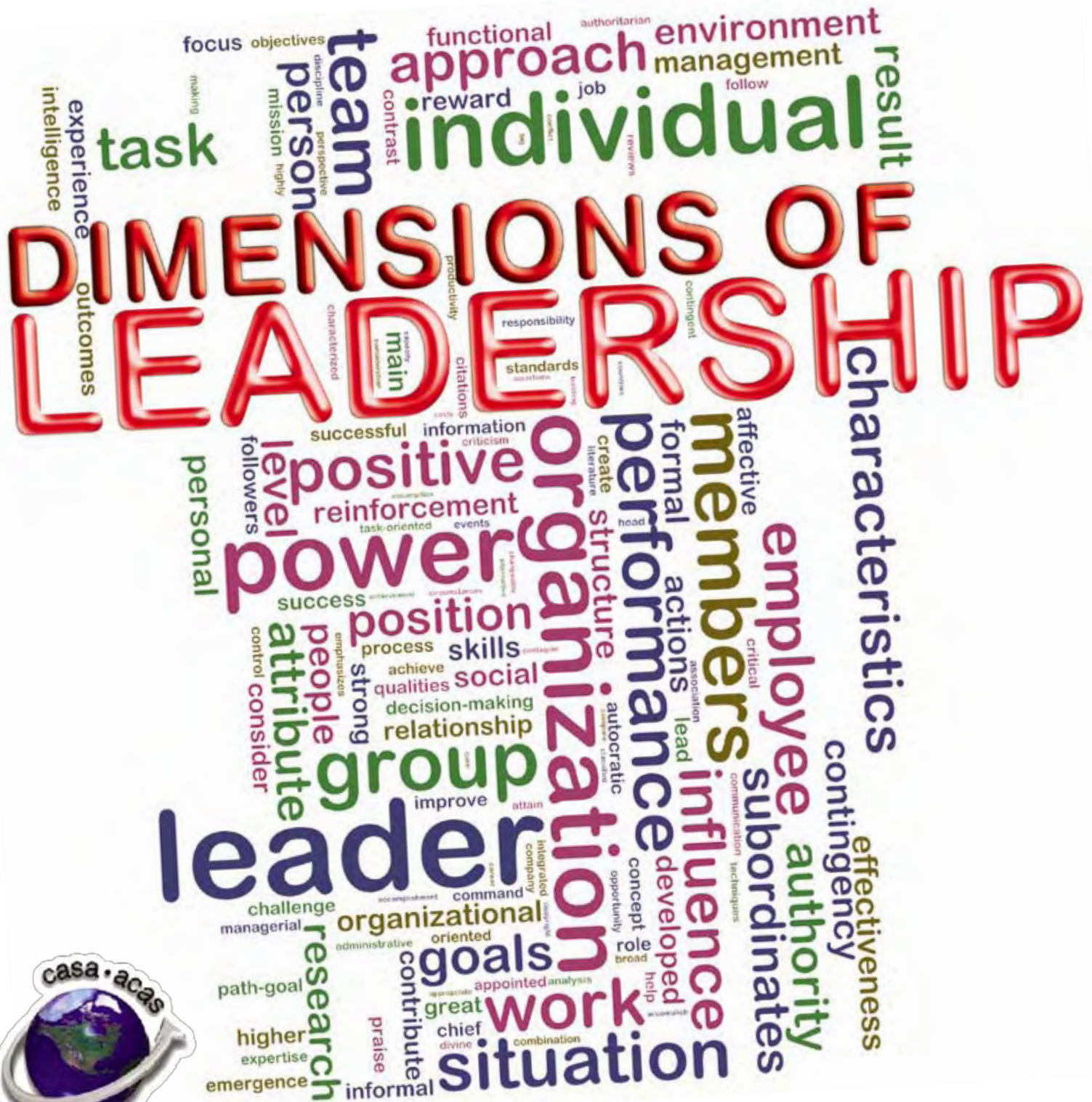


Winter 2012-2013

# Leaders & Learners

The official magazine of the Canadian Association of School Administrators

Association canadienne des administrateurs et des administratrices scolaires





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- **NEW** - Support for Google Chrome OS netbooks.
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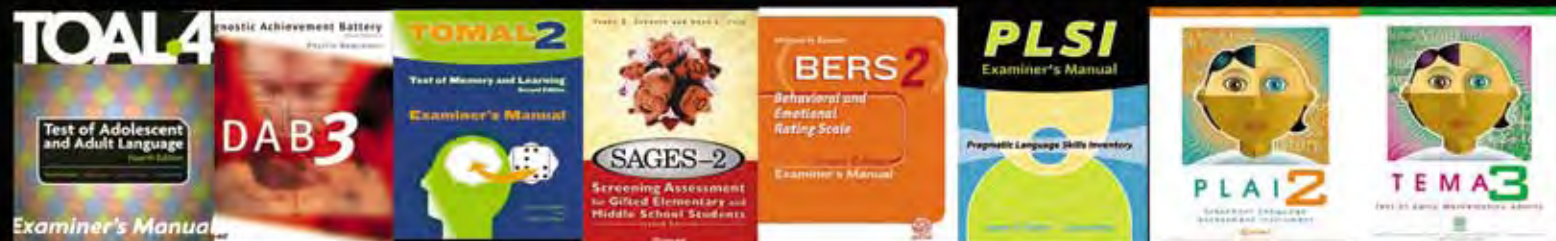
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L'Institut de leadership en éducation

The Ontario's Institute for Education Leadership (IEL) is a virtual organization that:

- supports research to identify effective practices;
- develops high-quality resources and learning opportunities for school and system leaders; and
- fosters greater collaboration and cooperation.

### What's New on APPLIKI?

APPLIKI has a wealth of recent resource materials and effective practices for succession planning and talent development: [appliki.apandrose.com](http://appliki.apandrose.com)

## Research into Practice



*The Ontario Leadership Framework 2012, With a Discussion of the Research Foundation*, directed by Professor Kenneth Leithwood, provides the research and foundations underlying the revision of this leadership resource.



*A School and System Leader's Guide to Putting the Ontario's Leadership Framework into Action*: This guide will assist school and system leaders to effectively implement the OLF. The online version of this user guide hyperlinks to various resources.

Four placemats that give "at-a-glance" views of school and system leadership practice at both the individual and organizational levels. These placemats can be downloaded separately for use in professional learning contexts.

### Development:

*The Safe and Accepting Schools Toolkit Project*: This resource presents various strategies, knowledge and experience to ensuring safe and accepting schools.

For more information on the OLF and other resources, visit the IEL website at:

[www.education-leadership-ontario.ca](http://www.education-leadership-ontario.ca)



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L'Institut de leadership en éducation de l'Ontario (ILE) est une organisation virtuelle qui :

- explore la recherche visant à déterminer les pratiques réussies;
- appuie les leaders scolaires et les leaders du système en leur donnant des occasions de se perfectionner et d'échanger sur les pratiques réussies et,
- favorise une plus grande collaboration et coopération.

### Du nouveau dans APPLIKI :

APPLIKI offre une variété de ressources types et des pratiques exemplaires pour l'élaboration de plans de relève et pour le développement de talents : [appliki.apandrose.com](http://appliki.apandrose.com)

## La recherche en action



*Le Cadre de leadership de l'Ontario 2012 : une discussion relative aux fondements de la recherche*, dirigé par le professeur émérite Kenneth Leithwood, présente la recherche sous-jacente à la conception et à la révision de cette ressource liée au leadership.



*Le Guide à l'intention des leaders scolaires et des leaders du système pour la mise en application du Cadre de leadership de l'Ontario* : Ce guide permettra aux leaders scolaires et aux leaders du système à faire une mise en œuvre efficace du CLO 2012. La version en ligne de ce guide contient des liens vers différentes ressources.

Quatre tableaux synthèses offrent une vue d'ensemble des pratiques de leadership au niveau de l'école et du conseil scolaire, tant sur le plan individuel qu'organisationnel. Ces tableaux peuvent être téléchargés séparément et utilisés dans des contextes d'apprentissage professionnel.

### Développement :

Les écoles sécuritaires et tolérantes : Boîte à outils : Cette ressource présente des approches, des expériences et des acquis qui permettront de rendre nos écoles plus sécuritaires et tolérantes.

Pour obtenir de plus amples renseignements, visitez le site Web de l'ILE au :

[www.education-leadership-ontario.ca](http://www.education-leadership-ontario.ca)



# Tapping into tap water again

When tap water went by the wayside in favor of bottled water in the 1990s, few considered the high environmental costs. Now tap water is in vogue again and, thanks to a modern water delivery solution, refilling and reusing water bottles is quick and easy.

Canadians drink more bottled water than coffee, tea, apple juice or milk. In fact, Canadians consume an average of 60 liters of bottled water per person per year. That's a whopping 2 billion liters annually.

While many Canadian cities, including Charlottetown, P.E.I., Nelson, BC and London, ON, have banned the sale of water bottles on some level, 88 percent of Canada's plastic water bottles don't get recycled. Instead they end up in landfills or going to incineration.

The fact is plastic bottles are among the fastest-growing form of municipal solid waste in Canada. Yet, in spite of the staggering environmental impact, bottled water has become such an ingrained part of our lifestyle that we sometimes forget there's an alternative.

## Its name? Tap water.

Tap water is thirst-quenching, tasty and stringently tested—much more so than bottled water, which is among Canada's most unregulated resource industries.

Plus, tap water is cost-effective and environmentally friendly. And now drinking water companies like OASIS International, have made tap water more convenient and accessible, thanks to bottle filling stations that let water drinkers refill their own water bottles.

The OASIS VersaFiller® quickly and easily turns various drinking fountains into eco-friendly bottle fillers," says OASIS regional sales manager Chris Romagnoli. "Nobody likes filling a water bottle in the lavatory sink, it's awkward, and the bottle never gets completely filled. With the VersaFiller, students, faculty and staff can easily refill their own reusable water bottles."

Besides being highly convenient, VersaFiller stations are helping school campuses "go green." Many North American colleges and universities including Pepperdine, Michigan State and Marshall University in the U.S. have transformed ordinary drinking fountains into eco-friendly bottle filling stations with the VersaFiller.

## Reducing plastic waste across campus

Margie Phillips, Marshall University's sustainability manager, says VersaFiller bottle filling stations were key to helping the University reduce plastic consumption across campus.



"Our students loved their bottled water," says Phillips, "so we did a reusable bottle giveaway (to encourage the switch). Now they love the stations because they can easily fill the bottles, and it doesn't cost them any money. We plan to install one station for every single floor in every building across campus."

The Oasis VersaFiller is designed to fit Oasis, Sunroc and most Haws and Elkay units. It's one unit, that delivers one thing: great-tasting, refreshing cold water on-demand. Learn how the VersaFiller can turn your ordinary drinking fountain into a modern, convenient bottle filling station.

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# TEACH don't BAN

Chocolate fundraisers support the spirit of school food and beverage policies. Here's why...

## Teaching works, banning doesn't.

91% of adults agree that teaching about how treats fit into a healthy lifestyle is better than banning chocolate fundraising<sup>1</sup>.

## Common sense and behavioural science support that treats are part of a healthy active lifestyle.

92% of dieticians say that people are more likely to maintain a balanced lifestyle when they don't deprive themselves of treats<sup>2</sup>.

## In the world of treats, chocolate is one of the healthier options.

Eaten in moderation, chocolate has many benefits. It's rich in antioxidants, flavonoids, vitamins and minerals, and contains valuable calcium and iron.

## Chocolate could lower your risk for heart disease!

British Medical Journal Research: The study, involving more than 114,000 people, showed that higher consumption levels of all types of chocolate, was significantly associated with a reduced risk of cardiometabolic disorders. This beneficial association was significant for cardiovascular disease (37% reduction), diabetes (31%) and stroke (29%)<sup>3</sup>. Chocolate might be a viable instrument in the prevention of cardiometabolic disorders if consumed in moderation.

The launch of a chocolate fundraiser is an opportunity to teach kids about healthy lifestyles and World's Finest® Chocolate can help:

INTRODUCING



Teaching material to help educate children on the importance of portion control and physical activity. Available with each fundraising campaign.

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- Encourage your students to eat slowly and mindfully.
- Encourage your students to eat a variety of foods.
- Encourage your students to eat a variety of textures.
- Encourage your students to eat a variety of colors.
- Encourage your students to eat a variety of flavors.
- Encourage your students to eat a variety of shapes.
- Encourage your students to eat a variety of sizes.
- Encourage your students to eat a variety of textures.
- Encourage your students to eat a variety of colors.
- Encourage your students to eat a variety of flavors.
- Encourage your students to eat a variety of shapes.
- Encourage your students to eat a variety of sizes.

**TEACHING MATERIAL**

It's a good life, when your thoughts are bright and you're eating right!

- Practice portion control. Eat smaller portions and don't eat too fast, too early, or without.
- Remember that chocolate is a treat, not an "add-on" food. Enjoy the whole package and ingredients, but don't eat too much.
- Use a balanced diet. Think food, play, and rest.
- Drink the right amount. Choose the right kind of beverage for the right occasion.
- Get high quality and play to achieve your goals.
- Remember to practice your healthy eating program.

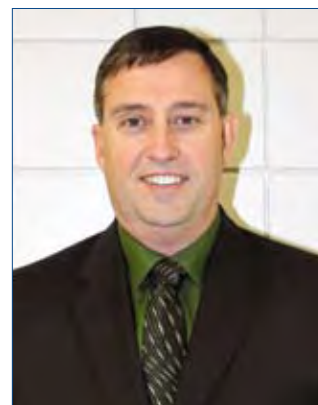
www.thinkbigeatsmart.com



<sup>1</sup> September 2010 survey of 1,000+ adults in using 200 parents of children aged 4-11.  
<sup>2</sup> Survey of Nutritional Professionals. An online survey of 410 registered dietitians (RD) by the Academy Center for Dietetics & Nutrition.  
<sup>3</sup> "Sweet Treats are Good!" Research on sugar and cardiovascular disease. 7 studies involving 114,000 people, studies up to Oct. 2010.



# Starting my Leadership Journey With CASA



**Roger Nippard**  
CASA/ACAS President

**W**elcome to this edition of Leaders & Learners. Henrik Ibsen once wrote, “A community is like a ship; everyone ought to be able to take the helm.” Although I have been affiliated with CASA for quite a number of years, my tenure “at the helm”, as President, has been relatively brief, having taken over just this past July. Since then, I have been honoured to represent the organization and had the privilege of travelling from British Columbia to Newfoundland and Labrador. As a matter of fact, I “pen” these words in St. John’s, after a series of meetings related to the organization of the upcoming 2013 summer conference, which will be held in this historic city.

Originally from this province, returning here has been a tangible reminder of the importance of my roots and my past, both personally and professionally. In reflecting on CASA, I’m reminded that it too has a rich history and that if we really “want to know the road ahead, we need to ask those coming back.” I would like to take this opportunity to thank former CASA President, Lee-Ann Forsyth, and Executive Director, Frank Kelly, for their past leadership and continued support through the personnel changes at CASA in recent months. They have set the bar high for those following them and their continued support for the organization, as well as me personally, is much appreciated.

Jim Collins, in *Good to Great*, poses the question: “Can a good company become a great company, and if so, how?” His conclusion, based on a meta-analysis of the research, is that greatness is not a function of circumstance, but largely a matter of conscious choice and discipline. Canada has an education system that is consistently ranked as one of the best in the world. In 1994, I was selected to participate in a three-week educational tour of Japan with 60 other educators, from over 30 countries, most of which were from the former Soviet satellite states and Eastern Asia. I quickly learned that the Canadian education system and its educators were held in very high esteem, and while we are fortunate to live in our context, the success of our work isn’t simply a reflection of having won the educational lottery. Indeed, the system that we have today is the result of the conscious choices and disciplined efforts of those currently within this organization as well as those who have come before us.

CASA members fill positions of school division leadership and how we frame leadership determines how people will participate in it. If we believe that real leadership is restricted to a select few positions of formal authority, then people will act accordingly. I fundamentally believe that everyone is a leader and consequently each person has the right, responsibility and capability to be a leader. Clearly, as individuals in formal leadership positions, what we think, what we say, what we do and what we believe matters.

Research abounds on the effectiveness of the classroom teacher and leadership of the principal, in terms of both having a profound impact on the quality and culture of schools. Barth, in *Learning By Heart*, captures this, noting that, “teachers who choose the path of leadership become owners and investors in their schools, rather than mere tenants.” In one of the most comprehensive studies of system leadership, Marzano, in *District Leadership That Works*, identified a correlation of .24 between district level leadership and increased student achievement. Not surprisingly, leadership at the system level also truly matters, therefore, when we exercise our leadership responsibilities effectively, student achievement across the system is positively affected.

Over the past few years, a great deal more attention has been focused on building the capacity of individuals at the system leadership level. Over the past four years, my colleagues in the College of Alberta School Superintendents (CASS) have been fortunate to participate in the Building System Leadership: A Framework for School System Success initiative. Partnering with Alberta Education, this framework has been developed and has provided a coherent and unprecedented focus on building school system leadership capacity. The framework addresses the system level practices, or dimensions, that research and best practices support as having a demonstrated positive impact on student learning and achievement.

I know that other provinces are also engaged in similar work and as educators and leaders within our respective organizations, I can’t think of anything that could be more important than learning and making our learning more visible. In the words of Goethe, “the most honorable, fitting title any educator could have is that of leading learner.” Indeed, CASA is a vital and dynamic resource that can help us on this leadership and learning journey.

To conclude, John Dewey once said, “what the best and wisest parent wants for his own child must be what the community wants for all its children.” Despite having a huge geography, relatively high levels of diversity and a widening gap in terms of social equality within our classrooms, we continue to work towards creating a system of schools where we would send our own child to any classroom in any school. Thank you to all the contributors to this edition. I trust that you will enjoy the read.



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# Connecting With CASA!



**Ken Bain**  
CASA/ACAS Executive Director

**I** am very excited to bring you my first message in the Leaders & Learners magazine as the new CASA Executive Director! It is an honour and a privilege to fill this role and I look forward to working closely with the Board of Directors on behalf of the affiliate members across Canada.

Before I address what I see coming ahead for CASA, I want to pay tribute to Frank Kelly, our outgoing CASA Executive Director. Frank provided outstanding leadership to CASA and always demonstrated a sincere commitment to ensure that CASA was a strong and vibrant organization uniting Canadian senior education leaders. Frank will be missed at the CASA Board of Directors' table and at our annual conference. On behalf of CASA, I want to extend my appreciation to Frank for his years of service and my best wishes for a well-deserved retirement.

You may be aware that the CASA Board of Directors engaged an external consultant to review the current communication strategy between and among CASA members. The final report provided recommendations that extended beyond the area of CASA communications.

Essentially, the three major themes addressed in the report included:

1. Communications;
2. Governance; and
3. Membership Outreach.

The CASA Board of Directors and I have begun to implement a number of recommendations within the context of the resources available to CASA. I will provide further updates as we move forward.

Please set aside the dates of July 4 to 6, 2013 as we gather in beautiful St. Johns, Newfoundland, for our annual conference, and watch for more information as it is available.

Once again, it is indeed an honour to take on the role of CASA Executive Director and I look forward to connecting with you frequently throughout the year.

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By Julie Hobbs



# School Administrators' Support Team:

## A Model for School Success

Juxtapose this situation with a legion of “boomers” retiring from school administration, looking for new challenges and where their next “buzz” will come from and you have a ready-made resource. These retirees, more ready to “retread” than retire, understand the history and culture of an educational organization. They have expertise to share, which has often been learned through the “school of hard knocks,” when there was not much support for a new principal, beyond the keys to the front door.

In 2008, the School Administrators' Support Team, fondly known as “SAST,” was conceived in Québec's English educational community to support school and school board administrators in their capacity as providers of services for students who had special needs. Partially funded by the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS), through its plan of action to support students with special needs (MELS, 2008), and partially funded through a special grant for linguistic minorities, three “retreading” administrators took on the task of supporting the ten English school boards across the province, in a way that school board administrators can only dream of doing in these days of heavy pedagogical and administrative demands.

Two former school principals and one former school principal/central board office senior administrator came together to pool their expertise and experience. Each of the school principals knew what it was to turn a school around. Diane Wood had taken an inner city Montreal school and, with her school team, had brought it to the world stage through some of its innovative programs. Carol Marriott had led a large secondary school to become one of the most inclusive and successful schools in the province. I brought with me the experience of a former school principal and school board senior executive, a career in special needs education and knowledge of the Quebec education network. All three of us had started out in the field of special education, understanding the importance of inclusive education and the need for it across the province.

It wasn't long into the project before we realized that the project had to move beyond its focus on students with identified special needs to the collective population of students who weren't succeeding in school, those who were at risk of dropping out and those who were not graduating or completing their program of study. At least one in five students sitting in classes across the province wasn't succeeding

“Boy, am I glad to see you! I have just had the worst day of my life,” a school principal says to me as I walk into the school to deliver some books for an upcoming professional learning session.

The job of a school administrator in 2012 is a daunting one. Principals and vice-principals are bombarded with the need to hone their leadership skills for the 21<sup>st</sup> century along with their day-to-day obligations of managing a school, large or small. Often they feel that they are facing this overwhelming responsibility of merging the development of pedagogical leadership with learning their administrative duties all by themselves.

and in the case of boys, the statistics were even higher.

As a team, we began to review the latest literature on brain-based learning, gender issues, differentiated instruction, professional learning communities and collaborative networks. We worked at translating some of the most effective strategies into classroom practices. We met with each school board and some private schools as part of our mandate to learn their needs and to work with them in customizing learning opportunities with their administrators and the school teams.

Through the four years, there were certain elements of success that grew organically from our experiences, either collectively or individually, in each of the schools and boards where we worked.

### **What were the elements of success? Relationships, relationships, relationships...**

We like to think that much of our success came as a result of our understanding that support and change come through relationship building. As we started out, we understood, often more intuitively than not, that the essence of leadership to be “building collaborative models that have a focus on vision, goals, process and accountability, in a spirit of caring.” (Hobbs, 2008) We often likened our roles to that of the “favourite aunt”—non-threatening, there to listen and to be the critical friend in times of need. (Hume, 2011)

### **Focus and accountability**

At the same time as we began our work in schools, the MELS (2009) put forward a strategic plan focusing on increasing student graduation rates, improvement in literacy and increased success rates for students identified with special needs among other directions. This was backed with legislation involving the development of a partnership agreement for each school board and a management and educational success agreement (the MESA) for each school within the board.

Driven by evidence-based results, this provided the focus for much of our work in schools. The questions, “Where are you now?” and “Where do you want your school to be in three to five years?” and “How will you get there?” helped us focus our work with the schools and show the principals what was required to bring them together.

### **Fun factor and food**

Under the title of “Super 7”, Carol collected all the strategies we were promoting in differentiated instruction: mindset, movement, visuals, music, technology, novelty and fun. We took off from there—Diane in her Superman T-shirt entering the room to the music from Superman, fidget tools on the tables for the more kinesthetic learners, periodic brain-breaks (who wouldn’t laugh to a beach ball routine set to the tune Surfin’ USA!) and, of course, food. A cup of coffee or tea and a snack—often chocolate—go a long way to setting the stage for new learning.

### **Risk-taking**

Our greatest challenge was moving from “one-stop wonder” presentations to helping principals and their teacher teams take hold of the strategies we introduced—moving those strategies from the conference room to the classroom.

One of the most difficult tasks for a principal is putting yourself out there in front of your staff and taking your place as a teacher of teachers. It is a risk and it takes confidence and sometimes more than a little courage.

We saw our role as accompanying principals over these hurdles and supporting them in their first steps toward building collaboration with a focus on vision, goals, process and accountability, all in a spirit of caring. Where principals have taken this leap into pedagogical leadership, they have begun to see the results of changes in teacher practice and student learning. They are excited about their schools and learning. And so are we! ○

*Julie Hobbs is currently Team Leader of the School Improvement Resource Team, an initiative of the Association of Directors General of the English School Boards of Quebec.*

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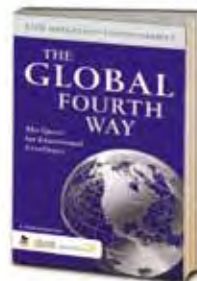
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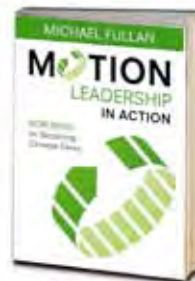
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# Enhancing Our Capacity for Instructional Leadership as School Administrators

By Pino Buffone

**I**n the fall of 2011, the Curriculum Services Department of the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board led an authentic, engaging professional learning activity with all principals and vice-principals related to instructional leadership, a key dimension of their roles and responsibilities as school administrators.

We asked our entire group of school administrators, over 250 principals and vice-principals, the following question: What does effective instruction look like, sound like, and feel like for all students in our classrooms?

There were over 1,000 observations identified by the group.

For each instructional practice noted, we asked our administrators to identify a strategy that would encourage and promote the

implementation of the instructional practice observed in their schools. They came up with over 875 strategies.

We then conducted a “dot-mocracy” exercise. Each administrator was given three dot stickers and asked to place a sticker by the three strategies they felt were most essential in leveraging the instructional practices noted. Remarkably, five strategies emerged above all others as the most “high yield” in ensuring effective instruction across all classrooms in our schools.

The short-list created became known across our district as ‘The BIG FIVE Strategies for Effective Instruction in Our Schools’. The strategies focus on: task, feedback, criteria, differentiation and moderation.

Emerging from this professional learning activity, the leadership team of the Curriculum Services Department developed

a “Lead Learner Series” to provide principals and vice-principals with the opportunity to “practise” their instructional leadership in professional learning sessions focused on the BIG FIVE.

During the first year of the series, our school administrators worked collaboratively on building their shared understanding of the BIG FIVE strategies for effective instruction. As part of the launch of the Lead Learner Series, our district hosted a number of keynote speakers, including Professor Garfield Gini-Newman of the Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto (OISE/UT). Garfield’s sessions focused on the nature of the TASK, ensuring that students are engaged in activities that promote creativity, critical thinking and problem solving, and collaboration in rich, meaningful contexts. He worked with our



**“Research shows that school leadership, especially by the principal, is the second most important factor (next to the teacher) when it comes to impact on student learning. School principals have a special responsibility to focus on what it takes to implement the core priorities.”**

**-Ken Leithwood, 2008**

**“We learn to do the work by doing the work.”**

**-Richard Elmore, 2010**

**The Leadership Team of the Curriculum Services Department (OCDSB) includes:**

Pino Buffone, Superintendent of Curriculum  
Jeffrey Frith, School Effectiveness Lead  
Nadia Towajj-White, System Principal-Elementary  
Steven Massey, Student Success Lead  
Barry Bickerton, System Principal-Secondary  
Joan Oracheski, Manager of Quality Assurance

principals and vice-principals to explore ways in which everyday instructional tasks could be “tweaked” in order to embed creative, critical and collaborative thinking to a greater extent in the classroom.

Our district also hosted Damian Cooper, best-selling author and internationally known speaker and consultant in the area of assessment and evaluation. Damian’s sessions focused on the use of timely, descriptive FEEDBACK in order to guide students during the teaching and learning process. Numerous examples of the use of precise, detailed information related to students’ strengths and next steps for improvement were shared and discussed with our principals and vice-principals.

As a follow-up to these introductory sessions, Superintendents of Instruction encouraged school administrators to re-visit their School Improvement Plans for Student Achievement (SIPSA) in order to reflect upon the use of the BIG FIVE as related to the goal(s) outlined in their plans and the Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement (BIPSA).

This school year, we are delving deeper into our collective understanding of the BIG FIVE strategies for effective instruction, enhancing the instructional leadership capacity of school administrators through professional learning

sessions on-site in schools across the district, K-12. A total of 24 sites will host a lesson study for small groups of principals and vice-principals. With the guidance and expertise of Garfield and Damian, each lesson study will be co-planned by a teacher on site, the school’s principal and/or vice-principal, and central staff in Curriculum Services. Each lesson will strive to connect all elements of the BIG FIVE, including the moderation of student work after the lesson.

Each school administrator across the district will then choose one of a number of lesson study sessions to attend at either an elementary or a secondary school. Each lesson study will provide the group of 10 to 12 principals and/or vice-principals with the opportunity to:

- Learn about the school and classroom being visited, and the diverse needs of the community of learners in the class;
- Review the learning goal(s) of the lesson with the host teacher and administrator(s), including the grade/subject area and the link to the expectations outlined in The Ontario Curriculum for the lesson;
- Observe the lesson;
- Debrief the lesson as a small group, ensuring a non-evaluative stance during the discussions; and

- Reflect upon the lesson study as instructional leaders, including the implications for their SIPSA and the BIPSA.

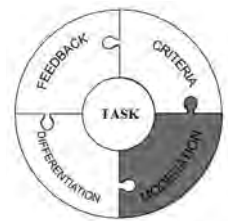
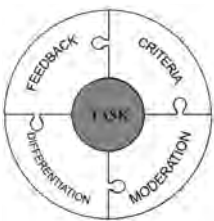
The Lead Learner Series endorses an appreciate inquiry approach, capitalizing on the interests, strengths and expertise of educators, where the ability to question, model and reflect upon practice are essential elements of the process.

To date, the Lead Learner Series has been met with great interest and commitment, and the BIG FIVE strategies for effective instruction in our schools have been embraced by elementary and secondary administrators alike.

For additional information, please contact Pino Buffone, Superintendent of Curriculum, OCDSB at [pino.buffone@ocdsb.ca](mailto:pino.buffone@ocdsb.ca). ○

*An educator by profession since 1994, Pino Buffone has worked as a classroom teacher in the Western Quebec School Board (1994-1998) and as a teacher, administrator and supervisory officer in the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (1998 to present). He is currently Superintendent of Curriculum, responsible for the implementation of initiatives related to curriculum, teaching and learning, as well as provincial and district-wide assessments*

## The BIG FIVE Strategies for Effective Instruction in Our Schools...



### THE TASK

*engages learners*

- **Focuses** on big ideas and enduring understandings of the Ontario Curriculum.
- **Promotes** open-ended inquiry that reflects authentic, relevant and meaningful contexts.
- **Inspires** creativity, innovation, critical thinking and problem-solving.

# 1

### FEEDBACK

*guides learners*

- **Provides** ongoing, descriptive, precise, and timely information.
- **Invites** peer and self-assessment (focuses on assessment “as” and “for” learning).
- **Identifies** strengths and next steps for improvement.

# 2

### CRITERIA

*informs learners*

- **Defines** learning goals.
- **Establishes** success criteria.
- **Scaffolds** learning through co-created anchor charts, exemplars, and qualitative rubrics.

# 3

### DIFFERENTIATION

*invites learners*

- **Offers** choices in products, and /or processes.
- **Responds** to learning styles, interests, and readiness.
- **Creates** multiple entry points for learning.

# 4

### MODERATION

*supports learners*

- **Anchors** professional learning in student work.
- **Builds** individual and collective capacity.
- **Facilitates** evidence-based decision-making.

# 5



# Taking the Lead to Build the Leaders of Tomorrow

By Sandra Mann

**H**igh school drop-out rates in Alberta are some of the highest in Canada. While demonstrating gradual improvement, they continue to be an area of concern and targeted improvement strategies across the province. The Calgary Board of Education (CBE), in its efforts to improve high school completion rates, is dedicated to achieving the outcome of success for each of our students, every day, no exceptions.

In the Calgary Board of Education we have come to appreciate that the reasons young people leave school before completing are as individual as the youth themselves. There is no one strategy, school board or agency that can, by itself, successfully respond to the myriad of competing factors and complexities that contribute to youth disengagement with school. As the largest school district in Alberta, the CBE has taken a bold step to coordinate its efforts in collaboration with the Calgary Catholic School District, community-based agencies, health and social service providers

and youth justice to create a unique opportunity for youth, otherwise disconnected from school, to re-engage in their learning journey. Together we provide youth with access to critical supports and community services that promote successful school completion.

At the Calgary Board of Education, we believe that each student needs to feel that they belong in school, that school is their place and that they can achieve success in their endeavours in school. As such, CBE is dedicated to the personalization of learning and has designed many pathways to help students learn in ways and environments that work best for them and create the conditions for individual students to experience success. Over the course of time, the CBE has expanded its outreach high school programming, created distributed online and blended online learning experiences, designed and recently opened a state-of-the-art Career and Technology Centre, and implemented flexible high school upgrading opportunities available at times and in places that can accommodate the diverse and unique circumstances of all learners.

Despite these measures, there remains a cohort of young people in Calgary who have

not been able to find a way to navigate their way through to the completion of school. In light of the fact that Alberta has one of the highest numbers of high school drop outs in Canada, the CBE was compelled to design a strategy, a place and a process to help these youth find their way to re-engage with learning.

In September 2011, Encore CBE opened its doors to youth in Calgary who had not completed school and were seeking ways to re-engage in their learning. The youth-friendly space was designed and named with input from the very youth for whom it was created to serve. The space creates a venue where youth can find out about themselves as learners, find ways to ignite and capture their passion for learning and be connected to programs, schools and/or community supports that would help them on that challenging journey back to being a student. Youth are invited to drop in, text, call or email the centre to initiate a working conversation with one of the dedicated staff or partner volunteers, and to begin to build a personalized learning plan that assist them in removing barriers in accessing a successful learning experience.

## Getting started

The process of developing Encore CBE started in earnest in January 2011 with the creation of a strategic action development team representing multiple stakeholders in the success of our learners. Concurrently, as CBE prepared to move into new centralized administrative facilities in downtown Calgary, a decision was made to dedicate the most beautiful, bright, open space in the building to create a venue for youth struggling to find their way back into their learning.

Strategic action groups of principals from the community and alternative high schools, senior leaders, learning and technology specialists, career practitioners and psychologists met to dream of possibilities and to explore research, plan and reconnect youth to learning.

As an asset-based model was chosen to work with youth, the term “drop out”, which connoted student failure, was removed from the



vocabulary. Focus groups were held with young people who had left school early and had subsequently returned, street youth and youth who were vulnerable to at-risk behaviours. They were asked for their input on everything, including the design of the space, the furniture, the name and the process of reengagement. When asked what they thought would encourage those who had left to come in to explore their possibilities of learning, there were many creative and meaningful answers:

- Have bright colours not the beige in a welfare office;
- Round edges, lots of light;
- It should be a warm and welcoming place, a place where kids could be creative;
- There needs to be time for one-to-one, time to make connections, time to work with teachers who care and who are passionate about what they do;
- Would like to have an “E-Harmony” way of matching kids with advisors, programs and/or schools—take a personality test and find out what would work;
- Help kids access services, not just give them the information;
- Like the name, “Encore”—it’s like a second chance but better—it’s like when good things

happen at a concert and you get to hear more; and

- A name is a name but I would come if I knew people were going to help me.

The strategic action group met with the building designers and the architects and created a space that incorporated these suggestions. Floor to ceiling windows, round, colourful and funky furniture, white board walls and space to be creative were all part of the design.

No new operations funds were allocated to Encore CBE. Programs throughout the CBE provided staff “in kind” for the centre. Staff from outreach programs, CBe-learn (online learning), Chinook Learning (high school upgrading), the student health partnership, and specialized learning programs came to participate in the development and implementation, exploring mutually-beneficial avenues for professional development while planning for service access for the youth who would arrive at the doors of Encore CBE. For example, a career practitioner from one of the CBE’s specialized settings spends two days per week welcoming young people to the space, exploring educational possibilities and supporting the creation of their learning plans.

She, like the diverse staff involved in Encore CBE, is very passionate about designing and supporting new positive experiences for young people. “This space is unlike anything these youth have ever seen. It reinforces the idea that going back to school can be a new experience and that they can have control over that.”

### Opening the doors

The day that Encore CBE opened, the first community advisory committee convened in the space. Community leaders from agencies throughout the city that supported vulnerable youth were invited to share how they would like to contribute to support our city’s youth who left school early, to return. To honour the fact that CBE was dedicating a new space on traditional Blackfoot land to support youth, a smudge was held with all our community partners. A medicine wheel was the organizing framework around which our community members determined how they could best contribute to the support and success of the youth who came to Encore CBE.

Each agency representative placed their commitments on the various spokes of the wheel; spiritual, physical, intellectual and emotional, which, when taken up

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together, contribute to a balanced healthy life. Mentorship, counselling specialized addiction support and recreational supports and activities were some of the services that the community offered to provide.

Jonny, 18 years old, was the first young man who walked through the doors with his four month old baby. He had left school at 16 because he did not feel that he was learning and wanted to try to find a job. He told us that now that he was a father, he wanted to make sure that he could make a better future for his child and wanted to go back to school. An assessment was initiated with Jonny to delve

deeper into reasons why he had not connected with school. It was discovered that Jonny had undiagnosed learning difficulties. Subsequently, he was connected with an outside agency that would help him with job preparation as well as future school options.

Renata, 15, had a history of involvement with gangs, drugs and family violence. She had short-lived stints of success at school but then would leave, lured by outside influences. Renata came to Encore CBE with her mother and her baby sister. As she spoke to us, she fidgeted, turned on the rolling chairs and looked discouraged when she talked about school.

When asked if she wanted to create a learning plan, her face lit up. Digital templates and examples of other learning plans were presented to her and within minutes, Renata was adding pictures and comments and working diligently on her own plan. Her plan included locating an environment that matched her values, in Renata's case, small classes and teachers who were "laid back" and somewhere she could develop her interests as part of her program. Renata kept a hard copy of her colourful plan as well as a digital copy on a memory stick. Later that week, Renata was able to use her learning plan as a ticket of entry into an out-reach program that is incorporating her love for dancing, drumming and singing. The learning plan gave her a voice to design her own return to school, which incorporated her passions.

### Realizing potential, fulfilling dreams

Encore CBE is helping youth articulate their dreams, hopes and goals for themselves while transforming the systems that have been barriers in the past to possible bridges to the future. Learning plans are created, capitalizing on various technologies; student-made art and music and new pathways are forged. Youth are supported as they explore different schooling options and ways to access community services to ensure scaffolds to success.

As of December 2012, 250 youth have come through Encore CBE. They text, they call, they email, they drop in. The majority are between 16 and 18, with a similar number of males and females. Their stories vary. Many have had involvement with the justice system or social services and have very challenging backgrounds. Each youth is met with respect and care and is given the opportunity to express their needs, desires and hopes. Many have created personalized learning plans and to date, 55 per cent of them have successfully reengaged with a learning program. Encore CBE has just begun and the word is just getting out. The success of Encore CBE can be summed up through the voice of one youth who walked through the doors last March: "I feel at home here. I feel respected. This is my place. I feel listened to. I feel hope." ○

*Sandra Mann has been with the Calgary Board of Education for 30 years. She has served CBE students in a variety of roles, including teacher, psychologist, specialist, and, most recently, as a system assistant principal in Learning Services working with Encore CBE. Mann has a B.Ed. from McGill University and a M.Ed. from the University of Calgary.*



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# The View from over Here: Reflections on the Transferability of Skills and Knowledge

By Margaret Roberts

**T**wo years ago, I was presented with an opportunity to become the Superintendent of Plant Services after several years as a Superintendent of Schools. Taking a big breath and drawing upon the support of my colleagues, I leapt into this new field of responsibility. As it turns out, despite the content being so different from the literacy and numeracy focus of student achievement, supervising a service department has many similarities to supervising school administrators and schools. It takes a combination of factors to succeed as a leader in a new subject area and the learning that results is engaging and rewarding.

Luckily, leaders in Ontario school systems are supported in their work by several documents based upon research conducted by Ken Leithwood. The System-Level Leadership chart, in particular, outlines four domains that pertain to effective leadership provided by superintendents; core processes, supporting conditions, leadership development and relationships. To move a school system forward, all superintendents must work in tandem to plan, implement and monitor leadership strategies that are focused and intentional in nature.

## Core processes

When a department has a clear sense of what its responsibilities are, how they relate to the core business of the school board and how it will achieve them, the service superintendent will find that processes have served a critical role in the department's success. Using strategic planning processes, an effective service superintendent will be able to help move the department's work forward, just as academic superintendents work to move student achievement forward.



Plans for continuous improvement are equally as important for departments as for schools, with goals based on data, supported by targeted actions, related professional learning, monitoring, clear lines of responsibility, and evaluation and analysis of results. In York Region, all improvement planning supports goals set out by trustees in the Multi-Year Plan, and those articulated by the Director in his Annual Plan. Schools and departments are equally responsible for working towards successful achievement of these goals, so superintendents follow similar processes to achieve these goals.

Attending carefully to the issues and knowledge being generated by academic superintendents has been useful to my practice. In addition to attending meetings regarding planning and financial issues, it has been important to stay connected to academic knowledge generation. Reading and considering the impact of Instructional Rounds, for example, has helped me begin to work on a model of shared leadership between the three service departments,

which will focus on a shared “challenge of practice”. Working with staff in all the departments has helped underline the advantages to be gained from a seamless service delivery ethic. The integration between departments has been one of many pleasant surprises in my role, especially since we do not all work within one common board office building or even in the same town.

## Supporting conditions

Keeping our department's work aligned with that of other departments and schools has been facilitated through regular reporting to the Board, Ministry, Director and the Associate Director, to whom I report. Attending the weekly Superintendents of Schools meetings when possible has also helped me keep our department's work focused on areas that support the work done by teachers and support staff in classrooms. Our department's managers serve on many interdepartmental committees, along with school administrators, which helps ensure alignment of our initiatives and services.

Meeting with other superintendents in the Barrie Region has been helpful in establishing a network of colleagues to whom I can turn for a sounding board, for advice or answers.

### Leadership development

From LEED training to human resources skills, plant services managers and staff are all keen to keep up with current knowledge and to move our practices forward, constantly in search of what will be needed next in our schools. Each person brings a different set of skills to the department and as we continue to learn, our department will be able to keep ahead of demands and influence school design, operations and maintenance in ways that will support teachers, students, support staff and administrators. Similar to professional development needs of school administrators, encouraging managers to develop their leadership skills has served as a complement to the subject matter expertise they bring to the job.

We recently piloted an electronic career survey for supervisors and managers in our department in an effort to collect and manage data regarding current and future interest in leadership positions. This will help us tailor leadership development opportunities offered within our board complementing courses and workshops offered by outside agencies. While much of the need in our department is for skilled trades-related knowledge (for example, reading architectural drawings), there is also considerable interest and need for subjects such as project management, conflict resolution or managing change which transcend departments.

### Relationships

The first item in my entry plan was to establish relationships with the plant services staff as soon as possible while gathering new knowledge. I attended summer caretaking training workshops, went out on the road with some of the tradespeople, visited all 32 high schools and attended a provincial Operations, Maintenance and Construction conference with many of the department's managers within the first few months. A course in Building Environment Systems (BES) at the local college gave me a general overview of the mechanical systems that I'd be looking at in schools, and more to the point, gave me some credibility that my B.A. in Canadian history might not have warranted.

Once my interest in the department's work and my willingness to support staff needs were established, I was able to articulate, in a credible way, what I had observed in terms of next steps and changes that might be needed. This has, in turn, become part of the Department Improvement Plan. Staff have contributed their ideas, debated timelines and engaged in provincial-level discussions regarding advancement of practice. Getting out into the schools helped build relationships, just as it did when I was an academic superintendent.

The greatest advantage of becoming the plant services superintendent following many years in school leadership is that of the relationships which already existed and the trust that was in place. School administrators and superintendents know that I have a good idea of the challenges they face, while the plant services staff know that their work, knowledge and expertise is valued by me as I articulate the value they add to our school system every day.

### Conclusion

As Ken Leithwood reminds us, "Leadership is the exercise of influence on organizational members and diverse stakeholders toward the identification and achievement of the organization's vision and goals." (The Institute for Education Leadership, 2012).

While he may have focused on the leadership provided by academic leaders, Leithwood's words and research apply equally to leaders in the service departments of our school boards across the province. By providing a leadership framework that suits leaders from all aspects of the school system, the province has taken the first step in ensuring that service superintendents and academic superintendents work together in alignment to support student achievement and staff development. Having had the chance to transfer my leadership skills to a new department has been energizing and exciting; I recommend it to anyone who is intrigued by the opportunity to examine leadership in a new light! ○

*Margaret Roberts is presently the Superintendent of Plant Services with the York Region DSB. She holds an M.Ed. in curriculum, an M.B.A. in Executive Management and is currently enrolled as a doctoral student in a D.B.A. program specializing in Strategy and Innovation.*

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# Engaging Boys at the Central Québec School Board

By Patti L. Moore

When the Québec Ministry of Education engaged all public school boards across Québec to increase the provincial graduation rate of Québec secondary students to 82 per cent by 2020, they mandated each school board to set precise targets outlining specifically how they intended to reach their goals. While Central Québec School Board (CQSB) success rates were impressive, we determined that while CQSB boys were succeeding at a rate higher than the provincial average (5.4 per cent better than boys in the public schools), **CQSB girls showed an almost 10 per cent differential with CQSB boys.** Finding a way for CQSB boys to succeed as well as the girls became a top priority.

Director General Marielle Stewart was an active part of the team that brought Barry MacDonald's Boy Smarts workshop to the CQSB. The full-day workshop in October 2010 drew over 350 CQSB

educators from all 18 schools (elementary and secondary levels) as well as the Board's adult and vocational centre. Every single participant received a copy of Barry MacDonald's Boy Smarts: Mentoring Boys for Success at School. Each school also received copy of Barry MacDonald's Boys on Target: Raising Boys into Men of Courage and Compassion.

"We wanted to ensure that as many educators as possible were provided the opportunity to have this training first-hand," says Stewart. "Our territory is extremely large, covering 30 per cent of the province. Bringing together teaching teams from every school was a big deal—but also very important to us!"

One CQSB school that has become a model for creative ways to engage boys is Ste-Foy Elementary, a small English school in the heart of Québec City. Immediately following the CQSB Boy-Smarts Training, every staff member (from teachers, to daycare staff to technicians) was actively involved in creating an environment in the school better suited to meeting boys' learning needs. That first year, staff focused on

learning all that they could about the ideal teacher and the ideal classroom.

"Absolutely everything was divided into manageable chunks," says school Principal Denise Godin. "Our entire staff was divided into teams, each of which was responsible for mastering one technique and bringing it back to share at school-improvement meetings."

This included examining school data in minute detail—from behaviour incidents to overall success rates—and mapping out 'hot zones' in the school and on the playground where the staff felt that incidents of bullying and violence needed to be decreased. All agreed that with a minimum of effort, the school environment could be better arranged to suit the needs of the boys, while still leaving plenty of room for the girls to blossom as well.

"We can misread 'violence' in boys," says Godin. "We know that boys need to move; they thrive on action, movement and adventure. Boys can be impulsive: a little bit of good-natured roughhousing needs to be tolerated, but supervised. Boys need to get the 'wiggles' out."

As such, every single staff member was asked to adopt two Boy Smarts strategies



Standing stations are located in all cycle 2 and 3 classrooms. There are smaller ones for cycle 2 (grades 3/4) and taller ones for cycle 3 (grades 5/6). All photos by Jason Enlow, Ste-Foy Elementary School Special Education Technician.



Targets can be used for snowballs or any ball.



A rack containing books that appeal to boys situated near the magazines that boys frequent (note the green background).

**“We wanted to ensure that as many educators as possible were provided the opportunity to have this training first-hand. Our territory is extremely large, covering 30 per cent of the province. Bringing together teaching teams from every school was a big deal—but also very important to us!”**

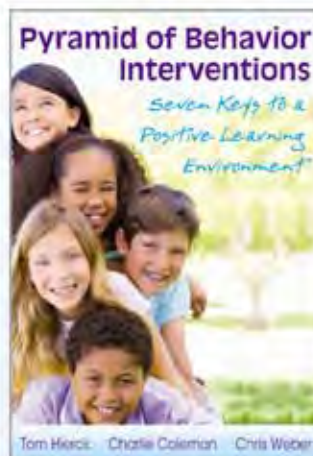
that they felt they could succeed at (again, manageable chunks were key).

Over the course of the past few years, the school has gradually been transformed. Hallways and classrooms have been de-cluttered. Overhead lighting is more subdued. SMARTboards feature larger font and brain-friendly colour backgrounds (for example, lime green and black). Every day, classroom teachers build some form of physical-activity movement into their daily routines. It can be as easy as following a dance routine on the SMARTboard or running a few laps in the yard. Classrooms have balls for students to sit on. Standing work stations, built with the boys’ assistance, have been installed to give boys greater mobility and “wiggle” room (it is interesting to note that male teachers have been spotted using the standing work stations as well...). In addition, the use of graphic organizers and structured tools and techniques better enable boys to break tasks into their own manageable chunks.

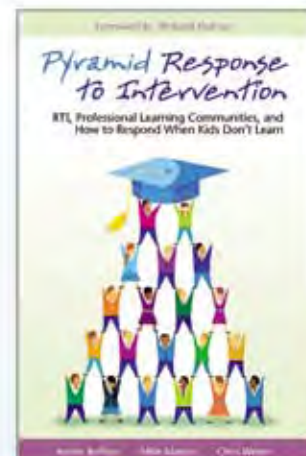
The school lunch hour has been spilt into two cycles so that smaller children have the playground to themselves while older children eat, and vice-versa. Noon-hour activities include a variety of options, including a skating rink, targets for throwing snowballs and games that have been permanently painted on the outdoor pathway. In addition, there are always plenty of structured, supervised activities for students to choose from. Rules are few and stated in a clear, positive, what-is-expected manner. They are applied by every member of the staff.

Perhaps most notable of all: in their third year of implementing Barry MacDonald’s strategies, the Ste-Foy Elementary team has *ceased referring to the*

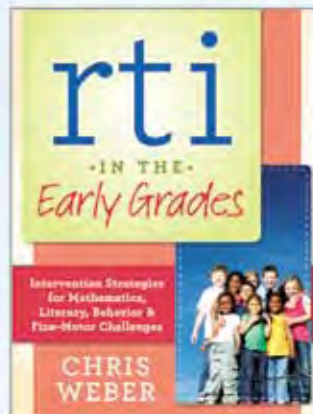
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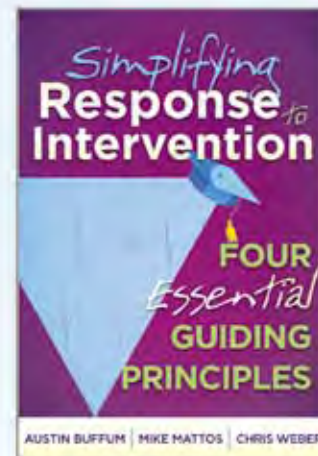
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implementation of “boy” activities. “Plenty of our girls like to be active as well,” points out Denise Godin. “These initiatives benefit *all* of our students. We are currently piloting a new project, Active Bodies Active Minds (ABAM), aimed at our cycle three students. Based on brain research and its influence on learning, our goal is to increase physical activity in the morning to promote better learning during the day. Students will also learn to adopt a healthier lifestyle by developing their knowledge of activity, nutrition and body image.”

CQSB recently invited a few members of the Ste-Foy Elementary team to deliver a presentation to all elementary and secondary principals. “The difference in the school is remarkable,” exclaims Director General Marielle Stewart. “According to the most recent Tell Them From Me survey, boys’ sense of attachment to the school has significantly increased and bullying and anxiety have substantially decreased. We want all of our schools to meet with this kind of success.”

Board leadership has been key. “This has been one of our most sustainable

Ped Days’,” declares Stewart. “Educators in all of our schools have since built Boy Smarts into their daily practices and there is more awareness of how boys learn differently. Each school is expected to build these methods into its local strategies, which must subsequently transfer to everyday planning in the classroom. We did not want these books to just go onto a shelf.” ○

*Patti L. Moore is Project Development Officer for the Central Québec School Board.*

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# Unleashing Potential; Harnessing Possibilities: How One School Board is Leading the Way to Creativity and Innovation

By Jane Daly

According to Wikipedia, there are more than 13,000 school boards in the United States. But when some of America's most prominent leaders from business, science, medicine, law, defense, the arts and education gathered in New York City for the American Imagination Summit last year, Canada's own Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB) was one of only a handful of school boards invited from across North America. (The Edmonton School Board was similarly honoured.)

The OCDSB's invitation to the Summit, which was also attended by Deepak Chopra, General Charles Wald of the U.S. Department of Defense; Matthew Bishop, business editor of the Economist; Judith Kaye, the former New York City chief judge; and Bruce Vaughn, a former director of Walt Disney Imagineering, is a powerful indicator of just how well-respected the OCDSB has quietly become on the subject of creativity.

Sponsored by the National Education Association (NEA) and the Walt Disney Company, the two-day Summit culminated in an action plan for policy makers, educators and community activists to put imagination at the forefront of school curricula in the United States. As NEA Executive Director John I. Wilson explained, "America has always been a leader in innovation and we want to ensure a new generation has the imagination and creativity to not only lead a 21<sup>st</sup> century economy but also to visualize innovative solutions to the problems they will inherit. Tackling climate change will take imagination; finding alternative energy sources will take imagination; and leveraging advances in technology to help the greater good will take imagination. We want to be sure we foster that imagination and creativity across the curriculum."

## Creativity: A new imperative

Dr. Peter Gamwell, a Superintendent of Instruction at the OCDSB and the Project Lead for the District's push towards creativity (a team



effort that has involved more than 1,000 people), echoes Wilson's call, saying that Canada's own businesses, government and not-for-profit organizations are increasingly looking for creativity, innovation and critical thinking skills.

"This presents an exceptional opportunity for school boards to not only foster and teach creativity in the classroom but to also research and determine exactly *how* to help organizations and learners of all ages to become the creative, engaged, critical thinkers our future will require them to be," he says.

## Unleashing Potential; Harnessing Possibilities: an Action Research Paper

For the OCDSB, a snapshot of its ongoing journey to creativity was recently captured in an action research paper, *Unleashing Potential, Harnessing Possibilities*. This report outlines the steps of the District's seven-year journey, its discoveries, how the initiative supports its mission, vision and strategy and what it needs to do next to further instill creative environments in its classrooms, schools, organizations and communities. (The report and regular updates and resources can be found at [www.leadthewayto-creativity.com](http://www.leadthewayto-creativity.com).)

## Leadership leads the way to creativity

As explained in the report, the catalyst for the District's own instructional and cultural shift was a 2005 OCDSB Leadership Study

that revealed some employee groups felt disconnected and undervalued. A dedicated effort was then initiated to change the situation.

First, the OCDSB developed a Leadership Narrative and Principles of Creative Leadership, both of which focused on shaping the culture of the district into a more positive environment that encouraged and supported the ideas and creative capacities of every person. The Leadership Narrative also challenged individuals to think of leadership in the ways people can positively influence and motivate those around them, rather than in terms of rank.

To put the policy into practice, the OCDSB altered the structure of its leadership initiatives to ensure more inclusive opportunities for involvement and input. For example, those who typically attended leadership events were now asked to invite a guest—a teacher, student, custodian, parent, community member or local business person—to attend and provide their ideas. These included popular "Lead the Way" events, featuring presentations by local and internationally renowned thinkers with expertise in the fields of innovation, imagination, creativity and education, such as Daniel Pink, Sir Ken Robinson, Margaret Wheatley and Sir John Jones.

## Fostering creativity in the classrooms

At the same time, the OCDSB was also looking more deeply into the implications of



imagination, creativity and critical thinking at the school and classroom level. While there had always been spontaneous creative initiatives going on across the district, educators realized that effective instructional practices also needed to foster the diverse talents and abilities of every learner as a “community of thinkers” in the classroom and school. An enhanced focus on instructional strategies (such as differentiated instruction to appeal to different learning styles, for example) provided more authentic, engaging, joyful learning environments for all students.

### Discovering best practices, inside and out

To discover some of the best practices to foster and support creativity, the OCDSB also examined global research and found seven key conditions essential for the fostering of imagination and creativity. These included embracing creativity as an organization; understanding the critical connection between diversity and creativity; recognizing that good ideas can come from anywhere within, or outside of, an organization; providing permission to experiment and fail; creating a balance between autonomy and structured processes; embracing new forms

of leadership; and understanding the need to create fun, meaningful environments.

However, the OCDSB also recognized there is no one-size-fits-all solution that can be applied across all organizations to foster a creative environment. As a school district, it had its own unique set of requirements, challenges and opportunities to address. It therefore conducted its own research under four main initiatives, including the OCDSB Report on Leadership; the OCDSB 2010-2011 Employee Census and Student Survey, which supports its diversity and equity framework; a Call for Creative Initiatives, which is building a library of best practices gathered from all levels of the District; and the OCDSB Lead the Way Events, at which thousands of participants were asked: What are the conditions under which healthy and creative individuals and organizations flourish?

### What are the common conditions?

The Lead the Way research identified the following conditions for fostering healthy and creative individuals and organizations: a safe and positive environment; time to create; autonomy and empowerment; respectful and trusting culture; open communication, feedback and recognition; methods/tools/resources supported by

professional development; leadership; purposeful environment; teamwork and collaboration; and passion. Participants also recommended ways these conditions could be implemented.

The learning gained from the Lead the Way initiative is now embedded in the OCDSB’s 2011–2015 Strategic Plan, with a focus on supporting the four key priorities of Well-Being, Engagement, Leadership and Learning, as well as the OCDSB Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement (BIPSA) for 2012-2013, and the School Improvement Plans for Student Achievement (SIPSA) for 2012-2013.

### Join us

As the OCDSB continues on its journey, it invites all interested stakeholders to join in. “Fostering creative potential will ultimately strengthen our collective thinking, and reveal the brilliance of the students in our care,” Gamwell. “It’s been a long journey, but we’re just beginning, and we hope others will join us for what’s bound to be an exciting ride.” ○

*Jane Daly is a freelance writer working in the Ottawa community and is the owner of Fifth & Walden Communications.*



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# Towards Collaborative Practice

By Lynda Pressey and Rose Walton

In September 2010, the Ontario Ministry of Education introduced a monograph titled Collaborative Teacher Inquiry. Networking as a professional learning community of educators had already been facilitated through informal processes within geographical locations. More formal supports at the provincial level included the Primary Collaborative Inquiry, Collaborative Inquiry for Learning: Mathematics (CIL-M) and the Student Work Study.

These focussed inquiries employed the knowledge and skills of a singular profession, namely teachers registered with the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT). Educators from OCT engaged in the practice of analyzing and reflecting on current curriculum, student performance and pedagogy within Thames Valley District School Board (TVDSB). As educators engaged in professional learning throughout the province of Ontario, supports from a variety of sources came into play. This inter-play of support systems, such as research teams, broadened the thinking and responses to issues or questions. Through Program Services, Research and Assessment, TVDSB began the journey of

questioning the interdisciplinary practice of diversely positioned professions as supporting the shift from isolated to collaborative inquiry practices.

## Supporting the shift towards interdisciplinary collaborative practice

Douglas Reeves describes inter-professional education as an “interactive learning activity that involves participants from two or more professions” (Reeves, 2009, p.142). The TVDSB Primary Task Force and the Primary French Language Task Force comprised a team of educators, literacy coaches and coordinators as they engaged in conversations surrounding the reading comprehension levels of young children. Questions emerged as educators dialogued about practice, pedagogy and research findings. A common understanding of “wanting to dig deeper” into the reading comprehension levels of young children turned towards collaborating with other support systems to enhance the learning of not only students, but educators as co-owners of the findings and investigation.

The Language Portfolio engaged in an exchange of questions, research supports and data analysis with the Research and Assessment Department in order to broaden their base of knowledge and skills. Building

a sense of collaborative practice within the broad context of educators and researchers, the question arose: If specific reading comprehension strategies are targeted then students’ comprehension levels will improve.

The prime objective was to co-construct a measurement tool/intervention with Research and Assessment to measure comprehension strategies employed by grade one students in 12 English speaking classrooms and French Immersion primary classrooms. Task Force meetings opened spaces for dialogue and questioning among all the participants involved in the research question. Co-learning and co-researching were consultative roles undertaken by all members of the team to support student learning.

Collaborative consultation is defined as “a process in which a trained, school-based consultant, working in an egalitarian, non-hierarchical relationship with a consultee, assists the person in his or her efforts to make decisions and carry out plans that will be in the best interests of the students,” (Margison and Shore, 2009, 129). Dialogue and stretching the knowledge-base of educators in the areas of data collection, research questions and analyzing data to drive future instruction was supported by the Research and Assessment



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team through opportunities to co-learn and co-teach in a collaborative process.

Information was presented by the Research and Assessment team, in collaboration with the Primary/French Task Force Teams, who would conduct the mini-study over the course of six weeks. The teams were collaborative in nature and thus the interaction between the members was on-going. Throughout the process of engagement and investigation, the teams became a nucleus of learning and further investigation in the form of questioning. The language of the team became a cohesive hub of understanding and pushing the boundaries of classroom practice, further professional reading and dialogue. Discourse was vital to the health and wealth of the data collection and interactions between the two professions as the team moved from a reactionary position to co-researchers learning and growing their professional dialogue.

Margison and Shore (2009) and Nastasi (2000), noted that school psychologists' roles were reactive in nature and efforts to embrace the profession as collaborative learners were an evolution in setting common goals, knowledge-base and strategies. Glen (2001) also emphasizes the strengths of each profession and their unique contributions to learning and practice.

As educators become researchers in their classrooms, the support of psychologists from the Research and Assessment branch of the local school board provided support and growth within and to other professions supporting the development of students.

The educators made observational notes through the use of a journal about their students overall use of targeted comprehension strategies. The general consensus of the teams indicated that their focus for instruction was guided by the hard data collected by the Research and Assessment Department and their interpretations or analysis of their observation notes. Further discourse arose from discussions surrounding interpretations of observations and how these findings guided their instruction with small groups.

Students employed the targeted strategies with explicit instruction and support from educators using child-friendly language.

Educators reflected on their journal notes and data collected by TVDSB Research and Assessment Department and concluded that students needed supports in identifying and using comprehension strategies earlier in the school year in order to understand the texts they were reading. ○

*The authors wish to acknowledge the support and work of TVDSB colleagues and the Primary and French Task Forces.*

*By Lynda Pressey, Learning Supervisor, Thames Valley District School Board, and Rose Walton, Learning Coordinator Literacy K-6, Thames Valley District School Board.*

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# Leadership Practice: Applying What we are Learning

Education leaders work with others to put into place programs and strategies to realize goals. Leaders in Ontario are becoming increasingly strategic when building networks for collaborative professional inquiry and when supporting implementation. This article describes what leaders are learning and how the learning is being activated in Eastern Ontario Public and Catholic District School Boards.

By Eleanor Newman and Norah Marsh

In Ontario, educators continue to focus on student achievement of high standards through the application of knowledge and skills through problem solving, higher order thinking, critical and mathematical literacies and communicating. Over the past decade, the proportion of students meeting standards and graduating from secondary school has steadily progressed. However, to meet the challenge of engaging all students, leaders in Ontario are becoming increasingly strategic when building networks for collaborative professional inquiry and when supporting implementation.

In eastern Ontario, leaders in public and Catholic school districts and Queen's University meet this need through joint collaboration. They formed the Eastern Ontario Staff Development Network (EOSDN) as a vehicle to think and learn together in a network that has served the region for over 20 years.

Through symposia, programs and workshops, as well as digital means, the EOSDN connects leaders from classrooms, schools and districts. All network opportunities are designed to promote reflection and inquiry that is respectful of students, teachers and administrators, aligned with provincial and district priorities, informed by research and focused on implementation of effective practice.

The member organizations identify needs and generate ideas from which the EOSDN Board of Directors set the vision and direction. Representatives of each member organization serve on ad hoc working committees to realize the plans and, much like an organism, the network morphs to serve changing and

evolving needs. Through the active participation of member boards, the EOSDN decided that student thinking, professional inquiry and leadership were priority points of leverage and would be the focus for EOSDN.

The EOSDN approach is organic and responsive, rooted in an understanding that professional growth occurs when multiple voices and experiences are valued, including those of researchers. An example of this fluidity in learning structures is the EOSDN's 2012-13 Thinking Symposium. Teams, comprised of teachers, school administrators, consultants and/or superintendents, determine an area for study—an aspect of student and professional learning—that the team has identified as its focus for improvement. All the teams meet at fall and spring regional sessions for facilitated collaborative work and reflection. Through EOSDN, teams have ongoing access to resources and research and opportunities to connect online about the practical aspects of implementation.

Through these means, EOSDN provides support for those who are merging professional learning with classroom practice. While the focus for the work is fluid and responsive to prioritized learning needs, the structure is tight, providing a framework for participants to reflect on their experience through the stages of attempting different strategies—thinking, doing and refining—and full implementation, where the “different thing” is embedded into practice.

Facilitating professional learning grounded in practice is complex. It requires leaders who are sufficiently skilled to understand that it is not a matter of prescriptive

direction and accountability, but a mixture of being informed by the research literature on effective instructional and assessment practices, and a professional curiosity that fosters an environment in which all participants are co-learners on a journey to better serve students. Success relies upon respectful interaction among teachers and administrators, which requires a high degree of trust. Teachers learn to trust that administrators are engaging as learners and not as evaluators. Likewise, administrators learn to trust that it is not only appropriate, but vital to be a co-learner.

In our experience, trust does not emerge by accident—it comes from a sincere commitment to continuous examination of teaching, learning and leadership practices, and clear group norms for collaboration. Trusting the voices of experience does not mean that practices are not questioned experience becomes the starting point for professional discourse about student learning and needs and the learning and responsibilities of educators. When teachers and administrators work collaboratively with purpose, rich and focused learning for themselves and for students is more likely to occur. In Eastern Ontario, through the Eastern Ontario Staff Development Network, professional interaction extends beyond the boundaries of schools and districts providing a forum for regional learning. ○

*Eleanor Newman is Executive Director of the Eastern Ontario Staff Development Network. Norah Marsh is Superintendent of Education for the Limestone District School Board, and is Chair of the Eastern Staff Development Network.*

# What Happens When Leadership Asks Why?

By Karen Dalton, Laura Elliott, Mike Sereda and Bill Tucker

*“Any person or organization can explain what they do; some can explain how they are different or better, but very few can articulate why. WHY is not about money or profit—those are results. WHY is the thing that inspires us and inspires those around us.”*

Simon Sinek, the author of *Start With Why* (2009), describes how the simple idea of discovering his own WHY, has led to a restoration of the passion that allows leaders to inspire others both within and outside their organizations, to advance their ideas and their vision.

In the late spring 2011, the senior administrative team of the Thames Valley District School Board (TVDSB), London, Ontario, was provided with a copy of Sinek’s book, *Start With Why*. Frustrated with stagnant provincial assessment results, which were consistently below provincial standard, the senior team was committed to engage in dialogue about the underlying reasons for the underachievement of its students.

The discussions, which were sometimes highly spirited, yet respectful, centred on the core mission of the TVDSB. As all organizations question, we asked “why do we exist? What is our differentiator as a school district? Why would anyone want to send their children to a Thames Valley school?” Unlike many organizations, we took it further and delved into the debate.

Throughout the fall and extending into the winter months, the senior team expanded the weekly discussions to a group called the Learning Agenda. Members of this group consist of senior administration, system principals and managers within the departments of program, operations, human resources, business and director’s services. The primary goal of the Learning Agenda is to engage in

professional learning and dialogue to focus on student achievement.

After significant dialogue and debate, it was decided that the director of education needed to “speak” to every employee about the *why* of the Thames Valley District School Board. The April 20, 2012, Professional Activity Day was a perfect opportunity for the director to provide a message to all district employees. Considering that this district employs over 7,200 staff and spans more than 7,000 square kilometers, the challenge of reaching everyone at the same time required a creative solution. After consideration of a variety of options, the decision was made to utilize live video-streaming, connecting more than ten sites across the district, requiring each employee to travel to one of the sites.

On April 20, 2012, the director delivered an inspiring message to 7,200 staff, in a simultaneous multi-site context. With a relentless focus on “each student, every day”, he described his vision for the delivery of educational services and supports provided by staff to the 71,000 Thames Valley students. This vision was organized within four pillars: focus on excellence; signature learning experience; responsibility to lead; and renew the passion. Immediately following his message, senior administration, together with principals and managers, facilitated a full discussion and debriefing activity with all staff at each site. The same set of questions was presented to all audiences. Questions included the following:

- What message did you take away from the director’s address? What resonated with you?
- Why would a family choose Thames Valley for their son’s/daughter’s education?
- What do you do in your day-to-day work that demonstrates the intent of the director’s message?

- How does your work contribute to enhanced student learning, for each student?

An “exit card” was provided to each staff member upon the conclusion of the discussion, with reflection questions and next steps to prompt action.

It is readily apparent that the strategic planning process engaged in by trustees, and the *why* messages from the Learning Agenda, along with the director’s inspiring message, are all in perfect alignment. This can only lead to better outcomes for the students of TVDSB.

The impact of April 20th is far-reaching and long-lasting. We continue to *see* and *hear* evidence of “each student, every day.” Department plans, student and staff programs continue to focus work on the four pillars.

As one teacher put it, “The opportunity to work for an organization that focuses on excellence is incredible—recognize excellence in oneself and in our colleagues, and that translates into excellence in others, specifically our students. Regardless of your role, we each support student success and academic achievement.” ○

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# Dimensions of Leadership - Coherence-Making and Capacity-Building

By Education Council, Waterloo Region DSB

## COHERENCE MAKING

### Importance of coherence

Coherence is the glue that binds a large school district together. Coherence serves to increase the precision of instructional practice and secure accountability in optimizing learning and achievement for all students. Consequently, improving coherence has become the focus of leadership at the Waterloo Region District School Board; an organization serving over 60,000 students and which is the largest public employer in the regional municipality of Waterloo.

Coherence involves over 3,500 teaching staff sharing a vision of learning through the establishment of high yield instructional tools, a professional learning focus and a clearly defined system expectation that supports the achievement of a precise system instructional goal.

### Reorganization of leadership to support structural coherence

Emphasizing the learning agenda required the reorganization of leadership at the senior level. Through the support of trustees and the leadership of the director of education, the structure was reorganized to allow four superintendents of education to focus purposefully on instruction in schools. This was supported by an executive officer, who was responsible for managing various operational issues, and a superintendent of learning services who, in turn, supervised an integrated department led by four assistant superintendents. An education council, led by an executive superintendent, was established to align everyone's efforts.

The common focus of the implementation of the learning agenda by this group served to strengthen working relationships, clarify a common vision of leadership and implement strategies that would ensure coherence across the system. The resulting strong collegial relationships, where ownership of learning belonged to all, promoted a high level of collaborative problem-solving and innovative thinking that was translated to practice through work at the family of schools and supports across the system.

### A coherent vision of instructional practice

The education council articulated a vision of learning that linked a system goal with beliefs and a system expectation. This was complemented by a professional learning focus anchored in the use of a learning cycle and choice of high yield instructional tools. What became known as the System Success Plan Synopsis, served as a consistent reference point for teachers, support staff and school administrators for several years. This created a coherent view of optimizing learning, reinforced through aligned communications, supports and resources and with some site-based flexibility to allow school leaders to differentiate their approach to implementation.

## CAPACITY BUILDING

### Promoting coherence through collaborative capacity building

Education council has served as an effective structure through which a vision and approach to improved instruction and learning, has been articulated, refined and consolidated. Throughout the district, cultural changes reflecting a gradual release of

responsibility, have resulted in actions such as principals and vice-principals providing leadership in district and family of schools sessions, and all secondary department heads engaging in sessions on improved assessment practices. These cultural shifts, with an emphasis on capacity building, exemplify ways that staff across the system are engaging in, and contributing to, improved instruction and instructional leadership.

## CELEBRATING ACHIEVEMENTS OF COHERENCE-MAKING AND CAPACITY-BUILDING

Coherence making and capacity building are key ingredients in improving instructional leadership in the Waterloo Region District School Board. The improvements in results for students and the increasing sense of efficacy reflected by staff, underscore the importance of coherence making and capacity building in working strategically to optimize learning and achievement for all students. ○

*Contact Mark Harper, Superintendent of Learning Services for the Waterloo Region District School Board, for more information.*

### Components of the Waterloo Region District School Board Experience

	Coherence Making (Technical/Process)	Capacity Building (Adaptive/People)
<b>Actions: What we did</b>	Structural Coherence	Relationships
	Shared, Focused Vision	Instructional Leader Mindset
	SMART Targets	Collaborative Learning Cycles
	System Success Plan Synopsis	Leadership Development
	Common Messages	Gradual Release of Responsibility
	Alignment of Resources	Celebration
<b>Adult Indicators: How we knew</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved Efficacy in Instructional Leadership/Practice.</li> <li>Deeper Understanding of Assessment.</li> <li>Greater Motivation.</li> <li>Clearer Connections between School Plans and System Plan.</li> </ul>	
<b>Student Outcomes: Impact on Learning/Achievement</b>	Growth in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Primary and Junior EQAO Writing and Reading Results.</li> <li>Primary and Junior Reading Records and CASI Results.</li> <li>Results and Participation Rates in EQAO and system wide assessments by students receiving special education supports.</li> <li>Grade 9 EQAO Mathematics Assessment - Applied Results.</li> <li>Reduction in Gap between Boys and Girls in Reading and Writing.</li> <li>Improved Credit Accumulation and Student Retention Results.</li> </ul>	

# Knowledge Mobilization as a Lever for Change

By Dr. Kathy Witherow

**K**nowledge mobilization is a relatively new and underused term in education. It is multi-dimensional and draws on many different fields and contexts. Knowledge mobilization can be defined simply as efforts to integrate new knowledge, including research evidence, into policy and practice. The literature (Nutley et al, 2007; Levin, 2008; Witherow, 2011) suggests three key interrelated factors: 1) characteristics of the research (*Content*); 2) leadership, organizational structures and culture of the organization (*Context*); and 3) facilitation (*Conversation*), as essential to any knowledge mobilization strategy.

Content matters. We know from the research (Levin, 2008; Witherow, 2011) that teachers and school leaders report multiple sources of knowledge that shape how they think about education and what they do in practice each day. However, it is clear that educators are more likely to rely on their own experiences or obtain information from colleagues or professional networks than they are to seek research findings. When educators do access secondary sources, they rely mainly on the translations of research in professional publications (Biddle and Saha, 2002). For understandable reasons, educators rarely read original research studies. We therefore need to find ways to have colleagues engage with good quality evidence. The relevance, quality and source of the research all matter when considering knowledge mobilization strategies.

Leadership, both at the school and district level, has a significant role to play in generating the will and building the capacity to ensure engagement with research. Effective leaders are able to instil in others a commitment to seek new knowledge. Leaders need to have high expectations and

provide the necessary supports to develop skills and provide monitoring if teachers are to use research in their practice. Lack of time is often cited as a barrier for teachers to use research. Leaders have an important role to play in overcoming this barrier and setting research-based practice as a priority at both the system and school level.

Structures and processes need to be put in place so administrators and teachers have opportunities to engage with research, but these activities also need to be effective and meaningful, and to lead to changes in what people actually do. School leaders have used a number of means to bring research into their schools and to engage staff, such as book studies, “Lunch and Learn” sessions and discussions at staff meetings. These formal structures require resources, such as time and personnel, to plan, and for the most part, are dependent on individual choice for participation. They can also create a sense among staff that discussions about research are normal and expected in the organization.

Providing a process or structure does not necessarily guarantee that educators will engage with research. An important determining factor in research use is a culture that encourages individuals to seek out new knowledge and to interact with colleagues about it. That is why it is so important to make research engagement a normal part of daily life in schools.

The final element of the strategy is facilitation. Facilitation can act as a scaffold for teachers to move from what they currently know and do to what is known in the research. Learning in networks within and across schools, and encouraging staff interaction with facilitators who have a deep understanding of research, can have a positive impact on research uptake. Facilitators can prevent learning communities from getting stuck on what they already believe instead of seeking out better ways of working. Teachers value learning from colleagues,

therefore teacher to teacher interaction within and across schools is an essential element in the uptake of new knowledge. School and system leaders should consider using facilitators who can take on multiple roles, such as coaching, creating protocols that encourage the engagement with research and providing executive summaries of research so that the research findings are relevant to practice.

Knowledge mobilization has enormous potential to transform classroom practice if it is woven into the fabric of the organization. In order to ensure that the research gets shared, and more importantly, used consistently to inform practice, leaders need to pay attention to the factors that influence research engagement. The net result of a focus on content, context and conversation is the creation of the conditions for knowledge mobilization in schools and across districts. ○

*Dr. Kathy Witherow is Superintendent of Curriculum and Instructional Services in the York Region District School Board.*

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# Collaborative Leading and Learning

By Doris Beers, Jacqueline Gauthier and Theresa Kennedy

**A**nyone who has observed a kindergarten class knows that children ask questions...a lot! Questioning is the natural vehicle by which children learn as they process their observations and make sense of their world. As life-long learners, educators know that following our youngest students' lead and asking the deeper questions based on what we see and hear can guide us in our next steps to improving student achievement.

Administrators across Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board (ALCDSB) continue to develop authentic understanding of the instructional core, which is the impact of the interactions between the teacher, the students and the task. Through Richard Elmore's "Instructional Rounds in Education" strategy, we identified, through our observations based investigations, trends that led us to ask:

- What impact does an inquiry-based collaborative culture have on building teacher leadership?
- How do we sustain systemic change and growth?
- How can we synthesize initiatives and new learning so as to move from a culture of research to a culture of action?
- Why is there a variation of effective practices between classrooms within and across schools?
- How can we tailor core instructional strategies to meet the needs of each school's community?

## Our Co-learning/Co-leading Journey

ALCDSB's Learning Network #3 is comprised of 12 Kindergarten through Grade 8 elementary schools. Our journey to

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**A number of teacher-leaders' enthusiasm has piqued their colleagues' interest so that the culture of inquiry-based reflective practice is already established for the upcoming school year.**

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investigate our "questions for change" began with establishing four hubs, or groupings, of schools within our network. The smaller cohorts enabled school-specific foci, while maintaining our collective goal of establishing a culture of reflective practice and collaborative inquiry. The hubs were identified as groups of mutually accountable co-learners engaged in action research. Articulating the purpose of the hubs in this manner encouraged the risk-taking necessary for all educators to comfortably share their thinking, try new strategies and question one another.

Each hub consisted of at least one teacher and one administrator from every school. Hubs met at least once at each school in their group. Hubs used Elmore's instructional rounds process to attend to the host school's particular inquiry question. This focused on the goals of each school's improvement plan, while improving our ability to ask questions regarding student learning, objectively analyze what students are saying and doing, and articulate a strategy's objective. The teacher-leaders shared their learning with their own school in order to develop capacity within schools. Meanwhile, administrators shared information from hub meetings so that the network could identify patterns that fueled the next steps in our instructional leadership.

As anticipated, individual hubs evolved to meet the particular school improvement goals of each school and learning needs of their members. One hub focused on rich and engaging tasks to improve student

achievement in numeracy. Another hub measured the effects of their descriptive feedback in two classrooms over several months. While the focus was individualized for each hub, the purposeful and evidence-based action research format was consistent across the network.

## 2012

By June, many teachers reported confidence in aligning their hub learning with personal practices. They also stated greater assurance in leading a collaborative inquiry within their schools. In fact, a number of teacher-leaders' enthusiasm has piqued their colleagues' interest so that the culture of inquiry-based reflective practice is already established for the upcoming school year.

The qualitative data gathered in our hub model this year has provided us with a solid foundation upon which to build across our network. The analysis of our journey demonstrates that the hubs were effective for three reasons:

1. The hubs provided all members autonomy over the inquiry and the methodology.
2. Regularly scheduled hub work offered all educators opportunities to develop mastery of their self-selected strategy; and most importantly.
3. Our hub work addressed our collective purpose of improving student learning. ○

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*Doris Beers is Principal of St. Mary Catholic School (Trenton). Jacqueline Gauthier is Principal of St. Peter Catholic School (Trenton). Theresa Kennedy is Superintendent of School Effectiveness for ALCDSB.*

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## Ontario Public Supervisory Officials' Association (OPSOA) News

OPSOA is pleased to announce that Laura Elliott, Executive Superintendent, Program Services, Thames Valley District School Board, is the 2012-2013 President. Elliott brings many years of dedicated service to public education and to OPSOA. She will serve the members in an exemplary way! Congratulations Laura!

## LBPSB Teacher Participates in Google Teacher Academy

Tanya Avrith, an Itinerant Digital Citizenship and Educational Technology Teacher who works at the Lester B. Pearson School Board in Dorval, Quebec, has the distinct honour of being only one of three Canadians—and the only teacher from Montreal—who took part in the Google Academy workshop, held recently in New York City.

Avrith was selected for this program based on her innovative work with students, from Grades K to 11, and educators on the role of educational technology in schools. Avrith has been a key developer of the school board's innovative Digital Citizenship program, which provides curriculum materials and information to students, teachers and parents about the appropriate use of technology in a 21<sup>st</sup> century world. The Lester B. Pearson School Board is proud to salute Avrith's accomplishments!

## Ontario Catholic Supervisory Officers' Association (OCSOA) News

1. OCSOA is pleased to announce Anne O'Brien, Superintendent with the Durham Catholic District School Board, as the association's President for 2012-2013. Simone Oliver, Superintendent with the Ottawa Catholic School Board, is Vice-President.
2. Congratulations to Chris Roehrig, Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board, and Larry Clifford, Waterloo Catholic District School Board, newly appointed Directors of Education this fall.
3. Best wishes to Susan LaRosa, who will be retiring as of December 31, 2012, after 15 years as Director of Education for the York Catholic District School Board.
4. Congratulations to Bruce Rodrigues, Director of the Toronto Catholic District School Board and OCSOA's Past President. Bruce is the 2012 recipient of the St. Jerome's University Chancellor John Sweeney Award for Catholic Leadership.

## Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board Director of Education announces retirement

Huron-Perth Catholic DSB's Director of Education, Martha Dutrizac, announced her retirement in November 2012. Upon announcing her retirement, she said, "I have been blessed to serve in Catholic education over the last 42 years; however, to be part of the dynamic leadership team of the Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board for the past 10 years, as a Superintendent and the Director of Education, was truly a gift. It has been a privilege to live my vocation with so many talented educators whose passion and vision for Catholic education has been nothing short of outstanding across the system." Dutrizac previously served as Superintendent of Education for Huron-Perth, vice principal, principal and staff development officer in the London District Catholic School Board.

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### Round Table on “The Future of English Education in Quebec”

Key representatives from the English educational community came together on November 29, 2012, at the Sheraton Hotel in Laval, Quebec, to discuss priority issues for English education. Over 100 stakeholders from around the province were invited to reflect on the priorities of the English-speaking educational community in Quebec and participate in a shared dialogue on a number of key issues. This forum is particularly important in light of the current economic situation, as well as the election of a new provincial government in September 2012.

The round table event was organized by the Leadership Committee on English Education in Quebec (LCEEQ). LCEEQ is an advocacy leadership committee, with 35 members, that represent the English-speaking educational sector. The members provide broad expertise and perspective on emerging educational issues, while representing K to 11 education, adult education and vocational training, as well as higher education.

Also participating in this event were representatives from the Quebec Ministry of Education, Leisure and Sport. More information about LCEEQ can be found at [www.lceeq.qc.ca](http://www.lceeq.qc.ca).

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### Algoma District School Board Director Retires

In July 2012, Mario Turco, Algoma District School Board (ADSB) Director, retired after serving education for 42 years. He became the Director of Education for ADSB in August 2003. Turco began his career in 1970, as a math teacher at Korah Collegiate.

In his farewell message to colleagues and students, Turco said: “Our schools look great, both inside and outside. They are clean, safe and inviting. Our students enjoy coming to school. They are achieving better than ever before. More students are having their individual needs met, more are staying in school, more are returning to school and more are graduating from high school. Just as important, more and more parents are choosing to enroll their children in our schools. These things do not happen by chance. They happen because everyone in our Board understands the very important role that each plays to the betterment of our students, our community and ultimately our society.”

Algoma District has appointed Lucia Reese as new Director of Education, following a thorough search for candidates. Reese has served as Superintendent of Education with ADSB since 2005, worked as a principal and vice principal for eight years as well as spent 15 years teaching for ADSB and York Region. Mario Turco's entire letter can be read at: [www.adsb.on.ca/uploads/info/listings/FarewellMessageToAllStaff\\_Community.pdf](http://www.adsb.on.ca/uploads/info/listings/FarewellMessageToAllStaff_Community.pdf)

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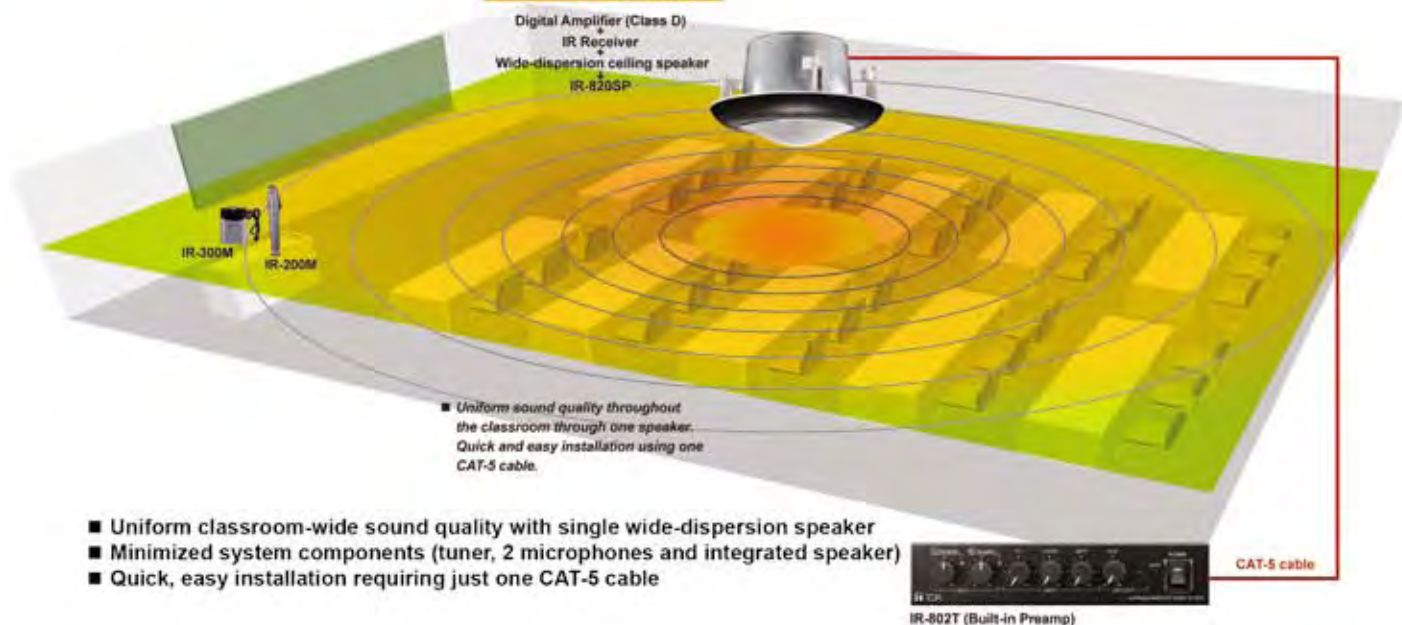
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