



TAAPCS' December, 2015 Newsletter

Season's greetings everyone. As 2015 comes to a close and we take time for rest and renewal, it is difficult to believe that our school year soon will be half completed and yet there is much to be done. In that regard, we are taking a slightly different approach to this newsletter which will not only reference meetings/events which occurred since our last newsletter in June but will also present information that will be part of our January 15, 2016 TAAPCS' General Meeting. Clearly more details and discussion will occur at the meeting but since not all our members are in attendance it was determined that basic information be provided at this time.

1. 2015-16 TAAPCS' Executive Officers – We welcome Dianne McBeth, Superintendent of the Calgary Girls' School as our new President. Judy Gray, former Co-President, will now serve as Past President while Roger Nippard, former Co-President will continue as a member of the Education Advisory Committee. We welcome back Yvonne DePeel, Superintendent of Almadina and Don Falk, Superintendent of New Horizons as Co Vice-Presidents and Meredith Poole of Foundations for the Future as Secretary-Treasurer.
2. Strategic Planning workshop – We were pleased to have Dr. Lynn Paradis, Superintendent of Suzuki, lead our members in a strategic planning workshop at our October meeting. As a result of that activity, a sub-committee was formed to develop a follow up session for our January 15 general meeting.
3. Research mandate and framework – A topic of conversation at December's EAC meeting was the importance of "research" in charter schools and the current absence of a common framework upon which our schools base their research. An activity and discussion will take place on this topic at the TAAPCS' January meeting. As well, it was considered important that the research being done in our schools be made known to the general public and therefore a request has been made to our schools for updates regarding what is taking place. Our website currently has information on the research taking place in our schools but it requires updating. This information will then be updated on our website, which is currently being revised.

4. School Leadership Learning Initiative – On October 29, Session one of this year’s School Leadership Learning Initiative took place. This session was led by Jeney Gordon (CAPE), Karen Spencer (Suzuki), Darrell Lonsberry (Connect) with assistance from Scott Meunier (Boyle Street) and Randy Clarke (Alberta Education). 25 people were in attendance. The evaluations were positive. The next two sessions are scheduled for April 8 and May 25, 2016.
5. Conference 2015 report – The conference which was held on October 30 at the Calgary Girls’ School and the adjacent Glenmore Park Community Centre, was well attended. 482 registrants were in attendance as well as a number of special guests such as MLA’s and American charter school officials. Evaluations were positive. In particular the presentation of Ms. Ember Reich-Junge was seen as excellent. A financial report will be provided in January.
6. Leadership standards – As noted above, Randy Clarke of Alberta Education, participated in session one of the SLLI. Randy is a Director at Alberta Education with specific responsibility for the development and implementation of “leadership standards” for administrators as well as “quality standards” for teachers. At our January meeting, James Trodden, acting Director, will make a presentation on the work being done to determine “leadership standards” for administrators.
7. Request for meeting with the Minister of Education – To date we have been unable to arrange a meeting with Minister Eggen. We understand he has met with other groups in the province and are optimistic that he will also provide TAAPCS with a similar opportunity.
8. Education Act/Regulations update – There has been a delay in the finalization of the date whereby the Act and its Regulations will be proclaimed. We have asked Alberta Education for more information as to what is taking place in order to determine the final outcome.
9. “Politics of Educational Reform: The Alberta Charter School Experiment 20 Years Later” – Dr. Lynn Bosetti, University of British Columbia (Okanagan) and Dr. Phil Butterfield, Connect Charter School, recently published a research paper on the history and results of Alberta’s charter school “experiment”. This paper was discussed briefly at our Conference by Dr. Butterfield and now since it has been officially published, has been circulated to our superintendents. We hope to have a presentation on this research at our January meeting.
10. Fee structure proposal – A request to modify our Association’s fee structure has been received and will be discussed at our meeting. It involves the creation of more incremental “steps” in the grid than currently exists.
11. Collaborative policy development – Another EAC meeting topic was the question as to whether there was a need in our association for “collaborative policy development”. It was noted that there continues to be a requirement for new policies to be introduced at each school as a result of societal and educational changes and therefore should the association consider contracting

with experienced policy developers to work in those areas where a common need exists? This topic is on the January meeting agenda.

12. Evaluation procedures – Following the strategic planning workshop in October, it was determined that in order to the association to “grow” and develop, more attention should be paid to the evaluation of such areas as organizational and personnel performance. As a result, we will begin to evaluate the effectiveness of each TAAPCS’ meeting effectiveness as well as, under the direction of the President, we will conduct an annual evaluation of the performance of the Executive Director.

Again, all the best of the season. Hope to see many of you in Red Deer on January 15, 2016.

Dr. Garry Andrews, Executive Director.