawa? If so, what are you most looking forward to?*

Absolutely. CASSA is one of our favourite national events and we’ll definitely be attending the 2018 conference! We look forward to (re)connecting with like-minded educators and administrators and furthering the conversations around leveraging technology to better communicate learning and engage parents and students in the process.

“FreshGrade forms a continuous glimpse into each child’s progress that parents and students can share.”

~ Sir Ken Robinson, author, *Creative Schools*

*Would you like to add anything about FreshGrade?*

As FreshGrade has grown over the past several years, we continue to come across amazing stories that greatly validate why we do what we do. One story in particular involves **Bernadette Kirk**, a grade 1–3 teacher in Palliser Regional Schools in Alberta.

Bernadette found it challenging to establish meaningful contact with some of her students’ parents. Phone calls and emails weren’t responded to and some parents didn’t attend parent-teacher nights. Bernadette

set herself the goal of improving parent engagement and worked with her Technology Integration Specialist to find a solution. Since implementing FreshGrade in her class, Bernadette was surprised to find parents reaching out, asking for her to post more content and leaving positive comments on student work. The increase of parent engagement increased students’ pride in ownership and the effort they put into their schoolwork.

“One boy in my class is very good at art,” says Bernadette. “But he never took any of his artwork home so his mom didn’t see it. When I took pictures or videos of him doing the artwork and uploaded them to FreshGrade, his mom would leave comments telling him ‘Wow, you did an amazing job!’ They’d talk about it at home and he’d come back to school the next day and say, ‘My mom was really proud of me!’”

Using class announcements, Bernadette was also able to see whether parents were receiving her messages about field trips and agendas for the first time. She worried less about parents attending parent-teacher nights because she knew they were getting information about their child’s school day and felt part of the class.

“FreshGrade is a nice, positive, engaging way to communicate with parents,” says Bernadette. “They can see their child’s learning with pictures and video. And they can scroll back and compare it to how they were doing before. It is a really good communication tool for them just to see that growth.”

*Thank you, David. We look forward to seeing you in Ottawa next summer.*



Instantly access your School Board's specific emergency response procedures and utilize key emergency response tools

## Emergency Response Plan



### Mobile Access

All of your personnel will have instant access to your emergency response procedures, as well as maps and safety-related how-to documents, right from their mobile devices.

### Role-based Checklists

Every staff member will have actionable sets of instructions that can be individualized based on each staff member's role within the organization. As a staff member completes the steps in their checklist, the Safety Team is informed of their progress.

### Emergency Communication

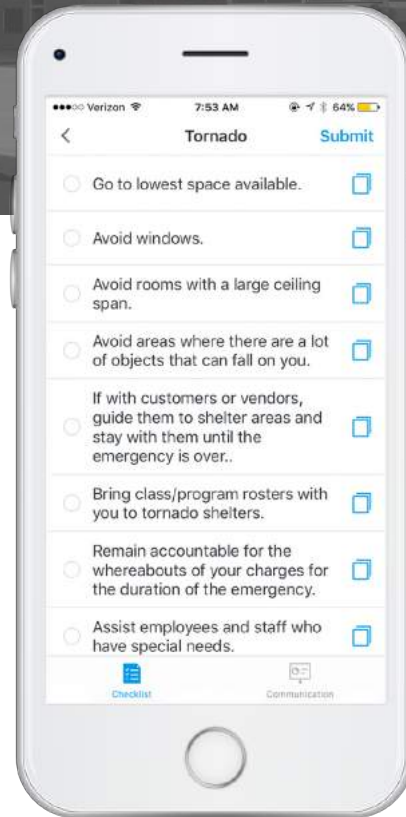
During crisis situations, your Safety Team can utilize the messaging tool to send out information through message groups to teachers and staff, students, and parents.

***"CASSA supports the health and wellness of students and staff. Safe and accepting schools promote the goal of student and staff health and well-being."***

Ken Bain Executive Director  
Canadian Association of School System Administrators



Download the CrisisGo app for free  
Learn more at [www.crisisgo.com/education](http://www.crisisgo.com/education)



CrisisGo's App turns your mobile devices into mobile safety assistants

### Benefits

- Safety Teams can set specific emergency instructions for every staff member through the checklist and observe their progress during a crisis.
- Through our messaging tool schools can keep their staff, their students, and the community continually informed.
- You can upload an endless variety of easily accessible maps and how-to documents that will be useful during a crisis.
- The checklist feature allows staff to follow instructions based on their role in the organization and report progress in reaching those objectives
- Staff will have instant access to emergency response procedures that have been developed for your organization



## The 2017–18 CASSA Board of Directors: Truly National Representation

### **NWTSA**

Metro Huculak, Curtis Brown

### **BCSSA**

Claire Guy

### **CASS**

Barry Litun, Colleen Symyrozum-Watt

### **LEADS**

Bill Cooke, Sean Case, Darrell Paproski

### **MASS**

Brett Lough, Ken Klassen

### **OPSOA**

Joy Badder, Karen Edgar

### **OCSOA**

John Kostoff, Deb Crawford

### **ADGESBQ**

Michael Chechile

### **AAESQ**

Christopher Fuzessy, Veronique Marin

### **RNDGÉ**

Monique Boudreau, Roger Paul

### **NBSSA**

Craig Caldwell

### **ANSEA**

Margo Tait, Gary Adams

### **NLASSA**

Gerald Buffet, Bronson Collins

### **Director At Large - PEI**

Anne Bernard-Bourgeois

### **Director At Large - Nunavut**

Bill Cooper

### **Director At Large - Yukon**

Penny Prysruk

### **Director At Large - BC**

Kevin Kaardal

### **AASA Western Rep**

Mike Borgfjord

### **AASA Eastern Rep**

Cindy Finn

### **President**

Anne O'Brien

### **Past President**

Cindy Finn

### **President Elect**

Reg Klassen



Supporting  
*each* Student

 JULY 4 - 6, 2018 • OTTAWA

## **CASSA Awards: Recognizing Outstanding Leadership**

DO YOU WORK with an outstanding CASSA colleague? Do you know a Canadian school system leader who deserves to be recognized for their service? Consider putting their name forward for the Honourary Life Membership, the Distinguished Service Award or the annual Xerox EXL Award. The awards are presented each year at the CASSA conference in July.

The Honourary Life Membership recognizes excellence in education at the national level. It is normally meant to honour individuals who have contributed significantly to CASSA. Significant contributions at the provincial affiliate level will be considered only in light of their relevance to CASSA and its national mandate.

The Distinguished Service Award is intended to recognize any present or recent CASSA member who has demonstrated outstanding ability and leadership.

The CASSA executive will consider the suitability of candidates for these two awards based on responses to the items in the nomination forms.

The EXL Award recognizes the outstanding leadership of superintendents and directors of education from across Canada. CASSA members who have exhibited exemplary leadership ability and who have enhanced school administration are eligible to receive this award.

What kind of qualities should an EXL Award nominee have? They will have brought honour to themselves, their colleagues and their profession. They have given exemplary service to their provincial, territorial or national professional association. They have made significant contributions to the field of education through their service, writings or other activities. They serve as role models and teachers to others and have at least five years of membership in CASSA.

The recipient of the EXL Award is invited to attend the annual AASA conference in the United States as the Canadian Superintendent of the Year. The recipient is also profiled in CASSA's *Leaders & Learners* newsletter.

Nomination forms are available on the CASSA website. Nominations for the 2018 award should be sent to your regional affiliate or to CASSA's Executive Director Ken Bain. They will be accepted until May 16.

CASSA recognizes and is grateful for the longtime support of Xerox Canada in presenting the EXL Award every year since 2002.



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