A NEW PATRON FOR THE AR
An Editorial

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In Canada, Action Research needs as much help as it can get. This is because it is largely disadvantaged by the natural predisposition of the country itself. Divided into 10 provinces and three territories, and almost 10 million square kilometers of formidable terrain, it is tough for people of like interests to get together. This has had mixed blessings for Action Research. It has led to a certain amount of decentralization and self-determinacy: If the will is in place, educator-researchers have opportunities to pursue projects with a certain amount of non-intervention that a more dictatorial and closely monitored system would not usually permit. However, it has also led to a great deal of educational solitude, forcing teachers to have colleagues of proximity rather than of shared interest and passion.

Over the years, networks of communication have opened up between practitioners and alleviate some of the isolation. The Canadian Education Association, for example, has been advancing ideas and research to educators through conferences and publications since 1891 (http://www.cea-ace.ca). More recently, a host of on-line networks offer teachers across the country the means of joining discussion, debate and professional development circles. The Canadian Network for Innovation in Education (http://www.tru.ca/distance/cnie.html), for example, focuses largely on the use of open and distance education through educational technologies. However, most groups are directed at the provincial level. The Nova Scotia Action Research Movement (see www.ns.literacy.ca/nsarmove/resrchmv.htm) dedicates itself to adult education and literacy, while the Saskatchewan Action Research Network (see http://sarn.ca/) provides a repository and clearing house for practice-based research and resources. Along with a website, the Manitoba Education Research Network (see http://www.mern.ca) also organizes events and forums for the communication of research findings. Finally, the Ontario Education Research Exchange does attempt to make community research more accessible and collaborative (see http://oere.oise.utoronto.ca/).
This past summer marked a new stage in pan-Canadian networking, however, when the 
*Canadian Journal of Action Research* collaborated with the Canadian Association for 
Teacher Education to host a pre-conference on the theme of Action Research at the 
Canadian Society for the Study of Education annual conference in St. Catharines’ Brock 
University. After keynote addresses from Jack Whitehead (Cumbria University), Steve 
Jordan (McGill), Ruth Dawson (ETFO) and Zoe Donoahue (Institute of Child Studies), the 
group of sixty came to the decision that a new association had to be created to promote the 
use of action research across the country.

To this end, I am happy to announce the birth of the *Canadian Association of Action 
Research in Education (CAARE)/Association canadienne de la recherche-action en 
éducation (ACRAE)*. Although it is in its infancy stage at the moment, we on the editorial 
board of CJAR have high expectation for this offspring. It was founded with a tri-fold 
purpose, outlined in its new constitution:

1. To provide a research and discussion forum for all members of the Canadian 
   Society for the Study of Education (CSSE) who are interested in examining and 
   promoting Action Research in the area of education (especially teacher education).
2. To encourage the dissemination and mobilization of knowledge in the area of 
   Action Research in education, teacher education and related areas.
3. To promote collaboration between Canadian researchers working in the field of 
   Action Research at the local, national and international levels in the field of 
   education and teacher education.

It will be trying out its sea-legs at the first CAARE annual conference in Ottawa in 2015, 
where it will elect its executive board. Sitting on the board will be a CJAR representative, 
belaying the fact that the destinies of the two entities should be intimately entwined. 
Henceforth, CJAR will be charged with the duty of creating all conference proceedings and 
act as CAARE’s communication organ. It is hoped that this will be the start of a 
foundational network for Canada-wide discussion and partnership. A call will be going out 
soon to join this group, and to attend its conference next May. I would encourage you to 
consider this offer, both for the sake of pan-Canadian discussion and for your own search 
for enlightenment!

This issue of CJAR offers an array of research projects that have been recently 
accomplished in Canada and abroad regarding basic skills. It begins with an examination of 
a Swedish research circle searching for support for university students’ literacy 
development, led by Dr. *Lotta Bergman* of Malmö University. Reading comprehension is 
also on *David Costello*’s mind as he studies student conferencing techniques in Prince 
Edward Island. Dr. *Dan Robinson*, a name we have seen before, returns with collaborators 
*Andrew Foran* and *Ingrid Robinson* to explore a physical education program in a Nova 
Scotia high school. Finally, from the University of Ottawa, *Maurice Taylor* and *Suzanne 
Taschereau* discuss a national strategy for developing essential skills.