



Federation of
Independent School
Associations in British
Columbia

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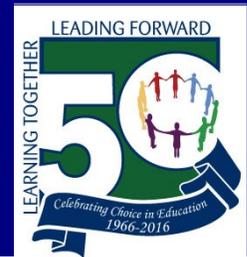
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FISA BC Convention 2016 - A View from Backstage
By Doug Lauson

I arrived at the Canada Place Convention Centre shortly after lunch on Wednesday, the day before the FISA BC convention. The first thing I saw was hundreds of elementary school children stuffing programs, water bottles and other items into the thousands of blue bags scattered all over the foyer in front of the ballrooms. I saw teachers supervising students, students helping other students working in teams, and FISA directors pushing boxes of stuffed blue bags in laundry bins to the welcome tables. Wow, I thought – this is great!



Henry Contant, former FISA director, with a student from Vancouver Christian School loading bags.

When I entered the ballroom, the enormity of its physical size struck me. The 5,100 chairs had already been set up and crews were working on the three audio-visual islands and the stage backdrop. Rows and rows of empty chairs glistening in the hint of afternoon sun shining through the large northwest side wall windows brought into reality how big our convention really was. Up until that time the number of seats had just been a theoretical concept, but now that number materialized before my eyes. It was going to be a big convention: a really big convention!

Wednesday evening was spent working with the set-up crews, choosing the colour of the lights on the stage, explaining the sequence of each speaker’s presentation, and ensuring that the A/V crews understood the coordination of background music, background slideshows and speakers’ PowerPoints and videos. Having spent several weeks struggling through the audio-visual requirements of every minute of the two-day program, I found it astounding that they caught on so fast. I guess it helps that they do this for a living!



Doug Lauson, Convention Emcee

Then the marching band from MEI and the choir from St. Mary’s arrived. As did all the ED Talks speakers. All of them were there to practice for the big day: tomorrow. When the rehearsals were over, I snuck off to the Cactus



MEI Marching Band playing *O Canada*

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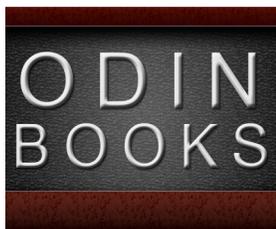
FISA BC Convention 2016 - A View from Backstage (cont.)

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Shawnigan Lake School

PERKINS + WILL



Club for a bite to eat before retiring to my room to review all the things that an emcee is supposed to do. Too bad that there were no Teleprompters in the ballrooms.

I didn't sleep much that night, as I continued to mull over the events of the coming day. At 5:30 am I gave up the attempt, and rose to once again review my notes. Did we leave out anything? Was everything covered? These were my thoughts as I dressed, running things through my mind. I remember repeating to myself: "Don't forget the iPad; it has everything in it!"

By the time I arrived at the ballrooms, everything was already buzzing. The Traditional Learning Academy teachers were there, ready to greet, with smiles on their faces. By the time I got into the ballrooms, there was a smile on my face, too. It's contagious. The AV crews were all set up and ready to go. Daniel Pink arrived and we set him up in 5 minutes. I was glad for that – no hitches!



Daniel Pink emphasizing a point

People were streaming in and the seats were filling up fast. I



Rabbi Don Pacht, FISA director, giving a blessing

had underestimated the eagerness of people to get a good seat. Before you could blink an eye, the ballrooms were full, the choir was ready and the marching band was lined up outside raring to go.

Upon Peter Froese's signal, they marched in to a drum roll. And then it was my turn ... "Good morning. Could you please stand for the singing of our national anthem to the accompaniment of St. Mary's choir and the MEI marching band." I turned to the big screen to see the video of the fluttering Canadian flag ... that no one had realized we needed until the night before! Thank you Peter Holowka for downloading it from the Internet, and thank you AV crew for a masterful job of cross-fading it with live footage of the choir singing. It looked perfect!

After *O Canada*, the rest is a bit of a blur, from the MEI marching band setting a dazzling tone for the convention to welcoming the thousands of delegates to opening com-

ments to the introduction of Daniel Pink. And, it was going so well – Rabbi Don Pacht, in his own inimitable way, broke the ice with his 'Old Testament' comment, and Daniel Pink spoke so impressively, and the crowd was buzzing with excitement and collegiality. This is what we had wanted to happen - and it was happening. It felt so good.

As the day progressed, I talked to many people in the hallways about how they were enjoying the convention. All I got were positive, excited responses: "The ED Talks speakers were great!" "I was inspired by Alan November." "Yong Zhao was fantastic!" ... and on, and on. Coffee breaks



Little Flower Academy Choir with director Marizza Mislang

and lunches were phenomenally well organized – I didn't think it was possible to serve coffee to 5,000 people and lunch to 3,100 people so quickly. Did you manage to hear the LFA and MEI choirs at lunch? Both of them were fantastic. And pretty much everybody came back on time for the afternoon sessions. What could be better than that? The afternoon was a repeat of the morning – great energy and enthusiasm, great speakers, great sessions.

FISA BC Convention 2016 - A View from Backstage (cont.)

That afternoon, after everyone had left, it was time to practise for the closing day. The Grad speakers arrived for their 4:30 pm rehearsals, and after that it was back to the room for a quick change of clothes and then off to the Pinnacle Hotel for the gala dinner. Peter Froese did an outstanding job as the emcee, as did all the FISA BC board members who pre-



Elizabeth Moore, Convention Chair, presenting lifetime achievement award to Gerry Ensing

sented awards to the people who contributed so much to independent school education over the last 50 years. The Brockton Marimba Band and St. Patrick's High School Chamber Choir did a marvellous job of showcasing the



St. Patrick's Reg. Sec. School Chamber Choir with director Tony Araujo at the gala dinner

student talent we have in our schools. Thank you Adrian and Paige, Tony, and all your students.



Dr. Martina Scholtens, AMG Grad Speaker

The final day arrived all too soon. It was up early, back to the ballrooms where we set up Col. Chris Hadfield at 7:00 am for his 1:00 pm closing talk. At that point, it struck me what a powerful IMAX experience his session was going to be. The Meadowridge Handbell Choir was chiming in the foyer and then it was back

on stage for the second day, to welcome the Minister of Education, Hon. Mike Bernier and then the Grad Talk speakers. I was so impressed with what they each had to say – heartfelt and genuine, instilling within me a pride to be part of our independent school system. Charles Fadel was scary! No, not in that way – his future vision of education really brought home what 21st Century education might look like. It was good to have a glimpse into the possible future – I wonder if there will be Morlocks then?



Min. of Education, Hon. Mike Bernier

Col. Chris Hadfield “made my day,” to quote Clint Eastwood. Having been a science teacher, I could relate to his every word and to some of his scientific experiences. And, he put it all together for me – that’s what being a teacher and the new curriculum was all about:

◆ be open to challenges,
 ◆ take risks,
 ◆ change only one variable at a time,
 ◆ have your failures in the beginning,
 ◆ enjoy every day, and
 ◆ stay alive!

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What a way to end two days of sharing, networking and camaraderie! Truly, a dream come true!



Col. Chris Hadfield illustrating the sound of a space shuttle blasting off

Federation of Independent School Associations in British Columbia

THANK YOU SUPPORTING CORPORATE SPONSORS



Doug Lauson is in his 12th year as the President of FISA BC. It was in 2002 when he first brought to the Board of Directors of FISA the dream of a provincial education convention where thousands of independent school educators would come together under one roof. In February 2016 that FISA dream was fulfilled.

THANK YOU SUPPORTING INDEPENDENT SCHOOL SPONSORS



Southpointe
ACADEMY



MEADOWRIDGE
SCHOOL



Common Goals Uncommon Outcomes



Funding is available for schools or associations wishing to host a Pro-D event

Would You Like to See Some Convention Sessions Again?

Thanks to Doug Lauson, many sessions of the 50th Anniversary Convention, held on February 4 -5 at the Vancouver Convention Centre, have been posted on YouTube for you to see again. Unfortunately, we are prohibited from posting the keynote addresses due to contractual agreements, but the talks by the sessional speakers – Yong Zhao, Kimberley Mitchell, Alan November, Amy Burvall – along with the Ed Talks and the Grad Talks have been posted. Parts of the opening and closing sessions are also available. Go to **You Tube** and search for **FISABC 2016** for the convention videos.

What you said...

FISA received many emails, cards and phone calls from people who attended the convention. Here are a few of the responses:

“This one event has clearly advanced the security of independent schools in BC. It made my heart burst with pride to see such a diverse group of 5,100 educators convene for the good of independent education in BC. I hope this is the first of many such conventions.”

Ariel DeJong, Former FISA Board Member

“This was one of the top education conferences I have been to in my 13 year career. My head is buzzing with ideas that I now need to sort through and begin putting into practice.”

Chuck Loewen, MEI Secondary Teacher

“This was not only some really interesting Pro-D, but it was invaluable social time with colleagues. I was sooo inspired by so many speakers, especially Chris Hadfield. It was an amazing opportunity to learn from some of the greats.”

Aspengrove staff comments

“This is the BEST PD event ever to be held in BC for independent school teachers and administrators, and perhaps the best ever of its kind in the history of K-12 education in BC.

Dean Croy, Southpointe School

Wow! That was amazing! Thank-you so much for all of your effort in pulling off an incredible gathering of people, ideas and energy! I (and ArtStarts) was thrilled to be there, not only as an exhibitor, yet also as a participant. The presentations were rich and inspiring. I took so much from being there. It was quite an experience and means so much to have been there.

Sarah Kim, ArtStarts

Thank-you to the Convention Planning Committee on a Job Well Done!

Chairperson Elizabeth Moore (ISABC), Doug Lauson (CIS), Henry Contant (SCSBC), Rabbi Don Pacht and Karen Gledhill (AMG), Dave Neufeld (ACSI BC), Sandy Marshall (CISVA), Bonnie Chant (Event Planner), Peter Froese (FISA).

Pro-D Funding to Support the New Curriculum

Independent schools have received \$100,000 in funding from the Ministry of Education to support the five associations in providing professional development for teachers and administrators. School authorities are encouraged to visit the FISA website for information on Pro-D events that are being offered around the province. School authorities are encouraged to contact their own associations if they wish to host a Pro-D event on the new curriculum implementation.

FISA thanks the Ministry of Education for providing independent schools with Pro-D funding.

Career, Skills, and Technology Coordinators

Thanks to generous funding from the Office of the Inspector of Independent Schools, Herb Krul and Sean Engbers have been seconded to assist independent schools in developing career and technology programs, to establish partnerships with post secondary institutions and the business sector, and to identify ways in which schools can work together with the public sector in supporting career, skills and technology opportunities for independent school students. The secondment runs until the end of June 2016.

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Sean Engbers
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Email: sengbers@surreychristian.com

Budgeting for Next Year?

In 2015-2016 there was a 6,500 FTE increase in public school enrolment, due in part to family mobility from Alberta and the rest of the provinces, immigration, and a decline in independent school enrolment, particularly in independent DL schools. This has resulted in a lower average per student operating cost in the public sector, with the consequence of a lower independent school operating grant. There is a direct correlation between the public school average student cost and the independent school operating grant. The public per student operating cost was reduced in 46 of the 60 districts in BC,

resulting in an average \$10 per student decline in the grant for Group 1 independent schools and a \$6 decline for Group 2 independent schools. The average operating grant for Group 1 and 2 independent schools in 2015-2016 is \$4,144 and \$2,901 respectively; however, the grants vary from one district to the next.

School authorities are encouraged to budget for no increase in the operating grant for 2016-2017, since enrolment is again expected to increase in the public sector while provincial funding will remain stable.



Audience of 5,100 British Columbia independent school educators at FISA Convention 2016.

Federation of Independent School Associations in British Columbia

THANK YOU STUDENT MUSIC PERFORMERS

THURSDAY

MEI Screaming Eagles Marching Band
St. Mary's Elementary Choir
MEI Chamber Choir
MEI Concert Choir
Little Flower Academy Chamber Choir

GALA DINNER

Brockton Preparatory School
World Music Program:
Senior Specialized Ensemble
St. Patrick Regional Secondary School Chamber Choir

FRIDAY

Meadowridge Handbell Choir
Brockton World Music Program

THANK YOU DOOR PRIZE DONORS

PINNACLE HOTEL
HARBOURFRONT

Pinnacle Hotel

Harbourfront



Vancouver Marriott Pinnacle Downtown



Landsea Tours & Adventures



Pan Pacific Vancouver



London Drugs



FlyOver Canada



Old Spaghetti Factory



The following information is provided to you as a service of your membership in FISA BC.

FISA BC does not presuppose to endorse any group and each school will need to make its own decision with respect to following up on this information.



Canada Census 2016

You are invited to participate actively!

Census 2016 Community Supporter Toolkit: http://ftp.nsb.org/sites/default/files/ftp/InForumPDFs/CST-Toolkit_HR_ENG_FR.pdf

Teacher Resources: http://www.census.gc.ca/ccr16e/ccr16e_002-eng.html

BCTC Standards Review Invites Teacher Participation

The BC Teachers' Council is reviewing the Standards for the Education, Competence and Professional Conduct of Educators in British Columbia. The TRB welcomes feedback from certificate holders to support the Council review.

Visit the TRB website found at: <https://www.bcteacherregulation.ca/> to participate before Monday, April 11, 2016.

Vancouver International Universities Fair 2016

Vancouver Convention Centre
Saturday, May 7, 2016
1:00-4:00 PM

Universities from across Canada, the United States, and the UK will be in attendance.

For more information, visit www.nationalcollegefairs.org

2016 BC Student Leadership Seminar

Superb opportunity for student leaders! Seminars this year will focus on combatting cyberbullying and teaching students to be safe, smart, and kind online.

Chandos Pattison Auditorium
10238-168th Street, Surrey, BC
Thursday, May 19, 2016

For information, contact Bill Edgecombe at 1-877-992-4343 or bcleadership@eastlink.ca

Mandarin Scholarships for Grade 12s

The British Columbia-China Award for Excellence in Chinese, offered to Grade 12 students studying Mandarin, is co-sponsored by the BC Ministry of Education and the Vancouver Education Office of the Consulate-General of the People's Republic of China.

A total of 50 awards of \$500 each will be awarded. Application deadline is March 31, 2016. Information and application forms are available at <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/support/international-education/scholarships-awards/bc-china-award-for-excellence>. Contact Ms. Rozi Dobreci at Rozi.Dobreci@gov.bc.ca or 250-882-1506 for further information.

International Association for Cognitive Education and Psychology

North American Regional Conference
Century Plaza Hotel and Spa
Vancouver, BC
July 11-12, 2016

Keynote Speakers
David Tzuriel, Ph. D.
Carol Robinson Zanartu
Carl Haywood

Early bird registration ends March 31, 2016
Conference Poster, Registration Form, and Call for Papers available at: <http://ia-cep.org/component/content/article?id=155&Itemid=424>

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