

## CASS Fall Conference 2020 Highlights

Two-hundred and fifty (250) system leaders representing 88 percent of all school authorities in Alberta, including public, separate, Francophone, Charter and First Nations Authorities, were represented at CASS' virtual Fall Conference, Nov. 5 and 6, 2020.

The online learning opportunity was based on themes identified by CASS' SLQS Professional Learning Advisory committee and included: Wellness, Assurance Framework, Continuity of Learning 2020-21 (leading and learning online), Inclusion, Professional Practice Standards and Leading Learning- Supporting Optimum Learning for All Students. Based on previous feedback stating the value of learning from and with colleagues, role alike sessions were offered for system leaders in the follow roles: Chief Superintendents; Curriculum, Assessment and Technology; First Nations, Métis and Inuit, Human Resources with a focus on Workplace wellness and Inclusive Education.

### Learning Guides

CASS Directors of Leadership are compiling learnings from each session into Learning Guides, which will incorporate delegates feedback and insights. The intent of a CASS Learning Guide is to apply research, deepen understanding and enhance professional practice within the Alberta context. With a focus on optimum learning for all students, a Learning Guide provides an opportunity to grow system leader knowledge, resulting in quality school leadership and quality teaching throughout Alberta. The conference learning guides are also intended to address current context and gather members views.

### Delegates Experience

Delegates responded to a thought exchange prompt asking for reflections on the conference experience reflected in this word cloud :



Sample thoughts rated in this order:

#### • Delivery – Focus on Online

- “Appreciation for CASS’s organization and design of this online learning opportunity. (Document with links, access to presentation information, online engagement strategies used).”
- “Preference would be for face to face to allow for more networking opportunities.”
- “The conference organization, and the efforts of the CASS team to support smooth operations, was very well done. For a last minute adjustment to fully online, this conference was smooth.”
- “The conference program & zoom links were all formatted in and easy-to-read format and shared well in advance”
- “Managed to be interactive and very practical, despite the virtual attendance - well done.

- “Thank you for sticking with the breaks...Zoom is mentally exhausting”
- “The whole experience was run seamlessly! In spite of distances, feel engaged and have learned tremendously!”
- **Design - Focus on Learning**
  - “I so appreciate being able to hear my colleagues. The best professional development is always talking with colleagues!”
  - “Informative sessions. Enjoyed gathering ideas from others. role alike session allows for collaboration”
  - “The presenters were excellent and provided highly-relevant, useful information.”
  - “The alignment of the session topics with provincial/division priorities is exceptional”
  - “Nothing beats hearing from colleagues about their experiences working on topics of interest to your division. Practical and relevant.”
  - “I like the idea of jurisdictions co-presenting. Very effective. Provides participants to hear multiple perspectives on the same topic... strengthens the presentation.”
  - “Alberta stories of practice about assurance were very useful.”
  - “Excellent that they were connected to a key CASS priority ( and SLQS competency) and relevant in timing.” “Follow up access to slides and information For review, future planning and development in our districts and schools”
  - “Great to connect with colleagues to learn and discuss priorities Learning forward”
  - “The role alike provided rich discussion many of us don't take time in our schedules to connect with other division leaders. It allows us to compare strategies and develop new ones.”
  - “More than ever this is a time for collaboration and networking”

### Keynote Speakers

Two keynotes were additional highlights of the conference.

**The Leadership Wellness Link with Betsy Wierda** – Franklin Covey: You can't truly live your purpose if you are not well. In this keynote session, Betsy Wierda, focused on the urgent need for personal wellness as a driver for both workplace wellness and for the impact it has on the community as a whole. Highly effective results will emerge only through an inside out approach. Betsy shared insights into ways that hope, optimism and joy can be taught, and how to create innovative practices that can become sustainable habits in our lives.

**A Story of Connection, Culture and Change with Barry Litun** - After a career serving in several educational positions, Barry Litun accepted the role of CASS Executive Director and began a new chapter of his story of practice. If you know Barry, you know he naturally and authentically shares his experiences and wisdom through storytelling drawing you into wanting to hear more. Story is powerful. Story is where we came from and where we are going. In this opening keynote, you will hear Barry share stories from his acquired library, which will be informative, memorable and no doubt make you chuckle. In a conversation with CASS President Bevan Daverne, Barry shared how he has made meaningful moments in between the pages and chapters of his leadership legacy. CASS Leadership Excellence exemplified!

### The Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard\*

Quality superintendent leadership occurs when the superintendent's ongoing analysis of the context, and the superintendent's decisions about what leadership knowledge abilities to apply, result in quality school leadership, quality teaching and optimum learning for all students in the school authority.