

Leaders & Learners



CASSA-ACGCS
Promoting Quality Education for Our Students

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Message from the President: The Importance of Wellbeing

IT IS AN honour to serve once again as your President during this dynamic era in education, where we have much to celebrate. I look forward to our ongoing dialogue as colleagues in educational leadership, and I welcome you to what I know will be an outstanding year.

Thanks to all who joined us in Halifax this July for our annual conference. The theme—"Healthy Schools, Healthy Communities, Healthy Future"—spoke to the importance that we as leaders place on maintaining a culture of wellbeing in our schools and workplaces. Our leaders enjoyed three days of learning that can be applied in many ways through daily physical activity, mental health training and curriculum, suicide prevention and intervention, and more. We will soon be unveiling details about the 2018 conference in Ottawa.

I had the privilege of attending a recent conference hosted by the Canadian Education Association. It was an eye-opening event focused on



Anne O'Brien
President

the wellbeing of students and educators. Participants were inspired by stories and sessions that provided tools to apply in their school systems for the safety and wellbeing of students, thanks to presentations on Pursuing Joy in a Complex World; Making Connections Between Youths' Social Media and Wellbeing; and Trust: Truth and Reconciliation.

I also took part in the Canadian Association of Communicators in Education 2017 conference. With a focus on emergency preparedness, the sessions offered perspective on the work and preparation involved in crisis situations.

Another extension of wellbeing that we are accountable for is our emergency preparedness protocols. We don't have to look far to see how schools and systems across Canada have been affected over the past few months and years. Whether it is hurricane relief, evacuation plans or

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OUR PURPOSE

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

OUR MISSION

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

Message from the Executive Director: A National Association from Sea to Sea to Sea

I AM HAPPY to welcome everyone back and bring you up to date on CASSA news. I am pleased to report that CASSA now includes members from all 10 provinces and all 3 territories! The total membership is around 1,500. I am delighted that we can say that we are a truly national association from sea to sea to sea!

First, my thanks to our board members whose terms have concluded: **Barry Wowk** and **Loretta Notten**. Thanks too to **Simone Rose-Oliver** and **Guy LeBlanc**, who have both retired from education. Barry and Simone served the board exceptionally well as our reps to the American School Superintendents' Association.

Second, I want to welcome our newest member from the British Columbia School Superintendents' Association, **Claire Guy**, Executive Director. Claire joins BC's **Kevin Kaardal**, a Director at Large. I am also delighted to welcome two new board members from the Association of Nova Scotia Educational Administrators: **Margo Tait**, Executive Director, and **Gary Adams**, President. Also new to the board is **Deb**

Crawford, Past President of the Ontario Catholic Supervisory Officers' Association. We thank everyone past and present for their commitment to CASSA, your national voice for senior leaders!

CASSA has the following belief: "The role of school system administrators is essential in success for EACH student." This core belief is the foundation for this year's series of *Leaders & Learners* newsletters and for our national conference in Ottawa in 2018. From an individualized approach to getting to know each student with a unique tracking tool in the Northwest Territories to the application of a trusted adult/champion approach and the CAPE engagement efforts in Alberta, from a partnership with the University College of the North in Manitoba to the



Ken Bain
Executive Director

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Message from the President: The Importance of Wellbeing

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heightened levels of security due to an isolated emergency, we have made great progress in guiding our school communities to prepare for various situations.

This year, I encourage leaders to take safety and emergency preparedness practice forward. Involve parents and guardians in these exercises. Students practise lockdowns, hold and secure exercises, and fire drills on a regular basis. Caregivers need equal opportunities too to learn the language and means of

communication used during an unexpected or critical event. By helping them become familiar with these protocols, parents and guardians will be better prepared to recognize states of emergency and feel a greater sense of security and confidence in our systems.

In hearing from leaders across the country, I know that the 2017–18 school year has already shown promise for boundless achievement. May you continue to serve with humility and grace, celebrating your successes and managing challenges as opportunities for professional learning.

Message from the Executive Director: A National Association from Sea to Sea to Sea

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Niagara Launch Centre in Ontario to the Family and School Support Treatment School in Quebec...we highlight the ways that many boards are ensuring success for each student.

We had a very successful conference in Halifax, at which time we celebrated several outstanding leaders who were nominated by their provincial associations for our national award. Congratulations to **John Malloy**, Director of the Toronto District School Board. We honoured John as Canada's outstanding school system leader. We will honour John again at the AASA national conference in Nashville in February.

CASSA also bestowed an Honourary Life Membership Award to Barry Wowk, who has been a tireless advocate and CASSA supporter. Barry has been with the association for 16 years and has watched it grow to its current membership level.

We continue to be viewed as a key member of the national landscape as evidenced by our participation in the 20th International Play Association Triennial World Conference (in Calgary last month) and our upcoming involvement in the Healthy School Communities National Forum and the National Summit on Teacher and School Staff Wellbeing (in Ottawa and Montreal this November). I sit on a policy subcommittee for the Canadian Public Health Association (cpha.ca) and contribute on behalf of the association.

CASSA has also developed a strong relationship with the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (cmec.ca) and the Canadian School Boards' Association (cdnsba.org). You should have recently received information about the upcoming debate about copyright matters.

As part of our strategic plan, CASSA will extend our reach and participate as invited in other national conversations about matters related to student success.

Faces in the Crowd: Profiles of Leaders

Deb Crawford

Deb moved to the St. Clair Catholic District School Board (SCCDSB) in southwestern Ontario in 2001 from the Dufferin Peel Catholic District School Board, where she had been teaching since 1983. Deb is a graduate of York University, and attained her Bachelor of Education and Masters of Education at Brock University.

Deb began serving in leadership in 2004 as Vice Principal of Ursuline College in Chatham and was named Principal of St. Christopher Catholic Secondary School in Sarnia in 2007.

Since 2008, Deb has served as Superintendent of Education for SCCDSB, leading a full range of elementary and secondary curriculum departments and initiatives, including Mental Health, 21st Century Learning, Student Success, Equity and Inclusion, FNMI, Alternative Education and Special Education, as well as a few Pupil Accommodation Review Processes to make life interesting. Deb has also helped lead the development of the Community Violent Threat Risk Assessment Protocol with local police services, community partners and coterminous school boards. This fall, Deb was appointed Director of SCCDSB, a position she will start on January 1, 2018.

Deb currently serves as Past-President of the Ontario Catholic Supervisory Officers Association (OCSOA) and has great respect for the work that OCSOA does to further the cause of Catholic education in Ontario and build partnerships across Canada.

She also serves on the Board of Directors for the Erie–St. Clair Local Health Integration Network, where she works collaboratively to improve access to responsive health care. As a former board member of the Chatham–Kent United Way, Deb strongly supports the work of the United Way in her communities.

Deb and her husband Bob are avid skiers, hikers and summer worshippers. They enjoy their time with family and friends in the Adirondack Mountains, sunny southwestern Ontario and, whenever possible, Ireland. Deb has three grown children who visit regularly and one very friendly, attention-seeking Labrador Retriever.



Deb Crawford



**IoT: Big Data Healthcare Summit Western Canada
November 28-29, 2017, Vancouver, BC**

For more information and to register your leadership team, visit iotevents.ca/event/healthcare-west-2.

Educator Wellbeing: CASSA Engaging with the EdCan Network



CASSA leaders recently took part in an EdCan Network symposium in Toronto addressing how to support educators to develop wellness within entire school community cultures.

Clockwise from top left:

1. Board member Michael Chechile.
2. Dr. Kathy Short, a keynote speaker at CASSA's 2017 conference, spoke on School Mental Health ASSIST.
3. Ken Klassen, Executive Director for MASS.
4. A session on Student Voice and Inclusion.
5. Kevin Kardaal, a new CASSA board member from BC.



Conference Sponsor Profile: PCG Canada

In this issue, Leaders & Learners spotlights PCG Canada, a new conference sponsor, in this Q&A with PCG Education Senior Advisor Steve McLean. To learn more about the company, visit www.publicconsultinggroup.com.

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

PCG Canada is the Canadian-based arm of Public Consulting Group. Founded in 1986 and headquartered in Boston, Massachusetts, and Montreal, Quebec, in Canada, PCG has nearly 2,000 professionals in 61 offices across North America and in Europe who are dedicated to delivering leading consulting approaches and technologies to public sector clients.

PCG's Education division partners with schools, districts and state education agencies across Canada, the US and internationally to improve student achievement and strengthen organizations' instructional and operational capacity. PCG Education uses its expertise, capacity, and scale to help educators improve their decision-making processes and achieve measurable results by providing education services and software tools.

With 30-plus years of education experience, PCG ranks as one of the largest educational consulting firms and solutions providers in North America. In total, PCG has implemented solutions and services in more than 5,700 school districts and 34 departments of education. PCG works with districts of every size and demographic: large, urban districts; medium, mixed-residency districts; small, rural districts; and multiple departments of education.



Working with large, complex agencies for these projects requires a structured approach to achieve key goals. Due to our extensive experience, PCG has developed long-standing and successful partnerships with school systems and education agencies across North America. We understand the complexities of working with all involved entities, from the integration of data from multiple sources to implementing the guiding policy and principles that each province has designed as well as supporting the end user.

Please tell our readers a little bit about yourself.

I have been with PCG for almost 10 years. My time at PCG is focused on improving outcomes for students by helping schools and districts to improve data literacy, provide solutions for managing the needs of special education learners, and by facilitating school and district improvement efforts.

Prior to working with PCG, I was with the Upper Canada District School Board for 27 years serving in both elementary and secondary classrooms. In addition, I spent 14 years as a principal in three high schools as well as at the board office. In my role, technology has always played a part in how I have not only delivered content and learning opportunities to students but how I supported staff in carrying out their duties in their work with students. At the heart of the matter, I believe that

Conference Sponsor Profile: PCG Canada

every student can achieve their potential when supported by caring, compassionate adults who are themselves supported by a school system designed to deliver education that meets the needs of all learners and at the highest professional standards.

How long has your company been a sponsor?

PCG Canada joined CASSA for the first time this summer in Halifax but looks forward to a long and distinguished partnership with the organization and the individuals who comprise the group.

Why is it important to you to develop a sponsorship relationship with CASSA? What makes your company a good match with an organization like CASSA?

As a publicly focused company, PCG Canada has become a leading Canadian provider of technology systems and education consulting services that promote improved student learning and higher levels of student success.

We combine consulting expertise with innovative technology systems that have a foundation on evidence-based and researched supported methodologies to help educators make informed decisions that lead to improved instructional decision making and student outcomes.

PCG sees CASSA as an organization with similar values and goals, and as such sees a “kindred spirit” in partnering to achieve these goals. By working collaboratively to support educators in their efforts to



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Conference Sponsor Profile: PCG Canada

support teaching and learning, PCG believes that that effort can be leveraged to produce even better results for kids.

What were your impressions of the 2017 conference and of CASSA members?

Halifax was PCG's first CASSA conference. The conference was outstanding, as were the staff and attendees. With the opportunity to meet and greet the conference goers, educators and vendors alike, there were many rich conversations that occurred and some relationships started that will carry forward well into the future. As a new member, it is easy to see why there have been some very long-standing attendees.

What were the highlights of the experience for you?

From the highlight perspective, I would say that having the opportunity to present to a group of attendees was the most rewarding part of the conference.

What would you tell other sponsors who are considering attending a CASSA conference?

Like anything else, the best advice is always to get involved and participate fully to reap the full benefit and rewards.

Any plans to attend the 2018 conference in Ottawa?

PCG expects to fully participate in the Ottawa conference in 2018 and is looking forward to extending the discussions and relationships that were started in Halifax. As was mentioned above, to fully realize this opportunity, one need only participate in the culture of the event and share, listen and learn.

Would you like to add anything about your company and this partnership?

As a company, PCG Canada prides itself on being a great community partner. With that said, the atmosphere and culture created at CASSA was clearly one in which PCG could feel comfortable. With our focus on education and knowing that educators and CASSA share a passion for improving teaching and learning, we see a long affiliation with CASSA.

Thank you, Steve, and we look forward to seeing you in Ottawa in 2018!

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