

# Leaders & Learners



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

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**WILL WE SEE YOU IN WINNIPEG FOR THE 2016 CASSA CONFERENCE?**

## Message from the President: The Importance of Self-Care

CARING FOR OTHERS is at the heart of much of what we do as educators.

Each day, we come into contact with teachers, administrators, support staff and professionals who are determined to not only make a difference in the lives of their students, but to help those students discover that they too hold the power to make a positive difference in the lives of others.

Our annual conference this summer will focus on the wonderful things our schools are doing, all in the name of social justice and social responsibility. We hope you will join us in Winnipeg from July 7 to 9 to discover ways we create cultures of caring in education.

Caring about our students and inspiring them to care about others is important work. It is work that many in education take on without much conscious thought. This inevitably raises the question: Who tends to the caregivers?



Cindy Finn  
President

If it is important to care for all children and youth in our charge, then we must take steps to ensure that we also look after the caregivers. As system leaders, our role extends beyond the welfare of our students; we also must inspire and support our colleagues who are aspiring to this same calling.

We need to find ways to replenish that energy to care for others and guard against compassion fatigue. One way to do this is to encourage people to take care of themselves so that they can continue to look after those in their charge.

Self-care is an important term that is garnering more attention in the area of mental health. According to the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (camh.ca), it is important for caregivers to have a self-care plan. Such plans help to strengthen resilience and avoid burnout and compassion fatigue.

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## OUR PURPOSE

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

## OUR MISSION

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

# Message from the Executive Director: Recommendations for Student Mental Health

CASSA PRESIDENT CINDY Finn has written a wonderfully thoughtful piece for this edition of *Leaders & Learners*. I urge you to read, enjoy and reflect on the message it contains.

As I have mentioned in previous newsletters, the Board of Directors has made student mental health and wellbeing a priority for CASSA this year. To that end, your board met in Toronto toward the end of February to learn and reflect and to develop recommendations that I plan to share with the Executive Director of the Council of Ministers of Education.

It is our hope that the recommendations will be in front of the Council at a future meeting. The board engaged the expertise and experience of **Dr. Kathy Short** and **Dr. Bruce Ferguson**. Dr. Short is the Director of the School Mental Health ASSIST ([smh-assist.ca](http://smh-assist.ca)). Dr. Ferguson is a Senior Consultant with the Child and Mental Health Research Unit at the Hospital for Sick Children ([www.sickkids.ca/psychiatry/Research-Activities/cymhru/index.html](http://www.sickkids.ca/psychiatry/Research-Activities/cymhru/index.html)).

At its April meeting, the CASSA Board of Directors gave its unanimous support to the following recommendations:

1. Coordinate a pan-Canadian scan of student mental health and wellbeing data, research, practices and supports.
2. Use national and provincial/territorial data to support and prioritize systemic change to improve upon student success with a focus on student mental health and wellbeing.
3. Respond to the intergenerational impact of residential schools on Indigenous peoples.
4. Focus supports for Indigenous students in the areas of literacy, numeracy, culture and language to narrow the achievement gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.



Ken Bain  
Executive Director

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## Message from the President: The Importance of Self-Care, continued

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As system leaders, there is much that we can do to help our colleagues with their self-care plans. We can encourage them to attend to the four dimensions of self-care: physical health, emotional health, spiritual care and social support. We can organize activities in our

schools and centres that take place before, during and after hours. Many of us have programs in place for our employees such as lunchtime walking groups, book clubs, choirs and sports teams. All are important and contribute to a sense of wellness. In turn, this wellness leads to cultures of caring, something all of us in education care deeply about.



**Hearts & Minds**  
Creating a Culture of Caring  
**Conference** July 7 - 9, 2016  
Winnipeg, Manitoba



## Message from the Executive Director: Recommendations for Student Mental Health, continued

*Continued from page 2*

5. Recognize that school systems are well positioned to provide early interventions that can contribute to improved student mental health and wellbeing.
6. Engage parents/caregivers from diverse communities in awareness about student mental health and wellbeing.
7. Collaborate with mental health experts to develop wellness indicators.
8. Ensure current and future teachers, education support personnel and leaders receive appropriate

pre-service and ongoing in-service training regarding student mental health and wellbeing.

9. Develop a framework for system-wide leadership for capacity building and sustainability related to mental wellness in a school context.

10. Advocate for a cross-ministerial commitment and partnership regarding student mental health and wellbeing.

I will keep our members informed as CASSA shares these recommendations with stakeholders across Canada. I welcome any comments you may have. Please email me at [ken\\_bain@cassa-acgcs.ca](mailto:ken_bain@cassa-acgcs.ca).

## CASSA Conference 2016: Four Impressive Keynote Speakers

CASSA CONFERENCES ARE known for their high-quality and highly relevant keynote speakers. Over the past decade, delegates have heard informative, inspiring and innovative presentations from the likes of Ontario's first First Nation Lieutenant Governor **James Bartleman**, Métis author **David Bouchard**, rocket scientist **Natalie Panek**, children's author **Budge Wilson**, hockey legend **Johnny Bower**, and great thinkers like **Dr. Paula Barrett**, **Dr. Michael Fullan**, the late **Dr. Fraser Mustard** and **Hall Davidson**. The 2016 conference is setting the bar at a new high, with keynote addresses on the Hearts and Minds theme from not one but four outstanding individuals.

### Michael Redhead Champagne

Michael Redhead Champagne is the founder of AYO!, Aboriginal Youth Opportunities, a youth movement that has been breaking stereotypes and creating opportunities since 2010.

Michael is a community organizer and public speaker who has travelled across Canada sharing teachings, acronyms and strategies with youth, leaders and educators. He was recently featured in *Time* as part of the Next Generation Leaders series.

One of his most notable accomplishments is "Meet Me at the Bell Tower," an anti-violence rally that has happened every Friday on Selkirk Avenue in Winnipeg for over four years. An award-winning community activist and a published author, Michael is ready to encourage whole communities to work together and lead by example to craft shared solutions.

While the subject matter may change, one thing that stays consistent is his message: "Programs don't change people. Relationships change people."

Michael is known for his straight-up and heartfelt style that will leave you moved, inspired and ready for action. He will present his keynote address on Thursday, July 7.



Michael Redhead  
Champagne

### Dr. Izzeldin Abuelaish, MD, MPH

Dr. Izzeldin Abuelaish, often referred to as "the Gaza Doctor" in the media, is a Palestinian medical doctor and infertility specialist who has dedicated his life to peace in the conflict between Israel and Palestinian.

Dr. Abuelaish, author of *I Shall Not Hate*, was born and raised in the Jabalia refugee camp in the Gaza Strip. Tragically, his three daughters and a niece were killed in January 2009 during the Israeli incursion into Gaza, yet this devastation did not harden his heart. Instead, he has directed his energy toward spreading the doctrine that from tragedy can come good; from conflict and hardship can come peace and wellbeing in hopes that the lives lost during this time would be the last.

Nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize in 2010 and winner of humanitarian awards around the world, he now lives with his family in Toronto where he is an associate professor at the Dalla Lana School of Public Health at the University of Toronto.

Dr. Abuelaish has founded Daughters for Life, a Canadian charity that provides young women in high school and university the opportunity to develop a strong voice and play a

more influential role in improving the quality of life throughout the Middle East through their education.



Dr. Izzeldin Abuelaish

## CASSA Conference 2016: Four Impressive Keynote Speakers, continued

“I know that what I have lost, what was taken from me, will never come back. But as a physician and a Muslim of deep faith, I need to move forward to the light, motivated by the spirits of those I lost. I need to bring them justice. I will keep moving but I need you to join me in this long journey.”

~ from *I Shall Not Hate*

Visit the Daughters for Life website at [www.daughtersforlife.com](http://www.daughtersforlife.com). You can also watch Dr. Abuelaish’s TEDx video on Youtube. Dr. Abuelaish will present his keynote address on Friday, July 8.

### Dr. Catherine Taylor

Dr. Catherine Taylor is a professor in the Faculty of Education at the University of Winnipeg. She is widely known for her work on sexual and gender diversity and social justice within education.

As the Principal Investigator of several large-scale research projects that are actively supported by virtually all national, provincial and territorial school system organizations in Canada, she and her research teams are instrumental in building inclusive school climates for LGBTQ students and staff.

These research projects include the first-ever national survey on homophobia, biphobia and transphobia in Canadian schools in partnership with Egale Canada Human Rights Trust, the Every Teacher project on LGBTQ inclusive education in partnership with the Manitoba Teachers Society, and the National Inventory in partnership with Manitoba Association of School Superintendents.



Dr. Catherine Taylor

The multifaceted research approach—involving students, educators, school division directors, teacher organizations, ministries/departments of education and education professors—has resulted in many publications and presentations reaching scholars, educators and government officials and has directly informed policy and law development across the country and internationally.

Dr. Taylor will deliver her keynote address on Saturday, July 9.

### Leora Schaefer

Leora Schaefer is the Director of the Toronto office of Facing History and Ourselves, an organization that engages teachers and their students in the study of history through an approach that encourages critical reflection and active citizenship.

Leora started her career as a classroom teacher and now oversees professional development opportunities for teachers, curricular initiatives and educational events for the greater community. In her role at Facing History, she facilitates seminars and workshops on teaching practice and pedagogy for teachers across Canada. Leora is passionate about empowering young people to create change, and as the Facing History tagline says, helping students understand that “people make choices and choices make history.”

For more information about Facing History and Ourselves, please visit [www.facinghistory.org](http://www.facinghistory.org).

Leora Schaefer will deliver her keynote address on Saturday, July 9.



Leora Schaefer

## CASSA Conference 2016: Hotel, Travel and Excursions Information

THERE IS STILL time to sign up your senior leadership team for the 2016 conference in Winnipeg.

This year's event is being held at one of Canada's grand railway hotels, the **Fort Garry Hotel, Spa and Conference Centre**. This hundred-year-old hotel is also one of the city's most recognizable architectural landmarks. It was built in 1913 by the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway and is now a National Historic Site of Canada.

The Fort Garry is right in downtown Winnipeg and offers guests a blend of modern-day style and amenities along with local history and authentic charm.

CASSA delegates are being offered a special room rate of \$149 per night for dates between July 5 and 9. The hotel will also provide delegates with 24-hour complimentary delivery of coffee, tea and cookies to all guest rooms, complimentary high-speed internet access and complimentary passes to the hotel's fitness centre.

The special room rate will be held until June 6. You can access the rate through CASSA's conference website ([conference.cassa-acgcs.ca](http://conference.cassa-acgcs.ca)). A link to the reservation system can be found on the Hotel & Travel page.

CASSA delegates are also being offered a special discount for any air travel with **WestJet**. Delegates can access a 10 per cent discount on applicable airfares (base fare only; taxes, fees and charges are extra) by using promo code YWG02 and coupon code 3QTFEGK for travel between June 29 and July 17. Visit the CASSA conference website for details and a link to make reservations. There may be blackout dates and other terms and conditions; please

check with the [westjet.com](http://westjet.com) website or call their agents at 1-888-493-7853.

Delegates travelling by **VIA Rail** may be eligible for conference discounts. Please check the CASSA conference website for details.

At each of our CASSA conferences, there are many opportunities to explore the host city and surrounding area, whether on official organized group tours or on an independent outing. Over the years, these outings have included zipline adventures, sunset canoe rides, lobster dinners, guided historical walks and many live cultural events. This year will be no different.



The Canadian Museum for Human Rights. The museum opened in September 2014 and is the first new national museum created in Canada since 1967.

On Friday, July 8, following the day's final breakout sessions, conference participants and their spouses and family members are invited to join in a tour at the **Canadian Museum for Human Rights**. Taking a guided tour is a great way to find out more about the museum's innovative exhibitions, human rights stories

## CASSA Conference 2016: Hotel, Travel and Excursions Information, continued

and this architectural marvel. Participants will take the museum's 90-minute tour.

The Explore the Galleries tour lets visitors connect with compelling human rights stories and discover what the museum is all about. Its interpretative guides offer a fascinating journey through a selection of galleries and exhibits. Visitors will learn how their rights are protected and be inspired by stories of courage and action. After the tour, participants are free to explore on their own and visit the Israel Asper Tower of Hope.

To learn more about the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, visit [www.humanrights.ca](http://www.humanrights.ca).

Although there are no other official group tours, delegates and their families may want to take in some of the other fantastic attractions nearby.



The Forks Market, part of The Forks National Historic Site in downtown Winnipeg.

**The Forks National Historic Site** is an urban oasis in the heart of the city, next to the Canadian Museum for Human Rights. The Forks incorporates riverside walking paths, shops, green space and a stunning array of dining experiences. Visitors can take in a variety of

entertainment and special event experiences. To learn more, visit [www.theforks.com](http://www.theforks.com).

Located just 20 minutes from downtown Winnipeg, **Thermëa by Nordik Spa** offers visitors a unique experience in the heart of nature. Thermëa is a haven that features relaxation techniques from the Nordic countries. Guests are invited to take time to unwind and reenergize in the Nordic baths and waterfalls, steam bath, Finnish sauna and relaxation areas. Massage and other body treatments are also available, and the restaurant and bar serve healthy meals. To learn more, visit [www.thermea.ca](http://www.thermea.ca).

The **Winnipeg Art Gallery** recently celebrated its centennial. The WAG features over 24,000 works of art ranging from 15th-century European paintings to 21st-century American multimedia art. Its exhibits represent local, national and international artists from countries and cultures around the globe. To learn more, visit [wag.ca](http://wag.ca).

Are you fascinated by the night skies? What about anthropology and history? The **Manitoba Museum, Planetarium and Science Gallery** may be just the place for you. The award-winning Manitoba Museum offers a vivid portrayal of Manitoba's rich and colourful history. It features an ever-changing variety of exhibits, a Planetarium and a Science Gallery. The museum also has a number of permanent galleries, including the Arctic/Sub-Arctic Gallery, Boreal Forest Gallery, Earth History Gallery, Grasslands Gallery, Hudson's Bay Company Gallery, Nonsuch Gallery, Orientation Gallery, Parklands Gallery and Urban Gallery. Learn more at [manitobamuseum.ca/main](http://manitobamuseum.ca/main).

We hope to see you in Winnipeg this July.

## CASSA Conference 2016: Sponsors

CASSA THANKS ALL of our returning conference sponsors. We will profile new Gold sponsors **Accent Environments**, **Miller Thomson LLP** and **Edusight, Inc.**, and new Silver sponsor **Canada's History** in future newsletters.

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