



# ABOVE AND BEYOND

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF STUDENT ACTIVITY ADVISORS

VOL 15 NO 1

## FLAT OUT Leadership: CSLC 2012



### CSLC 2012

**Dates:** Sept. 25 to Sept. 29, 2012

**Location:** Weyburn Comprehensive High School, Weyburn, Saskatchewan

CASAA has applied again to Heritage Canada for travel grants for students to defray the cost of travel to the conference. This information will be available as soon as Heritage Canada approves the grant for CSLC 2012.

Students will be billeted for the conference with local families. Advisors should book accommodations early in Weyburn.

Registration for the conference will open online in March 2012. You should register for the pre-conference tour early to guarantee a spot.

Your co-chairs for CSLC 2012 are:

Joanne Jenson

(joanne.jenson@cornerstonesd.ca)

Margot Johnston

(margot.johnston@cornerstonesd.ca)

The website for the conference is found at [www.cslc2012.ca](http://www.cslc2012.ca)

If seeing is believing, then you simply have to see Saskatchewan to understand our connection to the land. Otherwise, you won't believe the expanse of the land, or the feeling of serenity that the constant, distant horizon brings to your soul. You won't believe the size of the endless sky overhead, or the vibrant colours that fill it at sunrise and sunset. You won't believe the down-to-earth, welcoming nature of the people you'll meet, or the range of cultures and experiences that have come together to create this unique and spirited society. See Saskatchewan, and start believing!

Saskatchewan is proud to be the originating province of "The Canadian Student Leadership Conference"! We are very excited to be your host for the 28th CSLC from September 25th – 29th, 2012! Weyburn Comprehensive High School is located in the small rural city of Weyburn, in southeast Saskatchewan, and is gearing up to provide you with a taste of our culture, spirit, and adventure!

Our conference theme of "Flat Out Leadership" will be an experience full of exceptional speakers, leadership opportunities, and rural Saskatchewan flavour and hospitality. Delegates will explore the beauty and diversity of southern Saskatchewan with our pre-conference agenda. A highlight of the pre-conference will be a "Prairie Pioneer" day full of many interactive activities, events, food, and FUN! Those attending will also get the opportunity to tour a coal mine, an oilfield which is a world leader in the oil and gas industry with CO<sup>2</sup> and water injection, scenic Badlands where the dinosaurs roamed thousands of years ago, as well as other traditional SK sights and sounds. Pre-conference will be limited to the first 200 delegates who reserve their spots. Registration for our conference will be opening March, 2012 so register early.

Our staff and students are working hard to plan a conference that you'll never forget! We're very eager to welcome and share our friendly, small town uniqueness and Saskatchewan's pioneer spirit! We look forward to sharing our "Land of Living Skies" with YOU in 2012!

*The people, the land, the sky and the spirit: A place like no other!*

*“There is nothing so useless as doing efficiently that which should not be done at all.”*

*Peter Drucker*



## Initiative

The verb initiate is defined as meaning “to cause the beginning of,” and employees appreciate employees who demonstrate this ability by thinking carefully about their jobs, deciding what needs to be done, and doing it without repeated instructions.

If you want to broaden your role as a leader, you must show initiative. The demonstration of appropriate initiative really impresses people. Think of your own home. Simply taking the initiative to change the kitchen garbage bag when it is full, or replacing the toilet roll, or putting tools or toys away because you see they are out of place, has a major impact on most parents. Similarly with fellow students and teachers.

In order to appropriately demonstrate initiative in your job as a leader, the first step is to learn as much as you can of the environment. This is most efficiently done by close, thoughtful observation and pointed questions. Identify the school routine where you can ‘put in your oar’ and do something. It may be getting paper for the photocopier, it may be cleaning up a spill without being asked; whatever the action is it should be appropriate to your situation and it must be voluntary.

Once you have consistently demonstrated this attitude you can go to the next level of initiative – where you identify tasks or responsibilities, which have not yet been given, but are within the realm of possibility for you to accomplish. ASK TO DO THEM!!

### Guidelines for Showing Initiative

1. Learn to assess priorities. Not every task you do is equally important. You should learn which of your duties is most important, which is second, and so on.
2. Be adaptable to change. For example, if your advisor asks you to perform a new task, to take over for someone who is absent, or to change your daily routine to meet a sudden need, a person with initiative will respond to the new challenge willingly, even enthusiastically. This type of behaviour shows both a willingness to learn and a commitment to the needs of the leadership group.
3. Be a problem solver. Almost every week, student leaders are faced with problems that need solving. It is not possible to report every new problem to your advisor and follow the instructions you receive. Leaders with initiative try to come up with solutions themselves, before taking the issue to the advisor.

### TEACHER GRADS

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June is the time of year where some teachers get to finally graduate from your school as well. One of the unique and truly appreciated mementoes that you are able to create can come from letters or notes collected from present students. Here is an example of a note sent to home room teachers at Waterloo Collegiate:

There are a number of teachers retiring this year. We will be making memory packages for these teachers; these packages will include pictures and letters from their past or present students and fellow teachers. These packages will be presented at the final awards assembly in June. If you, or any student in your class, would like to write a letter for any one of these teachers or have pictures, please leave them with student council. Please encourage your class to contribute.

Plaques are nice, but notes of heartfelt appreciation last much longer.

*Kevin O'Reilly*

# Phrases that Coach

We all know that email is a poor way to communicate your emotional intention, as email does not carry the tone of the writer. We also know that what you say is important and there are phrases that advisors can use to coach and encourage rather than to confront and discourage student leaders. The following phrases will help you move your students to leadership skills and positive experience rather than cause friction and frustration for both of you.

## **I'm not quite comfortable with that.**

It doesn't sound like "no," but it gives you the option until they can explain all of the gory details.

## **Help me to understand . . .**

This is a much better opening as opposed to, "What the heck were you thinking?" It gives you time to process as well.

## **Instead of excuses, let's focus on solving the problem.**

This cuts the blame game. Students will find out that others will disappoint them or they will forget essential steps along the way to completion.

## **I really liked the way that you . . . It was impressive.**

Praise is great, but specific and targeted praise is a positive nugget that they will store in their self-esteem for a long time.

## **I am concerned about...**

This allows you to step in as the advisor when you see things heading in the wrong direction. You are not assigning blame, but establishing your part as the helpful advisor.

## **What is the result you are looking for?**

This is a coaching phrase that asks the student to verbalize their intention. Putting it into specific words makes it a tangible goal rather than an idea.

## **This is as difficult for me to say, as I'm sure it will be for you to hear...**

Not every result is a positive one. Share their pain by showing your empathy.

## **Here are the reasons that we can/can't . . .**

Rationale is always appreciated and allows student leaders to prepare better for the next event. When they know what is acceptable or what is not, they can plan for success much better. You know that they hear the principal's "no" but they want to know why.



*"Man is least himself when he talks in his own person. Give him a mask, and he will tell you the truth."*

Oscar Wilde

## **TRAVEL THE ROAD TO SUCCESS**

Once upon a time a King had a great highway built. Before he opened it to the public, he had a contest to see who could travel the highway best. On the appointed day the people came. Some had fine chariots, some used their feet. But no matter what vehicle they used, all of them complained that there was a large pile of rocks just on the side of the road in one particular spot, which hindered their progress.

At the end of the day a lone traveler crossed the finish line and wearily walked over to the King. He was smudged with dirt but he spoke with respect as he handed the monarch a bag of gold. "I stopped along the way to clear a pile of rocks," he said. "And under it was a bag of gold. Can you find the rightful owner?"

Solemnly the King replied, "You are the rightful owner. You have earned the gold by winning the contest. For he who travels on the road best is he who makes the road smoother for those to follow."

So it is with life. While people scramble to outdo each other, every now and then a leader comes along to pave the way for the rest of us. To these leaders are given the rewards - the sacks of gold called fame and fortune.





“Walk a Mile in Her Shoes” is a YWCA event that has been run for the past ten years all over Canada. The purpose of the event is to raise awareness as well as funds for the YWCA’s women and children programs. The Cambridge YWCA runs their event through our downtown area, having men from all over the city come out to “strut their stuff” down the main street. The event works by having men collect pledges, and in turn, they receive a pair of red high-heeled shoes in which they walk a mile.

After hearing about this amazing and powerful event, I decided that the same support and excitement established with this event across Canada could come out of a school atmosphere. However, it was only possible having worked closely with the lovely people at the YWCA, as they were willing to provide me with everything I needed to run a successful event.

Within our school, I sent out informational flyers to get all the staff members involved. Not only did I invite the male staff to sign up and collect pledges, but I also invited the female staff to support their co-workers. We then proceeded to branch out to all male students. Through announcements, classroom visits, lunch-hour sign ups, posters, and word of mouth, the idea quickly spread around the



# Walk a Mile in Her **red** Shoes

school. The women at the YWCA brought some of the red high heels into the school so that guys could sign up and try on the shoes. The visualisation of the shoes really helped. To sign up, the male staff and students had to either raise \$30 of pledges by themselves or \$100 as a team of four.

The event was extremely successful as we had 63 men sign up. We took this as a large number seeing as the event ran in the last week of school. Between the pledges collected by participants and overall donations, we raised \$2206.

The male participants had to walk two laps of our track. There was a huge crowd that came out to watch all 63 men as they pranced off in their red high heels. This all took place during lunch hour, and took very little to set up and take down. The event brought a lot of laughter, and as well it offered the participants a very new perspective of the feeling women have in high heels.

Running “Walk a Mile in Her Shoes” in a school setting does not take a lot of organizing or planning, but it does raise some unplucked eyebrows along with huge fundraising numbers. For me, the most impressive and brilliant part was to see so many of my male peers taking part in an event which is raising awareness toward and money for women in the community. Seeing their compassion and empathy brought our school together in a way that I haven’t seen before. It truly was an amazing way to end our school year and I recommend the event to any school looking to support a great cause and gain some laughs too!

*Jessie Lund*

*School Captain, Galt Collegiate Institute*

*Cambridge, Ontario*

*(Thanks to teacher, Bob Stalder, for strutting his stuff for the cameras.)*



# Encouragement Speeches

*“No one is useless in this world who lightens the burden of it for anyone else.”*

*Charles Dickens*



At the beginning of the semester, our leadership group randomly draws names from the class list (I, as teacher, always participate too). Students are to keep the name of the classmate confidential. The person whose name the student draws will then become the subject of an encouragement speech written by the student who draws the name. Encouragement speeches are a true gift of character, and it's very important that the students recognize this as they would be letting their classmates down if they were to scribble out a speech the morning of class.

The students spend the rest of the semester subtly observing the person they will be writing a speech about, and then near the end of the semester we take turns reading the encouragement speeches and guessing who the speech is about. This activity always surprises me because my students are so happy and excited to read their speeches and to receive them. It's amazing how insightful and thoughtful the speeches are. It soon becomes a “hugfest” in the classroom filled with warm fuzzies.

## *How do I write an encouragement speech?*

The writer must observe the receiver, looking for things that the individual does right:

- What does this person do that you respect?
- What does this person do that you wish you could do?
- What does this person do to help or show kindness to others?
- What does this person do that makes the world a better place?
- What habit does this person have each and every day that you think is admirable?
- What are the strengths of this person?
- What challenges/changes has this person mastered?

## *What encouragement speeches are not:*

- Do not include negative judgmental statements.
- Do not focus on the identifiable traits of an individual (eg: “You have brown hair; you are a girl, etc.”)
- Never make a judgment about a person's culture, religion, family, or ethnic background.

This activity teaches students that some very memorable gifts are the words we hear from others in a public place. Encouragement and praise are valuable to give, but they are treasured for a long time by the recipient.

*Joni Blaxland  
Riverside Secondary  
Port Coquitlam, British Columbia*

## **DON'T EMAIL STUDENTS**

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One of the hardest things to do, with all of us being swamped by the media around us, is to find a way to communicate with our leadership students. Even though almost every student has a phone, they don't always answer their phones when someone calls and they don't use email. How do you communicate effectively with them? Twitter is a possibility, but they don't use it to communicate with others, and most teachers want to avoid FaceBook for all sorts of professional reasons. So, text your students when the next meeting is. Create a group on your phone contact list, and add all of your student leaders to that group. They won't answer your call or reply to your email, but they do respond to a text.

# The Power of a Post-it®

**General Idea:** Connect with every person in the school (600) by putting a coloured sticky note with a positive message on their locker, door, or in their mailbox.

**Who:** Two students came up with the connect idea after watching Mark Scharenbroich's "Building Connections" DVD; they proposed the idea to their leadership class and the answer was an overwhelming YES!

The two students then planned the work over two class periods of 75 minutes each. Breakdown was as such:

## *Class One:*

1. Put classes into groups of 4.
2. Each person in the group comes up with 10 positive, unisex, fun sayings.
3. Group of 4 collaborate their 40 ideas and develop a list of the "TOP TEN".
4. With 8 groups in the class the lists were passed around and 'evaluated' for appropriateness, spelling etc.

The two students then took the group of sayings and reviewed them with the teacher and developed a template to be given to the students' next class. Students also made the 'post it' packages, ready to give out next day.

## *Class Two:*

1. Post-it Packages were handed out ( 2 packages each)
2. Templates of sayings handed out.
3. Students then wrote the sayings on the Post-it notes.
4. 20 minutes prior to the end of class, students were sent to their area of the school to 'post' the note on the lockers.
5. Students were ready with video cameras to film the responses of the student body.
6. Just prior to the end of class a short announcement was made telling students there would be a surprise for them at their locker and to please only take THEIR surprise, not to touch anyone else's!
7. Teachers and other school staff had a personalized Post-it placed in their mailboxes.

## **Response:**

Many students left their Post-it on for over a week, as you walked by open lockers two months later, most have their note inside the locker. Students and staff loved the activity. Our students were respectful of each other and didn't take anyone else's special "POST IT".

This has created a new saying in our school:

"If you loved Post It day.... Make a Difference and Post it on!"

Check out the You tube video <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=paJ3PNbK668>

*Valerie Nadeau and Melina Rouleau  
St. Patrick's High School, Quebec*

*"Life isn't about finding yourself. Life is about creating yourself. "*

*George Bernard Shaw*

## **CASAA YOUTUBE CHANNEL**

CASAA now has a YouTube channel that has favoured all of our best leadership videos. There are over 35 clips posted here for your use. They range from school spirit videos to the best of TED talks that pertain to the leadership classroom.

You can view the existing clips and suggest more for the channel. Many schools firewall YouTube, so you may have to download these clips at home and add them to your library. You can download the TED.com clips from the host site.

Your students are part of the video generation and these clips will add to your classroom resources. The free channel is available at:

[www.youtube.com/user/studentleadershipca#g/f](http://www.youtube.com/user/studentleadershipca#g/f)



*“There are two ways of spreading light: to be the candle or the mirror that reflects it.”*

*Edith Wharton*

### **Above and Beyond**

is the official newsletter of the Canadian Association of Student Activity Advisors. The newsletter is published 3 times a year for schools all across Canada.

To learn more about membership, go to [www.casaaleadership.ca/join.html](http://www.casaaleadership.ca/join.html)

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## **Resources**

Be sure to visit the CASAA website for more lesson plans, activity ideas and a complete list of resources.

**[casaaleadership.ca](http://casaaleadership.ca)**



**CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF STUDENT ACTIVITY ADVISORS**  
EMPOWERING YOUTH TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

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## **What's Your Listening Sin?**

“Know how to listen, and you will profit even from those who talk badly“  
Plutarch (46 AD – 120 AD)

I believe I'm a good listener. Most of us do, don't we? Effective listening isn't rocket science and most of us can reel off exactly what we should be doing to show we are listening, but in practice, so much can get in the way can't it?

When I deliver coaching skills programs we “confess our listening sins” in a light-hearted way and then seriously commit to keeping them front of mind in order to address them.

Here are some of the obstacles to effective listening:

- Being distracted by something seemingly more exciting going on nearby such as hearing your name mentioned
- Deciding that you've heard this message so many times before
- Hearing something that clashes with your values, beliefs, or opinions
- Thinking about something you'd rather be doing or somewhere you'd rather be
- Preparing your response
- Telling people what you would do if you were them, or were in their situation even when they haven't asked you to
- Finishing off the other person's sentence for them in your own head or even out loud

In order to develop and maintain effective listening skills we need to constantly check in with ourselves and consciously practice them.

So, it's time to 'fess up! What listening sins are you guilty of and what strategies do you use to stay focused on the speaker and what they are saying?

*Julie Kay*

[www.developingleadersonline.com](http://www.developingleadersonline.com)