

THE POWER OF REFLECTION AND RENEWAL

It's May and the school year is winding up before it winds down. On the horizon, you can envision the quiet road to the cabin, the trails you will enjoy, the books you will read, and the people you will connect with. It is time to prepare for the summer ahead but, before we do that, it is important to take a moment to reflect on the journey of the past year. For school and district leaders, the end of the school year is often a blur of activities: graduations, leaving ceremonies, staffing decisions, budget planning, building and maintenance lists, and planning for September. In the midst of this business, we can lose sight of one of the most valuable opportunities this season offers: a chance to reflect and renew.

Reflection is a vital aspect of effective leadership. It allows us to step back and consider the impact of our decisions, the growth we've experienced, and the challenges we've overcome. Take time to think about the moments that made you proud, whether they were small victories or large accomplishments. It might be the subtle change you have noticed in your interactions with a student who has spent a considerable amount of time with you in your office. Or, it might be the way you were able to bring your staff together with a professional development program that hit the mark. Celebrate these moments and recognize them as your jumping off point and motivation for what lies ahead.

Equally important is your reflection on the challenges. Leadership is not without its hurdles, and this year may have brought its share of difficulties. Whether it was navigating policy changes, supporting students



by
Dr. Shannon Behan
2024-2026 President
BCPVPA



"ON THE HORIZON, YOU CAN ENVISION THE QUIET ROAD TO THE CABIN,
THE TRAILS YOU WILL ENJOY, THE BOOKS YOU WILL READ,
AND THE PEOPLE YOU WILL CONNECT WITH.."



“... THESE ACTS OF RENEWAL ARE NOT INDULGENCES;
THEY ARE NECESSITIES.”



and staff through crises, or simply managing the day-to-day demands of your role, these experiences have shaped you as a leader. What lessons have you learned? How have these moments strengthened your capacity to lead with empathy and resilience? Reflection doesn't mean dwelling on what went wrong, but rather finding the growth opportunities in every experience.

This summer, make renewal take centre stage. The demands of educational leadership are constant, and it can be easy to neglect your own well-being in the process of supporting others. Prioritize rest and self-care, and – especially – joy. In one school where I taught many years ago, I had three friends who, for the first week of summer, headed out on their sailboat, threw their watches in the water, and wandered the seas. I always thought that was a great way to start the summer, with a very clear definition between work and downtime.

I hope you can find your own path to disconnect from the trappings of our daily demands. Consider stepping away from emails, calendars, and clocks, and allowing yourself the time to recharge. Whether it's spending time with loved ones, pursuing hobbies

that bring you joy, or simply embracing the quiet moments, these acts of renewal are not indulgences; they are necessities.

Renewal also means reigniting your passion for the work you do. Use this time to reconnect with your purpose as a leader. Attend a conference, read an inspiring book, or explore innovative ideas that you can weave into your practice next year. Summer is the perfect time to cultivate curiosity and expand your perspective. When we return to our schools in the fall, it is this sense of renewal and inspiration that will empower us to lead with intention and energy.

May is a time to celebrate, reflect, and prepare for renewal. It is a time to honour the incredible work you have done as leaders, and to look forward to the opportunities ahead. Thank you for your unwavering dedication to your schools, staff, and students. I hope that this summer brings you the chance to rest, recharge, and return with a renewed sense of purpose and resilience.



@bcpvpapresident