

ABOVE AND BEYOND

THE NEWSLETTER FOR ADVISORS AND STUDENT LEADERS ACROSS CANADA

Vol. 2 No. 2

CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF STUDENT ACTIVITY ADVISORS

Spring/Summer 1999



CSLC 1999

The Waterloo Region District School Board has been asked to be the new host for the 15th Canadian Student Leadership Conference. Waterloo will be taking over the conference duties from Welland because of a contract dispute between the teachers and the Board in that jurisdiction. This is a joint effort by the 15 secondary schools of Waterloo County

Making it Work is the theme for this conference and over 600 student leaders and advisors from across Canada will learn about the basic tools and elements of student leadership. The seminars, speakers and resources provided at the conference will prepare them to return to their schools ready to make it work!

Students and advisors will share keynote speakers, but there will be separate leadership programs for the two groups. This is a professional development activity for advisors and a fantastic learning opportunity for student delegates. All delegates will be able to sample the sights, sounds and culture of an area renowned for its Oktoberfest celebrations.

Registration Contact:
Maureen Murphy
Glenview Park Secondary School
55 McKay St.
Cambridge, ON N1R 4G6
Fax: 1.519.621.5860

What should student leaders know?

Student leaders spend a lot of time in your school, and they are very aware of the importance of the teachers and coaches who interact with them. You know the joke in teacher's college that the *most* important person in a school was the head secretary, but the joke changed once you learned how much *you* relied on that secretary to get through the first semester of teaching.

This is an important lesson that your student leaders should learn. Many may find the secretarial staff to be a nuisance, because they are the ones who are asking the questions that seem to stand in the way of getting an event organized or completed. Have your students realize that the secretaries are there to help them and are interested in the proper running of a school and its events. Once students see the secretaries as people and not naysayers, they will run better events with the support and invaluable information that an office staff can offer.

Once you became involved as an advisor or coach in the running of activities, clubs and teams; you learned that the custodial staff were the next group who could make or break an event. You got to know their names, and they were the ones who let you into your room when you had forgotten your key or found the materials needed to run your event. Student leaders should get to know the names of your custodians, because they are the ones who can help your students find the materials needed to clean up the messes that students are most certain to make. The custodians are paid to keep a school clean, but they also respect people who understand and assist in the job that they do.

What should your student leaders know? They should know the custodians are more than "those people in the blue shirts." They should know the names of the secretaries, their duties and how students can make their jobs easier. They should know that they will meet many people in their lives. All are significant. They deserve attention and care no matter what their job or position is. A simple smile and "hello" is a great start to knowing names. That's what student leaders should know.

Dave Conlon

CASAA

Retreat Thought —

One of the reasons for going on a leadership retreat with students is to open them up to new experiences and new ways of doing things. The retreat should be held away from the school because you want to allow students to break out of the normal groups and ways of thinking that they have been used to. The following three paragraphs are given to students as a way of informing them about what a leadership retreat is about.

When lobsters grow to be about one pound, they have gone through periods in their life where they have been totally vulnerable. They live most of their life in a hard shell that protects them, but it inhibits their growth. To become mature, the lobster must shed its old shell, and grow a new one, a process that takes about two days.

This isn't a long time to be without a shell, but during that time they are left naked and open to dangers. Other creatures may eat the lobster or waves could slam it against the rocks. Yet there is no alternative if it is to grow. The lobster must endure two days of risk to grow a new shell and mature.

Humans often have to do that too! If you are to grow, you must be vulnerable for certain times in your life. Your protective shell needs to be left behind and you must be willing to let others see your thoughts and feelings. You must be willing to meet new people, to listen carefully, and to risk new experiences. After you have risked and experienced this retreat, put on your new armour and go back to work renewed and stronger.

After the retreat has come to a close, ask students what they have learned and what is part of their new shell that they have developed.

The Boredom Club —

After running various types of activities for over thirteen years, I've come to realize that some students choose to be bored. It's the easiest club in the school to join. There are no skills involved, no special fees, no uniforms, and meetings are held irregularly. In fact, if you show up to a meeting of the Boredom Club, you will have your membership revoked for showing too much initiative.

This is always the hardest group in your school to reach, because they actually feel better about themselves when they can ignore your attempts to get them interested in something. This is also the hardest group for your student council members to cater to because they both view the world in opposite ways. Leadership students and the Boredom Club don't live in the same time zone.

The question remains: How do you involve people who would rather not be?

Whether you realize it or not, this group usually has a president and various other leadership positions. They also have interests that are not familiar to your leadership students. There was no election, but the group knows who is in charge. The key is to find out the interests of the Boredom Club by asking the leaders and attempt to cater to them.

We run Coffee Houses for the Boredom Club at our school. They get cancelled every now and then because of lack of participation, but the Boredom Club likes it that way. Somehow they don't want this to be too much of a good thing otherwise it would not be an event that they would want to participate in. The Boredom Club will come to a Coffee House to hear their friends play a few tunes. They will leave when their friends are done, but a major victory is achieved by having them come to a school event. The evenings are loosely organized and always seem to be on the verge of collapsing, but this makes it comfortable for the crowd we are trying to attract. Always avoid letting the drama and music types make the evening too slick and professional. Yes, they can do a better job, but this will only make it another listing on the Boredom calendar of events to avoid.

It is difficult to find ways to recognize the achievements of the Boredom Club directorate and its membership at large. They will not be on the Honour Roll assembly or MVP sports banquet lists. What you can do is have part of an assembly that cheerfully recognizes the achievements of the underachievers in the school. It truly is amazing what you can stick to a plank of wood with a glue gun so let your bonding instincts run wild. We have given awards for: the longest hair (comb on a plaque), best excuse for being late (enlarged late slip), most detentions (free lunch with the vice-principal in the cafeteria) and various look-alike awards (Howard Stern etc.) Nominees can be announced in Oscar night fashion and just remember that the winner of "The Most Lates in One Semester" probably will not be on time for the assembly.

Finally, realize that you can't recognize or interest the Boredom Club too often during the year. They will realize that you have made them a special project and will look for new ways to be bored. Ignore them, and they'll still be there for the next time you try to trick them into being interested.

Dave Conlon

Activity Ideas

It is difficult to keep coming up with new ideas for events, so we rely on resources to provide us with new twists on the problem of making it interesting. Because we all teach in different schools with different populations and administrations with different thresholds, there is one golden rule that you must follow when looking at someone else's idea: Always remember to adapt it before you adopt it.

The following events are just four of the over 500 different ideas for promoting school spirit in Bob Burton's book, *Spirit Works ...Turn It On!* This book is now available through CASAA along with his other excellent book, *99 Nuggets*.

Staff Appreciation

Staff members who contribute a lot to activities at your school must also spend a lot of time away from home. Have students send a note to the staff member's spouse or significant other appreciating the effort, but also thanking the people at home for making sacrifices. This will recognize the patience and understanding that has to occur on the home front, and will help students understand that teachers make many kinds of special efforts to help in activities.

Using Your Head for Something Useful

Two students use a roll of wide masking tape to wrap the head of a team-mate like a mummy, sticky side of the tape facing OUT. Don't tape over the mummy's eyes as they must be able to see. Spread lots of items in an area that is about 10 meters square. At a signal, the mummies crawl about, picking up items using only their heads. The object is to bring back to their team-mates as many of the light items during a two minute period of time without using their hands. The team-mates take the items off the mummy head and place them in a box for counting, and the mummy goes and retrieves more. You can use rubber bands, Q-tips, milk cartons, balloons, cotton balls, marshmallows, plastic straws.

What's in the Bucket?

Have 5 students each volunteer to sit on a chair that is facing the audience. Behind each chair is a bucket that has a temporary cardboard lid to hide the contents. The volunteers must agree to allow the contents of their mystery bucket to be dumped on their head. Tell them that at least one of the buckets has between \$5 and \$25 in it. The other buckets may have anything: water, flour, milk, anything. Announce that if the money is dumped on you, you get to keep it. Volunteers will step forward. Fill the other four buckets with confetti, dry cereal, water and potato chips. This is an excellent activity for a pep rally!

Bath Tub Stuff

Remove the hardware from an old bathtub. Place the tub on the lawn or on gym mats. Give a class 30 seconds to get as many kids in the tub as possible. No feet or hands may be touching the ground. Once time is up, the class must balance in the tub for 15 seconds.

Homeroom Contests

Play Dough Creations

Craig Nickle, Grand River C. I.
Kitchener, Ontario

This is a great homeroom contest that allows everyone to show their artistic side. Each homeroom is given the recipe for play dough (see below). The class can make as much or as little of the stuff as they require. A theme is declared (Hallowe'en works well) and within each homeroom a play dough piece of art is created. Winners can be selected for various categories and the art can be displayed in classrooms or in a common area of the school. This is a super activity that anyone can participate in.

Recipe

1 cup flour
1/2 cup salt
1 cup water (add colouring to this)
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
food colouring
2 teaspoons cream of tartar

Stir all ingredients together and cook over medium heat for about 5 minutes or until the right consistency is achieved. Make sure to store the play dough in an airtight container.

National Anthem Contest

Our school plays the national anthem each morning as part of opening exercises. To alleviate the repetition, a contest was announced for any homeroom that wanted to sing their own version of the national anthem. The only rule is that the anthem be treated with respect. The finalists are played as part of opening exercises with the winning class being a part of the normal rotation of anthems. All types of musical tastes will appear and many will be unique and still tastefully done.

Hands Are Not for Hurting

A program to educate each student about their moral and legal right to live free of violence has been changing schools across the USA. It consists of the simple *Hands Are Not for Hurting* pledge: "I will not use my hands or may words for hurting myself or others." Students then draw their hands on purple construction paper and sign their hands with their name and age. Their signature is a commitment to end school violence. One hand is placed in their homeroom and the other hand forms a unity circle around the school.

Different schools have chosen to educate and celebrate the success of the program. Speakers have been brought in during Purple Hands Awareness Week and students have been rewarded for going a whole month without violence. It is important that students feel powerful in positive ways and the local community and school board can be made aware of the program through student efforts and activities.

This program originated in Oregon and was featured in an article in the January, 1999 issue of the magazine *Leadership for student activities*. For more information on the Hands Are Not for Hurting Project, e-mail: hands_project@hotmail.com or visit the website: www.handsproject.org

Leadership for student activities is published nine times a year and is the best student leadership magazine available. As a member of the National Association of Secondary School Principals — Dept. of Student Activities, you will receive three copies of each issue and have access to the excellent resource materials available through NASSP-DSA. Cost: \$85 (US) annually. phone: 1.800.253.7746

Scavenger Hunt for Charity

During the second week of December, 1998, all Waterloo Region District Secondary Schools participated in a region-wide community event called *Christmas is for Caring*. This community Homeroom Scavenger Hunt was a friendly competition that was fun and supplied a considerable amount of needed items for twenty two designated charities under the United Way umbrella. All of the items collected during the Homeroom Hunt were requested specifically by the local United Way agencies. The event was a very positive experience during the Christmas season for the participating schools and the charities benefited enormously.

The power of co-operative contributing was demonstrated in this community event. For example, a men's hostel requested a blanket as a charity item. With a school average of 20 homerooms participating in the event, over 300 blankets were collected from the 15 secondary schools. The items were then collected from the schools by buses donated by local companies and taken to a central point in the region. The positive response from the agencies was overwhelming.

How to do it

The Homeroom Scavenger Hunt consisted of four sections. Each section was to be judged in homeroom by the teacher and final total points were reported to the Student Activity office. The lists were given on a Monday and the classes had until the Friday to prepare all of their items for judging.

The first section was the charity portion and each homeroom had to have over 50% of the items to be considered as a participant in the contest. The items were as follows:

- a bar of soap
- a roll of toilet paper
- a Christmas gift bag
- a new comb
- a pen
- a Christmas ornament
- a colouring book
- a magic marker
- a child's story book
- a puzzle
- a pair of shoes
- a jar of peanut butter
- a can of stew
- packaged dessert
- a new coffee product (creamers, tea bag, can of coffee, sugar packs)
- a pamphlet from each of your school's family of schools
- a new clothing item for a child or mother
- a new toothbrush
- a new Transit ticket
- a new pair of socks
- a blanket
- a new bed sheet
- a board game
- 1 sleeve of Styrofoam cups
- a children's video
- a new bottle of vitamins
- a deck of cards
- a package of paper plates
- a can of pork & beans
- a can of pasta

Each item was worth 20 points with a bonus of 200 for all charity items being turned in.

The second section was a general trivia section that was answered on paper in each homeroom. 10 points were given per answer and 100 bonus points were given for a perfect page.

The third section was the costume section. Students were to come to class dressed in their respective costumes. Each costume was worth 20 points with a bonus of 200 for all costumes being represented.

a baseball player	a rock star	a teacher	a firefighter
a hobo	a Spice Girl	a witch	a lifeguard
a magician	a construction worker		

The final section was the general scavenger hunt with fifty items receiving a range of points. All of these items were returned to their contributors.

Pts. Item

20	tan shoe	20	tie pin
30	sombrero	10	Backstreet Boys CD
10	green thumb tack	50	a class picture
30	riding boot	30	15 student cards
10	Stick It note	50	an air mail stamp
20	teacher's federation pin	50	post card from a resort
20	maple leaf	10	an admit ticket
50	whoopee cushion	30	Canadian flag
10	2 red Duplo blocks	20	Ontario road map
30	Jr. A hockey ticket stub	20	Nike t-shirt
20	a McDonald's receipt	30	a Pet Rock
50	shoe shine kit	20	wooden spoon
50	wooden puzzle	100	pair of wooden shoes
100	a Thigh Master	50	magnifying glass
75	sou'wester	30	school pen
10	computer disk	100	pair of stilts
30	bowling score sheet	250	a media personality
100	a picture of a custodian	50	a flower for your teacher
20	striped umbrella	50	a team poster
75	shoe stretcher	30	a red white and blue rubber ball
30	school key chain	20	skipping rope
10	yellow binder	30	roll of coloured hockey tape
50	red long johns	75	a colander
10	coat hanger	50	newspaper from last month
10	orange golf ball	30	a first place ribbon

This event was a friendly and caring competition among the homerooms. It managed to make all students participants and caring individuals in their community. If this event looks fun, check out "The Ultimate Scavenger Hunt" in the *CASAA Student Activity Sourcebook*.

John Thompson
Preston High School

More Activities

Crush on You

Crush on You is an activity that would work well prior to Valentine's Day or a special dance. Students purchase a can of Crush pop (the flavour doesn't matter) for one dollar. They indicate who they have a "crush" on and a note is sent to that person that a can of Crush is being held for them in the Student Council office. The person picking up the can is only able to discover who sent the can by paying another dollar. To make it interesting, the original sender can block their identity by paying two dollars initially (you don't let the crushee know this until they pay the dollar and then you deliver the crusher!). This is a different way to raise money and allow the secret admirers to have some fun.

Letters to Leaders

Sue Tietz, Forest Heights C. I. Kitchener, Ontario
Have your leadership students write a letter to someone that they think exhibits good leadership skills. The only stipulation on the subject is that the person has to be living. Prior to writing the letters, brainstorm about the qualities of a leader and identify these qualities with a common list. Letters are proof read and good copies are mailed by the teacher. Students in my class chose to write to Nelson Mandela, Margaret Thatcher, Mark Scharenbroich, their Dad, Grandma, a Forest Heights teacher, David Letterman, etc. The most affecting letters are those people who don't see themselves as leaders. Grandma was really touched and had a really meaningful discussion with her granddaughter.

An International Student Leadership Conference

The Summer Olympics are being hosted by Sydney, Australia in the year 2000 from September 15 to October 1, and following that event will be the First International SRC Conference from October 3 – 8th, 2000. In Australia, student councils are generally known as “Student Representative Councils” or SRC’s. This SRC conference aims to bring together student and adult representatives of secondary school student and adult organizations to explore issues of relevance to youth and initiate action which will address these issues.

The Sydney International Conference aims to attract 1000 student representatives and student advisors from both Australia and overseas. Students attending will stay with host families and advisors will find hotel accommodations in the Sydney area. This conference is being organized by the Australian SRC Advisors Association in cooperation with the University of Newcastle and The National Association of Student Councils (USA).

The conference is being held over six days with separate and combined sessions for students and adults. Each day will have a theme, with general sessions and workshops, meetings, performances and excursions.

If you are interested in joining a Canadian contingent down under, contact Dave Conlon through CASAA. You can contact the organizers directly through the following:

Sydney 2000

First International SRC Conference
c/o Charles Kingston & Ralph Murray
1 Gladstone Street

Bathurst, New South Wales
Australia, 2795

Fax: (02) 63322302

E-mail: ckingston@interact.com.au

Natural Leadership Habits

All of us have a leadership style that we feel comfortable with and this is the style that we will use naturally. The reason for this is that our natural leadership style has been effective for us in most cases in the past, and it will continue to be effective for us in the future. It is important that we practice using other styles of leadership because we will have to use them at some time. One way of pointing this out to students is to use the following exercises to make them aware of their natural habits and then to have them practice the natural habits of others.

Exercises:

1. Instruct participants to put their hands out in front and then to clasp them together by intertwining their fingers. Separate hands and do this again. Identify this as their natural position. Have them notice which thumb is on top and instruct them to clasp their hands together again with the other thumb on top.

Consider the following:

- Why is it initially difficult to clasp your hands in the other fashion?
- What does it feel like when both positions are compared?
- Why do you have to think about clasping your hands in the other position?

This exercise can be repeated by crossing arms.

2. This exercise will require students having a pencil or a pen and some paper to draw on. Have the participants place their paper horizontally and then fold the paper in half along the vertical.

Instruct the students to draw a house on one side of the folded paper. (They may get as fancy as they wish, but do not encourage this. Let them do it as naturally as possible.) When the pictures are complete, ask them to put their pen in the other hand and draw the exact same picture on the other side of the paper.

- Discuss some of the differences in the first houses between participants.
- Discuss the feelings involved in producing the second drawing.
- Discuss how many times it would take to reproduce faithfully the first drawing with the opposite hand.

Point out that most of us have a leadership style that is natural for us, and yet we often must adapt to another style when conditions require it. With some practice we can become competent in the other style, but it will feel awkward from our natural style.

These exercises are helpful as an introduction to a discussion of leadership styles.

Taken from the *CASAA Leadership Handbook* available through CASAA

Introducing a Speaker

One of the public speaking skills that can be practised by leadership students is the introduction of speakers. It takes a prepared and competent introduction to successfully introduce a speaker and this can only be learned by doing it. Many of the professional speakers in schools have a prepared introduction for students to read, but all speakers deserve a proper introduction even if it is just the president from the local service club speaking to your class. Opportunities for students to practice this type of skill are missed each time the principal introduces the speaker at an assembly or a Parent Night.

A good introduction builds instant rapport between the audience and the speaker. Students must realize that a poor introduction will make the speaker's task of reaching the audience even more difficult. A proper introduction is brief (one to one and one-half minutes in length) and to the point.

The formula for a good introduction is a simple three step process:

1. Establish the importance of the subject of the speaker's presentation.
2. Relate the immediacy of the topic to the audience's current interests.
3. Highlight the speaker's qualifications to address the topic of the presentation.

These should also be followed as rules of thumb for making an introduction:

- The introduction should be written (typed) clearly in full. This is not the time to ramble on about the upcoming speaker.
- The introduction is always positive and must avoid any "in jokes" with the audience or speaker.
- The speaker's name should be pronounced clearly and properly.
- The sound system should be tested before the introduction is made. You don't want to start out with the audience impatiently waiting for the sound technician to sort out problems.

The final thing to realize about the introduction is that the speaker must be thanked for their effort. This will bring a successful presentation to a proper and complete close. It is not the speaker's job to close an assembly for you. It is also not appropriate to have the introduction and closing done by a person who just drifts in to do their job and doesn't listen to the whole presentation. Students must learn to act attentive no matter what the presentation is about.

It is important to make students realize that public speaking skills are not just those that involve giving a speech. Novice public speakers can be given good practice by being properly trained on how to introduce and properly thank more experienced speakers. Look for the many opportunities for your students to learn leadership skills by doing it and modelling it for others.

Events for Charity

Lazy Boy or Girl Day

The day involves having a student or staff member win the opportunity to experience all of his or her classes for one day from the comfort of a Lazy Boy recliner. A recliner is placed in full view in the cafeteria on a Monday, and tickets are sold at 50¢ each or three for a dollar. The winner is drawn at the end of Thursday, and the winner outlines their timetable and location of classrooms. The Lazy Boy is then lugged to each class throughout Friday, and various treats arrive at each location (coffee, donuts, junk food). This is a huge hit with staff and students, but hope that the winner doesn't have alternating classes in your three floor school!

Food Drive Fun— Domino Dinner and JENGA

Your mother told you never to play with your food, but sometimes you have to spice up food drives to motivate students. Glenview Park Secondary School has collected Kraft Dinner or similar macaroni product in boxes and lined them up on a gym floor like dominoes. This really gets interesting when you line up more than 2000 boxes of macaroni standing on end and make a huge intricate design that stretches over a full double gym. Just make sure you don't knock over that first box or it takes two more hours to set the dominoes back up.

With the same theme, students got tired of watching boxes simply fall down, so they decided to build it up as high as possible — and then see if it fell down. Homerooms brought in boxes of Kraft dinner and built JENGA towers of five per level and ten levels high. Then, under a time limit (five minutes), they tried to extend their macaroni towers JENGA style as high as they could build. Great fun and it's truly amazing how tall the towers can go.

Quotes

There is nothing quite so tragic as a young cynic, because it means the person has gone from knowing nothing to believing nothing.

Maya Angelou

We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence then, is not an act, but a habit.

Aristotle

The question is not whether we will be extremist but what kind of extremist will we be. Will we be extremists for hate or will we be extremists for love? Will we be extremists for the preservation of injustice or will we be extremists for the cause of justice?

Dr. Martin Luther King

Freedom is the most beautiful, holy and precious fruit of our culture; an individual should never be made to feel that he is at the mercy of any force or coercion or that his will is subjected to others.

Anwar Sadat

Anything I've ever done that ultimately was worthwhile . . . initially scared me to death.

Betty Bender

We can do no great things—only small things with great love.

Mother Teresa

An optimist is wrong just about as often as a pessimist is, but the big difference is that the optimist has more fun.

Anonymous

Leaving a Legacy

The quote section of this newsletter is included because it is hoped that these short passages serve as a sounding board for the ideas of others who have been noted for saying something profound or noteworthy. It is also hoped that the ideas of others will spark you or your students to discover something new or to confirm things that you have already found to be true. Big ideas can be summarized in well chosen small words, and the ideas behind a project or a philosophy can be understood by all with the proper aphorism.

One thing that I have been looking for lately is an aphorism or a touch stone that would summarize genuine feelings about the millennium and separate them from the hyperbole and commercialism that already is surrounding this momentous occasion. It is an occasion that demands a lasting legacy, and the opportunity for a significant school project that involves students, staff and community is comparable to what was last done around Canada's Centennial year.

I think that I have found the quote that will allow me to explain to my staff and students what their efforts to celebrate the millennium should be judged by. It is as follows:

A society grows great when old men plant trees
whose shade they know they shall never sit in.

Greek Proverb

Without identifying what type of millennium project we should embark upon, this quote sets a tone and a level that all of our plans can be judged by. It is a touch stone and summary of what a project should be. I have no idea what we will be doing for our lasting legacy at my school, but I now have the words to explain what we should be looking for. I hope that you and your students will find a spark in these words that will ignite your ideas of what to offer the coming generations at your school.

Dave Conlon

Newsletter Published by:

Dave Conlon
Publication Director for CASAA
Glenview Park Secondary School
55 McKay St.
Cambridge, ON N1R 4G6
fax: 519-621-5860
email: casaa@sentex.net

You have received a copy of this newsletter because of CASAA's commitment to providing resources and information to teachers and students across Canada. Please pass this information on to other advisors who would benefit from it.