

# LEADERSHIP UPDATE

Volume 8

Number 1

## 50 Years of the CSA! What Does the Future Hold for Our Organization?

*Holly Godson and Garnet Goertzen*

Over the past 50 years, the Council on School Administration (CSA) has been actively involved in research, providing professional development, serving as a sounding board for issues and concerns arising from the field, and acting as an advocate and a voice for school leaders at the local, provincial and national levels. The CSA continues to evolve. Over the next year or so, the CSA will take on a new look, expand its vision and continue to build on what it has been doing successfully for 50 years—representing you, our school leaders.

When we talk about educational leadership, we talk about the heart of learning and of learning communities. Whatever the configuration of the learning community—an elementary school, a school division, a specialist council—each and every member of that team has the potential and should have the opportunity to take on a leadership role, no matter how large or how small. As a team, as educators, as leaders and as learners, we can make a difference, but it can no longer be left to a select few. We live in an interesting age where change is no longer a choice and lifelong learning is no longer a cliché. It is a place where we are more connected and more vulnerable, and where we have more opportunity to be open to new ideas and ways of looking through the eyes of a learner—as a learner.

What does the future hold for our organization? This question was addressed through our strategic planning activity in the spring of 2011. As we move forward, we will take full advantage of the increased ease of communication through technology while striving to maintain the face-to-face conversations and sharing that we value. The dynamic we seek to create will strengthen networking capacity within our organization.

Conversations among our CSA executive have led us to understand that it is time to update our image. Much has changed in 50 years. In the coming months, the CSA will rebrand itself to better represent our image as educational leaders. This will likely result in a name and logo change.

To increase the power of networking, we will build a database for members, with optional fields to describe specific characteristics of your school in order to facilitate collegial connections that in turn will facilitate professional growth. Your executive sees provincial networking as having the potential to create a culture of peer support outside one's regular scope of district administrative councils, to enable links between colleagues that can lead to interschool visitations. We also are working toward building connections between school administrators on the national and international levels. Short-term exchanges



**First say to yourself what you would be; and then do what you have to do. Life is a grindstone. Whether it wears you down or polishes you up depends on what you are made of.**

**—Zig Ziglar**



in which administrators from high-performing schools can share experiences and knowledge will prove to be enlightening and enriching. Your organization will build opportunities for professional growth that will be highlights in your career development.

In anticipation of the formalization of the Principal Quality Standard, the CSA will take a lead in developing meaningful professional development to ensure that our members are highly skilled and prepared to meet these expectations for school-based leaders. We will strive to make our conferences richer by designing opportunities for collaboration and dialogue between administrators in similar work circumstances. Look forward to research-based themes that you can move into practice in your schools.

With this in mind, the CSA is looking forward to an exciting few years, with some outstanding PD being offered for all education leaders. The Western Canadian Educational Administrators Conference is also going through a transformation and will take on a new look and format called Leadership.11 (to be held in October in Edmonton), followed by Leadership.12, Leadership.13 and so on—each building on the previous conference. The Educational Leadership Academy will continue to be offered in July in a retreat format. Talk about a great way for education leaders to develop a professional network! In addition, we are excited to be hosting the Canadian Association of Principals 2013 national conference April 21–24 at the Banff Springs Hotel.

But we are going beyond national: we will be inviting delegates from around the world to share, interact and grow with our Alberta school leaders. The CSA recognizes the importance of understanding the promising practices coming out of Asian and European education systems, and feels that Albertans and Canadians need this opportunity to draw on wider experiences than our own. In April 2013, we will welcome the world to Banff to share school leadership and education strategies that are changing how schools function in the 21st century. We hope you will join us.

To ensure ongoing communication from your CSA, go to the ATA website ([www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca)) and register for ongoing CSA specialist council membership.



Q & A

GORDON THOMAS  
Executive Secretary

**Q:** What PD programs does the ATA offer for school staffs?

**A:** Operating under its mandate to improve professional practice, the Association has a number of professional development programs and services available to school staffs throughout the province. Currently, the Association offers more than 40 workshops to support school-based PD and school improvement initiatives.

All workshops use the principles of adult learning and incorporate a range of facilitation strategies to encourage conversation and reflection. These full- and half-day workshops are delivered by a corps of practising teachers and school administrators who will customize the workshop to meet the needs of your staff. The total cost for a workshop offered at your school site is only \$100. For more information about ATA workshops, look for the workshop poster mailed to your school and visit the ATA website at [www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca).

As a benefit of Association membership every ATA member can select one specialist council membership at no cost. The specialist council memberships are continuous from year to year or until the teacher makes a new selection. Currently, there are 21 specialist councils serving the full range of teaching specialties from K to 12. Specialist councils offer a variety of programs and services, including websites, newsletters and journals, regional workshops and an annual conference. Please encourage your teachers to visit the ATA website to activate their specialist council membership.

The Council on School Administration (CSA) is the specialist council focused on supporting school administrators. It offers professional development and networking opportunities such as conferences, publications, workshops and regional meetings. The CSA is a provincial advocate for school administrators, representing your issues and concerns to Alberta Education, the College of Alberta School Superintendents (CASS) and the Association. For more information about the CSA, visit <http://csa.teachers.ab.ca>.



# The Evolution of the CSA

*Neil Fenske and Kathleen Murphy-House*

The experience of being a member of the Council on School Administration (CSA) can be framed in terms of collegiality and professional dialogue, because that is really what comes to mind when we think about our history.

The CSA enables and promotes professional dialogue through our many PD offerings. For decades, the CSA has provided learning opportunities to members through the annual Western Canadian Educational Administrators Conference and the Banff Leadership Seminar. These wonderful PD events have been planned and organized by volunteer CSA members who are also full-time school administrators, balancing their school life and organizing amazing first-class learning for our province's school leaders. Added to this list of outstanding PD opportunities is the Educational Leadership Academy and the recent launch of the Leadership Essentials for Administrators conference, both of which boast top-notch national and international presenters. The CSA has always worked to fulfill its mandate statement of Basic Beliefs by offering "theoretical and practical research that expands the knowledge base of educational administrators."

When it comes to collegiality, the CSA has worked diligently over the

years to forge a positive relationship between school administrators and the ATA. When we began our careers as school administrators, it was deemed to be a lonely job at the top, with few supports when conflict arose between teachers and administrators. Teachers had the luxury of calling the ATA for advice and support, but administrators felt that the same support was not available to them. Administrators tended to stick it out on their own and often chose not to call the ATA for advice. As a result, there was a common misconception that the ATA was not supportive of school administrators. However, Julius Buski (then ATA executive secretary) listened to the CSA and, with Provincial Executive Council (PEC), established the position of ATA staff advisor for administrators. Susan Fraser was the first in this position, followed by Konni deGoeij. We also recognize CSA statesmen such as Wayne Street, David Woloshyn and Lee Koran, who calmly and purposefully led us through this transition period. The CSA developed a Call Sooner campaign. The message to administrators was that they had someone to call for support and that they should call sooner rather than wade through issues and concerns by themselves. Essentially, the message was that administrators were not alone.

The campaign was very successful, and administrators around the province now call the ATA for advice without hesitation.

The other historic event for the CSA was gaining recognition as truly being a voice for administrators. When Alberta's Commission on Learning (ACOL) released its report in the fall of 2003, one of the recommendations was to establish a new Council of Education Executives to provide certification, ongoing support and professional development for principals and assistant principals. There was a possibility that administrators would be pulled out of the ATA. In a survey of our school leaders, over 90 per cent of administrators around the province stated unequivocally that they did not want to leave the ATA. We were heard loud and clear, and the ACOL recommendation was not considered by the minister of education. The CSA was recognized for our work on behalf of school leaders, and we were invited to provide representation on numerous committees and panels in the province. For example, the Blue Ribbon Panel on the School Administrator was formed and ultimately produced a white paper, and an Administrators Issues and Concerns Committee was established.

The CSA has become the voice for Alberta's school administrators.

To find archived issues of *Leadership Update* go to [www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca) and click on **Other Publications** (under **Publications**), then go to **School Administrators**.

Feedback is welcome. Please contact Konni deGoeij, associate coordinator, administrator assistance, Member Services, at [konni.degoeij@ata.ab.ca](mailto:konni.degoeij@ata.ab.ca).

# Alberta Education Study

## CSA Past Presidents

1961/62	H A Wallin
1962/63	N P Hrynyk
1963/64	R Warren
1964/65	Dr J H M Andrews
1965/66	Harold J Hall
1966/67	A M Arbeau
1967/68	N J Chamchuk
1968/69	Alvin Myhre
1969/70	F P O'Hara
1970/71	Dr Eugene Ratsoy
1971/72	Dr Frank Oliva
1972/73	H P Chomik
1973/74	G E Sisko
1974/75	Dr L Bunyan
1975/76	Dr E J Ingram
1976/77	Dr E J Ingram
1977/78	John Enns
1978/79	Don Vinge
1979/80	Dr Eugene Falkenberg
1980/81	John W Zyp
1981/82	Dr Robert Bryce
1982/83	Keith Sterling
1983/84	Peter Waldron
1984/85	Jim Weed
1985/86	Claude Oppenheim
1986/87	John Slaughter
1987/88	Mike Barbero
1988/89	Bruce D Brandt
1989/90	R Michael Allen
1990/91	Robert J Wilson
1991/92	Marlene Russell
1992/93	Don Ross
1993/94	Norval Horner
1994/95	Carol Steen
1995/96	Terry Storch
1996/97	Al Bellamy
1997/98	Carl McColl
1998/99	Lee Koran
1999/2000	David Wolosyn
2000/01	David Wolosyn
2001/02	Lee Koran
2002/03	Lee Koran
2003/04	Lee Koran
2004/05	Wayne Street
2005/06	Johanna Juergensen
2006/07	Kathleen Murphy-House
2007/08	Kathleen Murphy-House
2008/09	Garnet Goertzen
2009/10	Garnet Goertzen
2010/11	Garnet Goertzen
2011/12	Holly Godson

## Dr Robert Garneau

In support of its *Alberta School Leadership Framework* initiative, Alberta Education will undertake an extensive research study on the current state of school leadership in Alberta in October 2011. Representatives from stakeholder organizations and institutions, including the Alberta Teachers' Association, have endorsed the study.

The overall objective of the study is to collect data on the state of school leadership in Alberta in order to define possible gaps between the vision of school leadership found in the *Alberta School Leadership Framework* and current practice and contexts. The perspectives of principals, assistant principals, associate principals, vice-principals, teachers and school superintendents will be studied in relation to school leaders'

- day-to-day practice,
- preparation,
- induction and
- professional development.

The study will also look at the challenges of school leader attraction, development and retention.

The study data will be collected through online surveys, telephone interviews and regional focus groups, through a contractor (Leger Marketing). The data collected will be analyzed in relation to the following themes:

- The nature of school principals' leadership practice

- How principals prioritize responsibilities
- The extent to which the dimensions contained in the 2009 Principal Quality Practice Guideline (PQPG) are being implemented
- The impediments to school principals' demonstration of the PQPG
- Challenges and focuses of school leaders' practice
- School leaders' perceptions regarding the efficacy of current school leader preparation, induction and professional learning programs in Alberta and facility of access to those programs
- The perceptions of superintendents and a sample of teachers on various aspects of school leadership in Alberta

The findings will inform the School Leadership Framework Working Committee as it develops an implementation and communication plan for the *Alberta School Leadership Framework*.

Participation in the study is voluntary, and all information collected will be used for research purposes only and will be kept confidential, in accordance with Alberta's *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

For further information regarding the study, contact Dr Bob Garneau, senior manager, Professional Standards Branch, Alberta Education, at 780-422-8233 or [Bob.Garneau@gov.ab.ca](mailto:Bob.Garneau@gov.ab.ca).