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# LEADERS & LEARNERS

THE VOICE OF THE CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF  
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CANADIENNE DES ADMINISTRATEURS ET DES  
ADMINISTRATRICES SCOLAIRES

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### CASA Events

- Join us in 2010 at the  
CASA Annual Summer  
Conference in Quebec  
City. The theme for next  
year's conference is  
"Dealing with Children's  
Mental Health."

Watch for details on this  
event in upcoming news-  
letters and also at  
[www.casa-acas.ca](http://www.casa-acas.ca).

## Message From The President: Thoughts On Ethical Leadership

There can be little doubt that, wherever we are in the western world, the last few years have brought to us clearly astonishing cases of unethical leadership in the large scale scandals that have rocked the business world (ENRON, WorldCom, Adelphia, Madoff, Jones, et al), as well as all levels of the political realm.

At the same time, as we look around us at our organizations, I am sure that we see examples of the power and strength of educational leaders of the highest ethical standards. It is that form of leadership that we must adopt, nourish and celebrate enthusiastically.

I believe that we are all intimately acquainted with "ethical leadership" in that we have all experienced and benefitted in our own personal and professional lives from contact with a mentor who was, in effect, an ethical teacher. For a moment, I encourage you to reflect on the individual who has had the greatest impact on you professionally. I suggest that this individual modelled consistently the traits of ethical leadership.

Those who study qualities of ethical leaders refer consistently to the total integrity of the individual and to the diligence and single-mindedness with which he pursues his goals.



Carol Gray  
CASA president

He remains true to principles that are clearly stated and to values that are evident in all of his actions. Those with whom he works respond with total trust and great loyalty both to the leader and to the organization, due to his ability to build relationships and to empower those with whom he works. As a result, expectations of the leader are enormous.

In today's ever more complex role, responding to more demanding and more needy publics, the ethical leader must deal with conflicting expectations with fairness and with respect, and must adhere to the values for which he stands. This is never an easy task, but responses to such challenges can be seen more clearly when measured against these standards.

The recipe given above can seem somewhat simplistic but is, in fact, rooted deeply in the organizational culture established by all who contribute to the school or school district.

Thus, the leader's ability to enunciate and conform to his stated values, to form meaningful relationships and to empower those with whom he works assumes primary importance.

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Message From The Executive Director: A Look Back At The Successful Conference In Calgary

**M**any people think that educators have more than their share of free time with long summers and other holidays to indulge themselves. Those critics should have been in Calgary in early July as 150 system leaders came together for four days to share and learn about directions and best practices for early learning.

**Jim Grieve**, 2008-09 president of CASA, and his conference planning team are to be congratulated for putting together a fine program with contributors from across Canada. Teachers and system leaders who have developed programs that work offered the breakout sessions. The keynote addresses by **Michael Fullan**, **Fraser Mustard** and **Clyde Hertzman** gave inspiration and motivation to those who want to be involved and make a difference for young learners.

Dr. Mustard is a speaker that all educators should hear and hear regularly. He has a lifetime of experience researching learning and the capabilities of youth. At his advanced age he is still one of Canada's strongest advocates for change and improvement. He believes truly that the young can learn more quickly and more accurately than they have to this point. And he is very firm in pointing this out to educators and asking them "do they get" his message. With every speech he challenges teachers, principals and senior administrators to do better and to advocate with government for

changes. Read more about Dr. Mustard on page 5.

The climate in Calgary was charged with a desire to make changes for the benefit of young learners. Everyone was positive to the messages they heard.

This is the benefit of the Canadian Association of School Administrators. These sessions bring a focus to important issues in education. They allow good educators to interact and share, and motivate them to carry positive ideas into their school districts.

As Michael Fullan and **Lynn Sharratt** point out in their new book, *Realization*, "It takes real knowledge of how students learn to understand what, how and why some structures get in the way of improvement. Then, it takes a commitment of energy to remove them." There was energy at CASA in Calgary. That energy will spread into many school systems across this country.



Frank Kelly  
CASA executive director

## Message From The President, continued

(Continued from page 1)

I suggest that it is the responsibility not only of our educational systems but of our society as a whole to re-insert the basic values of integrity and honesty into all we do. Combined with respect for others, all the elements of ethical leadership will emerge and will form a firm foundation on which

we can continue to progress. The increasing focus on this aspect of educational leadership bodes well for the future and for those young people who are now looking to us for direction and inspiration.

This summer, **Carol Gray** replaced **Jim Grieve** as CASA's president. Carol is the director of secondary schools for the Lester B. Pearson School Board, the largest English-language board in Quebec. Her school board's territory covers the western half of the island of Montreal and then extends west to the Ontario border. Get to know Carol better in our feature interview, starting on page 3. To contact Carol, try:

**Email:** cgray@lbpsb.qc.ca  
**Phone:** (514) 422-3000, ext. 3239  
**Fax:** (514) 422-3024  
**Post:** c/o Lester B. Pearson School Board  
1925 Brookdale Avenue  
Dorval, QC H9P 2Y7



Winter is an  
etching, spring a  
watercolor, summer  
an oil painting and  
autumn a mosaic of  
them all.  
—Stanley Horowitz

## Getting To Know Carol Gray: A Feature Interview With Our New President

**Carol Gray** was born in Montreal and still works in the Greater Montreal area. She taught elementary and high school students for 16 years before going into administration. She then held a variety of administrative positions, including vice principal and principal at both the elementary and high school levels. Eight years ago, she was appointed director of secondary schools for the Lester B. Pearson School Board.

She was president of the Association of Administrators of English Schools in Quebec in 2005-06, and has co-chaired two provincial administrator/trustee conferences. She has been a member of CASA for eight years, during which she has served as Quebec director. In 2007, she received the national EXL Award.

Carol took both her undergraduate and graduate studies at McGill University. She is married to Warren, with whom she has one grown son, Ryan.

***Why did you decide to get into the field of education?  
What sparked your interest and why?***

As the eldest of five children, nurturing was second nature to me. At the tender age of 10, I often held “pretend classes” in our basement and prided myself in being able to teach my youngest brother to read. (I was too young myself to realize he had memorized the words under the pictures!) Hence, my interest was sparked because of my misdirected belief in my own success.

***How has education changed the most since you first entered the field?***

When I first became a teacher, education focused on delivering to the student a certain body of knowledge within an allotted period of time. Thankfully, the paradigm has shifted from “teaching a program” to engaging the whole child. The change in focus is due, in part, to the accessibility of data-driven research, the socio-constructivist approach and the new technology that enables us to engage the students in a far more interesting and meaningful way.

With today’s technology, the world has become a much smaller place. As a result, students are more sensitive to the needs of others, and issues of social justice and community service play a more pivotal role in school life.

***What has remained essentially the same?***

Every child’s need to feel safe, to have a healthy sense of self and to enjoy a sense of belonging has remained essentially the same. However, with increased pressures and stressors on today’s youth to be “in,” although their needs are essentially the same, their coping mechanisms have become far more complex.

***What are some of your board’s most notable achievements in recent years?***

The board’s philosophy and implementation of the International Studies Program is unique in Quebec, not only for the number of students studying in our schools from abroad, but also for signed agreements that focus on teacher and administrator professional development.

As well, the LBPSB was recently awarded provincial recognition for its inclusive approach to special education and the innovative methods and programs set in place to meet the wide ranging needs of our students. Family Support Services and Treatment Teams (FSSTT), our Centre for Excellence in Autism and the new Planning Room model for providing support for students experiencing behavioural difficulties are examples of our board’s commitment to our most vulnerable students.

I’d be remiss if I did not mention our board’s Central Students’ Committee.

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Carol riding the gondola at Sulphur Mountain with LBPSB colleague **Cindy Finn** at CASA’s 2009 conference.



**Autumn is a second  
spring when every  
leaf is a flower.**

**—Albert Camus**

## Getting To Know Carol Gray: A Feature Interview With Our New President, continued

*(Continued from page 3)*

The establishment of the CSC is a milestone in the Quebec education system and has broken new ground in the role of student involvement in their own education. Students throughout the high school sector meet on a monthly basis (on Saturdays) to network and respond to board consultations. They make recommendations for improvement and initiatives they would like to see in all of the high schools. Because their status has been duly recognized by the Council of Commissioners, members of the Central Students' Committee have been allotted a budget, submit monthly reports, attend Council meetings and participate in board focus groups.



Carol with son **Ryan** and husband **Warren**.

### ***What sort of challenges has the board faced lately, and how is it meeting them?***

Like many boards across the country, we're experiencing a shift in demographics and an imbalance in our school populations. While schools in some areas of our board are only partially full, we find the need to build in other areas where there is population growth. A declining birthrate further adds to our enrollment situation and is exacerbated in Quebec by Bill 101, which restricts access to English education. We are facing these situations with complete transparency and consulting school and community partners on major school change. Together, we are devising a fair and equitable plan for rationalizing our resources and services.

### ***What do you feel are some of your own personal achievements in the field of education?***

The relationships that I've developed and maintained throughout my career are among my most meaningful achievements.

I am proud that my career has evolved while never losing sight of the student at the core. Even now, as a senior school board administrator, I involve myself extensively in student life, and it's an aspect of my job that I thoroughly enjoy, as it allows me to remain "au courant" of students' realities. I also take pride in the mentoring that I do, with new and veteran administrators alike.

I encourage risk taking in the development of new pro-

grams and approaches to enrich student learning. I initiated a comprehensive study examining the effectiveness of the board's alternative programs. As a result, the network of off-site alternative programs was reorganized, and in-school alternative programs were developed and/or expanded in secondary schools across the sector. A work-study program was implemented in every high school in the board, and the first English CFER program (a computer recycling program that provides on-the-job training to students) in the province was established.

I am also extremely proud of my commitment to and active participation in my professional associations at the local, provincial and national levels.

### ***What are you most proud of when it comes to your work as someone in education?***

On a personal level, I have been recognized by my colleagues with a number of awards for my contributions to educational excellence and leadership at the local, provincial and national levels, culminating in 2007 with CASA's EXL Award as Superintendent of the Year.

### ***Outside of your work in education, what is your greatest achievement or most proud moment, and why?***

Being a parent is the source of my greatest pride. In education we are advocates for other people's children; yet, as a mother, the advocacy is enhanced with unconditional and reciprocal love. There can be nothing more rewarding.

### ***What is the greatest lesson you have learned as a teacher/education administrator? How did you learn it, or who or what taught you this lesson?***

The greatest lesson I have learned as an educator is to always champion the child by validating his experiences and guiding him to self-fulfillment. I came to this realization not only through natural instinct, but also through continuous professional development and inspiring mentorship.

***Thank you, Carol!***



**When I speak  
My lips feel cold—  
The autumn wind.**

**—Basho**



## An In-Depth Conversation With Dr. Fraser Mustard: The Importance Of Early Childhood Development

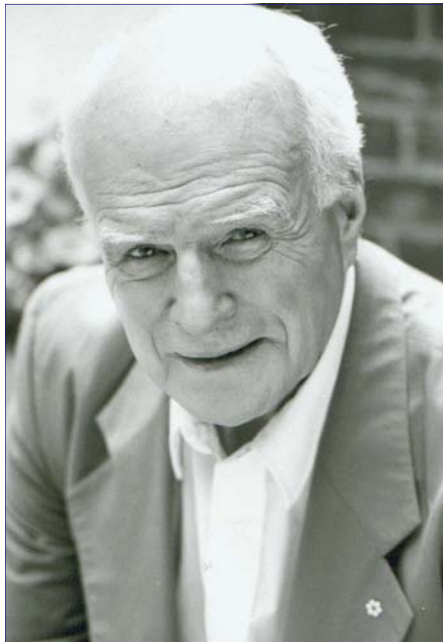
As mentioned in the previous issue of *Leaders & Learners* (Volume 5, Issue 29), **Dr. Fraser Mustard** delivered an informative, passionate keynote address to CASA members attending the annual conference in Calgary. In this issue, we present an exclusive conversation with the esteemed physician, researcher and author.

Dr. Mustard finished his MD in Toronto in 1953 and focused on medical research for nearly 30 years. In 1982, he set up the Canadian Institute for Advanced Research and brought together distinguished investigators from around the world to conduct research in interdisciplinary teams exploring significant scientific and social challenges. Today he leads the Founders' Network, where his main focus is examining the crucial importance of a child's experiences in the first six years of life. He is a dedicated advocate of the importance of early brain development for health, behaviour, learning and quality of life.

*The delivery and language of your presentation to CASA members this summer (for example, "enough research!") demonstrates your frustration with our current governments' lack of action and your sense of urgency for education professionals to lobby for change in how this country supports early childhood education. What can you say today to encourage our readers to share your message and to work for real change?*

You can think of human development as having three or four stages. Early development, this is stage one, is from conception to school entry or age eight, whichever way you want to phrase it. That period of development determines what the next stage will be like. If there's poor development in the first stage, you won't be able to do a great deal in stage two. The evidence of that is pretty robust. School teachers see it all the time.

The second thing that goes with your question is that this is more than just education. This is human development. In education you tend to forget about behaviour and you certainly forget about physical health. We also know that early development affects your risks for health problems in adult life and as a teenager, in terms of physical and mental health. It's a very fundamental stage in development that affects everything. What we do is we put our kids into education who are already handicapped with a great belief that we can turn it around. Well, you can make some gains but when you look at all the evidence, you don't turn it around very much in the education system.



**Dr. J. Fraser Mustard**

*During your presentation, you put forth the idea that governments should scrap their ministries of education and replace them with ministries of human development, and you encouraged CASA to push for that. Can you explain why you believe the model for ministries of education is flawed? Why is it important for organizations like CASA to support the concept of a ministry of human development?*

There are a couple of reasons for that. One is that the architecture and function of the brain is being set in stage one of human development, and it's set very early, pregnancy to age two or three. That's the neurobiology of development. That development affects what your behaviour is going to be like later on. It affects your capacity to learn later on. It affects your risks for certain health problems like coronary disease.

Because of that, what we set up as our education system is basically stage two in human development. If you call it education, you'll totally ignore the health side of it, and the health side of it in our society is primarily related to health care, not healthy development.

And finally, capacity to go into stage two in the school system depends on what your health is like, what your behaviour is like. If you have ADHD, you don't learn as well as if you don't have that problem. It's because these are all

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## An In-Depth Conversation With Dr. Fraser Mustard, cont'd

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integrated that you should talk about it in a simple kind of way and recognize that anybody working in the fields of education or healthy development needs to understand developmental neurobiology. They need to be educated in it. That changes the way that you think about things because all teachers are working on is the developmental neurobiology that's been set in the first six years.

***It sounds like a much broader interdisciplinary approach rather than sticking to pedagogical methods of learning.***

That's right. The methods of learning are basically flawed because they're not based upon developmental neurobiology.

***In your presentation, you also made reference to the need to increase parental leave, both in terms of time off and in financial support. What do you believe are the benefits of increasing leave time and support for both parents/caregivers?***

The biggest factor determining the quality of the architecture and function of the brain is the quality of the experience of the infant and toddler. That experience is a complicated kind of subject to put into a science term, but you would know it in terms of breastfeeding as an experience. If you think about that as an experience, what sensing pathways are you stimulating when you breastfeed? You've got touch, you've got smell, you've got temperature, you've got nutrition, all of which we know affects the development of the architecture and function of the brain. And so if you bottle feed your infant, you won't get the same effect as if you breastfeed your infant.

Secondly, in terms of language and literacy, the sounds you receive in the first seven months of life when your brain is most plastic in terms of developing the neurons for sound will determine how well you progress in language and literacy in the school system. That's something most people don't know and the first three years are hugely important for developing language systems in the brain. You need to have a caregiver who is pretty consistent, who is with the infant during those critical early periods of development, particularly in terms of development of language and literacy and numeracy capabilities. If you can keep the infant and toddler with its biological parenting structure, that should be a good structure to support development.

We don't know how long that should be in place, but the

Swedes do 18 months of parental leave and they do better than we do in terms of these performances. So that's a pretty good human example of what you should do. The Cubans, who begin earlier than the Swedes do, they begin actually when you're pregnant with a very sophisticated program, they have by far the best health of the Latin American countries and they're the most literate of Latin American countries. If you package all of that together against the developmental neurobiology, why wouldn't you provide extended parental leave for six months for the mother and the next 12 or so to be shared between the parents to optimize the development?

And daycare centres, they could provide much of this if they're extremely good but it's much better to build that into the primary caregiving structure for the infant and toddler, which is the parents.

***What do the Swedish and Cuban governments seem to know that our governments in Canada do not?***

I don't know how the Swedes are, but we know that the Cubans set up what they call polyclinics in the middle of the 1970s in which they put a huge support program for pregnant women and mothers with infants and toddlers and young children that included nutrition, which is important in this brain development story, good nutrition, and good stimulation, and they built that into the program. We think that's the reason why they have the best infant health of Latin American countries.

***When you talk about the best infant health, what sort of factors are you looking at, in terms of how these babies are progressing and growing?***

Nutrition is one of them, and the quality of stimulation they get, which is the reading and the touch and how you respond to their noises that they give you, their coos and cries. It's all part of the process.

***Do you see results from these polyclinics that were set up in the 1970s now in these children who have grown into adults?***

We see it in terms of the health effects in that population at the moment. It may collapse as that country collapses back into an American style of life. At the moment they are a pretty good example of what you can do. Remember the population was partly African and partly Spanish, and the equity in the application in their society with both the African slave group and the Spanish owner group was positively affected by it. You

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## An In-Depth Conversation With Dr. Fraser Mustard, cont'd

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didn't get a real split in terms of the black versus white business that you get in the United States in terms of slavery.

***Coming back to Canada, what reasons do we have that Canada can't seem to develop similar systems or similar models? Why are we dragging behind on implementing better parental leave and other forms of support?***

One thing is we don't teach all our students about human development and the factors that influence it. I think you can do that at least in the secondary school system. I don't think you should be allowed to graduate from high school without understanding it, because most people who graduate from high school don't have a clue about it.

Yes, it's hard to do but if you put it in simple language, early experience, which includes nutrition, affects development; that's pretty easy for people to understand. You'd just have to describe what experience is. And it does that through its effects on your sensing pathways that feed into the brain. And all the neurons in your head have the same gene coding, but how in the hell do they ever differentiate for their diverse functions such as sight and sound?

We now know the biological process that allows genes to differentiate for these functions, and that's dependent upon the experience of the nerve pathways that go to the different parts of the brain transmitting to the system, that signals the cells to differentiate. And the marvelous term for all of this is epigenetics. We've finally learned how neurons differentiate.

What epigenetics processes are, these are biological pathways whereby only specific parts of the gene function. All the DNA in the gene doesn't function; it's only selected parts that function, which differentiate the neuron function, so the neurons for touch will have a different DNA pattern that is working the handling and sensing of touch and a different DNA pattern for activation in the parts of the brain that listen to sound. We don't know how you switch that differentiation on later on if you muck it up in the very early period.

***Would it be wise for educators to be pushing for this to be included in curriculum?***

Well, I think you should put that into the education curriculum, and I think that if you think of university, there is not a discipline that is not affected by this new knowl-

edge, be it economics, be it psychology, be it health sciences, be it education. They're all affected by it.

***When you say new knowledge, how long has it been that researchers have been aware of how the pathways are developed and now different stimuli will affect a child's development in the later stages?***

It's safe to say it's only been really extensive for about 20 years and become very extensive within the last 10 years. The neurobiology is still thought of as an esoteric subject by many people, and the details are esoteric, but the fundamental thing is how does experience convert a whole bunch of neurons so that they differentiate for their different functions? Something has to do it, and that's experience. That's kind of easy to understand.

***So in addition to perhaps pushing for some curriculum change, what else can senior education administrators do to help bring about better support for these early years and early childhood experiences?***

If you take the school as the second stage of human development, and it's community based and families make use of it, why don't you put the first stage of human development as part of the school? As simple as that.

***Now what do you mean by that?***

Well, moms who are pregnant would be encouraged to come to the school, which would have a thing like the polyclinic structure the Cubans have. We have pregnancy programs but we don't have anything as intense as what the Cubans have. The Cubans have home visits every week. They're serious. They know that mothers learn from mothers, and that's what they're doing with the home visits, putting mothers in with mothers.

The second thing you do once the child is born is you have them join an early childhood development centre with good staff so mothers learn about mothering with other mothers.

There's a good book by a woman by the name of **Sarah Blaffer Hrdy** called *Mothers and Others*, and she says the human animal survives because of others working with the mothers. In the hunter and gatherer societies, the gatherers are largely the women who live in clusters and they tended to work and support each other so there was lots of support. It was kind of an elegant daycare centre in a hunter and gatherer world, but it was

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## An In-Depth Conversation With Dr. Fraser Mustard, cont'd

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much more than that. In the farming communities, they tended to have farms with large families because of the labour that was involved with farming, and you had aunts and uncles and others to help mothers with raising children as well.

***We don't seem to have that structure in place anymore, so you're proposing a return to that through things like education centres. Right now you can go to prenatal classes at hospitals, but schools are way down the road, five or six years down the road, for most new parents.***

So if you design your primary schools to cater to the first stage of human development and allow pregnant women to come, of course, and you had the staff well educated in developmental neurobiology and you would help the parents, you'd then have parents who would go on working with the children in stage two in the school system. You'd have much more parental involvement because you'd have introduced them to the concept of doing that, using the school as a hub in your community.

***So you're going to have parents that are not only involved with their child at stage one and stage two, but who are also supporting the school because you need to have parents supporting public education as well for it to thrive and survive.***

You've got it right. That's exactly what you have to do.

***They really just build upon each other as the child goes through these different stages of development.***

Hrdy, in her book *Mothers and Others*, says we wouldn't exist as a species if others hadn't interacted with the mothers.

The other thing is that populations are so...well, the relatives of these biological parents don't tend to be in the same community anymore. The others in a family structure don't exist anymore. If you're in a large urban centre like Toronto you can be pretty isolated, and if you live in a bloody condominium with no green space around, what the hell do you do?

And so the biggest hue and cry against this kind of approach is it would cost our country somewhere around \$22 billion a year to put up early childhood development centres beginning with pregnancy and also putting in 18-month parental leave policies with 80 per cent pay. That's what it would cost you to put it into place. But you know that the Swedes spent \$16,000 per year on every infant, toddler and young child in their age one to six program, and they only spend \$10,500 in the formal

school system, and that's because you're paying for parental leave and you've got a higher staffing ratio in your one to six program. And 50 per cent of their staff are university trained so they're paid at the same rates as the primary school teachers.

***I'm wondering what your thoughts are on the rates of pay for your typical early childhood centre staff. It's not a great rate of pay, is it?***

No. If you're serious about this, at least half of your staff have to be well educated and trained. You can have assistants working with them who are not as extensively trained in the biological sciences side of it, but in most countries that are serious about this, to become an educator you need at least four years of university education.

***Just as if you were going to teach high school physics, you'd need four years.***

Yes, you've got it right.

***If you could see just one thing change today in Canada in our schools and communities that would yield the greatest results for our children within a generation, what would it be?***

Well, education is a government responsibility in our country. I would like to see ministries of education become ministries of human development that embrace all of this, and so that their policies do this, so they fight for the parental leave policies that are necessary to do this, they fight for the training of the staff to work in these centres to do this, they make sure that the staff has the same formal education, a basic standard of education in developmental neurobiology so that they're all singing from the same songbook.

It's pretty simple. If you want to do it, you declare that your primary schools are going to be community based so the parents can easily get to them by simple transportation, preferably walking. That means that you don't close all of your primary schools. You keep them open.

***Because your background is as a medical scientist, I'm wondering what pushed you to focus on this particular area in this stage of your life. You've done some great work with the physical body and biological processes, and you've made these connections that there is biology involved in all of this.***

***Why are you so interested and passionate about these early years of development for our youngest citizens?***

My education when I was wandering

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November always  
seemed to me the  
Norway of the year.  
—Emily Dickinson



## 2009-2010 CASA Executive Officers & Regional Directors

<b>President</b>	Carol Gray Lester B. Pearson School Board 1925 Brookdale Avenue Dorval, QC H9P 2Y7	Phone: (514) 422-3000, ext. 3239 Fax: (514) 422-3024 Email: cgray@lbpsb.qc.ca
<b>Past President</b>	Jim Grieve Peel District School Board 5650 Hurontario Street Mississauga, ON L5R 1C8	Phone: (905) 890-1010, ext. 2006 Fax: (905) 890-6698 Email: jim.grieve@peelsb.com Assistant: Carole Divell, carole.divell@peelsb.com
<b>President Elect &amp; Treasurer</b>	Lee Ann Forsyth-Sells Niagara Catholic District SB 427 Rice Road Welland, ON L3C 7C1	Phone: (905) 735-0240, ext. 229 Fax: (905) 735-9710 Email: leeann.forsythsells@ncdsb.com Assistant: Franca Spagnuolo, franca.spagnuolo@ncdsb.com
<b>PD Coordinator</b>	Ed Wittchen Ed Wittchen Consulting Ltd. 3 Linkside Close Spruce Grove, AB T7X 3C5	Phone: (780) 222-4022 Fax: (780) 960-4181 Email: ed.wittchen@telus.net
<b>Executive Director</b>	Frank Kelly CASA 1123 Glenashton Drive Oakville, ON L6H 5M1	Phone: (905) 845-4254 Fax: (905) 845-2044 Email: frank_kelly@opsoa.org Assistant: Kathy Sanford, kathy@opsoa.org
<b>Regional Director (Western)</b>	Chris Gonnet Grande Prairie School District 10213-99 Street Grande Prairie, AB T8V 2H3	Phone: (780) 532-4491 Fax: (780) 539-4265 Email: chris.gonnet@gppsd.ab.ca
<b>Regional Director (Ontario) OPSOA</b>	Ken Bain Hamilton-Wentworth DSB 100 Main Street W. Hamilton, ON L8P 1H6	Phone: (905) 527-5092, ext. 2304 Fax: (905) 521-2536 Email: c/o assistant, see below Assistant: Claire Vander Beek, claire.vanderbeek@hwdsb.on.ca
<b>Regional Director (Ontario) OCSOA</b>	Cathy Horgan Brant Haldimand Norfolk CDSB PO Box 217, 322 Fairview Drive Brantford, ON M3T 5M8	Phone: (519) 756-6505, ext. 223 Fax: (519) 756-1012 Email: chorgan@bhncdsb.ca Assistant: Claire Dodgson, cdodgson@bhncdsb.ca
<b>Regional Director (Quebec)</b>	Bob Mills Lester B. Pearson School Board 1925 Brookdale Avenue Dorval, QC H9P 2Y7	Phone: (514) 422-3018 Fax: (514) 422-3016 Email: bmills@lbpsb.qc.ca Assistant: Cathy Hilton, ext. 2501, chilton@lbpsb.qc.ca
<b>Regional Director (Atlantic)</b>	Beth MacIsaac Cape Breton-Victoria RSB 275 George Street Sydney, NS B1P 1J7	Phone: (902) 562-6486 Fax: (902) 564-4546 Email: bmacisaac@cbvrsb.ca

*Additional and updated contact information can be found on the CASA website at [www.casa-acas.ca](http://www.casa-acas.ca).*

## CASA PEOPLE: Faces In The Crowd



### Metro Huculak Northwest Territories

Metro is not just the superintendent for Yellowknife Public Education District 1, he has become the ambassador and public face of the district. He's also known for his talents in the kitchen, especially when it comes to preparing perogies and cabbage rolls.

He began his career as a teacher at Willingdon High School (in his hometown in Alberta) in 1970. He has also served as a principal, deputy superintendent and superintendent in various districts in Alberta. Metro received an outstanding teaching award and a provincial EXL award. He's spent many years coaching volleyball, basketball, softball, Reach for the Top and drama teams.

Metro has three children and four (soon to be five) grandchildren. His hobbies include fishing, playing tennis, hiking, biking, golfing, gardening and, of course, cooking.



### David Lapides Alberta

A former educator, David is SMART Technologies' director of education market development and a familiar face at CASA events. Prior to joining SMART, he was vice president, operations, for ExploreLearning, Inc., makers of the widely used online simulations for math and science known as Gizmos. He was also director of product development for Texas-based ActiveInk Corporation, providers of online curriculum and professional development materials.

He was previously an instructor and researcher in the prestigious Computer Writing and Research Lab at the University of Texas at Austin, where he was also assistant director for Lower-Division Writing.

David is a native of Memphis, Tennessee, and a graduate of Amherst College and the University of Texas at Austin.



### Lise Haman Ontario

Lise began her career with Lakehead Public Schools 30 years ago as a teacher, coordinator and principal. She was appointed superintendent of education over 12 years ago, and took a leave of absence for one year to serve as director of education for Superior-Greystone District School Board. This past August she started a two-year secondment as student achievement officer with the student achievement division of the Ontario Ministry of Education.

She was born in Wawa, and in an effort to remain fully bilingual, completed her secondary and post-secondary education in Ottawa. She has a Master's Degree in Curriculum and Supervisory Officers' Qualifications.

She has made Thunder Bay her home since 1978. Lise has two adult sons and one grandson.

## CONTACT CASA:

1123 Glenashton Drive  
Oakville, ON  
L6H 5M1  
Canada

T: (905) 845-2345  
F: (905) 845-2044  
frank\_kelly@opsoa.org

[www.casa-acas.ca](http://www.casa-acas.ca)

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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.

## An In-Depth Conversation With Dr. Fraser Mustard, cont'd

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into medicine, I did honours history so I went through the Industrial Revolution in the UK and how it changed health patterns in that society. So that always haunts one in medicine, how the bulk of your health problems come from the poor sectors of society.

Then when I ran a medical school, I tried to get them more interested in the social determinants of health. We're training them all to do diagnosis and treatment. That's how they earn a living. That means what value to you is the diagnosis and treatment to understanding the social determinants of health, if you follow me. You don't get paid for that. I was always uncomfortable with the way that medicine was set up because the real issue was what's the underlying causative factor. We didn't know all the pathways we know about today.

So when we set up the Canadian Institute of Advanced Research, which was designed to tackle complex problems, I put in a program on population health to look at the social determinants of health. One of the first things we did is we got the data that you can get from the world and plotted death against the social position of the individual in society. In developed countries, you'll find that there's a perfect

linear gradient. The better off you are in the social environment, the lower your mortality rate. The poorer you are on that gradient, the worse off you are. But it's a perfectly linear gradient. There's no threshold. Whatever it is that's doing it is affecting all social classes. We found it was not disease specific. We said to ourselves "What the hell could be the master organ in the body that could affect all these conditions?" and of course it's your brain.

That led into curiosity about not only how the brain affects health but also about how its development affects you. Once we went into that, we came into the early neurobiological development story. So we created a program in human development, and human development is an issue about behaviour, and school behaviour is also a perfect linear gradient just like health is. I said "Eureka! These things are all caused by a common pathway," and so it became very clear from other things that we knew as well. This is the clue. There is something about the inputs into the brain that differentiate nerve function which produce all these effects. So I approached this from developmental neurobiology.

*Thank you for sharing your ideas with our readers, Dr. Mustard, and for your presentation this summer.*