

## CASS Annual Learning Conference 2022 Highlights

The CASS Annual Learning Conference provided an opportunity to strengthen leadership growth based on the Professional Practice Standards – LQS and SLQS (<https://cass.ab.ca/resources/practice-profile/>) and is based on CASS Professional Learning Goal: *Deepening the understanding and applying the learning to support implementation of professional practice.*

The 2022 Annual Learning Conference was the first face to face conference CASS hosted since FALL 2019. (Annual 2020 cancelled, Summer 2020, Fall 2020, Annual 2021, Summer 2021 and Fall 2021 delivered online)

The conference themes were informed by the Role Alike data, emerging provincial needs and in consultation with the SLQS Professional Learning committee, representing zone members input. The use of CASS Pro-spective provided an opportunity to gather members input on emergent topics through a world café process, was used as a follow up opportunity for the data leadership preconference and gathered input from system leaders on how to address the recommendations from the Child and Youth Wellbeing review. You can access CASS Prospective information at <https://cassprospective.ca/>

**Leslee Jodry, Deputy Superintendent** Northern Gateway, represented the system leadership team (Chief Superintendent Kevin Bird, System leaders Bev Cotton, Tammy Davis and Lorna Vardy), and offered a reflection of their learning from the conference. Components of the message she shared include:

*I'd like to start by saying our cups are full and overflowing. From reconnecting to many who have had significant impact on our professional journeys to building new connections with those with common commitment to learning and education in this province, each connection is valued.*

*All of you in this room represent the passionate, dedicated educators who keep our focus on the work and the kids. These last two days have also highlighted the value and necessity of the collaboration and collegiality of our work. The CASS community is significant to the education community that impacts how we work.*

*What are the takeaways of this valued time? We value the expertise of our colleagues. We value the dialogue and the opportunity for sharing. We value the opportunity to reconnect and to build new connections. We value the common understanding that we should not be doing the work in isolation. We value the power of the whole and being vulnerable to realize the power is in working together.*

*Some of the big ideas we are walking away with after this time of learning and connecting include:*

- *We are all in this together; We have structures in place to use*
- *We need to make sure connections are strong between what we are doing and what is coming; Wisdom is in the room and within us*
- *We must share and connect; Collaboration and networking are necessary and appreciated*
- *Again, Wisdom is in the room, leverage it; We are on the right track - especially when we work together; Mistakes will be made, we will continue to move forward*
- *Listening to each other empowers us all*
- *Being part of this work and this collaborative atmosphere creates a sense of pride; Make sure connections are strong between what we are doing and what is coming; Once again, Wisdom is in the room*

265 Alberta system leaders attended the CASS Annual Learning Conference representing **95% of Alberta School Authorities** (Public, Separate and Francophone); Charter schools, First Nation School authorities and education partners were also in attendance.

More than 25 system leaders and education partners, representing 20 different school authorities were willing to share their “**Stories of Practice**” at the variety of concurrent sessions offered. System leaders involved also include the lead facilitator for the valued Role Alike time. The presentation slide decks and resources are available on the [conference website](#).

#### An overview of Annual Learning conference delegates survey data:

1. This professional learning opportunity contributed to my growth and understanding of system leader professional practice. 100% either strongly agree or agree
2. I plan to apply my learning in my school authority. 100% either strongly agree or agree
3. An aspect of this learning opportunity that made it meaningful is:
  - Opportunities to collaborate with colleagues – 41 responses
  - Learning from Stories of Practice – 24 responses
  - Specific Content/sessions – 15 responses e.g., curriculum implementation, role alike, data leadership, instructional leadership, HR legal issues
  - *The timeliness and relevance of the topics presented and discussed (Survey Comment)*
4. An aspect of this learning opportunity that might be improved is:
  - Conference design – 34 responses e.g., more role alike time, follow up from role alike, mentoring of new members, not back-to-back conferences, role alike not grouped, opportunity for repeat sessions, more world café dealing with issues
  - Specific Session ideas: more Indigenous representation, keep it current and relevant to the SLQS, Research based opening keynote
  - *It was so wonderful to be together, the discussions were valuable. More time for discussion would have been great... but it would have taken another week! (Survey Comment)*
5. One thing I require to further support my professional learning is:
  - Specific Sessions such as: staff wellness, current research, effective governance, current issues, evidence-based leadership practices, CASS objects, curriculum implementation, inclusive education, stakeholder engagement, coherence with SLQS, staffing practices
  - Conference design such as: access to presenters slides beforehand, reading preconference, collaboration time, extended role alike
  - *More time to collaborate. While I appreciate the work of our zone, there is significant amounts of work happening in other zones that I was unaware of. Continuous opportunities to hear about the good work happening around the province is great for smaller boards who have smaller teams. (Survey Comment)*
  - *Continued support on current issues. (Survey Comment)*
6. General Comments
  - *Love the CASS pro-spective.*
  - *As always, the conference was very well organized, and information was shared in a timely manner. It would be great to know ahead of time which slide presentations are available on the CASS site so I can tailor my notes during the sessions accordingly, but this wasn't a big problem. Thanks for a great conference!*
  - *I quite enjoyed getting back together in person for this conference and as a first-time event participant at CASS it was so amazing to be engaged with such amazing leaders!*