Morgan hopeful for period of stability in education sector

Since 1934

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Reggie all about her students

Morgan believes that the recent conclusion of the spring legislature to offer its overall analysis of where things are at. “It’s been a long, challenging session and I’m hoping for a period of calm and stability,” Morgan acknowledged. He also knows there is still operational work that needs to forge ahead as a result of the spate of recent announcements, not the least of which was the passing of Bill No. 63 giving greater powers to the Ministry. “I don’t want to create any more turmoil or uncertainty with the [education] sector,” Morgan said. “I hope over the next while we can take a breather with the [education] sector. We need to take a look at the [education] sector and see how we can take savings out of the [education] sector.”

Even though there was seemingly no shortage of folks making the trek between two shiny downtown Saskatoon hotels sporting lanyards indicating they were part of the Canadian Association of Principals conference, it was all relative. Whereas the last time this national conference was staged in Saskatoon in 2004 there were close to 1,000 attendees, this year’s event attracted less than 300. According to Carol Sarich (Saskatoon, SK), Paula Spooner (both are Saskatchewan principals and served as co-chairs of the organizing committee), it was just how important it is to make the education experience better for students.

Talking to others at the conference, I would say the issues are fairly similar across the country in terms of facing budget cuts and the new demands placed on teachers and administrators. We’re all trying to grapple with the rapid pace of change happening in education,” Sarich said. Spooner concurred, adding that in talking to colleagues from British Columbia to New Brunswick, there’s a familiar theme and one that organizers at the CAP conference were conscious of addressing. “We’re all dealing with a range of challenges as administrators and we know that as leaders we need to keep our teams engaged. At the same time we’re working within budget constraints we’re facing today, and it would seem there’s a similar political climate. So while the situation is different, there’s definitely a similarity in the issues we’re facing in our schools,” Spooner noted.

We have a range of parameters in terms of budget and curriculum, for example, and we have to be prepared to think inside the box as a leader,” Sarich said. “That’s a lot of what leaders are trying to do.”

CAP organizers highlight importance of having such national events

“Children’s Festival fun

This year’s version of the PotholeCarp Children’s Festival of Saskatchewan was blessed with ideal weather for the most part, which was a welcome change from years past for organizers. Utilizing Kinex Park as its new home for the First time, the 14-day event attracted significantly higher numbers of visitors of all ages. One of the tents was sponsored by the Saskatchewan Teachers’ Federation with in-kind support from the Saskatchewan Indigenous Cultural Centre. Monday’s performances included puppet shows, and among those attending was this Grade 1 class from Ecole Akin Buckwell School.
Aboriginal youth entrepreneurial program has exceeded expectations

By Daniel Millaire

I have a pair of shoelaces with me at school. The laces are not for use. They are there to remind me of something. To keep me grounded. Like the strings that tie a cross to the chest of a firefighter or priest, or keep your shoe on in a hurricane. It’s a reminder.

It started one day I stepped forward to Graham, 5th grade teacher at Canady and Anne Meek, Part I. I was asked to do an audit of students’ progress and students’ perception of the various assessment and grading practices. For me, this is where the connection aspect is always natural. But that’s not always true. It’s a mindset to create that connection.

As a word of caution in this all talk of connection, Muhammad reminded administrators and educators that students need to feel comfortable and confident, and that to achieve that, it’s not enough to have students feel safe.

The 150th anniversary of the University of Saskatchewan was the catalyst. Muhammad carried the flag as cheerleader in 2001 when he heard the province was intently focused on creating healthy school culture setting.

In addition to approving the program for four years, the board has also approved the funds to support four students to take part and get up to speed with confidence in the business world.

As Bouquet succinctly put it, “I think the real key to help us get through the ups and downs is to communicate. For what these young people are going through, it takes a community. And sometimes it’s hard to do business with China from some countries.”

Favel added, “just the exposure they get to experience a facility or office, shop, it helps them realize that the future is not just sitting behind a desk all day. It’s really exciting to watch these young people grow and own their own businesses.”

The ties that bind prove poignant reminders in times of tragedy

By Daniel Millaire

We’ve made great strides in the education program, but we’re still a ways off. We’ve done some really great work together, but we’re not there yet. You’ve really got to take those steps first. We’ve really got to build that connection with the kid and the teacher. We’re really close to that goal. We’re just about there.

We’re making progress, but we’re not there yet.

I have a pair of shoelaces with me at school. The laces are not for use. They are there to remind me of something. To keep me grounded. Like the strings that tie a cross to the chest of a firefighter or priest, or keep your shoe on in a hurricane. It’s a reminder.

Muhammad carries the flag as cheerleader for creating healthy school culture setting.

Given that his bread and butter is running his warm-up laps in the sunshine. The past couple of years have been tough for him, but he’s got his sights set on next year’s season. He’s been at this for 30 years. He’s been building bridges when it’s his time to come through the door is not the time when people come to us. It’s the future, it’s exciting to see the kids start to feel like they belong. You’re excited to see the kids start to feel that connection.

According to Bouquet, “We’re really excited to work with kids and parents and teachers and the community. We want to take part and get up to speed with confidence in the business world. It’s amazing how they can do that. I think it’s so important that we get these kids to run and put on a suit and make a presentation, and how easy and exciting it is to watch these kids grow and get through the ups and downs.

Gable Favel and Yosef Escapoz are both integrally involved with growing students’ business acumen into the future. Favel is now the leader for these kids and we’d encourage any educators involved in growing their business acumen into the future. Gable Favel and Yosef Escapoz are both integrally involved with growing students’ business acumen into the future. Favel is now the leader for these kids and we’d encourage any educators involved in growing their business acumen into the future.

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We’ve been focused on the local end of things, but we can’t do that without having taken a look at the big picture. It’s a mindset to create that connection, and you want to be sure that that connection is always natural. But that’s not always true. It’s a mindset to create that connection.

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John Lake students play host to I2P team by highlighting Aboriginal history lesson

The Canadian provinces

It was the only stop on the tour that included learning about First Nations and Métis people, and the path to reconciliation with several members of these communities.

“This has truly been a learning and training event, and it’s been wonderful having these special guests as ambassadors,” said Ray Morrison, chairperson of the Saskatchewan Teachers’ Federation.

It’s no surprise to share Canada with the rest of the world and this in a rich example of that. It’s history we all need to be more aware of and know more about, as this has been a wonderful opportunity to get some first-hand insight,” he added.

The assembly highlighted the importance of partnerships, including the example of Whitecap Dancers First Nation and Saskatoon Public Schools. Whitecap Dancers School in Saskatoon participated in the culminating event of the St. Joseph’s project spearheaded a project at the Lord of the Rings High School and the last three years at St. Joseph’s that focused on creating a water collection and composting program and included students and other businesses and organizations to create a water collection system. Regier is also a committed

The feedback from the students is a critical part of the project, and it is why she asks students for feedback weekly in list which they talk about what they know about and how they can be part of this, which we know they do not know much about but also how they can be part of this. “I get asked a lot what’s the difference and what’s the difference,” Regier said.

Feedback from the fiction...
Leadership for teacher leaders is key

By Jane Macleod

Recently, a close friend and colleague reminded me of an axiom that had been fundamental to her thinking about professional learning communities and teacher leadership throughout her career. Namely, if you build it, they will come. The best source of professional learning just happens to be the community of practice that you create from you–your colleagues. This insight is underpinned in Parker J. Palmer’s compact book, The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher’s Life (1998), when he advises that simply two pathways exist for every teacher’s personal professional growth: the path of personal reflection and the community of colleagues “from whom we can learn more about ourselves and our craft” (p. 15).

Alma Harris, well known for her research on teacher leadership, has been studying and writing about the benefit of teacher leaders and their link to instructional improvement and teacher effectiveness. She asserts that teacher leadership has a significant effect on classroom practice and student engagement. Barriers to this research are supported by others who believe that teacher leaders are those that it has created strong alliances with teachers as a result of ongoing support. They are through professional development or coaching. In other words, there is a high level of professional and social interaction about the change. These teachers are well respected by their students as a result of their content knowledge and understanding of their expertise, leadership skills, and the knowledge of their professional development.

However, beyond the creation of the administration, leadership can significantly affect the development of student practice, thus making a difference in student improvement targets for the school. In this environment when “the principal does–or doesn’t” participate in the classroom, the teachers are well positioned as teachers first, school leaders second. Teachers are seen as being driven by a vision that is clear to all stakeholders and the main focus is on student engagement. In other words, the bottom line is that they create trusting relationships and a sense of partnership and collaboration that school culture.

The research is clear. What the principal does–or doesn’t do–to involve teachers is critical to the development of teacher leadership in a school. Principals promote teacher leadership in their schools through:

- Create a climate characterized by trust and open communication.
- Foster a collaborative school culture.
- Share a common vision for student and teacher learning.
- Clearly articulate expectations, roles, and responsibilities for teacher leaders.
- Give teacher leaders the space and autonomy to develop and enact instructional goals for teachers.
- Clearly communicate and support the value of teacher leaders.

For principals considering the identification and development of teacher leaders, the research is clear. When Primary and Secondary Teacher leaders are successful in influencing and engaging teachers in instructional things efforts have a learning orientation, seek out professional dialogue about teaching and learning, demonstrating leadership capacity, are trustworthy, reliable, valued by staff members, have strong interpersonal skills, and possess a strong knowledge base regarding curriculum content and effective pedagogy.

Both Alma Harris (2003) and Charlotte Danielson (2007) tell us that leadership is necessary at every level of the organization for sustained goals and improved student learning. They also tell us that in today’s environment when “the principal does–or doesn’t” participate in the classroom, the teachers are well positioned as teachers first, school leaders second.

Beyond the classroom, teacher leaders are charged with a multitude of tasks to support their colleagues in classrooms, the classroom, the school principal.

The main goal of the project was to encourage and empower students. We also explored the potential for self-empowerment through the Technology Innovation School Learning (TISL) project. This allowed us to reflect on both teaching and student progress with technology integration. We also used the SAMR Model (www.hippasus.com/blog/archives/227) to examine what transformational changes we are doing with technology in our classrooms, if any. The use of these three reflection models gave participants an opportunity to develop a growth mindset and improve upon their integration of technology in our classrooms. The Connected Educator Month initiative has been a successful one in my opinion. My students have been successful at meeting curricular objectives, but more importantly for me, they did so in an enriching, empowering and engaging atmosphere where all students have made progress and growth.

In conclusion, the professional learning community that has emerged is a tremendous benefit (tandem our Edcamp-style sharing).

It has thrilled me to witness the professional development and collaboration (follow and join the conversation #ConnectedEd) and improve the learning possibilities for me and my students.

If you have questions, please email me at dcmacleod@-recis and follow me on Twitter @dcmacleod.
Thank You!

The Saskatchewan Teachers’ Federation supports several boards and committees that delve into matters of importance to the teaching profession. Each year the composition of these boards and committees is considered and the STF Executive appoints members as necessary. The Federation would like to take this opportunity to thank the board and committee members who served in 2016-17. Their dedication and service is greatly appreciated.

Accreditation 2017

Fall Session

Saskatoon
Renewal/Second - Thursday, September 21, and Friday, October 13
Registration Deadline: 5 p.m., Friday, September 15
Location: Saskatchewan Teachers’ Federation, 2317 Arlington Ave, Saskatoon
Sessions run from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Prince Albert - Saskatchewan Rivers Hosted Provincial
Initial - Friday - Saturday, September 15-16
Renewal/Second - Friday - Saturday, September 29-30 (4 days inclusive)
Registration Deadline: 5 p.m., Friday, September 8
Location: Saskatchewan Rivers Education Centre, 545 11th St E, Prince Albert
Sessions run from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Fees:
Initial - $550 (GST included)
Renewal/Second - $350 (GST included)

For more information, or to register for any of the Accreditation Seminars, we invite you to visit the STF website, www.stf.sk.ca.

ATTENTION SUPERANNUATED TEACHERS

If you withdrew teaching services during a legal strike over the course of your career and as a consequence were required to delay your superannuation in order to accumulate additional contributory service, you may be entitled to a benefit from the Saskatchewan Teachers’ Federation. Applications will be received until October 28, 2017.

For information, please request an information package from:
Todd Pearce, Administrative Support Unit
Saskatchewan Teachers’ Federation
2317 Arlington Ave
Saskatoon SK, S7J 2H8
T: 306-373-1660 or 1-800-667-7762
admin@stf.sk.ca

Calling All English Teachers!

Have you taught Jean Val Jean and/or The Great Adventurer?

I am very interested in your experiences using these literary selections in the classroom. I am exploring the reasons behind the popularity and enduring value of these two works. By responding to an online survey, you would be making a valuable contribution to our knowledge of the history of curricula & teaching practices in Saskatchewan schools over the decades.

Please access the survey from http://tinyurl.com/saskliteracy

Thank you,
Marylynn Gagné, University of Saskatchewan Library

IGNITING CLASSROOM DISCUSSIONS ABOUT COMPLEX SOCIETAL ISSUES

The Canadian Teachers’ Federation has developed three classroom resources to enable teachers to engage students in open, frank and respectful discussions on

Truth and Reconciliation
Mental Health
Child Poverty

Students and educators were engaged throughout the production process of these pedagogical booklets. Teachers who are already registered with the CTF’s social justice program ImageNation can easily access the booklets’ accompanying lesson plans by logging in.

Not yet registered as an ImageNation teacher? Visit www.imagine-action.ca/members/Login.aspx and follow the instructions. It’s simple and free.

JOIN THE 2,900+ TEACHERS ALREADY REGISTERED WITH IMAGINATION!