

President's Message



Greetings from the Manitoba ASCD leadership team. This month's newsletter follows a well-attended MB ASCD professional learning session facilitated by Damian Cooper.

Damian's session was one of a number of excellent professional learning sessions Manitoba ASCD offered over the past few years on the theme of assessment. We hosted such well-known presenters as Katherine Nunnally, Anne Davies, Ken O'Connor, and Jay McTighe in an effort to deepen our understanding of teaching and learning and demystify the role of assessment. Our choice of assessment as an ongoing theme is in keeping with ASCD International's position that accountability should involve multiple measures that are fair, balanced, and grounded in the art and science of learning and teaching. Manitoba ASCD will continue to stand for best practice in the areas of assessment and learning and will be actively seeking out facilitators who can share their insights on this topic.

In my role as president of Manitoba ASCD I have had the opportunity to connect with many members outside our province. I am amazed at the impact that state mandated "high stakes" testing has had on educators in other parts of North America. It is with a great sense of pride that my MB ASCD colleagues and I share the Manitoba experience with them. It is interesting to hear others refer to Manitoba as a breath of sanity in a world gone high stakes test crazy.

Having recently participated in the Grade 7 & 8 Middle Years Provincial Assessment and knowing

that a provincial election is on the horizon I sense we will hear more on the topic of assessment in the near future. Manitoba ASCD will continue to advocate for best practices in assessment that support the world-wide ASCD position on student assessment.

We hope our members find this newsletter professionally supportive. I'd like to say a special thank you to our contributors and our editors.

Bill Burns

Please join us at the **ASCD Annual General Meeting**

Following the Distinguished Lecture Series with
Ann Lieberman.

Wine and Cheese 4:00 pm
Meeting 4:30 – 5:30 pm
Location: The Sun Centre
(Formerly Blue and Gold Room)

Non-members are also welcome as non-voting participants. Please contact Bill Burns at 489-0799 if you would like to put your name forward to be on the Board of Directors and committees.

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Interactions and Reflections

Your membership with ASCD Manitoba has an impact your ongoing professional learning and has a ripple effect on others as the following email message conveys:

Regarding MB ASCD, please pass on to the Board and the PL Committee that, if they ever wonder if they are having a lasting effect, then they can consider the following:

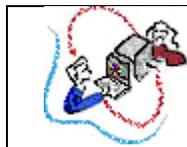
MB ASCD had Kathie Nunley come to Winnipeg in October 2004. In October 2005, the South-Central SSAAM PD Committee brought Kathie to Carman for the 8 south-central divisions.

In September 2006, Portage and Pine Creek School Divisions brought Kathie in to present to all the teachers in both divisions. A month later, Portage brought in Heather Clayton (who is licensed by Kathie to present on Layered Curriculum) to do follow-up sessions with teachers from Portage and Pine Creek who wanted to develop Layered Curriculum units with guidance. Heather returned in February 2006 and again in February 2007.

Heather will return a third time in 2007-08 (exact dates to be determined). Attached is a 2-page document of comments compiled by Heather based on feedback from teachers attending her sessions who have developed units and tried them in their classrooms. As well, the high school principal of our newly amalgamated high school told me that the layered curriculum is one initiative that he has seen that has had an immediate and direct impact on students because it has changed how teachers teach in the classroom.

I believe none of this would have occurred if not for MB ASCD bringing Kathie to Manitoba. Please pass on my appreciation to the Board and the PL Committee. Keep up the excellent work!

John Rennie
Curriculum Coordinator
Portage la Prairie School
Division



**Please send your reflections or comments
to spark interactions for future
newsletters to
Paulette Migie at mbascd@shaw.ca.**

Your Manitoba ASCD Membership

Your Manitoba ASCD Membership supports an exemplary slate of Professional Development opportunities for the Province of Manitoba. As an ASCD affiliate, we are able to attract highly sought after speakers like Thomas Segiovanni, Carl Glickman, Ken O'Connor and Ann Liberman for our distinguished lecturer series. Your membership supports the organizational structure needed for these and other professional development events. You also receive our newsletter and journal as well as a reduced rate for any of the professional development sessions you attend.

We are constantly looking for new benefits for our membership. Currently we are exploring ways of engaging both our rural and urban members in educational discussions through things such as online book clubs or blogs. We welcome your suggestions and feedback.

Lastly, thank you for your continued support in developing a quality professional community for quality education in Manitoba.



MANITOBA ASSOCIATION FOR SUPERVISION AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Teachers as Learners and Leaders



Distinguished Lecturer Series
Friday, May 25, 2007
1:00 to 3:30 PM
The Sun Centre (former Blue and Gold Room)
1465 Maroons Road
Winnipeg

WITH ANN LIEBERMAN

This session is designed for all educators. Given the rapid changes in our world and the constant demands on education, it seems impossible that schools could change without the assistance of teachers who assume leadership. But what are the conditions that help facilitate this leadership and what do we know about how teachers learn to lead? Through several studies and development programs we are learning from teachers how they learn: what organizational networks do to provide a foundation for their learning; and how they share their leadership with other colleagues. Teacher development, leadership and enhanced competence all matter and sew the seeds of real learning communities.

Dr. Ann Lieberman is an emeritus professor from Teachers College, Columbia University. She is now a Senior Scholar at The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and a Visiting Professor at Stanford University. She received her BA and Ed.D at UCLA. She got her Masters Degree at California State University at Northridge, where she also received an honorary degree.

She is widely known for her work in the areas of teacher leadership and development, collaborative research, networks and school-university partnerships, and increasingly, on the problems and prospects for understanding educational change. Her recent books include *Teachers: Transforming Their World and Their Work* and *Teachers Caught in the Action: The Work of Professional Development* with Lynne Miller. She has just completed a book with Diane Wood entitled: *Inside the National Writing Project: Network Learning and Classroom Teaching*, a new synthesis to be published by the Teachers College Press.

Her many books and articles have been used by schools and universities alike. She has helped to bring research to the field and helped to popularize the perspective that learning from the field is another way to build important conceptions and knowledge about teaching and learning.

Manitoba ASCD presents:
ANN LIEBERMAN

Friday, May 25, 2007 <i>Teachers as Learners and Leaders</i>			
Manitoba ASCD member	\$95	Non-Member	\$105
Teacher Candidate	\$30	Retiree	\$50
Distinguished Lecturer Series 1:00 to 3:30 PM			
Please complete the registration form and include a cheque made payable to MANITOBA ASCD. <p style="text-align: center;">Mail to: MANITOBA ASCD 1590 Mathers Bay West Winnipeg, MB R3N 0T7</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Deadline for registration is May 15th, 2007</p>			
NAME			
School:		School Division:	
PHONE:	FAX:	EMAIL:	
I am enclosing \$_____ as a paid up member of Manitoba ASCD. I am enclosing \$_____ as a non-member of Manitoba ASCD. I am enclosing \$_____ as a teacher candidate. I am enclosing \$_____ as a retiree.			
REFUND POLICY If notification of refund request is received more than 2 weeks prior to event – FULL REFUND If notification of refund request is received 7 to 14 days prior to event – RETAIN \$25 If notification of refund request is received less than 1 week prior to event – RETAIN \$50			

ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS CALL Paulette at 488-7271

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Douglas Reeves: Manitoba ASCD Distinguished Lecturer Series, May 15, 2008

Reflections Journal 2006-07: Valuing the Whole Child

When we commit to educating whole children within the context of whole communities and whole schools, we commit to designing learning environments that weave together the threads that connect not only math, science, the arts, and humanities, but the heart, body, and spirit-connections that tend to be fragmented in our current approach. (*The Learning Compact Redefined: A Call to Action*, ASCD, 2007)

Manitoba ASCD believes that “weaving together the threads” is a worthy goal for educators to pursue and so we have chosen “Valuing the Whole Child” as the theme of our next Reflections Journal.

We invite Manitoba educators to share their experiences, research, and opinions on this topic. It is not too late! We have extended the deadline to April 1 for your *Intention to Write* and April 30 for your completed submission, whether it is an article, letter to the editor, book review, graphic, or other kind of contribution.

Not sure what to write about? You may wish to consider one of the following questions as a starting point:

- What do we need to change so that all students can reach their potential?
- How can we address the diverse needs of our students so that every child can learn?
- What does it mean to value and educate the “whole child” in the Manitoba context?

ASCD International Conference in Anaheim



Left to right: Bill Burns, President Manitoba ASCD; Brenda Lanoway, Vice President Manitoba ASCD; and the ASCD affiliates from BC, Alberta, and Ontario.



Bill Burns, Dick Hanzelka - President of ASCD International, and Brenda Lanoway



View the full version of past newsletters and Reflection Journals in the Members Only space online at the Manitoba ASCD website <http://manitoba.ascd.org>. Contact Paulette Migie at mbascd@shaw.ca for the username and password.

Talk About Assessment: Strategies and Tools to Improve Learning. A Reflection on a Day with Damian Cooper

By Val Rollins



Damian Cooper delineated and expanded on many BIG ideas regarding Balanced Assessment on February 23 when he spoke to an enthusiastic and appreciative crowd here in Winnipeg. Cooper has a wide experiential base as a parent, classroom teacher, consultant for school divisions, and speaker at conferences throughout Canada and the United States. Drawing on his personal experience, and on his study of some of the key writers on assessment (e.g., Rick Stiggins, Grant Wiggins, Jay McTighe and Ken O'Connor) Cooper developed these big ideas.

His talk, entitled “**Talk About Assessment: Strategies and Tools to Improve Learning**”, based on his new book of the same name, was rich and informative, as well as lively and entertaining.

“How many coaches yell scores at their athletes during practice?”

Much of his presentation focused on Assessment FOR learning. He began by using a powerful analogy of a sports coach and separating what coaches do at practice from what they do at the game. “How many coaches yell scores at their athletes during practice?” he asked. Rather, what coaches do, is give ample, specific, descriptive feedback on how the athlete can improve his/her performance towards a clear target. Then the athlete is given time to practice with the expectation that trying again will lead to improvement.

Cooper feels this coaching analogy needs to become a reality in our classrooms. Most of our teaching/learning cycle needs to be about the practice. This analogy illustrates his BIG ideas about classroom assessment as follows:

- Our students need to have clear targets and goals. Post these goals daily or weekly in your classroom.
- Assessment and instruction are inseparable because effective assessment informs learning.
- Assessment must be planned and purposeful. In his opinion, drawing on Wiggins’ and McTighe’s work in Understanding by Design, as professionals, our planning must first be about determining the critical learning outcomes we want for our students in any unit of study, second, about choosing the best assessment strategies to gather the critical evidence of learning, and finally, about developing the lessons and activities.
- For assessment to be helpful to students it must inform them in words, not scores, what they have done well, what they have done poorly and what they need to do next time in order to improve.
- Students need to be involved in the assessment learning cycle. Our job as teachers is to “work ourselves out of a job” Rather than depending on us as arbiters of quality, students must progressively become collaborators with us. Instead of hearing students ask “How am I doing?” we will hear them say “I did a good job on this assignment because of these reasons....”
- When students are involved and are clear about the performance standards and are given descriptive feedback they will learn to assess their own progress.

Cooper dealt in depth with the idea of triangulation of evidence both as assessment FOR learning and assessment OF learning. Students must demonstrate their understanding not only by the traditional method of writing, but also by talking and by doing. He advocates the use of talk in assessment, pointing out that the origins of the word assess is to “sit with”. Students need to be able to talk about their learning, demonstrate their learning through performance, as well as complete written work. His challenge...always teach and assess for understanding!

Cooper spoke at considerable length about assessment OF learning...the "game situation". In this situation, teachers take on more of the role of judge. Knowing that success builds motivation and self esteem, how can we ensure the critical learning tasks are completed well by each student? He advocates the following strategies:

- Clearly communicate timelines to students and parents.
- Require only a few critical learning tasks that will be graded.
- Conduct frequent "process" checks.
- Provide plenty of in-class time to work on essential tasks.
- Expect students to use descriptive feedback to improve their assignments.
- Develop completion contracts for individual students.
- Provide a supervised learning centre where students must attend to complete these tasks once they are overdue.
- Use "incomplete" on interim report cards when there is insufficient evidence
- Develop consistency regarding what incomplete becomes on the final report card.

Talk about assessment....Cooper encouraged us to talk more amongst ourselves about assessment. Collaborative planning time with our grade level, subject area partners needs to be a part of each teacher's timetable. We need to talk about assessment to our students daily about assessment and teach them to become self assessors of quality. Cooper feels that most definitely we need to do a much better job of talking about assessment with our parent communities, helping them understand the current research and practice.

Throughout his presentation Cooper referred us to research-based strategies and ideas for assessment practice in our classrooms. This practical advice, along with his animated, humorous speaking style, made this a most valuable day, leaving us with much to think about and many strategies to weave into our teaching/learning/assessment toolkit.



Val Rollins is a Resource teacher at Linden Meadows School in the Pembina Trails School Division.

Mark Your Calendars

Manitoba ASCD

Annual Distinguished Lecturer Series:

Ann Lieberman - May 25, 2007 - Teachers as Learners and Leaders

Douglas Reeves - May 15, 2008

Featured Lecturer:

Carol Ann Tomlinson - October 10, 2008

"The Differentiated Classroom: Responding to the Needs of All Learners"