

Leaders & Learners

The official newsletter of the Canadian Association of School System Administrators

NEWSLETTER



CASSA-ACGCS
Promoting Quality Education for Our Students

Greetings from the President

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**All websites and email addresses are active. Click them to connect immediately with various resources.*

As many of you know, on January 23, 2019 our Manitoba government announced a new Commission on Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education with nine commissioners to guide this Comprehensive Independent Review of Manitoba's Education System. Most of you from other provincial and territorial jurisdictions have already experienced a similar kind of government response to education, often culminating in a wide array of changes to the structure of your education system.

The website at <https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/educationreview/index.html>, outlines the Context, Mandate, Focus Areas, and how organizations and individuals can participate. A final report is to be delivered to the Minister of Education by February 2020 with findings and recommendations to be shared with Manitobans in March 2020.

Recently it was announced that Avis Glaze has been hired as the lead consultant for the commission; this is the same consultant who recently prompted Nova Scotia to eliminate elected school boards along with other sweeping changes. The question that many are asking, "Is this a real conversation about education with boundless possibilities or . . . ?" Only time will tell.

My hope is that we can have open dialogue and conversation about our purpose for education. Simon Sinek, in his book entitled, *Start With Why*, suggests that if we as human beings don't know the "why," we can't know the "how." If this commission only focuses on the "how" of education, without understanding the "why" of education, I fear



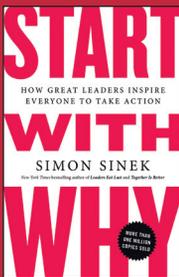
Reg Klassen
CASSA/ACGCS President

"I would argue that if we could come to a common understanding of our "why," the "how," that is the structures, resources and funding to make it happen, would require minimal debate."

nothing will be gained. I believe there is an assumption that we all understand the "why" of education, but I think it is much less clear today than it may have been a century ago.

I would argue that if we could come to a common understanding of our "why," the "how," that is the structures, resources and funding to make it happen, would require minimal debate. Why you ask? Because we would be inspired by our common understanding of our "why" in education.

Reg Klassen
CASSA President



Start With Why

In his message Reg Klassen mentions the book *Start With Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action*, written

by Simon Sinek. You can watch Ted Talks featuring Sinek by clicking this link: https://www.ted.com/speakers/simon_sinek.

Greetings from the Executive Director



Ken Bain
CASSA/ACGCS Executive Director

Our vision is
“Every school
in Canada is a
healthy school
community.”

The Canadian Association of School System Administrators (CASSA) has included improving student and staff mental health and well-being as one of its priorities and has joined four other organizations who share a commitment to healthy school communities as stewards in the Canadian Alliance for Healthy School Communities. The Alliance is a collaboration of stakeholders spanning the interests of both **health** and **education** working together to advance healthy school communities through a comprehensive school health approach. Our vision is “Every school in Canada is a healthy school community.” The four other stewardship organizations are DASH BC, EverActive Schools – Alberta, Ophea – Ontario and PHE Canada. I’ll update you on the Alliance as we progress.

Since my last update, I have been to the National Conference for the School Superintendents Association; this group represents our colleagues in the United States. Their conference is very large in scale as there are so many more

superintendents in the United States than here in Canada. In fact, the average size of a school district in the U.S. is about 3,300 students. There were several speakers and workshops focussing on the importance of strong system leadership to help improve student achievement.

This event was also an opportunity to gather as a group of CASSA members to celebrate the recipient of the CASSA EXL Award for outstanding system leadership in Canada. The 2018 recipient is David Keohane, Superintendent of Greater St. Albert Catholic Schools. David was recognized by his American colleagues during the

conference and the CASSA members who were at the conference got together to celebrate his achievements.

Please **SAVE THE DATE** for this year’s CASSA 2019 Conference at the Vancouver Sheraton Airport Hotel in Richmond. The conference begins on the evening of July 3rd and ends mid-afternoon of the 5th. Check the conference website to register and make your hotel reservations. Here is the link: <http://conference.cassa-acgcs.ca>.

Look forward to seeing you there!

Ken Bain
CASSA Executive Director

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Faces in the Crowd:

Christian Michalik



saying, “His vision and support has been and continues to be critical to the leadership team and the Indigenous education team in supporting Indigenous students and promoting reconciliation.”

At that same November welcoming ceremony, Christian made the following statement: “I am humbled by the Board’s confidence in my leadership. I’ve been a part of LRSD for many years, and I am honoured to continue this journey of serving the community. Together with LRSD’s larger network of leaders and administrators, we will continue to place the best interests of students at the forefront of everything we do. We are all leaders and followers, and I look forward to learning from my colleagues, students, parents and the wider community as we educate and inspire our students on their learning journey.”

Christian’s leadership style is based on placing the utmost importance on relationships and collaboration, believing that a leader should always promote and support teamwork.

His educational philosophy is based on the concept that students learn best and teachers improve their practice most when everyone is actively engaged in the learning process. Parents and the community, for example, are also partners in education, and students and teachers all thrive in an environment that is built on security, caring, belonging and respect. His philosophy also includes the idea that teachers must learn together, inquire together and solve problems together to fully realize their potential as educators. ○

Christian lives in Winnipeg with his two daughters, Émilie and Camille, as well as Sammy, their Springer Spaniel.

Christian Michalik is the new Superintendent of the Louis Riel School Division (LRSD) in Winnipeg, Manitoba. He took on this leadership position at the beginning of January 2019. This isn’t an entirely new role for Christian, however, as he had been the Acting Superintendent for the division since December 2017.

Throughout his career, Christian has been a strong advocate for both the French Immersion program and French-language instruction in English schools. His journey in public education began in the fall of 1989 when he was hired as a middle years teacher at École Golden Gate School (now known as Golden Gate Middle School) in the St. James-Assiniboia School Division in western Winnipeg. A decade later, he was named principal at Collège Jeanne-Sauvé, a position he held until 2005.

In 2005, Christian first joined the Louis Riel School Division when he accepted the position as a Director of School & Community Support. Louis Riel School Division includes 40 schools with over

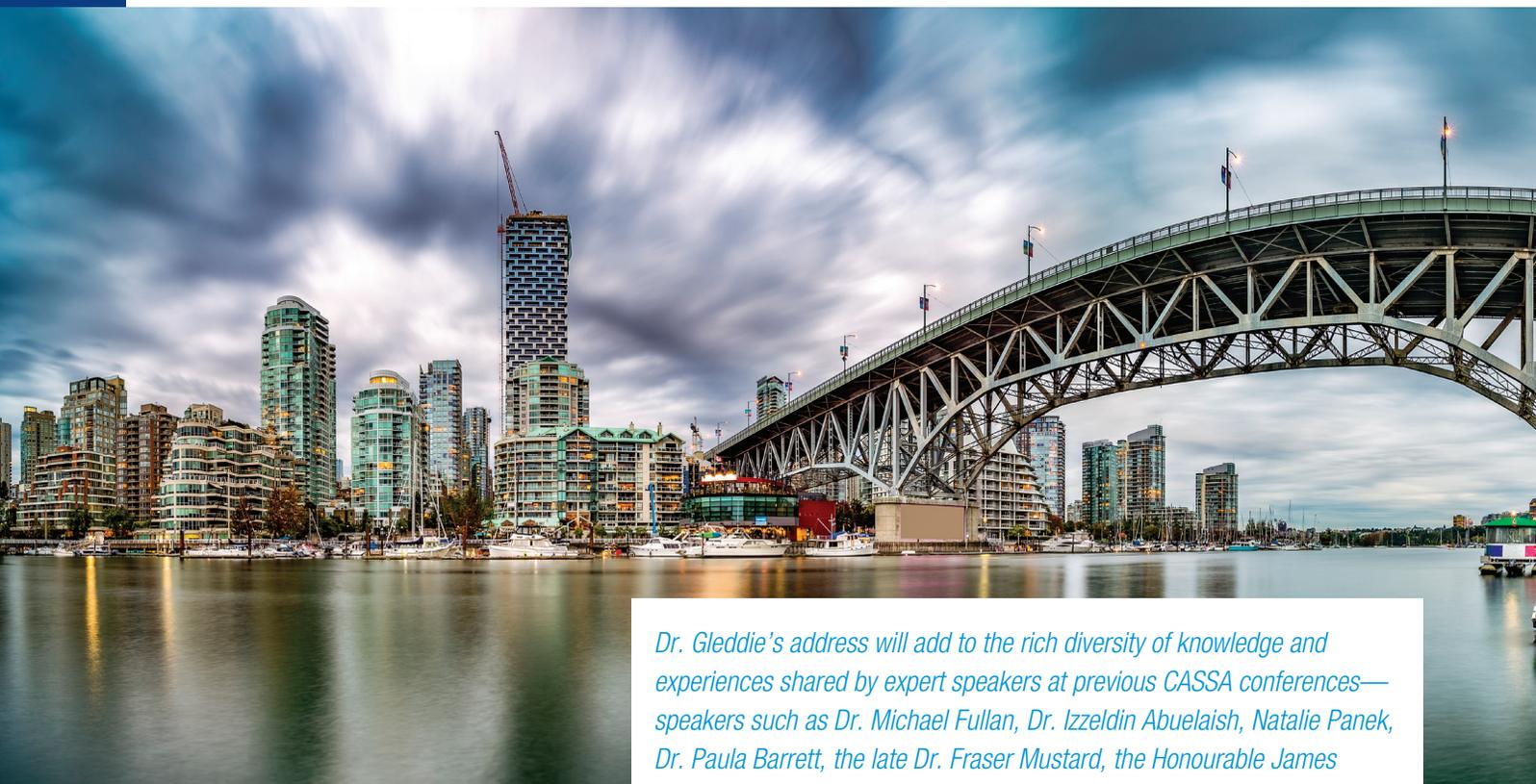
15,500 students in the southeast quadrant of Winnipeg.

One year later, Christian was named an Assistant Superintendent for the division. He remained at that position until 2017, when he took on the Acting Superintendent role.

In addition to advocating for the French language, Christian has also worked to support reconciliation and the integration of Indigenous perspectives in Canadian schools. His efforts were recently recognized during a ceremony held in November 2018 when he was welcomed as the new Superintendent for LRSD. Two LRSD colleagues, Corey Kapilik, Indigenous Education Coordinator, and Shirley Ewanchuk, Indigenous Language Consultant, presented Christian with an eagle feather. The eagle feather is the highest recognition that can be given in Anishinaabe culture. The Louis Riel School Division is situated on Treaty One Territory, the traditional lands of the Anishinaabe and the homeland of the Red River Métis.

At the time, Corey commented on the role that Christian’s leadership has played in furthering Indigenous education and opportunities for all students in the division,

The 2019 CASSA Annual Conference



Dr. Gleddie's address will add to the rich diversity of knowledge and experiences shared by expert speakers at previous CASSA conferences—speakers such as Dr. Michael Fullan, Dr. Izzeldin Abuelaish, Natalie Panek, Dr. Paula Barrett, the late Dr. Fraser Mustard, the Honourable James Bartleman, Michael Ungar, Dr. Edwina Wetzel and more.



The 2019 CASSA Annual Conference features guest speakers from the top of their respective fields. This year's event in Vancouver, B.C., is no different, with Dr. Doug Gleddie touching on the “Healthy Living Active Learning” theme in his opening keynote address on July 3.

Please join us in Vancouver this July for this unique professional learning opportunity.



Introducing the Keynote Speaker

Dr. Doug Gleddie is an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Education (Physical Education) at the University of Alberta in Edmonton. He teaches physical education curriculum and pedagogy to undergraduate students as well as graduate courses in health and physical education, reflective practice, physical literacy and research methods. His research focuses on narratives of physical education, school sport, physical literacy praxis, meaningful physical education and teacher education.

In a career filled with change, the only true constants in Dr. Gleddie's life have been physical activity and education, working with kids and how joy fills the spaces in between. His life-course journey has allowed him to work with a variety of people and organizations across the country and around the world. At this time, Dr. Gleddie is researching narratives of movement and physical education, school sport, and the affective and implementation aspects of physical literacy.

Dr. Gleddie is also a husband and father who takes care of his own wellness by being active with his family. He enjoys working to improve his guitar picking and seeking new challenges every day.

You can follow Dr. Gleddie on Twitter @doug_gleddie or read his blog at www.purposefulmovement.net. You can also learn more about him on YouTube, here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sgx0w1sRTkI>.



Pack Your Bags and Stay Awhile!

Along with our provincial affiliate, the British Columbia School Superintendents Association (BCSSA), CASSA extends an invitation to its membership across Canada to attend the 2019 CASSA Conference in Vancouver, B.C, from July 3 to 5.

Each year this event brings together hundreds of school system leaders from publicly funded school districts across Canada. The theme this year is *Healthy Living Active Learning*. Our conference keynote addresses, panel discussions and breakout sessions promise to deliver multiple opportunities for personalized learning and peer-to-peer sharing on related topics. Delegates, guests, sponsors and exhibitors will also experience a wealth of networking opportunities.

The 2019 CASSA Conference will be hosted in Richmond, B.C., at the Sheraton Vancouver Airport Hotel, a convenient base for arrivals and departures by air. There are also many transportation options to take you from the airport to downtown Vancouver and

beyond. In addition to rental vehicles and taxis, you can hop aboard the SkyTrain Canada Line. The SkyTrain leaves the airport about every seven minutes and is extremely cost-effective. Visit www.translink.ca for more information on fare options and routes.

The Sheraton Vancouver Airport Hotel offers a variety of amenities such as complimentary Wi-Fi, luxury bath items, an outdoor heated pool, fitness centre, whirlpool, room balconies and sun deck. Hotel hospitality options include a bistro, bar, sundry and convenience store, Starbucks coffee shop and room service. The hotel includes a 40,000-square foot conference centre, which will serve as the main site of our 2019 conference.

Group rates for staying at the Sheraton Vancouver Airport Hotel are available for the 2019 CASSA Conference. If you book by June 4, you can access rooms for between \$195 and \$295 from June 29 to July 10. Find up-to-date details and links for online reservations on the CASSA conference website.

Travel Deals!

For those planning to travel to the Vancouver area by air, CASSA is pleased to announce we have arranged conference discount rates with both Air Canada and WestJet.

Air Canada is offering a special discount for flights to Vancouver for conference attendees and guests travelling with them. Simply visit aircanada.com and enter the promotion code CWUC77C1 to book a discounted flight. Please note that the following conditions apply:

- The booking must be made to Vancouver (YVR).
- The travel period begins June 26, 2019, and ends July 12, 2019.

- Travel is valid for any day of the week.
- No discounts will apply to Tango bookings for travel within Canada or between Canada and the US. For international travel (destinations outside North America), discounts apply to all fares including Tango.

WestJet is offering:

- A five per cent off Econo and 10 per cent off EconoFlex and Premium fares for travel within Canada.
- Two per cent off Econo, five percent off EconoFlex and 10 per cent off Premium base fares for guests travelling trans-border into and out of Abbotsford (YXX) or Vancouver (YVR)

These WestJet discounts are valid for travel between June 27 and July 12, 2019.

To access them, use the coupon code J88RU47 if you or your travel agent book online. If you are booking with a travel agent using the Global Distribution System, have them use promo code WLL70.

VIA Rail will also be offering travel discounts. More information will be available soon—check the CASSA conference website for updates.

More Details to Come!

Be sure to watch upcoming issues of this newsletter and the CASSA conference website (<https://www.cassa-acgcs.ca/domain/17>) for details on opportunities for optional sightseeing tours. Our conferences have become known for these fun, family-friendly outings. Previous events have included kayaking in St. John's, sampling cuisine in Old Montreal, exploring the innovative Canadian Museum for Human Rights in Winnipeg, cheering on the Stampede chuckwagons in Calgary and meeting sled dogs in Whitehorse.

In addition to affording delegates a chance to explore the host city or region, these outings also represent a unique opportunity to get to know your colleagues in public education system leadership.



Good Spirit School Division Sea Stars

The leadership team at the Good Spirit School Division in Saskatchewan has embraced the values taught in this fable. Its Sea Stars employee recognition awards program is based on those values, while also incorporating the division's own motto: Students Come First. It's a positive initiative that lets the board and senior administration team highlight the acts of kindness and extra special personal touch for students that so many employees work to deliver every day.

Sea Stars stands for Sparkling Examples of Accomplished Skillful Talented And Radiant Staff. The awards program, initiated in 2011, offers a formal way to recognize Good Spirit School Division employees who embody the division's foundational values:

- Belonging;
- Respect;
- Responsibility;
- Learning;
- Nurturing; and
- Perseverance.

The nominations committee considers an additional three areas when determining who should be recognized:

1. High level of achievement;
2. Individual or school team making a marked difference; and
3. Dedicated service.

Nominations are accepted each year until the end of October, and awards are presented shortly after.

All division employees are eligible to receive this award. To illustrate this point, consider that in 2018, employees recognized with a Sea Star award included a library technician, members of a walking school bus team, school counsellors, a school administrative assistant, educational assistants, and more.

In 2017, all 33 staff members of an entire school—Victoria School in the community of Kamsack—were among the annual award recipients. At the time the award was presented, Mark Forsythe, one of the



Mark Forsythe (back row right), superintendent of schools in the northern area of Good Spirit School Division, presented Sea Star Award pins to each member of the staff of the Victoria School in Kamsack in December. Photo courtesy of the Kamsack Times.

Have you ever heard the fable of the starfish?

An older man was walking along the shore littered with thousands of starfish, beached and dying after a storm. A child was picking them up and tossing them back into the sea. "Why even bother?" the man said. "You're not saving enough to make a difference." The child picked up another starfish and delivered it back to the water. "Made a difference to that one," the child said.

division's Superintendents of Education, noted that every person on the school team played a key role in the school's successes, including the teachers, support staff, speech language pathologist, Aboriginal support worker and volunteers. (To read more about this incredible honour, be sure to read the "Entire Victoria School Staff Named Sea Star Award Winners" story in the *Kamsack Times* newspaper. You can click here to go directly to the article).

The Good Spirit School Division serves about 6,000 students in 27 schools in east central Saskatchewan. Much of the division is located in rural communities; it also includes several large towns and the cities of Melville and Yorkton. Good Spirit School Division spans a geographic area from Esterhazy in the south, Preeceville in the north, Calder in the east and Springside

in the west. Six First Nation communities are within the division's boundaries. The school division also serves two Hutterite-based schools. Its administration office is in Yorkton.

The division's Director of Education is Quintin M. Robertson. Donna Kriger is its Deputy Director of Education Services and its Superintendents of Education include Mark Forsythe, Lisa Wotherspoon and Alisa Leidl.

To learn more about programming and initiatives at Good Spirit School Division, visit www.gssd.ca, check them out on Facebook or follow them on Twitter @GSSD204. ○

Note: Starfish and sea stars are the same creature, with "starfish" being the more common name.

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