

The CASS Annual Learning Conference provided an opportunity to strengthen leadership growth based on the [LOS and SLOS](#) Professional Practice Standards and the role system education leaders have in leading and supporting optimum learning for all students in Alberta.

Over 275 CASS members attended the conference, held in Edmonton on March 22-24. Conference attendees represented 90% of school authorities in Alberta.

Christopher Usih, Chief Superintendent of Schools, Calgary Board of Education reflected on the value of the conference.

*“Several CBE colleagues and I participated in the recent CASS Annual Learning Conference in Edmonton. The sessions were informative, relevant, and timely. I very much appreciate the opportunity to learn and share with colleagues from other school divisions. Irrespective of size of division, meaningful collaboration and stakeholder engagement contribute to improved outcomes for all students and staff.”*

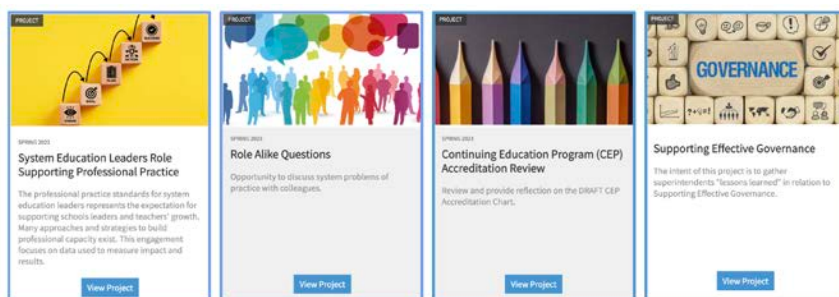
The conference program was designed based on members’ survey input from the fall conference as well as input received from Zones in November/December 2022. 16 school authorities: Battle River, Calgary Board of Education, Edmonton Catholic, Edmonton Public, Foothills, Fort McMurray Catholic, Grasslands, Grande Yellowhead, Greater St. Albert Catholic, Holy Family Catholic, New Horizons Charter, Palliser, St. Albert Public, St. Paul Education, Wetaskiwin and Wolf Creek, with 4 education partners: Alberta Assessment Consortium, McLennan Ross, Jigsaw Learning, and University of Calgary, facilitated sessions at the conference. The program, as well as presenters’ slides, and materials are available on the [conference website](#).

### [CASS Pro-spective](#) (Members’ Professional Perspective)

The conference provided an opportunity to engage members through CASS Pro-spective, framed around current and emergent education topics. Members’ survey feedback on the CASS Prospective site includes:

- *I really like the CASS pro-spective. Using the conference sessions is a good way to increase its use as the pro-spective can often provide valuable insights and different ways of thinking about differing ideas.*
- *I also greatly appreciate how CASS Pro-spective was organized - how people were expected to type in their learnings/experiences for all to see. It is great to have all this information readily available to refer back to.*

The engagement site, intended to gather members’ expertise and professional perspective, also provides feedback to the CASS Board about members views and practice, and assists CASS in providing supports and services that meet members’ needs. The projects focused on this conference include:



**System Education Leaders Role Supporting Professional Practice – Pre-Conference**

The pre-conference provided an overview of the results of the Alberta Post-Secondary collective research on implementation of the professional practice standards and stories of practice of how school authorities are supporting teachers and leaders professional learning. The intent of the pre-conference was to focus on how professional learning is designed to support teachers and school leaders capacity as well as how to measure impact of actions and supports provided. Pre-conference materials from the presenters, as well as members contributions through CASS Pro-spective is available here.

**Dr. Jordan Tinney ([www.jordantinney.org](http://www.jordantinney.org))**

As a result of a partnership with the [Canadian Association of School System Administrators](http://www.cassa.ca) (CASSA), and access to the expertise of Dr. Jordan Tinney, CASS was able to adapt, for our context,



conversation starter papers on *Adaptive Leadership and Contextual Literacy* that were presented at the FALL conferences. Dr. Tinney returned for this conference and presented two additional papers titled *Leading for Equity and Compassionate Leadership*. These “conversation starters” are posted in the [CASS Resource Library](#) and suitable for individual reflection, as well as system or school leadership learning opportunities.

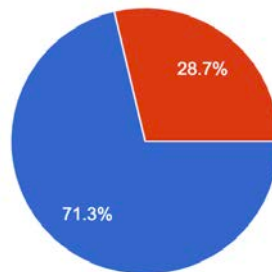
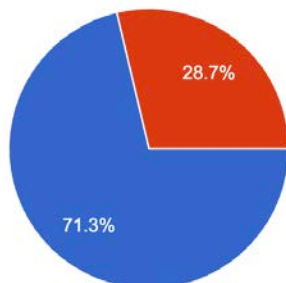
Dr. Tinney also facilitated an interview with Mike Wake, Superintendent of Wetaskiwin Regional Schools, Joline Bull, Trustee appointed by the Four Chiefs of Maskwacis Nations, and Mario Swampy, Board Member (education) on Maskwacis Nation, Minister and Acting Chief. The group modelled how they have built relationships with the intent of supporting student learning. The panel explored colonial perspectives in today’s workplace and the impact Treaties, and the language of Treaties, have had on governance systems and learning for Indigenous children. Members survey comments included:



- *Friday keynote inspired me to challenge my leadership team to think about systemic racism in a different way.*
- *Appreciated the ‘action-oriented’ focus of Jordan Tinney’s presentation. I valued being challenged to reflect on, and to commit to, taking action re: our learning.*
- *The panel discussion was very powerful and aligned with my recent professional reading*

**Conference survey results** indicate a high degree of satisfaction as well as ideas for improvement. 40% of delegates responded to the Conference survey. A summary, generated by an artificial intelligence tool and checked for validity, will be used to plan future learning opportunities. Summary comments include:

- This professional learning opportunity contributed to my understanding of the professional practice standard.



- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

- I plan to apply my learning in my school authority.

- An aspect of this learning opportunity that made it meaningful is:
  - a. The attendees appreciated the chance to share experiences, perspectives, and best practices with their colleagues and learn from other jurisdictions.
  - b. The program sessions shared were relevant to attendees' day to day work.
  - c. Survey respondents shared appreciation for Dr. Jordan Tinney's keynote presentation as well as the panel representing the Wetaskiwin Regional Public School community.
  
- An aspect of this learning opportunity that might be improved is:
  - a. Providing more opportunity for divisional teams to unpack learnings from each day.
  - b. Shorter sessions with engagement opportunities. Time for reflection and wellness.
  - c. The session should be more interactive and focus on problem-solving discussions to move issues forward.
  - d. Creating more unstructured opportunities and under-programming would be appreciated.
  
- One thing I require to further support my professional learning is:
  - a. A variety of interests related to professional growth were identified and include topics such as: Anti Racism and diversity, mentorship programs, effective governance, engaging with indigenous communities, succession planning, leadership team capacity, employment law, Human Resources sessions, Inclusion and Mental Health.
  - b. Survey responses also highlight the importance of networking and connecting with colleagues, having time to reflect and apply new learning, accessing a range of session formats, presenters that offered opportunities for engagement during sessions and resources shared.



[Resources used and shared at the conference](#) and intended to support continued learning following the conference.

Resources to support members continued professional growth can be found on the [CASS website](#).

