

INTRODUCTION

Jane P. Preston, Guest Editor

During the past decade, educational leaders have witnessed a host of vibrant and challenging societal and educational changes. For example, leaders have seen an increased focus on instructional leadership, a greater need for cultural leadership, a greater need for teacher leadership, a focus on parent and community involvement, and the explosion of technology in all levels in education. Such changes have necessitated educational leaders (e.g., principals, vice-principals, department heads, and teachers) to assume new roles and responsibilities. The focus of this special issue addresses the increased complex nature of educational leadership in the 21st century. Simultaneously, this issue documents practical suggestions for meeting the intricate and sophisticated leadership needs of modern educators, parents, students, and society, in general.

The first five articles in this issue thematically spotlight leadership trends, styles, and traits. **David Costello** writes on the topic of instructional leadership. He identifies core challenges associated with instructional leadership, and he provides practical suggestions of how a school principal can successfully deal with these issues. **Rosalind Hardie** discusses issues surrounding succession planning. She addresses the question, “How can school divisions effectively deal with the predictable challenges that arise when principals leave their assigned schools?” **Steve Lambert** takes the reader to the United Kingdom and speaks to the topic of succession planning for leadership in community colleges (and beyond). **Vicki Squires** refers to an emergent style of leadership, adaptive leadership, where multiple leaders complete tasks via shared responsibility. **Amanda Cooper** addresses the concept of evidence-based leadership and explains how knowledge mobilization can be both an exciting and integral aspect of leadership. She supplies concrete examples related to this process.

In the next few articles, authors share their own experiences and research to interrogate additional dimensions of educational leadership. As an instructional leader in a Kindergarten to Grade 6 urban elementary school, **Lori Cooper** explains how, with the assistance of a learning coach, she promoted and participated in the professional learning of teachers. **Scott Lowrey** shares his research pertaining to *Canada’s Outstanding Principals (COP)* program and describes its core leadership development elements. **Ben Kutsyuruba** and **Keith Walker** speak on the topic of teacher leadership and explain the role that trust plays in developing successful mentoring roles in induction programs.

In the final few articles, authors refer to the cultural, environmental, and philosophical aspects of leadership. **Frank Deer** reminds educational leaders that, throughout Canada, treaty relationships, legislative issues, and constitutional rights are and should be a part of educational discourse. However, he stipulates that school and district leaders have a responsibility to ensure that Indigenous education is more than merely an issue of jurisdiction. **Lyle Hamm** and **Kevin Cormier** address the

urgent need for school leaders to embody cultural leadership, a type of leadership that safeguards an inclusive, safe, and welcoming school environment for every student. **Hartley Banack** shares his knowledge pertaining to outdoor education. He provides practical, relevant, ideas for any educational leaders who want to invigorate learning with an *air* outdoor freshness. **Joel Hall** concludes this issue by inviting the reader to reflect on how the colorful meanings that one consciously and unconsciously associates with common words can sometime hamper communication within the realm of education.

The collected work of these authors represents some of the most contemporary topics associated with effective leadership within Canada and beyond. It is a privilege to publish their work.

In line with the concept of shared leadership, this special issue is the co-creation of many individual leaders. I acknowledge Theodore Christou, the Founding Editor of *Antistasis*. I send a thank you to James Kerr, whose expertise enabled this issue to be delivered online and accessible to the world.

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In closing, I hope you find these articles interesting and learner-filled. I also hope they spark new ideas and feed the beautiful leader in you.