

**Great schools make great choices.**

At the Heads conference held at Trinity College School in 1971, the guest speaker at the dinner was the celebrated Canadian author Robertson Davies. His eloquent address on the strengths of independent schools included a sentence that would become the title of a book about the history of our independent schools in Canada and the theme of our upcoming Heads and Chairs conference:

“Your first great strength is your strength of choice.”

This statement is more relevant than ever. We have been talking for years about the challenges facing independent education, and as a reminder, our three greatest challenges as identified by members are the following: financial sustainability, marketing and fundraising. I won't even bother to list the other trends here (but you can watch our upcoming CAIS National Trends webinar!), but I hear school Boards and leadership teams grappling with big choices – Do we build a senior school? Do we shift away from IB? Do we start a homestay program? Do we require online learning options? Do we hire another development professional?

What I hear from Boards and leadership teams is that the new normal includes an ever-growing number of opportunities, many of which are worth pursuing. The challenge, therefore, is increasingly becoming the choice between good and good.

What we know for sure is this: there is a need for our schools to make choices and develop strategy in all areas of program and operation in order to remain permanent and strong.

In *Playing to Win, How Strategy Really Works*, Roger Martin defines strategy this way: “Strategy therefore requires making explicit choices – to do some things and not others – and building a business around those choices. In short, strategy is choice. More specifically, strategy is an integrated set of choices that uniquely positions the firm in its industry so as to create sustainable advantage and superior value relative to the competition.”

CAIS is striving to support schools' focus on strategy in three ways:

1. The members of the Heads and Chairs Planning Committee chose to make strategic choices their theme when they planned the program for later this month. They wanted to learn from experts outside of our industry about how they approached strategy, and they wanted to bring a deeper understanding of some of the many choices facing our schools.

2. The Standards Council reviewed the current *Accreditation Guidelines* and gave direction to changes that include a real emphasis on strategy. The process to update our *Guidelines* will be highly collaborative; new *Guidelines* may require schools not only to have a more comprehensive Strategic Plan, but to articulate strategy in all key areas, along with evidence that it was informed by research and school data.

3. Meanwhile, our CAIS team has also been focused on strategy. We are launching a new online series this year that asks leaders in our schools to share their strategy documents in CAIS Connect and also create webinars that explain the strategy and outline the choices made in the development process. Our schools need to understand what strategy really is and learn to make truly hard choices.

I have often remarked that great schools have great boards and that great schools have great teachers. But I have a new mantra this year: Great schools make great choices.

All the best for a great year,  
[Anne-Marie Kee](#)  
Executive Director

### Annual Heads and Chairs conference

This year's annual conference will focus on the theme of "Strength of Choice" and key areas related to strategy, online/blended learning, mental health and wellness and alumni tracking. The Planning Committee, under Bill Boyer's leadership, has developed a solid program that will allow time for both collaborative learning with colleagues but also your leadership teams, should you take advantage of the opportunity (for this year only) to include an additional leader from your school.

#### Key dates:

- October 22* - dinner for new Heads and new Board Chairs
- October 23* - workshop for new Heads and new Board Chairs
- October 23 - 25* - full conference (kick off begins at 6pm. Conference concludes at 5pm on Saturday)
- October 25* - dinner for Collaborative Boarding Schools
- October 26* - Collaborative Boarding Schools Summit

For all conference details and to view the latest conference program, please click [here](#).

We look forward to welcoming you to the beautiful Muskoka region this fall.

CAIS would like to thank the following Planning Committee members:

- William Boyer**, Head of School  
[Neuchatel Junior College](#), Committee Chair
- Stuart Grainger**, Head of School  
[Trinity College School](#)
- Geordie Hendrie**, Board Chair  
[Ridley College](#)
- Lance Postma**, Head of School  
[Rosseau Lake College](#)
- Claire Sumerlus**, Head of School  
[Robbins Hebrew Academy](#)
- Sarah Parsons**, Program Coordinator,  
[The Sterling Hall 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 #CAIS

### Summer Leadership Institute

From July 2 - 6, 2015, LI participants will be welcomed to the beautiful [St. Margaret's School](#) campus in Victoria, BC. We are fortunate that Cathy Thornicroft and her staff have agreed to be our hosts of the 2015 Summer LI.

We thank all those that provided feedback and suggestions for the summer module line-up. The module line-up will be announced shortly.

### Fall Leadership Institute

Bill Jones, Head of School at [Strathcona-Tweedsmuir School](#) in Okotoks, AB has graciously offered to host the Fall LI. Please mark your agendas with the following details:

November 7 - 9, 2014

"[Risk Management](#)" facilitated by Scott McLarty

Additional updates and to register, click [here](#).

Enjoy a great year of learning!

[Sheri Little](#)

PD Coordinator

### CAIS Online PD

#### National Engagement Forums

With the outstanding success of last year's Forums, CAIS is excited to work on another great line up of topics and industry leaders. Check out this year's line-up [here](#).

#### National Webinar Series on Strategy

This year, CAIS is rolling out its greatest webinar series yet. Hosting 12 webinars that will walk through strategy documents aligned with our National Standards. CAIS aims to provide a free accessible way to promote professional development within our schools that is strategically focused on strategy. Webinar topics and registration will be posted [here](#).

Contact me if you have any ideas for more ways I can create valuable online learning for members!

[Jeremy Barr](#)

Conference/Event Coordinator

## CAIS Senior School Leaders

*Submitted by Courtenay Shrimpton, Committee Chair*

Over the past six months a group of Senior School leaders have come together to re-energize what was once the Assistant Heads' conference into its current form. Our objectives were to create a conference that focused on how Senior Schools in CAIS schools actually, or should optimally operate, and that is through a collaborative leadership model. We are hopeful that all school leaders involved in the operation of Senior Schools across the country will join us and share in "Collaborative Leadership: Making Our Schools Great Together". We invite teams from each school to join us at the beautiful [Kingbridge Centre](#) for four days of intellectual discovery, professional sharing, strategic planning and collaborative growth.

Our conference schedule has a combination of outstanding world-class speakers, school visits, participant presentations, a little comedy and a little yoga. What more could you want in a conference? The dates for the conference are November 19 - 22, in the hopes that the conference will be a stimulus to your collective work this year.

Registration is already underway. To register click [here](#). Conference updates will be posted [here](#).

## Senior Student Leadership

The Senior Student Leadership conference is headed east in 2015 and will be hosted by the students at [Miss Edgar's & Miss Cramp's School](#). Please make sure to save April 29 - May 3 in your agendas as you won't want to miss the Find Your Place in the Crowd; Explore, Climb, Succeed conference. Additional details will be posted on the conference [webpage](#) soon.

## Junior and Middle School Leaders

Co-hosts [Holy Trinity School](#) and [The Country Day School](#) welcome Junior and Middle School Leaders from across Canada to attend their conference being held in King City, ON from April 15-18, 2015. The theme of this year's conference is Celebrating Success and the committee has secured Dr. Robert Brooks as the featured keynote speaker. Mark your calendars with the above dates and be sure to check out the conference [webpage](#) for regular updates.

## Advancement Professionals

*Submitted by James McMillan, Committee Chair*

CAISAP 2015 National Conference – "THE BEST OF CAIS"

On the homepage of the CAIS website are the words "EXPECT THE BEST". At CAISAP 2015, we will be featuring "THE BEST OF CAIS" by showcasing the best advancement programs in Canada. CAIS Advancement Professionals will be holding their biennial National Conference in Montreal, Quebec, from January 29 - 31, 2015, at Place d'Armes Hotel in Old Montreal. Every CAIS school is invited to participate in this conference, whether it is by presenting an advancement program that has been successful at your school or by attending and learning about all the great advancement programs that are currently running in CAIS schools. Virtually every advancement topic will be addressed and there will be many opportunities during breaks, meals and the hospitality suite at the end of the day for attendees and sponsors to answer your questions.

The format of this conference will be based on panel presentations where there will be three presenters and each will give a 12-minute presentation on their topic. Attendees will have the opportunity to pose questions to all presenters. The presenters will be predominately Advancement Professionals from CAIS schools. We encourage Heads of School and/or key volunteers to attend or co-present. Everyone is welcome.

Registration will be open shortly and you will receive an email from CAIS with the link to the registration page. For more information, contact James McMillan, Director of Advancement, [Selwyn House School](#) at 514-909-7125 or email at [mcmillan@selwyn.ca](mailto:mcmillan@selwyn.ca).

## Business Professionals

This spring the Business Professionals conference will be held in Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON at the beautiful Queen's Landing Hotel. Please save the following dates: May 3 – 6 and if you are a Business Professional from a boarding school we ask that you hold May 6-7 for an extended program to address a number of "boarding specific" topics.

Additional conference details will be posted soon on the conference [webpage](#).

## Program Update

### CAIServices

CAIS is excited to announce the addition of four new Advisors to the CAIServices team:

[Liz Falco](#)  
[Michaele Robertson](#)  
[Andrew Whiteley](#)  
[Annette Whiteley](#)

This group of experienced leaders and well-known names within the CAIS community join our existing [CAIServices team](#) of six retired Heads, combining 300 years of educational experience.

Since the program's launch in 2013, CAIServices Advisors have worked closely with respective school officials to plan and develop a customized presentation or study using current research and the school's own data to meet the school's objectives.

CAIServices Advisors have a depth of experience and remain current with the latest research in the field. To find out more about how your school can benefit from CAIServices, contact me directly.

### National Research Fund

As a benefit of membership CAIS is committed to providing members with access to contemporary research into issues of concern and relevance to members, the results of which would help members to do a better job educating our students and ensuring the long term viability of Canadian independent schools.

The NRF Advisory Committee will be accepting applications for proposed research projects that will have short and long term relevance and a lasting impact on CAIS schools.

Mark your calendars! Call for proposals will take place in the new year. For more information please contact me.

Cheers,  
[Fiona Parke](#)  
Research and Communications Coordinator

### The Collaborative Boarding Project

The Collaborative Boarding Project has made some great gains as it has maintained its momentum during this time of transition.

As the recruitment season has already begun (and is forever ongoing!) I am excited to represent CAIS Boarding Schools as we further investigate emerging markets in Japan, UAE and Nigeria.

We have further solidified our brand recognition with the launch of our new International Student [video](#) as well as the School Directory, which will be used in CAIS supported marketing events.

Another well-organized FAM Tour is currently underway, with carefully selected agents visiting 15 of our schools across Canada, showcasing how our schools are first class destinations for international students. Thank you to those schools that have already been [gracious hosts](#) and thank you in advance to the schools next on the tour!

I look forward to connecting with members of our schools' Admissions teams as I hit the road for my first fair. I also look forward to meeting the Boarding School Heads and Chairs at the upcoming [Boarding Summit](#). I will be presenting the 2014 Enrollment Data insights with everyone there and sharing it broadly afterwards.

Warm regards,  
[Janice Greenshields](#)  
Boarding Coordinator

### Welcome to the new CAIS Heads

Our CAIS team extends a warm welcome to our new CAIS Heads! Meet them here:

[Chantal Gionet](#) – York House School (BC)  
[Helen-Kay Davy](#) – Havergal College (ON)  
[Jason Rogers](#) – Rundle College (AB)  
[Jeff Aitkens](#) – St. John's Kilmarnock (ON)  
[Jim Keefe](#) – St. John's Ravenscourt School (MB)  
[Michael Fellin](#) – Crescent School (ON)  
[Mirna Hafez](#) – TFS – Canada's International School (ON)  
[Sharon Klein](#) – St. George's School of Montreal (QC)  
[Steven Erdlyi](#) – Solomon Schechter Academy (QC)  
[Sydney Benudiz](#) – École Maïmonide (QC)  
[Wayne Schneider](#) – Calgary Jewish Academy (AB)

## Accreditation

In my first few months as the CAIS Accreditation Coordinator, I have been connecting with people involved in all aspects of the accreditation review process. I have been so fortunate to work with Heads, Internal Evaluation Coordinators, and Executive Assistants who are engaged and enthusiastic about their school's review, and Visiting Committee members who very generously donate their time and are passionate about contributing to the greater Independent School community. Thanks to all of you for your continued support of this national, whole school improvement process.

I have three requests for you:

### 1. Visiting Committees

We are always looking for the best of the best in CAIS Schools to participate on our Visiting Committees.

What do we mean by "the best"? We need experts in their fields who also understand our focus on whole school improvement. We need leaders who have experience with change management, working collaboratively, and writing effectively. The ideal candidate thinks big picture, meets deadlines, and asks great questions.

If you would like to participate in a CAIS Visiting Committee, with the support of your Head, please complete the [online application](#) to be added to our database. Once you are added, we can begin our search to match your expertise and experience to a CAIS Visiting Committee.

### 2. Online Training

Training our Visiting Committees continues to be a priority. To date, more than 200 leaders have taken our Accreditation Module at our [Leadership Institute](#) and our long-term goal is that all VC members will have this extensive training. In the short-term, we have new webinars on National Trends and Accreditation, and we are building a bank of online training programs.

Check out our member portal, [CAIS Connect](#), for our webinars and [Visiting Committee Training and Resources](#) page for additional resources.

### 3. Accreditation Guidelines Update

On July 8th, the CAIS Standards Council met face-to-face at [Pickering College](#) to review the process to develop the next version of our *Accreditation Guidelines*. We reconfirmed our goal - to maintain the rigour and focus on improvement, while creating some real efficiencies in our internal evaluation process and enhancing our training as well.

The full process for this tune-up will be outlined at our [Heads and Chairs conference](#), but I wanted you to know that continually updating our Standards and procedures is a priority. If you would like to contribute to this process, please contact me.

Wishing you continued success,  
[Val Pighin](#)  
Accreditation Coordinator

## The Middle School Leadership conference

With amazing weather and a gorgeous Ontario fall setting, Onondaga Camp was the perfect place to foster new friendships, get rid of inhibitions and create new tangible leadership skills for our 111 students representing 20 CAIS schools. Our young leaders, who were guided and supported by their advisors, left the conference with action plans to implement in their schools. We hope your communities have noticed their enthusiasm and leadership abilities.

Thanks to the Program Committee:

Janice Ewanyshyn, [Miss Edgar's and Miss Cramp's School](#)  
Julie Clement, [Selwyn House School](#)  
Mark Burleigh, [The Country Day School](#)  
Tizianna Patella, [St. John's-Ravensourt School](#)

