

Leaders & Learners



CASSA-ACGCS
Promoting Quality Education for Our Students

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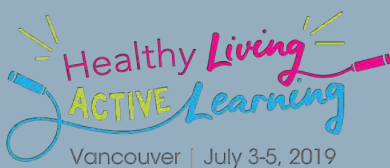
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Message from the President: An Introduction to “the New Guy”

LET ME BEGIN my first newsletter column by stating that I am honoured to serve as your CASSA President for the next two years.

I know that many of you are asking, “Who is the new guy?” I thought it was only fair to introduce myself. Important for you to know is that I have been married for 35 years to Karyn, a resource teacher and literacy specialist.

We have two sons, two daughters-in-law, one daughter—and let’s not leave out the boyfriend—and three grandchildren. These individuals enrich my life and are a significant aspect of who I am.

Like most of you, my career has been in education serving students in many communities and educational situations. Currently I serve as the Chief Superintendent of Frontier School Division in Manitoba.

I have a Bachelor’s in Theology, Art and Education, and a Master’s in Educational Administration. I have had the privilege of working in private and public education in a



Reg Klassen
President

variety of capacities. These include classroom teacher, resource teacher, vice principal, guidance counsellor, principal and currently superintendent.

I have also had the honour of leading a number of national and regional organizations, including serving as Chair of the Canadian

Association of Mennonite Schools and of the Manitoba Federation of Independent Schools Education Committee. In addition to serving as President of CASSA, I have also served as the President of the Manitoba Association of School Superintendents (MASS).

I am blessed to have great support at home, quality leadership experience and a sound education. In today’s volatile educational landscape that is not always enough, as leadership has become increasingly demanding. Leaders are no longer

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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 Benefits of Risky Outdoor Play for Children

RECENTLY I ATTENDED the Lawson Foundation Outdoor Play and Early Learning Policy Research Symposium, which brought together outdoor play and early learning researchers and practitioners from Canada, Finland, Sweden, Netherlands, Scotland, Ireland and the United States. CASSA was invited so that the voice of school system leaders could be included, given that early learners arrive at our doorsteps every morning.

The Lawson Foundation provided participants with a Position Statement on Active Outdoor Play. “Access to active play in nature and outdoors—with its risks—is essential for healthy child development. We recommend increasing children’s opportunities for self-directed play outdoors in all settings—at home, at school, in child care, the community and nature.”

Not only were the benefits of play being advanced but the notion of “risky outdoor play” was an important theme for the symposium. I heard from researchers and early childhood educators about the physical and mental health benefits of outdoor play.

Outdoor Play Canada states that “risky play is a thrilling and exciting form of play that involves the possibility of physical injury and can include play with great heights, play with high speed, play with dangerous tools, play with dangerous objects, play near dangerous elements, rough-and-tumble play and play where children can ‘disappear’ or get lost. Risky play provides opportunities for challenge, testing limits, exploring boundaries and learning about injury risk.”

While the notion of encouraging children to engage in dangerous play may be difficult to immediately embrace, the research is clear on the many physical and mental health benefits that result when children play outdoors.



Ken Bain
Executive Director

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seen as having all the answers, and they do not fare well if they make that claim. Today leaders need to have an understanding of power, collaboration, inclusiveness, sustainability, serving, regulations, teaching and learning, and this list is by no means exhaustive. To that end, I believe that servant-leadership has much to offer leadership in the public education system.

The premise of servant-leadership is the belief that one needs to serve first. Servant-leadership can only be practised by serving others, about paying attention to others and treating them right based on group purpose and core values. This response to others is to everyone’s advantage because it is in this context of caring for each other that one acts. This action creates community, and community is connectedness.

Like most of you, my career has been in education serving students in many communities and educational situations.

Serving makes for a better society and a better life for everyone. This thinking runs counter to the commonly held belief that we should look out for ourselves first. **Margaret Wheatley** makes the case that we have a need for each other and that together we are the best resource to go into the future. **K. M. Keith** says that in serving and being served, we build relationships that offer meaning and hope. I believe true servant-leadership has the very real potential to guide our future as a human species.

Through serving each other and building positive relationships, we can improve student learning. As



CASSA President Reg Klassen and his wife Karyn on safari in Kenya in 2018, with a large group of hippos gathered in the background.



Reg and Karyn with Mama Gladys after taking part in the Water Walk while in the Maasai Mara in 2018.

educators and leaders, our duty is to help those around us (particularly our students), to acquire an ever-expanding understanding of our world and to use it in such a way that humanity will have a better chance of

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living together in a global community, responsible to each other for the collective in our lives.

I look forward to engaging with CASSA members and those involved with our regional affiliates over the next two years of my term as CASSA President. Contact me at Reg.Klassen@fsdnet.ca or through the usual CASSA channels.

New CASSA President Reg Klassen with his family.



Message from the Executive Director: The Benefits of Risky Outdoor Play for Children

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Our 2019 summer conference, which will take place in Vancouver, British Columbia, from July 3 to 5, will explore healthy, active living including outdoor play and I encourage you all to save the date. You can check for updates on our conference website in the new year.

I also recently attended the AASA Superintendent of the Year Gala in Washington, at which time AASA honoured **John Malloy**, Director of Education for the Toronto District School Board, along with other American state recipients. I was struck by both the similarities and differences between the challenges faced by system leaders in Canada and the USA. The theme for the event was “Leaders Matters,” and on that...we can all agree!

Top: CASSA Executive Director Ken Bain with AASA Executive Director Dan Domenech at the AASA Superintendent of the Year Gala in Washington, DC.

Bottom: AASA Superintendent of the Year David Schuler with Ken Bain and CASSA EXL Award recipient and Canadian System Leader of the Year John Malloy.



World of 7 Billion Video Contest: Prizes for Students and Curriculum Resources for Teachers

BACK BY POPULAR demand, Population Education's World of 7 Billion student video contest helps teachers bring technology and creativity into middle and high school classes. The contest challenges students in grades 6 to 12 worldwide to create a short video connecting world population growth to one of three global challenges:



Preserving Biodiversity

Habitat destruction/fragmentation, ecosystem diversity, coral reefs, deforestation, pollinators, extinction, invasive species

Sustainable Resource Use

Energy, fossil fuel use, single-use products, diet, overfishing, global inequities in consumption

Protecting Human Rights

Poverty, barriers to education, women and girls, forced migration, environmental/social justice, economic security

In the fall of 2011, the world's population surpassed seven billion. It's important to understand how this milestone was reached, analyze the impact of the choices we make, and realize that our decisions can and will impact the future.

This student video contest makes a compelling class project by using current issues that affect everyone around the world. All video submissions must address how population growth affects the chosen challenge topic and include at least one idea for a sustainable solution.

Public system leaders from across Canada may wish to alert the teachers in their school districts about the opportunities offered by this worldwide contest.

Students can win cash prizes, including a \$1,000 first-place prize for high school students and \$500 first-place prize for middle school students.

Participating teachers will receive free curriculum resources. Downloadable lesson plans are available now on the contest website.

The deadline for submissions is February 28, 2019. Full contest details, resources for research, archives of past winners and more information can be found on the World of 7 Billion website.

Learn more about World of 7 Billion and Population Education:

- * Follow on Twitter @PopulationEd
- * Visit www.populationeducation.org
- * Visit www.worldof7billion.org

Your Leaders & Learners E-newsletter: Looking Back and Looking Forward

IN DECEMBER 2004, the first issue of *Leaders & Learners*, CASSA's national electronic newsletter, was published and shared online.

This communication initiative, developed by former Executive Director **Frank Kelly**, former Professional Development Director **Ed Wittchen** and current Editor **Tara Lee Wittchen**, was created to expand and evolve the scope of the old *CASA CLIPS* newsletter. The new newsletter featured an updated title and design template, and had a specific mandate:

- to communicate regularly with all CASSA members in an appropriate professional newsletter format
- to inform members about executive activities
- to inform members about promising practices and success stories from affiliate associations and member school boards
- to profile CASSA leaders from across Canada
- to encourage participation of all members in CASSA activities, including the annual conference
- to build leadership capacity on a national level
- to inform education partners about CASSA
- to promote CASSA as the national voice for public education in Canada

Over the years, that mandate grew to include promotion and coverage of the annual CASSA conference, updates from regional affiliates, and reports on AASA and other international events attended by CASSA members. *Leaders & Learners* also began to include profiles on CASSA conference sponsors, a step intended to strengthen those important relationships.

As the newsletter continued to evolve, so too did CASSA. What was known in 2004 as the Canadian Association of School Administrators (CASA) is now called the Canadian Association of School System Administrators (CASSA). Its French language title was also updated: Association Canadienne des Gestionnaires de Commissions Scolaires (ACGCS). Its constitution, bylaws, executive, board of directors, affiliate members and website have all changed over the years as well, with those changes regularly recorded in these pages.

CASSA members and other education professionals from across North America helped contribute to features covering topics such as off-campus schools, Indigenous education and achievement, rural and urban school boards, women in leadership, mentorship, STEM and STEAM education, early childhood development, living school initiatives, Black History Month, effective



The first five years: Issue 1 (December 2004), Issue 5 (Summer 2005), Issue 8 (January 2006), Issue 16 (February 2007), Issue 34 (Summer 2010).

The Leaders & Learners E-newsletter: Looking Back and Looking Forward

communication, democracy, recruitment strategies, mental health, northern district issues, human rights, literacy, inclusion strategies, technology and more.

Over the last 14 years, this newsletter has included features on innovative and inspiring leaders such as **Dr. Paula Barrett, Dr. Edwina Wetzel, David Bouchard, Roger Garriock, Budge Wilson, Frank Turner, Dr. Michael Fullan, Natalie Panek, Dr. Stan Kutcher, Ashleigh McIvor, Dr. John Malloy, Leora Schaefer** and the late **Dr. Fraser Mustard**, many of whom were keynote address speakers at CASSA conferences.

The annual EXL Awards were reported on in these pages, including biographies of each of the nominees. Each new president was profiled as they started their term, and system leaders from across Canada were featured in the ongoing Faces in the Crowd series. Notable milestones such as the retirement or passing of longtime members were also recorded here.

CASSA presidents **Ruth Mattingley, Bob Mills, Jim Gibbons, Jim Grieve, Carol Gray, Lee Ann Forsyth-Sells, Roger Nippard, Cindy Finn and Anne O'Brien** contributed messages for each issue. Executive directors **Frank Kelly** and **Ken Bain** also provided updates in their messages. Many members, including **Ed Wittchen, Cindy Finn, Carol Gray, Simone Rose-Oliver, Barry Wovk** and more, submitted photographs from conferences and other CASSA gatherings.

In 2009, Matrix Group Publishing Inc. began producing a twice-yearly print magazine for CASSA, also called *Leaders & Learners*. In 2019, Matrix will take over publishing this e-newsletter. The company has a solid track record of creating, editing and publishing excellent communication products for a number of professional associations across Canada. There is much to look forward to in the continuing evolution of the *Leaders & Learners* newsletter and CASSA.

LEADERS & LEARNERS: THE VOICE OF THE CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL SYSTEM ADMINISTRATORS

Leaders & Learners



The 2017 CASSA Annual Conference: Healthy Minds in Halifax

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THE WEATHER WAS gorgeous (not always a guarantee in a northern port city, even in July) and the people were friendly in Halifax, the site of the 2017 CASSA conference.

In addition to engaging sessions, delegates enjoyed a tour of the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21. For many, this is where their family's journey in Canada began.

Some delegates took part in a trip to Peggy's Cove and a tour through the city's streets and harbour in the Harbour Hopper amphibious vehicle.

This year's gathering saw over 200 delegates in attendance at the Westin Nova Scotia. We also had over 20 sponsors and exhibitors on hand to connect with delegates.

We hope to see you next year.



The Harbour Hopper cruises through the Halifax Harbour offering passengers a great view of the city's downtown, waterfront, bridges, ships and harbour traffic.

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LEADERS & LEARNERS: THE VOICE OF THE CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL SYSTEM ADMINISTRATORS

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Message from the President: Supporting Daily Physical Activity

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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.

Waking 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.

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LEADERS & LEARNERS: THE VOICE OF THE CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL SYSTEM ADMINISTRATORS

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The 2018 CASSA Annual Conference: Supporting Each Student in Ottawa

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Conference host city Ottawa offered CASSA delegates a wealth of off-site sightseeing opportunities, including the Parliament buildings, museums, historic waterways and Indigenous cultural experiences.

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The latest version: Issue 76 (September 2017), Issue 78 (December 2017), Issue 82 (September 2018).

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 2019 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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