



CASSA-ACGCS
Promoting Quality Education for Our Students

Greetings from the President

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And more!

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

My wife and I recently had the opportunity to spend a week with EF Educational Tours in Portugal and Spain. Our group included 10 other educational

leaders from across the country, along with their spouse or family member. Leading us were two EF employees and one tour guide from Spain. It was a whirlwind tour, departing on a Friday and returning exactly one week and six hours later.

We very much enjoyed getting to know people from different parts of the country, many of whom we had never met. We bonded very quickly and easily adopted the name of “Family” given to us by our tour guide. Throughout the tour, EF reached out asking for our feedback about our experience and learning.

Our schedule was the same as any student group would experience, which included a great deal of walking; the count was about 15,000 steps a day! We enjoyed two scavenger hunts, which forced us to converse, as best we could, with local residents. Like students, we were engaged in experiential learning regarding culture, history and language.

For me, one of the many highlights was learning about the cork industry. Unknown to me, Portugal and Spain have roughly 2.8 million acres of cork forests and are the largest producers of cork in the world. Cork is used for so much more than wine bottles, floors and soles of shoes. Cork is elastic, resilient, buoyant, impermeable, and, of course, biodegradable. I must admit,



Reg Klassen
CASSA/ACGCS President

I found learning about cork and driving by what seemed like endless kilometres of cork forest fascinating.

Our tour guide was a walking Wikipedia about Portugal and Spain. EF ensures knowledgeable guides and guarantees all logistics are looked after. This is very different from the two study tours I led to Germany in the late 80s where, as teachers, we made the reservations, drove the vans, planned the tours and acted as guides. Using EF would have been so much less stressful, and invaluable, when dealing with the unexpected. I would have worried less about logistics and had more time for my students.

I will leave you with the words of David Mann, Executive Director, Strategic Initiatives at EF Education First, which seem appropriate: “In a time of growing intolerance, teaching students about different cultures, and experiencing them firsthand, is an integral part of the recipe for change.”

Thank you EF for a great experience.



The tour group visited the Plaza de Espana in Seville, Spain. It was built for the Iberian-American Exposition in 1929.

Greetings from the Executive Director



Ken Bain
CASSA/ACGCS Executive Director

I recently had the opportunity to participate, on behalf of CASSA, in an informal roundtable discussion on key priorities in education across the country with education partners and members of the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) secretariat.

What is CMEC?

“CMEC is an intergovernmental body that was founded in 1967 by ministers of education to serve as:

- A forum to discuss policy issues;
- A mechanism through which to undertake activities, projects, and initiatives in areas of mutual interest;
- A means by which to consult and cooperate with national education organizations and the federal government; and
- An instrument to represent the education interests of the provinces and territories internationally.

“CMEC provides leadership in education at the pan-Canadian and international levels and contributes to the exercise of the exclusive jurisdiction of provinces and territories over education. CMEC is governed

by an Agreed Memorandum approved by all members. A Chair is elected every two years based on rotation among the provinces. The current Chair is the Honourable Melanie Mark, Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Training, British Columbia. All 13 provinces and territories are members. CMEC celebrates its 50th year in 2017.

Our new timeline provides an overview of CMEC’s milestones since 1967.” (Sourced from the CMEC website: <https://www.cmec.ca/en>)

At the roundtable, I learned about the three main CMEC overarching mandates: policy, Programs, and international connections. I shared CASSA’s main priorities, which include: student mental health and well-being (including an equity lens), staff mental health, and our participation in the Canadian Alliance for Healthy School Communities.

Among the many program and policy areas in which CMEC is involved are: Well-being, Indigenous Education, Global Competencies, Early Learning Childhood and Development, Post-secondary Education, Copyright, and Assessments, among others.

From the international connections perspective, CMEC is very involved with UNESCO’s Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) and its targets (<https://en.unesco.org/education2030-sdg4/targets>), as well as the OECD Education 2030 project (www.oecd.org/education/2030-project/). The SDG4 targets, “ensure inclusive and equitable education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.” (Sourced from <https://en.unesco.org/gem-report/sdg-goal-4>)

CASSA is also proud to support the efforts of CMEC with respect to the Fair Dealings Tool Kit for teachers (<http://fairdealingdecisiontool.ca>).

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Faces in the Crowd: Scott Stinson



Scott is the Superintendent/CEO of School District No. 62, which incorporates the suburbs of Victoria, known as the Western Communities, as well as the mostly rural areas around the sea-side villages of Sooke and Port Renfrew.

Scott Stinson is the Superintendent/CEO of School District No. 62 (Sooke), a large, rapidly growing urban district in the Victoria, B.C. area. He began this new position in August 2018, coming from an assistant superintendent role with nearby School District No. 63 (Saanich). This move marks a return to School Division No. 62 for Scott, as he had been a principal with the district in an earlier phase of his career.

Scott is originally from Duncan, B.C. He attended the University of Victoria where he earned a bachelor of education (physical education/history) and a master of arts in curriculum and instruction.

Scott has worked in education in the Greater Victoria area for over three decades. He began his career in education as a teacher, serving students in secondary, middle and elementary schools. He has also held positions as a middle and elementary school vice-principal and as an elementary school principal. Each level appealed to him for different reasons. At the secondary level, Scott was interested in coaching. When he worked

at the middle school level, he became much more interested in curriculum and pedagogy. Elementary education drew him to the importance of building relationships with students and applying a more holistic perspective to education. He later began to engage in system thinking and change, which led him to work at the senior administration level. Scott is particularly interested in the changes that can be made in classrooms by looking at big issue items.

While with School Division No. 63, Scott was actively engaged in two key processes that brought about positive change in the district. One was related to changing student reporting practices and the other was connected to shifting the way in which students with challenging behaviours are viewed. The reporting project led to a deeper understanding of the importance of ongoing communication between the educator and the student and parents, compared to a single communication effort. Changing Behaviours for Young Students let school teams explore a case study related to student behaviour and let them explore collaborative problem solving with noted child psychologist and author Dr. Ross Greene.

“Scott is particularly interested in the changes that can be made in classrooms by looking at big issue items.”

Scott is committed to a relationship-based style of leadership. He believes:

- Senior leaders need strong relationships to be able to move their work forward in service to students and their families;
- Using strong relationships to leverage this work is the most important thing leaders can do;
- Developing relationships means trusting colleagues to make wise decisions and be accountable for their work; and
- It is important to build structures that allow for a relationship culture to develop.

Scott has been married for 29 years. His wife is a secondary school French immersion and physical education teacher, and they have two children, ages 22 and 19. Both of their children are actively involved in post-secondary sport. Scott enjoys running to stay in shape, along with surfing, paddle boarding and snowboarding for fun. ○

Project HEAVY DUTY



Photos courtesy of Project Heavy Duty – www.prn.bc.ca.

Visit any daycare or elementary school sandbox and you are likely to see children playing with toy dump trucks, bulldozers and excavators. Some of those kids might want to work with heavy equipment in real life when they grow up. School districts can have a role in supporting that interest and directing students toward viable career goals.

Project Heavy Duty at School District No. 60 in northeastern British Columbia is one such education program that helps students to get early experience with heavy equipment. The five-day program, held each year in late May, offers School District No. 60 high school students the chance to receive hands-on training operating rock trucks, graders, bulldozers, crawlers, excavators and logging equipment at actual work-sites near Fort St. John, B.C.

Qualified heavy equipment operators carefully supervise each of the approximately 16 students who take part in this annual learning opportunity. At the start of each program, safety professionals train all students about job site safety procedures and guidelines. As well, each student is given one-on-one safety instructions before they operate any piece of heavy equipment. No student is ever left alone on the heavy equipment and site supervisors oversee each area of the project throughout the five days.

There are four stations set up at the main Project Heavy Duty location, each reflecting a different aspect of the heavy construction industry in the North Peace region:

- The construction of a road;
- A pipeline division;
- A dirt moving component; and
- An active logging operation.

Each station features three to five pieces of heavy equipment. The students are put into four groups, with every group spending

a full day at each station. Every student has a chance to take a turn with the equipment at that station, under the direction of the site's foreperson. Experienced operators in the industry give the students one-on-one instruction on maintaining and operating the machines. Students learn the safety procedures for the site at "tailgate meetings" at the start of the day. The job site also includes a camp trailer, latrines and first aid services.

For the students to have a well-rounded learning experience, the program needs access to equipment and operators, facilities, fuel, first aid services, security services, communications equipment and more. Local contractors, businesses and other agencies have stepped up to make sure the program is well supplied.

Project Heavy Duty offers students a number of benefits, including

- Hands-on experience with heavy equipment to increase their skills for future employment;

- The chance to learn about different career choices;
- The chance to meet local businesspeople and potential employers;
- Work experience at actual job sites;
- The chance to learn workplace safety skills; and
- The chance to learn job application skills, such as resumé writing and interviewing for jobs.

During the five days of the program, students do not attend their regular classes. Instead, they start their days at 7 a.m. at the worksite and continue their learning there until 5 p.m.

To apply to take part in Project Heavy Duty, students submit an application form and resumé at their high school. They then have a job interview. Several factors are considered when students are selected, including

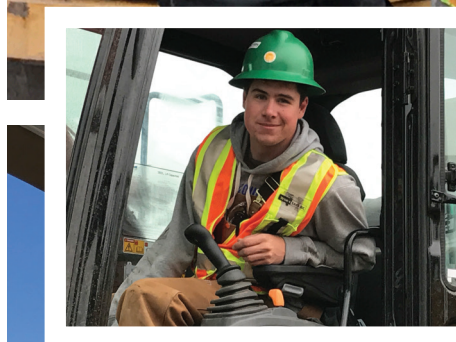
- Career goals;
- Positive work attitude;
- A strong interest in the program;
- Regular school attendance; and
- Maintaining educational program.

For students who choose not to attend college or university after graduation, Project Heavy Duty offers the chance to develop a variety of skills needed in the heavy construction industry. Thanks to the cooperation and support of local contractors and business leaders, School District No. 60 can offer this practical hands-on program to senior secondary students.

The support from industry includes

- Approximately 16 pieces of heavy equipment, such as excavators, backhoes, crawlers/dozers, graders, rock trucks and a variety of logging equipment;
- Skilled operators to train students on the equipment;
- Fuel and lubricant supplies;
- Safety equipment;
- Camp facilities, such as operation centres and latrines;
- First aid services;
- Security services; and
- Communications equipment.

The shared expertise of individuals and companies familiar with the heavy construction industry is key to the success of this program. The kind of partnerships developed between School Division No. 60 and the local business and heavy construction community also reflects parts of the school district's Dream Statement: *We provide a variety of learning environments,*



both in and outside of the classroom and through the integration of technology. With the help of our community partners, we involve students in authentic learning experiences. Students discover and pursue their interests and strengths. They are actively engaged and willing to step outside their comfort zone in order to challenge their learning.

School District No. 60, also known as Peace River North, has its administration offices in Fort St. John. The district serves nearly 6,000 students in 21 schools. This is a diverse school population. Nearly one-fifth of the students are Indigenous, and students from many countries and cultures attend its schools. The character of School Division

No. 60 is also diverse, representing rural and urban ideals and the perspective of both British Columbia and neighbouring Alberta. The people in the region value personal resilience, a strong entrepreneurial spirit and hard work.

David Sloan is the district's Superintendent of Schools. Stephen Petrucci is the Assistant Superintendent of Schools and Doug Boyd is the Assistant Superintendent of Special Projects.

To learn more about Project Heavy Duty and to view photos from recent programs, visit the district's website at www.prn.bc.ca and look under the Programs tab. School District No. 60 is also on Facebook and can be followed on Twitter @sd60. ○

EXL Award Nominees



Each year, CASSA honours the EXL Award recipient at our summer conference. The ceremony for the 2019 award will take place on Wednesday, July 3 at the Sheraton Vancouver Airport Hotel. The recipient is chosen from a selection of high-calibre nominees from across the country, representing a number of CASSA's regional affiliates. This national recipient will also go on to represent CASSA as the Canadian Superintendent of the Year at the annual American School Superintendents Association conference in 2020.

The 2019 nominees include individuals from the Northwest Territories Superintendents' Association (NWTSA), the Ontario Catholic Supervisory Officers' Association (OCSOA) and the College of Alberta School Superintendents (CASS). Thank you to Xerox Canada for its continued support as co-sponsor of the award.

Here are profiles on each of the three deserving nominees. Congratulations to them all.



**SHANNON
BARNETT-
AIKMAN**
Northwest
Territories
Superintendents'
Association

Shannon is the Chief Executive Officer for the Tłı̨chų Community Services Agency, a position she came to hold in April 2018. The TCSA is a government of the Northwest Territories agency that delivers health services, social services and education programs that incorporate the values and principles of the Tłı̨chų people. It also

supports the Tłı̨chų government in carrying out self-government. In her role as CEO, Shannon has successfully implemented a Tłı̨chų language-rich, play-based junior kindergarten program in each of the five Tłı̨chų schools and has established a comprehensive mental health and wellness support model for all students in TCSA schools.

Prior to this, Shannon was the Director of Education for the TCSA from 2012 to 2018; the K-12 Phys. Ed., Health, Wellness, Nutrition Coordinator for the government of the Northwest Territories Department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE); and the principal at Mackenzie Mountain School, a part of the Sahtú Divisional Education Council, from 2005 to 2011. She has also worked as a teacher in the Sahtú Divisional Education Council and at Morpeth Secondary School in London, England.

Among other leadership roles, she has served as NWTSA's representative on the Northwest Territories Teachers' Association and Department of Education's joint NWT Strengthening Teacher Instructional Practices committee; NWTSA's representative on the ECE's Supporting Northern Professionals working group; and the Department of Education's representative on the Pan-Canadian Joint Consortium for School Health.

Shannon earned her master's degree in Education from the University of Calgary, where her studies focused on supporting the continuous improvement of adult learners within the community and workplace environments.

Shannon has been a member of CASSA for seven years. She is the recipient of both the NWTSA Distinguished Service Award and the government of Northwest Territories Long Service Award. Shannon is also the mother of three young children.



**THERESA
KENNEDY**
Ontario Catholic
Supervisory
Officers'
Association

Theresa is the Superintendent of Education for the Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board. Through her dedicated leadership, anchored by faith, she has supported the mission of Catholic education for 27 years.

She has also served the district as a Superintendent of School Effectiveness, system principal and principal. Theresa has committed to honouring the voices and celebrating the strengths of all staff to encourage the best teaching and learning environments for the board's students. She has demonstrated strong communication and strategic planning skills through progressively challenging leadership portfolios and has worked collaboratively to develop strategic directions for the board.

Theresa has demonstrated fiscal responsibility for managing budgets for a variety of programs and departments. She led the planning and implementation of full-day kindergarten at the board and developed strong partnerships with its childcare managers. Working hard with her team, Theresa has supported and directed the implementation of the board's Mental Health, Addictions and Well-being Strategy.

Theresa has chaired many board committees, including the Special Education Advisory Committee, Social Justice Committee and Catholic Character and Culture Committee. She has sat as chair of the Regional Special Education Committee for Eastern Ontario and chair and co-chair of the Hastings & Prince Edward Children and Youth Services Network.

She has also chaired the Kingston Centre Accommodation Review Committee, is a core member of the Moving on Mental Health Committee with lead agencies in the region and serves as an ALCDDB representative on youth homelessness and youth employment advisory committees.

She served as both vice president and president of OCSOA and as its representative for CASSA and has previously been honoured with the OCSOA Past President Award and OCSOA President Award. Theresa has been a CASSA member for 10 years.



DR. CINDI VASELENAK
College of
Alberta School
Superintendents

Cindi is the Chief Superintendent of Evergreen Catholic Schools in Spruce Grove, Alberta, a position she has held since 2009. She has been an educational leader for over 32 years, serving as a teacher, a

curriculum coordinator and an administrator with Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools as well as an administrator with Parkland School Division. Cindi first came to Evergreen Catholic Schools as a principal in 2001 and was appointed Deputy Superintendent in 2006. A lifelong learner, she earned her doctorate while continuing to work full time as an educator.

Cindi's many accomplishments in education include her leadership in system excellence; her leadership in global citizenship, social justice and awareness; and building capacity in school leadership through the EXCEL (Excellence in Catholic Educational Leadership) Academy.

As Superintendent of Evergreen, Cindi created a strong structure around change management. Seeing the inequity in school supports due to size, she placed a guaranteed

“Cindi’s ability to see the whole system and to develop the proper supports has allowed Evergreen Catholic Schools to become an innovator and leader in change management.”

minimal amount of counselling, inclusive education support and instructional coaching in all Evergreen schools. Cindi’s ability to see the whole system and to develop the proper supports has allowed Evergreen Catholic Schools to become an innovator and leader in change management.

She has served on the CASS board of directors for three years and as CASS zone president for two years. Cindi has also served on the Council of Catholic School Superintendents of Alberta (CCSSA) as president for two years and as the chair of the Provincial Second Languages Consortium for three years. She also sits on the board of directors for MindFuel, an organization committed to developing and distributing hands-on and online science programs. Cindi has been a member of CASSA for 12 years. ○

Read past issues of this Newsletter and the *Leaders & Learners* magazine at <https://www.cassa-acgcs.ca>.

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Share Your Success Stories!

**EQUITY
AND
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FOR STUDENT WELL-BEING
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Write for the
Winter 2018-2019
issue OR the
Summer 2020 issue of
Leaders & Learners!

We are looking for features and success stories from each region of Canada: Eastern Canada, Quebec, Ontario, Western Canada and Northern Canada.

THEME: EQUITY AND INCLUSION FOR STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

We are looking for articles about how schools, school districts and community partners are **supporting every student** through programs, community partnerships, professional development for principals/teachers, etc, that promote *Equity and Inclusion for Student Mental Health and Well-being*.

The Winter 2019-2020 will drop into the mail the first week of January 2020. The Summer 2020 edition will be mailed to readers in Spring 2020, and will be available to attendees at our Conference, which will be held July 2-4, 2020, at St. Andrews By-the-Sea, New Brunswick, and is focused on this same theme.

If you have an article idea that fits into this theme, please send a short abstract (50 to 100 words) to Shannon Savory, editor of the magazine, at ssavory@matrixgroupinc.net, and copy ken_bain@cassa-acgcs.ca.

Proposals are due: September 13, 2019
Final articles are due: November 1, 2019
Photos are welcome (must be high resolution)
You will be notified if your abstract is selected.



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