



ABOVE AND BEYOND

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF STUDENT ACTIVITY ADVISORS

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Why Attend a Leadership Conference?



CSLC 2010

The 26th Canadian Student Leadership Conference will take place under the Big Top from September 21st – 25th, 2010, at Pierrefonds Comprehensive High School in Pierrefonds, Québec. The theme for the conference Big Top 2010 will see Canadian Youth Performing Above and Beyond. Taking the lead from the fantastic Cirque du Soleil in Montreal, students will have a truly spectacular time learning and listening to the dazzling keynote speakers and involve themselves in thrilling leadership sessions.

As with all national conferences, this CSLC will have advisor sessions specifically geared to teach new tricks and polish old routines. The spotlight will shine on what is being done in schools across Canada and advisor networking will be your safety net for a safe return home.

The preconference will involve tours of Montreal's main landmarks and a supper and entertainment at an authentic Québec Cabane à Sucre. A second day will involve tours of historical Quebec City sites and an evening cruise on the St. Lawrence River.

Registration for the conference will be online in the spring of 2010.

Conference Chair: Hugues Bertrand
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Website: www.cslc2010.ca

Conference chair, Nicole Haire, embraces two of her students after PEI's CSLC 2008.

As teachers and administrators, we all know that we make choices about what we include in our programs and in our schools every year. We also choose what events and activities we will attend. Every year, it is a bit of a struggle to find the means to cover the costs of attending two leadership conferences – one provincial and one national, but I wouldn't even consider giving up either experience.

Why attend both? A provincial conference offers you the opportunity to network with advisors and activity directors from across your province and to see what kinds of things are working in your neighbouring communities. The provincial conference also allows the organizers to spotlight keynote speakers, vendors, and resources that are unique to your province. In addition, each province operates its leadership programs in ways that are unique to the province and what better place to come together as a province and set leadership standards or ideals than at a provincial leadership conference?

A national leadership conference offers you an entirely different set of opportunities. You still have an opportunity to see vendors, resources and excellent speakers, but you will also have an opportunity to see what the rest of Canada is doing in leadership, to explore a new province, to see fresh new ideas in action as people share and network, and to watch your students as they discover what it's like to live in this part of Canada.

A national conference can be more expensive to attend, but it presents your students with an entirely new perspective and it has often been called a once-in-a-lifetime experience. Every year, as I attend the national leadership conference, I know that I will get to experience that feeling and that enthusiasm all over again. Every year I come home exhausted but filled – filled with the energy that comes from spending a week with the most incredible people in Canada learning as much as I possibly can.

My wish, for everyone this year, is the wish that everyone have an opportunity to explore and share and give back to each other and to attend two incredible events – your provincial leadership conference and the national leadership conference. I promise, the journey is well worth every second of time and every dollar spent. ■

Lori Armstrong

*“A good listener helps us
overhear ourselves.”*

Yahia Lababidi

LEADERS NOT VOLUNTEERS

When members are elected or appointed to an office, they are no longer a volunteer. They are leaders!

- They have accepted and possibly taken an oath to be responsible for an activity or activities with the organization.
- They should set an example for the members of the organization by their conduct.
- They have an obligation to execute their responsibilities and insure the future of the organization. They must take the long-term benefit of the organization into consideration on every decision that they are involved.
- They should attend all activities in their area of responsibility, and as many other activities and meetings as possible.
- They will have to recruit, delegate, train, motivate, manage, assist and reward people to help them accomplish their goals.
- The final responsibility of their term is to motivate and train at least one, but hopefully more than one person to take their job for the next term.

Richard Battle

The ME Box

Near the end of a semester in Leadership is a good time for students to reflect on what they have been discussing and deliberating upon during the class. This year-end assignment is designed to help bring all of this material and more, together into a final presentation.

The first thing each person will need to do is find an empty shoebox – this is what each student will keep this assignment in and present this assignment from.

The initial component of this assignment is to decorate the shoebox to reflect ‘who you are’. This will of course include colors, designs, emblems, pictures, etc.

Once each student has his or her ‘Me Box’ ready to go, it is now time to load it up! For each of the major topic areas discussed in class, a minimum of one item must be included in the box which symbolizes a particular topic. For example, if a student has traveled to a leadership conference or camp, they might include a token from that experience to remind them of their experiences geared towards Team Building and Ownership. Each person will do this for each of the topic areas from class. A list of these areas can be provided.

In addition to the main topic areas, students are asked to take time to revisit Habit 7: Sharpen the Saw from the *Seven Habits of Effective Teens*. Remember that each of us are made up of four different ‘parts’ – the Physical You, Mental You, Emotional You and the Spiritual You. In the ‘Me Box’ each person will include one reminder that they will be able to associate with exactly how they recharge each of these dimensions of their own self.



The students will include two items in the ‘Me Box’ that will help the class to understand two things about them that they don’t believe we already know.

Lastly, the presenter will tell us how they feel they have changed over the past five months. How different are they now than they were five months ago when the first class was held?

Each student will need to prepare to spend 3 to 5 minutes presenting the project to the class. If there are some components of the project which are very personal and the student is not comfortable sharing them in front of the entire class, arrangements can be made for the student to present them directly to the teacher.

The objective of this final project is to simply help each student leader identify how they are already applying the concepts from the class in their own lives. ■

*Brent Allen
Wainwright High School*

Music Matters

Students live in a world of music from the time they get up in the morning until even after they finally put their head on the pillow at night. Schools have recognized this and our announcements, pep rallies, pre-game warm-ups and spirit activities are full of the latest tunes and raps and rock. Even our gym classes utilize the great sound systems in the gyms or weight room to make classes more energized and interesting. A good activity can be fully energized with the right song and the audience will remember a video with the perfect lyric and beat.

The most recent hit music can work wonders for you, or it can work against you. Most teacher advisors are not aware of all of lyrics in the music out there, and a few will get caught this year riding along “on the disco stick.” Even those teachers who are just two years out of teachers’ college are eight years out of what’s really popular music. There always has been inappropriate music with sexual lyrics, but that’s why it’s “popular” with the youth. They know something that the oldsters don’t.

The major aspect that has changed is that the sexual innuendo of popular music is no longer innuendo. It’s now up front and in your face or any other body part that the singer may choose. There is always a “radio clean” version of music that students will attempt to justify as being appropriate. However, students know the original lyrics that have been changed and will sing them out loud at pep rallies. Remember this: **radio friendly does not mean school friendly.** There is a difference.

What is appropriate for a student’s iPod is not necessarily appropriate as the song to the school’s “Welcome Back” video. Students must remember that a school audience is much more than the members of the basketball team. A school audience is the parents, siblings and grandmas who have come to watch the game. It is the mom walking down the hallway during announcements or the visiting superintendent at the pep rally who hears that raunchy tune. It’s not just the modern lyrics that you have to be aware of the power of. There are teachers who don’t have a problem with Pink Floyd’s “Another Brick in the Wall” and then there will be many that do because they know all the lyrics. When Paul Simon “looked back upon all that crap (he) learned at high school, it was a wonder (he) could think at all.” Somehow your principal might object to that ancient lyric even as she hums along on her way to your office to complain.

Inappropriate content and sexual or misogynistic lyrics abound in modern hip-hop, rap and rock. No advisor could ever hope to stay ahead of what should or should not be played. However, it is the student leaders’ responsibility to filter what is appropriate and what is not. It is also the advisor’s job to let the students know that they have a responsibility to keep it appropriate for the school audience at all times. Everyone knows that music always matters. ■



“Our heads are round so that thoughts can change direction.”

Francis Picabia

PEP RALLY PLANNING

Plan well in advance: A good rally takes time and preparation. Decide early what is the objective of the rally.

Involve as many students as possible: Students love to watch their friends on stage. Without making your spirit rally too long, make sure to try to involve as many participants as possible from all types of school groups.

Use video: Good video can involve the whole audience. You also have control of the length and content as opposed to a live act.

Organize a Pep Rally Outline: Organize a minute-by-minute pep rally outline in order to utilize the allotted time. A short pep rally with great acts is better than a long rally with mediocre acts.

Team Advisors/Coaches: Make sure to communicate with your coaches and advisors about performance time limitations, theme information, etc. Personally check your performers’ music and outfits well in advance to make sure they are school appropriate.

Rehearsal: If you are fortunate enough to have the time and ability to get all your performers together before your big event, try having a rehearsal. This will give your hosts and individuals running the sound system an opportunity to practice in advance.

Agenda: On the day of the rally, make sure to have an agenda so everyone knows when they will be on stage.

Oriole Adventure Challenge for Students

During the month of May for the past four years, twenty four students gain an exclusive leadership experience aboard Canada's Naval Tall Ship, the Oriole. The mission of providing sail training to junior officers and non-commissioned officers at sea. Often, Oriole is the first time at sea or even in a ship for many CASAA member schools, and 12 students spend one of two weeks



Adventure Training in Oriole offers an avenue to confront fear and to face the challenges of the sea.



There are only a few tall ships remaining on the seas, and this sail training experience will never be forgotten.



Adventure Challenge Student Leaders

Students from across Canada spend a four day, all-inclusive experience aboard the HMCS Oriole. The HMCS Oriole is charged with the task of training commissioned officers as part of their introduction to life at sea for these people. This unique experience is offered only to students for a week aboard the ship.



The students learn teamwork by hauling lines, shining brass and living in the spartan conditions that Oriole affords. Beyond teamwork, the sail training instills in each individual a great respect for the forces of nature. With Oriole cracking along at 12 knots under reefed sail in 35 knots of wind, it is easy to appreciate the power of the wind and sea. There is nothing like a sailing ship to bring home the challenges facing a ship's crew at sea. The individual and group confidence that this builds is incalculable but obvious after a week at sea.

Most of the previous student participants have never worked on a sailing vessel in their lives. The only things that are required are a willingness to work and a desire to participate in new experiences. There is also room on each sailing for an adult chaperone from a CASAA member school.

The single expense that students have to cover is the cost of getting to the port of Victoria. The Oriole training is covered by the Canadian Navy. All necessary gear onboard is provided by the crew. CASAA member schools will be notified of the next sail experience on board the Oriole in the February e-letter. Applications are due in March 2010.

For information on the ship, check: www.navy.forces.gc.ca/oriole/home/index_e.asp



Making a Difference Since 1985

“If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor. If an elephant has its foot on the tail of a mouse and you say that you are neutral, the mouse will not appreciate your neutrality.”

Desmond Tutu

STOP, START, CONTINUE

A necessary exercise for any leadership group is to objectively look at the activities and events that they run and decide what should happen to them. Every activity has a lifespan and it's better to stop running the winter carnival now, rather than keep running it because we've been doing it (poorly) for the past 10 years.

Break the group into small tables of 4 and have each group look objectively at the activity calendar for the year. Each of the events and activities then is listed under one of three categories: stop, start, or continue. Events to start could be those that the students experienced in first year, but were not continued by other leadership groups. A presentation is then made to the class on the board for everyone to see. Reasons for continuance or elimination should be given and written down. When the majority of groups decide to stop a major event, the students are sending a message.

The results are often surprising, and the benefit is a program that stays fresh and vibrant on student energy, rather than running solely on tradition. Students will support activities they are excited about rather than ones that they have to run because “we've always done that!”

The Canadian Association of Student Activity Advisors has been addressing the leadership needs of high school students and student council advisors since 1985. The first Canadian Student Leadership Conference was held in Yorkton, Saskatchewan, and this annual conference has traveled to every province in Canada since then. CASAA is now a registered, not-for-profit association. It is run by a Board of Directors which consists of an Executive, a director from each province, a francophone director, and a communications director. In addition to conferences, CASAA has promoted the creation of provincial student leadership organizations with similar goals and objectives as that of the national organization.

Student engagement happens at many levels, and CASAA produces materials that help to connect students to their schools and communities. Fundraising ideas, anti-bullying initiatives and spirit events are all part of well-balanced programs that give all students a chance to grow to their potential. CASAA believes that a healthy and active co-curricular program creates a sense of school pride for the organizers and participants.



Educators know that students, who are involved in activities at school, will achieve better academic results and are less inclined to drop out of school. Administrators and Advisors need ideas and materials to support the existing programs at schools, and they are always looking for creative and new strategies to deal with school issues. Through a monthly electronic newsletter available to member schools, CASAA provides the latest ideas that have been used successfully across the country. A membership in CASAA gives your school a discount on print resources and instant access to emerging trends and activity ideas.

There is a school in your district that has an amazing choir. The program attracts boys and girls alike and the choir travels locally and abroad amazing audiences with their skills and harmonies. Another school in your area has an incredible volleyball program. Their teams win provincial titles and the trophy case is full of tournament pennants and plaques. Do these schools have better singers or volleyball players than those at your school? No. Since both of these programs have a record of excellence over a number of years, they succeed because they have committed and passionate teachers who support their students and help them to be their best.

CASAA supports teachers to be their best. CASAA supports co-curricular programs that make a positive difference year after year in schools across the country. CASAA supports conferences and provincial organizations working in your province. Don't wait. Find out about the support and resources from CASAA for your staff and your school. You can make a difference! ■

Words Matter

“That’s so Gay!” is a phrase that is often heard in our hallways and classrooms. Most students will tell you that they see nothing wrong with it because it means “stupid” or “dumb” and they did not intend a slur. However, this is an example of a phrase that is inappropriate in connotation and denotation. Words and phrases are powerful indicators of belief and behaviour and students need to learn this. We have changed our language to the more inclusive letter carrier and firefighter rather than the male-exclusive postman and fireman. These changes have helped to open professions to women because of the societal change to the inclusive descriptions.

Education is about academics and the use of language. For example, biology class is as much about learning the language of the science as it is about the nature of the birds and the bees. Students learn about what the words of biology mean and how and when they should be used appropriately.

This means that the language used in the classrooms and hallways of a school is open to the principles of education as well. Nothing conveys or contributes to the atmosphere and tone of a school more than the language heard in a hallway or in a classroom. Free speech is a speech that is free from hurt and ignorance. Homophobic and racial slurs are not appropriate at any time and should be dealt with through education.

The following are steps from the website *tolerance.org* that will help any student or teacher deal with these situations:

- **Speak up:** Take the courage to ask, “Why do you say that?” or “How did you develop that belief?” Some people need to be told that their choice of language is hurtful and inappropriate.
- **Identify and Question:** Point out the behaviour candidly and question the reason for saying it, do not target the person who said it.
- **Appeal to Principles:** Tell them about what is appropriate and why it is a better way to behave and speak.
- **Set Limits:** You cannot control another person, but you can tell them that these types of statements or jokes are not allowed in your classroom or presence anymore.
- **Work with Others to Educate:** Seek out like-minded people who support your cause and help to promote it. If you’re not the first voice to speak up, be the next.
- **Be Vigilant:** Change happens slowly. Stay prepared, and keep speaking up. Don’t risk silence.

Language changes slowly, but it is only through education that students will learn that their words always matter and what they say will influence how they behave and believe. ■



“Progress lies not in enhancing what is, but in advancing toward what will be.”

Kahlil Gibran

WORK MANAGEMENT

Be a Workafrolic

People who work only for the sake of working are *workaholics*. They find no joy in their addiction to work; they infect others with their dour approach to life and its constant struggle. Conversely, a *workafrolic* loves their work and enjoys the challenges and effort that their work involves. A *workafrolic* is simply someone who loves what they do in life, and therefore they do lots of it. Part of being a *workafrolic* is to work for your passion in life, rather than your paycheck. Most people involved in student activities are *workafrolics*. It’s not the money that makes *workafrolics* happy, it’s the passion that they experience daily doing what they love best.

Eat the frog

This is a great time management tip to get things done and avoid procrastination. Many people spend time doing the easy and non-necessary things on their goal list for the day or for the week. They avoid doing the hard things because they’re not as much fun. They procrastinate because it’s easy to do so. What you do to change this approach is to remind yourself to “Eat the frog.” Eating the frog is another way of saying that you have to do the most important task of the day first. If you eat the frog, you will have completed your biggest challenge early in your day. The rest of your day will be successful because you have already completed the hard stuff.

*“Never confuse motion
with action.”*

Benjamin Franklin

Above and Beyond

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To learn more about membership, go to www.casaaleadership.ca/join.html

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**Canadian Association of
Student Activity Advisors**

Resources

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



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

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One Gourmet Lollipop

Student leaders need to understand that the most effective communication happens one-on-one. This concept is easily taught and understood, but often difficult to make common practice. Student leaders will easily communicate amongst their friends, but making connections outside of this known circle is difficult.

One Gourmet Lollipop is an exercise that is fun, challenging and forces the participants to meet new people. Any initial contact between two complete strangers is awkward for most, but having the trading aspect as the focus eases the communication process. This exercise uses gourmet lollipops from Kapow Pops because flooding the initial trading market with over 20 red paperclips would be unfair.



Assignment:

A young man from Montreal decided that he wanted to find out how far he could test the children's game of Bigger and Better. His name is Kyle MacDonald and he traded one red paperclip for a house. He started with one red paperclip on July 12, 2005 and 14 trades later, on July 12, 2006 he traded with the Town of Kipling Saskatchewan for a house located at 503 Main Street. You can look at Kyle's entire trading journey on the website: www.oneredpaperclip.com

Your task is to start with one gourmet lollipop and trade your way to the best item that you can in 5 days. You will bring your final trade to class for all to see and enjoy!

Rules:

1. All trades must be between two willing individuals who fully own the items traded.
2. No cash can be part of the transaction. All trades must be fair. (e.g. no stealing, no blackmail, no bribing, no exchanging of illegal items, etc.)
3. You must keep a chronological log of the items traded for. All trades must be identified with the trader and item noted. Digital pictures of the items for proof would be a good record of the path of your transactions.
4. A short description of why the trade was made must be noted for each transaction.
5. There must be some better value in the trade for you. Explain your strategy.
6. You must trade outside of your comfort zone. The greatest percentage of your trades must be made with individuals whom you don't know or regularly communicate with. This is an opportunity designed to meet new people.

You can find a great source of lollipops at: www.studentfundraising.com

You get 75 free Kapow lollipops with your first order as a CASAA member school.