

Workplace Wellness Plans - What, Who & How...

Evidence-based practices, roles and responsibilities and systemic professional learning are components of a comprehensive and integrated Workplace Wellness plan.

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.

Summary Points

Workplace Wellness can best be achieved when all partners share responsibility and ownership for planning and implementation. This includes:

- Being engaged in the design and delivery of system workplace wellness planning. Specifically, bringing the outcome/purpose of the plan to life.
- Deciding “what” will be involved in the plan. (e.g., programs, practices that are evidence and research-based, systemic professional learning plan)
- Identifying “who” will be responsible for what, by when and at what cost.
- Establish what evidence will be accepted to determine the outcome has been addressed. [Watch full recording here.](#)



Following the pillars of a Comprehensive School Health approach (Nutrition, Physical Literacy, Mental Health and Community Partnerships), **Parkland School Division** represented their vision “student success and well-being” framed on the CASS Workplace Wellness conditions. A

comprehensive and integrated approach was created by the Board and senior admin focusing on a vision that includes a strong well-being message “*Our Ultimate Goal is Student Success and Well-Being*”. Based on an initial problem of practice focused on student resiliency, the wellness journey began 9 years ago. As time progressed, the inclusion of supports for all staff occurred with internal and external partners, a transdisciplinary approach and the leadership of the district’s full time Wellness Coordinator. Evidence and research was accessed and applied from Alberta Health Services, JCSH, ASEBP and the Tamarack Institute. A focus on culture building was emphasized to enhance a more comprehensive approach and honour the “human process” focus of the work. A team came together – the Staff Wellness Coalition, which includes School Health Champions, Trustees, ATA local, ASEBP, led by system leaders to explore and develop a school authority Workplace Wellness plan. School members identified as

wellness champions/leads were those staff that influence the culture in schools and applied what they learned from the system committee meetings. Monthly meetings focused on building a transition from the head to the heart and nurtured a focus on the human aspect of wellness. (vs. the idea of just a strategic plan on paper). Monthly Staff Wellness sessions and activities to build community, connection and encourage sensitivity and trust. Preparing to pivot practices and policies in response to staff wellbeing post-pandemic. Next steps include exploring assessment tools that will help to measure impact of the efforts undertaken as well as a deeper dive into the CASS resources to seek coherence and ideas for enhancements. Dianne McConnell DMcConnell@psd70.ab.ca and Felicia Ochs Fmochs@psd70.ab.ca (Timestamp 7:25 on recording.)



Horizon School Division’s story of practice began with a revisioning process that provided for multiple stakeholders to be engaged. One

outcome, besides a refreshed vision, brought to light the importance and value on building and fostering effective relationships. The relationship building, based on being truly engaged with identifying what is important in the work of the district, resulted in the vision being developed and embraced by all. The visioning work identified an important value as ensuring a “welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment” and brought to the forefront the need to walk the talk as a senior leadership team. The knowledge and skill to be a contributing citizen includes the knowledge and skill to look after yourself.

The pandemic provided an opportunity to build on the wellness work that had been occurring in the school authority, particularly leveraging a focus on resiliency and personal well-being. (e.g., put the oxygen mask on yourself first.) The stigma

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about talking about mental wellbeing was addressed given the context. Horizon believes that social and emotional learning (SEL) is increasingly recognized as playing a critical role in the promotion of positive mental health. Programs and practices that support SEL is a focus. The work to support workplace wellness is woven throughout many roles and provides for the creation of a culture that models “this is the way we do things here”. Senior leadership team meets weekly to make connections to one another’s work and how areas of focus can be leveraged by supporting one another’s roles. This often includes responsibilities different system leaders have for supporting workplace wellness. Horizon has defined wellness

using the ASEBP Dimensions of emotional, spiritual, intellectual, physical, environmental, financial, occupational and social. Systemic Professional Learning opportunities addresses these dimensions and includes workshops/webinars, Franklin-Covey Wellness and 7 habits series, mental health training and opening keynotes. System leaders work to ensure they circle back to the messages shared in these learning opportunities supporting and modelling the learning and implementation. Horizon framed their presentation around the CASS WW conditions and seek to continue to access the resources to enhance their work. Dr. Wilco Tymensen wilco.tymensen@horizon.ab.ca and Amber Darroch amber.darroch@horizon.ab.ca (Timestamp 31:22 on recording.)

Connections with the Alberta Context

System education leaders play a critical role in ensuring quality school leadership, quality teaching, and optimum learning for all students in Alberta. To meet the respective professional practice standard, all teachers, school leaders, and system leaders need to be in good health.

CASS incorporated the wellness image alongside the standard to reinforce the importance of having the well-being capacity to meet the professional practice standard. All professional practice standards (superintendents, leaders, and teachers) identify competencies and indicators to help describe the standard. The following is an example of a competency and indicator from the Leadership Quality Standard (LQS):

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Fostering Effective Relationships:

A leader builds positive working relationships with members of the school community and local community. Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

Demonstrating a commitment to the health and well-being of all teachers, staff and students.

The SLQS competency, **Building Effective Relationships**, states: “A superintendent establishes a welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe learning environment by building positive and productive relationships with members of the school community and local community.”

The SLQS competency - Building Effective Relationships, states: “A superintendent establishes a welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe learning environment by building positive and productive relationships with members of the school community and local community.” Practice Profiles (<https://cassalberta.ca/resources/practice-profile/>).



Research to Practice

Questions for reflection and dialogue within your context.

1. What workplace wellness practices or programs have the potential to make a positive impact? How do you know?
2. What resources, including research, people, networks, print and electronic forms, might support your workplace wellness plan?

Additional Supports for System Leadership Capacity

- [CASS Workplace Wellness Resources](#)
- “What, How and Who” Learning Opportunity [Padlet](#)
- “What, How and Who” Learning Opportunity [Slides](#)
- A Guide to Support Implementation: [Essential Conditions and Comprehensive Professional Learning](#)



Building Effective Relationships

Modeling Commitment to Professional Learning

Supporting Effective Governance