

What our students want

One of the most important questions that leaders need to ask is this: Is our learning program meeting the individual needs of our students (and their parents)?

The interesting challenge is to figure out how to answer that question. The best teachers ask it regularly about their own students in their own classes, and then with colleagues as they meet to tweak their programs. But the best school leaders are also stepping back and asking big questions and digging into evidence. Can you tell by watching classroom engagement? Do you ask students, and if so, when and how often? Do you track their progress in university?

This year, we have been really interested in the future needs of our students and how schools must evolve to meet those changing demands. We are excited that 42 leaders will join our 2051 Project this July, and we now have completed the first stage of our research which includes over 50 schools world-wide that are actually meeting our dual challenge of academic and business innovation. For my part, I have been meeting with student leaders across the country to ask about technology and their advice on the future. These conversations have reminded me that our students are full of energy and ideas; in fact, my time with students has been a total highlight! But I'm hearing over and over again that not only do they want to be asked their opinions on education, they expect to be included in the conversation.

We will do a full analysis of the students' perspectives as part of our final report, but for now, I want to give you a glimpse into some of the main trends that will inform our thinking and planning for The 2051 Project.

In each meeting, I ask two questions: one on the use of technology and the other on their best advice to educators who are planning schools of the future. Before they leave, they each give me one sentence to capture their best advice. So here they are, "out of the mouths of babes," some of the repeated ideas:

"I took a whole course in three days and got 99%. I'm not even kidding. The whole thing was shaky"

I've been surprised by the number of students – even middle school students – who have taken online courses. They report that they take a course to create more flexibility in their schedule or because a course was not available. But there is a new and concerning trend: we are learning that in public education online courses, there is no interaction between students and worse, very little interaction with teachers; furthermore, they can do full year courses in very little time, and there is little supervision on exams, if any. Here's the big issue: the students are getting high marks on their transcripts and using these marks for university entrance. Perhaps there is a way that CAIS can do some advocacy as part of this project, but what we know for sure is that we have a responsibility to clearly define high quality online learning and steer our students in that direction.

We also have an opportunity to provide excellent blended learning experiences for our students in our schools and become leaders in shaping the future of education.

"Everything about technology helps, but you can go too far"

There has been one main theme on the issue of technology. Some students want more technology and some want less, but all students highlight the need to use it purposefully. Many of our CAIS students have tried a flipped classroom – seems that every school has at least one champion – and students expect that assignments are posted in some kind of online portal. They are already doing it, but they want to improve their ability to research and collaborate. All are intrigued by the potential of videoconferencing to diversify their conversations. The most passionate advocates for more technology are students who have experienced effective blended learning. In my opinion? All teachers should be blending their classrooms, and all leaders should be researching its effectiveness.

"We need to have more choice."

In every single conversation, students agree on one issue: choice. Students want to learn more than traditional course content. They want to study cooking and budgeting, and they want to learn how to change a tire. They are passionate that school should do more to prepare them for "the real world" and they want more guidance on discovering their passions and less emphasis on marks. They also want more experiences – they want co-op and community service and one group went so far as to advocate for the school schedule to be structured around experiences, not courses. (And good news for boarding schools – many students think that all students should experience boarding – required time away from parents! – before graduation).

"My worry is that technology will mean that we lose intimacy of conversation."

Today's students worry that they are spending too much time on technology. Over and over, I heard about the need for schools to continue to focus on deep relationships between students and their teachers. They come to life describing the teachers that influence them most, the ones who change their lives.

More than ever, I believe that we need to focus on the question of learning and how schools need to evolve to meet the changing needs of students. But I was reminded again that we must also renew our focus on teachers. Do they have the capacity to research and use new technology to enhance teaching and learning? Do they commit to focusing on more than academics? And most importantly, how do we support them so they have the energy - on a daily basis - to share their passions and connect with children? According to today's students, their future success will depend as much on academic innovation as it will on learning from good people with good old-fashioned values.

Anne-Marie Kee
Executive Director

Shaping the Future of Education

CAIS Shifts to One National Conference

After extensive research and consultation with Heads, many of whom consulted their leadership teams, the CAIS Board has decided to pilot the concept of one National Conference beginning in April 2016. The vision is to bring multiple CAIS leaders together into one event that will include a program that is research-driven and more broadly engaging. Our team will work hard, along with all of the current partner groups, to establish a program that provides time for the national network groups to meet about issues particular to their area of expertise, but also time for cross-pollination of ideas.

We believe that a national event can focus collaboratively on the most important issues identified by CAIS members. We can create some efficiencies in terms of operations, and we can maximize volunteer time at the strategic level. For our first conference, we will continue the work of The 2051 Project – meeting the dual challenge of academic and business innovation. We are excited to try something new and hold the first ever national event for all CAIS leaders.

What to expect from CAIS every year:

October – Heads and Chairs Conference

April – National Conference

July – Leadership Institute

All year – online learning opportunities that are growing in popularity

Going forward, five things you should know about this new model:

1. Save the date: April 10-12, 2016, Vancouver
2. Special for our first ever National Conference – Focus on 2051
3. Special for our first ever National Conference – Open to all CAIS leaders: Junior/Middle, Senior, IT, University Counsellors, Business, Admissions, Advancement. If you are on the senior leadership team, you are invited.
4. Starting in 2017, our National Conference will alternate yearly between Academics and Operations.
5. More specific Q&A on our new PD Model can be found [here](#).

Our vision is to shape the future of education, and we believe that this is best done together. We look forward to planning with you and meeting in Vancouver.

Watch my [“Strategy and Choice for CAIS”](#) webinar for more information on the transition to one National Conference.

[Anne-Marie Kee](#)
Executive Director

Engaging our National Networks

As we move forward with our new national PD model, with the creation of one National Conference, we are eager to engage our members in the planning process. The shift to this new PD model has created a need for guidelines on areas beyond PD, including communication, budgeting, sponsorship, research, awards, and decision-making.

We are in the process of creating an advisory group with two representatives from each of the traditional seven partner conference groups (Junior/Middle, Senior, Business, IT, University Counsellors, Admissions, and Advancement). At this time, this group will be referred to as the National Network Advisory Council for CAIS (NNACC).

This June, the NNACC will meet face-to-face to provide input into two key areas: planning the new National Conference and advising on national network guidelines. The NNACC will make a recommendation to the CAIS Board for their approval in August.

National Network Advisory Council for CAIS – Draft Mandate:

To advise CAIS on how to support the seven partner groups (national networks) as we strengthen communications and relationships to better align accreditation, professional development and research, with our new one National Conference model.

Thank you, Drew Stephens, Head of Southridge School, for offering to support the development of our new national network guidelines, and Marc Ayotte, Head of Hillfield Strathallan College, for offering to share the work of the Research Committee and how it will align with the new National Conference.

We look forward to finalizing our partner group representatives and are excited to create a strong first National Conference that includes all of our national networks in a collaborative effort that is research-based and reflective.

The vision for CAIS is to shape the future of education, and we believe that we need multiple leaders working together to make that happen.

One of our three pillars at CAIS is professional development, and we remain committed to national leadership development through targeted and responsive PD programs.

As the CAIS office enters its spring conference season with the completion of the Junior & Middle School Leaders conference and upcoming Business Professionals and Senior Student Leadership conferences, the continuation of the spring online PD and the fast approaching summer LI deadlines, we are reminded that so many volunteers work hard to make CAIS programs a success. We appreciate the great work of our members.

Annual Heads and Chairs Conference

October 15 - 17, 2015 – save the date

The planning committee under the leadership of Gary O'Meara, Head of Armbrae Academy, Blayne Addley, Head of Halifax Grammar School and Anne Wachter, Head of Sacred Heart School of Halifax have developed an engaging and thought provoking program. Our participants will hear from acclaimed speakers such as: Heather Staker, co-author of *Blended: Using Disruptive Innovation to Improve Schools* and Howard Gardner and Katie Davis co-authors of *The App Generation*. To see the full draft program, please visit the conference [webpage](#).

As a reminder, a benefit of membership in our national organization is participation in the annual meeting. Heads and Chairs are required to attend the annual Heads and Chairs Conference during which our Annual General Meeting is held. Membership invoices include conference fees for both the Head of School and Board Chair. It is permitted to send a replacement if the Board Chair cannot attend the annual conference.

2015 Summer Leadership Institute

We are pleased to report that the LI is sold out. Thank you for your overwhelming enthusiasm for our professional development. Our host and LI faculty members look forward to welcoming over 140 participants to St. Margaret's School in Victoria, BC on July 2.

Thank you Cathy Thornicroft, Head of St. Margaret's School for agreeing to host this year's LI as well as Kathy Charleson and her team for all the preparatory work that will ensure the success of the 2015 Summer Leadership Institute.

[Sheri Little](#)

PD Coordinator

Partner Conferences

The 2014/15 school year offered a number of PD opportunities for school leaders. Volunteers worked exceptionally hard to offer strong programs for nearly 300 attendees.

Thank you to the following Partner Conference committee members for volunteering countless hours to organize these conferences:

Advancement Professionals

"The Best of CAISap"

Montreal, QC

Host/Chairs:

- James McMillan, Selwyn House School
- Sharon Cozens, Trafalgar School for Girls

Business Professionals

"Connect, Collaborate, Differentiate"

Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON

Host/Committee members:

- Jim Parke, Conference Chair, Ridley College
- Leslie Goodfellow, St. Mildred's-Lightbourn School
- Jewell Kennedy, Appleby College
- Brenda Lockhart, Ridley College
- Patti MacNicol, Upper Canada College
- Beth McKay, St. Andrew's College
- Darcy Wallace, Hillfield Strathallan College

Junior and Middle School Leaders

"Celebrating Success, the Magic of a Positive School Culture"

King City, ON

Hosts/Committee members:

- Heather MacDonald, Holy Trinity School
- Rob Thomson, Holy Trinity School
- Walter Davison, The Country Day School
- Dean Sherman, The Country Day School
- Ann Wildberger, The Country Day School

Senior School Leaders

"Collaborative Leadership: Making Our Schools Great--- Together!"

King City, ON

Hosts/Committee members:

- Courtenay Shrimpton, St. Andrew's College, Committee Chair
- Laura Brock, Halifax Grammar School
- Kristopher Churchill, Trinity College School
- Jo-Anne Kingstone, Crofton House School
- Denise Lamarche, St. Michaels University School
- Lois McGill, Balmoral Hall School
- Brian Murray, Rothesay Netherwood School

Accreditation

After a three year process including research and extensive consultation with members and experts, we are excited to announce that the CAIS Board approved our new Accreditation Guidelines. While there are countless changes in all 12 National Standards, I would like to provide you with an overview of the major changes to both the process and the content.

Major changes to process:

- i. **Surveying.** At least every 3-4 years, CAIS schools will be required to conduct surveys of students, staff, parents, alum and/or the broader community.
- ii. **Guiding Questions.** The guiding questions have been rewritten so that each one of them will require deep reflection; the number of questions has been significantly reduced from over 300 to approximately 100.
- iii. **Evidence.** The required documentation list will be enhanced so that schools must provide more evidence.
- iv. **Context.** The Head and Chair will be required to submit a high-level narrative school profile to set the context for the Visiting Committee and the CAIS Board.

Major changes to content:

- i. **Evidence of strategy.** The new requirement is that a school must have an articulated strategy even when the school is between Strategic Plans, in the form of an Implementation Plan. Standards One, Four and Eight have been rewritten to clarify expectations, including aspects of Strategic Plans, roles and reporting between the leadership teams and Board. Ideally, schools can use our process as part of a fully integrated strategic planning process. Finally, a strategy is required in every area of program and operation.
- ii. **Permanence and Strength Focus.** The new document shines a spotlight on revenue and retention, and asks schools to reflect on unique value proposition and efficiencies.
- iii. **Student Focus.** This document is more intentional about including the student experience; for example, questions have been added to ask about student success and responsible risk-taking.
- iv. **Clearer Definitions.** Diversity is more clearly defined and schools are expected to be proactive in promoting diversity, including meeting a variety of student needs ranging from psycho-social, sexual orientation, and learning differences. Online learning is also defined and a new Indicator requires all students to experience blended learning.

I am currently completing some small revisions and expect that the CAIS Board will sign off on the final draft at their May meeting. Upon approval of these revisions, we will be looking for schools to pilot the new Accreditation Guidelines in the coming year. Please note that schools will have the option to choose between the old and the new versions for another year.

In the meantime, the draft version of the Guidelines are available to preview, and the summary of the Standards and Indicators (our “cheat sheet”) is available [here](#). Please contact me, if you would like to receive a PDF copy. Keep in mind that we always welcome – and encourage! – feedback.

[Val Pighin](#)

Accreditation Coordinator



Branksome Hall Visiting Committee

CAIS Fact

In the past four months, our Executive Director has presented to the Boards of 12 schools in four provinces.

Contact [Lynne Turnbull](#) to arrange for Anne-Marie to speak to your Board or Leadership Team.

The 2051 Project

We are only 10 weeks away from the start of The 2051 Project – The Future of Education Incubator.

Our Facilitators, Justin Medved and Garth Nichols and our team of Advisors are working diligently on creating a program that will foster learning, ignite conversation, explore current trends, and design strategies to grapple with the dual challenge of designing innovative academic programs while managing cost per student.

Thank you to our team of Advisors for volunteering their time in guiding this project:

- Jeff Chisholm, former Board Chair of St. Andrew's College,
- David Hadden, retired Head of School of Lakefield College School
- Patricia McDermott, former Board Chair of Halifax Grammar School and CAIS Board Member
- Jennifer Riel, Associate Director of the Desautels Centre for Integrative Thinking at Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto
- Meena Roberts, Board Chair of Ashbury College
- Dan Sheehan, Vice Board Chair of St. Michaels University School

We continue to be overwhelmed with interest from international schools and industry leaders wanting to know more and get involved with the project, confirmation that we have found a sweet spot and are doing something that has yet to be done.

Demand for this project continues to grow, and at the February Advisory Board meeting, the Advisors agreed to increase the number of participants from 36 to 42. This expansion will allow for 42 CAIS schools to be represented at this summer's incubator.

Our team has researched over 50 schools from around the world that are meeting the dual challenge and have selected 25 schools that will drive our participants' pre-work as they deep dive into how these schools are defining the future of education. Check out our [2051 Resource Page](#) for new and relevant articles, books, and videos that are driving our thinking and planning.

Stay tuned for more updates on The 2051 Project and be advised that the complete 2051 Report, including our 2051 student focus groups, will be presented at the October Heads and Chairs Conference, as well as at the April National Conference.

[Fiona Parke](#)

Research and Communications Coordinator

National Research Fund

The National Research Advisory Committee, is a new committee, with the mandate to advise on national research projects to ensure timeliness, efficiency and value to members. We are currently conducting the following studies:

Homestay in CAIS schools

What are the numbers? What is working? And are there any collaborative opportunities?

Online and Blended Learning

1. CAIS - How are our schools using technology to accelerate learning and create powerful and deep learning experiences?
2. University Landscape - What are universities doing and thinking that our K-12 schools should consider in the development of strategy?

Leadership Structures

At the request of many Chairs and Heads, we will conduct research on new structures, roles and responsibilities. Thank you to Susan Wright for leading this initiative, to begin next month.

Risk Management

We are reviewing our athletic and student activities, with an emphasis on billeting and insurance practices.

Thank you to our Committee members for their ongoing work, advising and driving national research projects:

- Marc Ayotte, Hillfield Strathallan College, Committee Chair
- Tam Matthews, West Point Grey Academy
- Margaret Dorrance, Calgary French and International School
- Maureen Baron, JPPS Bialik
- Michel Lafrance, West Island College
- Leanne Foster, St. Clement's School
- Rebecca Powell, St. John's-Ravenscourt School

A Little Bird Told Me...



Tweet to let us know what exciting events are happening at your school, and we will retweet. Together, we will share your excellence.

#ExcellenceInLearning #2051Project #CAIS

CAIS Online PD

This year CAIS set out with a goal to better align our Webinar series and National Engagement Forums with our membership needs and requests, as well as our accreditation process.

Since launching in September 2014, our online offerings have quickly become a convenient way for members across the country to participate in relevant and accessible professional development. With over 75% of all member schools having participated in the first half of our series, we have already managed to surpass the total registration for online PD in 2013.

Based on our 12 National Standards and largely led by volunteer leaders within our schools, this year's series offers a look at best practices in key areas affecting our schools today. Upon completion, each webinar recording can be found in CAIS Connect, along with a strategic document selected or developed by our facilitators.

Upcoming Webinars:

["Strategic Planning for Alumni Relations/Development"](#)

April 27, 2015 at 12:00pm ET

Led by: John Lynch, Executive Director of External Relations at Crescent School, Kathryn Rutherford, Alumni Relations Officer at Crescent School & Jill Cannon, Director of Advancement at Crescent School

["Human Resource Strategy"](#)

May 1, 2015 at 12:00pm ET

Led by: Val Cambre, Director of Human Resources at Appleby College

["Retention and Re-recruitment Strategies"](#)

May 6, 2015 at 12:00pm ET

Led by: Ed Kidd, Head of Ridley College & Julie Cameron, Director of Admissions at Ridley College

["Strategic Communication Planning"](#)

May 14, 2015 at 12:00pm ET

Led by: Dawn Levy, Director of Communications at Lower Canada College

["Co-curricular/Student Life Strategic Plan"](#)

May 27, 2015 at 12:00pm ET

Led by: Dave Fitzpatrick, Dean of Students, Senior School at Royal St. George's College

["Strategic Enrolment Management"](#)

May 29, 2015 at 12:00pm ET

Led by: Maggie Houston-White, Director of Admission at Havergal College

Don't see the topic you were looking for? Click [here](#) to view all recordings, available on demand!

CAIS would like to extend a sincere thank you to all of our facilitators who have taken the time to showcase their school and strategic vision.

If you are interested in leading a webinar or have a topic you'd like to see in the future, please email me.

I look forward to virtually meeting you all very soon!

[Jeremy Barr](#)

Events Coordinator



Collaborative Boarding Project

With our boarding numbers collectively up by 4.5% in the 2014/15 year we continue to push forward undertaking new initiatives to help our schools further attract mission appropriate students. Thanks to the guidance and support of our CBP Steering Committee and with our passionate leader, David Robertson, at the helm, the CBP is focusing on the development of a new strategic plan to be implemented in October 2015.

To further solidify the CAIS Boarding Schools brand, we are currently undertaking the following domestic initiatives:

The CAIS Road Trip – Martin Laws has visited seven of our schools, collecting valuable photos and video footage of our schools to use for content on our Social Media and on future PR and Marketing Campaigns. Come along for the ride by following us on Twitter [@caisboarding](#) and Facebook.

DM2, an Analytics and Marketing Communications Company, has collected domestic boarding student data trends from our schools. Over the next few weeks they will be analyzing the data and preparing a report for the CBP community to help our schools better understand the existing and prospective Domestic Boarding Student market to effectively execute mass and direct marketing programs to attract, acquire, retain and grow our domestic market

Website refresh is underway. Stay tuned for our new [boardingschools.ca](#) website with a fresh look and additional content for families interested in finding out more about boarding in Canada. This summer we look forward to the translation of our website into Japanese, Russian and Arabic to support inquiring international families

Last week the CBP Recruitment and Marketing Committees met to discuss our priorities for the 2015/16 year. We are diligently working on our recruitment and marketing plans that will support the interests of all schools. Stay tuned for a letter from David Robertson next week to announce the results of our government grant application for international marketing funding.

Recruitment: We are looking forward to supporting our schools in the following ways this upcoming year:

- One CAIS facilitated FAM Tour
- Representation at four international agent conferences
- Representation at four Edu-Canada events in different markets
- Three CAIS run fairs
- Partner events with associations and boarding school recruitment companies

Marketing: We will:

- Continue to prioritize online presence through SEM/SEO and social media campaigns
- Investigate partnerships with associations (TABS) and Public Relations firms in order to focus on the correct messaging of boarding schools to change the current perception

The CBP continues to focus on doing together what each school cannot do alone. In my first six months on the job, I have been encouraged and driven by the constant support from our community.

[Janice Greenshields](#)

Director of Outreach, CAIS Boarding Schools

Student Events

Senior Student Leadership Conference

At the end of the month Miss Edgar's and Miss Cramp's School (ECS) in Westmount, QC will be hosting the CAIS Senior Student Leadership conference. This national student-led conference will focus on the theme of Find Your Place in the Crowd: Explore, Climb, Succeed.

Thank you to faculty advisors: Sarah Neeff and Angela Kelley and student leadership directors: Erica Assayag, Annissa Di Marino, Jiasi Liu and Elizabeth Rohlicek for all their hard work in bringing this program together for CAIS students.

Middle School Student Camp

Martin Laws, newly appointed CAIS Student Coordinator, is in the process of organizing the planning committee for the 2015 Middle School Student Camp. Please mark your calendars for September 29 – October 2 at Camp Onondaga and watch for additional updates on the CAIS website.

If you're interested in joining the planning committee, please email [Martin Laws](#).

CAIS Fact

26 schools have participated in Student Focus Groups for The 2051 Project, with Ontario and Quebec tied for the most. Thank you to all schools that have participated and we look forward to sharing our 2051 Student Focus Group video with you soon!