Editorial

It is hard to believe that LEARNing Landscapes is celebrating its 10th anniversary and 20 issues of peer-reviewed, themed articles contributed locally, nationally, and internationally by members of the academic community, practitioners, and students. The thrust of LEARNing Landscapes has been to include diverse voices, multiple forms of representation, and to bridge theory and practice around topics that are pertinent and timely. The editorial staff has been supported enthusiastically by exceptional people in the field who have provided important and relevant commentary about the theme of each issue. This we believe has served to push the conversation further and reach out to a wider audience.

We are indebted to all who have contributed to LEARNing Landscapes over the past decade—the authors, the commentators, and the wonderfully perceptive and generous reviewers who spare no effort in communicating helpful feedback to authors to make the review process a learning experience.

In addition, a special thanks must be extended to the Editorial Board members Patricia Cordeiro (Rhode Island College), Carl Leggo (University of British Columbia), Ruth Leitch (University of Belfast), Anne Lessard (University of Sherbrooke), Shaun Murphy (University of Saskatchewan), and Carolyn Sturge Sparkes (Memorial University). Heartfelt thanks go also to the Editorial Staff which includes Dr. Mary Stewart, who works tirelessly to make sure each issue adheres to the publishing timelines and specifications and liaises seamlessly with authors, commentators, and reviewers, David Mitchell, our Copy Editor, whose perceptive eye ensures rigorous editorial standards, Maryse Boutin, our Graphic Artist, who has ensured that LEARNing Landscapes is the artful product that it is, and the technical staff at LEARN who provide the expertise to put each issue online and adroitly maintain the website. Finally, we have been extremely fortunate in having the unwavering support of Dr. Michael Canuel, CEO of the Leading English Education and Resource Network (LEARN), who, as its publisher, enabled the journal to become a reality.

As LEARNing Landscapes moves into the next decade, we are pleased to announce that it is migrating to the Open Journal System (OJS), which is a journal management and publishing system developed by the federally funded Public Knowledge Project. The system is predicated on the notion of open access and expands and improves access to scholarly work. This change will extend the reach of LEARNing Landscapes and the work of its authors. There may be some minor visual changes to LEARNing Landscapes as a result.

One final piece of news is that Sean Wiebe, an Associate Professor at the University of Prince Edward Island, was the recipient of the 2017 Canadian Association of Curriculum Studies Publication Award. His award-winning article, entitled, "The Teacher as Silenced Superhero," was published by LEARNing Landscapes, Volume 9(2), in 2016. We are delighted that his work has received national acclaim and that he chose to submit it to LEARNing Landscapes.

Defining Well-Being

The theme health and well-being in education was chosen carefully for this issue to signal the historical roots of the term well-being which emerged from a much more narrow focus on health curriculum and services beginning in the late 1920s (Konu & Rimpela, 2002) and to reach as wide an audience as possible. Dodge, Daly, Hayton, and Sanders (2012) discuss the history of the term well-being and how difficult it has been to arrive at a definition of the term. They carefully trace the evolution of definitions over the last 50 years and propose that it is a dynamic construct which can exist in various stages of stability at different times. If stable, "wellbeing is when individuals have the psychological, social and physical resources they need to meet a particular psychological, social and/or physical challenge. When individuals have more challenges than resources, the see-saw dips, along with their wellbeing" (p. 230). They argue convincingly for a fluid notion of well-being, rather than a dichotomous one.

In Australia, the New South Wales Government Office on Education and Communities (2015) has established "The Wellbeing Framework for Schools." The report defines well-being as the quality of an individual's life and suggests that, "wellbeing needs to be considered against a background of how we feel and function across several domains, recognizing the multidimensional nature of wellbeing" (p. 2). They suggest there are five facets of well-being—cognitive, emotional, social, physical, and spiritual. The report suggests that cognitive well-being is related to success and achievement; emotional well-being relates to self-awareness, reflection, and regulation; social well-being is about connecting and relating empathetically to others; physical well-being is related to feeling safe and healthy; and spiritual well-being is about meaningfulness and purpose (p. 2). The report underscores the need for a holistic understanding of well-being and highlights the need to attend to contextual uniqueness and implications of gender, race, and class to avoid propagating deficit notions of well-being.

Statham and Chase (2010), in their briefing paper on childhood well-being in the United Kingdom, reiterate the fluidity and the multidimensional aspects of well-being and add an important caveat. They suggest it is imperative when exploring or studying well-being that the participant perspective be included, even when working with children. I would argue that these dimensions of well-being, held in tandem, provide a helpful and beneficial way of thinking about and reflecting on the topic of health and well-being in education and about the articles in this issue.

In the discussion of the commentaries and articles on health and well-being in education that follows, it should be noted that submissions appear in alphabetical order in the journal, but are presented here thematically.

Invited Commentaries

We are pleased in the commentaries in this issue to showcase the work and commitment to well-being by local educators. **Sharon Klein**, the Head of St. George's, an independent school (grades K-11) in Montreal, uniquely governed by parents since its inception, shares in an interview how "health comes first" and is one of the six pillars which undergird the philosophy at St. George's School. These pillars

have been in place since it was founded in 1930. Based on the progressive education of John Dewey, which has become increasingly relevant for 21st century education, the 1930 prospectus of the school indicated that health

> means much more than physical examinations and prescription for ills, or the use of athletic field or gymnasium. It means that the school life should be adapted to the nervous system of the child. It means movable sets, freedom of movement in the classroom, elimination of strain from academic work, abundant hard work and motor activity of different kinds to balance mental work, avoidance of large class groups and their overstimulation for small children, longer periods of recreation and more use of the out-of-doors; close co-operation between school and home for detection and remedial attention of abnormal conditions, whether of body or mind. If necessary academic work is sacrificed for health, rather than health for academic work. The competitive marking system, with all its strains of daily marks, of tests, of examinations, is greatly modified. (School Prospectus, 1930, p. 2)

In an interview, which took place in the newly opened fitness centre for students and staff at the high school, Klein describes how the physical literacy program at the school combines well-being for mind and body and "The Core Five Program," developed by the teachers at the school, addresses social and emotional learning for all students.

Barbara Kurtzman, a veteran, early childhood teacher at The Study, which is another independent school in Montreal, describes in an interview how she became committed to "mindfulness," or "the practice of maintaining a nonjudgmental state of heightened or complete awareness of one's thoughts, emotions, or experiences on a moment-to-moment basis" (Merriam-Webster) and brought mindfulness first to the Kindergarten and then to the other early childhood classrooms in her school. She describes in detail what her program entails, and suggests that teachers interested in mindfulness should start with themselves. Her grade one students, **Catherine** and **Disha**, also part of the interview, give their very articulate perspectives on practicing mindfulness in school and beyond.

Maggie MacDonnell, recent recipient of the prestigious 2017 Global Teaching Prize, spoke with us from Kativik School Board where she teaches and provides professional development for teachers with "The Compassionate-Based Schools Approach." This approach helps students who have experienced childhood traumas that affect their ability to focus, connect, and use executive functioning skills effectively. Her programs are tailored to the gender and cultural needs of the students and have decreased dropout rates, improved academic and social skills, and raised awareness about suicide prevention through social support and physical activities.

Last, but not least, **Alissa Sklar**, an educational consultant in digital technology, education, and parenting in Montreal, contributes a timely and important commentary on digital hygiene. She describes the "Digital Citizenship Program" and, using examples from her own personal experiences, highlights the need for schools and parents to be addressing digital issues on safety, security, respect, civility, privacy, and productive and creative use of digital technologies. She illustrates how digital technologies permeate all aspects of our lives and need to be part of any discussion of health and well-being in education.

Using Mindfulness in Education

Piotrowski, Binder, and **Schwind** studied four Ontario primary teachers to get their perspectives on implementing a "low intensity" mindfulness in their respective classrooms. They describe how mindfulness practices (including yoga and breathing exercises) allowed them to feel more connected to their students and more able to respond to individual needs. They felt better equipped to address anxiety among students and noted that the students were more relaxed in class, better able to express their emotions, and make and sustain friendships. **Haines, Clark/Keefe, Tinkler, Kotsiopoulos, Gerstl-Pepin, Shepherd, Woodside-Jiron,** and **Milhomens** discuss how a linguistically and culturally diverse, high-poverty, elementary school population in the northeastern United States changed with the introduction of mindfulness practices. This community-driven, qualitative study comprising 25 teacher interviews, classroom observations, and relevant documents demonstrated that the students became more self-aware, increased their ability to articulate emotions and self-regulate, and were able to transfer these practices beyond their classrooms. **Glasser**, an elementary classroom teacher, outlines how she helped her students in California to build an understanding of the natural world using a holistic approach to education consisting of balance, inclusion, and connection, which included mindfulness, art, meditation, and *Snowga* (yoga in the snow). She noted increased emotional well-being among the students, and deeper connections to community, place, and the natural world. **Carvajal** describes his work on mindfulness in a high school curriculum with adults in a Los Angeles county jail. He shares from his experiences how he learned that mindfulness only works when the teacher creates an atmosphere of flexibility, thoughtfulness, and openness. **Berezowski, Gilham,** and **Robinson** discuss their study of "Yoga 11," a mindfulness program for high school students in Nova Scotia which encourages stress reduction and self-regulation. Their student participants described with examples how yoga made them feel happier, stronger, kinder, and more self-confident, suggesting that Yoga 11 is instrumental in helping adolescents adapt personally and socially to everyday life stressors.

Tapping Into Participant Perspectives of Well-Being

The work described here shows how narrative and arts-based research approaches provide important avenues for tapping into participant perspectives on well-being. **Schaefer, Lessard,** and **Lewis** worked alongside Aboriginal children and youth in an after-school program entitled, "Growing Young Movers" (GYM), to support health and wellness opportunities within their communities. They argue that narrative inquiry, which required them to relinquish control, and attend rigorously to researcher assumptions, changed their understanding of productivity in this context and, in so doing, countered institutional narratives of what well-being looks and feels like for children and youth in this study. **Mitchell** and **Ezcurra** share the results of a six-year study of Indigenous girls and young women in Canada and South Africa and the implications for well-being in contexts that have high rates of sexual violence. The participants were engaged in cellphilm production, photovoice, body mapping, and other art-making approaches to elicit and highlight their perspectives on sexual violence. They argue persuasively how visual methodologies provide vehicles for activism and resistance and can help young women to flourish

in difficult conditions, and that the accessibility and poignancy of these art forms can promote social change.

Scaffolding and Supporting Well-Being

The following authors illustrate how certain educational programs and practices help to scaffold and support well-being among participants. **Rowan** describes his study of the New Horizons Band Guelph (NHBG), which is a group of amateur musicians who make music together with minimal musical backgrounds. His work focused on a 10-week improvisational jazz combo program which demonstrated that the freedom and loose structure that jazz improvisation offers, conducted in an empathetic and nonjudgmental atmosphere, resulted in a "flourishing" of mind, body, and spirit. **Clarke-Vivier, Lyford,** and **Thomson** studied Museum Café, an arts-based museum program for adults with dementia and their caregivers. The program provided a safe space for communication, relatively free of the stigma often associated with the disease. Their study shows how competing notions of well-being and learning among involved stakeholders were complex and required negotiation, suggesting that it is imperative to critically examine perspectives of well-being which, inherently, may be driven by deficit notions. **Stone** argues strongly for the importance of play in the curriculum for supporting cognitive, physical, social, and emotional well-being in every child. She describes with examples how the nonlinear and child-oriented dimensions of play encourage deep learning, which includes using imagination, planning, negotiating, problem-solving, and building friendships. **Tinckler** examines how storytelling has a therapeutic dimension, in addition to its importance in literacy learning, and promotes a sense of community and social well-being while providing connections to life outside the classroom. **Young et al.** examined the personal narratives of 13 female faculty members at Memorial University (Newfoundland) who were part of a writing group in the faculty of education. Their writing group helped to mitigate the difficulty of balancing home and work life, and the stresses associated with promotion and tenure and workload. The group provided a space that validated individual experiences, promoted connection with and emotional support from colleagues, and helped to resist the "normalizing of unwellness." In another professional writing group, formed by a small group of PhD education students at McGill University, **Doody, McDonnell, Reid,** and **Marshall** share how they worked collaboratively over a two-year period. Initially, they concentrated on writing during their time together. Subsequently, they analyzed and interpreted their field texts and wrote together using the Pomodoro Method (write, break, and share). They describe their individual experiences with writing and how writing alongside each other contributed to their well-being by countering isolation and writer's block through their collaborative work. The writing group created a sense of community, encouraged balance and motivation, and maintained writing momentum. **Simpson** shares the evaluation of a sexuality education program with an emphasis on reproductive rights and gender equity created to demystify sexuality and reproductive health in technical and vocational institutions in Guyana. She candidly reports how after the investment of much time and resources, the program was not integrated into the curricula of the participating institutions. A positive outcome was that individual facilitators did use their learning to counsel students, conduct informal class discussions and community discussions, and integrated this content into other courses.

Countering Stress to Enhance Well-Being

The papers here suggest strongly the need to actively address stress management among all stakeholders in educational contexts to enhance well-being for everyone. **Goldfus** and **Karny-Tagger** describe their work on adolescent neuroscience in Free State South Africa and the importance for educators to understand the changes in behaviors that result from brain development in the teen years. They discuss the stresses on youth as a result of these changes and the need for teachers to help students to acquire skills related to self-control, goal setting, and planning to help mitigate stressors. **Carsley, Mettler, Shapiro, Mills, Bloom,** and **Heath** discuss a StressOFF Strategies (SOS) program for adolescents that they have been studying in the greater Montreal area with 14 teachers and technicians in nine high schools. SOS is a stress management program for adolescents. It consists of four components—psycho-education, stigma reduction, coping skills, and follow-up. Their findings suggest that outside professionals are not necessary for implementing stress management programs such as this one. Educators in schools are more than capable of teaching stress management with added benefits. They can use their experiences to assist school psychologists and utilize this knowledge for personal benefits while simultaneously helping to cut the costs of the programs. **Cunningham** discusses the long-term effects of trauma on children which continue into adulthood and critically affect well-being. She shares how much can be gained by having children and teacher survivors of childhood trauma share their stories in supportive and authentically safe environments to help heal and alter long-term effects. **Ragoonaden** shares her experiences with smartEducation (stress management and resiliency techniques in Education), a pilot study conducted with elementary, pre-service teachers which was implemented in a Faculty of Education in Western Canada. The program supports the cultivation of personal and professional resilience, kindness, and empathy, and develops strategies for dealing with challenging situations and reducing stress. The results of the study indicated improved practice and emotional self-regulation and an increased sense of well-being. **Blinder, Ansley, Varjas, Benson,** and **Ogletree** illustrate how The Collaboration and Resources for Encouraging and Supporting Transformations in Education (CREST-Ed) project enhanced student health and well-being by providing wellness and stress management learning among all members of the school staff. The program focused on recognizing stress, the psychological and physiological reactions to stress, and scientifically based ways of managing stress in a context of sharing and collaboration.

Engaging in Critical Digital Literacy to Support Well-Being

Last, but not least, **Crossman** surveys current literature on the important topic of female body perception and the effects that social media exerts on women. More specifically, she focuses on the content of "Fitspiration," a form of social media that purports to encourage and foster a healthy lifestyle through postings and images for healthy eating and exercise which, she argues, does just the opposite. Rather, her analysis suggests that Fitspiration leads to negative body image and body dissatisfaction, which are key predictors of eating disorders. This article provides a good argument for the need to engage in critical digital literacy with all stakeholders in education to counter any negative impact that social media has on health and well-being.

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