

MEDIA RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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RE: Darrel Robertson Named Canadian Superintendent of the Year



(EDMONTON) – Darrel Robertson, Superintendent for Edmonton Public Schools, was named the Canadian Superintendent of the Year for 2020 at the Canadian Association of School System Administrators (CASSA) Annual Conference, conducted remotely for a national audience from CASSA's head office in Oakville, Ontario.

Jointly sponsored by Xerox Canada Ltd. and (CASSA), the EXL Award acknowledges exemplary leadership at the school system level, with recipients having enhanced the profession of school system administration throughout their careers. Due to pandemic related restrictions in 2020, the award presentation was deferred to the 2021 Annual General Meeting of CASSA, on July 7, 2021. Dr. Renee Closs, Superintendent of the Sahtú Divisional Education Council in the Northwest Territories joined Robertson as a co-recipient of this award.

This award confirms Mr. Robertson's legacy as a role model for others in being responsive to the well-being and success of students. When Darrel was nominated for his provincial award, Edmonton Public Schools Board Chair, Trisha Estabrooks commented, "The mark of a good leader is the ability to navigate change well. The mark of an excellent leader is the ability to navigate change, while also inspiring others around them to embrace that change. Despite all of the change that has happened, Darrel has never wavered in keeping students at the forefront of every decision we make as a division."

Throughout his leadership as Superintendent with Edmonton Public Schools, Robertson has been credited for fostering and leading through the cornerstone values of accountability, collaboration, equity and integrity. His firm belief that equity is one of the foundations of student success led to the establishment of an equity fund that enables schools to be responsive to the unique needs and emerging challenges faced by some students.

Robertson believes that education leads to a life of dignity and fulfillment and to help all students achieve this, he established Career Pathways, a division-wide Kindergarten to Grade 12 initiative that helps students develop self-awareness and motivates them to explore possibilities for life beyond school.

When COVID-19 resulted in a sudden pivot to learning from home for all students in Alberta, Robertson knew the importance of resources to support teachers and immediately prioritized the establishment of online resources for students and staff within five days of the suspension of in-person classes due to the pandemic. Estabrooks noted that one of Robertson's leadership strengths "is his ability to allow division staff and division leaders to co-create solutions and inspire collaboration."

In addition to receiving this award, Robertson will be acknowledged as the Canadian Superintendent of the Year for 2020 by the American Superintendents Association at its annual conference scheduled for February 17 – 19, 2022, in Nashville, TN. He joins David Keohane (2018), Joan Carr (2016), Kim Jenkins (2013), Ed Witche (2004), and John Darroch (2002) as Alberta superintendents who have received the national award.

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