

QUESTIONS to ask yourself before agreeing to serve on the board

1. What will be expected of me?
2. Can I make time for meetings, retreats, homework?
3. What qualifies me to serve on this board?
4. How long a commitment can I make?
5. Do I really believe in the school?
6. Am I truly supportive of the administrative team and staff?
7. Is my spouse supportive of my decision?
8. Is there any reason I should not serve?
9. Do I sense God leading me in this decision?

- adapted from Biehl, Engstrom, *The Effective Board Member*



The “One Voice” of the Board of Trustees

Henry Contant

School board members are often referred to as **school trustees**. Rightfully so, as collectively the role of the school board is to be ‘trustee’ of the vision and direction of the school.

An effective board is one that does not allow individual member ‘agendas’ to drive the business and decision making of the board. Instead, board leadership requires that the school board provide overall vision and direction for the school and establish sound policies to govern the school according to its mission.

Periodic review of these policies to ensure that they still provide effective guidance remains prudent, given the rapidly changing nature and realities of our Christian school communities.

Keenen, in his book *Christian School Board Governance* (2007) sums it up well when he states “The role of the board of Trustees is best understood when each trustee realizes that the board must speak with “one voice”. He goes on to say that this means

that school board members or trustees have the authority to speak in a governance capacity only when attending an official board meeting. Individually each ‘trustee’ brings much to the table: experiences, leadership abilities, and expertise in a given area are valuable assets. But these contributions must be exercised as part of the whole. When a board speaks, it must speak with one voice rather than with a variety of voices from individual members.

In the spirit of one voice, the trustees cultivate an atmosphere in which dissent can be expressed. The board meetings are also characterized by the pursuit of consensus and agreement. In addition, the essence of the board meetings is harmony, and peace is normative.



The voice of Discussion and Dissent

Does “one voice” mean that there must be an absence of differing opinions or individual preferences? Absolutely not! Debate and discussion are vital to the life of every organization, and Christian schools are no exception. Input is important, but the board must come to consen-

(continued on page 2)

“ Consensus is the ‘one voice’ that establishes policy to guide the school. Consensus is the one voice communicated . . . to the various constituent groups within the school. ”

sus on every issue. Dissenting opinions must be surfaced in board meetings in an atmosphere where they are valued. But dissenting opinions must not become dissension. Good trustees speak their piece and engage the debate but have the maturity and leadership discipline to yield to the counsel of the group.



The voice of Consensus

Consensus means that the discussion has reached the point where all trustees feel comfortable calling for the vote. This occurs because all have had a fair chance to voice their positions on the matter. Consensus is the “one voice” that establishes policy to guide the school. Consensus is the one voice communicated by the principal and/or board chair to the various constituent groups within the school.

Does this mean that there must be 100 percent agreement on every issue? Once again, the answer is no! It means that each trustee has spoken, been heard, and participated in the vote and then has entrusted the results to the corporate body. At this point there is no place for dissent or petty sniping.

The voice of Unity

For most decisions, strong boards of trustees are likely to reach 100 percent unity. However, there will be difficult issues that put good people on different sides, issues on which it is impossible to come to total agreement. Strong debate and much prayer must be devoted to these mat-

ters. Occasionally it is wise to postpone a final decision to allow everyone time to pray and seek wisdom from the Spirit of God. Sometimes there will be time spent in prayer together just before the decision is made. Even if individual board members struggle to accept a final decision, a board that understands the one-voice concept will know that if the outcome must be communicated to others, the communication must be with a peaceful voice of unity.

- Based on Keenen, pp. 29-30



As school boards carry on their governance task in leading their Christian schools through another school year, I pray their actions and decisions will provide the needed visionary leadership that advances, not hinders the cause of Christian education in their respective communities.

References

Keenen, Derek, J. (2007). *Christian School Board Governance: A Framework for Effectiveness*. Colorado Springs: ACSI Purposeful Design.

Henry Contant (contant@twu.ca) served Christian schools for 30 years as a teacher, principal, and development director before assuming his role as Executive Director of the SCSBC. He has a B.A. in Secondary Education from (Dordt College, Iowa) and a M. Ed. (Simon Fraser University, BC) in Administrative Leadership.

FORWARD Together WITH GOD

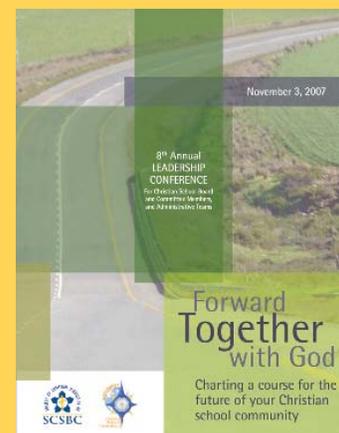
*Charting a course
for the future of
your Christian school
community*

Plan to attend the SCSBC's 8th annual leadership conference for board/committee members and administrative teams:

**November 3, 2007
Langley Christian
Middle/High School**

Featured speakers include James Marsh, Christian Schools International Board Chair, and Dave Koetje, CSI President/CEO. Topics may include: orientation for new board members, curriculum development/instruction, board/administrator relations, finances, development, strategic planning, international education and more.

Watch for the brochure – coming soon to your school!



“Serving All Children Well is a resource to assist Christian educators to help each child explore and discover their gifts . . .”

A New Resource for Educational Support Services (ESS)

Serving All Children Well continues a long-standing tradition in the SCSBC to provide quality Christian education for all children, and to share ideas, practices, and expertise across its member schools and beyond.

SCSBC schools have provided learning assistance and special education for many years. Schools are also giving attention to English language instruction and enrichment. One of the on-going challenges is that inclusion functions at a surface level: students of varied abilities and learning needs are present in the classroom. But, in a number of cases, all students are not integral members of the class.

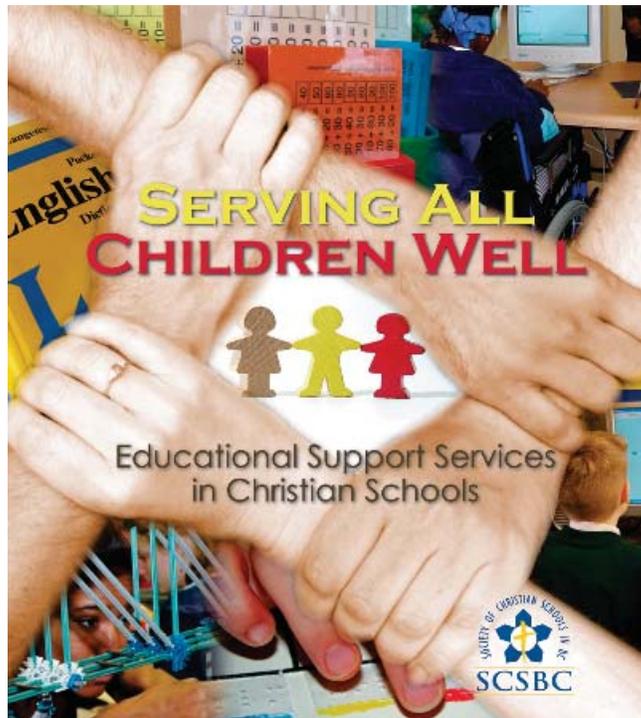
We are moving forward from where we are – namely, having an inclusive attitude and many inclusive practices – to becoming a place of belonging. A place of belonging is based on interdependence. We share a common humanity in the image of God, truly recognizing that

“bearing the image has nothing to do with whether one is able bodied or disabled...it requires a re-envisioning of the classroom.”

“When inclusive education is fully embraced, we abandon the idea that children have to become “normal” in order to contribute to the world. Instead, we search for and nourish the gifts that are inherent in all people. We begin to look beyond typical ways of becoming valued members of the community, and in doing so, begin to realize the achievable goal of providing all children with an authentic sense of belonging.” (N. Kunc, p. 51, in D. W. Anderson, 2006)

Christian schools as inclusive learning communities would become

“...characterized by a recognition that differences in ability are natural, and by an encouragement of the gifts and talents of each individual, including those who have severely disabling conditions or disruptive behaviors.” (p. 52, D. W. Anderson.)



Such an inclusive learning community would also recognize

“that each individual, including those without disabilities, also has areas of weakness and need...Each member of the community is an individual – uniquely designed, gifted, and purposed by God, in whose image they are fashioned, but also possessing areas of

vulnerability and relative deficiency.” (D. W. Anderson, p. 53)

Serving All Children Well is a resource to assist Christian educators to help each child explore and discover their gifts and, subsequently, to help them develop and use those gifts with and for others to God’s glory and the well-being of the community. *Serving All Children Well* is not prescriptive, but is intended to assist administrators and educational support personnel in developing their own school programs so that all children and young people can function as successful learners and contributing members in their school community.

This resource flows from the *Learning Assistance Handbook* (1988, 1990) and the *Learning Assistance and Special Education Resource* (1997). *Serving All Children Well* recognizes and encourages schools to broaden their range of supporting and challenging all students’ learning through differentiation, enrichment, and English language instruction.

A copy of this new handbook will be sent to each SCSBC member school. Support for this resource will be available in the coming months.

References

Anderson, D. W. (2006). “Inclusion and interdependence: students with special needs in the regular classroom.” *Journal of Education and Christian Belief* 10:1 p.43-59.

• *The BC School Sports' Outstanding School Award* is for those special schools whose commitment to improving the lives of their students and staff through athletics, intramurals, leadership and public service, contribute significantly to the welfare of school athletics in their local community and in BC. The award is given to only two schools a year; this year they were **SURREY CHRISTIAN MIDDLE SCHOOL** and **DUNCAN CHRISTIAN SCHOOL**.

Surrey Track & Field Champions Samantha Kennedy (Javelin) and Adam Karrasch (400 m) hold the banner for Surrey's award (photo top left). SCS staff and students are thrilled with this honour, awarded based on criteria such as student/staff involvement in school sports, intramural program, athletic program contribution to school community, fundraising efforts, and activities unique to the school.

Even without a gym of its own, Duncan Christian School (photo centre left) has managed to host four provincial championships at the single-A level, most recently the 2006 girls soccer tournament, as well as many Island championships, using community facilities.

• **WHITE ROCK CHRISTIAN ACADEMY** has a new school crest (photo bottom left), and a fresh, new-look web-site: www.wrca.bc.ca

• **RICHMOND CHRISTIAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL** has set a new record again this year, bringing in over \$41,000 for the *World Vision 30 Hour Famine*. Mr. Dave Toy-

cen, President of World Vision (photo top right), shared an exciting chapel with RCS and thanked them for their involvement in helping others around the world.

- A special welcome to some more administrators in new leadership positions this year:
 - > Steve Onsonge, Elementary Vice-Principal; Rod Augstin, Middle/High School Vice-Principal - **VERNON CHRISTIAN**
 - > Anne Ferguson, System Principal; Anne Langille, Primary Campus Head Teacher; Wendy Pertulla, Middle Campus Head Teacher; Melody Jobse, Director of Development.

- **JOHN KNOX CHRISTIAN**

- > Jeannette Berkenbosch, Elementary Vice-Principal, and Matt Driediger, Middle/High School Vice-Principal - **UNITY CHRISTIAN**

- > Michelle Nederlof, Secondary Vice-Principal - **DUNCAN CHRISTIAN**

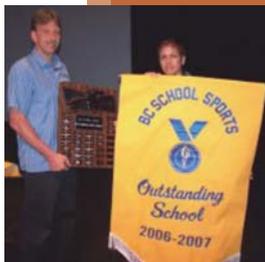
- > Sean Rathburn, Interim Elementary Vice-Principal, and David Bolink, Director of Operations -

PACIFIC CHRISTIAN

- **CARVER CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL** had its historic first graduation at Michael J. Fox Theatre in Burnaby June

28. 20 graduates (photo bottom right) and the Carver community received formal greetings from MLAs Raj Chouhan and

Adrian Dix, the Inspector of Independent Schools, FISA and the SCSBC. Minister of Education Shirley Bond sent a letter of congratulations.



3 Notes

FROM THE INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS E-BOARD:

1 *The Teaching Profession (Teacher Registration) Amendment Act, 2007* came into effect on **July 1, 2007**: www.leg.bc.ca/38th3rd/3rd_read/gov21-3.htm

2 SOPSOC - Group 1 Independent Schools: to validate your school's status, have an auditor complete the *Statement of Per Student Operating Costs Form* and submit it to the Independent School office no later than **October 15, 2007**.

3 The due date for submitting *Fall Special Education Application* forms is **October 12, 2007**. For forms see: www.bced.gov.bc.ca/independentschools/is_forms/spec_ed/se_app_fall.doc

For details, visit the Independent Schools E-board (password required):

www.bced.gov.bc.ca/eboard/ind/welcome.htm

“... development is multi-faceted and therefore requires a well-defined plan to insure that your school is building and maintaining support from a widely based community.”



Plan Your Work and Work Your Plan

Gerald Ebbers

A lot of planning done in the past few months is now being worked into the new school year. The budget planned by the Finance Committee is now the working budget for the new year. New programs and courses planned by the Education Committee are being taught to students. Units and course outlines planned by teachers are now being used.

But what about the development plan? Does your school have one or are you doing a whole lot of things without being sure that the development needs of your school are being addressed? Development is not just a series of activities and events; it is sharing your vision and mission in compelling ways with diverse constituencies.

Development is the comprehensive word we use to describe all that the school does

- to build community, both externally and internally;
- to market the school and recruit students;
- to raise financial support and secure corporate and estate gifts;
- to prepare for a capital campaign;
- to build bridges with churches and the broad Christian community; and
- to communicate with current parents, alumni, former parents and grandparents.

You can see that development is multi-faceted and therefore requires a well-defined plan to insure that your school is building and maintaining support from a widely based community.

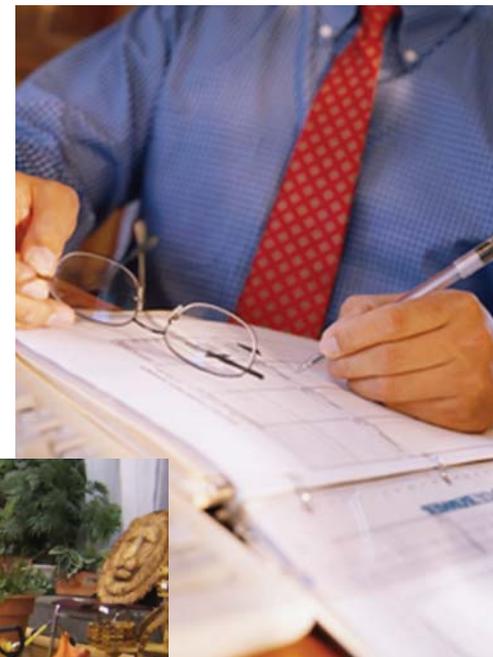
If your school does not have a development director, then the responsibility for designing the annual development plan falls to the marketing, fundraising and community relations committee(s).

A development plan:

- Starts by assessing the needs of the school and establishing the objectives or goals for the year.
- Next determines what programs, activities, events and communications will meet those goals, and what key messages must be repeated.



- Then lists who will be responsible for each part of the plan and what resources will be needed. Resources should include both the finances and the programs (like a database), and the volunteers.
- Finally must have a way of measuring the success of the plan so specific targets are listed which can be used to set new goals for the next year or adjust the plan in order to meet the goals. Targets should be quantifiable: the number of students recruited or the number of churches visited or the amount of money raised.



If your school needs help designing its development plan or analyzing the effectiveness of your current plan, give me a call and we'll get started so that your

school will truly be planning its development work and working its development plan.

Gerald Ebbers (geraldebbers@shaw.ca) is the SCSBC consultant for Community Relations/Marketing/Development. He served 17 years as a high school teacher and principal in the Edmonton, AB and Lynden, WA Christian school systems. His development work includes positions with The King's University College (Alberta), Trinity Western University and Dordt College (Iowa).

SUMMER PRO-D

- 93 people participated in 7 courses through Trinity Western University's annual summer session for teachers: 1 course in Victoria, 1 in Calgary, 1 in Hong Kong, and 4 on TWU's campus. This program offers elementary, middle and high school teachers practical courses for professional development

such as *Developing Educational Programs*, *School Leadership and Supervision*, and *Worldview Foundations of Education*. Most of the courses can be applied towards the Graduate Certificate in Educational Leadership (which ladders into TWU's MA in Leadership - Education stream) or the *Graduate Certificate in Christian Schooling* (which ladders into ACTS Seminars' MA in Christian Studies). This professional development is an integral part of ensuring that Christian teachers are uniquely equipped to integrate faith and learning.

- Mix together school leaders from across North America, church pastors and many others from a wide variety of locations, put them in a beautiful Northern Michigan setting, and the result is good fellowship, energetic idea-sharing, relaxing excursions, and a renewed commitment to disciple youth together. *CSI's Annual Leadership Convention* included a roundtable discussion of the proposed "Covenetwork Manifesto", major addresses by Walt Mueller and Neal Plantinga, and a number of relevant and informative breakout sectionals. For highlights: www.csionline.org/index.php/events/conventions

CALLED TO SERVE – PREPARED TO LEAD

15 new and beginning principals/vice-principals from 9 schools converged on Trinity Western University at the end of June for 3 days of intensive orientation to Christian school administration.

These sessions, attended by administrators from member and non-member schools, was led by SCSBC Executive Director Henry Contant.

Session topics included: visionary leadership, professional development, and accessing resources.



ELDI PACIFIC

This year, for the first time, current classroom teachers had a second, west coast opportunity to attend *CSI's Educators Leadership Development Institute*, held at Cedar Springs Christian Retreat Center in Sumas, WA. The week-long retreat afforded participants the chance to learn from practicing administrators and explore their interests, abilities, and gifts in administration through the use of assessment exercises.



Topics included: biblical vision of leadership, curriculum design, board-administrator relationships, and much more.

19 teachers attended from schools in BC, Alberta, Washington, Alabama, and Mexico.

DID YOU KNOW THAT FISA schools

... account for **92%** of independent school enrollment and **78%** of independent schools? (the members founding FISA in 1966 are members to this day)

... educate **10.6%** of all students enrolled in BC elementary and secondary schools, but receive only **4.4%** of grants the provincial budget allocates toward operating costs?

... have a great resource in the FISA website? There is a directory of member schools, FAQ for parents, and an online *Resource Library* including current and historical *Statistics*, *Ministry of Education* contacts, the 1988 *Royal Commission*, *Policy Aids*, *The Law*, a list of *Further Readings*, and links to related organizations.

For more, visit the FISA website:
www.fisabc.ca

“Increasing diversity also brings change and with that change it becomes necessary for Christian school leaders to evaluate the services that are being provided for students who are coming from overseas.”



Learning to Appreciate Diversity

Marlene Bylenga

Many of our schools' mission and vision statements express, in differing ways, the concept of equipping our children to become discerning disciples of Jesus in an ever changing world. One way in which our schools have changed in the past years is the variety of cultural backgrounds reflected in our student bodies.

These are exciting times where the classroom has now become a place where students are able to hear and learn from the experiences, values and norms of cultures very different than their own. The opportunity to hear and learn from the different expressions of the Christian faith enables both students and teachers to appreciate the diversity with which God has created us.

Increasing diversity also brings change and with that change it becomes necessary for Christian school leaders to evaluate the services that are being provided for students who are coming from overseas. These students may not only be making adjustments to a differing school system but often are faced with the challenge of learning English and working through the issues of living in culture that may be different from their own.

As your schools face these changes are you developing policies and programs that will address the needs of these new members of your community? Are there supports in place to enable these students to be successful in their new environment? Does your school have an English Language Learning Program?

It is no longer safe to assume that every student in your classroom understands the Western perspective and worldview. We should be challenging ourselves to look at our curriculum through the differing eyes of our students and make the necessary changes so that the students are able to share their perspectives

and experiences. Are your teachers aware of the differing cultural values and norms of the cultures represented in your school? Are we enabling our students to develop the skills to become discerning disciples of Jesus and to challenging them to search out God's will for all of His children?

As you begin your new school year, please take some time to evaluate the services provided for your international and newly landed immigrant students.

- Do you have a quality ELL program?
- Are your classroom teachers aware of the differing cultural norms in their classrooms?
- Are you providing a quality homestay program for students who are studying here from abroad?
- Are you ensuring that these students have appropriate medical coverage and that all their documentation is up to date?

The SCSBC is committed to providing support for schools in the area of International Education and also facilitating opportunities for coordinators, ELL teachers and administrators to learn from each other. In February of 2008, SCSBC will be hosting a conference in Victoria



for coordinators, ELL Instructors, and administrators in the whole area of International Education. There are also quarterly networking meetings for coordinators and administrators, these are invaluable times of sharing and learning from each other. Please check the SCSBC calendar for the dates.

As International Student Program Coordinator I am available to answer your questions and to assist you in the area of International Education. Please feel free to call me or send me an e-mail to discuss the ways I can be of assistance to your school.

Marlene Bylenga (ieprogram@scsbc.ca) is the SCSBC International Student Program Coordinator. She has been working with international students and their families since 1996 as a homestay parent, International Student Coordinator at Langley Christian School and with the SCSBC. Marlene has a Certificate in Intercultural Studies from UBC.

“Seeking to do collectively what no school could or should do individually” served as our focus as we worked towards addressing the current and future needs of our member schools.”

Implementing the Mission: Moving forward in Community and Vision

Three new members join the SCSBC staff team this school year as the SCSBC Board moves forward with the implementation of our strategic plan.

The appointments of **Joanne den Boer** – Director of Curriculum & Instruction (Pre-K –Grade 5), **Bill de Jager** – Director of Curriculum & Instruction (Grades 6-12) and **John Vegt** - Director of Finance, enable the SCSBC to continue providing existing services and programs and to launch several new initiatives. “Seeking to do collectively what no school could or should do individually” served as our focus as we worked towards addressing the current and future needs of our member schools.

Joanne den Boer and Bill de Jager have already begun their work. They are not simply filling a vacancy precipitated by the retirement of Robert Koole, our previous Director of Curriculum, but are moving forward to meet curricular needs identified by our member schools during the strategic planning process. The SCSBC will now be able to give more attention to: addressing Early Childhood/Pre-school and Elementary curricular issues; implementing student support services (K-12) in Learning Assistance, Special Education, English Language Learning (ELL), and Enrichment; and providing a focus beyond curriculum to include instruction.

John Vegt will be joining the SCSBC staff team in a part-time contract position as Director of Finance commencing in November 2007. This appointment advances the implementation of another of the SCSBC’s strategic plan goals—to better serve the business and financial management needs of our member schools. As Director of Finance, John is positioned to provide more intentional support and advice to school business administrators, bookkeepers, Finance Committees, treasurers and auditors in the areas of school finances, accounting, budgeting, charitable tax receipting, tuition-assistance, endowments, and foundations. Specific areas of responsibility within the SCSBC will include:

- Monitoring/implementing the application of the *SCSBC Framework for the Issuance of Charitable Tax Receipts*
- Visiting/advising SCSBC member schools on financial management issues, working with school-based business administrators, Finance Committees and school treasurers
- Facilitating professional development activities for school business administrators through the SCSBC Business Administrators Forum
- Coordinating school financial stewardship reviews
- Developing a framework for Christian school finances/budgeting
- Providing consultation in the establishment of local Christian school endowment programs/foundations
- Advising the SCSBC Stewardship Committee;
- Representing SCSBC financial interests at provincial, national, and international venues (e.g. Federation of Independent School Associations [FISA], Christian Schools Canada [CSC], Christian Schools International [CSI]).

These three appointments free up some time for our Executive Director, Henry Contant, to devote towards other priorities identified by member schools, including a more intentional leadership development/support program for administrators and board members. The successful launch of the *Educator Leadership Development Institute* (ELDI-PACIFIC) in July 2007 and our expanded regional leadership conferences are some initial steps to address these priorities.

Please pray for our entire staff team, glean from their collective experience and expertise, and utilize the many SCSBC programs and services designed to support each local Christian school community. Together we can better fulfill our mission of strengthening and promoting Christian education more effectively.

September

- 4 Schools open
- 7 SCSBC Board mtg.
- 14, 15 Okanagan Regional Conf. for boards, cmts., admin. teams - Vernon
- 24 Intl. Coord. Networking mtg.

October

- 3 CPABC Fall Conference - TWU
- 3 SCSBC Compensation Cmte. mtg. - 5:30 pm
- 4, 5 NWCSI - CTABC Teachers Conv. - Lynden, WA.
- 8 Thanksgiving Day

November

- 2 SCSBC In-service for Business Admin.; Charitable Tax Receipting
- 3 Leadership for Christian Schools Conf. - Langley
- 12 Stat. holiday in lieu of Remembrance Day

December

- 10 Intl. Coord. Networking mtg.
- 21 Schools close; Christmas break