



Équité et excellence en éducation
CASSA-ACGCS
Equity and Excellence in Education

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

We would love to hear and consider your responses as we further meet and determine our strategies and actions. Please do not hesitate to provide your responses to your provincial or territorial CASSA reps so that your good ideas can be relayed prior to or during the upcoming planning sessions.

Greetings from the President

Although unable to meet in person in each of the past two years, the Board of Directors undertook some virtual planning in 2021 and managed to meet by video conference for a day last month to update our shared vision and brainstorm strategies for the Canadian Association of School System Administrators (CASSA) going forward. Usually, the Board meets for a day or two each January to do some networking and planning, because “Human collaboration is our superpower as a species.” (Dr. Michael Ryan 2021).

Over the next few months, the Board is planning to meet again to further develop the strategic directions and create a set of more specific actions. The intended result of our collaborative work will be a CASSA improvement plan with responsibility and timelines (identifying who's going to do what, by when, at what cost, and for what intended outcomes). We hope our plan is operational and purposeful in moving CASSA toward our collective vision.

Your input would be appreciated at his time. Consider taking five minutes to brainstorm your answers to the following key questions:

- What is your ideal vision of/for CASSA in three to five years?
- What might be blocking the vision from being achieved?
- What strategies would you recommend to address those blocks and move towards the vision?
- What specific and practical actions would you suggest, and better yet, might you even be prepared to



Curtis Brown
CASSA/ACGCS President

contribute, and by when, to assist in the achievement of the vision?

We would love to hear and consider your responses as we further meet and determine our strategies and actions. Please do not hesitate to provide your responses to your provincial or territorial CASSA reps so that your good ideas can be relayed prior to or during the upcoming planning sessions. See page two for your provincial and territorial reps!

On another note, here's hoping that by the time you see this newsletter, Omicron will be confirmed as the last significant COVID-19 variant, and a vaccine will have been approved and is being rolled out for children under five years old. Stay positive. Test negative.

I hope to see you at our conference in picturesque St. Andrews By-the-Sea, New Brunswick, from July 6 to 8, 2022.

Curtis Brown
CASSA/ACGCS President

Greetings

from the Executive Director



Ken Bain

CASSA/ACGCS Executive Director



I will begin my message with a huge thank you to all senior school system leaders for your relentless commitment to the health of your students over the past two years. I know that our leaders have always been committed to our student's health and well being, but these last two years have made demands on our leaders that exceed all we have known previously. We are all looking forward to the time when we can refocus our efforts and attention to high quality instruction and the promotion of student success. I hope it's time to return to being instructional leaders rather than epidemiologists.

Welcome to our new board member

From time to time, we regrettably have to say goodbye to the Canadian Association

of School System Administrators (CASSA) board members. Gerald Buffet, Executive Director of the Newfoundland and Labrador Association of School System Administrators (NLASSA) has retired from that position after supporting CASSA and our work for several years. I want to express my appreciation to Gerald and his many years of service to both NLASSA and CASSA. I am pleased to welcome John Way to the CASSA board. John has already participated enthusiastically in our work so far, and we look forward to his continued participation and insights from Newfoundland and Labrador.

CASSA2022 Leadership Conference

The CASSA board of directors is excited about the prospect of an in-person summer conference this July. The destination is

St. Andrew's By-the-Sea in New Brunswick, and the conference will run from July 6 to 8. As I write this, plans are well underway for an exciting get together in July with a focus on learning together and being together. The theme of the conference is *reimagining education*. What better theme to dive into as leaders have had to re imagine how education is delivered in districts and divisions throughout the country. Please visit the CASSA website to learn more about speakers, the program, and the activities that will be available as soon as they are confirmed. For now, I ask you to simply hold the dates in your calendar as we look forward to being together again and enjoying Maritime food music and hospitality.

Ken Bain

CASSA/ACGCS Executive Director

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An Innovative Approach to Bully Prevention and Inclusion:

Transforming the Silent Majority into the Caring Majority



By Lisa Dixon-Wells, M.Ed., Founder of Dare to Care

If you're taking the time to read this article, I know it's because, like me, you believe no child should ever feel alone, afraid, or unwelcome in their school community.

The practice of direct-ing intentional and repetitive abuse towards certain classmates or teammates, known as bullying behavior, was something I personally witnessed as a child and teenager. When I became an accredited teacher/counsellor in 1990, I was saddened to find that nothing much had changed. It was the lack of evidence-backed, Canadian-based bully prevention programs that inspired me to return to the University of Calgary to complete a M.Ed. in Education Psychology. The focus

of my studies was to gather data on best practices in the areas of bully prevention, discipline with dignity, child development, and community building. The Dare to Care Bully Prevention and Life Skills program for students in K-9 launched in 1999 and has been successfully presented to more than 1,000,000 children in Western Canada.

In 2017, we launched a sister program to address bullying in amateur sports. Our complete K-6 bully prevention program, previously delivered in person by our team or remotely via webinar, is now also available in a turnkey online program. This means that schools across Canada now have affordable, year-round access to this content and can utilize it whether their classes are remote or in person. I'm also delighted to

announce that online delivery of our program for Grades 7-9 should be ready for the 2022/23 school year.

As you strive to make the schools under your watch into safe spaces, welcoming and inclusive for all, I believe Dare to Care can be an invaluable tool – one that is designed to be implemented without upfront work by busy educators and administrators. Read on for what makes our approach so different, what's new (including age-appropriate modules on cyberbullying and racism), and two stories that remind me why this work matters so much.

A holistic approach

To embed a significant and enduring cultural shift towards respect and inclusion, the Dare



WHILE CONFLICT IS A NORMAL PART OF LIFE...

BULLYING IS NOT

AND SHOULD **NEVER** BE TOLERATED IN ANY ENVIRONMENT.
#KNOWTHEDIFFERENCE!

to Care program is designed to engage everyone in the school community.

Whether facilitated by our team or delivered online, our program offers three components:

1. **Innovative, age-appropriate modules for students and student athletes.** We help children understand the difference between buddy (kind) behavior and bully behavior and recognize the differences between normal conflict and bullying. We also give them a toolbelt of skills to deflect and diffuse instances of bullying and effectively get help from an adult when they witness a situation they can't handle.
2. **Professional Development modules for educators, administrators, coaches, and officials.** We provide actionable strategies for addressing bully behavior and outline what an effective discipline policy may look like.
3. **Support and education for parents.** We help them recognize signs that their child

is being bullied or may be exhibiting bullying behavior. We also give them the tools to coach their children to effectively report incidents of bullying to an adult.

A common language

We ensure the entire community has a shared understanding of bullying vs. normal peer conflict, with the goal of reducing false reports of bullying and shifting focus to real incidents.

While their actions can have an outsized impact on a school community or sport organization, the reality is that only a small number of individuals, as few as two percent, display true bullying behavior. One of the major roadblocks to effective bully prevention comes from the misuse and overuse of the words "bully" and "bullying." Many have grown tired of hearing the term, and others label every incident, big or small, as bullying when it is nothing more than normal conflict. Dare to Care begins by teaching all stakeholders the proper, and globally accepted definition of

bullying, which is negative behavior that is repetitive and intentional and evokes very little remorse from the perpetrator.

A caring and empowered majority:

Our program places particular emphasis on engaging the approximately 79 per cent of the school community who witness bullying but currently aren't speaking up or stepping in. We call these witnesses the "Silent Majority," and consider them the largely untapped resource in every school.

Those who display bullying behavior (the ringleaders) who, by definition, feel no remorse for their brutal treatment of others, often surround themselves with fellow students who seem to support their actions. In my experience, these followers don't necessarily feel good about what they're doing, but their need to fit in to a certain group often outweighs their moral compass.

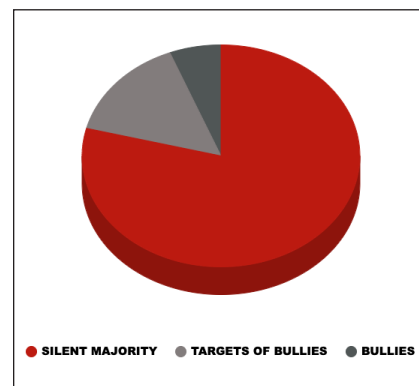
Beyond these two groups, ringleaders and their followers, is the majority. Some might say that these students and adults have become apathetic when it comes to bullying incidents, but I disagree. In my experience, this group doesn't remain silent due to apathy or lack of compassion. Generally, these individuals remain silent due to fear of retaliation or fear of making the situation worse. The Dare to Care program succeeds by teaching a proven toolbelt of skills, transforming bystanders into a "Caring Majority," empowered to prevent and deescalate incidents of bullying.

"Dare to Care has been the only Bully Awareness program that fills students, staff, and parents with confidence that they have the ability to prevent bullying from occurring but also trains the school community how to cope with bullying when it occurs. I have used program in several schools, and it has made a change to the culture and attitudes!" – Tom Brinsmead, Administrator, Calgary Catholic Schools.

Our Online K-6 Bully Prevention Program is:

- **Affordable** – At \$900/school/year, it's less than half the cost of in-person workshops.
- **On Demand** – Class modules can be accessed 24/7 and re-watched/replayed as often as desired.
- **Holistic/Schoolwide** – Modules for students, parents, and school staff are all included.
- **Supported** – Membership includes access to a resource portal with suggested reading, FAQs, downloadable posters, and more.

Learn more at www.DaretoCare.ca



A changing world

As the world's circumstances and the shape of bullying change, Dare to Care continues to adapt and evolve.

This past summer, new modules were added to help teach young students about discrimination and racism. Our online program includes six learning modules for K-2 and eight learning modules for Grades 3-6. Each Grade K-6 module contains an introduction to the concept, an animated video to expand on the concept and at least one activity to anchor the learning. The modules are designed to be done either in the classroom or at home for virtual learners.

Unfortunately, the pandemic has resulted in an explosion of online bullying, with data showing that cyberbullying is up 70 per cent. We've responded with a new, cyberbullying education module for Grades 3-6. As a direct response to the ongoing school disruptions and pandemic safety protocols, we successfully lifted and shifted the in-person program to a comprehensive, interactive online platform for schools.

Futures forever altered

I'd like to close by sharing the stories of two boys deeply affected by bullying.

Sometimes people assume my passion for bully prevention comes from being bullied myself, but it's driven by the memory of witnessing the relentless bullying of a school-mate. He lived nearby, and we were in the same grade from K-12, but I never really noticed him until Grade 8 when he was in my homeroom. Although I had seen kids being targeted in the past, it was then that I truly saw how cruel kids could be. This boy was tormented, on almost a daily basis, by a ringleader and his followers. Today, more than two decades later, I still see this individual several times a month as he walks around the neighbourhood we grew up in. He has never left his childhood home, nor has he ever held on to a job and, as far as I know, he has never had a relationship. He now lives alone, as both parents have passed, and I can only assume the incessant walking is what keeps him going each day. I have no doubt, his school experience had a tremendously negative and long-term impact on his adult life.

The second boy, named Paul, is someone I and my fellow Dare to Care facilitators met at a small rural school. Initially, he sat off to the side of the school-wide assembly,

seemingly bored and unengaged. We assumed he was off in his own world, perhaps daydreaming about lunchtime or what he was going to do after school. But during the first break, Paul quietly approached us, with tears in his eyes, and simply said *"I have been bullied for three years and no-one in this school cares."*

He proceeded to tell us about the numerous times he went home hungry because people stole his lunch, and that he had never wanted a birthday party because he knew that no one would come. He had several other stories to share but then he dropped the real bombshell. A week earlier he had gone out to the family shed and held his dad's shotgun in his mouth, ready to pull the trigger. He was worn down and tired of the living nightmare his life had become. He simply wanted to give up. Thankfully, he didn't pull the trigger that day. We did not ask him why, we simply hugged him and told him how happy we were that he was here with us. We promised him that if he stayed the day, he would realize that there is hope and that he is not alone in this world. Paul was in Grade 6. Imagine if he had gone through with his intentions. Imagine the impact it would have had on his family and his community.

What happened later that afternoon is exactly why we continue to do what we do at

Dare to Care. Paul, who had felt like giving up only days before, was now surrounded by 15-20 of his classmates. They were hugging and crying and individually apologizing for what they had done to him.

Former CFL player Randy Chevrier, an outstanding guest facilitator for Dare to Care, was part of our team that day. He recalls: *"You never know when or where your impact will occur. Many times, we do not see the impact Dare to Care has in a community, because change takes time. However, that day I witnessed first-hand how our presence started a conversation that potentially saved a student's life."*

Our experiences as children shape the rest of our lives. One of the most important skills that young people learn is practicing self-care and building up their self-esteem – no small feat in a world where political, environmental, and financial unrest are all too familiar and childhood mental illness is at an all-time high. Therein lies the importance of a program like Dare to Care. We need to know how to deal with inappropriate behavior before it escalates and creates lasting harm. ○

To see video clips from the Dare to Care online program and to purchase access for your school(s), visit www.daretocare.ca, or contact Lisa Dixon-Wells at kidsmatter@shaw.ca or 403-620-5156 with questions.



Faces in the Crowd

Derek O'Brien

By Tara Wittchen, Contributing Writer

Derek O'Brien is the Chair of the New Brunswick School Superintendents' Association. This is his first year as Chair, but he has been involved with the organization since 2009. He is also the New Brunswick representative on the CASSA board of directors, noting he finds it rewarding to develop relationships with colleagues from across the country. Derek also values having the opportunity to influence education from a national perspective.

Since August 2017, Derek has served as the Director of Schools for the Anglophone School District – South (ASD-S) in New Brunswick. This district serves 23,000 students at 70 schools in southern New Brunswick. It is headquartered in Saint John.

He places great value on learning, and this combined with a desire to serve his community led him to pursue a career in public education. His path began at the University of New Brunswick, where he earned a Bachelor of Education in Secondary Arts (Social Studies/History), a Diploma of Advanced Undergraduate Studies in French Immersion Education

and a Master of Education in Educational Foundations and Administration.

In 1995, Derek took his first job in education as a supply teacher with what was then known as School District 10, which has since been amalgamated into ASD-S. Between 1996 and 2000, he served as a high school French Immersion social studies and history teacher as well as a Grade 3 French Immersion teacher. He advanced to administrative positions in 2000 as a vice principal and in 2005 as a principal. From late 2009 to mid-2012, Derek served as the Superintendent for School District 10 until it was amalgamated. In 2012, he took on the role of Director of Curriculum and Instruction for the newly formed district.

Derek's professional development activities are varied and wide ranging. They include chairing the New Brunswick Teacher Education Certification Committee, taking part in the Leadership for Equity webinar series and Building Effective Leadership Relationships in the Workplace series, facilitating a leadership development program, and presenting at numerous learning summits, workshops, and conferences.

Derek describes his personal style of leadership as one based on shared leadership developing strong relationships and empowering others



*Derek O'Brien and his son.
Photo courtesy of Derek
O'Brien*

to share their gifts. His professional leadership path also included a short side trip away from education when he took on the role of Chief Administrative Officer for the Town of St. Stephen from early 2015 to mid-2017.

His service to community includes taking on a variety of leadership roles, including board chair for the United Way serving Saint John, Kings and Charlotte counties since 2015. From 2011 to 2020, he was the treasurer and director of Vibrant Communities Charlotte County, a not-for-profit organization and one of 12 Community Inclusion Networks set up in New Brunswick to support the provincial poverty reduction plan. He served as director for the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award board, New Brunswick division, from 2010 to 2015. He has supported the Charlotte County Civic Centre Project as a fundraising campaign event MC and host, and the St. Stephen's Chocolate Fest, an annual celebration of its rich chocolate heritage, as both its director and board chair. He has also served on the Town of St. Stephen's Tourism Action Committee.

Derek enjoys music and playing the piano. Since 1992, he has served as a supply organist for local churches. He is also active in the ministry of his local Presbyterian church. He is the proud father of an active 11-year-old son, Alexander. In his down time, Derek likes travelling to sunny destinations—Puerto Vallarta being a favourite—with his family. His family is active in hockey and downhill skiing in winter and biking and swimming in summer, and they enjoy spending time with extended family and close friends throughout the year. ○

Faces in the Crowd

Scott and his wife, Lorraine,
on a trip where they were doing
educational presentations in Africa.
Photo courtesy of Scott Morrison.



Scott Morrison

By Tara Wittchen, Contributing Writer

Scott Morrison is the Superintendent of Christ The Redeemer Catholic Schools (CTR Catholic), a position he has held since 2013. Scott has a long history with the division, including serving as a teacher, principal, and division principal. Before taking on the role of Superintendent, he was CTR Catholic's Associate Superintendent of Secondary Education.

CTR Catholic operates 18 schools in Oyen, Okotoks, Canmore, Brooks, Drumheller, Strathmore, and High River in central and southern Alberta on the traditional territories of the Blackfoot Nations. The division also offers online and home education options. Scott's dedication to providing quality education to students in Alberta has been formally recognized several times. He received the Edwin Parr Teacher Award for excellence in first-year teaching as well as the Excellence in Teaching Award in the administrator category.

He received his Bachelor of Education from the University of Lethbridge and his Master of Arts in Administration and Curriculum from Gonzaga University in Spokane, Washington. He earned his Doctor of Education from William Howard Taft University in Denver, Colorado.

Scott is a sessional instructor at St. Mary's University and the University of Calgary, teaching the courses required to earn the Alberta Leadership Quality Standard. Any educator wishing to become certified as a principal in Alberta must earn this standard. He also teaches the courses required to earn the Superintendent Leadership Quality

Standard. Any educator wishing to become certified as a superintendent in Alberta must earn this standard. This opportunity to give back to his profession by supporting the next generation of leaders on their learning journey is one he finds especially rewarding.

He has been presenting sessions for aspiring and experienced leaders in education at College of Alberta School Superintendents (CASS) conferences for over 10 years, and he sits as one of two CASS representatives on CASSA's national board of directors.

Scott kindly took the time to respond to questions posed by *Leaders & Learners* over email.

What inspired you to work in public education and to work in senior administration?

I developed competence in each of the positions I held and had the desire to share what I knew with others in those roles by moving into higher levels of leadership.

Tell us about some of your personal points of pride as a senior administrator in public education.

I've had the opportunity to work with hundreds of teachers and administrators over the past 20 years, completing in-service on the topics of academic achievement, creating safe and caring schools, and organizational storytelling. I use stories of practice to communicate key ideas.

How would you describe your personal style of leadership?

My preferred leadership style is educational leader because I want the work I do to result in higher levels of student learning.

How many years have you been involved with CASSA and its regional affiliate CASS, and what are you most looking forward to in your role on the Board?

This is my first year on CASSA. I've been a member of CASS for 14 years. Though very new to the board, I'm fascinated by the cross-country checkups we do, realizing our issues and concerns are more alike than different.

Please tell our readers a little about yourself, your family, and your hobbies or interests.

My wife of over 30 years is Lorraine. We have three children. Dylan is a chef in Calgary, Zachary is a doctoral candidate at the University of Alberta, and Bailey is a Bachelor of Science grad from the University of British Columbia, working in a lab.

My wife and I enjoy travel. Two of our trips are highlights for me. First, I've been to Rwanda three times, offering professional development on the topics of classroom management and leadership. The first time I went, Lorraine joined me as a co-presenter, working with elementary teachers while I worked with secondary teachers. She had never led professional development in her life, so I was immensely proud of her courage! Second, we spent a year in Belize while I was on sabbatical working on my doctoral dissertation. During that time, I volunteered to teach in a Grade 8 Language Arts class, giving me the opportunity to step back into trenches and experience life as classroom teacher again. ○

Faces in the Crowd



Bill Cooper

By Tara Wittchen, Contributing Writer

In the early days of his professional journey, Bill Cooper did not intend to work in education.

“I was never going to be a teacher,” he recalls. “I was going to use my biology degree and parlay it into being some sort of wildlife park manager or warden, or maybe research in the outdoors.”

That wasn’t an option, however, by the time Bill finished his Bachelor of Science Advanced Degree at the University of Saskatchewan in 1986. Federal funding for the Canadian Wildlife Service had been drastically reduced and jobs in his field were scarce. It was time for a new plan.

“I’m a learner,” he explains, and the new plan meant going back to the University of Saskatchewan to pursue a degree in education. (He kept his connection to science, however, by majoring in biology). By the fall of 1989, Bill was in a Yorkton, Saskatchewan, high school teaching biology, science, and history. A year later, he was teaching science courses at a Moose Jaw high school.

The opportunity of a lifetime presented itself just four years later. He and his wife Denise had noticed a couple of job postings based in a community over 2,000 kilometres away in the far north. They decided they would apply, and soon after they moved their four sons to Coral Harbour, Nunavut (this region was still called Northwest Territories until 1999).

“We’ve been here ever since,” Bill says. “There were a few times where we might have gazed in other directions, but we really enjoy working here. It’s professionally engaging, and we’ve had some wonderful experiences with students and parents and community. There was a lot of opportunity to learn from others and to pass that learning on.”

Bill worked briefly in Arviat as a principal and teacher after those first two years teaching in Coral Harbour. He’s been in Baker Lake since 1997.

For someone who didn’t originally plan on teaching, Bill has gone on to do highly commendable work in the classroom over the years. In 2003, his skills as an educator were recognized at the national level when



William “Bill” Cooper, Executive Director, Kivalliq School Operations, Department of Education, Government of Nunavut.

he received the Prime Minister’s Award for Teaching Excellence.

Bill took on his first system administrator position in 2010 as Superintendent of Schools for Kivalliq School Operations, one of three Regional School Operations (RSOs) in Nunavut. He is now the current Executive Director for Kivalliq School Operations. Over the past year, he has also served for short intervals as Acting Assistant Deputy Minister of Education. Since 2018, Bill has sat as a Director at Large on the CASSA board of directors, representing Nunavut.

“I think I sort of fell into leadership,” he says, recalling how he showed leadership tendencies from an early age in everything from athletics to his personality. Merely having those tendencies isn’t enough, he says—they need to be nurtured.

“I began to explore leadership when I did my Master’s in 2007 in school administration. This was at the time when we were talking about professional learning communities being centres of excellence and community-based education. When I did my Master’s, I expanded this view and began to consider how the context of Nunavut could inform educational leadership as identified by the academic gurus who I was referencing and studying during my period of study. I wanted to discover how the context of leadership, informed by Inuit societal values, can inform established peer reviews leadership practice.”

Right from its start in 1999, Nunavut’s government, including its education system, has been guided by Inuit societal values, Bill says (see sidebar on this page).

“How does the actual culture that we live in inform our leadership actions so we can create an authentic experience in our schools and our learning communities? Education is very socially constructed and so it must be nuanced. Leadership must, at times, be very direct and sometimes it has to be very nurturing and transformative. A true leader knows when to use the right elements of leadership to engage a learning community in an authentic way.”

Leadership involves foresight, strategy involves motivation and direction management involves an informed future, he adds. “And our future in Nunavut is informed, of course, by the people who are part of this vast territory. This is why I come back to what Michael Fullan has to say about connecting peers with purpose. Our leadership has to fit our context—even more so because of the cultural component that we’re called to live and recognize. The work that is being done in Nunavut must be rooted in collective efficacy. We all know that no one person can do it all. You have to rely on others and so there’s that sense of teamwork. As a system leader, I truly believe that it’s important to connect peers with purpose. I’ve always been keen to highlight that we as leaders foster of hope. We continue to ensure that all our stakeholders know that our engagements and conversations have purpose. They have to know that the challenging work is going to allow all of us to grow.”

He reflects on another aspect of his style of leadership, recalling his earliest days as a university student. “I did a biology

Leadership must, at times, be very direct and sometimes it has to be very nurturing and transformative.

degree with a focus on ecology. Ecology is all about the interconnectedness of things. That was profound—if you’re a system leader, an effective one, you require a sense of the interconnectedness. That speaks to the context of some Indigenous cultures which recognizes a holistic nature of the world that is a really critical worldview—one that has to be recognized.”

A point of pride for him as a system leader is the book study he helped to head up with the school leaders in the Kivalliq region. Yearly topics on change management, trauma-informed leadership practice, student assessment practice and nuanced leadership practice were explored through monthly teleconference engagements.

“This was introduced by a predecessor and colleague of mine, and I wasn’t so sure

about it at the time. Then I realized that this is a good way to get us together on a teleconference—this was pre-COVID—and so we would meet once a month.”

Participants would pick something that would lead them toward an informed future. “We further refined this to include conversation protocols to set up structured conversations. I am thankful to my colleagues who brought new dimensions to our engagement, which in turn brought additional collective efficacy to our work as leaders, both system and school communities.”

“There’s all kinds of learning strategies in this process,” he continues. “Our book study evolved over four years—our work in education is about learning and so systems should learn. So as an executive director helping to lead a conversation protocol felt very much

The Government of Nunavut, including its Department of Education, has been guided by Inuit societal values. For more information, visit <https://www.gov.nu.ca/information/inuit-societal-values>.

Inuuqatigiitsiarniq

Respecting others, relationships and caring for people.

Tunnganarniq

Fostering good spirits by being open, welcoming and inclusive.

Pijitsirniq

Serving and providing for family and/or community.

Aajiiqatigiinni

Decision making through discussion and consensus.

Pilimmaksarniq/Pijariuqsarniq

Development of skills through observation, mentoring, practice, and effort.

Piliriqatigiinni/Ikajuqtigiinni

Working together for a common cause.

Qanuqtuurniq

Being innovative and resourceful.

Avatittinnik Kamatsiarniq

Respect and care for the land, animals, and the environment.

like a classroom teacher working with students. Our meetings have become more about learning opportunities, and less about administrative points that we can easily pass along in other ways. This was a real game changer for our monthly teleconferences.”

Bill’s roles in education go well beyond the classroom or administrative office. He has been a part of many professional education organizations, including the Saskatchewan Teachers’ Federation, the Northwest Territories Teachers Association, the Federation of Nunavut Teachers, the Canadian Association of Principals, and the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. He has sat on several committees, including the Nunavut Minister of Education Advisory Committee and the Nunavut Educators Qualification Committee. He has also been a member of a number of professional science educators’ organizations, including the Saskatchewan Science Teachers’ Association, the Youth Science Foundation, the Kivalliq Science Educators Community, and the Science Teachers Association of Ontario.

Among his professional achievements, Bill

has been a College of Education Bates Award candidate, a co-developer for Nunavut Student Records Folders, the vice president of Kivalliq Regional Federation of Nunavut Teachers, the recipient of the Professional Association of Applied Engineering and Science Teacher Award, a candidate for the Teaching Excellence Fellowship at Queen’s University, the president of Kivalliq Regional Federation of Nunavut Teachers, and the co-developer of the draft evaluation process for Kivalliq principals. He has also presented at several conferences and workshops over the years.

Bill also contributes his time and expertise to community activities, including serving as a Beaver and Cubs leader for Scouts Canada, a volunteer fire fighter, a lay minister, a Nunavut Youth Abroad Mentor, a volunteer with the Baker Lake Youth Athletic Association, a facilitator with the Northern Youth Abroad Work Experience, and a volunteer with the Kivalliq Science Educators Community.

In his free time, Bill says he can usually be found puttering around the house, taking care of minor repairs, or woodworking. He and Denise have a couple of small dogs, and at one

time they even raised huskies. He enjoys music and tries to keep up a regular exercise regime. He’s a history buff and likes to fish, usually for lake trout. He also has a small sailboat that his now-grown sons look after in the south and tries to go sailing whenever he gets a chance.

“I think for a lot of system leaders, work can be all consuming. Maybe people find great joy in that. But you do have to find a pursuit that gives you a brain break—that’s so critical.”

After all these years, Bill says he remains truly humbled by the fact that he lives and works in Nunavut. “I’m not Inuk—I wasn’t born here and I’m not of this culture, but I’ve embraced being a Nunavummiut and the culture I live in. I know that Nunavut is much larger than me and I’m not talking about the geography,” he says. He speaks about the promise of Nunavut through the land claims agreement and the critical role that education plays in its success. “Our goals and dreams for our students have to be rooted in good foundational decisions. I’ve always informed my colleagues and our teachers that the job they do is so important and so critical to the promise of Nunavut.” ○

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