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LEADERS & LEARNERS

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CANADIENNE DES ADMINISTRATEURS ET DES
ADMINISTRATRICES SCOLAIRES

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- Watch for details of the 2009 CASA Summer Leadership Academy, taking place in Calgary, in the next issue.

Message From The President: Finding And Retaining The Best Teachers

March is that favourite time of year when we focus on projections and staffing as we move inexorably to develop next year's budget.

When we get this part of the process right and recruit, develop, and retain the very best staff to teach and support our students, we have already predetermined over 80 per cent of the next budget. It is small wonder then that we have learned to work well with our unions and federations to make sure that we find and retain the very best staff possible.

This issue of *Leaders & Learners* is filled with wonderful strategies for recruitment, development, and ongoing support of school and system staff. A number of professionals from Alberta and Ontario articulate their recruitment and support strategies.

Our own executive director provides 10 considerations for staffing in the coming decade. As always, this publication proves there is such wisdom across the country on all of our critical issues.

Every week when I spend a full day in schools in Peel, I observe some of the best teaching I have ever experienced. Of course



Jim Grieve
CASA president

I see experienced staff using an amazing array of effective instructional strategies but I also meet newly hired first-year teachers doing the same thing.

The teachers we have hired in the last six years are among the best prepared I have encountered. This is a credit to their personal commitment to prepare for a career in teaching.

It also reflects our commitment as a board to connect them with a mentor for their first two years and provide them with rich professional growth opportunities inside their own school.

How good are some of these new teachers? I visited a first-year primary teacher and her class earlier this month, and discovered that the literacy resource teacher had recently brought two other experienced teachers to observe the program in this classroom. We have come such a long way in our understanding of transformational teaching practices and learning!

Along with recruitment and development, it is extremely important that we take active steps to retain staff. Among the strategies that have proven effective in the retention of

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Message From The Executive Director: Some Considerations As We Recruit Staff For Our Schools

Just as change is a definite factor in education, so is the turnover of staff and the need to recruit for new and replacement positions. The market for teaching positions fluctuates according to regions across Canada and we tend to go from shortage to surplus in a cyclical manner.

Another phenomenon is the shortage in specific curriculum areas. Traditional high demand areas have been mathematics, French language, special education and technology.

In Ontario, there is a current need in these areas while a large number of education program graduates remain in supply teacher pools or even unemployed in education.

Urban areas often have an oversupply while rural and remote regions are understaffed. Retirements and loss of young teachers to the profession have been factors that add to the issue of getting and keeping quality staff.

The following are some considerations as we staff our schools in the next few years.

1. The economic climate of our world will slow down the retirement rate we have experienced. Already, there is a trend to not take early exit.
2. Young teachers are not leaving at the rate of the past few years. Work conditions and value in the job are more positive than they have been for some time.
3. School districts should concentrate on succession planning and gather data on needs over the next five years.
4. Succession planning should include specific targets for areas of most need.

5. School districts need to convey their needs to teacher training organizations to ensure that the supply matches the need.
6. Boards will be well served by promoting a positive image of their system and the treatment of their employees.
7. Hiring only specialists may create problems as curriculum shifts open new needs.
8. Recruiters should look at the future prospects for new hires and try to acquire those who will become system leaders.
9. Build success internally through provision of resources and a quality climate for instruction. This will make your current teachers advocates to bring in new prospects.
10. Develop a studied plan for advertising outside your board and for attendance at job fairs and other gatherings of teaching prospects.

Above all, look for long-range quality and then develop internal programs to retain and advance the best. Our students deserve no less.



Frank Kelly
CASA executive director

Recognize A Colleague With The EXL Award

CASA members who show exemplary leadership ability and who enhance school administration are eligible for the EXL Award. The award, jointly sponsored by Xerox Canada Limited and CASA, has been presented since 2002.


If you work with an outstanding CASA member or know a leader in our field who deserves to be recognized, why not nominate them for the 2009 award? You can share your suggestion



The EXL award.

with the executive director of your provincial association. The national award recipient is selected from the provincial nominations and is announced during the opening ceremonies at CASA's annual conference.

The official nomination forms can be found on the CASA website at www.casa-acas.ca.



Far and away the best prize that life offers is the chance to work hard at work worth doing.

—Theodore Roosevelt

One Year Later, An Update On Bathurst High School: A Magnificent Triumph To Honour “The Boys In Red”

Readers may recall a story *Leaders & Learners* ran in Volume 4, Issue 23 on New Brunswick School District 15 superintendent **John McLaughlin**'s moving presentation in Halifax last summer. John spoke about how his community was coping with the aftermath of a van accident that took the lives of seven Bathurst High School students and basketball players, and the wife of the team's former coach.

On Saturday, February 21, the Bathurst High School varsity boys' basketball team won the New Brunswick provincial AA championship, just 13 months after the tragedy. The Phantoms defeated the Campobello Vikings 82-50. This followed an amazing season record of 35-3, including 26 consecutive wins leading up to the provincial championships, and a provincial title win by the school's junior varsity boys' team.

John has been kind enough to share his thoughts here on the community's experiences over the past year and the hope these young men bring to all. *Leaders & Learners* salutes the strength and spirit of the Bathurst Phantoms team and their supporters throughout the school and wider community.

This time last year I wondered if it was possible for Bathurst High School and for our community ever to be happy again. At the time of the tragedy, I think a part of each of us died. Students and staff, parents and friends...nobody in this community was immune to the oppressive heaviness that seemed to paralyze the spirit. All of us worked very hard to help the healing process evolve, but we always seemed to be taking baby steps, and there were several points along the way that were debilitating and that even seemed to take us backwards.

Our desire for peaceful hearts has been intense, and a year after the tragedy I notice that as a community we seem to be



The Bathurst Phantoms, New Brunswick's 2009 varsity boys' basketball champions. *Photo courtesy of BHS*

at a better place. The sadness is never far away, though, and as leaders in the school system we are constantly reminded of our duty to care for our students and staff, and to learn from the terrible tragedy that we experienced. Because of that, our focus has been intense and many of us continue to experience this loss with worry and uncertainty and troubled hearts.

Then, out of the blue, come these two boys' basketball teams, burning up the court with their positive energy and will to succeed. First the junior varsity team wins their provincial title, and then the varsity team does the same. These young men and their coaches have done what nobody could have ever expected of them, and their accomplishments have brought encouragement to us all. As so often happens in times of great tragedy, the children are leading us to a more peaceful and confident place, and their example is astonishing. We worry so much about our students, and yet their resilience is somehow more evident than our own.

The passage of time allows things to settle, I suppose, but time alone doesn't heal. It is the positive actions of good people that bring peace and encourage comfort, a truth that is wonderfully evident in the youthful exuberance, the joyful resolve and the stirring pride that we all witnessed in this year's BHS Phantoms basketball teams. We are at a better place today because of these outstanding young men, their families, their fans and their coaches.



**Joy is of the will
which labours,
which overcomes
obstacles, which
knows triumph.**

**—William Butler
Yeats**

Facing A Downturn In The Canadian Economy: The Perspective From Leaders In Public Education, Part 2

In this issue of *Leaders & Learners*, we continue with part two in our series on the current economic climate facing Canadians and how these tough financial times affect public education in various regions across the nation. Here Grande Prairie Public School District superintendent **Chris Gonnet** contributes his thoughts on how this board, located in a region considered to be one of the country's most dynamic economic engines, will work to meet the needs of its students, staff and surrounding communities as the economy slows.

We hope to include contributions from senior administrators based in other regions in future issues. Please get in touch with the editor at tarawittchen@eastlink.ca if you'd like to share your own experiences and thoughts.

Describe the region that your school division serves.

The Grande Prairie Public School District serves the students of the city of Grande Prairie, located five and a half hours northwest of Edmonton. The district operates 12 schools enrolling approximately 6,100 students. The city of Grande Prairie is one of the most rapidly growing cities in Alberta, second only to Fort McMurray. Fuelling this growth has been the size of the economic trading area, which covers all of northwestern British Columbia, Yukon and the Northwest Territories, and of course the Peace River region of Alberta.

The major industries in the area include one of Alberta's largest natural gas fields, agriculture and forestry. Many believe that Grande Prairie is an excellent barometer for the Canadian economy, as all of the major economic drivers of our Canadian economy are evident here.

From your observations, what are the most pressing economic challenges facing senior administrators in public education in Canada today? What are the key issues fac-



Sharing a story on Literacy Day at one of Grande Prairie Public School District's schools. *All photos courtesy of GPPSD*

ing the communities served by your division and in your province as a whole?

The single greatest pressure that has impacted the quality of life and education in our community has been the unprecedented growth our community and school system has experienced over the past 10 years. We are one of the fortunate communities that are actually breathing a sigh of relief in the downturn in the economy. We are now gaining the opportunity to catch up on the community, social and educational infrastructure that is so desperately needed in our community.


For example, we have a number of our schools that have more students in modular and portable classrooms attending the school than being housed in the main school facility. These pressures place a tremendous strain on our staff and facilities to meet the educational needs of our students and maintain quality education programs.

If you could bend the ear of your provincial finance and education ministers and the federal finance minister, what message would you most want them to have? What priorities would you want them to focus on, in terms of supporting public education in Canada through uncertain times?

We need a long-term vision for education. In spite of what economic drivers are impacting our communities, we will continue to have students attending our schools.

During times when the economy in the private sector has slowed, there is an opportunity to invest in public infrastructure to support the needs of the private sector when they are experiencing times of growth.

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**If your actions
inspire others to
dream more, learn
more, do more and
become more, you
are a leader.**

**—John Quincy
Adams**

Facing A Downturn In The Canadian Economy, continued

(Continued from page 4)

The provincial and federal governments have a responsibility to even the cycles by building public infrastructure when the private sector is slow and not trying to compete with the private sector during times of strong economic growth and labour supply is in short demand.

In Grande Prairie, we experienced huge challenges over the past five years trying to build public infrastructure to meet the growth pressures while at the same time the private sector was competing for the same individuals for their workforce. This competition between the public and private sectors resulted in rapid escalation of costs and inflation here.

We know that our region will continue to experience growth and there needs to be a planned effort on behalf of government to ensure that there are not the huge swings in workforce activity during these changing economic times.

How do you plan to keep your eye on long-term goals for schools and the district as a whole when, as a result of this world-wide economic crisis, there may be more immediate concerns? How can you best plan to build on the division's strengths in so-called non-essential areas when there may be budgetary pressure to just maintain basic programming/services?

Our district has adopted a set of Universal Guiding Principles, which will help guide our decisions in everything we do. During the challenging times that may lie ahead or in prosperous times, they will still form the basis of our decisions and programs we offer in our district. These principles are as follows: For everything we de-



Left: Students enjoying stories together in the library of one of GPPSD's schools.



Right: Big bright smiles from a couple of young Grande Prairie students.

cide and do, we will hold ourselves accountable and we will ask

- Is it good for students?
- Will it build trust and good relationships?
- Will it help us improve?
- Is it the responsible thing to do?
- Are we being open, honest and ethical?


Every day we hear more and more bad news with regards to the economy and how it is affecting Canadians in every part of the country. To end this feature on a hopeful note, please share your personal suggestions for ways on maintaining a positive outlook through these challenging times.

We need to look forward to our future and beyond the upcoming months. We should be cautious that we do not get pulled into the vortex of a doom and gloom outlook for our future. We have tremendous potential for future growth as we have experienced over the past several years. It will return. We need to be very strategic in our thinking and planning in order to prepare ourselves for the return of our strong economy.

To this end, governments will play a large role in helping ensure the public infrastructure is in place to support a strong economy. Education will play a vital role in ensuring that we have the citizens to meet these challenges.

Now more than ever before we need to work hard in our schools, communities, provinces and country to ensure that our education system continues to improve, as this will be our foundation for the future.

Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts with our readers, Chris.



I start with the premise that the function of leadership is to produce more leaders, not more followers.

—Ralph Nader



A GPPSD student learns new skills hands-on.

Education Job Fairs And Recruitment Strategies

Each year, public school division representatives, including senior administrators, human resources staff, principals and teachers, attend education job fairs in an effort to recruit the brightest and the best of new teachers graduating from universities across the country. In this feature, we hear from senior administrators and human resources staff on their experiences and the strategies they use at the job fairs.

Neil Markham is the director - certified staff for the Northern Lights School division in northeastern Alberta.

Rick Cusson is the assistant superintendent of operations for the Fort Vermilion School Division in northwestern Alberta.

Ed Holt is the associate superintendent of the Golden Hills School Division in southern Alberta.

Lynn Hiebert is the superintendent of human resources support services for Peel District School Board in the Greater Toronto Area. Lynn is represented here by **Anne Cameron**, manager of human resources, and **Donna White**, an employee relations officer responsible for recruitment and retention of staff.

Please tell our readers about your experiences with recruiting teachers at education job fairs.

Neil: Northern Lights School Division has been actively recruiting teachers at education job fairs for at least 10 years that I know of. I personally have been involved in the process for the past five years. By the time I got into the game, NLSD had a system of doing local career fairs (Alberta/BC/Saskatchewan) and then a fairly extensive Maritimes trip. We've also recruited in Newfoundland but not at a career fair.

A great deal of attention was placed on the trips to the Maritime provinces as costs were obviously higher than local career fairs, but because of local teacher shortages, these trips were extremely important in the staffing of our schools. We found that because young teachers in the Maritimes often had to substitute teach for years



Students and recruiters mingle at the Maritime Education Fair, sponsored by the University of Prince Edward Island, this past February.



Kelly Johnson-Turnbull (facing), assistant principal, and **Blair Norton** (right), principal, meet with students at the NLSD booth at 2009 Maritime Education Job Fair in Charlottetown, PEI.

All photos by Tara Lee Wittchen

before they could hope to secure a probationary position within their home province, they were more than willing to consider the big move out west.

When I was principal-at-large, we developed a system where we would take a first-year teacher accompanied by either their principal, assistant principal or their mentor teacher. We also tried to match the first-year teacher's university education with the university offering the job fair. Prior to leaving for the Maritimes, we would conduct an orientation session to train our career fair teams. The new teachers brought a very authentic picture

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**Talent wins games,
but teamwork and
intelligence wins
championships.**

—Michael Jordan

Education Job Fairs And Recruitment Strategies, continued

(Continued from page 6)

of what the transition is like for prospective new teachers considering the move. Oftentimes, it was our new teachers who ultimately swayed the prospective teacher's mind.

In previous years, senior administrators attended the career fairs as well—our superintendent and the associate superintendent of human resources. I believe that their presence created a sense of importance and value to the job fairs, and made prospective new teachers realize that this was serious business and that they had better put their best foot forward in order to impress the school division brass.

Rick: I have been attending career fairs for the Fort Vermilion School Division for the past five years. I have been organizing our recruitment drive for the past four years. We focus Canada-wide but predominantly hit the east coast. I attend all fairs on behalf of our school division and I always bring a mix of experienced and new administrators with me.

We always conduct interviews during and after the fair, and I do have motives for bringing a mix of administrators. I use the experienced administrators to screen potential candidates; it is important that they meet the candidates as they will be the ones working with them on a regular basis if the candidates are hired for their schools. It also allows the veteran flag potential candidates that they want for their schools.

This is also a great opportunity for newer administrators in that I can use it as a mentorship opportunity. It is a great opportunity for new administrators to see other interviewers in action and helps them see the standard of potential teacher that our division is looking for. Newer administrators are asked to observe then debrief with myself and other seasoned administrators after each interview.

The recruiting drive also lets me spend a little extra time with each of our administrators. We are all busy people and it is sometimes difficult to have the time to build



Rick Cusson (left), assistant superintendent of operations for Fort Vermilion School Division, and **Patrick Wilbur**, principal, show off their job fair team jerseys.

that personal relationship with administrators from around our division. It turns out to be a great chance to share a neat experience over a good meal after a long day of work.

Ed: Golden Hills has been actively recruiting for the last 10 years. We started out just recruiting in Alberta at the University of Alberta, University of Calgary and University of Lethbridge. We have expanded in the last five years to include the University of Regina and the University of Saskatchewan. This year we have included the University of Toronto. Three summers ago we also went to the Maritimes.

Those who attend include myself as superintendent of human resources, and at some places other HR staff, other superintendents, principals and my wife.

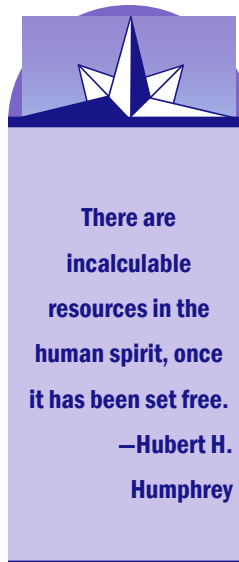
Anne: Donna and I have attended job fairs for the last 9 or 10 years. A team of elementary and secondary principals and vice principals attends the fairs with us. When we're recruiting for elementary French teachers, we also try to include our instructional coordinator of moderns as part of the team.

What do you believe is the most valuable aspect of meeting with and recruiting new education graduates in person at these job fairs? What insight can be gained by meeting in person and interviewing on site compared to reviewing a stack of resumes that come into your offices?

Neil: Being able to meet new education graduates and converse face to face is so much more meaningful than just reading over their resume. Sometimes a resume can't provide the insights into a person's personality and you can actually place a candidate on the discard pile when in fact you've actually just passed off an A+ teacher!

On the other hand, you can get a false impression of a person based on a resume that looks impressive and yet once you meet them in person you quickly realize they aren't quite the person you thought they were. The interesting thing about meeting people face to face is that

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Education Job Fairs And Recruitment Strategies, continued

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quite often you form an opinion about them within about 10 to 15 minutes and this impression is generally accurate even in the long term.

Rick: For me, it's about seeing who's who. You can only tell so much about a person by a piece of paper. Some look good on paper but don't turn out to be what you are expecting. With our location, a lot of what we do at career fairs is actually breaking down the perception of what the north is like. I find we get a higher level of candidate by actively promoting our division as opposed to a "sit and get" model of recruiting.

Ed: We do a short interview so we have a little more information than a resume. They get to know some of the finer points of our division and get a connection. We also get some ideas of other strengths they may have.

Anne: When we meet new graduates in person, it's a real opportunity to emphasize the vision, values and goals of our board. This personalized approach helps to establish the board's profile and reputation with the candidates. For new teachers, it's a chance to get their individual questions answered. The enthusiastic and energetic atmosphere at the fairs is clearly evident.

What are some key strategies you have found to be effective in attracting strong candidates to consider working for your school division? Are there any other unorthodox approaches you've found to be especially helpful in getting the attention of new teachers?

Neil: Generally speaking, we find that a well-dressed, classy team with a professional-looking booth and supply of resources will be the initial attraction. We also make a point to stand out front of our booth desk and approach people in a warm and inviting manner. We tend to keep the conversation informal yet informative—providing the candidate with key selling features of our school division while at the same time learning more about them and what they have to offer.

Quite often candidates get the wrong impression about our division because of our name, "Northern Lights," and so we often address that by pointing to the warm, inviting pictures of our local communities on our display board or by directing them to a revolving PowerPoint presentation that also shows the not-so-harsh climate and environment we call home.

Another unorthodox method is something we call "going fishing" where we will send some of our team members out to wonder about the career fair and "lure" them over to our booth so that we can then "hook" them with our wonderful teaching opportunities!

Rick: Attracting strong candidates is becoming easier. We have put a fair number of supports in for our beginning teachers over the past five years and candidates are impressed by the experience we can give them. We are a rural division and they quickly get the message that they will be taken care of and supported. In Fort Vermilion, you are not just a number.

I use two major draws in attracting attention to the Fort Vermilion School Division booth at career fairs.

"A couple of years ago, we had **bright hockey jerseys** made up with our logo on the front and 'Recruiter' on the back.

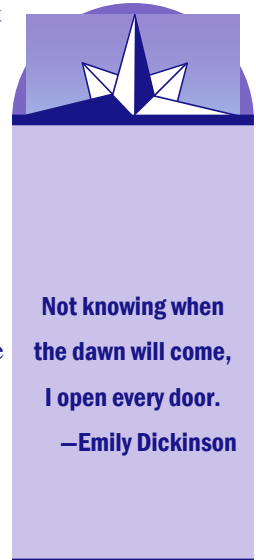
It is eye catching, memorable, and promotes a sense of youth and vigour in the division.

It also sends the new recruits a message that **we are a team.**"
—Rick Cusson,
Fort Vermilion School Division

First, a couple of years ago, we had bright hockey jerseys made up with our logo on the front and "Recruiter" on the back. It is eye catching, memorable, and promotes a sense of youth and vigour in the division. It also sends the new recruits a message that we are a team. You'd be surprised at the number of people that remember us from year to year.

Second, the recruiting team itself. I'm careful in the selection process to ensure that I have the right personalities joining me at the fairs. I want to have people who can attract people to be with me at the career fair. Personality and first impressions are key. I know that we have attracted a number of candidates over the past five years that indicated that it was the excitement around the booth that got them interested. Many had no intentions of working in northern Alberta until we chatted with them.

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Education Job Fairs And Recruitment Strategies, continued

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It's sometimes interesting to look at yourself through the eyes of a beginning teacher. Would you rather work for someone who is sitting behind a table with their arms crossed looking rather stoic, or someone who is up and actively engaged with you in conversation?

Ed: The short interview has fared well for us.

Anne: We know, from surveying new hires, that most of our new teachers choose our board because of our progressive, innovative reputation. We have also been experiencing significant growth over the past several years; that in itself is attractive to prospective teachers. So one important strategy is to make sure our booth stands out so candidates can find it easily.

Donna: We have also done research to find out what information is of most interest to candidates, and we make sure we highlight those aspects of our board in our display and handout material. Besides salary and benefits, candidates want to know what resources and supports we offer new teachers, and so we highlight the many resources in place in the Peel board.

Anne: Yes, we understand that it is very helpful for new teachers to have resources and a support system in place. For example, two years ago we established a program called Side by Side. In their first year of teaching, each new teacher is paired with a more experienced teacher.

Is it important for you to put effort into recruiting staff from outside your region, and if so, why?

Neil: I believe that Alberta graduates about 2,000 educa-

tion students each year and the demand for teachers is about 2,600 and so yes, we definitely have to go out of province to recruit teachers.

Rick: It is important for Fort Vermilion to recruit outside of Alberta. I am aware that it will be in very short order that Alberta universities will not be able to continue to produce enough grads to meet our needs. We have a barrier in our location as well; not every teacher wants to come north to a rural division. We find that the majority of grads from southern Alberta consider Edmonton to be northern and thus it is difficult to attract them. We also find that a fair number of students prefer to be in an urban centre.

Ed: We hire between 40 and 50 teachers for each new school year. Half of those hired are from outside of Alberta. There just isn't enough in Alberta to select the quality that we desire.

Anne: This year we stayed within the province. However, in the past, we have travelled across Canada.

Donna: For example, we've had an elementary French hiring pool and have attended fairs outside of the provinces to recruit elementary French teachers. Travelling to meet the candidates gives us a chance to tell them why they should choose our board. We see the value of those visits in the number of applicants from the fairs we visit and the number of teachers who accept jobs with us.

Anne: We do all of our teacher hiring directly online through our own online application process called Virtually in Peel, or VIP for short. With this process, each teaching job is posted on VIP and interested candidates apply directly for that particular job.

We have had very positive feedback from our candidates about this process. Candidates can create their resume and cover letter electronically. Besides being very user friendly, it's free of charge. So, even when we are not able to attend a particular out-of-region job fair, it's still easy for teachers to apply for jobs with our board.

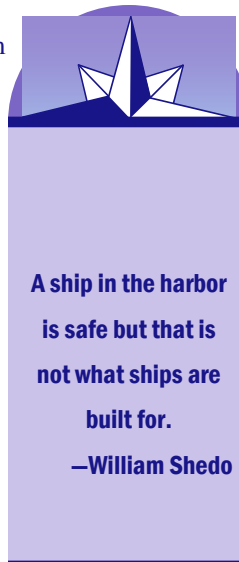
What do you personally enjoy about meeting new teachers/soon-to-be grads at these job fairs?

Neil: I really enjoy the enthusiasm and passion that these education graduates bring to the table. Some of the people

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UPEI education students listen intently as Fort Vermilion School Division assistant superintendent **Rick Cusson** cites some of the many benefits of working for his division.



Education Job Fairs And Recruitment Strategies, continued

(Continued from page 9)

I've met have had such tremendous life experiences and I often feel a sense of privilege to be able to meet and get to know them on a personal level.

The greatest pleasure I get out of being a recruiter for the division is that quite often I am their first contact with the division and if I do a good enough job to attract them and bring them on board, there is a creation of a bond between myself and that individual that lasts as long as they remain with us. I can walk into schools in our division and meet people that were recruited four or five years ago, and there is that connection that remains between us year after year.

Rick: I find it invigorating to get out and meet people who are excited about entering the profession. The whole process of getting out and talking with potential teachers also reminds me and our administrators what a great division we work for.

Anne: In attending the fairs, I have an opportunity to answer individual questions and know that the candidates are very thankful and appreciative of the fact that we've attended the fair. I come away feeling absolutely excited about the candidates we've had a chance to meet. As well, the candidates have had a chance to get a sense of who we are, where we are located, and why they would want to come and work with us.

Donna: I really like the energy in the room. The candidates are so enthusiastic, eager and ready to start working. At the end of the day, it's very rewarding to know that we've provided these individuals with pertinent information.

What strategies should education job candidates use to stand out?

Neil: Do your homework and research the school divisions prior to the career fair. Dress professionally. Bring a first-rate resume with you and leave it with the employers after conversing with them. Be prepared to talk about your student teaching experiences. Travel from booth to booth on your own...it takes more courage but you'll get one-on-one attention from the recruiters!

Ask intelligent questions. Be a good listener but also be prepared to share your own stories. Be confident and speak with confidence...be prepared to brag a little. Highlight your unique life experiences and leadership roles, such as trips abroad, mentoring roles, coaching and volunteerism.



From left: FVPD's **Patrick Wilbur**, principal, **Sharon Purdy**, vice principal, and **Darren Young**, principal, meet with potential teacher candidates at the 2009 Maritime Job Fair.

Rick: Put your best foot forward; first impressions are critical. Be open-minded and select the opportunities you are interested in after you hear what everyone has to offer.

Anne: The manner in which they present themselves is very important. The candidates who are very professional and mature demonstrate their professionalism. As well, candidates who have done research and ask informed questions also demonstrate their commitment to their career choice and their interest in working for our board.

Donna: It is very important to show an interest in the board. As the candidates ask questions, they show a genuine interest in the dialogue that's taking place.

Is there anything else that you would like to add?

Donna: Some candidates need to be reminded that they must treat our online application process as they would a traditional cover letter and resume.

Anne: To assist with this process, we do presentations at some of the fairs. Part of that presentation is to conduct a live demonstration of our VIP process. During this demonstration, we emphasize the importance of treating their application as a professional resume.

Thank you all for sharing your experiences and advice with us.



Leadership is the ability to get extraordinary achievement from ordinary people.

—Brian Tracy

CASA PEOPLE: Faces In The Crowd At Education Job Fairs In 2009



Above: New Brunswick's School District 11 booth at the Université de Moncton job fair. Right: Christ the Redeemer Catholic Schools HR coordinator **Dawn Quinlan** (left) in PEI.



Left: Fort McMurray Public vice principal **Jessica Rumer** and associate superintendent **Amgad Rushdy** take a moment to chat. Right: Former CASA president **John Darroch**.



Left: **Ed Buckle** (behind table), deputy superintendent of human resources for Grande Prairie and District Catholic Schools, in PEI.

Below: **Pat Nameth** (left) and **Kathleen Murphy-House** (second from left) of Fort McMurray Catholic Schools.

All photos by Tara Lee Wittchen



The great leaders
are like the best
conductors—they
reach beyond the
notes to reach the
magic in the players.

—Blaine Lee

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Our Mission:

CASA will advance quality public education and excellence in system level leadership through advocacy and national collaboration.



Our Beliefs:

CASA believes that:

- Cultural diversity is a unique strength that enriches our nation.
- Communication and collaboration with parents and other partners is integral to successful student learning.
- Quality public education provides the best opportunity for a nation to enhance the lives of all its citizens.
- Effective system, provincial and national level leadership enables and supports excellence in teaching and learning.
- A comprehensive education, equitable and accessible to all, is the key to meeting the diverse needs and securing a successful future for our youth.

Specific strategies to advance the mission:

- Establish position papers on specific topics as they relate to the beliefs and interests of the association.
- Recruit new people.
- Establish a national representation.
- Establish a three-tier public relations and publications strategy.
- Establish a funding team to create an operating budget.

Message From The President, continued: Finding And Retaining The Best Teachers

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staff, including professional development, building collaborative learning communities and negotiating fair collective agreements, we also have to consider recognition as extremely important. Service for 25 years has long been a standard recognition point. In the past few years in Peel, we have moved to add 30, 35 and 40-plus years of service. As well, we are moving toward forms of recognition for 5, 10, 15 and 20 years. The impact has been outstanding. Staff really appreciate the formal recognition and our retention has never been higher.

I hope that we will be able to devote a complete issue of *Leaders & Learners* next fall to reveal some of the wonderful staff recognition strategies boards have carried out across Canada. Please get in touch if you'd like to contribute your thoughts to this or any other topic.



Staff from Grande Yellowhead Regional Division gather information materials and resources about their division for an education student attending the Career Fair at the Université de Moncton in February.

Photo by Tara Lee Wittchen