

Principl(ed)

VOL. 1 - ISSUE 2 - MARCH 2020

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Leadership

Leveraging
Relationships

Identifying
Obstacles

Retirement
Reading

A Day in the Life

of a District Principal

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The Journal of the BC Principals'
& Vice-Principals' Association

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Principl(ed)

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The BCPVPA welcomes
editorial contributions

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The BC Principals' & Vice-Principals' Association (BCPVPA) is a voluntary professional association representing school leaders employed as Principals and Vice-Principals in BC's public education system. The BCPVPA provides its members with the professional services and supports they need to provide exemplary leadership in public education.

We are proud to have more than 2500 Members in the province's 60 school districts, and BCPVPA membership is open to any Principal, Vice-Principal or Director of Instruction at the school or district level. All school districts in the province have a local Principal and Vice-Principal association recognized as a Chapter of the BCPVPA.

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In my role as President I'm frequently asked to provide perspectives that reflect a school leader's experiences.

Using a recent example, I was invited by the Honourable Shane Simpson, Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, to discuss what accessibility and inclusion could look like in British Columbia as part of the process to develop a Framework for Accessibility and Inclusion legislation. During the briefing, we discussed ways to identify, prevent and remove barriers that limit the participation of people with disabilities in their communities and – specifically – in schools.

Typically, I am comfortable with and confident in these conversations through my 28-year career as a teacher, Vice-Principal and then Principal. In the past 6 years, in my current role and as a Director, my awareness of the diversity of the community contexts that Principals and Vice-Principals both work and live in has grown exponentially. Reflecting on my own experiences and recent visits to more than 45 school districts, I was able to share a number of pragmatic examples with Minister Simpson. We also discussed the complex nature of the systems that connect to and affect our schools, including our

Permission to Breathe

**Sustaining Leadership in
Complex Systems**

David DeRosa

*is the 2018-2020 President of the BCPVPA,
and a former Director of the Board*

communities and geography. The Ministry is engaged in very complex work, and I am grateful to support the process. With this in mind, I invited the Minister and his team to engage with students through our bi-annual BC Student Voice Summit and to hear their important contextual perspective.

As initiatives such as this intersect with the roles of Principals and Vice-Principals, I remain conscious of the complicated nature of our work, and the reality that our roles and responsibilities continue to place an increasing demand on our skills and capacities.

Many years ago, I fully engaged in the 'relationships, relationships, relationships' approach in my roles as a teacher, coach and leader, and I continue to be a 'relationships first' leader. I have worked with people my whole life, not widgets. I learned long ago that human connectedness is critical to individual and team engagement, and therefore necessary if we intend our generative work to lead to transformative change.

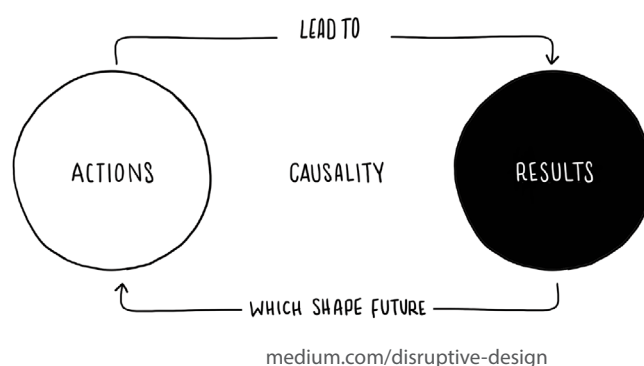
What I did not learn in those early days was the necessary skills to sustain myself when engaging in countless relationships, and the ever-increasing emotional toll that empathy can have when left 'unattended'. Supporting the diverse needs of others is the work I signed on for, but without a strategy to monitor and re-set myself to a baseline over the long haul, that is not sustainable. My strategy was more likely to keep moving faster, as the action of engaging in the work was easier than the development of new strategies to sustain myself. Or, even easier: how many weeks until Spring Break? Sound familiar?

To sustain our capacity to lead complex systems requires us to live in self-care, rather than setting aside time for self-care.

~Mette Boell

I see that same lack of strategy catching up to friends and colleagues, not just in education but in many different sectors and roles where care, support and positive relationships are necessary. Leadership roles are complicated, and time is finite.

Fortunately, and with gratitude to colleagues and mentors like Pippa Rowcliffe at HELP UBC, Jack MacNeill from humanworks, Dr. Mark Edwards at UBC and Peter Senge at MIT, I have learned a number of new strategies that I am now sharing with others, so that they have the option of incorporating the ideas into their vision for their leadership journey. Today, I give myself permission to breathe in the rhythms of the day and the work, with the goal of sustaining relationships and sustaining myself. I also apply systems thinking tools when I am working with my complex responsibilities.



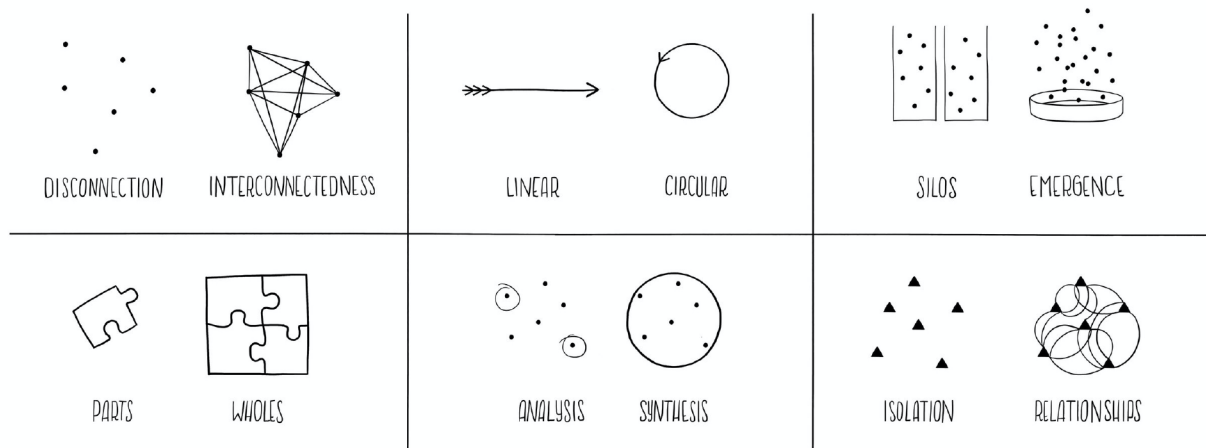
**Today's problems
are often
yesterday's solutions.**

~Peter Senge

When asked to engage in a problem-solving activity, I no longer look for the quick fixes related to the basic input and output of the situation. It's never that simple. Simple often leads to more challenges down the road. We work in very complex systems

that rely on human connectedness and relationships. Having an awareness of how we as individuals 'fit' in the system with our teams, and recognizing the many relationships that connect to our decisions, are skills that we can learn and utilize in our practice. Reducing complex problems to simple components to deal with in isolation eliminates the relationships that are critical to the success of the solution we are seeking, and limits our capacity to move forward with 'real' solutions.

TOOLS OF A SYSTEM THINKER



@disruptdesign

medium.com/disruptive-design

" ... I no longer look for the quick fixes related to the basic input and output of the situation. It's never that simple. Simple often leads to more challenges down the road."

I started on this journey 20 months ago and although there was no 'how-to' guide for the role of President, I made some assumptions and held a few beliefs regarding expectations. I assumed that my vision for this role and the work I was launching required communication, strategic planning, research and data analysis, and the development of a networking mindset.

All were true, but I missed one critical piece: I am no good to anyone if I am burned out and emotionally drained. When I developed an awareness of self within the system, I gave myself permission to breathe and I created the space to sustain my physical and emotional energy. By sharing and modelling this vision, I am hopeful that others will recognize a bit of their own journey in mine, and follow suit by giving themselves permission to breathe.

" Give yourself permission to breathe."

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The work and responsibilities of school leaders can vary greatly from elementary to middle to secondary, from region to region, and from school to school.

A Day in the Life offers a snapshot of BCPVPA members in their roles, and shares their thoughts on their path, their practice and why they love what they do.

In this second installment of *A Day in the Life*, we meet District Principal Selma Smith of the Surrey School District.

In January 2020, Selma joined the Surrey School District as District Principal, Student Support (Universal Design for Learning) following two years as District Vice-Principal, and two and a half years as District Principal for Social Emotional Learning & Prevention in Vancouver.

When Selma Smith was 13 years old, she would cycle with her father down 10th Avenue from Cambie Street in Vancouver. On that route, she saw a building being constructed with sleek glass and modern lines, a standout on the block. She stopped and told her father that – someday – she would work there. As a carpenter, her father was perplexed and asked why she would choose to work in a building with so much glass? The temperature would just never be right. But Selma was resolute.

While Selma didn't completely fulfill her dream of working in our BCPVPA building, she came close.

Selma's professional journey as a school leader has been influenced by her own early-learning experiences, and her compassionate approach to supporting others. She fulfilled a long-time goal when she graduated from the UBC Faculty



of Education in 2000, and immediately joined the West Vancouver School District as a full-time high school social studies and geography teacher. “When I was in elementary school, I had teachers who inspired me to love learning; but you know, when you're young you get involved in lots of different things,” says Selma. “It wasn't until grade 12 that my geography teacher Ms. Kelly Hawbolt had such a positive influence on me: her style, and her approach to learning really resonated with me and inspired me to pursue a four-year geography degree at Simon Fraser University.”

It was during that time that Selma decided to apply to teacher education. “Again, it was really Kelly Hawbolt who influenced me, she connected so well with young people and really made time. I had my own struggles in school: I was an English-language learner with non-English-speaking parents, and I needed to work that extra mile, with writing especially.” Selma returned to Kelly Hawbolt when she got her first position in West Vancouver as a geography teacher. “I thought it was so ironic that I had done a middle school practicum in Coquitlam, and my first teaching job happened to be five

teaching blocks of geography 12. Kelly Hawbolt was still teaching in the Vancouver School District: she really helped me to get going for my first term and I still keep in touch with her.”

In the Spring of 2002, Selma took the opportunity to teach at an American International School in Guadalajara, Mexico. As a first-generation Canadian, she had a real-world understanding of the challenges students and families can experience, of settling in a new country and operating in different languages at school and at home.

“My dad was a refugee from Germany in the early 1950s, and my mom is from Mexico, so both my parents didn't really speak English. My Dad hired a tutor so that he could learn Spanish to communicate with my mom, and my mother learned German with the help of other Germans in Vancouver. When I grew up, I learned Spanish, German and English: my parents learned a bit of English but I was often translating for them. I have two siblings, a younger brother and an older brother, and somehow as the middle child I became the school spokesperson



connecting between my parents and the school for my younger brother.”

“I think having lived experience as a first-generation Canadian, and in thinking about teaching a lot of our newcomer families or ELL families, I know how fortunate we are to have multicultural workers and settlement workers who can help families. When I was growing up in the early eighties, I don't think that was accessible, so I can now appreciate the importance of having those enhanced services in a District.”

Through working with many families from many different countries at her school in Guadalajara, Selma recognized how the support for life-changes can have an impact. “It's how someone copes with those changes, especially if they don't have any support. When I came back to Canada, I worked on my master's degree in Counselling Psychology: I wanted to have more of those skills and found that counselling work and therapeutic relationship work was so interesting.”

"I had an opportunity to really see what it means to wrap around a student and work as a team."

Selma completed her degree in three years and after two years of teaching on call she was hired for a counselling position in a Vancouver elementary school, beginning 12 years of counselling at about 20 different Vancouver schools. “Elementary school counsellors are typically split between different schools and it was a pivotal part of my career to learn how to work with so many different students, colleagues, parents and community partners. I had an opportunity to really see what it means to wrap around a student and work as a team.”

Selma's decision in 2013 to apply for a role as a Vice-Principal offered the opportunity to plant roots in one school, leading to two years as VP of Renfrew Elementary. “It opened my eyes to a different role of administration. Working approximately 80% teaching and 20% as a Vice-Principal, I got to



"Shop talk does not end at work for me, I feel very fortunate to have a very supportive husband, who is an elementary school teacher. Discussions around inclusive learning practices as well as the purpose of schooling and learning are regular topics of discussion for us. From this I feel my compassion and humility are derived.

We are both competitive athletes who train and compete in our respective sports. (*Tennis is my sport and my husband Sean, is a Slo-Pitch player*). From the beginning of Spring until Labour Day, many of our weekends involve travel throughout BC and the USA for tournaments.

Mind and body health are two important aspects to well-being. As a young athlete I was drawn to sports psychology as I learned the power the mind can have during a high performance activity.

I feel it is crucial to give all of our youth a foundational understanding of mental health literacy. This way, mental health/ mind health is normalized and youth have the tools they need to manage their emotions or to seek help for themselves or others.

work with all of the students but predominantly the primary students which was new for me. They had also just launched a brand-new Montessori program in the school, so I was involved in building out that program at Renfrew which is a dual-track school. It was a very exciting time to be a Vice-Principal: one minute you're doing something at the micro-level and then you turn around and you're planning a school-wide winter concert event. I was constantly on-the-go and loved every moment!"

Selma's recent role as a District Principal in Vancouver involved supporting student learning in the areas of social emotional learning and prevention, and inclusive learning. That District has both school-based administrators and District Principals who have assigned portfolios that include Indigenous Education, Alternate & Alternative Learning, International Education, Student Information Systems and Inclusive Learning.

The staff teams provide either direct support to students through added staffing or support through collaboration with teachers and other staff departments, and provide professional development training opportunities for staff along with parent education and engagement.

"I brought people together and focussed on how we could improve outcomes for students: that drives all of my work."

Student learning is the priority in the Vancouver School District, with 100 elementary schools, 18 high schools, alternate programs and adult education programs. In her role as District Principal, Selma was accessible to all of those sites and provided support as needed. "I could be contacted by school parents – often they would reach out to me for support in navigating our system. I worked with community partners who may have questions around student safety and mental health initiatives. In that District Principal role, I was a leader but very

much a collaborator with community partners, with staff and with families. I brought people together and focussed on how we could improve outcomes for students: that drives all of my work."

Selma adds, "With Vancouver being a large urban area, there are so many different services in the city, but what I heard over and over were questions about how to navigate these services. Where do I start? Where do I go? I worked to help staff, families and students to understand where they can go to get support for student well-being, mental health and student safety."

Selma reflects on her years with the Vancouver

What advice would you offer to other Principals or Vice-Principals who may be considering a District role?

"I think it's important to have a growth mindset, to be your own person, to challenge yourself and take risks and be authentic.

Authenticity is really important in a District Principal role because you are one person in that role and you want to build on those positive relationships and find ways to support professional learning networks.

I would encourage someone to speak to the people who are currently doing that role, and to ask them what their day is like, what they do each day. It's a practical question, because I think a lot of perceptions may exist."

School District and what she's learned. "I think in the work that I'm doing and will continue to do, having student voice has been incredibly important to me. As a District leader it's been critical to have committees with student voice: those are real opportunities for youth to share their experiences and thoughts, where I can also connect directly with them. Students know their voices are being heard, and that's really important to me in my role."

The integration of social emotional learning (SEL) into the system has made a difference in deepening the understanding of school leaders and staff. "Site-based Principals are utilizing a lot of these tools in their school growth plans, and looking at the adult SEL competencies, there's more of a common language and it's understood. I think people are seeing the value of the foundation when you're implementing an SEL approach to your classroom or to your school; research has shown that there's a positive impact on academic achievement, so I would say it's something that many schools want to be part of."

Selma continues, "For parents and families, there is an increasing demand for opportunities to learn about SEL and we are sending home materials and resources for parents so that they understand what their child is learning at school, and what SEL is. We understand that parent education is important."

A core component of Selma's journey has been reflective practice. "It's vital to take the time to reflect on your own practice and how you connect with others. People feel heard, they feel understood and feel valued, and we can look for ways to improve our service delivery. It's important to me that the staff teams I work with feel that they're continuing to learn, and can find joy and pride in their work with each other. We are working together to improve outcomes for our little ones."

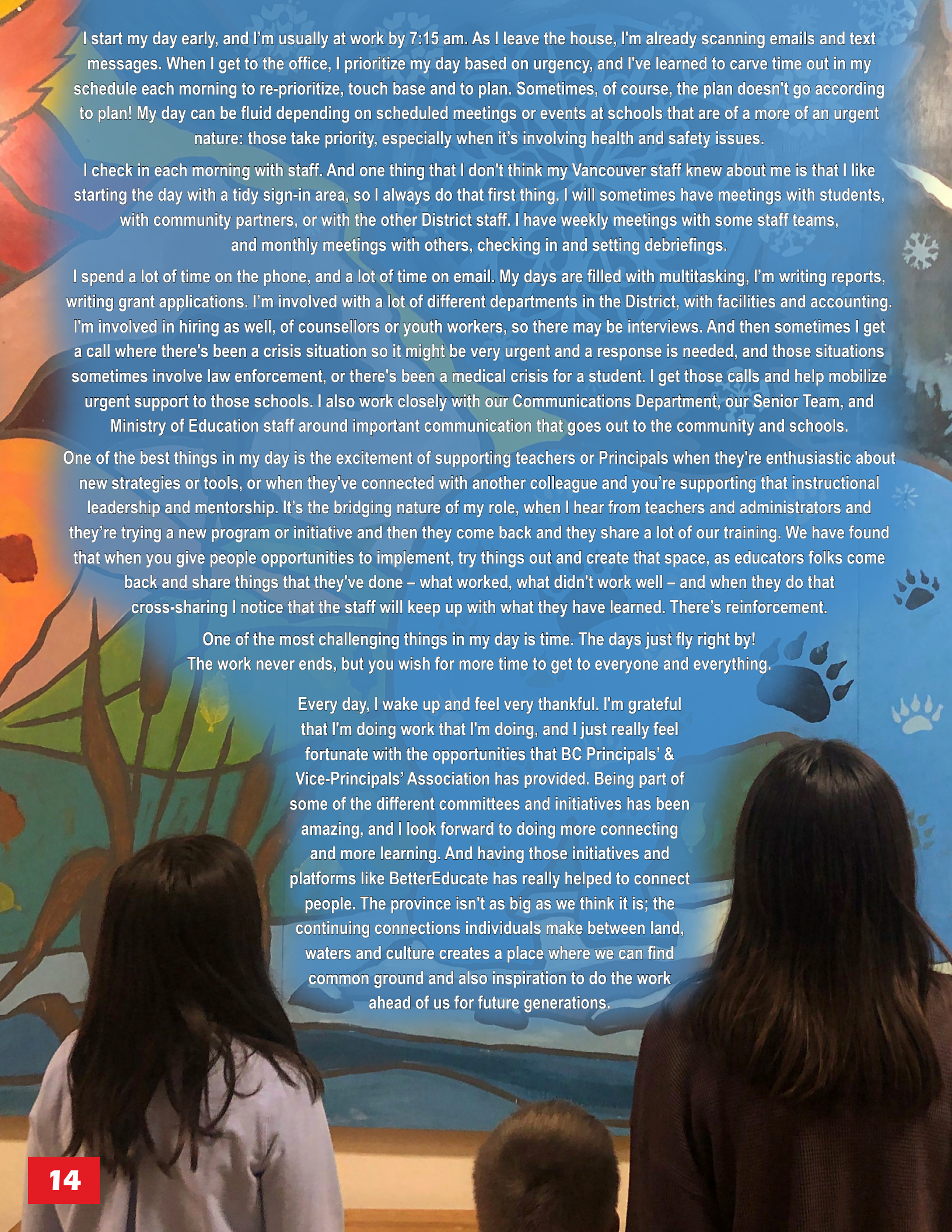
With Selma's January 2020 move to her new role in the Surrey School District, she is excited to bring her experience and strategies to Surrey schools.

"There's a balance that I help find in terms of reactive vs. proactive strategies. I provide a lot of proactive strategies and supports to schools so that if there is the need for a reactive strategy for a crisis or emerging situation, we have hopefully connected previously in fostering proactive supports with the school."

"I hope to continue to liaise with neighbouring School Districts: in Vancouver, we did a lot of sharing of training opportunities, a lot of wonderful support for student safety and well-being initiatives and we collaborated with other districts to co-develop learning tools such as Competency Based IEPs."

"My hope for the work that I'm involved with is that students feel a sense of identity, belonging and connection to their school community."

"My hope for the work that I'm involved with is that students feel a sense of identity, belonging, and connection to their school community. If we're looking at engagement, and we have students that are not attending, how could we better support or meet them where they're at? I meet with parents and students, sometimes under circumstances where there's been a safety issue or a school climate issue, and my role is to support re-engagement or transition so that student has support. I often meet students and their families at challenging times and so I've been the person to help walk with them through that journey. Over the years, I've had families and students that keep in touch with me as they've moved forward in the system. It feels good, and you know they're reaching out because they want to and not because they have to. Sometimes I haven't seen a student and their family for years, and then I hear from them down the road; when they leave that support, they know I'm just a call or an email away."



I start my day early, and I'm usually at work by 7:15 am. As I leave the house, I'm already scanning emails and text messages. When I get to the office, I prioritize my day based on urgency, and I've learned to carve time out in my schedule each morning to re-prioritize, touch base and to plan. Sometimes, of course, the plan doesn't go according to plan! My day can be fluid depending on scheduled meetings or events at schools that are of a more of an urgent nature: those take priority, especially when it's involving health and safety issues.

I check in each morning with staff. And one thing that I don't think my Vancouver staff knew about me is that I like starting the day with a tidy sign-in area, so I always do that first thing. I will sometimes have meetings with students, with community partners, or with the other District staff. I have weekly meetings with some staff teams, and monthly meetings with others, checking in and setting debriefings.

I spend a lot of time on the phone, and a lot of time on email. My days are filled with multitasking, I'm writing reports, writing grant applications. I'm involved with a lot of different departments in the District, with facilities and accounting. I'm involved in hiring as well, of counsellors or youth workers, so there may be interviews. And then sometimes I get a call where there's been a crisis situation so it might be very urgent and a response is needed, and those situations sometimes involve law enforcement, or there's been a medical crisis for a student. I get those calls and help mobilize urgent support to those schools. I also work closely with our Communications Department, our Senior Team, and Ministry of Education staff around important communication that goes out to the community and schools.

One of the best things in my day is the excitement of supporting teachers or Principals when they're enthusiastic about new strategies or tools, or when they've connected with another colleague and you're supporting that instructional leadership and mentorship. It's the bridging nature of my role, when I hear from teachers and administrators and they're trying a new program or initiative and then they come back and they share a lot of our training. We have found that when you give people opportunities to implement, try things out and create that space, as educators folks come back and share things that they've done – what worked, what didn't work well – and when they do that cross-sharing I notice that the staff will keep up with what they have learned. There's reinforcement.

One of the most challenging things in my day is time. The days just fly right by!
The work never ends, but you wish for more time to get to everyone and everything.

Every day, I wake up and feel very thankful. I'm grateful that I'm doing work that I'm doing, and I just really feel fortunate with the opportunities that BC Principals' & Vice-Principals' Association has provided. Being part of some of the different committees and initiatives has been amazing, and I look forward to doing more connecting and more learning. And having those initiatives and platforms like BetterEducate has really helped to connect people. The province isn't as big as we think it is; the continuing connections individuals make between land, waters and culture creates a place where we can find common ground and also inspiration to do the work ahead of us for future generations.



A Day in the Life of a District Principal

- 6:45 am** Check texts, review specific emails for student support needs
- 7:30 am** Arrive at the District office, check emails, check voice messages, re-prioritize day if needed
- 7:45 am** Review and re-assign support staff to schools where support is waitlisted
- 8:00 am** Staff arrive, staff check-ins, greet and welcome on-call staff
- 8:15 am** Prepare for meetings/ school visits or presentations/ workshops for the day
- 9:00 am** District Autism Team meeting
- 10:00 am** Weekly meeting of incoming collaboration requests for student support
- 11:00 am** District Principals of Student Support Huddle meeting — updates on collaborative work together, planning for District Pro-D events or upcoming training sessions for schools
- 11:30 am** Weekly progress meeting regarding student in hospital – conference call/ phone-in meeting
(School, family and medical staff discuss progress and planning for re-entry to school)
- 12:45 pm** Secondary school visit with student/ parent as part of intake meeting
- 1:45 pm** Head back to the District office for next meeting
- 2:00 pm** Team meeting with District Helping Teachers — focus articulation plans for Grade 7 to 8 students with complex learning needs
- 2:45 pm** School Principal phone call — student in crisis, review and discuss supports and plans for intervention.
- 3:00 pm** Emails to school Principals/ Vice Principals — graduation plans for specific students with Ministry Designations
- 3:15 pm** Make a cup of tea and have a check-in with clerical assistant *(review budget, upcoming Pro-D, requests for resources/ supplies)*
- 4:00 pm** District Healthy & Safety Committee Meeting
- 5:30 pm** Check messages, emails, make to-do list of who to call back tomorrow
- 6:15 pm** Go home

Committee



THE EVOLUTION OF THE BCPVPA Contract Advisory Committee

by
Don Boyd
Director, BCPVPA
Member Support Services

In January 1988, as the result of a 1987 legislative change made by the BC government that required school leaders to leave the BC Teachers' Federation, the BC Principals' & Vice-Principals' Association was formed as an autonomous professional association dedicated to helping Principals and Vice-Principals to provide 'quality leadership in education.'

The Association established a variety of committees to ensure not only that members received support in fulfilling the expectations of their roles, but that they had appropriate employment contracts and fair compensation for their work.

The first BCPVPA committee to focus on fair compensation – the Economic Welfare Committee – was established in July 1987 and chaired by Director Jurd Kirby. At the BCPVPA's request, Jurd had come out of retirement at a time when the Association was faced with establishing a 'personal services contract' for every Principal and Vice-Principal in the province with each of BC's School Boards. The process included defining conditions

of employment, salaries and benefits that would be covered in these new contracts.

Jurd assessed the situation and established the 'contract counselling service' to assist local Chapters in their discussions with School Boards. He promoted single-team bargaining, counselled the implementation of this practice, assisted members with the establishment of benefits package and developed the first 'personnel practices workshops' in 1988. In the years that followed, the Association has provided continued guidance and direction for our members through workshop offerings.

Throughout the years, this Committee has operated under a number of names: Economic Welfare Committee (1987 – 1988), Income Security Committee (1988 – 1989), Economic Security Advisory Committee (1990 – 2015), and finally the Contract Advisory Committee (2015 to present). Each of these Committees has focused on 'fair and reasonable total compensation' for all BC public school Principals and Vice-Principals.

The term 'total compensation' recognizes that salary is only one component of compensation. Other elements including health benefits, insurance coverage, pension contributions, stipends and long-service recognition payouts represent more than 20% of a Principal's or Vice-Principal's compensation package. The concept of 'total compensation' is recognized in the salary grids

that inform the models found in BCPSEA's Exempt Staff Compensation Working Group's 'Realities, Risks and Rewards' document (2014).

Today's Contract Advisory Committee (CAC) has 15 members representing the seven geographic zones of BC: Kootenay, Okanagan, Northern Interior, Fraser Valley, Metro Vancouver, Vancouver Island and the Northwest. Each of the zones has two representatives, except for the larger region of Metro Vancouver which has three representatives. Two Board representatives, the Association President, the Executive Director and the three members of the Member Support Services Team make up the remainder of the CAC.

The CAC holds two-day meetings in October and January, and January's meeting includes a one-day workshop for all regional contract chairs from the local BCPVPA Chapters. The CAC representatives will on occasion be asked to participate in conference calls and Zoom meetings to discuss emerging issues.

CAC representatives are appointed for two-year terms, and service can be for up to three consecutive terms. When vacancies become available, they are posted in BCPVPA's weekly eNews with a deadline for application, the zone seeking representation and a summary of the expectations of a CAC representative.

The CAC representatives support their fellow Principals and Vice-Principals by:

- Responding to member questions
- Participating in conference calls
- Providing up-to-date information on regional matters including:
 - contract language
 - compensation issues
 - regional trends
- Liaising with BCPVPA Staff
- Coordinating regional meetings

The term 'total compensation' recognizes that salary is only one component of compensation.

They also support the BCPVPA staff and Directors by:

- Liaising with the regional contract chairs
- Relaying information from the field on contract and employment related issues
- Facilitating sessions at the regional level and at the annual contract workshop
- Advising the BCPVPA Board of Directors on issues related to member contracts and negotiations
- Advising the BCPVPA on emerging trends in their regions

Over the years, the CAC has provided invaluable information to the BCPVPA and has assisted the Association in moving forward the mandate of 'fair and reasonable total compensation' for our members.

If you are interested in serving on this committee, read BCPVPA eNews for upcoming openings or contact us at 604-689-3399 for more information.

BCPVA Contract Advisory Committee

Board Members

David DeRosa, Brian Leonard, Des Sjoquist

BCPVPVA Staff

Don Boyd, Kevin Reimer, Ellen Roberts

Members

Deavlan Bradley	(SD50)
Brian Campbell	(SD60)
Carmen Eberle	(SD35)
Reid Findlay	(SD83)
Jaksun Grice	(SD54)
Dan Heisler	(SD33)
Craig McLeod	(SD79)
Shannon Miller	(SD53)
Denton Muir	(SD36)
David Mushens	(SD43)
Sarah Petrisor	(SD57)
Gord Redlin	SD63)
Aaron Thorn	(SD05)
Steve Wyer	(SD06)

"Anytime you're connected to the work of the Association, it makes you better at your own role. It may feel like a commitment of time but it makes you a better practitioner."

Reid Findlay
District Principal
N.Okanagan-
Shuswap
CAC Member: 3 Yr



"I appreciate how the Association is working for us, how deep their knowledge base goes and that for a lot of the staff, they're educators who have really dug into getting to know this work."

Shannon Miller
Principal
Cawston
CAC Member: 3 Yr



What inspired you to join the Contract Advisory Committee?

"I've always felt a strong connection with the broader association; that need was met very much while I was on the Board but I wanted to remain connected to the important work of the Association so when the opportunity came up for this position I had no hesitation to put my name forward for consideration.

The work is pretty complex and, locally, lots of people depend on people who understand the complexity of contracts and the employer relationship. I've always felt a strong local need to fulfill that for our Chapter. Provincially, I find that having a group of representatives who have the pulse of what's happening in the District, and who can advise the Board, is an important conduit for the broader work of the Association."

What is the biggest thing you've learned through your work on the Committee?

"To be of service. I feel that the work of the Committee is around addressing the issues that our members experience around the Districts. And I think for me it feels that we're trying to make improvements for our members in their work lives, address some really significant needs and trends. Someone has to keep their eye on that. This Committee, that's their central purpose, looking after the welfare of our members."

What inspired you to join the Contract Advisory Committee?

"I've been our Chapter's contract chair, part of the team for 10 years. Lynne, my predecessor in the region, was wonderful. When she retired, Harold (Krische) called to see if I would be interested. I don't love meetings, but I found the contracts fascinating. Being part of the team, I'm very aware of the importance of our contracts. But also, when you have to speak on behalf of your colleagues, on behalf of their livelihood, you really have to know what you're talking about."

What is the biggest thing you've learned through your work on the Committee?

"A few things: one of them is to be knowledgeable, to dig in and to know the information. It's important to know where to go to find the answers: you can't feign knowledge, you need to know. The bigger provincial picture gives me the scope and the ability to do the work, to know the next steps and why we need to move in a direction where we have a provincial voice, with less on the individual. The Committee is inside that, and I really understand the importance of it."

What advice would you have for a member who may be interested in joining the Committee?

"It's as close as you can come to working on the Board. This Committee, of all committees really: if you have any aspirations at all around a leadership position within the Association, the CAC is a probably a very good fit because of the body of work we work with.

You look at Kevin Reimer's recent contribution to the (*November 2019*) *Principl(ed)* magazine, saying that the number one priority of the Association is negotiation agency right now. This contract work has always been very closely aligned with our priorities as an Association. It's meaningful and purposeful.

Being involved with the CAC committee provides me with access to information that directly benefits our local association. So, in that regard, it is great professional development. I would even go so far as to say that the senior leadership team benefits from this as well because the information that our Contract Team is able to bring to the negotiating table helps them get a better understanding of what is happening in our region, and often leads to more productive negotiations."

What advice would you have for a member who may be interested in joining the Committee?

"Everybody should be interested in this Committee! I think it's that you can love what you do, you can be really good at what you do, but at the end of the day would you do it for free? And so, this is the part of the work that is about protecting how you get paid, how your benefits happen, all of those important pieces of why we do the work we do. I think it's so important for everybody, even if you're not interested in the contract piece, my advice would be for everybody to get a chance to serve and get a real understanding. The hope is with provincial negotiation, there would be even more trust and confidence in the process and the framework around some of the bigger issues within our contract. People should still be knowledgeable, but they can be more trusting that experts would be doing that work for them."

Instructional Leadership is one of the four domains within the BCPVPA's *Leadership Standards for Principals and Vice-Principals in British Columbia*, and for good reason.

In the recent work of Dr. Simon Breakspear, Amelia Peterson, Dr. Asmaa Alfadala and Muhammad Salman B. M. Khai, they suggest that the core capacity of leaders is to increase the capacity of teachers through purposeful day-to-day, holistic and experiential learning. They cite the following as a basis of their work:

"The evidence is clear, that leaders who focus on student learning and teacher practice – sometimes called 'instructional leadership' – have considerably more impact."

(Hattie, 2015a; V.M.J. Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008)

In the 2017 paper *Developing Agile Leaders of Learning: School leadership policy for dynamic times*, Breakspear et al make the distinction between traditional education administration and agile leadership. Their first contention is that it is necessary to have a heightened focus on those activities that can have a substantial and sustained impact on student learning experiences and outcomes (p.2). This focus on leadership for learning requires investment in professional learning such that leadership can effectively support cultures of professional practice that affect student outcomes.

With evidence such as this as the base, the Instructional Domain of the *Leadership Standards* emphasizes the Principals' and Vice-Principals' role in improving the quality of teaching and learning for students and adults through modelling, creating and sustaining a community that supports all learners.

Being an Effective Instructional Leader

by
Jessica Antosz & Elizabeth Bell
Directors, Professional Learning & Development, BCPVPA

Standard 3:

Leading the Learning, Action Statement #2

encourages *ongoing and targeted conversations regarding the progression of learning*

Standard 3:

Innovation and Inquiry, Action Statement #1

suggests that PVPs *promote reflection and dialogue about teaching and learning*

Standard 4:

Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment,

Action Statement #4

suggests PVPs *continually and collaboratively plan, monitor and review the effectiveness of instruction*

Instructional leadership is contextual and can be transformational for a school when done in concert with all adult learners and leaders. Principals and Vice-Principals who are effective instructional leaders link the work of leadership and learning to everyone in the school and provide cohesion among the tasks that are the foundation of a common vision.

In this spirit of collaboration, and working in conjunction with the University of Washington Centre for Educational Leadership, the BCPVPA created *Leading a Culture of Learning 2* for Principals and Vice-Principals who wish to investigate and practice a model of classroom observation and feedback intended to promote collaborative student focused dialogue.

Learning Walks are not new to the toolbox of most Principals and Vice-Principals, nor is the concept of feedback. However, in the midst of the busyness of a school, the reality is often that good intentions fall somewhat short of desired professional dialogue that leads to deep learning or change in practice. But with a focus on learning, and with the use of an intentional framework, Principals and Vice-Principals can be effective instructional leaders.

So what does Leading a Culture of Learning 2 entail?

Five sessions are spread over the course of seven months allowing for a rich examination of common learning language and experiential practice. Four of the days include classroom visits and active observation of student learning. Using the guiding questions within the Attributes as a starting place, authentic curious questions are collaboratively considered and constructed with the intent of sparking deep learner focused dialogue. It is harder than you think to ask questions devoid of bias or advice that truly drive a learning conversation.

The premise of core instructional elements of the program – as presented by City, Elmore, Fiarman & Teitel (2009) – are identified as a means by which we can increase student learning.

They include:

- Increasing the knowledge, skills and expertise of the teacher
- Increasing the level and complexity of the curriculum / content

WEBTESS Student Information System

- ✓ Attendance
- ✓ Class Lists
- ✓ Web Gradebook
- ✓ Transcripts
- ✓ Accounts
- ✓ Behaviour & Discipline
- ✓ Health
- ✓ Email & Notifications
- ✓ Master Timetable Builder
- ✓ Student Auto-Scheduler

- Changing the role of the student as learner

Understanding that there are multiple entry points to increasing student learning encourages us to work collaboratively as we grow our expertise. We might ask *“What does the Principal or Vice-Principal need to learn in order to support the learning of the teachers who are supporting the learning of the students?”*

The 5 Attributes of Teaching and Learning is used as a framework to establish common language which describes a vision for high-quality teaching and learning. These attributes have been adapted in order to reflect the BC Curriculum from the 5 Dimensions of Teaching and Learning used by the University of Washington Center for Education. This framework, not unlike others, can help to deepen the dialogue about the practice of teaching and learning.

The components of the *5 Attributes and Sub Attributes* include:

Attribute

Purpose

Student Engagement

Curriculum and Pedagogy

Assessment

Classroom Environment and Culture

Sub Attribute

Learning Standards, Big Ideas and Core Competencies
Learning Targets

Thinking Skills & Metacognition
Engagement Strategies & Structure
Communication

Curriculum Design
Instructional Design
Scaffolds for Learning

Assessments
Adjustments

Classroom Culture
Routines and Rituals
Physical Environment

Classrooms are complex environments to say the least. Given that, there is much to observe that can lead to general feedback. While it is important to provide appreciative motivation, effective feedback and collaborative coaching (Douglas Stone & Sheila Heen, *Thanks for the Feedback* 2014) often require more focused classroom visits. That is where the *5 Attributes* come in: they help to target attention to one or two areas so that the learning of all is rich and deep.

A key foundation of the program is that it comes from a strengths-based stance. Principals and Vice-Principals engage in a formative feedback cycle that provides immediate, focused and

relevant feedback. The feedback builds on the observation of what students are learning and what the teacher is doing. It is a growth-oriented process that requires the teacher and leaders to work side-by-side to develop instructional practice expertise.

The process of LCL 2 is one that endeavors to foster collective efficacy and to reflect the essence of Michael Fullan's five conditions that inspired the article *Building Blocks of Collaboration* by Chris Bryan and Brenda Kaylor (December 2018).

5 Conditions for Collective Efficacy

- The team must create a culture based on trust
- The team must commit to transparency in

practice and results

- The team must create a climate of nonjudgementalism
- The team must be specific in terms of the practices it will employ and actually employ them
- The team must be clear about the specific evidence it will collect to document growth, it must collect and use the evidence to improve professional practices.

The Learning Professional, Vol 39. No 6, Dec 2018

As such, there is considerable attention paid to the culture that precedes these intentional learning observations. Without a foundation of trust and the common intent of supporting student success, dialogues for learning can be less effective. But when Principals and Vice-Principals have made their learning visible and share the *Attributes* with staff members, teachers have been willing to support the process and are inviting the learning of the leaders into their classrooms.

Targeted Feedback Institute

May 7 & 8, 2020

Sponsored by the BCPVPA and facilitated by the University of Washington Center for Educational Leadership

Open to all Principals and Vice-Principals

Participants will:

Analyze characteristics of effective targeted feedback

Use evidence from a classroom visit to provide feedback connecting teacher practice to student learning

Utilize a strengths-based stance when providing feedback

Understand how to implement a targeted feedback cycle with teachers

Practice a replicable feedback process that supports teacher growth

bcpvpa.bc.ca

Following observations, the cohort of Principals and Vice-Principals work together to refine and practice questioning skills so as to craft authentic questions that will drive the learning of the teachers. The feedback is rich, both for the leaders and for the teachers. What we know now, as reported from past participants, is that this method of formative observation and feedback is now the positive foundation for formal teacher evaluations.

The expertise of leadership, teaching and learning must continually be fed to expand and flourish. When a collaborative culture of experiential learning, evidence-based observation and common language exists, deep conversation about learning and enriched practice that support students can result. Programs such as *Leading a Culture of Learning 2* are offered in order to support Principals and Vice-Principals as they strive to model the *Leadership Standards*.

To request a cohort in your area for 2020 / 2021 please call the BCPVPA 604-689-3399.



"This focus on leadership for learning requires investment in professional learning such that leadership can effectively support cultures of professional practice that affect student outcomes."

by

Tina Demings & Roberta Edzerza

Ts'msyen Sm'algyax Language Authority (TSLA)

Aboriginal Education

SD#52, Prince Rupert

Ła Bała Sgan

WELCOME

(THE CEDAR MAT IS SPREAD OUT)

**'Nii wila wilaayksm na lp algyagm gu Sm'algyax.
Na lp algyagm int luunda hoksnm
a lax yuubm Ts'msyen.**

Our Sm'algyax language represents
who we are as Ts'msyen people.

Our language connects us to our territories.

Sm'algyax is the language spoken by the Ts'msyen people who have lived for thousands of years on the North Coast of British Columbia, Canada. Our Sm'algyax language is the foundation of who we are as Ts'msyen people. Sm'algyax is spoken by people from our Ts'msyen communities of Maxłaxaala (Metlakatla), Txalgiw (Hartley Bay), Lax Kw'alaams (Port Simpson), Gitxaala (Lax klan), Gidasdzuu (Klemtu), Gits'ilaasü (Kitselas), Gits'mk'eelm (Kitsumkalum) as well as by Ts'msyen people who live in Prince Rupert, Terrace, Alaska and beyond.

Our Ts'msyen language is in serious decline due to the oppressive policies of the churches and government since the eighteen-hundreds. Colonization has had a devastating impact on our culture, language and people, and continues to do so. Most of our speakers are over seventy years old. Our elders and leaders strongly believe that it is critical to do everything that can be done to save our Sm'algyax language. Sm'algyax language, culture and spirituality go hand in hand and connect us to our territory. We know for a fact that Sm'algyax is a critical vehicle to instill cultural pride and

identity in our young people. We celebrate the language-learning successes of our children and youth, which they are able to confidently share with their families and communities.

**It's important to learn the history of where
you come from or where you live.**

— Charles Hays Student

Our Ts'msyen chiefs, matriarchs, elders, leaders, parents and youth have supported the teaching of Sm'algyax in our public schools in School District 52 from kindergarten to grade twelve for all learners since 1997. Previous to that, Sm'algyax was offered in three of our Ts'msyen community schools for well over 30 years. Community-based adult Sm'algyax learning continues to take place in Prince Rupert and other villages.

Our Sm'algyax program is one of the few First Nations language programs in British Columbia that has been supported by sustained, long-term curriculum and program development. Our program was one of the first in BC to develop an Integrated Resource Package (IRP), which made it possible for the language to be an accredited part of the school curriculum. Offering a strong Sm'algyax program is a goal of our Aboriginal Education Council and is supported by our School District Board of Education. We also acknowledge that we have a long way to go.

**We need to go below the surface,
students need to be involved,
not just as spectators.**

— Gitga'at Student (Hartley Bay)

The Sm'algyax program is instilling a strong sense of pride in our learners. As the program is currently offered, it does not have the capacity to build Sm'algyax fluency due to the limited instructional

time available. The continuing impact of colonization is that today's learners of Sm'algyax have few opportunities to hear our language spoken in the home and in the community. The development and the delivery of our Sm'algyax program is guided by our Ts'msyen Language Authority and our Sm'algyax Committee.

For many years, the Aboriginal Education Department was situated in the basement of one of our elementary schools. We were one of the corner offices in the District Resource Center. In 2004, the Aboriginal Education Council started discussions with SD Board of Education and the Management team about the importance of having our Aboriginal programs and services housed in a place that would honour and reflect the sense of pride in our quality Aboriginal Education programs, services and resources. Council also wanted a place to heighten how important Aboriginal Education is in the district, a district with over 60% Aboriginal student population.

**Aboriginal graduates should be able
to excel in any chosen life path...**

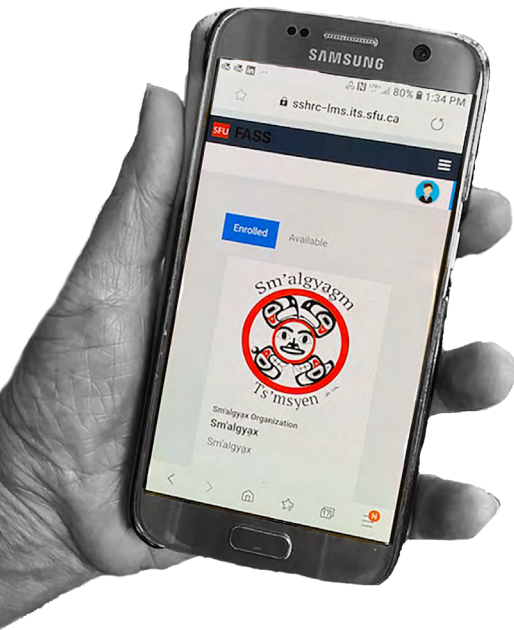
Strong in two worlds, not just one.

— Gitga'at Teacher (Hartley Bay)

After many meetings, a separate building was identified and renovated for the Aboriginal Education Department. Our Aboriginal Education Council in partnership with our Ts'msyen Language Authority named the building "Wap Sigatgyet," which means "House of Building Strength" in Sm'algyax. It is a place that is welcoming and has a strong sense of belonging for the community and all partner groups.

For over 14 years, Wap Sigatgyet has welcomed and hosted a wide range of District and community meetings daily. The Sm'algyax Committee, Ts'msyen Sm'algyax Language Authority and the Sm'algyax teachers meet regularly there, and Wap Sigatgyet houses a large Aboriginal content library, along with teacher and student resources for use

Sm'alg̱yax App



First Nations Language Platform
<https://sshrc-lms.its.sfu.ca>



Sm'alg̱yax Learning

A middle school student shares her perspective
<https://youtu.be/fhneoakWo-A>

in the classroom. Since Wap Sigatgyet opened, the importance of Aboriginal Education and Aboriginal history, language and culture has heightened in the community and in the District.

**When people found out about my culture,
it was like all of a sudden it altered
who I was as a person.
— Charles Hays Student**

Currently the Sm'alg̱yax Language Committee is continuing to work on developing a wide range of quality resources to support Sm'alg̱yax learning in our schools and communities. One of these resources is this Sm'alg̱yax app.

As with all of our valued Sm'alg̱yax resources this app is in constant review and update. It is our hope that this developing resource will help in keeping our valuable Ts'msyen Sm'alg̱yax language alive by exposing you as a learner to practice materials in sound, text and images. We hope that you will find it a useful resource in your Ts'msyen Sm'alg̱yax learning.

Sm'alg̱yax Living Legacy Talking Dictionary
<http://web.unbc.ca/~smalg̱yax>

**We acknowledge and honour
the dedication of our valued
Ts'msyen language and culture
experts and educators who have
contributed to keeping our
language alive over many years
past, present and future.**

Westcot Learning Stories

How can highlighting classroom learning through the development of *Learning Stories* help the school community to understand student engagement with greater clarity?

Evolution of Documentation of Learning, and a Culture of Learning

For the past three years, several teachers and administrators have worked together at Westcot Elementary School to celebrate learning and to create a culture of collaboration by writing and showcasing *Learning Stories* throughout the school.

This small team of three accessed funding through West Vancouver School District Innovation Grant program in the 2017-2018 school year, and designed a documentation strategy called *Learning Stories* that used common language that aligned with the province's redesigned curriculum. One of the essential goals of the Making Learning Visible team was to develop a shared understanding of the work we do as a school. By using the expertise in our own school, we created *Learning Stories* that are visual in nature, emphasize process over product, and are available to all members of the community. Essentially, *Learning Stories* document

by
Tricia Yurkowski

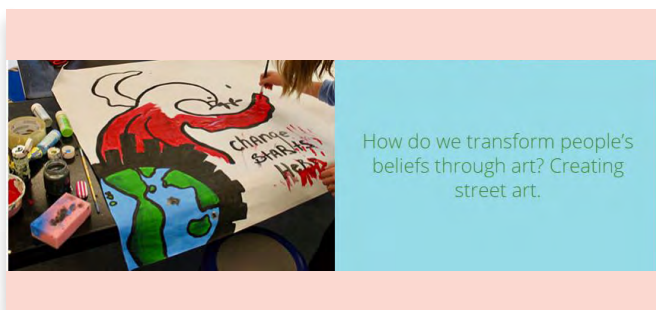
Vice-Principal Westcot Elementary School

We are all
made of stories

our own teaching practices, allowing us to learn from each other and to engage with students and parents more deeply.

In the first year of this initiative, after creating a framework that included the essential language, three exemplars were developed and featured on the school's webpage (westvancouver.schools.ca/westcot-elementary). The team worked together to write the first two *Learning Stories* to ensure the framework would work for both upper intermediate and lower primary. The third was created with another volunteer teacher in grade 5 to reach the goal of three completed exemplars.

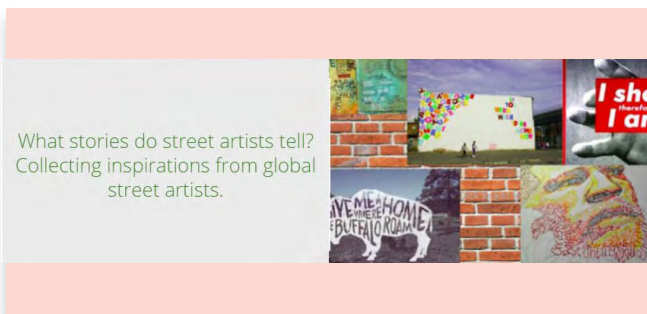
The following year, three more *Learning Stories* were developed by collaborating with other teachers on staff. All staff were introduced to and worked with the common language during professional development days and efforts were made to redesign the hallways of the school to reflect student learning and inquiry. Signs reinforcing the common language of Engage, Inspire, Make Meaning, and Connect were distributed to teachers for use on their bulletin boards. In addition, the hallways were transformed to display posters that showed a simplified version of the created *Learning Stories*. Using the key language and images that were selected to emphasize process over product, the message of learning is conveyed clearly to all members of the school.



What is a Learning Story?

A *Learning Story* is a framework that documents student learning, created to capture key aspects of learning goals and how they connect to the

BC New Curriculum. Included on our webpage are expanded *Learning Stories* that describe the context of the unit, core competency questions used, teacher and student reflections, curricular and ADST connections, and visuals highlighting the process of learning. The goal of *Learning Stories* is to show the larger picture of how learning unfolds, while honouring the provincial curriculum.



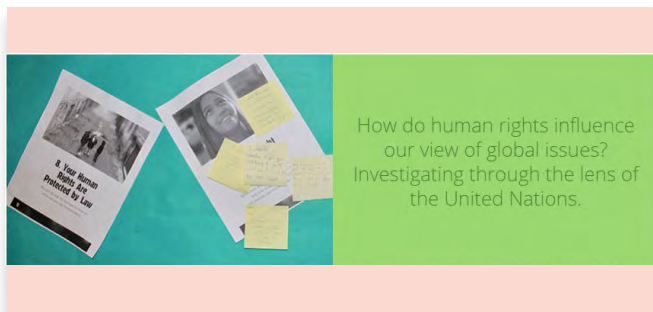
Learning Stories include images and words, allowing the reader to understand the learning from the student perspective. Student images and reflections are key to showing how the student engages in the process of learning. At the beginning stages of *Learning Story* development, teachers create units that are tied to essential questions, embed curricular competencies, and allow the development of core competencies. They then collect photographs during all stages of the unit, and capture student thinking through reflection.

Working with a Making Learning Visible team member, teachers use their planning and documentation to formulate a *Learning Story*. An essential part of this process is coming up with a meaningful title that shows the interplay of the essential learning and the content of the experience. The context and curricular connections are succinctly described, often demonstrating the transdisciplinary nature of the learning. The core competencies are articulated as questions; these show how the development of thinking, communication, and personal and social responsibility intertwine with the learning at hand and help teachers and students engage more deeply during the process.

The Practice of Collaborative Learning Groups

In our third year, our initial group of three expanded to a group of six. We collectively participated in a course offered by Harvard's Project Zero that examined group learning through Making Learning Visible Framework. Inspired by Reggio Emilia educators, we spent months reading, discussing and reflecting on how documentation leads to visible and more powerful learning for students.

After the course completion in December, we opened up the professional learning network to all teachers. From here, we continue to develop our understanding of our own teaching by getting inspired, making meaning with new ideas, engaging with others and sharing our knowledge.



Overall Impact

Part of the school's goal, as articulated in the Framework for Enhancing Student Learning, is to embrace the depth of the new curriculum allowing all learners to engage deeply with their learning. Teachers have been challenged to generate learning opportunities that are concept based and competency driven. Most teachers value and engage in collaboration to plan units and create meaningful opportunities for all students. By articulating and showcasing this work that is happening so well in so many classrooms, we have been able to celebrate our school in a positive way.

1. When teachers share a Learning Story they become creators of content. Not only are they sharing their expertise, they are documenting it in meaningful ways that benefit the entire school community.

2. The shared visuals help shape the school culture of learning, benefiting all members of our school community. Teachers, students, and parents are aware of the type of learning experiences that occur in our school by modeling the process of learning and celebrating our successes.

3. For new teachers or those new to the school, both the shared common language and the framework of the Learning Stories scaffolds our school goals and models excellence.

4. By Making Learning Visible, we are transmitting a culture of learning; we are reinforcing the language and practice of inquiry, while aligning with BC New Curriculum. By having a product to share, conversation and documentation becomes more deeply engaging.

BC's Framework for Enhancing Student Learning (FESL)

by

Shelaina Postings

*Executive Director, Governance and
Analytics Division, BC Ministry of Education*

In the 2020-2021 school year, the Province will implement the Framework for Enhancing Student Learning (FESL) across all school districts. FESL is about collectively improving the K-12 public education system to support student success. Ensuring students' needs are put first requires everyone in the K-12 education system to collectively work together, and Principals and Vice-Principals have a key role in this. It may sound fairly straight forward, but there is no one silver bullet to achieve this.

The Framework is as much about actions as it is about cultural shifts throughout the system, cultural shifts that embrace greater coherence, continuous improvement and accountability at all levels, and actions that include strategic planning, operational planning, reporting and capacity building. Efforts in this regard need to remain focused and to value the learner as a whole, including their intellectual, human and social, and career development.

The new accountability framework ensures that students' needs are the focus of all School Board decisions. School Districts will be accountable for strategic planning focused on students first including: students with diverse needs, Indigenous students, children and youth in care, children whose first language isn't English or French, kids living in poverty and other vulnerable students.

In simple terms, this means that School Districts need to be looking at their student data and asking probing questions. For example: is there equity of outcomes for Indigenous students in the School District? If not, what are the barriers and what strategies can be developed to address this. We know that all students can learn, and there is absolutely no reason for educational outcome disparity. So, what pedagogical strategies need to be deployed to address this and – further – what systemic barriers need to be tackled? This becomes the foundation of the strategic plan.

Aligning operational plans with strategic plans is critical. Investing financial, human and technological resources to support student focused strategies is the only way to achieve success. Operational decisions need to align

the needs of student support. For example, if a key strategy is enhancing supports for students in elementary years with numeracy and literacy, it wouldn't make sense if your financial plan didn't allocate resources to this initiative.

Principals and Vice-Principals have a key role in this work. Just as we need to ensure that operational plans align with strategic plans, we also need to ensure that the school plans align. Aligning the strategic plan and school plan is a bit like using Google Maps and zooming in on a certain area. The School District plan is going to be at the 1000-foot level, and the school plan needs to be at the 100-foot level. Principals and Vice-Principals will need to think about what the District strategies mean in their school, and how to bring these to life on the ground.

Another important component of developing the School District strategic plan is including parents, caregivers and community members in the development. Understanding the unique needs and interests of communities and families needs to be taken into consideration when developing the strategic plan. Principals and Vice-Principals know their communities best, and will have a role ensuring that these perspectives are brought forward in discussion.

The framework will raise the bar of the entire education system by putting student achievement at the centre of strategic planning, and ensuring that the allocation of financial and staffing decisions are in students' best interests. This means ensuring that student outcomes, such as graduation rates and school satisfaction survey results, are continuously monitored and publicly reported so that gaps in student achievement are identified and services can be planned based on proven strategies.

By focusing on students first, and better engaging parents and the community in the education system, the entire education system becomes better.

BC's Framework for Enhancing Student Learning (FESL)

Guiding Principles

The Framework for Enhancing Student Learning

- Is grounded in the belief that all education partners are responsible for student learning, with each having unique responsibilities
- Creates a system-wide focus on student learning, to ensure each student in BC achieves their full potential
- Is meaningful, impactful, flexible, realistic, and sustainable
- Addresses differences in performance among particular groups of students, most notably Indigenous students, children in care and students with special needs
- Is measurable and strength-, support-, evidence- and results-based
- Reflects system-wide commitment to continuous improvement and life-long learning
- Continues to build public confidence in BC's education system
- Focuses on the intellectual, career, and human and social development
- Includes evidence-based strategies for improvement that are measurable and outcome focused

Did You Know?

*thank you to
the staff of the
Professional Conduct Unit
Ministry of Education*

The Professional Conduct Unit is the unit of BC's Ministry of Education that administers professional regulation for certified educators in the province on behalf of the BC Commissioner for Teacher Regulation.

We asked their team to
guide us through
the investigation process.

What is the office of the BC Commissioner for Teacher Regulation, and what does it do?

The BC Commissioner for Teacher Regulation is an independent statutory decision maker who is appointed for a five-year term under the Teachers Act. It is the Commissioner's responsibility to oversee the discipline process for certified educators in BC and to ensure that concerns about educator competence and conduct are addressed in a way that's transparent, fair and in the public interest.

The Commissioner reviews reports (*from employers*) and complaints (*from the public*) about the conduct or competence of educators in BC and helps to enforce the Standards for Educators. After reviewing these reports and complaints, the Commissioner decides which process is appropriate for addressing the report or complaint. The Commissioner can investigate, close a matter by taking no further action or offer a consent resolution agreement (*if declined, the Commissioner may order a hearing and appoint a hearing panel*). The current Commissioner is Howard Kushner and he is supported in his work by the Professional Conduct Unit of the Ministry of Education.

What is the procedure to file a complaint?

Who generally files complaints, and where do the complaints originate?

Under the Teachers Act, members of the public may submit a written complaint to the Commissioner regarding the conduct or competency of a certified educator whom they believe has failed to maintain the Standards for BC Educators. Most concerns are best dealt with at the school level.

Before submitting a complaint to the Commissioner, complainants are encouraged to discuss their concerns with the educator, their supervisor or — if necessary — the Superintendent's office or independent school authority. The Commissioner deals with 200-300 cases per year. Approximately a quarter of those cases are from the general public, including parents, guardians, other teachers and others. Most of the cases originate from reports from School Districts or independent schools.

If a Principal is working with a teacher who is subject to a complaint, how are they advised of the complaint?

What are the expectations of the Principal, what are their responsibilities to the investigation and what evidence or information do they need to provide?

If the Commissioner orders an investigation into a complaint about a teacher, then a Principal may be notified. Notification with respect to teachers employed by a school district is sent to the Superintendent. Notification



BRITISH COLUMBIA COMMISSIONER FOR TEACHER REGULATION

regarding teachers employed by an independent school authority is sent to the Principal of the school. In both circumstances an investigator may request information from the Principal. There are no expectations for the Principal until an investigation is initiated. Once an investigation begins, the Principal is expected to provide the investigator whatever specific information is requested.

If a Principal or Vice-Principal is subject to a complaint, how and at what point are they notified?

What is the process that will follow the notification? What are their rights under the process, and their obligations to the process?

All certificate holders that are the subject of a complaint, teachers and administrators alike, are notified in the same manner. Once a complaint is received, the certificate holder is notified and offered a copy of the complaint. The certificate holder is also offered the opportunity to provide the Commissioner a written statement and any supporting documents as a response to the complaint.

Under section 44(b) of the Teachers Act, the Commissioner will then conduct a preliminary review of the complaint. The Commissioner will decide whether to take no further action, to defer the matter until conclusion of another process dealing with the matter, to investigate the complaint, to refer the complaint to the consent resolution process, or to issue a citation for a hearing. The Principal will receive notification of the Commissioner's decision.

If a matter is ordered to investigation, the certificate holder has an obligation to attend an interview and/or produce any documents requested by the Commissioner's delegate (*the investigator*). The certificate holder has the right to provide submissions to the Commissioner at any stage of the regulatory process up until the issuance of a citation. All certificate holders can obtain independent legal advice and/or speak to their union/association regarding the complaint.

What are possible disciplinary outcomes of an investigation?

If the Commissioner believes a certificate holder has breached the Standards for Educators and decides to take further action after an investigation the first step is to propose a consent resolution agreement to the certificate holder. This voluntary process results in a written agreement which resolves the matter without the need for a citation and hearing. The agreement includes information about what was decided and how it relates to an educator's certificate and/or practice. The outcome is shared with the person who made the report or complaint and the agreement is made public unless it would cause hardship to the person who was harmed by the educator.

The educator can be reprimanded or suspended and/or have limits or conditions placed on their teaching certificate. In cases of the most serious misconduct, an educator can have their teaching certificate cancelled. If the outcome is the suspension or cancellation of certificate, the information is recorded in the online registry of all certificate holders and on the Commissioner's discipline outcomes webpage.

If an agreement cannot be reached the Commissioner may issue a citation, which is a public document listing the allegations against an educator that will be the subject of a public hearing. This hearing is similar to a court proceeding and the hearing panel hears evidence and testimony relevant to the allegations against the educator. The disciplinary outcomes at a hearing are the same as those described in the consent resolution agreement process. Typically, less than half of investigation files result in a disciplinary outcome.

What are the best practices that a Principal or Vice-Principal should follow to regularly handle information that could potentially be called for an investigation?

The following are examples of best practice for record keeping and will assist with information requests for regulatory investigations:

- a. Maintain and submit records/documentation in chronological sequence.
- b. Note the date and time of evidence received or collected, and if collected from a place or person, indicate from where or from whom.

- c. Provide a list of individuals interviewed and their roles. (e.g. Principal, parent of 'student', teacher - witness or under investigation).
- d. Ensure that pictures and receipts are clear if copied in colour instead of black and white.
- e. Ensure that interview and meeting notes/transcripts:
 - i. identify who was present and the date and time (*start and end*) of the meeting/interview;
 - ii. indicate where the interview took place; and
 - iii. clearly identify who is speaking, and if the person is being directly quoted or their response is being summarized.
- f. Ensure the person conducting the interview has a second person present who can take notes, and identify the note taker.

Can you tell us more about the Apology Act, and how that may enter into any disciplinary processes or outcomes?

The Apology Act is a piece of legislation which is intended to allow people to apologise in relation to a matter, without that apology being an express or implied admission of fault or liability. A certificate holder's apology in relation to alleged misconduct might be a relevant factor the Commissioner considers in the disciplinary process, and the Commissioner cannot consider any such apology as an admission of fault by the certificate holder.

To find out more, visit

www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/organizational-structure/ministries-organizations/boards-commissions-tribunals/commissioner-for-teacher-regulation

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Many of our CTRI workshops are now live-streamed or available on-demand. Visit our website for details!

AUTISM

-Strategies for Self-Regulation, Learning, and Challenging Behaviours

Vancouver: May 5-6

This workshop provides practical strategies for working with high-need individuals around self-regulation, learning practices, and challenging behaviours.

Some of the Topics Reviewed

- Mapping Out a Plan: Structures and Systems
- Understanding Anxiety and Autism
- Emotional Awareness and Self-Regulation
- Best Practices and Strategies for Learning
- Determining the Function of Behaviour



VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR INFORMATION ON MORE 2020 WORKSHOPS COMING TO BC.

TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE

-Building a Culture of Strength

Vancouver: June 22

This workshop explores how to build a trauma-informed culture in a workplace setting that integrates knowledge throughout the organization.

Some of the Topics Reviewed

- Principles of Trauma-Informed Care
- Core Competencies - Putting Principles into Action
- Building Trauma-informed Principles into Policy & Processes
- Attending to Staff Safety & Secondary Trauma
- Contexts of Impact - Cultural, Intergenerational, & Societal Factors



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bcpvpa Leadership Standards for Principals & Vice-Principals



The Standards have been revised to reflect current practices

bit.ly/BCPVPA_LS2019

A companion Workbook has been produced for use in workshop settings

bit.ly/BCPVPA_LSW2019

Creating a plan for self-care can appear daunting. But starting with some simple healthy choices can have a positive effect on your health.

sleep

Improve Your Sleep Hygiene

Many administrators identify poor sleep or lack of sleep as a major wellness issue they struggle with. The term 'sleep hygiene' refers to a series of healthy sleep habits that can improve your ability to fall asleep and stay asleep.

Examples of healthy sleep habits include exercising regularly and maintaining a healthy diet; limiting exposure to bright light in the evenings; and avoiding the consumption of caffeine in the late afternoon or evening, and alcohol before bedtime.

Explore the resources below to see if you can improve your sleep quality.

1. A humanworks team member had a life-changing experience after attending a workshop by Dr. Glenn Landry, PhD, a sleep expert based in Vancouver. You can find out more about his work at elitesleep.ca

2. Books:

"The Circadian Code" by Satchin Panda, PhD.

"Why We Sleep" by Matthew Walker, PhD.

meet

Book A Date with a Friend

Work isolation and a lack of contact with peers outside of work can lead to low mood and underlying anxiety.

Research shows that social connection improves physical health and mental and emotional well-being.

People who feel more connected to others have lower levels of anxiety and depression. Moreover, studies show they also have higher self-esteem, greater empathy for others, are more trusting and cooperative and, as a consequence, others are more open to trusting and cooperating with them.

In other words, social connectedness generates a positive feedback loop of social, emotional and physical well-being.

Reach out to someone you've been wanting to connect with for a while and enjoy an evening together.

track

Track Your Daily Activity

Exercise has been proven to be a benefit to your physical, psychological and emotional health.

With technology improving on many fronts, activity tracking devices such as Fitbit and Apple watch have become welcome technological advancements.

A fitness tracker enables you to set your own fitness goals, stay motivated, track your sleep, monitor your heart rate, track your diet, and much more.

Tracking your daily activity develops a greater awareness around your physical activity. This can lead to more mindful choices we make throughout the day to enhance our health and well-being.

by

Jack MacNeill

MEd (Coun.Psych.), RCC, CVRP, RRP
President, humanworks

The demands of the role of Principal/Vice-Principal dictates that the hours of work extend into the evenings and the weekends which does not provide enough time to re-charge their batteries.

The issue is the erosion of support structures and overwhelming quantity of initiatives that are imposed on us - we are feeling like we are working endlessly and not accomplishing enough positive benefit to account for the hours.

Rural districts have trouble accessing supports - they just don't exist in our area so we need to ensure our members are taking care of themselves sooner rather than waiting until 'the crash'.

If you are not feeling supported by senior management, that has an affect. However, some districts do have senior management check in see how you and your staff are doing. This is only helpful if the trust is there: otherwise, it's another barrier.

At a recent BCPVPA Chapter Council meeting, members were asked what they believe to be obstacles to well-being for Principals & Vice-Principals: here are some of the comments.
What obstacles have you identified in your own practice?

We have a Chapter Wellness Committee: wondering if there are other Chapters who have committees and would like to connect?

We put pressure on ourselves.
We need to establish daily healthy routines without guilt.

Hard for people to ask for help and they see it as a weakness. Being out of the building creates greater workload: when we are out, no one does our work. Volume mounts up.

Initiative overload - need to prioritize.
We feel pushed from the top and bottom, and we are asked to do things in our 'spare time'.
What spare time?

Work intensification and workload - we are attending to more and more things that take away the joy of the work. When we focus more on management and less on supporting students staff and parents, this has an impact on our job satisfaction.

We care a great deal about the kids we serve so we jump in to fill the holes to provide the services they need...at the expense of overworking ourselves. So many demands in our sector - we get pulled in all directions, all the time.

In some districts new admin are often placed in an isolated situation with no intentional pairing with a mentor

We need more mentorship in our district to help support our colleagues.

Expectation that we are on call 24/7. Helpful to have dialogue with senior staff to articulate the expectations for hours of work, reasonable response time.

Long-time Principal Shelley Brett is no stranger to The Cmolik Foundation. As a nearby neighbour to Russ Cmolik, she was familiar with his family's philanthropic endeavours.

In conversation about the program, Russ didn't ask her for money but simply stated, "No, I want your time. I want you to be a Mentor."

Shelley decided to offer her time to a student. "I've been to university. It would have been really wonderful to have someone when I was going through school, and I just want to be there for her if she needs support or guidance. I want to be her cheerleader, so she is able to stay the course, and when things get tough I want to help her breathe and get through it."

The Foundation is clear that when they provide scholarships to at-risk students, they need to reduce the risk for these students as they enter post-secondary. Their scholarship requires each student to be engaged with a Mentor, so they have a caring relationship with at least one adult. As well, with the help of their alumni, the Foundation has also created a social support system around the students.

As part of the training, volunteer Mentors learn about what it means to be a Mentor and the Foundation's expectations. Mentors understand their effectiveness depends on three key aspects: championing the student's dreams (goal/growth focus); creating time for the relationship (listen, engage and empathize); and providing personal support (encouragement, hope-building, and referral to appropriate resources when needed).

Shelley has found the training really helpful in understanding the expectations of her role. "The Cmolik Foundation has done a wonderful job of putting together a Mentorship package for all of us so there is a training program, and you don't feel like you don't know what you are doing. They

Principals: Leveraging Relationships through Mentoring

by
Elisa Carlson, Ed. D.
Chief Operating Officer
The Cmolik Foundation

hold your hand and guide you through the process. They have prepared me well: in the events they plan, how they bring you together, and they put a lot of supports in place to help that relationship be built."

Allan Buggie is a former secondary school Principal and Member-at-Large for the BC Retired Principals and Vice-Principals' Association, and a firm believer in the importance of Mentorship. Professionally, he's been on both the giving and receiving end of it. Allan understands the power of listening and providing support to others. Many of the students from his former secondary school won Cmolik scholarships, "so it felt like a very good fit to give back to an organization that was doing very good work." Over the course of the last four years, Allan is so enthusiastic he has had as many as three Mentees at one time.



Retired Secondary Principal Allan Buggie and
retired Assistant Superintendent Pat Horstead



Mentee Amy Mebesius with Mentor Principal Shelley Brett

The Foundation has more than eighty Mentor volunteers paired with their students. Many of those are teachers, counsellors, administrators and former senior educational leaders from across the province, from former Assistant Superintendents Pat Horstead, Judy Chapman and Bob Coventry to current and former Principals such as Wendy Briggs, David Price, and Lois Wilkinson, to Victoria Island University's Dean Dr. David Paterson. The list of teachers and counsellors is even longer.

Kevin Reimer, Executive Director for the BCPVPA, is a great advocate for the Foundation and “appreciates the opportunity to support a student through their post-secondary experience.” From his school experience working with vulnerable children, he has seen firsthand, “the benefits of a close relationship with an adult,” and, “this is an opportunity to support someone who needed a little more guidance. Having a connection outside of your family really helps students to be a little more vulnerable and open with their challenges. For me, it is important for my Mentee to know he has someone in his corner.”

Educators make great mentors. By virtue of their profession, they know how to navigate the education system. Not only that, they know students flourish when someone cares about them. The Foundation is fortunate to have so many educators commit to

building a quality relationship with the Foundation's scholarship students. These educators continue to make a difference in helping students achieve their dreams.

Shelley Brett's Mentee, Cmolik Scholar Amy Mebesius, is thrilled with the Foundation's program. A graduate of Chilliwack Secondary School, she is now studying Biochemistry at UBC. “It becomes like a family: you have your Mentor, you have all the people behind the scenes, you have this endless supply of support around you, always. It's a dream.”

Special thanks to Dr. Rhea L. Owens, Dr. Thomas C Motl, and the UBC Shine team for reviewing current research, facilitating focus groups and preparing materials for our *Mentoring Handbook: Promoting Postsecondary Student Success*.



The Cmolik Foundation (TCF) is committed to investing in BC's youth through education.

Established in 2008, TCF has awarded over 5.3 million in scholarships to secondary school graduates. Each Scholarship is worth \$40,000 over five years of post-secondary study. More than just a cheque, the scholarship recipients are partnered with a volunteer Mentor for one-to-one support, are surrounded by a community of peers, and have access to career coaching.

TCF also sponsors an inner-city elementary school through their Expanding Horizons Program, providing high impact learning experiences to broaden the educational aspirations of young people; these same students attend STEM focused summer camp on real post-secondary campuses as a way to remove barriers to access.

The Cmolik Foundation is all this and so much more. To find out more, nominate a scholarship student or become a Mentor, visit www.thecmolikfoundation.com

Have Team

Will Travel



Provincial Outreach Program for FASD: Learning Opportunities for BC Educators

by
Meredith Keery
Senior Teacher Consultant
*Provincial Outreach Program Fetal Alcohol
Spectrum Disorder (POPFASD)*

For referenced links, please see Links list on following page

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) is a term used to describe a broad spectrum of presentations and disabilities resulting from prenatal alcohol exposure. In 2006 it was recognized that there was a need for enhanced understanding of FASD for educators so they could be prepared to support student learning with the most current training,

research, and strategies available. The Provincial Outreach Program for FASD (POPFASD) (4) has been based in Prince George's School District 57 since 2006, and we continue to innovate both online and in person. Our content is designed from classroom teaching experience, and it is informed by the latest research.

We are mandated to increase educators' capacity to meet the learning needs of students with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, and we do this all around the province for anyone involved in the BC education system.

Our team consists of 3.2 Teacher Consultants, a Technical Analyst, 0.5 Program Office Assistant, and a Principal. Designated POPFASD District Partners (9) from each District act as liaisons for in-service and support requests. We are also supported by a nine-person Steering Committee comprised of representatives from eight regions and one individual from the Ministry of Education.

Building Relationships is Key

School District 81 is situated amidst the beautiful northern Rockies, and flying in on a bright day is a spectacular experience. My job as a POPFASD Teacher Consultant takes me to the most stunning places in our province. For this trip in 2017, I had been booked for two POPFASD workshops (1) in Fort Nelson. Due to flight times, I had also accepted an invitation from RL Angus School's Principal Becky Froese to spend some time in her school.

When I was picked up at the airport the night before our workshops, I knew I was in for a treat because the entire District staff were gathered at the curling arena ready for an evening of fun! It was a wonderful way to be welcomed and to meet this committed community of educators. The workshops were well-attended and the participants were keen learners.

Listening to Learners

Becky Froese is a dynamic Principal and she leads a team of dedicated educators whose desire to learn is motivated by their desire to improve inclusion for all learners. During my school visit, I was able to see the environment of the school and help to find some possible supports for the students. After my time in SD81, the staff at RL

Angus were eager to learn more. They applied for a POPFASD Collaborative Action Research grant (CARS) (2), focusing on building relationships with some of their most vulnerable students who were experiencing low attendance and high suspension rates.

The actions they took through their CARS study improved results for students: suspensions dropped from an average of 20 per year to two per year, and attendance improved because greater connections were being made between school and home!

The staff of POPFASD has highly responsive training (8) both online and in person. They provided high quality, meaningful, and inclusive strategies. POPFASD goes above and beyond to meet their mandate.

Becky Froese, Principal, RL Angus, SD81

Building on Success

Excited by these positive outcomes, the staff decided to delve deeper into their school-based research.

The team applied for a second CARS grant and POPFASD returned for a second series of workshops in February 2019. Their continued research focused on further inclusive approaches. They accessed the POPFASD L.E.I.C. Planning Tool (3), explored the POPFASD website (4), looked at environmental supports (5), and strategies like The 8 Magic Keys (6) and they also examined how technology could support UDL. In November of 2019 the team shared their research (7).

Thanks Fort Nelson: it's always great to work with you!

Article Links

- (1) Workshops
<https://www.fasdoutreach.ca/training#workshops>
- (2) Collaborative Action Research grants (CARS)
<https://www.fasdoutreach.ca/cars>
- (3) L.E.I.C. Planning Tool
<https://www.fasdoutreach.ca/resources/all/leic>
- (4) Website
<https://www.fasdoutreach.ca/>
- (5) Environmental supports
<https://www.fasdoutreach.ca/resources/search?q=environment>
- (6) The 8 Keys
<https://www.fasdoutreach.ca/resources/all/0-9/8-magic-keys>
- (7) R.L. Angus Research “their work”
<https://static.fasdoutreach.ca/alfred/watch/06c96b7c3b28d88fbe7d6951b51d844a7b6fcd0e>
- (8) Training
<https://www.fasdoutreach.ca/training>
- (9) District Partner
<https://www.fasdoutreach.ca/liaising#district-partners>
- (10) FASDCasts
<https://www.fasdoutreach.ca/training#fasdcasts>
- (11) Website resources
<https://www.fasdoutreach.ca/resources/>
- (12) Online classes
<https://www.fasdoutreach.ca/training#fasdclass>

More About



Prevalence for FASD

2% and 5% (Popova 2017, May 2014). Using 4% that would equate to approximately 21,500 BC students

POP FASD

- eLearning videos are viewed approximately 72,000 times each year
- provides services to 2,500-3,500 BC educators each year
- has funded 37 collaborative action research studies since 2011



Comprehensive Support

Educators from around BC are being more creative in combining POP FASD services. Here are two of the many examples of in-depth learning undertaken in Districts:

In SD6, an elementary staff attended a full-day, in-person workshop (1). They wanted even more information so their administrator arranged for a series of 5 x 1 hour, monthly FASDCasts (webinars) (10). After each webinar, the staff was asked to apply an idea to their classrooms then share the idea via a forum on our website (4).

In SD58, a team asked for information to support one of their complex students. Although POP FASD does not provide direct student consultation, we were able to provide two FASDCasts (10). One focused on FASD information and ideas for creating a safe, predictable environment. For the second FASDCast (10), POP FASD and the school's resource teacher collaborated using the LEIC Planning Tool (3) to develop a greater understanding of how to support their student.

What Other Educators Are Sharing

"POPFASD training, whether it is in-person workshops (1), FASDcasts (10), or a FASDClass (12) or using their curated website resources (11), is second to none!"

"Their website is rich with resources that are accessible, up-to-date, and relevant to the complex issues we face in our schools."

"The POPFASD team are highly knowledgeable, organized, professional, and helpful. The sessions they offer are some of the best that I have attended."

"I highly recommend connecting with the team from POPFASD."

"When I consider all of the opportunities that a School District, or inclusive education department can be involved with, POPFASD is a partner that we have seen notable change since working more closely together the past few years."

*Enhancing knowledge
that will enable
educators to meet
the needs of complex
learners often takes
multiple exposure to
ideas and information.*

*POPFASD provides a
breadth and depth of
services to educators,
schools and Districts
that is first-class.*

*They are flexible and
prepared to find ways
to enhance learning that
meet school needs. The
team at POPFASD is also
recognized for its rapid
and thorough response.*

Curtis MacDonald
Supervising Administrator,
POPFASD

**Principal, Centre for
Learning Alternatives
Prince George**

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DENIM FADES. COURAGE DOESN'T.

**It's easy to get involved
with Jean Up.**

- > Sign up your school at JeanUp.ca/schools
- > Collect donations online by sharing your school's donation link
- > Pick a day for all students to wear their jeans—then celebrate the difference your school is making

BC 
**Children's
Hospital**TM
Foundation



HELP KIDS GET BACK INTO THEIR JEANS.

Jeans Day is now Jean Up. BCPVPA is proud to support this province-wide initiative during the month of May. It's a chance for students to come together and wear jeans to show what they stand for—helping sick and injured kids get out of their hospital gowns and back into their own jeans.

Perks of the new Jean Up school program

- > Month-long initiative gives schools flexibility to pick any day in May to Jean Up.
- > We will provide stickers for all students to proudly wear.
- > We provide all the tools you need—including an online fundraising page for your school, messaging for newsletters, automatic tax receipts and a poster to track progress.

Sign up your school at JeanUp.ca/schools



BC Children's is the only hospital in the province devoted exclusively to the care of children. That means one million kids—including some of the sickest and most seriously injured—count on the hospital for specialized care they often can't receive anywhere else. Last year, more than 93,000 patients visited the hospital—that's almost one student in every classroom.

Double your impact!

All donations made through your online fundraising page will be matched* by our friends at Odlum Brown Limited.



ODLUM BROWN
Investing for Generations®

*Gifts will be matched from May 1-31, up to a cumulative total of \$30,000.

BC 
Children's
Hospital
Foundation



The Presidents' Panel

At the November 2019 BCPVPA Chapter Council meeting, we convened our first Presidents' Panel and posed the question

"What advice do you have for new Chapter Presidents?"

Darren Danyluk, President, Rocky Mountain Chapter

"As the President for the Chapter, your members will turn to you when seeking answers on any number of things. Having a working knowledge of District policies, and staying abreast of policies under review, will help to provide guidance. I strongly recommend you become as versed with your contracts as is your Contract Chair.

As the Chapter President, I recommend that you connect regularly with your Superintendent and the leadership team, and that you understand their expectations of your role, and are prepared to educate them on some points. Invite clarity. For example, during a Chapter visit by the Association President, are there protocols your senior leadership team expects? Find out.

The Chapter President does not have to be the one with all of the answers but be prepared to find out. Never hesitate to pick up the phone and connect with Member Services, or any BCPVPA department."

"Never hesitate to pick up the phone and connect with the Association offices ..."

"It is extremely important to get to know the members within your Chapter."

Scott Sieben President, Central Okanagan Chapter

"The number one bit of advice to a new President of a BCPVPA Chapter would be to listen and empathize. Within your Chapter, each member has his or her own situation and brings his or her own backgrounds, skills, and expertise to the position of Principal or Vice-Principal. As people approach us with issues, or bring things forward, we must be understanding and look at the big picture of how circumstances may affect those people in their roles.

As well, challenges vary from student to student and school to school. Everyone wants to be understood, valued, and affirmed, and by listening and empathizing, you create a more beneficial and trusting relationship which will help your Chapter run more smoothly knowing that it has a President who cares about the members in that Chapter."

Verena Gibbs, President, Haida Gwaii Chapter

"Our job is challenging, deeply rewarding and oftentimes isolating and stressful. My advice to Chapter Presidents is to find the time to connect with colleagues. Whether it's a call to check in when you know someone is managing a challenging situation, a funny text to lighten someone's day, or a get together for a meal, these often help to make a little room for well-being. I don't pretend to have all the answers but I do try to show up authentically. I reach out when I'm stuck and I show that support is a two-way street because modelling this helps create connection. I also encourage people to reach out to the BCPVPA with any questions or concerns - know that in your role, you are well supported.

What has helped me in my role as Chapter President is my belief that every person is doing the best with what they know. When I was a teacher, I made it my practice to find something that I loved about each of my students, so that was what I saw when they walked in the room. I now apply that same practice with my staff, as well as my colleagues and District staff. We each have a gift we bring to our District and so I try to create the space for that to come through. I see this role as having a heart and a mind. On the one hand, my job is to effectively communicate what is happening at the provincial level and to represent the voice of my Chapter. It is also to build relationship among our team, to advocate locally and to make sure my colleagues have the supports in place to manage and thrive at a challenging job. Wellness is key and so at the end of a busy day, week or month, what are the resources to keep us re-fueled and balanced? Who do you need as your pit crew? It might include a colleague, close friend, partner, counsellor, mentor – whoever you choose to be there to support you through the tough times and to celebrate the successes."

Carol Sedgwick, President, Alberni Chapter

"My advice to new Chapter Presidents would be take time to learn who your members are connected to within your local Chapter. This may require Co-Presidents, Vice-Presidents, and Past-Presidents sharing this responsibility in larger Districts.

You cannot do this job on your own. Most of the calls I get from members are them seeking advice for themselves, or from members concerned about fellow colleagues. In some cases I can provide advice in the moment, and in other situations a member may need ongoing support from a caring colleague they trust. If a member requires ongoing support in sensitive matters I may not always be the best fit, so knowing who I can call on within my local Chapter to help support is vital. And in some cases we need to advise members to call BCPVPA directly and then follow up with them. It is important to remember that we have very caring and knowledgeable staff at BCPVPA to call on when we are not sure how to support members. You are not expected to take all of this on alone."

**"... by listening and
emphathizing,
you create a more
beneficial and trusting
relationship ..."**

**"You are not
expected to take all
of this on alone."**

Aaron Akune, President, Delta Chapter

"It is extremely important to get to know the members within your Chapter. Open up the lines of communication with them so that they see you as approachable, and someone they can turn to for advice. Let them know that they can ask their questions and share their challenges.

Meet regularly with your Superintendent and Senior Leadership Team. Establish trust so you can feel comfortable sharing with them a balance of what's working well, and where there are challenges.

Be visible within the District. As a Chapter President, you represent the ideas and views of your colleagues. Your presence at District meetings, Board meetings and professional learning workshops will provide you with a greater perspective, and will communicate to partner groups that Principals and Vice-Principals are willing to work collaboratively and are highly invested in the initiatives/directions of the District."

Kathy FLADAGER Principal SD34

The Gifts of Imperfection: Let Go of Who You Think You're Supposed to Be and Embrace Who You Are

by Brené Brown
(2010)

Courage sounds great, but we need to talk about how it requires us to let go of what other people think, and for most of us, that's scary. Compassion is something we all want, but are we willing to look at why boundary-setting and saying no is a critical component of compassion?...Belonging is an essential component of Wholehearted living, but first we have to cultivate self-acceptance (pg. 5).

I am honoured to submit a review on behalf of a book that has transformed my life, both personally and professionally, to our Principled Magazine. I have now read Brené's book for the second time in two years, and with each reading, I come away with a renewed sense of purpose, and confidence in what has become an increasingly challenging world. I suspect that, like myself, there are many of my colleagues across this province who hold themselves to a very high standard of behaviour, especially in the work that we do on behalf of our province's children. We are accountable to so many, and when we do make mistakes, which we will, we carry this weight around with us. How do we, and how CAN we, manage the multi-faceted perceptions that exist around us, our inner need to achieve on behalf of our students, and do all of this in a constantly in-motion world? Brené's work, based upon her years of shame and wholehearted living research, lays out some inner-work steps that



we all can take in support of embracing ourselves which may aid us in our quest to do our best (and not strive to be perfect!).

"Practicing self-love means learning how to trust ourselves, to treat ourselves with respect, and to be kind and affectionate towards ourselves" (pg. 27). First, we must practice compassion for ourselves, in terms of how we talk to ourselves, both when we make a mistake, and when we do something worthy. We are, by nature, a humble profession, and we forget to take a breath, and to reflect upon the good work that we do to support our students, our staff, our parents, and our colleagues. How we speak to ourselves will, indeed, influence how we speak to and treat others. And although Brené speaks to practicing compassion for ourselves, and for others, she is also insistent that we must set boundaries, and hold folks accountable (in this

Have you read a book that changed you, challenged you or surprised you?

Can you share your story in 500 words or less?

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way we practice respect). This is key in the work that we do to support students.

Brené goes on to exploring, in depth, how to live a wholehearted life with her 10 guideposts. She frames her Chapters in terms of Cultivating: Authenticity; Self-Compassion; Resilient Spirit; Gratitude and Joy; Intuition and Trusting Faith; Creativity; Play and Rest; Calm and Stillness; Meaningful Work; and Laughter, Song, and Dance. These guidepost Chapters include Brené's trademark stories, humour, questions, and tools to support us in some very personal growth.

I would recommend that if you are planning on reading *Dare to Lead*, or if you already have read it, that you read *The Gifts of Imperfection*. Both books go hand-in-hand in helping us to practice courage, compassion, and connection (must-haves when we are in a leadership role). In fact, some current work that our District — under the leadership of our Assistant-Superintendent, Carla Danielsson — is doing with our Elementary Administration team is based upon Brené's book, *Dare to Lead*.

If you wish to go beyond the Brené Brown quotations that appear to be all over social media currently, and you wish to rediscover your purpose, joy, at home and/or at work, I cannot recommend this book enough.

Kathy is celebrating her 30th year in education!

She taught in California for 6 years, and then moved to her current home/District in Abbotsford. She has been an Administrator for the past 12 ½ years.

Kathy is currently working alongside the fabulous team of children, staff, and parents at Blue Jay Elementary School in Abbotsford. Kathy is a Grandma to two, and loves teaching, art, reading, and can spend hours in bookstores (her husband is a very patient fellow).

Sue Tonnesen
Vice-Principal SD62

Make Learning Magical

by Tisha Richmond
(2018)

I recently read *Make Learning Magical* by Tisha Richmond, a former culinary arts teacher and now District Tech Instructional Specialist. Her book is an inspirational look at how she transformed her classroom into a gamified environment which includes fun, laughter and a healthy dose of competition. It is an experience that keeps students running into her class to eat it all up!

Make Learning MAGICAL...

Magical is an acronym:

Memorable beginnings that build excitement and relationships

Authenticity and Agency that empowers students

Gamified experiences to engage learning on a higher level

Innovation that makes learning exciting and relevant

Creation, collaboration, and curiosity to equip learners for real life

Authentic audiences to bring out your students' best work

Legacy built through meaningful experiences

Memorable Beginnings (Excitement and Relationships)

Tisha is a great storyteller and brings these stories into each of the elements of the acronym MAGICAL. During the first part of the book, she speaks about the magic of hospitality beginning with a warm welcome, an entertaining hook as well



as passion and enthusiasm. In creating a hospitable environment, she brings in the elements of décor and the importance of colour, and the effects colour has on students. She touches on some of the specific elements that she has in her own classroom — a coffee bar, music, aroma — and how she, the teacher, can make a huge impact on the students she teaches through simple things like greeting students and making everyone feel special and welcome.

I especially liked the 'Favorite Things' activity explained in Chapter 2. Like Tisha, my favorite movie of all time is *The Sound of Music*. As this is one of the first activities of the school year, it has an impact on the students in her classroom. During this activity, students are asked to write down three of their favorite things and discuss them with their neighbor. Once that activity is complete, Tisha then shares with them *her* favorite things, her 'passions', through the use of a slide show. She then takes her cue from Dave Burgess' book *Teach Like a Pirate* and has her class sculpt one of their favorite things from homemade playdough. This example is a great way to start off the school year with a hook rather than with the typical "rules" and a course outline. And, of course, she includes a recipe to make your own playdough!

Authenticity and Agency

Being authentic and getting to know those we serve is the idea behind this Chapter. Once we get to know our students, we begin to see the light that radiates from within them. Finding their inner beauty and sharing it with others is the focus Tisha has for her students.

This part of the book also talks about the "Magic Attitude" which Tisha describes as more than just a habit: she describes it as

a mindset or an attitude of gratitude! Gratitude is looked at in depth and #Gratitudesnaps are described, as well as the cultivation of a culture of kindness. You really get the sense that Tisha creates a classroom environment where we share our fails, where students can shine and where students have agency over their work.

Gamified Experiences

Throughout this next Chapter, Tisha talks about gamification deconstructed where one *"takes the most motivational techniques of games and applies them to non-game settings like classrooms."* (M. Matera) Once you have found a game or game category that appeals to you, Tisha encourages you to ask yourself the following questions:

What do I enjoy about those games?

What can I learn from them?

What are the motivational aspects of the games that get people hooked and make us want to play again and again?

This how-to Chapter is quite in-depth and provides plenty of explanation as well as gamified examples Tisha has used in her classrooms. It ends with the assurance that games and gamification go beyond just the playing of the games. Challenge, collaboration, creativity as well as critical thinking are outlined in this Chapter and bring a complexity to the game that goes much deeper than scores, badges, points and winners.

Innovation

Tisha states that *"thinking about things differently, shaking up the status quo, and devising new and better ways of teaching – is how we make learning magical."* She says *"to get there, we have to have the mindset of an innovator."* She then talks about George Couros' eight

characteristics of an innovator's mindset in terms of herself as an educator. You can find the eight characteristics and much more in George's book *The Innovator's Mindset*.

1. Empathetic
2. Problem Finders/Solvers
3. Risk Takers
4. Networked
5. Observant
6. Creators
7. Resilient
8. Reflective

Creativity, Collaboration, and Curiosity

Throughout this Chapter, Tisha provides examples of opportunities that her students have engaged in to go above and beyond the classroom experience. She elaborates on creativity through the following topics:

- Bakery Missions
- Video Creation
- Stop-Motion Animation
- Sketchnoting and Reflection

The point she is making in this Chapter is the importance for educators to model what it looks like to try new things. Tisha says that students appreciate a teacher who is continuously trying new things, and being creative in their teaching and learning.

Collaboration has always been a part of the culinary classes that Tisha has taught and the most important piece of this is to create powerful teams and build relationships. This building of relationships allows the students to develop trust and because of this, they feel safe to take risks and the result is a deeper learning.

Tisha wants her students to become excited about the possibility of creating something amazing in her classes. She states that *"When we tap into curiosity, we experience the sheer joy of discovery. Creating an atmosphere of curiosity where students feel safe to explore and play is vital to building confidence and ownership of learning. The magical classroom is one where students are safe, valued, immersed*

and empowered. There is curiosity and wonder. [A]ll it takes is a little mystery and wonder to take a lesson from ordinary to amazing." These are just a few of the quotes that spoke to me throughout this part of her book.

Authentic Audience

Through connections with community partners, Tisha creates relevancy for her students. She states that *"Creating learning experiences that are meaningful and relevant is essential for keeping the integrity of our programs."*

Tisha talks about how the power of reflection and that making time and building reflection into her class time has been one of the best decisions she has made as a teacher. She highlights #Foodsnaps and Flipgrid as two platforms for reflection and leaves the reader with the question: *How can you use reflection to enhance your students' learning experiences?*

Legacy

We are making a difference and leaving a legacy with every interaction we have with students. Tisha states that she will continue to shine her light bright because she is going to make an impact on students one way or another! This Chapter highlights stories and examples of ways you can leave a legacy and how these examples have the power to transform students' lives. The important question Tisha leaves us with is: *What kind of a legacy will you leave?* She is a hard act to follow with her stories and examples, but her humbleness gives agency to every reader to...GO MAKE LEARNING MAGICAL!

Make Magic Happen...My Little Bit of Magic

Two years ago, I happened to write a blog post *"Make Magic Happen."* In it, I have my own acronym for the word MAGIC. You can find it here

suetonnesen.com/2017/07/21/make-magic-happen

Sue Tonnesen has been an educator for 28 years and an administrator for 11 years. She has a passion for reading, cycling and gardening. Sue has taught in SD82, has been a Principal in SD62 and is currently a Vice-Principal at David Cameron Elementary. She is also a peer mentor for the BCPVPA.

The Psychology of Retirement

by Derek Milne

Derek Milne begins his story by focussing on the 'Surprises of Retirement' and a change in philosophy over the decades from an *"ending of a career to the beginning of a new chapter in one's life."* The improvement in western society's health has resulted in a longer life expectancy and has provided retirees with 15 to 20 years of 'quality living' before their quality of life truly begins to recede.

Milne points out that the transition to retirement is surprisingly hard to define due to 'retirees' continuing to work after their retirement date before easing into full retirement.

Of particular importance is his definition of those ingredients required for successfully coping with retirement. The acronym **RECIPE** for a successful retirement represents:

Resources (e.g. *sufficient money*)

Exercise

Coping Strategies

Intellectual Activity

Purpose

Engagement (e.g. *social support*)

Throughout the book, the author provides real-life case studies, both for successful retirements and for those that have been less than successful. By applying the **RECIPE** for success, he analyzes each case study which brings life to the stories and a focus on the keys for success.

Milne states that prior to retirement, members need to know who they are (what is important in retirement), their coping strategies (dealing with the stress of change and retirement), how to find purpose in retirement (new passions and pursuits) and their social support (creating new or redefining networks).

He asks the question, *"What does it mean to grow old successfully?"* This means different things to each of the readers, however being able to define what that means for *each of you* is important. One of the keys, however, is to ensure that you are looking after or attending to your health needs. Staying active, both physically and mentally, allow for retirees to move

through the various stages of retirement. He stresses the importance of 'coping' skills and quotes Darwin, *"It is not the strongest of species that survives, nor the most intelligent, but the one that is most responsive to change."* Retirees will go through various changes, and they need to be able to adapt to them in order to have a fulfilling retirement.

The author discusses the need to 'reframe' your lens of retirement, as some see it through 'rose-tinted glasses' others see the world with a 'half-empty' glass. He asks the question, *"Who do you think is most likely to have a successful retirement?"* While this unto itself does not mean that you will have a successful retirement, one's view of retirement needs to be defined and reframed in order for retirees to meet the challenges they could face.

Milne suggests that you need to be able to relate to your retirement. Who you once were in your previous working life will need to be re-created in your retirement life. Creating new networks for social emotional support are required, whether this is with a group of golf buddies, bridge players, or quilters, or even in developing a relationship with a pet. All of these things bring benefits to people so that they have a feeling of being connected and not isolated. Do not wait to be invited but rather reach out and create your own network in retirement.

In conclusion the author goes on to say that *"retirement is golden because for many it is the long-awaited opportunity to develop particular talents and interests free from the draining demands of work"*. He also states that, *"Happiness is not the absence of problems, but the ability to deal with them."*

Overall, I found this book to be engaging with sound points to consider for both pre- and post-retirement. I particularly enjoyed the real-life situations that demonstrated the key points of his **RECIPE** for a successful retirement. I would recommend this book to those who are looking ahead, and in the early phase of their retirement planning. • **DB**

How to Retire Happy, Wild and Free

by Ernie J. Zelinski

In the sequel to his first book on retirement entitled *The Joy of Not Working*, Zelinski delves deeper into the kind of life retirement can bring to people who embrace the opportunities that lay before them. As he states on the front cover, the book provides “*retirement wisdom that you won’t get from your financial advisor*”.

The author acknowledges that there are many guides to a good retirement that focus entirely on the need to plan financially, offering methods of how to do so, and measure a successful retirement based on achieving those financial goals. In his book, Zelinski focuses on the social, emotional, physical and spiritual planning for retirement, which he feels are more important than financial planning.

Zelinski goes into depth, helping a person to recognize when he or she is ready to retire. He cites researchers from Canada and the US who acknowledge the challenges individuals face as they enter retirement: knowing if the time is right, knowing what to do with their time, and learning how to embrace 'leisure' as a lifestyle. The overall message of the book is that retirement is the one opportunity in life to be exactly what you have always wanted to be. That requires getting to know your true self – the one who has not conformed to the expectations of a job or a particular lifestyle, but the real person inside. And once you know who you really are, you can do what will be fulfilling as a retiree.

Zelinski acknowledges that not all people are ready for retirement and shares ideas and options for those who might prefer to continue with part-time work or a different career after leaving their main one. He uses his own experiences as someone who retired early in life as an example of one kind of 'happy, wild and free' retiree. He also embeds stories from people who responded to his first book and took to heart his messages about embracing retirement. Their many letters about making bold decisions in their retirement to capitalize on this chapter of their lives add colour and fun to the book.

I would synthesize some of the key messages in the book to be:

- Retire as early as you possibly can.
- Make a plan for retirement! This could take a couple of years.
- Be involved in more than one leisure activity.
- Expand your social network.
- Take risks in retirement.
- Live without regret.

It is an easy read, and got me thinking about who I want to be in retirement, and what is really important. Given that our retirements may be as long as our working lives, it is good food for thought. • ER

Don Boyd & Ellen Roberts

*Directors of Member Support Services, BCPVPA
put a laser focus on retirement reading*



next issue



What Color Is Your Parachute? For Retirement
Planning a Prosperous, Healthy and Happy Future
by John E. Nelson and Richard N. Bolles

The Last Word

Kevin Reimer is the Executive Director of the BCPVPA, a previous Director of the Board and served as President 2016-2018.

“The greatest danger in times of turbulence is not turbulence; it is to act with yesterday’s logic”.
— Peter Drucker



Are you a hedgehog or a fox? Jim Collins in his book *Good to Great* offers up a famous Greek parable that contends that the world is divided into hedgehogs and foxes. In this parable the fox knows many things and the hedgehog knows only one big thing. In the conflict between the hedgehog and the fox, the fox will try make many attempts using different strategies to attack the hedgehog, but never gaining the advantage because the hedgehog uses only one strategy – it defends itself with its quills. The hedgehog concept is not a goal or strategy to be the best, It is a belief of what you can be the best at.

The BCPVPA Board of Directors is in the process of creating its next strategic plan. In doing so, the Association has sought the input of members and attempted to ask the right questions to determine the appropriate drivers and indicators of success that will ensure that its strategic goals will be achieved. The process of developing our strategic plan is as important as the plan itself, and in the end a guiding objective will be to better understand what we can be the best at.

Building greatness within all of our organizations is about preserving the core values of the organization while continually creating the conditions for progress. Knowing what should be retained and what needs to be changed is the artistry within the strategic planning process. Above all, it is important to remember that good is the enemy of great and defining greatness is an important piece of the process.

A great member-based organization does three things:

1. **Delivers superior performance defined by the results it achieves in fulfilling its mission**
2. **Makes a distinctive impact**
3. **Achieves lasting endurance by delivering results over a long period of time**

As we continue along this pathway, it will be important for us to continually remind ourselves that the path to greatness for a not-for-profit organization is very different than the pathway for corporations. We must be careful to avoid relying on traditional business metrics to assess the impact of our strategic plan. For corporations, the goalposts never move – maximize profitability. For social sector institutions like the BCPVPA, our goalposts shift and change regularly based on the needs of our members and the continually-shifting landscape of public education. The challenges are more complex for not-for-profit organizations than they are for private sector companies: there is no single measure of success for not-for-profits whereas profitability in the corporate sector is relatively easy to measure.

Building on the mandate of our previous strategic plan we have undertaken an extensive process to gather input and insights from our members and our partners in order to create our plan for the years ahead. The result will be a blueprint for how the BCPVPA will continue to develop and grow as a provincial organization recognized by its partners and its public for its commitment to a strong public education system led by world class school leaders.

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the Early Intervention Program (EIP)
by humanworks

Here to help you gain greater clarity
and control of your professional health

BCPVPA EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAM

The EIP offers an excellent opportunity to be proactive in managing your health and well-being. It is designed to provide you with quick and easily accessible resources and counsel on how to best navigate your health-related concerns so that you can remain at work.

Questions about the EIP?

Visit the FAQ section on the BCPVPA or humanworks websites or contact:

humanworks

EMAIL: admin@humanworks.ca

PHONE: 604-734-4130

www.humanworks.ca

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