

CURRENTS

UPDATE ON THE CURRENT ACTIVITIES OF THE
CHRISTIAN PRINCIPALS ASSOCIATION OF BC

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PRINCIPAL—SOLOIST OR CONDUCTOR?

by Edith Walker, Principal, Richmond Christian School – Middle Campus

It used to be that principals were the “do-all” and “be-all”. They were ultimately responsible for all that occurred at their school. But today, I believe that the schools that “get the job done” are not led by the soloist, but rather by a principal who acts more like a conductor – one who gathers a group of leaders around them and develops their gifting and talents, coordinating their efforts in pursuit of the common goal, to fulfill the mission and vision of their school. In this new paradigm, the principal is seen more as a formative leader, one who must possess facilitation skills, is able to imagine future possibilities, examine shared beliefs, and engage the staff in conversations about teaching and learning. As a principal, I have come to believe that my main job is two-fold: (1) to encourage an atmosphere of collaboration with teachers and to resource them so they can be the best they can be, and (2) to look for potential leaders on staff, tap them on the shoulder, and allow them the opportunity to grow and flourish as leaders on the team.

A team approach is the fuel that allows your school to attain uncommon results. Research indicates that the leadership of the principal is the critical factor in creating conditions in which teamwork and student learning thrive. I truly believe that failure to encourage collaboration among the teaching staff can be a recipe for failure. It’s been said that if you allow yourself to go too far out on a limb alone, you can expect the teachers to saw it off behind you.

I also believe that, if possible, having a diversity of generations on our staff is highly desirable when creating this atmosphere of collegiality, creativity, and cooperation. Each of these generations - (1) veterans, (2) baby-boomers, (3) generation Xers, and (4) generation Y, have a different life experience and hold slightly different views on the nature of teaching and learning. When mixed all together, there can be lively conversation which can create a “good” tension as we learn to respect each other’s beliefs and life experiences. If the thread that binds us all together is, in fact, the school’s mission and vision, then it can be a positive outcome, whatever the issue. If all generations feel valued and appreciated for what they bring to the discussions (and that’s part of the principal’s job), then the differences in perspectives and skills can lend value, rather than create barriers. A healthy, well-run school is comprised of all generations, who wish to work collaboratively with each other.

Principals do not have all the answers. That’s why the principal as conductor gathers a team who can be encouraged to share the responsibility, all the while learning what it means to lead collaboratively. The job of the conductor is to make sure that the music is interpreted properly so as to guide the musicians as they play. The conductor may have to make slight adjustments along the way, but when the orchestra is ready to play the music, there will be unity and harmony.

CONFERENCE UPDATES



Spring CPABC Conference

We are excited to have both Steve Bell and Jon Coutts present and share their gifts at our conference in May at Cedar Springs. The theme of the conference is **The Power of Love: Practising Forgiveness**. Steve Bell will lead us in worship times and through music, while Jon Coutts will lead us in some reflections on forgiveness.

The conference brochure can be found here:

<http://cpabc.ca/2014-CPABC-spring-conference-brochure.pdf>

Registration for the conference is open and can be completed online at:

<https://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/eventReg?oeidk=a07e8t1cgu4fa90b8d1&oseq=&c=&ch=>

Fall Christian Schools Canada Conference

The plans for the CSC conference are well under way. It is shaping up to be a great time of learning, reflection and fellowship. The conference theme is **Imagining the Kingdom** and we are excited to have Jamie Smith as our keynote speaker. We are hoping to get a large contingent of BC administrators and other school leaders to this conference.

The brochure for the conference can be found here:

<http://www.christianschoolscanada.com/2014-conference.pdf>

There is a 5 minute podcast from Jamie Smith on the conference website that outlines what he hopes to share with us at the conference. Here is the link to the conference webpage where you can find this podcast.

<http://christianschoolscanada.com/2014-2/>

Registration for this conference is also open and can be done online at:

<https://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/eventReg?oeidk=a07e8syp4s34d394c7&oseq=&c=&ch=>



CPABC/SCSBC LEADERSHIP CERTIFICATE



SCSBC and CPABC have been working together to revise and renew the leadership certificate. We strongly encourage all of our membership to fill in an application for this certificate. There is an interim certificate as well as a professional certificate. We are hoping that we will receive all applications by March 15, 2014, and then be able to give out certificates at our spring conference in May.

Here is the link to the page on our website with the link to the online application form: www.cpabc.ca/leadership-certificate.html



MENTORSHIP UPDATE

In partnership with SCSBC, we have approved the following three mentorship relationships for the upcoming year:

- Karl Kruze (mentee), from Powell River Christian School, and John Zuidhof (mentor), from Agassiz Christian School.
- Leila Chin (mentee), from Cornerstone Christian Academy, and Ellen Freestone (mentor), from Vancouver Christian School.
- Jeremy Tinsley (mentee), from Duncan Christian School, and Curtis Tuininga (mentor), from Cedars Christian School.

The CPABC Executive wishes God's blessings and guidance on these relationships. We are committed to supporting each relationship through prayer and financial reimbursement. Thank you to all who applied for this year's program. We were able to support most applications. It is exciting to see this initiative gather traction. We hope to see more of our membership apply next year.

CPABC Directors' Portfolios

Chairperson – Gerry Goertzen

Vice Chair – Jeanette Berkenbosch

Treasurer – Kevin Visscher

Secretary – Jeanette Berkenbosch / John Slofstra

Professional Development / Certification – Kevin Visscher

Conferences – John Slofstra / Gerry Goertzen

SCSBC & PDC & Miscellaneous – Ellen Freestone

Principal's Liaison/Promotion – Karl Boehmer / Edith Walker

CSC Representative – Danny Nagtegaal

Mentoring Program – Edith Walker / Kevin Visscher / Gerry Goertzen

Some Professional Reading Recommendations

The following are some books recommended by various members of the CPABC Board

How Children Succeed: Grit, Curiosity, and the Hidden Power of Character by Paul Tough – Drawing on groundbreaking research in neuroscience, economics, and psychology, Tough shows that the qualities that matter most have less to do with IQ and more to do with character: skills like grit, curiosity, conscientiousness, and optimism.

The Five Dysfunctions of a Team: a Leadership Fable by Patrick Lencioni – Lencioni reveals the five dysfunctions which go to the very heart of why teams even the best ones-often struggle. He outlines a powerful model and actionable steps that can be used to overcome these common hurdles and build a cohesive, effective team.

Humilitas by John Dickson – Embracing humility will radically transform your personal relationships, leadership abilities, and professional dealings.