



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.*

On February 6 to 8, 2019 Frontier School Division held its annual School Committee conference. It was our 41st conference so it was a significant event in Frontier School Division's calendar. School Committees exist at each of our 42 schools, consisting of about three to seven people who work closely with each school's principal. They are the voice of the community in school and program planning. Each School Committee was able to send two committee members to the conference, at the cost of the division. In addition, trustees, senior administration, representatives from the principal group, and special guests attend. Most of the delegates at this conference represent communities throughout the northern two thirds of the province of Manitoba.

It is therefore significant that Kevin Chief, our keynote speaker, spoke about the Winnipeg Jets in his keynote address, and their work in the NHL's "This is Hockey" initiative, which promotes diversity and inclusiveness. Our Jets, in conjunction with True North Sports and Entertainment, chose to celebrate Indigenous culture in Manitoba at their February 16, 2019 game when they hosted the Ottawa Senators.

For me this story gets better. The Jets collaborated with Leticia Spence,

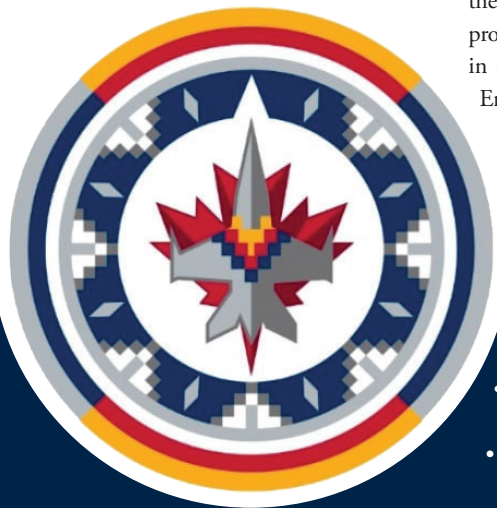


Reg Klassen
CASSA/ACGCS President

a young graphic design student, to make the logo for the team for that game a celebration of Indigenous culture. Spence, who is from the Pimicikamak First Nation in Cross Lake, Manitoba, did a great deal of research and has created a logo that represents motifs, symbols and patterns from many cultures and tribes, all the while retaining the Jets logo.

What great leadership from a professional sports team like the Jets, clearly articulating one example of how we can be inclusive, collaborate and celebrate our diversity. This is a wonderful example for all of us. I am so impressed, and very proud to be a Manitoban.

Reg Klassen
CASSA President



For more information:

- www.tnse.com/news/jets-and-moose-celebrate-indigenous-culture-with-wasac-night-and-follow-your-dreams-day/
- www.rrc.ca/news/2019/02/08/design-student-infuses-indigenous-culture-into-jets-and-moose-logos

Greetings from the Executive Director



Ken Bain

CASSA/ACGCS Executive Director

Welcome to our first “new look” *Leaders & Learners* Newsletter!

The Canadian Association of School System Administrators (CASSA) has entered a publishing arrangement with Matrix Group Publishing Inc., the company that has always published and distributed the *Leaders & Learners* print magazines; we are now working with them on this newsletter, the magazine and advertising possibilities for the website. Tara Wittchen will continue to provide the same outstanding content that CASSA members have come to enjoy, and Matrix staff will be responsible for editing and publishing the newsletter beginning with this issue – February 2019. I welcome your comments about the new look and format!

I would like to ask you to SAVE THE DATES – July 3rd through 5th – for CASSA 2019 Annual Conference, which will take place at the Sheraton Vancouver Airport Hotel. We will be organizing the

conference workshops into three strands this year: Healthy Active Living; Student Mental Health and Well-Being; and Outdoor Play, including Risky Play. I am delighted to announce our opening keynote speaker is Dr. Doug Gleddie, Associate Professor at the University of Alberta. Dr. Gleddie’s opening address is called: *Living and Learning to be Healthy and Active*. Check the CASSA Conference website for registration, and for speaker and workshop updates (<http://conference.cassa-acgcs.ca/index.html>).

Here’s a quick update on the recent CASSA Board Planning Meetings. Twenty-four members of the CASSA Board of Directors (school system leaders) from B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan, Yukon, Northwest Territories, Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland and Labrador met recently in Toronto to review the successes of the previous year and to begin to look ahead. The meetings also involved presentations focussed on student health and well-being.

The board heard from the WE organization and its new program, WE Well-being (<https://www.we.org/wellbeing>). We also

received an update from Chantal Beaulieu, the Executive Director of the Council of Ministers of Education (<https://www.cmec.ca/en>), regarding their goals and plans. Finally, the board heard from Katherine Kelly, the Executive Director of the Joint Consortium for School Health (<http://www.jcsh-cces.ca>), about the many excellent resources they have available at no cost. It was an excellent two days of reflection, planning and learning!

I look forward to connecting with you on a regular basis via these Newsletters, the magazine, and, of course, in person at our Annual Conference this July.

Ken Bain

CASSA Executive Director

CASSA Board of Directors

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Valérie Morand and Anne Bernard-Bourgeois

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BCSSA

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NLASSA (Newfoundland and Labrador)

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Executive Director

Ken Bain

Faces in the Crowd: Chris van der Mark



Photo courtesy of The Interior News / Tom Best.



SD 27 is spread out over a diverse geological and geographical area, with a distance of 500 kilometres between the most eastern school and the most western.

Chris van der Mark is the Superintendent of Schools for School District No. 54 (Bulkley Valley) in British Columbia. In April, he will take on a

new role as Superintendent of Schools for School District No. 27 (Cariboo-Chilcotin).

While Chris grew up just outside of Vancouver, he has focused his entire public education career in northern rural British Columbia. SD 54, for example, is headquartered in Smithers. His placement with SD 27 continues his work in these parts of the province. The district is administered out of Williams Lake in central interior BC. It is spread out over a diverse geological and geographical area, with a distance of 500 kilometres between the most eastern school and the most western. In his new role, Chris will work with a team having responsibilities for approximately 4,600 students in 22 schools.

With this transition, Chris will wrap up eight years of service as Superintendent with SD 54, and over a decade with the district itself. One of the many commitments he's

taken on while with SD 54 is coaching the Smithers Secondary School girls' basketball team. As many of the young athletes who began with him in grade seven will be graduating this year, Chris has committed to staying at SD 54 until their current season wraps up.

Chris is known for his strong advocacy work on behalf of students. While he served as Superintendent at SD 54, Chris oversaw the improvement and enhancement of the district's educational programs and professional learning opportunities. During his time there, he led a team that saw improved student achievement, particularly for First Nations students, and increased opportunities for student choice in programming.

Prior to his role as a superintendent, Chris was also an assistant superintendent and secondary school administrator. He has over 23 years of experience in public education. His career also includes 10 years working as a teacher, vice principal and principal in the Hazelton, a predominantly First Nations community with a rich culture and history.

Chris has presented at provincial conferences on topics including Effective

Board Governance, Systems Planning, and Change and Innovation in Education. He is also the current President of the British Columbia School Superintendents Association, CASSA's regional affiliate in BC. The BCSSA celebrates its 132nd anniversary in 2019, marking well over a century of its members inspiring, developing and supporting educational leadership across British Columbia, Canada and the world.

In reflecting on SD 27's decision to hire Chris as its new superintendent, the board noted his demonstrated leadership capabilities, broad understanding of the BC Education Plan, commitment to fiscal responsibility and good governance, and focus on improving student outcomes.

Chris is married to Cathy. In his spare time, in addition to coaching high school basketball, Chris also enjoys fishing. ○

Faces in the Crowd:

Christopher Usih

Christopher Usih is the new Chief Superintendent of Schools at the Calgary Board of Education (CBE). He officially started his work with the CBE, Alberta's largest school board, in December 2018.

Christopher was born and raised in Nigeria and arrived in Canada in 1979. He earned an engineering technology diploma from what is now known as Cape Breton University, and his Bachelor and Master of Education degrees from the University of Manitoba.

From a very early age, Christopher recognized the value of public education and its power to transform lives. He now has 30 years of experience as an educator. Before joining the CBE, he spent 28 years with the Toronto District School Board (TDSB), holding several positions including teacher, principal, Superintendent of Student Success, Associate Director and Executive Superintendent. Before joining the TDSB, Christopher taught in an Indigenous community in northern Manitoba. At every level, he actively engaged and collaborated with educators and partners to support student success.

In addition to receiving a number of academic awards, such as the High School Mathematics Teacher Award, Christopher says he feels the most honour for having been recognized for community service. This is a deep, personal value, he explains, as service to others is the highest calling.

Over the course of his three decades working in education, Christopher has contributed to and led different initiatives that contributed to student success. He is most proud of the work he did as Superintendent of Student Success. In this capacity, he implemented new programs and expanded opportunities to allow more students to complete high school and transition to work or further their education.

He describes his personal style of leadership as follows: "Teamwork gets it done every time! I will not travel alone when it comes to embarking on a meaningful journey. I have always admired leaders who value servant leadership. To me, it is always about service to humanity, not individual adulation."

Calgary Board of Education officials have commented on Christopher's leadership reputation, noting his integrity, efficiency and commitment to equity, raising academic standards, and addressing achievement and opportunity gaps.



"I have always admired leaders who value servant leadership. To me, it is always about service to humanity, not individual adulation."

Christopher is the proud father of two terrific young adults. He is constantly reading and learning new things everywhere he goes, he says. Since he is new to Calgary, Christopher is frequently discovering new "cool" spots, including local bookstores. For fun, he enjoys long distance running and jazz music. ○

Join CASSA in Vancouver!

CASSA's Annual Conference is fast approaching. What better setting than beautiful Vancouver, British Columbia, to focus on healthy living and active learning? Delegates will have opportunities to hear from engaging speakers and breakout session leaders during the day, and then have access to the very best this ocean-side city by the mountains has to offer.

Take advantage of the group rates and book your flight and hotel room today.

Learn more at www.cassa-acgcs.ca.





CASSA-ACGCS
Promoting Quality Education for Our Students

CASSA Awards: Recognizing Outstanding Leadership

As stated in its Purpose, CASSA is the Canadian organization of school system leaders that promotes and supports quality education for the success of all students. The leaders who make up CASSA's membership represent an incredibly broad array of school systems in Canada. No matter the size or demographics of the systems, superintendents, directors-general and directors of education across the country strive for excellence as they support their senior administration teams, school staff and students.

CASSA recognizes the extraordinary efforts of school system leaders through its Honourary Life Membership, Distinguished Service Award and EXL Award.

Honourary Life Membership

This unique award recognizes excellence in education at the national level. It is normally meant to honour individuals who have contributed significantly to CASSA. Occasionally those who have made significant contributions at the provincial affiliate level will be considered for this distinction. This will only happen when those contributions relate to and support CASSA and its national mandate.

Distinguished Service Award

This award recognizes any present or recent CASSA member who has demonstrated outstanding ability and leadership. This award is open to leaders at all stages of their career. It is not meant to honour only those leaders who are retired or nearing retirement; the CASSA Honourary Life Membership would normally be more appropriate for those individuals. These guidelines, however, are not intended to exclude individuals approaching retirement from receiving the Distinguished Service Award.

The CASSA executive will decide which candidates are suited to receive the Honourary Life Membership and the Distinguished Service Award based on the information included in the nomination packages.

EXL Award

The EXL Award recognizes the outstanding leadership of superintendents and directors of education from across Canada. CASSA members who have shown exemplary leadership ability and who have enhanced school administration are eligible to receive this award.

What sort of qualities should an EXL Award nominee have? They will have brought honour to themselves, their colleagues and their profession. They have given exemplary service to their provincial, territorial or national professional association. They have made significant contributions to the field of education through their service, writings or other activities. They serve as role models and teachers to others, and have at least five years of membership in CASSA.

This national award has been presented each year since 2002. CASSA is committed to highlighting the work of extraordinary leaders in education for several reasons:

- It is important to acknowledge the dedication and enthusiasm of administrators who guide children's educational experiences. Recognition is a powerful instrument for building pride in accomplishment and continued determination to pursue excellence.
- System leaders who establish the character of a particular school system's programs through the important work with school boards, school leaders, teachers and caring parents help to determine the scope and quality of children's education experiences.
- Children's attitudes toward learning and their perceptions of themselves as lifelong learners are established in their school years. Effective leadership,

mentoring and modeling determine whether the school jurisdiction effectively creates this environment.

Each year, the EXL Award nominees and the recipient are profiled in this *Leaders & Learners* newsletter. The system leader who receives the EXL Award is also invited to attend the annual AASA conference in the United States as the Canadian Superintendent of the Year.

Since its inception, the EXL Award has been supported by Xerox Canada. CASSA recognizes and is grateful for this longtime partnership. ○



XEROX Canada EXL Award Recipients

Year	EXL Recipient	Affiliate
2018	David Keohane	CASS
2017	Dr. John Malloy	OPSOA
2016	Joan Carr	CASS
2015	John Crocco	OCSOA
2014	Brent Kaulback	NWTSA
2013	Kim Jenkins	CASS
2012	Robert Mills	AAESQ
2011	Linda Fabi Curtis Brown	OPSOA NWTSA
2010	John Mackle	OCSOA
2009	Johanne Messner	OPSOA
2008	Geoff Williams	OPSOA
2007	Carol Gray	AAESQ
2006	Ron Canuel	AAESQ
2005	Edie Wilde	MASS
2004	Ed Wittchen	CASS
2003	Roy Seidler	MASS
2002	John Darroch	CASS

Nominate a Leader You Know!

If you know of a leader whose work deserves to be recognized at a national level, consider putting their name forward for one of these awards. Nomination forms for each award can be found on the CASSA website. Nomination packages are accepted between October 1 and May 16, and the awards are presented at the annual CASSA conference in July.



Call for Presentations: 2019 CASSA Conference

It's time to put forward your leadership team's submission to present a breakout session at the 2019 CASSA Annual Conference.

The call for presentations is open now and will close on March 25, 2019. If your submission is accepted, you will be notified by email by April 15.

This year's gathering is in Vancouver from July 3 to 5 and features the theme *Healthy Living, Active Learning*. Preference will be given to sessions that address school and system practices that relate to the following topics:

- Healthy Active Living;

- Student Mental Health and Wellbeing; and
- Outdoor Play including Risky Play.

Breakout sessions take place on July 4 and 5. We offer both 30- and 60-minute slots at this conference. We welcome individual presenters as well as team-led sessions. Sessions may be presented in either official language. Presenters must be available at the time and date on which CASSA assigns your session.

We require all presenters to pay conference registration fees and to have a registration badge. Your co-presenters need to be aware of this policy as well. Note that we do not offer presenter registration discounts. Suppliers presenting at the conference are expected to have a school system leader as a co-presenter.

Our conference breakout rooms will be equipped with a projector, screen, Wi-Fi and a head table for two. If your presentation requires any extra audiovisual equipment, such as speakers or flipcharts, please let us know. We will do our best to meet your needs. Unfortunately, we cannot provide hardcopy handouts of your presentation to those attending your session. You may, however, distribute your own materials during the session.

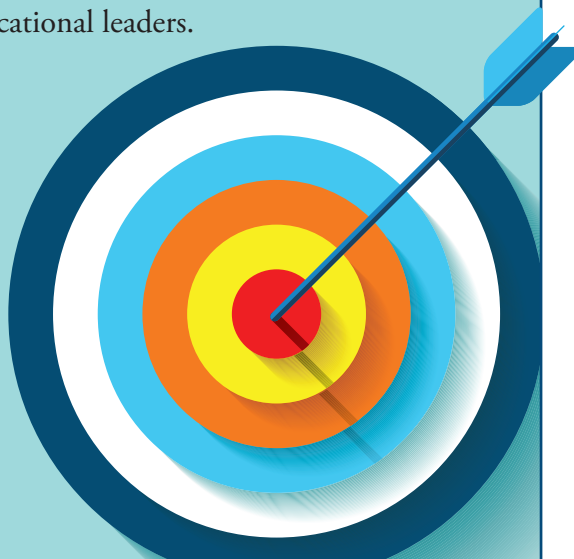
For more information, or to submit your proposal to present, click on the Annual Conference tab on the CASSA website and select "2019 – Call for Presentations." Click this link to fill out the form: <https://form.jotform.com/90075189188265> ○

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