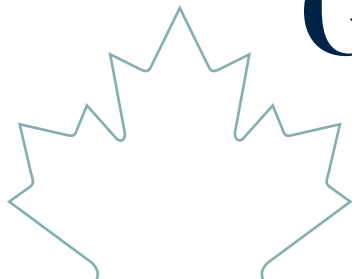


## Greetings from the President

### The Imperative for Courageous Leadership in Canadian Public Education



**Kevin Kaardal**  
CASSA/ACGCS President



### Inside this Issue

Greetings from the President,  
**Page 1**

Greetings from the Executive  
Director,  
**Page 2**

Introducing a New Affiliate:  
PSAANS  
**Page 4**

Meet the PSAANS Regional  
Executive Directors!  
**Page 6**

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

In the past five years, Canadian public education faced significant challenges that demanded courageous leadership. The COVID-19 pandemic forced a widespread expansion of remote learning, a transition back to in-person learning, and increased health protocols that continue to place additional demands on classrooms. Leaders had to balance safety with long-term impact on students' academic and social development. Post-pandemic, leaders face a rise in mental health issues, inequity exposed by the crisis, and financial inequity, particularly the increase in food scarcity among students; pandemic effects will continue to demand courageous leadership that can build teams and acknowledge truth to address them effectively.

Whether it's an increase in mental health issues or ensuring children have the nutrition to learn, systemic responses rely on professional adults in schools and administration offices. The challenge of recruiting and maintaining qualified employees greatly stresses public systems from coast to coast to coast. More than ever, courageous leaders need to strengthen support and career paths for the people who make up the teams we rely on.

Canada now sees division over the human rights of students who identify as 2SLGBTQIA+. I recently read an ad proposing a prayer walk that called those who support these human rights, "enemies." It is shameful and explicitly dangerous rhetoric. Courageous leaders must continue to stand for the human rights of students and staff in the face of misinformation, even as organized groups slander leaders by name.

Global conflicts divide people within our communities at the same time as refugees from conflicts

diversify communities. Courageous leaders create safe, inclusive learning environments with a focus on high quality learning and building intercultural competency throughout the system.

Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) software is predicted to be the biggest disruptor (for good or ill) that public education has ever faced, and we must consider certain questions carefully. How do we use this tool to prepare young people to thrive in an economy that will use AI? How do we use this tool to ensure students develop competencies like critical thinking? Required changes in pedagogy will demand courageous leaders collectively to move over a century of practice forward.

Courageous leaders are thoughtful, purpose driven, and keep the common good as the moral driver. Courageous leaders create conditions where learners and educators thrive holistically amid complexity. Courageous leaders are not deterred by the magnitude of problems, they see opportunities to effect meaningful change. If you are a leader in public education in Canada over the past five years, you displayed courageous leadership. The complexity our society faces will offer many opportunities to do so moving forward.

Recent years prove courageous leadership is not just desirable, but essential in Canadian public education. While courageous leaders speak their own truth, they also reach out for support. Remember that you are never alone; connection with your Canadian Association for School System Administrators (CASSA) colleagues and their wealth of knowledge and experience is an invaluable resource. As we continue to grapple with challenges and the opportunities they present, may we find hope in leaders who have the courage to lead towards a better future, together!

# Greetings from the Executive Director

## Mark Your Calendars for CASSA's Annual Leadership Conference!



**Ken Bain**

CASSA/ACGCS Executive Director

**J**oin us at CASSA's 2024 Leadership Conference in beautiful and historical Montreal, Quebec from July 3-5, 2024! This annual event follows the very successful 2023 conference in Victoria, British Columbia.

This year's theme is "Inspiring Systemic Change Through Courageous Leadership." The conference will celebrate leadership approaches throughout Canada. We are eager to showcase outstanding practices and inspire our collective journey in educational leadership.

Speakers include Dr. Jacqueline Ottmann, President, First Nations

University of Canada (Saskatchewan), Louis Volante, Professional Fellow, UNU-MERIT, Brock University Department of Educational Studies (Ontario), and the Honourable Senator David M. Arnott (Saskatchewan). Here is the link to register: <https://site.pheedloop.com/event/CASSA2024/register#category>.

The conference hotel is Le Westin Montreal. The hotel is perfectly located on the edge of Old Montreal... and a short walk to the Montreal Jazz Festival!

Lunch on Thursday July 4th, 2024, will highlight the XEROX EXL Award nominees from throughout the country and will culminate in the announcement of this year's National XEROX EXL Award recipient. Keep an eye out on the

next few *Leaders & Learners Newsletter* issues to see the nominees and the recipients when they are announced! Make sure to join us... we look forward to seeing you all there!



**WestJet, Air Canada, and VIA Rail are offering discounted travel!**

For more information:  
<https://site.pheedloop.com/event/CASSA2024/Travel>.

Your registration includes two lunches, two breakfasts, breaks, and an opening reception.

**Rooms are going quickly, so reserve NOW!**

Here is the link to reserve rooms: <https://www.marriott.com/event-reservations/reservation-link.mi?id=1696865421135&key=GRP&app=resvlink>.

### CASSA Board of Directors

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# SAVE THE DATE

Join us July 3-5, 2024!

**Location: Le Westin Montreal, Montreal, Quebec**

**Theme: To Come!**

The CASSA Annual Conference looks forward to seeing you in wonderful Montreal, Quebec, in 2024! Re-connect with school system leaders from across Canada to learn and share information on current topics in education.

Check <http://conference.cassa-acgcs.ca/index.html>  
for more information to come.

# Introducing a New Affiliate: PS AANS



By Tara Wittchen, Contributing Writer

**L**eaders & Learners has profiled school system leaders from Nova Scotia since the newsletter's first year of publication. The ongoing Faces in the Crowd series has included nearly a dozen superintendents from this province on Canada's east coast. Two issues of the newsletter have also devoted coverage to the Canadian Association of School System Administrators (CASSA) national conference when Halifax, the provincial capital, hosted it in 2008 and 2017.

The last time the newsletter put the spotlight on Nova Scotia, superintendents for the province's eight regional school boards belonged

to the Association of Nova Scotia Educational Administrators (ANSEA). CASSA welcomed ANSEA as a regional affiliate in 2016.

Much has changed since then. In 2018, the Government of Nova Scotia passed the Education Reform Act. The passing of this legislation resulted in the dissolution of the province's seven English-language school boards. In their place, Nova Scotia now has seven regional centres for education (RCEs). The Conseil scolaire acadien provincial (CSAP), created in 1996 to serve the education and language needs of the province's Acadian and franco-phone population, has remained intact throughout this transition.

RCEs make many of the same regional and local decisions as the

elected school boards did, including those related to school budgeting, teacher hiring and firing, student busing, and school building maintenance. RCEs also work with local school advisory councils (SACs). These volunteer organizations provide parents and guardians, school staff, community members, and, when appropriate, students with a voice to influence decisions that affect student learning. SACs bring partners together to give principals and RCEs advice that reflects the best interests of students from the perspective of the school community.

Another change that came out of this legislation was the elimination of the position of school superintendent, replaced by a regional executive director for each of the RCEs. Regional



## PSAANS is an inclusive professional association representing the diverse interests and voices of educational administrators at the school and regional levels whose leadership is central to building strong systems and strong schools where staff and student success are the priorities.

again in 2022 to maintain this affiliation with the NSTU.)

PSAANS aims to empower educational administrators through collaborative professionalism. Key priorities include:

- **Education and professional excellence:** strengthening and promoting excellence in education.
- **Negotiation and advocacy:** negotiating on behalf of members to gain improvements in the terms and conditions of employment, as well as compensation and benefits directly for administration or as a result of affiliation with the NSTU.
- **Building relationships and instilling confidence:** fostering positive relationships among and between administrators as well as the broader educational community and instilling confidence in the profession.
- **Support and protection:** providing support and protective services for members to enhance effective leadership that promotes the recruitment and retention of leaders.

PSAANS is an inclusive professional association representing the diverse interests and voices of educational administrators at the school and regional levels whose leadership is central to building strong systems and strong schools where staff and student success are the priorities.

In December 2018, PSAANS announced Ford Rice would be its interim executive director. That name will be familiar to longtime CASSA

members and *Leaders & Learners* readers. Ford was a superintendent and director of education in both Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador (the newsletter profiled Ford in the April-May 2011 issue). At the time of this announcement, he served as the regional executive director for the Strait Regional Centre for Education. As PSAANS executive director, Ford took on the task of working with a board of 14 public school administrators to represent the varying interests and perspectives of over 800 educational administrators at the school and regional levels.

During this time of building the organization, PSAANS members chose its first permanent board of directors. PSAANS named Tim Simony, a Halifax-area principal, as its board's interim chair. Tim has also served the organization as an elected director. He is now the current PSAANS executive director and one of two Nova Scotia representatives on the 2023-2024 CASSA board of directors.

The second Nova Scotia representative on CASSA's board of directors is Paul Landry. Paul was appointed to the PSAANS board of directors in 2020. He is the current regional executive director of education for the Strait Regional Centre for Education.

The PSAANS board of directors includes 10 elected directors from the seven English RCEs. It also includes one from the CSAP. The Halifax Regional Centre for Education has three directors, and the Chignecto-Central

executive directors report to the Deputy Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development.

The year 2018 also saw the development of a new membership association of educational leaders, known as the Public School Administrators Association of Nova Scotia (PSAANS). PSAANS includes the regional executive directors from all seven RCEs and the directeur général of the CSAP and all principals, vice principals, and other supervisory staff.

(As part of the changes under the 2018 legislation, school administrators could not remain in the Nova Scotia Teachers Union [NSTU] but still maintain affiliation with it. That affiliation protects seniority and compensation. PSAANS members voted in 2019 and

Regional Centre for Education has two; all others have one. As well, the board of directors includes one director appointed to represent members of African descent, one director appointed to represent members of Indigenous ancestry, and up to four appointed directors to reflect the diversity of the membership, including gender, ancestry, experience, skills, and current leadership role. Director positions are elected or appointed for a two-year term. Directors must have a permanent position and be an active PSAANS member.

PSAANS has hosted several in-person and virtual professional learning opportunities for its members.

In October 2021, it hosted the Leading Inclusive Education Virtual Conference, featuring keynote speakers

Tanya Talaga, Ojibwe author; Andy Hargreaves, author/advisor/researcher; and Jess Whitley, educator/researcher.

A year later, it hosted its first in-person conference, on the theme of Leading for Well-Being. The event included sessions on trauma-sensitive leadership, positive school culture, and brain-friendly classrooms.

Its most recent conference, held last fall, addressed the theme of Elevating Leadership. Keynote speakers were principal Baruti Kafele and Rev. Dr. Lennett Anderson, and sessions covered topics such as treaty education, autism, women in leadership, creating positive workspaces, educational leadership standards, and more.

PSAANS has also presented a number of webinars for its membership.

Recent topics have included understanding students with autism and stress; safeguarding schools from visitors with abusive behaviours; supporting 2SLGBTQ+ students and staff; and introduction to school finances. Upcoming sessions will focus on topics relating to AI and Chat GPT, the Nova Scotia School Book Bureau, financial planning, autism, and anti-racism.

In September 2023, five years after the organization's creation, PSAANS set up offices in its current location in Bedford, part of the Halifax Regional Municipality. It shares this space with the Educational Leadership Consortium of Nova Scotia.

To learn more about PSAANS, visit its website at [psaans.ca](http://psaans.ca) or follow it on the usual social media channels. ○

# Meet the PSAANS Regional Executive Directors!

## **Dave Jones – Annapolis Valley Regional Centre for Education (AVRCE)**

Dave took on the role of regional executive director for the AVRCE, with head offices in Berwick, in April 2019 after having served in the role in an acting capacity since May 2018. From 2008 to 2018, Dave was the director of programs and services for the former Annapolis Valley Regional School Board. He began his career in education in 1992 as a high school teacher. He has also taught education at the undergraduate and graduate level at Acadia University and Mount Saint Vincent University. He holds a Bachelor of Commerce from Saint Mary's University, a Bachelor of Education from Dalhousie University, and a Master of Education from Acadia, as well as an executive leadership certificate from the University of Toronto's Rotman School of Management.

## **Susan Kelley – Cape Breton-Victoria Regional Centre for Education (CBVRCE)**

Susan has served as regional executive director for the CBVRCE,

based in Sydney, since June 2019. She previously worked as director of programs and student services with the former Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board. Susan has worked in education for over 40 years, starting with the former Hants West School Board. She has also worked for the Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development for five years. She is originally from Albert Bridge, Cape Breton, and graduated from Riverview High in Sydney.

## **Karyn Cooling – Chignecto Central Regional Centre for Education (CCRCE)**

Karyn was named the regional executive director for the CCRCE, headquartered in Truro, in February 2024. She first joined the CCRCE team in 2023 as its director of school administration. Prior to this, she served in a multitude of roles with the Halifax Regional Centre for Education and the former Halifax

Regional School Board, including as a school administration supervisor, principal, vice principal, and teacher. While principal of Oyster Pond Academy in 2013, The Learning Partnership named Karyn as one of Canada's Outstanding Principals.

## **Steve Gallagher – Halifax Regional Centre for Education (HRCE)**

In April 2023, Steve was appointed as the regional executive director for HRCE after having served in the role in an acting capacity since September 2022. HRCE is the province's largest regional centre for education in the province, serving over 58,000 students at 137 schools. Its head offices are in Dartmouth. Steve also serves as the treasurer for the Educational Leadership Consortium of Nova Scotia, which provides leadership opportunities for educators in Nova Scotia based on the needs of educators and developed by Nova Scotia educators.

*Continued on next page*

### Angela Gladwin – South Shore Regional Centre for Education (SSRCE)

Angela is the acting regional executive director for the SSRCE, a role she has held since November 2023. Prior to this, she served as director of programs and student services in the SSRCE, which has its offices in Bridgewater. She has 15 years of experience in educational roles, including teacher, mentor, coach, principal, and coordinator of programs. She is passionate about instructional leadership and building the collective efficacy of school teams to make sure each student is successful.

### Jared Purdy – Tri-County Regional Centre for Education (TCRCE)

Jared was named regional executive director of education for the TCRCE, which has its administrative offices in Yarmouth, in June 2022. He had previously served in this role in an acting capacity. He has worked in a variety of classrooms, in both English and French, and has experienced a number of leadership roles in Nova Scotia's public

education system for more than 15 years. He also served as chair of the Nova Scotia Principals' Forum. Jared previously served as the TCRCE director of programs and services, where he led collaborative improvement teams that put in place the practices to help raise the bar and begin closing the gap for learners.

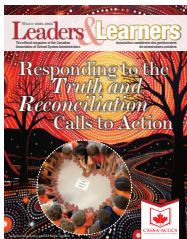
### Paul Landry – Strait Regional Centre for Education (SRCE)

Paul was appointed as regional executive director for the SRCE in April 2019, and served as the acting regional executive director from January to March 2019. Prior to that, he was the acting director of operations. He had previously been the director of programs and student services for the former Strait Regional School Board. Paul also worked at the regional level as the coordinator of strategic planning and the coordinator of school improvement and special projects. He has been a teacher at schools serving children at all grade levels in British Columbia and Nova Scotia, as well as serving as a principal. He holds a Master

of Education in educational leadership and administration from St. Francis Xavier University.

### Michel Collette – Conseil scolaire acadien provincial (CSAP)

Michel has been the directeur général (executive director) of the CSAP, which has its administrative offices in Saulnierville, since 2021. He holds a Bachelor of Education and Master of Education from the Université de Moncton. He also has a second Master of Education with a concentration on information and communication technology from Memorial University. Michel previously served as director of educational and student services at CSAP from 2019 to 2021, and has held roles as vice principal, principal, and educational program coordinator, in addition to many years as a teacher. He has worked for the Nova Scotia Department of Education as a consultant in French immersion and lectured at Université Sainte-Anne and Université de Moncton. ○



#### WE WOULD LIKE YOU TO WRITE FOR US!

The CASSA Board is looking for authors interested in writing for the upcoming Fall 2024 issue of *Leaders & Learners* magazine. If you have an article idea that you're itching to tell, please send an abstract to Jenna Collignon, editor of the magazine, at [jcollignon@matrixgroupinc.net](mailto:jcollignon@matrixgroupinc.net), and copy

[ken\\_bain@cassa-acgcs.ca](mailto:ken_bain@cassa-acgcs.ca). We are looking for features and success stories from each region of Canada: Eastern Canada, Quebec, Ontario, Western Canada, and Northern Canada.

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#### Published for the Canadian Association of School System Administrators

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#### Published by Matrix Group Publishing Inc.

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