

The College of Alberta School Superintendents upholds the standard of practice for system education leaders in Alberta.

Annual Report 2023-2024



Table of Contents

Introduction	4
Who We Are? Why We Exist? What We Do?	4
President’s Message	5
Chief Executive Officer’s Message	7
Board of Directors	9
Opportunities for Improvement:.....	9
Membership in Review	11
Governance - The Role and Work of CASS Committees	12
Zone Committees.....	14
Zone Executive.....	15
External Standing Committees.....	16
External Stakeholder Committee.....	16
Policy 16 Update	19
Conditional Grant Deliverables.....	20
Deliverable 1: Excellence in System Leader Professional Practice.....	21
Mentorship	21
Mentorship Program Literature Review	22
Education Workforce Study: Teacher and Leader Recruitment and Retention in Alberta	22
Measuring the Impact of Quality System Education Leadership: A Literature Scan	23
Creating Optimal Learning Conditions for all Students Through Implementing Professional Practice Standards	23
Deliverable 2: Enhancing Implementation of Inclusive Education and Specialized Educational Supports for Students.....	24
Communities of Practice	24
Webinars on “A Systematic Approach to Promoting Positive Student Mental Health”	25
Deliverable 3: Success for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Students	26
Grow in Kinship for Student Success at the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Education Gathering	26
Reflections from CASS President Dr. Andrea Holowka.....	28
Deliverable 4: Success for Students through Skilled Trades, Apprenticeships, and Vocational Education.....	29
Celebrating Trades, Apprenticeship, and Vocational Education (TAVE)	29

Deliverable 5: Classroom Complexity Grant: Supporting and Strengthening the Strategic Purpose	31
Research Report: Classroom Complexity Grant: Supporting and Strengthening the Strategic Purpose	32
Research Report: Addressing Classroom Complexity at the System Level: Environmental Scan and Review of Literature	32
Deliverable 6: Improving the Professional Practice of CASS Regulated Members	33
The CASS Continuing Education Program	33
CEP Logo Unveiled	33
CEP Guiding Principle #1 – Responsive	33
CEP Guiding Principle #2 – Research-Informed	34
CEP Guiding Principle #3 – Innovative	34
CEP Learning Outcomes	34
CEP Accreditation Requirements in a Nutshell	35
CASS’ Continuing Education Program (CEP) Bookmark	35
Deliverable 7: Establishing Sustainable Teacher Recruitment and Retention Practices	36
Alberta Regional Professional Development Consortia (ARPDC) / Alberta Professional Learning Consortium (APLC)	36
ARPDC Promising Results	36
A New Brand for K - 12 Professional Learning Across Alberta	37
ProQuest Education	38
Land Acknowledgment Project	38
Professional Learning	39
Webinar – Discover Promising Leadership Practices for Grades 1-3 Students	39
Fall Pre-conference - Mental Health in Schools	39
Fall Conference – November 1-3, 2024	40
Fall Conference By the Numbers	40
Fall Conference Highlights	41
Artificial Intelligence (AI): Implications for Policy and Practice	43
Reflections on the 2024 Annual Learning Conference: Insights and Opportunities – March 20-22, 2024	44
The Benefits of Breaking Down the Silos Between Inclusion and Curriculum	47
Leadership Foundations - The Focus of the Start Right and Leading for Learning Program (July 2024)	47

Introduction

Who We Are? Why We Exist? What We Do?

The College of Alberta School Superintendents (CASS) remains committed to its vision of Leadership and System Excellence by supporting the development of system education leaders who are dedicated to ensuring optimal learning experiences for all students. As a legislatively empowered professional body, CASS plays a pivotal role in shaping education across the K–12 public education system in Alberta.

At the core of our mission, CASS strives to enhance leadership capacity within school systems, ensuring that each leader has the tools, knowledge, and expertise required to provide the highest quality of education for every student. As a learned body of seasoned educators, CASS members bring valuable experience from classroom teaching, school administration, and system education leadership, which informs their ability to support and guide ongoing educational advancements.

CASS is a trusted partner to the Ministry of Education, providing advice and guidance that help to shape the successful implementation of ministerial initiatives. Furthermore, CASS is deeply committed to serving the public interest by ensuring that its regulated members meet the highest standards of professional practice. Through the Continuing Education Program (CEP), our members engage in ongoing professional learning that aligns with Alberta’s professional practice standards, strengthening their capacity to lead with excellence.

This annual report highlights our progress, achievements, and continued dedication to fostering leadership that empowers our school systems and, most importantly success in learning for students. As we reflect on this year’s accomplishments, we reaffirm our commitment to advancing the cause of education in Alberta, improving the teaching profession and leadership of the education system, maintaining and improving the competence of our members, and working with all other organizations and bodies having the same or similar aims and objects.

President's Message

This past year within CASS has been one of growing, rebuilding, and refining both our internal and external impact and support for K-12 education across the province.



Doing so requires tremendous commitment and expertise from the many members that have contributed during the past year in so many ways. Alberta's provincial landscape presents great diversity across local contexts, with the common goal of creating successful learning experiences for students. CASS's commitment to supporting the development of system education leaders through conferences, zone meetings, committees, and learning opportunities has allowed for strong alignment in professional learning while allowing for reflection and application within local school authorities.

As CASS president, I was able to attend each zone meeting across the province and visited each zone meeting in person at least once during the year. Through this lens, I observed committed system education leaders approach similar challenges and opportunities with distinct approaches and nuances required to advance student learning within their own school authorities.

With the heavy lifting of the governance model established, CASS was able to focus outward on working with government and other partners in education. I would like to commend the leadership of our CASS CEO, David Keohane, who has continued to forge partnerships and collaborations with broader interest holders across province. Together, CASS provided significant provincial leadership and support through the strength of the Executive Committee, comprised of Dr. Clint Moroziuk, Mike McMann, Dr. Wilco Tymensen, and Dr. Dwayne Zarichny, along with the rest of the Board including Lynnette Anderson, Krimsen Sumners, Greg Wedman, Vincent Behm, Brigitte Kropelnicki, and Dr. Daphne Mai'Stoina. During this past year involving many significant changes in education, we have continued to provide meaningful partnership and support.

The ongoing development of the Continuing Education Program (CEP) has enabled the organization to fulfill its legislative requirements in providing a structured and accountable process for membership professional learning. Our CASS principal leadership consultant, Dr. Gloria Antifaiff, alongside the CEP committee, has laid the groundwork for members to participate in and document their progressive learning in alignment with the *Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard* and the *Leadership Quality Standard* beginning in the 2024-2025 school year. This structure is not only befitting of a professional organization such as CASS, but I also look forward to watching our membership continue to grow as individuals and collectively to meet the challenges that will

undoubtedly lie before system education leaders in the upcoming years.

Similarly, the consolidation of the various learning consortia across the province into the formation of the collective Alberta Professional Learning Consortium (APLC) will benefit all educators in their collective learning needs. Led by Executive Director Todd Robinson, our APLC Directors have joined together to rebrand and solidify this provincial organization to make available all offerings and resources to teachers and teacher leaders across the province.

With so many irons in the fire, both in supporting the needs of members with their learning and supports, as well as shaping K-12 education across the province, CASS must remain a leader in education across the province. With the strength of our entire membership, the Board of 2024-2025, and the support of our CEO, David Keohane, and the mighty executive assistant, Claudine Cortes, I am confident that the investment that CASS has made within will continue to shape the educational landscape in Alberta.

The future of CASS is bright, and I look forward to watching it continue to flourish and evolve to meet the needs of our members and ultimately support all of Alberta's educational systems, schools, and students.



Dr. Andrea Holowka
President, 2023-2024

Chief Executive Officer's Message



It has been said that a strong foundation is not just the beginning of a structure; it is the bedrock of its future success. In 2023-2024, the College of Alberta School Superintendents (CASS) set out to complete the work of its Continuing Education Plan. This plan is mandated by legislation for the participation of all our regulated members and serves as the basis through which they demonstrate to the public that they are accredited on an annual basis through professional learning. Annual accreditation of regulated members furthers the public interest in excellent service to students through system educational leadership.

Now that our Continuing Education Plan, which was slated for implementation by September 2024, is fully operational, all other core functions of CASS will deliver greater benefits to the education system.

We can enhance our members' capacity to address competencies within the Leadership and Superintendent Leadership Practice Standards. Since all practice standards in Alberta's education system are complementary and rely on each other to optimize learning for students, we can bridge our commitment to learning with the expertise of our members, who have served at every level of the education system. This synergy positions us as a strong source of guidance on how to implement educational goals and policies meaningfully. Furthermore, we are poised to be a trusted advisor to the Ministry and members within their local school authorities, upholding the critical responsibility of ensuring that regulatory and policy-based decisions best meet student needs.

Through this report, you will gain insight into how CASS's governance structure brings coherence to our mandate. You will also understand how our conditional grant from the provincial government has enhanced the implementation of provincial priorities for growth within the K-12 system over the past year. Additionally, CASS's role in overseeing the Alberta Professional Learning Consortium has significantly impacted professional learning throughout the province.

I would like to thank all the dedicated board members, consultants, and employees for their efforts in laying the groundwork for CASS to grow as an organization in the future. CASS is a collective concept, and each of its members contributes to upholding the standard of practice for system education leaders in the province. With one in four members contributing to projects dedicated to building capacity and more than 90% of member school authorities attending conferences annually, the status of our college is indicative of our members' strong commitment to it.

Lastly, I extend my gratitude to Past President, Andrea Holowka and all our Board Directors at the CASS Provincial table as well as those who serve on the executives of local zones for keeping the pulse

of our organization alive. This work is often done on top of considerable service these leaders undertake for their own school authorities. Thank you for making space for our organization amidst your many employment-related responsibilities.

System education leaders play an essential role in supporting the vision of student success established by the Ministry and local governing boards, as well as in verifying that all efforts within a school authority meet or exceed established outcomes. May this report validate the commitment of CASS's membership to fulfill this vital responsibility.



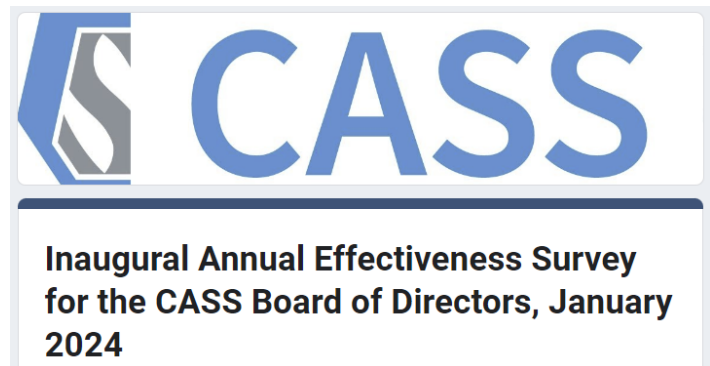
David Keohane
Chief Executive Officer

Board of Directors

The CASS Board of Directors plays a critical role in overseeing the governance and operations of CASS as a professional organization. In 2023-2024, the Board's work was centered on several strategic priorities aimed at reinforcing the organization's effectiveness and impact. Key discussions focused on deepening relationships with educational stakeholders, refining governance policies, and strengthening zone committees to enhance provincial engagement. The Board also guided the development and implementation of CASS' Continuing Education Program (CEP), ensuring that system education leaders are well prepared to meet their professional practice standards. Additionally, the Board provided oversight for the Alberta Professional Learning Consortium (APLC) and conducted a thorough review of CASS' budget priorities, ensuring the effective use of resources and the successful fulfillment of grant deliverables.

In 2023-2024, the Board, within the mandate of the Governance and Nominating Committee (GNC), responded to an Annual Effectiveness Survey, with questions to demonstrate the Board's compliance with governance practices.

The annual effectiveness survey results revealed key areas of success and opportunities for improvement.



Key Achievements:

- Board policies are clear, well-structured, and align with the governance mandate. These policies provide a strong framework for operations and decision-making.
- The nomination process is seen as open, democratic, and effective, though aligning zone and provincial representation could be enhanced in the future.
- Orientation and continuing education for board members are helpful, particularly in understanding governance practices. The June meeting remains crucial for planning.
- Board members value the information management and flexible meeting schedules, enabling efficient use of time and resources. The rotational executive and committee participation ensure balanced involvement.
- Administrative and external supports are highly appreciated, with the board considered to have made significant progress due to the active work of these resources.

Opportunities for Improvement:

- Enhancing the onboarding process for new board members with dedicated time for understanding the board's structure and strategy was recommended and acted upon.

As a result of the survey, an onboarding session for new Board members have been planned. This onboarding session is crucial for new Board members because it provides them with a comprehensive

understanding of the Board's structure, governance framework, and strategic priorities. It ensures that they are well-versed in their roles, responsibilities, and the organization's mandate. Effective onboarding accelerates new members' integration into their governance roles, empowering them to actively contribute to discussions and decision-making processes. Additionally, it fosters alignment with the Board's culture and operational processes, enhancing overall effectiveness. By addressing any knowledge gaps early on, onboarding minimizes confusion and promotes smoother collaboration, ensuring new members are fully equipped to support the Board's mandate.



President
Dr. Andrea Holowka
Superintendent
Christ the Redeemer
Catholic Schools



1st Vice President
Dr. Clint Moroziuk
Superintendent
Greater St. Albert
Catholic Schools



**2nd Vice President &
Zone 1 Director**
Mike McMann
Superintendent
Fort Vermilion School
Division



Past President
Dr. Wilco Tymensen
Superintendent
Horizon School Division



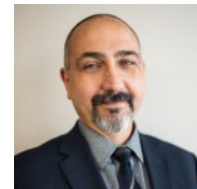
Zone 2/3 Director
Krimsen Summers
Superintendent
St. Albert Public Schools



Zone 4 Director
Greg Wedman
Deputy Superintendent
Wild Rose School
Division



Zone 5 Director
Vince Behm
Deputy Superintendent
Christ the Redeemer
Catholic Schools



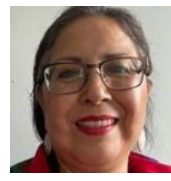
Zone 6 Director
Dr. Dwayne Zarichny
Superintendent
Medicine Hat Catholic
Board of Education



**Director – Metro
School Authority**
Lynnette Anderson
Chief Superintendent
Edmonton Catholic
Schools



**Director – Francophone
School Authority**
Brigitte Kropielnicki
Directrice générale /
Superintendent of
Schools
Conseil scolaire du Nord-
Ouest



**Director – First Nations
School Authority
(Treaty 8)**
Dr. Daphne Mai'Stoina
Superintendent
Kee Tas Kee Now Tribal
Council Education

*We have come a
long way since
being legislated
and the work
being done is
ground-breaking.*

Comment from the Annual
Effectiveness Survey

Membership in Review



As of the report at the November Annual General Meeting, CASS' records showed a membership of **430** members. Before this year, the largest membership was in 2017 with 404 members. In 2013, CASS only had 257 members in total.

Of the total 430 members, the breakdown of membership types are as follows:

- 348 Regulated members (339 last year; 2.65% increase)
- 27 Associate members
- 55 Affiliate members

There are 235 female members and 195 male members with CASS.

For interest's sake, time periods demonstrating when current members "first joined" are as follows:

- 1989 – 2009 = 25 members
- 2010 – 2019 = 216 members
- 2020 – present = 189 members (158 last year; 20% increase)



Our Impact

The College of Alberta School Superintendents (CASS) plays a pivotal role in advancing system education leadership across the province, driving excellence through professional growth, collaboration, and innovative practices. By equipping system education leaders with the skills and knowledge to navigate complex challenges, CASS ensures that leadership at all levels is focused on creating optimal learning environments. Our commitment to leadership development directly contributes to improved educational outcomes, fostering inclusive and equitable learning opportunities for all students, and ultimately strengthening the quality of education throughout Alberta.

Governance - The Role and Work of CASS Committees

Committees in CASS are an extremely important part of our organization, and they exist at different levels of focus and responsibility, with the intent of making their influence evident in different but meaningful and interconnected ways. Therefore, it is important to take the time to address their roles and relationships to each other within CASS' broader governance framework.



When CASS received legislated status as a professional organization, there was a significant amount of time taken to study and interpret how other professional organizations and colleges organize themselves. At the time, our organization benefited from the contributions of board members who were either familiar with or had representation on university and other professional boards. Efforts were therefore taken to emulate the work of core committee structures that are common to these organizations, which includes a Board Executive Committee, Governance and Nominating Committee, and Audit and Risk Management Committee. These committees are known as standing committees since their work is continually dedicated to sustaining the success of the Board in meeting its fundamental governance responsibilities.

As confirmed by our bylaws, CASS exists to enhance the relevancy of system education leadership within Alberta's K – 12 public education system through four specific focuses and behaviours:

- ✓ **Provide Requested, Required, and Accessible Professional Learning** - Build the capacity of system education leaders to ensure optimal learning for all students in the public K – 12 education system.
- ✓ **Function in an Advisory Capacity to the Provincial Learning System** - Serve as a learned body of educators who have proven expertise in classroom teaching, school, and system-based administration.
- ✓ **Act as a Trusted Supporter of the Work of the Ministry** - Serve as a proven partner with the Ministry of Education who assists in providing advice and support for the implementation of Ministerial initiatives.
- ✓ **Serve the Public Interest for Excellent System Education Leadership** - Assure that regulated members participate in a Continuing Education Program (CEP) that addresses Alberta's professional practice standards for system education leaders.

It is the dedicated work of each standing and external committee of CASS that enables these responsibilities to be fulfilled.

Executive Committee

While the Board formally meets ten times per year to address education matters of importance, work needs to be conducted between these meetings and this is where the Executive Committee takes an active role.

As a standing committee, the **Executive Committee** is comprised of the president, first vice president, second vice president, a board member selected by the Board, and the past president and CEO as non-voting members.

In between Board meetings, the Executive Committee may be convened to address matters of government and external relations, review agenda items for Board meetings, and address matters arising daily that do not have a material impact upon the authority of the corporate Board (i.e., approving a budget or amending bylaws and policy). This committee is also a mechanism to ensure an ongoing liaison role between the Board and CEO.

Governance and Nominating Committee

Another extremely important standing committee that is dedicated to CASS achieving its mandate is the **Governance and Nominating Committee** (GNC). This committee exists to confirm that the Board follows appropriate governance practices, recommends new candidates for membership on the CASS Board, and establishes committee representation from the regulated membership. Within its work, the GNC performs an analysis of the succession planning for the Board, addresses any gap analysis that is required to assure that the competencies and personal attributes required to be a board

member are fulfilled, and assures that the requirements for all external committees are addressed through an appropriate representation of the geography of the province. This committee also approves all external committee appointments and annually assesses the effectiveness of the Board in meeting its mandate through governing policies, bylaws, and the CASS' Continuing Education Program (CEP). Since CASS is in its infancy in establishing program prerequisites and the accreditation standards of the CEP, an advisory committee was structured to assist the GNC in approving on-going plans for the CEP. Membership in the GNC committee includes the president, first vice president, two zone directors as selected by the Board, the public board member, and the CEO as a non-voting member.

Audit and Risk Management Committee

A standing committee that assists the Board in meeting its fiduciary duties is the **Audit and Risk Management Committee**, which annually reviews financial practices throughout the organization and conducts a risk assessment of external and internal variables that can impact organizational viability and effectiveness. The president, and no fewer than two but no more than four additional Board members as selected by the Board, work with the CEO regarding these topics who also serves as a non-voting member.

Zone Committees

CASS is organized into five Zones, representing different geographic regions in Alberta.

Zone committees, as permanent standing bodies within CASS, are dedicated to representing the interests of all regulated members in their respective regions. Composed exclusively of system education leaders, these committees address matters relevant to their zones and serve the needs of CASS' membership. Each zone committee has an executive committee that acts on its behalf between meetings, and they are empowered to shape agendas tailored to the specific priorities of their local members.

While the purposes of the previously identified Board committees significantly contribute to the overarching identity of CASS, their relevance is equally profound at the local level within individual school authorities. This explains why CASS, within each of its five zones, facilitates ongoing communication and liaison work with the Board through predetermined committee expectations.

Every regulated member of CASS is a representative of at least one of its standing committees, and for the majority of our members, this includes representation within their zone committees. As expressed in our bylaws, zone committees are dedicated to addressing the interests of all regulated members within these zones. Any business addressed through the agenda of a zone committee is subject to the exclusive information and deliberation of those who legislatively hold the right to title as system education leaders. Therefore, zone committees serve the needs of regulated members. Zone committees shall form executive committees, consisting of table officers, who may act on behalf of the zone committee between meetings of the zone.

Each zone committee has a member who is also a member on the CASS Board. Known as zone

directors, these members act in a formal liaison role between their zone committees and the Board. Zone directors are normally elected to the Board by their local zone committee members for two-year terms and throughout this time, are empowered within the bylaws to do the following:

- Share with the Board any emergent zone recommendations, concerns, or issues that are adopted by zone resolution and are formalized in writing to the Board.
- Communicate decisions made by the Board to the zone committee.
- Inform the president immediately of any controversy or matter developing in the zone which may have important implications for CASS.
- Keep the Board informed of any important zone committee decisions that have been made.
- Assist the Chief Executive Officer and zone committee chair with establishing an up-to-date zone register of regulated members and assure that only regulated members participate with the business of the zone.
- Represent the interests of their zone but ultimately make decisions in the best interest of CASS as a whole.

Zone Executive

Zone 1 (Northwest)

Chair: Alexander “Sandy” McDonald
Superintendent, Grande Prairie Public School Division

Vice Chair: Stephanie Sutherland
Director of Students Services, Northland School Division

Secretary/Treasurer: Kimberly Frykas
Director of System Planning, Grande Prairie Public School Division

Zone 4 (Central)

Chair: Mike Wake
Superintendent, Wetaskiwin Regional Public Schools

Vice Chair: Natasha Wilm
Assistant Superintendent – Human Resources, Battle River School Division

Secretary: Tim De Ruyck
Superintendent, Wolf Creek School Division

Zone 6 (South)

Chair: Carmen Larsen
Director of Learning, Holy Spirit Catholic School Division

Vice Chair: Robbie Charlebois
Associate Superintendent of Human Resources, Lethbridge School Division

Treasurer: Dr. Wilco Tymensen
Superintendent, Horizon School Division

Secretary: Lisa Furukawa
Director of Learning (Support Services), Livingstone Range School Division

Zone 2/3 (Edmonton and surrounding area, Northeast)

Chair: Cindy Escott
Superintendent, Evergreen Catholic Schools

Vice Chair: Terri Reid
Curriculum Manager, Black Gold School Division

Secretary: Laurie Kardynal
Assistant Superintendent – Learning Services, St. Thomas Aquinas Roman Catholic Schools

Zone 5 (Calgary and surrounding area)

Chair: Allen Davidson
Assistant Superintendent of Employee Services, Foothills School Division

Vice Chair: Debbie McKibbin
Deputy Superintendent, Canadian Rockies School Division

Secretary/Treasurer: Jeff Grimsdale
Superintendent, Golden Hills School Division

Each zone committee brings together representatives from different regions of the province to provide localized insights, ensuring diverse perspectives are considered in decision-making. It fosters collaboration, addresses region-specific challenges, and enhances communication between local and provincial bodies, leading to more informed policies and advocacy efforts that reflect the unique needs of each zone.

External Standing Committees

Our bylaws define **External Standing Committees** as unique entities dedicated to championing the cause of education for the public good. They not only involve the active participation of our educational partner organizations but also welcomes the valuable contributions of non-regulated affiliate members of CASS. These committees are always Board-approved and may change in scope and purpose from time to time. In 2023-2024, two active committees of this kind were CASS' **Women in Leadership Committee** and the **First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Education Action Committee**. Both committees played pivotal roles in our collective mission as a professional organization.

Common provisions through which external standing committees operate are outlined in the Bylaws as follows:

- Each External Standing Committee of the College will create a terms of reference established through a Board policy to assist representatives of the College in their participation and to inform the Board and membership of the progress of these committees.
- The Board, through the Governance and Nominating Committee, approves the terms of reference for these committees and any powers that have been afforded to them.
- Regulated members on these committees are expected to apply the vision, mission, values, objects of the College, as well as its belief statements in furthering the outcomes of these committees.
- Typically, the Executive Committee of the Board, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), or appointed regulated members of the College participate within these committees.

To effectively govern the dynamic scope of external standing committees and ensure their alignment with the CASS' objectives, the Bylaws mandate the Board to exercise vigilant oversight. This includes:

- making the decision to continue, discontinue, or add external standing committees by resolution as required
- appointing or removing, in its sole discretion, members of Standing Committees

External Stakeholder Committee

The other external committee category that CASS participates within is that of the **External Stakeholder Committee**. This committee is enacted when external partners request that regulated members or CASS' CEO be part of a committee that is governed by the external partner. These committees may have a regional focus specific to a CASS zone, such as representation on a university advisory program, or they may be dedicated to a provincial focus, such as the Alberta School Athletic Association, or representation on a committee of the Alberta Teachers' Association.

When the Ministry of Education requests of CASS to serve as an external partner, this represents the most frequent application of an external stakeholder committee. CASS bylaws indicate that when a request is made of the CEO or president to address a matter arising in the ministry that addresses a

topic of immediate interest or time sensitivity, the Executive Committee of the Board shall determine how to respond to the request.

On the Right Path



The 2023-2025 strategic plan represents the collaborative efforts of the Board of Directors and the members of the College. Its scope of application was significantly dedicated to the reality that CASS received legislated status through the *College of Alberta School Superintendents Act*.

The Board, with consideration of research, an analysis process that incorporated a PESTLE and SWOT analysis, and the application of Alberta stories of practice, have informed its development.

Evidence of Success to Support Success Indicators within the 2023 – 2025 Strategic Plan

Priority 1 - Communicate our Structure, Purpose and Work

Make the goals of CASS, objects, committee structures, and its Continuing Education Program (CEP) effectively articulated and known to members.

- ✓ **Establish and communicate mandate letters for each internal standing committee;**
 - ✓ At the September 7, 2023, Board Meeting, mandate memos were circulated to all internal standing committee representatives. A meeting calendar for the year was established for each internal standing committee to address the topics contained within the memos.
- ✓ **Use CASS Connects and Zone Committee Meeting updates to clarify the role of CASS committee structure;**
 - ✓ Updates in CASS Connects and Speaking Notes for Zone Directors were used to clarify the work of each committee.

- ✓ **Establish a communication plan for the implementation of the Continuing Education Program (CEP) to ensure all regulated members understand the requirements for accreditation.**
 - ✓ CEP Committee meeting minutes were posted on the CASS website and CASS Connects was used to clarify updates and well as further responses to Frequently Asked Questions

Priority 2 - Enhance Professional Development Networks Between ARPDC Regions

Enhance the focus of ARPDC to centralize accessibility to regional sessions and locally developed resources.

- ✓ **Rebrand the focus of ARPDC so that it explicitly furthers accessibility of regional work to all areas of the province.**
 - ✓ The Board approved the rebrand of ARPDC to the Alberta Professional Learning Consortium – APLC.
 - ✓ The Ministry supported this change by updating the Funding Manual to reflect this change.
 - ✓ A new logo and purpose statement was established and communicated to provincial members focusing on “the consortium” and a logo that promotes each of the six provincial regions, the Provincial Francophone, and the Province as three links within a collective focus for the organization. This will be highlighted in this annual report under the heading - **The Consortium.**

Priority 3 – Strengthen Partner Relationships for the Public Cause of Education

Work with the Ministry and educational partners to support our work and to increase public interest in the importance of education.

- **Pursue continued assistance from the Ministry through conditional grants in furthering government priorities and building the professional capacity of members to effectively implement the Business Plan for Education and other provincial priorities;**
 - ✓ A conditional grant was approved by the Ministry based upon mutually established priorities.
- **Provide situational advice to government and Ministry regarding its implementation of policy priorities;**
 - ✓ Monthly meetings were conducted between the CASS President / CEO and the Chief of Staff, Deputy Minister, and ADM of Support Services.
 - ✓ CASS provided specific feedback on new curriculum, digital assessments, expediting certification of new teachers, and addressing teacher shortages.
 - ✓ The Board met with the Minister and provided feedback on the budget, new curriculum, and teacher shortages.

- **Promote the communication of Ministry initiatives that impact planning and resourcing on behalf of students to superintendents;**
 - ✓ CASS furthered the development of a provincial technology and vocation implementation strategy through TAVE to assist school authorities optimize their implementation of Dual Credit and Collegiate Programming.
 - ✓ CASS assisted the Ministry in understanding ways to address gender education issues and cell phone use in schools.
- **Further dialogue to generate matters of common interest with the ATA;**
 - ✓ CASS met with the ATA to address emerging topics of interest including an exploration of the ATA's interest in promoting the teaching profession publicly.
- **Advocate for the System Education Leader Profession and develop awareness of CASS' value to the K - 12 education system to policymakers within the government and the opposition party**
 - ✓ An awareness meeting about the work of CASS and its Continuing Education Program was conducted with the education partners.
 - ✓ The Ministry funded the establishment of a Continuing Education Program which is on track to being implemented on September 1, 2024.
 - ✓ CASS has used conditional grant funding dollars to develop a certification program for members who are pursuing LQS or SLQS certification.

Policy 16 Update

Addressing Solicitation of Products and Services

As is the case with school boards, the CASS Board of Directors examines the impact of policies when it becomes evident that they could be improved to address their overall effectiveness. Such has become the case with “Policy 16 – Addressing Solicitation of Products and Services,” a policy that clarifies how vendors of products and services will be affiliated with our organization.

Upon careful review of this policy, it has become clear that it would be more effective if it emphasized flexibility in dealing with the emerging contexts of educational and professional development needs. Greater intentionality in its explanation of CASS' relationship with vendors and their products and services also would be beneficial.

CASS is committed to ensuring that sponsors presenting at conferences primarily highlight school authorities who have benefited from their products or services. However, in areas like Artificial Intelligence, where vendors may lead in professional learning advancements, they might play a significant role in disseminating crucial information on topics of mutual interest. In these instances, vendor presentations will require the CASS Board of Directors' pre-approval, ensuring there is no conflict of interest for the College, presenter, or school authority, including any personal financial gain for a regulated member.

CASS values providing its members with networking opportunities, which includes introducing them

to various products and services. Recognizing that the 61 public school boards and 19 charter school authorities in Alberta each have their unique missions and mandates, not all products and services presented by vendors will align with every school authority's needs. In adherence to Section 18 of the *CASS Act*, which mandates regulated members to respect their school authorities' decisions, the amended policy clarifies that sponsor or vendor presentations do not reflect CASS' organizational stance. Consequently, each school authority retains the autonomy to evaluate and decide whether to engage with or endorse a vendor's product or service, based on their distinct mandates and the relevance of any promotion to their professional learning objectives.



Conditional Grant Deliverables

A Showcase of Professional Learning and System Influence

For over 15 years, the CASS Conditional Grant has become a mainstay of our world, initially intended to demonstrate the Ministry's support for our organization and enhance our members' capacity to enact government initiatives.

Annually, CASS and the Ministry collaboratively establish grant deliverables, aligning them with the Ministry's Business Plan and the Government of Alberta's Strategic Plan. This partnership aims to bolster the capacity of system education leaders, enabling them to effectively apply these outcomes for the improvement of the K – 12 education system. This year's grant objectives emerged from a collaborative process, starting with CASS' proposals to the Ministry and refined with their input. This grant underscored the critical role of system education leadership in achieving the objectives of Alberta's education system, and we were honoured to continue our involvement in these efforts.

Dr. Gloria Antifaiff, continued to oversee the implementation of the grant, which had rigorous components of accountability including the completion of mid-year and final reports. Thanks to Gloria's efforts in working with other consultants and our membership, we continued to further our legacy of bringing projects to fruition that benefit the learning needs of system education leaders, school staff and students. Components of our last two annual reports highlight the impact of CASS putting this grant to use. While all deliverables associated to the grant are important, three that strongly resonate with existing provincial priorities include:

- supporting success for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Students
- furthering Success for Students through Skilled Trades, Apprenticeships, and Vocational Education (Skilled Trades and Technologies)

- enhancing Education Workforce Recruitment and Retention

Dr. Antifaiff, alongside her consultancy team and many regulated members, made significant strides in advancing the grant's goals, demonstrating the impactful work being done in our educational community.

This work continued to support and advance the Alberta Education Business Plan and the Alberta Strategic Plan, as well as advance the continuous implementation and application of the Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard (SLQS) and Leadership Quality Standard (LQS) as it relates to system education leaders. Specifically, the funding provided by this grant resulted in the achievement of seven deliverables and 20 associated actions that will improve the professional practice of system education leaders and ultimately contribute to quality school leadership, quality teaching, and optimum learning for all students in Alberta school authorities.

It is worth celebrating that 100% of the 20 actions tied to our seven key deliverables were successfully completed, thanks to the collective efforts and collaboration of 100 dedicated regulated members. This achievement reflects the power of working together toward a common goal and the unwavering commitment of our members to advancing our mission.

Deliverable 1: Excellence in System Leader Professional Practice

This deliverable focused on enhancing system education leadership by providing regulated CASS members with new skills and shared understandings. In collaboration with the Ministry, a study on recruitment and retention was completed, along with two literature reviews on provincial assessment results and the impact of leadership. A new mentorship program for newly appointed system leaders, based on the Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard (SLQS) and Leadership Quality Standard (LQS), launched in September 2024.

Mentorship



CASS' mentorship program continues to thrive, currently pairing 41 mentees with 28 dedicated mentors, some of whom have generously committed to guiding multiple mentees. On Jan. 22, 2024, a virtual event was held, showcasing a panel discussion with two superintendents, **Dr. Wilco Tymensen** of Horizon School Division and **Dr. Reagan Weeks** of Prairie Rose School Division. They shared insightful stories from their experiences, enriching the mentorship journey for all participants.

Mentorship Program Literature Review

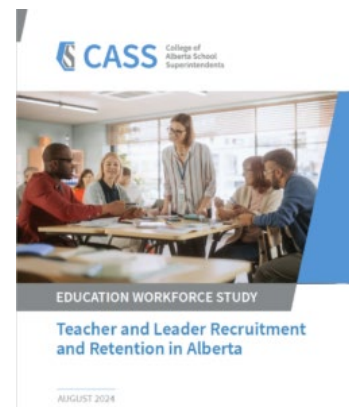


CASS has provided mentorship programming in a variety of forms to system education leaders since its inception. The review of literature is a necessary component for the ultimate development of current and relevant mentorship for system educational leaders. This document provided a solid research-based foundation for the new CASS Mentorship Program, which was fully launch in September 2024, in alignment with the introduction of the new CASS Continuing Education Program. [Read the report here.](#)

Education Workforce Study: Teacher and Leader Recruitment and Retention in Alberta

This year's education workforce planning deliverable developed a labour force survey, in partnership with the Ministry, aimed at informing research on various aspects impacting this area. This included identifying success stories, pinpointing service gaps within the province, and exploring potential solutions and best practices to enhance recruitment and retention in underserved areas.

The Education Workforce Study was conducted by CASS Leadership Consultant, **Dr. Edgar Schmidt**. Alberta Education representatives contributed to the survey's development and analysis. After piloting with three school authorities and incorporating their feedback, the final survey was distributed to 86 school authorities across Alberta. The 105-page final report and executive summary will be available to members once finalized, with the executive summary intended to help system education leaders interpret the findings for their respective school authorities.



Key findings of the report include:

- **Participation:** 54 of 86 school authorities (63%) participated, representing 72% of Alberta's student population.
- **Teacher and Leader Retention:** Over the past five years, 90% of teachers and 90% of school leaders stayed with their school authorities annually. Most leave for life changes like retirement or moving.
- **Anticipated Teacher Needs:** Schools expect to hire 974 to 2,139 teachers for the 2024-2025 school year.
- **Recruitment Strategies:** Advertising and benefits were the most effective strategies for both teachers and leaders, though advertising was also identified as a least effective strategy in some cases.

- **Retention Strategies:** The most successful retention actions focused on professional development (PD), division culture, and wellbeing, with school authorities believing in investing in teacher success as a key factor in retention.

The study highlights the complexity of recruitment and retention, with a need for targeted strategies to address teacher shortages in specific areas. Read the [Executive Summary](#) for concise overview of key information. [Read the full report here.](#)

Measuring the Impact of Quality System Education Leadership: A Literature Scan



Drawing on research conducted in the United States and Canada, this literature scan explored current evidence pertaining to the following areas of focus:

- key features of quality system education leadership, and
- how to measure impact as it relates to system education leadership.

[Read the full report here.](#)

Creating Optimal Learning Conditions for all Students Through Implementing Professional Practice Standards

CASS leadership consultants hosted 10 free of charge webinars from March to June. The first webinar, “Creating Optimal Learning Conditions for all Students Through Implementing Professional Practice Standards – Evergreen Catholic Schools,” was held March 13 and was related to the final report from Alberta’s post-secondary research on the implementation of the professional practice standards. Evergreen Catholic’s senior leadership team shared insights on fostering a culture of learning and growth, aligning with high-performing educational systems’ practices. Participants gained an understanding of implementation strategies, professional learning, and impact measurement, directly from the experiences of Evergreen Catholic Schools’ **Cindy Escott**, **Duane Hagen**, and **Terri Lynn Guimond**, who brought a wealth of experience in educational leadership.

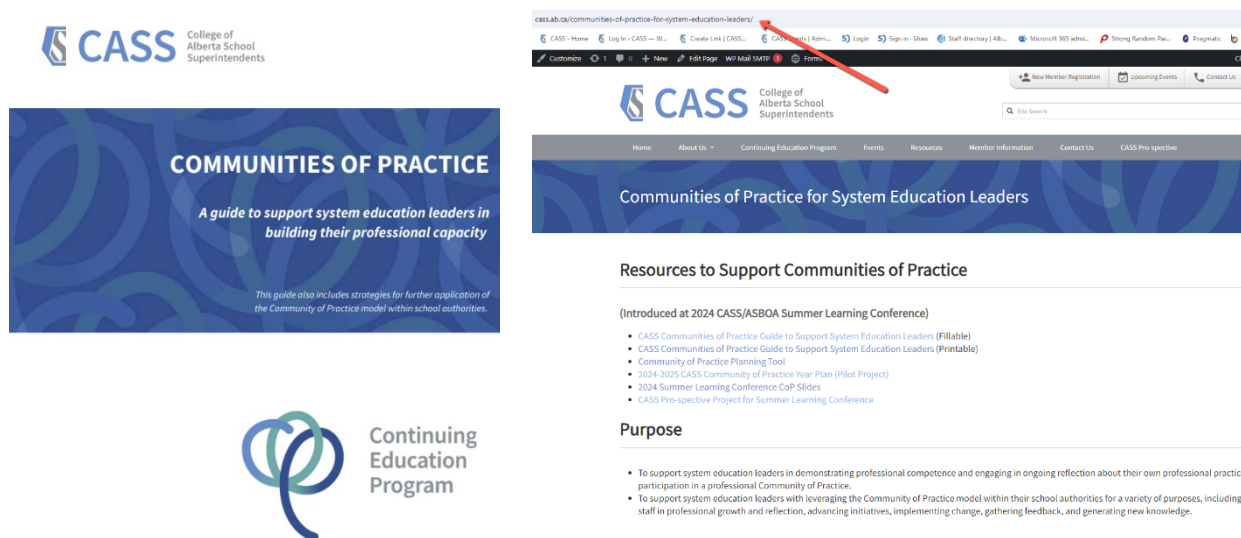
Following the first session offered by Evergreen Catholic Schools, the second session, hosted by Calgary Catholic Schools was held on April 10, 2024, which delved into the application of professional practice standards, showcasing how they serve as a unifying vision for optimal student learning. **Dr. Bryan Szumlas** and **Helmut Kaiser** shared insights on leveraging these standards to foster data-driven decision-making and educational coherence. Based on her involvement in the four-year longitudinal study, **Dr. Bonnie Stelmach** also shared her perspectives on the research theme related to measuring impact.

The third webinar, presented by St. Paul Education on May 1, 2024, featured **Peter Barron** discussing the implementation of these standards to address the educational disparities faced by Indigenous students, offering strategies for decolonization and enhanced support. Additionally, the webinar explored the impact of professional learning on the educational outcomes of Indigenous students. During this session, Peter Barron examined the effectiveness of current professional learning programs and their potential to break down systemic barriers that hinder the educational progress of Indigenous communities. The webinar delved into evidence-based strategies for decolonizing school divisions, offering the participants a look at practical approaches that could transform learning environments and promote equity in education. His presentation equipped educators, leaders, and policy makers with the knowledge to foster more inclusive educational practices. **Dr. Sharon Friesen** provided additional perspectives on implementation, drawing from a comprehensive four-year longitudinal study.

These sessions aimed to equip educators with the knowledge and strategies needed to create nurturing and effective learning environments for all students.

Deliverable 2: Enhancing Implementation of Inclusive Education and Specialized Educational Supports for Students

Communities of Practice



The image displays the CASS logo (College of Alberta School Superintendents) and a guide titled "COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE: A guide to support system education leaders in building their professional capacity". It also shows a screenshot of the CASS website's "Communities of Practice for System Education Leaders" page, which lists resources and the purpose of the program. The resources include a fillable guide, a printable guide, a planning tool, a pilot project plan, and conference slides. The purpose is to support system education leaders in demonstrating professional competence and engaging in ongoing reflection, as well as leveraging the CoP model within school authorities for professional growth and reflection.

This deliverable provided CASS with the opportunity to lead the creation of a Mental Health in Schools Pilot: Community of Practice, involving nearly 80 pilot projects across various school authorities focused on improving student mental health. Participants included members from the Inclusive Education Action Committee, pilot participants, AISCA members, and First Nations school authorities, who shared best practices and experiences. The insights from this Community of Practice (CoP) led to the creation of a [guide](#) to help school authorities establish similar CoPs focused on other topics, along with a [website](#) to support participants in these initiatives. CASS will also use these resources to introduce CoPs at CASS conferences where system education leaders will form CoPs focused on a variety of topics related to system education leader

professional practice.

A series of four Community of Practice sessions has been developed for school authorities participating in the Mental Health in Schools Pilot Projects. The inaugural session, titled "System Education Leaders' Role in Supporting Student Mental Health," successfully convened on Feb. 29, attracting 52 participants. The three other sessions were strategically scheduled to deepen the discourse and enhance strategies on student mental health:

- March 21: Focusing on "System Education Leaders' Role in Building Mental Health Capacity for Students."
- April 11: Addressing "Systemic Strategies to Ensure Early Identification and Intervention for Student Mental Health."
- May 9: Concentrating on "System Education Leaders' Role in Developing Partnerships and Navigating Pathways to Support Student Mental Health."

Webinars on “A Systematic Approach to Promoting Positive Student Mental Health”

In the four-part CASS webinar series, participants delved into their crucial role in bolstering student mental health, aiming to foster optimal learning environments across school authorities. The first of four webinars kicked off on March 27, 2024, with a focus on promotion and prevention strategies to support student mental health, featuring three Alberta stories of practice from **Michele Revoy** of East Central Catholic Schools, **Wendy Ruzicka** and **Allison Salazar** of Rocky View Schools, and **Marianne Barrett** of St. Albert Public Schools. Across all four sessions, leaders shared their experiences, strategies, and the impact of their efforts to promote student mental health, offering a comprehensive view of how to cultivate a supportive educational ecosystem.

The second webinar scheduled on April 17, 2024 delved into effective strategies, sharing success stories and challenges from three Alberta school authorities. Attendees gained insights from Elk Island Public Schools' paradigm shift led by **Sandra Stoddard** and **Mardi Hardt**, Wolf Creek Public Schools' universal programming with **Barb Reaney** and **Kevin Newman**, and Lethbridge School Division's digital wellness initiatives with **Morag Asquith**. This webinar offered valuable perspectives on building a supportive mental health framework in educational settings.

The third webinar scheduled on May 15, 2024 delved into effective strategies for nurturing student mental well-being across Alberta's school systems and highlighted practical stories from three school authorities: **Nicola Golby** of Red Deer Public Schools covered the jurisdiction's dual approach to behavioral issues; **Leanne Timko** of Calgary Catholic School District focused on the board's development of a wellness framework; and **Gillian Bowerman** of the ISSP outlined implementation of a province-wide wellness model. This session equipped leaders with proven strategies for identifying and addressing student mental health needs, ensuring a supportive learning environment.

The focus of the fourth webinar scheduled on June 5, 2024 focused on strategies employed by system education leaders to ensure that partnerships are being developed to support students and families with navigating pathways to mental health support and services. The guiding questions for this learning opportunity were:

- What successes and challenges have you faced in developing partnerships and navigating pathways to support student mental health?
- What system education leader practices are necessary to ensure that partnerships are being developed to support students and families with navigating pathways to mental health support and services?
- How will you know that the strategies you are implementing are having a positive impact?

This webinar included stories of practice from 5 Alberta school authorities as well as some context and information about the work that CASS is engaged in. The presenters included **Jodi Smith** with Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools, **Dr. Marcie Perdue** with Chinook's Edge School Division, **Shawn O'Shea** and **Ashley Mercer** with Peace Wapiti Public School Division, **Karen Rancier** with Horizon School Division, **Lisa Lindsay** with Prairie Rose School Division along with some of their partners through EdCan's Well at Work project.

Through participating in this webinar series, participants had the opportunity to:

- examine system education leadership practices that support and build student mental health capacity in their school authorities and apply these to their own context.
- contribute to the development of learning materials that support system education leaders with building student mental health capacity in their school authorities.

Learning Guides were created to complement the webinar recordings, offering individuals who missed the live session an opportunity to learn from the recorded material. These learning guides will be highlighted later in this annual report under the heading Professional Learning and Resources.

Deliverable 3: Success for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Students

Grow in Kinship for Student Success at the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Education Gathering

CASS expresses gratitude to those who envisioned the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Education Gathering many years ago. This year, over 400 educators and community leaders gathered in Edmonton from April 24-26 for the 8th annual event. This year's theme, "Kinship Relations for Student Success," highlighted the event's focus on building foundational knowledge, advancing student success, working collaboratively with Indigenous leaders and community, and leading practices that support truth and reconciliation. This year marked the 8th consecutive year that CASS has hosted this event. Through time, it has become the most broadly engaging community event that the College annually sponsors. While our community events are essentially dedicated to building the professional leadership capacity of our membership, the Indigenous Education Gathering has become a provincial educational community phenomenon. Registrations encompass the participation of K-12 and post-secondary students, parents, community leaders, teachers, trustees, and school / system education-based administrators. It is inspiring to note that through the past experiences of "the Gathering," positive word of mouth to others, and the greater community's desire to grow in Truth and Reconciliation, interest in this event continues to broaden and grow.

Dr. Dianne Roulson, and **Jason Bigcharles** were engaged in planning the event. We were especially pleased to have had the cultural knowledge of Jason in our planning. Dianne and Jason have also engaged the CASS' First Nations, Metis, and Inuit Education Action Committee in providing feedback on events that were scheduled.

In Indigenous culture, Kinship goes beyond the nuclear family and extends to community, where that community comes from, and its meaning going forward in all aspects of life.



Delegates of the Gathering immersed themselves in the vibrant tapestry of Indigenous Education at the event, which promised a rich blend of cultural celebration, insightful dialogue, and collaborative learning. The event kicked off with a spirited pre-conference Round Dance, followed by an evening of Grand Entry, heartfelt welcomes, and teachings about kinship from Chief **Billy-Joe Laboucan**. Over the next two days, participants engaged in sessions that weave together the wisdom of Elders like **Adelaide (Dolly) Creighton**, **Wilton Good Striker** and **Lynda Minoose**, and the innovative practices of educators, all aimed at nurturing kinship relations and bolstering Indigenous student success. Highlights also include a banquet featuring **Cadmus Delorme's** keynote address, reflections and calls to action from the Gathering Witness, and a closing ceremony.

At this year's Gathering, 46 Elders and Knowledge Keepers attended from across the province. One of the vendors who works with a board shared, *"The event really touched me in a different way than last year's event. This year, the event felt more like a family gathering, where everyone was benefiting from the presence of Elders and Knowledge Keepers in the room."*

Upon observation, the event seemed to demonstrate the delegates having a more connected experience than any other Gathering held so far. The Elders were so welcoming, and they spoke from the heart, captivating interest, furthering understanding, and essentially teaching both the head and heart. The pipe ceremony for male leaders, conducted by **Elder Calvin Cardinal**, was a great testimony to this. Calvin shared the story of how his connection to family made him responsible for owning the legacy of the pipe to honour the wishes of his father-in-law as expressed during his father-in-law's final days of his life. Calvin then spoke to how he has worked with other groups to bring peace and healing to them by undertaking the responsibility of carrying the pipe and engaging others through it wherever he goes.

The Gathering commenced with a pipe ceremony led by Elders **Alma Desjarlais** from Frog Lake First Nation and **Calvin Cardinal** from Saddle Lake First Nation and was followed by a round dance. The

Cultural Advisor for the Gathering, Knowledge Keeper **Jason Bigcharles**, described the round dance as the embodiment of kinship.

Reflections from CASS President Dr. Andrea Holowka

Keynote, **Cadmus Delorme**, was a definitive highlight for many participants. He began by helping situate the inequities experienced by Indigenous peoples as inherited, not created, by our current society. However, this inheritance still positions current society with the responsibility to address these inequities and create conditions for decolonization.

Reconciliation requires the acceptance and perpetuation of both Western and Indigenous worldviews as valid, equal, and beautiful. The Indigenous worldview tells us that the greatest warrior is the one that brings peace. Cadmus reminded us that we need to inspire our students to be dreamers and peacemakers who change the world for generations to come. Through colonization, the Indigenous lineage was taken away and must be returned. Doing so requires a change of mindset in our current society, where Indigenous knowledge and ways of being are adopted by all.



Cadmus left us with four questions to ensure we impart upon students as we engage in reconciliation through education:

1. **What was life before residential schools?**
2. **What was life during residential schools?**
3. **What was life after residential schools?**
4. **What would you tell a Canadian to make sure that this does not happen again?**

Those four questions remain foundational to the work of system education leaders in education, and their responsibility to furthering reconciliation practices within their school authorities.

Also of note was my participation in the Métis sharing circle and the presentation of materials by Rupertsland Institute. Both provided a deeper understanding of Métis culture and history through stories shared by Métis circle participants and the robust information resources shared by Rupertsland Institute. The beauty and uniqueness of Métis culture was shared, as well as the historical challenges imparted upon Métis society. Through these stories and artifacts, participants in both sessions were gifted with incredible knowledge and understanding of the depth and resilience of the Métis culture and peoples.

Deliverable 4: Success for Students through Skilled Trades, Apprenticeships, and Vocational Education

Celebrating Trades, Apprenticeship, and Vocational Education (TAVE)

The TAVE Committee is an external CASS committee comprised of 29 representatives from Alberta Education, school authorities, post-secondary institutions, skilled trades partner organizations, and employers committed to inspiring students to embark on rewarding career pathways in trades and technologies.

Through the ongoing support of CASS' conditional grant from Alberta Education, TAVE developed and is committed to promoting and implementing a framework known as the [TAVE Strategic Framework](#). This is a model for sharing responsibility and accountability between the Government of Alberta, school authorities, post-secondary institutions, partner organizations and employers to enable students to explore, engage, and experience skilled trades and technologies. Specifically, these outcomes are dedicated to:

- exploring the scope, the demand, and the value of skilled trades and technologies.
- engaging in academic studies and skills training through inclusive, authentic, hands-on learning opportunities.
- experiencing diverse work-integrated learning opportunities with employers and partners.

CASS has been extremely impressed with the capacity of TAVE to showcase and collaborate activities dedicated to these outcomes. In the past year, the Central Alberta and Southern Alberta Collegiate Showcases have been excellent undertakings and have demonstrated strong satisfaction from the involvement of school authorities throughout the province.



Building on these successes, the [2024 Trades and Technologies Summit](#), became a unique event, which gathered industry leaders, education leaders, policymakers, and students and explored the



evolving Alberta landscape of trades and technologies. With a focus on shaping the future, delegates engaged in dynamic discussion, gained valuable insights, and experienced innovative approaches that are shaping the pathways to success in these fields. Given the impressive scope of the summit, the interest of Premier **Danielle Smith** was captivated, resulting in our premier being in attendance and sharing remarks during the event.

Organized by CASS' TAVE Committee, the 2024 Trades and Technologies Summit, held on May 14 and 15, brought together over 175 CASS members, stakeholders, and partners to exchange innovative ideas and practices to help students explore career pathways in trades and technologies. A student panel that concluded with welding student, **Brielle Underhill**, presenting the premier with a bouquet of metal sculpted roses. Alongside a robust panel that included Minister of Advanced Education, **Rajan Sawhney**, the summit offered a total of 20 engaging breakout sessions under six thematic banners - ranging from 'Alberta Stories of Practice' to 'Insight: Looking Forward'. The event was further enriched by the presence of exhibitors, including many polytechnics and partners like Skills Canada Alberta and the Rupertsland Institute, creating a fertile ground for networking and inspiration. Special thanks go out to Alberta Education for sponsoring the event, which strengthened collaboration and fostered connections with the TAVE community.



This past winter, our focus on trades and technologies was also highlighted through a series of engaging activities. Lethbridge College hosted a "Dual Credit Discovery Night" on March 7, 2024, from 6 to 8 p.m., where attendees explored a variety of dual credit opportunities available at the college. The following day, March 8, 2024, the Southern Alberta Collegiate presented the "Explore Collaborative Opportunities in Trades Education" event, showcasing an innovative approach to collegiate education. This event, attended by the CASS Board of Directors and notable dignitaries, emphasized the importance of advancing trades education in Alberta. Additionally, TAVE Chairman, **Jason Kupery**, contributed an insightful article to the Spring edition of CASS Connects titled "The Power of Career Pathway Partnerships," which discusses the relevance of TAVE initiatives within the school authority framework.

Collegiate School Showcase: Shaping Futures

An Annual Learning Pre-Conference event was hosted by CASS and the TAVE Committee on March 20, 2024. This event was an invaluable opportunity for stakeholders to delve into the world of collegiate education. Participants explored successful Alberta stories of practice, identifying replicable opportunities and partnership potentials. The delegates engaged in meaningful dialogues with system education leaders, students, and stakeholders to understand the dynamics of collegiate-approved schools and contribute to shaping the future of education and career pathways. The event featured 29 speakers, representing 9 out of the 12 newly approved Alberta Collegiate Programs. These programs exemplify the innovation and forward-thinking approaches being implemented in Alberta's education system, showcasing a commitment to preparing students for a dynamic and evolving future.

The pre-conference covered a comprehensive range of topics, starting with an overview of collegiate programming principles and an introduction to each of the newly approved Alberta Collegiate programs. It explored essential components of collegiate education, including identifying suitable post-secondary institutions, raising awareness of career pathways through experiential learning, and leveraging dual credit programming to enhance post-secondary experiences. Participants also benefited from a student and parent panel sharing their experiences, engaged directly with Alberta Education and collegiate representatives at their tables, and received insights on collegiate application planning. Key takeaways were captured in a provided Thinkbook, containing contacts and reference resources to support ongoing development and collaboration.

Building Futures Collegiate	Calmar Secondary Collegiate School
 	
CBE Digital Futures Pathway	
	
Central Alberta Collegiate Institute (CACI)	
      	
Southern Alberta Flight Academy	Fusion Collegiate
 	
North Peace Commercial Diving Academy	
	 
Our Lady of the Rockies and St. Mary's Collegiate	
  	
	
Southern Alberta Collegiate Institute (SACI)	
	   
    	

Deliverable 5: Classroom Complexity Grant: Supporting and Strengthening the Strategic Purpose

Drawing upon the learnings from previous Conditional Grants about learning loss and classroom complexity, an eLeadership Guide was developed. The [System Education Leaders' Roadmap to Addressing Classroom Complexity eLeadership Guide](#) is a learning resource for system education leaders to share Alberta Stories of Practice that demonstrate promise of success when addressing complexity in the classroom. The design of the eLeadership Guide is based on the domains of the continuous improvement cycle as identified in the annual Alberta Education Funding Manual for School Authorities. The *Explore* section provides background information about the topic of the eLeadership Guide. The *Develop* section provides a deeper understanding about the topic from a system education leader perspective. In the *Take Action* section, school authorities provide stories of practice related to the topic of the eLeadership Guide typically consisting of a recorded presentation and resources. For the *Evaluate* section, reflective questions, moving forward ideas, and additional resources are provided. Additionally, a learning lab, focused on student behaviour has been developed and will be presented at the 2025 CASS Annual Conference in the Spring.

Research Report: Classroom Complexity Grant: Supporting and Strengthening the Strategic Purpose



This study provides current, relevant, and research-based information that supports and strengthens the strategic purpose of the Classroom Complexity Grant. It is intended to support system education leaders in their work to address the complexity of the classroom. The project includes a survey of superintendents designed to access their professional knowledge and experience with strategic planning for the resource allocation to address classroom complexity in their school authorities. The survey responses provide information about the current state of classroom complexity across Alberta, with specific attention paid to classroom complexity with potential ties to learning loss, the use of learning loss funding to address classroom complexity, and the superintendent's vision of a preferred future for addressing the

complexities in classrooms. This research also includes a literature review. The review highlights literature in several areas related to classroom complexity: classroom complexity tied to learning loss, complex adaptive systems and educational leadership, leadership for inclusive education systems, and building professional capacity in the system. Finally, the report includes short- and long-term strategies and recommendations to address classroom complexity. [Read full report here.](#)

Research Report: Addressing Classroom Complexity at the System Level: Environmental Scan and Review of Literature



This research provides current, relevant, and research-based information that supports system education leaders in their work to address the complexity of the classroom. The environmental scan provides macro-level information from across Canada about provincial approaches to addressing classroom complexity. This information and the related resources set Alberta within the national context and provides considerations for Alberta's system education leaders as they tackle the issues related to increasing complexity in classrooms. The review of literature further supports system education leaders in leading inclusive education systems and implementing continuums of supports and services to meet the needs of all learners. [Read full report here.](#)

Deliverable 6: Improving the Professional Practice of CASS Regulated Members

The CASS Continuing Education Program

CEP Logo Unveiled



Continuing Education Program

CASS' new logo for its Continuing Education Program (CEP) was unveiled at the 2023 Fall Conference, blending CASS' traditional blue with a new teal colour to signify professional learning and resources related to the CEP. By design, the logo creatively combines scripted lowercase letters of "cep" into an abstract form resembling a plant, which symbolizes educational growth and development in educational leadership, with an upward

expanding movement to represent emerging ideas and new opportunities. As was shared at the conference, the overall design aimed to spark curiosity and emphasize the importance of continuous learning – which has arrived just in time for the CEP officially starting on Sept. 1, 2024.

CEP Principles

CEP Guiding Principle #1 – Responsive

Grounded in the guiding principles of being responsive, research-informed, and innovative, CASS Continuing Education Program (CEP) is now dedicated to meeting the professional learning needs of system education leaders. A key aspect of the "responsive" principle is the program's commitment to adapt to the evolving professional learning needs of system education leaders.



To achieve this, CASS actively encouraged members to continue sharing their professional learning requirements through the CASS Pro-spective project, “**Your Professional Learning Needs 2023/24.**” As a critical step in shaping the CEP's direction and content, this call for member input was central to ensuring that the learning opportunities provided would be directly relevant and beneficial. Other ways the CEP has demonstrated its responsiveness includes:

- inviting regulated members to join advisory groups for critical CEP component development.
- encouraging participation in committees like the CEP Committee.
- analyzing feedback from professional learning events to continuously improve offerings.

- utilizing diverse data sets, such as CASS membership information, to tailor learning to various experience levels and roles.
- offering a blend of face-to-face and online learning opportunities throughout the year.

By prioritizing member input through CASS Pro-spective, the CEP ensured that its offerings are closely aligned with the current and future needs of system education leaders. Members were urged to contribute their ideas about their professional learning needs for 2023-2024, which played a vital role in shaping the program's responsiveness and effectiveness.

CEP Guiding Principle #2 – Research-Informed

A key aspect of the second principle, “research-informed” means that the CASS’ CEP will apply research and data-informed practice to support the professional learning of system education leaders. What does this look like in action? This approach involves utilizing current research and literature on system education leadership to shape course content, applying insights on adult learning to design effective professional development, adhering to rigorous research standards for CASS-led studies, updating the research section on the CASS website, and exploring access to research databases for members. One highlight that will be mentioned later in this report is ProQuest One Education, which is now available for members to access.

These measures collectively ensure that CEP's offerings are grounded in the latest educational research, providing system education leaders with learning opportunities that are both relevant and impactful.

CEP Guiding Principle #3 – Innovative

The third principle, “innovative” is crucial, guiding the CEP to offer accredited professional learning that aligns with Alberta’s three professional practice standards. Actions underpinning this principle include crafting a CEP Professional Learning Plan that includes a future-thinking strategy, utilizing backward design for course development with input from system education leaders, and aligning learning outcomes with the Leadership Quality Standard and Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard competencies. By integrating "innovation" into discussions, CASS stimulates dialogue, idea exchange, and critical reflection on professional practices. Attendees of the 2024 Summer Conference, Aug. 14 to 16, 2024, had the opportunity to engage firsthand with these innovative courses, marking the start of their transformative journey in system education leadership.

CEP Learning Outcomes

The **Professional Learning Outcomes** (PLOs) support system education leaders in achieving professional competency, as identified in the *CASS Act* (2022). The PLOs ensure the Continuing Education Program consistently meets the needs of system education leaders to build professional capacity through a framework of the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and actions expected for the profession.

Learners in the CASS Continuing Education Program will . . .

1. **Engage** in ongoing critical reflection about research informed opportunities for enhancing system education leadership, teaching, and learning.
2. **Work collaboratively** with diverse teams to problem solve and apply teamwork strategies for creating shared understanding about system education leadership.
3. **Examine** research and data sources to determine relevancy to support planning and decision-making in a culture of continuous improvement.
4. **Acquire and apply** foundational knowledge about First Nations, Métis, and Inuit for the benefit of all.
5. **Explore** innovative approaches to leading and managing operations and resources to create optimal learning environments for students.
6. **Demonstrate** ethical behaviours by applying the *Alberta Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers and Teacher Leaders (2022)*, in all matters and interactions.
7. **Foster** the development of professional competency in system education leadership within self and others.
8. **Evaluate** issues, trends, and engagement practices related to achieving optimal learning for all students in a variety of leadership contexts.

Learning
Outcomes 

Engage

Collaborate

Examine

Demonstrate

Explore

Foster

Apply

Evaluate

CEP Accreditation Requirements in a Nutshell

CASS' Continuing Education Program (CEP) launched on Sept. 1, 2024, marking a significant milestone in professional learning for all regulated CASS members. Watch and learn the CEP's Accreditation Requirements in this one-minute [awareness video](#). The video provides a brief but comprehensive understanding of the new program, ensuring all members are well-informed and prepared to engage with upcoming educational opportunities.

CASS' Continuing Education Program (CEP) Bookmark

At the Annual Learning Conference, delegates received a special reference bookmark, detailing CASS' new Continuing Education Program (CEP). This essential tool assists regulated members in staying informed about the upcoming implementation details of the CEP. For those unable to attend, [the bookmark](#) is available online. The College has reminded all regulated members to review this

resource to ensure they are fully equipped with the necessary knowledge for the forthcoming changes.

Deliverable 7: Establishing Sustainable Teacher Recruitment and Retention Practices

A white paper was developed to explore Grow-Your-Own (GYO) Teacher Programs as a solution to rural school authorities' recruitment and retention challenges. These programs support local community members with bursaries while they pursue a teaching degree, followed by a commitment to serve locally afterward. Research on global GYO programs and interviews with Fort Vermilion School Division (FVSD) leaders and teachers highlight their effectiveness. The findings show GYO programs can address workforce issues and have a transformative impact on both individuals and their communities.

CASS is dedicated to collaborating with the Ministry of Education and education partners across Alberta. Together, we aim to strengthen professional capacity in educational leadership to ensure the best possible learning outcomes for all students in Alberta.

Alberta Regional Professional Development Consortia (ARPDC) / Alberta Professional Learning Consortium (APLC)

ARPDC Promising Results

In its fourth year of working within the governance oversight of the CASS Board of Directors, the Alberta Regional Professional Development Consortia (ARPDC) has a very promising future. At the CASS Board's March meeting, Executive Director **Todd Robinson** and his team of seven regional directors communicated a quarterly report outlining several provincial grant deliverable updates, curriculum support information, and systemic reports, which includes the organization's annual learning plan and annual report.

From an operational standpoint, ARPDC achieved ministerial approval for a comprehensive rebranding initiative. This project, outlined in CASS' strategic plan as "Enhance Professional Development Networks Between ARPDC Regions," aimed to unify the seven consortiums under a single provincial identity, enabling educators across Alberta to access a shared network of professional learning opportunities and resources developed collaboratively by all regions. This initiative has been designed to enhance connectivity and resource sharing among educators, regardless of their location within the province, fostering a more integrated and accessible professional learning environment.

As part of the March quarterly report, progress of ARPDC's Assurance Framework was communicated, which gathered responses from 712 stakeholders, with 46 responses submitted from the Francophone community.

We appreciate that ARPDC has communicated the following celebrations:

- With the Ministry of Education having conducted an audit of key resources provided by each consortium, the ministry staff has provided a strong review of the work conducted by ARPDC staff and consultants.
- ARPDC continues to be very active in support of school authorities across Alberta. Between July 1, 2023, and January 31, 2024, the organization has offered 1,784 sessions to 64,000 participants.

We thank **Todd Robinson** and Regional Directors **Madeleine Lemire**, **Sandra Ciurysek**, **John Waterhouse**, **Brent Thomas**, **Diana White**, **Wilma Jamieson**, and **Dr. Rick Gilson** and their dedicated staff for leading ARPDC to such a promising future.

A New Brand for K - 12 Professional Learning Across Alberta



The Consortium

Alberta Professional Learning Consortium

After months of diligent effort, CASS unveiled a new brand for Alberta's K - 12 professional learning services - **the Alberta Professional Learning Consortium** (APLC). This rebranding reflects a comprehensive re-evaluation of the ARPDC's mission and scope of work by the consortia directors and the CASS Board of Directors. The CASS Board came to understand that the former title no longer captured the dynamic and evolving nature of this organization. The Board also realized that school authorities are better served through a renewed focus that emphasizes collaboration across regions, fostering a collective mindset that enhances the sharing and scalability of resources province-wide.

The first step in the rebrand was to think of our regions operating within a collective mindset. This explains the ongoing reference that will be made to our provincial professional learning service as a collective noun, described as "The Consortium." Just as important is the reality that meaningful and sustainable learning in education is best described through the lens of "professional learning," not "professional development." Both factors explain the rationale for a new name and tagline.

The new name and logo is now featured on a rebranded APLC website in time for the 2024/25 school year. The logo features three interwoven links forming a chain. These links represent the three core

components of an operational strategy within the APLC, which are:

- Provincial Collaboration
- Regional Collaboration
- The Consortium Provincial Francophone

ProQuest Education

Go to the Research!

Research cannot always be served straight up to us. For professional practitioners, much of its value comes from the self-discipline and motivation of personal inquiry, meaning that through doing the investigative component of what research means, more is known and appreciated about its impact than if summaries are shared with us by another person. Perhaps this explains why **Dr. Mae Jemison**, an American engineer, physician, and former NASA astronaut simply stated, “Research is creating new knowledge.” This is the reason why through the latter part of the year, the Board has worked diligently to offer CASS membership access to **ProQuest One Education**. Through this platform, members gain access to the world’s largest one-stop inventory of scholarly journals, books, audio/video works, dissertations, theses, and newspapers to support your professional practice.

To paraphrase **Albert Szent-Györgyi**, "Through research, we see what everybody else has seen, but by using it, we learn and grow in ways that nobody else has imagined." The stars have now aligned through the activation of this service and CASS' CEP to make this possibility a reality for all our members.

Land Acknowledgment Project

Acknowledgment of the land is a critical part of demonstrating respect for First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples as the original peoples and the traditional stewards of the land in Alberta and who continue to live here and whose traditional knowledge, cultural practices, languages, oral traditions and worldviews are tied to their relationship with the land. To acknowledge the traditional territory is an expression of gratitude and appreciation to those whose land we reside on and a way of honouring the people who have lived and worked on the land since time immemorial.

CASS invited school authorities to contribute one or two high resolution photos for a project aimed at honouring the Treaty land their school authority occupies. These images were used in a [land acknowledgement](#)



embedded in CASS' Continuing Education Program courses and was shown for the first time at the summer conference.

Professional Learning

Webinar – Discover Promising Leadership Practices for Grades 1-3 Students

Through this CASS webinar, Superintendents and system education leaders gained valuable insights into sustaining a culture of learning within school authorities, promoting evidence-based approaches, and reflecting on shared responsibility for student success and continuous improvement. This session, facilitated from a system education leader perspective, explored strategies to tackle learning disruptions and classroom complexity. Participants left with a deeper understanding of promising system education leadership practices that have driven gains in literacy and numeracy achievement for Grades 1-3 students, along with inspiring Alberta stories of practice that showcase effective data-driven leadership.

This webinar was presented by a wide representation of system education leaders in the province.

- Fort McMurray Catholic Schools (Facilitators & Presentation)
 - Danielle Maczko, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment
 - Mat Campbell, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment
- Classroom Complexity Research (CASS)
 - Danica Martin, Leadership Consultant
- Edmonton Catholic School Division
 - Nicole Lafreniere, Director of Curriculum and Assessment
 - Sarah Fedoration, EAL and Languages Manager
- Grande Prairie Public School Division
 - James Robinson, Deputy Superintendent of Schools
 - Corinne Kruse, Director of Teaching and Learning
- Prairie Rose School Division
 - Reagan Weeks, Superintendent
 - Boyd Craven, Assistant Superintendent
- Red Deer Public Schools
 - Dan Lower, Deputy Superintendent
 - Shari Jensen, Numeracy Coordinator
 - Sherri Jansen, Literacy Coordinator

Fall Pre-conference - Mental Health in Schools

Due to popular demand, the College brought back the availability of a pre-conference session in conjunction with the fall conference, which focused on a topic of ongoing importance – Mental Health in Schools. This session offered delegates the opportunity to learn from the experiences of selected school authorities who have participated in mental health projects that have taken place throughout the province. **Dr. Andrea Holowka**, superintendent of Christ the Redeemer Catholic Schools, presented research from her recently completed doctoral dissertation, which focused on the

application of transformative system leadership to impact student well-being through system-wide mental health interventions. Additionally, Alberta Education's Mental Health in Schools Specialist **Loriann Stienwand** shared initial learnings including supports used in the design and implementation of the 80 pilot projects that are being supported by the Government of Alberta.

To sum it all up, this pre-conference gathered system education leaders who learned from and with:

- the research specific to system education leaders in creating the conditions to support mental health.
- school authority stories of practice, related to provincial areas of focus and themes.
- opportunities to have conversations with colleagues and learn about successes and focuses for ongoing improvement.

To support all school authorities, including those unable to attend the pre-conference, CASS put together a membership data base of pilot projects and work, related to student well-being, that identifies key contacts, project/work focuses and descriptions, and a synopsis of challenges being discovered through this work. This database enabled those involved in the pilot projects to learn from others and share insights, track progress, and collaborate more effectively by providing access to real-time data and resources.

Fall Conference – November 1-3, 2024

Given that the ultimate goal of our education system is student success, every act of leadership matters. This underscores the importance of designing a conference that not only champions excellence in system education leadership but also offers a diverse array of presentations and topics. Such an approach ensures that the professional interests of all members are addressed, enriching their leadership skills for the benefit of student outcomes.

Thanks to member feedback and the generosity of presenters sharing their unique stories of practice, the Fall Conference offered enriching content for every system education leader. The conference featured a blend of role-alike networking sessions and stories of practice from 24 different school authorities. These presentations covered a wide array of competencies, aligning with both the Superintendent Leadership and Leadership Quality standards.

Fall Conference By the Numbers

The Fall Conference was a hub of professional growth for over 300 system education leaders – representing 90% of school authorities in the province and 60% who joined CASS less than five years ago.

The event was rich with:

- 2 Elders offering blessings and opening greetings
- 4 role-alike gatherings
- 18 diverse breakout sessions
- 27 school authorities sharing their story of practice as session facilitators

- 10+ education partners attending or supporting conference offerings
- 180+ responses to the Continuing Education Program Course Survey
- 110+ system education leader insights, posted to five CASS Pro-spective projects

Fall Conference Highlights

The conference provided an opportunity to strengthen leadership growth based on the [LQS and SLQS](#) Professional Practice Standards and the role system education leaders have in supporting optimum learning for all Alberta students.

One highlight of the conference included the large number of facilitators involved in sharing stories of practice, research, and facilitating dialogue and learning for colleagues. Apart from concurrent sessions, role alike opportunities were provided. Professional thanks to the school authorities and partners involved who are displayed in this slide image.

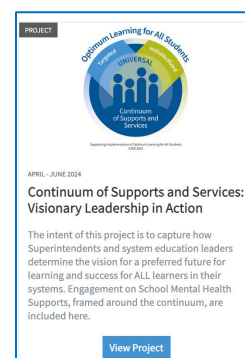
All facilitators were willing to share their presentation materials, which are posted under the [conference archive](#), resources column.

The pre-conference on **Mental Health in Schools** included support for ongoing work on mental health supports, as well as pilot projects funded by Alberta Education. This learning opportunity focused on research including a summary of findings from the University of Calgary [Centre for Wellbeing in Education](#) who are studying the pilot projects. This university also has a contract to develop a

provincial mental health framework based on the research and the school authority learnings. **Dr. Andrea Holowka** shared her dissertation on *Transforming School-Based Mental Health to Heal the Collective Soul Wound*, which focused on the application of transformative system leadership to impact student well-being through system-wide mental health interventions. **Loriann**

Stienwand from Alberta Education shared updates about the pilot projects including early implementation learnings. System Education Leaders **Shane Cranston from Palliser, Lisa Furukawa from Livingstone Range and David Legrandeur from Horizon**, shared their work on the Southwest Collaborative Support Services that includes their districts as well as Westwind, Holy Spirit and Lethbridge School Division. The collaborative works together in support of children, youth, and families in the Southwest, including a focus on mental health supports.

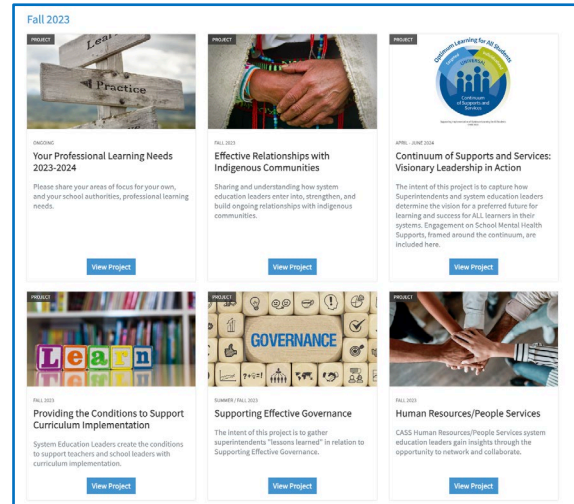
Brian Torrance of [Ever Active Schools](#) provided an overview of how the organization is, and can, partner with school authorities' wellbeing plans. Delegates at the preconference contributed their practices, based on individual and table group submissions, to the [CASS Pro-spective project: Continuum of](#)



[Supports and Services Visionary Leadership in Action](#). Ideas CASS members shared focused on measuring impact as well as building capacity.

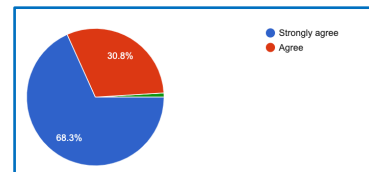
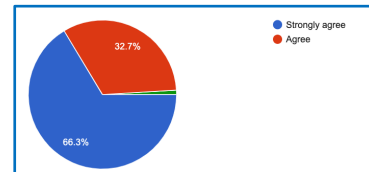
CASS Pro-spective provided an opportunity to engage members, framed around current and emergent education topics. 133 “ideas” were shared, during the fall conference, based on questions of practice posed in various sessions. Both the *Mental Health in Schools* and *Providing the Conditions to Support Curriculum Implementation* included questions of practice related to the role of system education leaders in building capacity and measuring impact. Summaries of members input has been, and will be, shared through CASS Connects.

Conference survey comments included messages about comfort with the tool and a commitment to revisit it to stay connected with members’ professional perspectives.



38% of delegates responded to the Conference survey. Data will be used to plan future learning opportunities. A summary, as well as selected survey responses:

- This professional learning opportunity contributed to my understanding of the professional practice standard.
- I plan to apply my learning in my school authority.



- An aspect of this learning opportunity that made it meaningful is:
 - *The Role Alike sessions are always wonderful. Hearing from the Minister was appreciated.*
 - *Sessions from school authority teams is relevant, timely, and valuable. Learning from each other informs actions we take and decisions we make.*
 - *Opportunity during sessions to reflect, discuss with colleagues to connect stories of practice to the work of our district and consider applications.*
- An aspect of this learning opportunity that might be improved is:
 - *More time for role alike opportunities.*
 - *I would like to see the mentorship mixer be a session during the day instead of an add on after the AGM.*
 - *I would have appreciated that boards are not sitting together in the preconference and role alike. There would have been more learning if the majority of the people at a table weren't from the same board.*

- One thing I require to further support my professional learning is:
 - *Continued time to network*
 - *Continued stories of practice from leaders around the province*
 - *Continued opportunities to have conversations with colleagues*

Artificial Intelligence (AI): Implications for Policy and Practice



CASS, in collaboration with Intellimedia and DOCEO AI, hosted a pre-conference on "Artificial Intelligence: Implications for Policy and Practice" as part of its March 20 to 22 Annual Learning Conference. This event delved into the transformative potential of AI in education, exploring how it can reshape teaching, learning, and educational policy. Participants engaged with leading experts and system education leaders to discuss the critical questions, benefits, and challenges AI presents to the educational landscape. A [dedicated website](#) has been built by Intellimedia, featuring the pre-conference's schedule, speakers, and resources recommended by presenters.

During the session, system education leaders explored specific key themes for developing AI guidelines and policies in education. Making use of [CASS Pro-spective](#) to capture their discussion, attendees identified several key themes, including protecting data privacy, ensuring transparency in AI applications, fostering inclusive policy-making by involving diverse stakeholders, and emphasizing the need for ongoing AI education for staff and students. The discussions also highlighted the importance of considering equity and inclusion, particularly how AI tools can enhance accessibility for all students. Ethical considerations were also central to discussions, such as the need to focus on developing critical thinking skills, emphasizing responsible use, and safeguarding against the erosion of agency and increased dependency. Adaptability in policymaking also was highlighted, recognizing the rapid evolution of AI technology and the need for policies that are flexible, yet robust enough to guide ethical AI use in dynamic educational landscapes. Presentation materials are included on the CASS Pro-spective site where system education leaders can continue the conversation with colleagues.

CASS' Artificial Intelligence (AI) Pre-Conference ignited discussions regarding the development of AI policies and procedures and identified several risks, barriers, and biases system education leaders can anticipate addressing. Based on posts to the [AI CASS Pro-spective project](#), attendees of the pre-

conference emphasized the importance of fostering dialogue across a broad spectrum of stakeholders in policy and procedural development to hear diverse viewpoints. Attendees also outlined the need to continuously educate themselves and their communities on AI's ethical use, balancing its benefits against fairness and equity concerns. Addressing risks such as cognitive atrophy, privacy issues, and societal biases in AI data, alongside barriers like resistance to change and training deficiencies, also were deemed crucial. Overall, consensus pointed towards a need for policies that not only mitigate risks and biases but also promote ethical AI use, ensuring it serves as a tool for enhancing learning while upholding core educational values.

2024 Annual Learning Conference - Promoting Central Office Teams as Agents of Equitable Teaching and Learning

Through time, our conference feedback has suggested with increased frequency the importance of promoting instructional leadership among our members. A step for system education leaders in embracing this role involves exploring the most effective practices identified by current educational research for central office teams to enhance student learning outcomes. Thanks to a strong recommendation from long time CASS Learning Mentor, **Dr. Santiago Rincon-Gallardo**, and CASSA President, Superintendent **Kevin Kaardal** with the Central Okanogan School District, the Annual Learning Conference provided as its keynote and presenter of complementary breakout sessions, **Dr. Meredith Honig**, a researcher, and professor from the University of Washington.

Dr. Honig and her team at the University of Washington have spent over a decade capturing what central offices do when their daily work demonstrably supports equitable teaching and learning in schools. The basis for her work begins with a basic proposition about effective central office practices, which can be viewed [in this video](#).

Since 2014, Dr. Honig and collaborator, Lydia Rainey, have engaged in highly regarded work to help system education leaders access knowledge and tools to transform their central offices into engines of educational equity. Both leaders, through the establishment of the [District Leadership Design Lab](#) (DL2) have helped district leaders access knowledge and tools to achieve this goal. In 2023, Honig and Rainey released the book, "[From Tinkering to Transformation – How School District Central Offices Drive Equitable Teaching and Learning](#)." Each delegate at the conference received a complimentary copy of this book.

Reflections on the 2024 Annual Learning Conference: Insights and Opportunities – March 20-22, 2024

One of the largest gatherings of CASS members in recent times with 370 attendees, was the 2024 Annual Learning Conference. This conference offered a vibrant platform for professional growth and collaboration. The conference highlights reveal a high satisfaction rate among attendees for its engaging sessions and opportunities for networking across diverse educational roles. Members noted they valued the discussions and sessions centred around AI, its implications, and considerations for implementation in education. Some attendees suggested shorter, more interactive presentations. They also expressed a desire for increased opportunities for role-alike interactions. The feedback not

only helped CASS celebrate the conference’s achievements but also paved the way for future enhancements.

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

“Greatly appreciate the role-alike opportunities, and wide variety of session choices. Very informative and lots of great learning from colleagues. I really appreciate the culture of collaboration at CASS.”

“There is so much to be learned from our colleagues across the province. Sessions where colleagues shared how they actioned current research are meaningful and relevant.”

Conference attendees represented 95% of school authorities in Alberta. Two pre conferences were offered with close to 300 CASS members, industry partners and community stakeholders attending one of the following two learning opportunities.

The Collegiate Schools Showcase: Shaping Futures included over 29 school authority and community facilitators. Through collaborative efforts with post-secondary institutions and industry partners, collegiate schools bring together students with shared interests, offering enriched programming, specialized facilities, and enhanced learning opportunities that lead to post-secondary and career readiness. Delegates that attended shared appreciation for the opportunity to connect with other collegiate schools, the stories or practice and practical applications related to developing a collegiate school.

Artificial Intelligence: Implications for Policy and Practice was offered in collaboration with Intellimedia and Doceo AI. Participants appreciated the opportunity to hear from a variety of perspectives, including educators, industry leaders, and researchers. This allowed for a comprehensive understanding of AI in education from different angles. Delegates that attended appreciated the relevance and timeliness of the learning and collaboration, shared a desire to learn more, including a deeper dive into AI policy and implementation. The education analytics website includes resources and announcements about future learning opportunities.

<https://educationanalytics.ca/>

The annual conference program included stories of practice from over 20 school authorities in sessions that allowed for members to learn as well as be involved in dialogue with colleagues. The program, and presenters’ resources and slide decks are available on the [Conference Program Archive](#).

“The clear connections between system work within each presentation along with the opportunity to discuss issues and share between role-alikes makes these sessions invaluable. I also appreciate the opportunity to attend/work as a system team - learning and brainstorming how we might apply what we are learning to our community’s needs.”

Delegates appreciated Dr. Meredith Honig’s sessions focused on her research and book: Honig, M., & Rainey, L. (2023). *From Tinkering to Transformation: How School District Central Offices Drive Equitable Teaching and Learning*. Harvard Education Press.



Her focus on instructional leadership, nurturing school leaders' growth, the importance and value of human resource leaders sparked thinking and reflection. Members appreciated receiving a copy of her book for continued

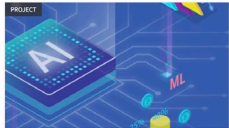


learning. *“The opening Keynote specifically focused on Division office importance was inspiring to me and helped my team identify our importance in overall division improvement initiatives we start.”*



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.

The engagement site, intended to gather members' expertise and professional perspective, also provided feedback to the CASS Board about members views and practice, and assisted CASS in providing supports and services that meet members' needs. <https://cass.ab.ca/cass-pro-spective/>

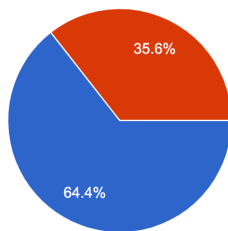
Spring 2024		
 <p>Artificial Intelligence: Implications for Policy and Practice</p> <p>Artificial intelligence (AI) is being described as the most significant technological innovation since the internet. This system education leader engagement focuses on policies and ethical considerations.</p> <p>View Project</p>	 <p>Continuum of Supports and Services: Visionary Leadership in Action</p> <p>The intent of this project is to capture how Superintendents and system education leaders determine the vision for a preferred future for learning and success for ALL learners in their systems. Engagement on School Mental Health Supports, framed around the continuum, are included here.</p> <p>View Project</p>	 <p>Human Resources/People Services</p> <p>CASS Human Resources/People Services system education leaders gain insights through the opportunity to network and collaborate.</p> <p>View Project</p>

Conference survey results indicated a high degree of satisfaction as well as ideas for improvement.

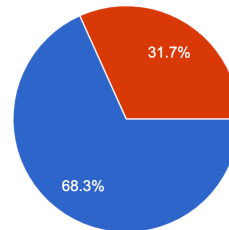
A summary, generated by an artificial intelligence tool and checked for validity, will be used to plan future learning opportunities. Summary comments include:

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

I plan to apply my learning in my school authority.



- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree



- An aspect of this learning opportunity that made it meaningful is:
 - **Networking and Collaboration, Focus on AI and Technology Relevance to Roles and Priorities, Quality Presenters and Keynotes**
- An aspect of this learning opportunity that might be improved is:
 - **Session Structure and Length**, (e.g., shorter opening remarks and breaks), **Role-Alike Interaction longer**
- One thing I require to further support my professional learning is:
 - **Collaboration and Interaction:** Desire for more interaction with colleagues, especially on supporting diverse learners. Interest in continued connections through role-alike.
 - **Focused Topics:** Requests for more sessions on AI, HR, and governance, Interest in practical workshops and legal conversations.
 - **Access to Resources:** Desire for access to presentation slides, resources, and online learning opportunities. Interest in ongoing access to CASS conferences and webinars.
 - **Leadership Development:** Interest in practical suggestions for system leadership and governance. Desire for mentorship opportunities and networking support.

The Benefits of Breaking Down the Silos Between Inclusion and Curriculum

Facilitated by St. Albert Public Schools' **Charlotte Kirchner** and **Catherine Coyne**, the Inclusion and Curriculum Role Alike Discussion at CASS' Annual Learning Conference focused on the challenges of working in isolation within school divisions, particularly for those handling both curriculum and inclusion. Participants identified a prevalent 'silo mentality' between the two functions as a significant barrier, noting an 'us' versus 'them' attitude emanating from central office decisions. The discussion highlighted the importance of breaking down these silos to foster a more collaborative and equitable educational environment. By promoting teamwork among system education leaders, teachers, and support staff, participants felt the benefits extend to students who experience more targeted and effective learning outcomes. Additionally, concerns were raised about supporting the mental health of English as an Additional Language speakers, with many divisions struggling to secure necessary interpreters, highlighting a common challenge across schools. For an Alberta story of practice, look to Coyne's [Learning Progression Framework](#) presentation.

Leadership Foundations - The Focus of the Start Right and Leading for Learning Program (July 2024)

The CASS Start Right and Leading for Learning Programs are summer learning programs that CASS has organized for over 20 years. The programs are run in early July and in recent years have been held at Olds College. Start Right focuses on providing programming dedicated to the needs of beginning school leaders. Leading for Learning is dedicated to the needs of experienced school leaders and dedicates its exploration of learning beyond the *Leadership Quality Standard* with additional attention given to learning through the lens of the *Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard*. Both programs were originally established to provide a system-based perspective on school and system education leadership that was not offered through leadership formation programs by the teachers' association. Focused on enriching leadership skills, the program integrates the Alberta quality standards into its core tenets to ensure a comprehensive professional learning approach. Participants delved into the competencies through a blend of reflective exercises, idea-sharing, and interactive learning sessions led by seasoned Alberta system education leaders. Additionally, the event provided a platform for

networking, fostering collaborative relationships, and practical strategy development to address prevalent leadership challenges. This program not only equipped beginning leaders with new resources and ideas but also supported their ongoing development with post-program guidance all year.

Summer Learning Conference – August 14-15, 2024



Beginning Sept. 1, 2024, regulated members are expected to comply with the requirements of CASS' Continuing Education Program (CEP). Annually, each member must complete 30 credit hours of professional learning. Additionally, specific course-based learning obligations will take effect with the start of the 2024/25 school year. Participation in the summer conference assisted with initiating this process with seven of the twelve CEP courses being piloted during the conference. By participating in one of the courses being piloted, this action counted towards a member's requirement to complete five courses within the course-based learning component of the CEP within five years.

The conference attracted 273 delegates representing 93% of the school authorities in the province and provided opportunities to strengthen their professional growth as system education leaders through the introduction of Communities of Practice.

CASS President Dr. Clint Moroziuk, Superintendent of Schools for Greater St. Albert Catholic Schools opened the conference with welcome messages. The value of networking and collaboration with ASBOA was shared, and how our work together, as system education leaders, supports staff and student growth and learning. As was noted from the president's podium remarks, *"Both professional organizations operate with distinct standards of professional practice to guide and inform our roles and responsibilities. Our networking and collaborative efforts produce visible outcomes that optimize learning for all students in Alberta. Our professional relationships with colleagues allow us to work to support ALL students in our schools across the province."*

During the conference, delegates registered in the CASS course-based learning, provided feedback on 7 CEP courses: *Changing World, Changing Needs: Engaging the Age of Disruption; Developing Leadership Capacity at the System Level: The Ripple Effect; Leading Learning; Leading to Support Effective Governance; Modeling a Commitment to Professional Learning; Sharing Stone Keeper's Wisdom; Vision Leadership in Action: Implementing a Continuum of Supports and Services.*

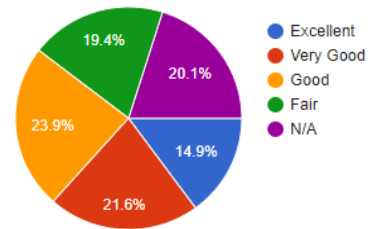


Nearly half of the conference delegates (49%) responded to the 2024 Learning Survey for the Summer Learning Conference and communicated the following:

Communities of Practice Pilot

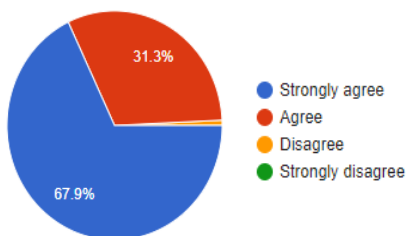
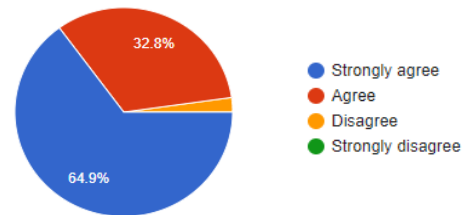
What supports do you need for your Community of Practice (CoP) to be successful?

- Provide agendas and topics in advance to allow for preparation and decision-making during the CoP.
- Ensure CoPs are flexible throughout the year to offer participants to provide opportunity to address emerging needs.
- Ensure each CoP has a designated leader or chair.
- Provide regular updates, reminders, and opportunities for CoP members to connect such as at CASS Conferences and Zone meetings.
- Allocate more time for CoP activities at future conferences for discussion, planning, and collaboration.

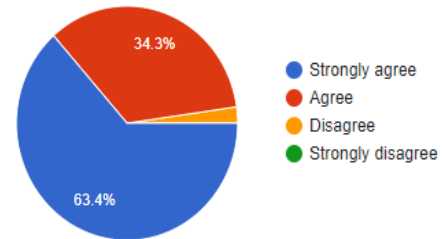


Reflections on My Professional Learning

1. *This professional learning opportunity contributed to my understanding of the professional practice standard or ASBOA's Areas of Practice. (e.g., content-related to one or more competency)*
2. *I plan to apply my learning in my school authority.*



3. *This professional learning opportunity provided ideas about how to lead and apply the professional practice standard or ASBOA's Areas of Practice (e.g., content related to one or more competency) in my school authority.*



4. *An aspect of this learning opportunity that made it meaningful is:*

- Time to engage in deep, purposeful collaborative dialogue was highly valued.
- Practical applications with examples and activities for implementation made the learning relevant and actionable.
- Focused system education leadership perspectives and implications made the learning meaningful.
- Effective facilitators with well-structured sessions.
- Integration of research was appreciated and contributed to the depth and breadth of the learning experience.

5. *An aspect of this learning opportunity that might be improved is:*

- More case studies and practical examples
- Consider reducing content or extending the length of time to deliver courses
- More time for group discussions and opportunities to interact with colleagues
- During the course, utilize the expertise of the participants to generate examples

6. *One thing I require to further support my professional learning is:*

- Continued learning and resources at future professional learning events
- Impact of technology (AI) and future trends on the education sector
- More networking and collaboration
- More time for reflection and deep dives into the content

7. *As a result of your learning at the CASS/ASBOA Summer Learning Conference, what have you committed to take action on?*

- Sharing and applying the knowledge gained with teams in school authority
- Ongoing learning and networking through professional reading, research, and staying connected with colleagues
- Reviewing and refining existing policies to ensure alignment with best practices and legislative requirements
- Ongoing reflection and continuous improvement on leadership practices to ensure actions are aligned with goals and values

8. *Comments/suggestions regarding the structure of this learning opportunity (e.g. facility, registration process, communication).*

- Well organized, excellent, and easy to follow communication
- Appreciation for the venue particularly for comfort, food, and overall ambiance
- More time for networking and division team meetings
- Review quality of sound in all rooms, particularly the ballroom
- Valued the learning opportunity

Overall, the conference delegates found the 2024 Summer Learning Conference to be a valuable experience and impactful for their professional growth. The effort put into organizing the event was widely appreciated, and the experience was considered beneficial for their individual roles.

Indigenous Virtual Circles

These virtual circles build on the insights offered in the [Guide to Relationships and Learning with the Indigenous Peoples of Alberta](#), the new eLeadership Guide, [Establishing and Maintaining Respectful Relationships for Student Success](#), [A Virtual Circle with Elders](#), and [Improving Success for Indigenous Students](#). System education leaders have identified the need to deepen their understanding about how to build respectful and reciprocal relationships with Indigenous communities to better enable them to lead reconciliation in their districts and to further the success of Indigenous students ([SLQS](#), [LQS](#), [Optimum Learning for All Students Final Report, June 2023](#)).



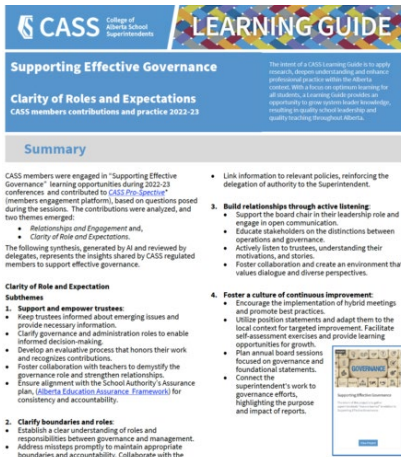
These virtual circles were hosted by Crystal Clark, Indigenous Education Consulting, and Dr. Dianne Roulson, CASS Leadership Consultant.

A Virtual Circle: Najuna Ats'ila-hi - Embodying the Spirit and Intent of Treaty for Student Success

On the May 8, 2024, participants had an opportunity to sit in a virtual circle with **Jonathan Kaiswatum**, Director of Education, Tsuut'ina Education Department; **Steven Crowchild**, Minor Chief, Tsuut'ina Nation Xakuja-yina/Chief and Council; **Cindy Stefanato**, Director of Indigenous Learning, Rocky View Schools; **Lori Pritchard**, Education Director for Indigenous Education, Calgary Board of Education; and **Helmut Kaiser**, Director of Learning Services, Calgary Catholic School District. Participants caught a glimpse into the story of how they are working together to focus on the aspirations of young people and honour insights from Tsuut'ina Knowledge Keepers and Elders. The collaborative approach ensures the inclusion of Tsuut'ina language, culture, and perspectives while

Learning Guides with Focus on Governance

At CASS conferences, chief superintendents led insightful sessions on key governance topics, such as building relationships with boards, fostering a culture of continuous improvement, identifying success



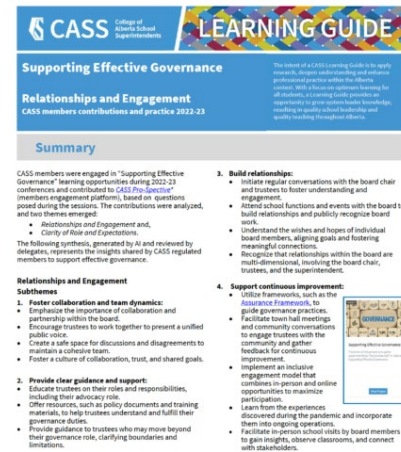
indicators, and clarifying roles and boundaries. Discussions at these sessions were captured through the CASS Prospective project **Supporting Effective Governance Project**, yielding rich insights and culminating in the creation of two new learning guides:

"Supporting Effective

Governance - Clarity of Roles and Expectations" and

"Supporting Effective Governance - Relationships and Engagement." Now accessible in CASS'

Resource Library, these guides offer system education leaders the opportunity for self-paced learning. The production of these resources was made possible by the valuable contributions from session facilitators and participating members, furthering CASS' mission to support effective governance within education.



Learning Guide – Promising Leadership Practices to Address Learning Disruptions for Grades 1-3 Students

In this learning guide "**Promising Leadership Practices to Address Learning Disruptions for Grades 1 – 3 Students**," strategies to address learning disruptions and classroom complexities are explored.

Danica Martin from CASS presents findings from a study on learning disruption, emphasizing professional capacity building and collaborative approaches. **Dr. Sarah Fedoration** from Edmonton Catholic School Division describes a continuous improvement cycle for English Language Learners' literacy skills. **Matthew Campbell** and **Danielle Maczko** from Fort McMurray Catholic Schools discuss their model for professional growth, focusing on sustainable teaching practices. **James Robinson** and **Corinne Kruse** from Grande Prairie Public School Division highlight their approach to formative data analysis and intervention strategies. The guide emphasizes the importance of data-driven decision-making, professional capacity building, and sustainable instructional practices to effectively address learning disruptions and improve student outcomes.

Learning Guide – Optimum Learning Professional Practice Research Synopsis

This learning guide, "**A Synopsis - Optimum Learning for All Students: Implementing Alberta's Professional Practice Standards Research Study**," delves into the comprehensive four-year

research study initiated in 2019 to assess the implementation of Alberta's professional practice standards: Teaching Quality Standard, Leadership Quality Standard, and Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard. The guide highlights the post-secondary research team's key findings and recommendations, emphasizing the importance of a culture of learning, implementation, visionary leadership, and continuous professional development. It also underscores the standards' role in fostering collaborative dialogue, aligning professional practices with educational goals, and enhancing First Nations, Métis, and Inuit knowledge integration. To further explore these themes, CASS is hosting a series of webinars, offering a platform for districts to share their experiences and insights. Prepare to join Evergreen Catholic Separate School Division's **Cindy Escott** on March 13, Calgary Catholic School District's **Bryan Szumlak** April 10, and St. Paul Education Regional Division's **Peter Barron** on May 1, as they delve into these critical topics, providing valuable perspectives and strategies to enhance educational excellence. Watch for details and registration to be released via CASS' [online learning webpage](#).

Learning Guide – What Do We Mean by Optimum Learning for All?

Besides the opportunity to learn in person at CASS' annual conference in March 2024, multiple "learning opportunities" that system education leaders can access at their own pace and place are available. The [learning guide](#) inspired by **Dr. Santiago Rincon-Gallardo's** keynote at the August 2023 CASS/ASBOA Learning conference, encourages educators to delve into the concept of "optimum learning for all" within the context of Alberta's educational landscape. This guide not only revisits Rincon-Gallardo's insights on leveraging provincial practice standards for systemic coherence but also serves as a precursor to **Dr. Meredith Honig's** conference keynote, which explored how school authority teams can foster equitable teaching and learning.

Navigating AI in Education: Insights from CASS's Latest Learning Guide

In this learning guide, "[Artificial Intelligence: Implications for Policy and Practice](#)," system education leaders are provided with key insights into effectively integrating AI within the school system. The guide, developed through collaborations with Intellimedia and DOCEO AI, features presentations from educational experts including those from the University of Calgary and several Alberta school authorities. Highlights include **Dr. Sarah Elaine Eaton's** focus on AI's impact on academic integrity, **Jillian Kowalchuk's** overview of enhancing teachers' AI literacy, and practical strategies from **Dr. Kirk Linton** on creating AI-inclusive policies, and from **Dr. Chris Fuzessy** and **Rebecca Bultsma** on the leadership practices required to support implementation of AI use. This resource aims to equip system education leaders with the knowledge to use AI ethically and effectively, ensuring it serves the best interests of students and enhances teaching and learning across Alberta. Reflective questions and additional resources are provided so that CASS members can connect this learning to their own contexts.

Advancing Equity in Education: Dr. Meredith Honig's Transformative Insights

In this learning guide, "[From Tinkering to Transformation: How School District Central Offices Drive Equitable Teaching and Learning](#)," **Dr. Meredith Honig** outlines impactful strategies for central office transformation to support equitable teaching and learning. Drawing from extensive research, Dr. Honig emphasizes the critical need for system education leaders to redefine the role of central offices from operational management to active support of principals as leaders of instructional change. By focusing on principals personalized growth rather than operational tasks, system education leaders can significantly influence the quality of education. The guide, infused with reflections from four CASS members, also emphasizes the necessity for transformation at the systemic level to authentically support all students, particularly those from marginalized communities. This guide serves as a call to action for system education leaders to initiate deep, structural changes that prioritize equity at the core of their mission. Honig's self-study guide, "Central Office Transformation for Equitable Teaching & Learning" is also included in the guide under additional supports.

A Systematic Approach to Promoting Positive Student Mental Health Learning Guides

Four learning guides were created to complement the webinar recordings, offering individuals who missed the live session an opportunity to learn from the recorded material.

Part One – This learning guide "[A Systematic Approach to Promoting Positive Student Mental Health](#)", highlights strategies that promote positive student mental health within Alberta school authorities. In the guide, CASS Leadership Consultant **Danica Martin** outlines some of the foundational research and legislation that guides the work of system education leaders in supporting student mental health. **Michele Revoy** from East Central Catholic Schools shares the work her district is doing to build the professional capacity of their staff, while ensuring barrier-free access to supports and services for their students and families. **Wendy Ruzicka** and **Allison Salazar** from Rocky View Schools discuss their school authority's work to cultivate wellness and implement effective mental health supports in their schools. Complementing these stories of practice, **Dr. Marianne Barrett** from St. Albert Public Schools outlines their interconnected approach to supporting student mental health, which emphasizes students' sense of belonging and connection while at school. This learning guide highlights the importance of system education leaders' commitment to promoting positive student mental health, building professional capacity, implementing proactive and preventative strategies, and leading with vision and vulnerability. Powerful questions for reflection are included so that readers can connect their learning to their own context.

Part Two – In this learning guide "[System Education Leaders' Role in Building Mental Health Capacity for Students](#)", **Danica Martin**, CASS leadership consultant, outlines some of the foundational research and legislation that compels system education leaders to support the implementation of strategies to build student mental health capacity. **Sandra Stoddard** and **Mardi Hardt** from Elk Island Public Schools share the work they have done to implement reset rooms to support student mental health. **Kevin Newman** and **Barb Reaney** from Wolf Creek Public Schools discuss how they have embedded universal social-emotional learning supports and programming

throughout their schools. Finally, **Morag Asquith** from Lethbridge School Division outlines the work the district has undertaken to address and support digital wellness. This learning guide highlights the importance of system education leaders' investment in this work, a commitment to long-term improvement, shared vision and common purpose, and a culture of continuous learning. Reflective questions and additional resources are provided so that CASS members can connect this learning to their own context. The learning guide features a link to the webinar recording to enhance one's learning experience.

Part Three – This learning guide “[Systematic Strategies to Ensure Early Identification and Intervention for Student Mental Health](#)”, highlights strategies for the early identification of student mental health concerns and subsequent intervention strategies within Alberta school authorities. In this learning guide, CASS Leadership Consultant **Danica Martin** outlines some of the foundational research and legislation that compels system education leaders to ensure they have robust continuums of supports and services which include early identification and intervention within their school authorities. **Gillian Bowerman** presented an overview of the Integrated School Support Program (ISSP) and shared the work they are doing with school authorities across the province. **Leanne Timko** from Calgary Catholic School District shared the story of their implementation of a common mental health framework throughout their school authority. **Nicola Golby** from Red Deer Public Schools shared their school authority's journey to support student mental health and regulation. This learning guide highlights the importance of a collective vision, the purposeful allocation of resources in alignment with goals, data-informed decision-making, and the implementation of research-based strategies to support student mental health.

Part Four – This learning guide “[System Education Leaders' Role in Developing Partnerships and Navigating Pathways to Support Student Mental Health](#),” highlights stories of practice from several Alberta school authorities (as well as some of their partner organizations) who have developed partnerships and pathways to support student mental health as part of their Mental Health in Schools Pilot Projects. In this learning guide, **Dr. Marcie Perdue** from Chinook's Edge School Division and **Jodi Smith** from Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools, along with **Dixie McLeod** from McMan Central share their partnership approach to supporting students and staff in addressing students' mental health and challenging behaviour concerns. **Shawn O'Shea**, **Megan Stevenson**, and **Ashley Mercer** from Peace Wapiti Public Schools describe the implementation of their wellness framework and outreach model and team. **Lisa Lindsay** from Prairie Rose Public Schools and **Karen Rancier** from Horizon School Division along with **Kathleen Lane** from EdCan share their work to support the wellbeing of their school leaders in order to create safe, caring and welcoming school environments. In the guide, CASS Leadership Consultant **Danica Martin** emphasizes the critical need for comprehensive support systems within school authorities. These systems should include collaborative frameworks and partnerships, along with clearly defined pathways for accessing, navigating, and transitioning out of services. This learning guide highlights the importance of a shared commitment among partners to collectively uphold the well-being and success of students within their communities.

Learning Guides Illuminate Alberta's Professional Practice Standards in Action

Four additional learning guides were developed advancing the series on "Supporting Optimum Learning for All Students." Based on research conclusions from Alberta's post-secondary four-year

longitudinal study on implementation of the professional practice standards, the guides are instrumental in illustrating how Alberta's system education leaders are applying the standards to foster effective school leadership and teaching. Highlighting practices from the Evergreen Catholic School Division, Calgary Catholic School District, and St. Paul Education, the guides offer a practical look at improving student outcomes. Complementing these narratives, university researchers contribute insights from both academic literature and personal experience, underscoring the significant impact of standardized practices on educational excellence.

- [Implementation of the Professional Practice Standards](#)
- [Professional Learning and Professional Practice Standards](#)
- [Using an Evidence-Informed Approach and the Professional Practice Standards](#)
- [Enhancing First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Knowledge and the Professional Practice Standards](#)

eLeadership Guide on Education Service Agreements

Education Service Agreements (ESAs) are formed between provincial school authorities and First Nations, facilitating the attendance of First Nations students living on-reserve in provincial schools. Entitled, “[Establishing and Maintaining Respectful Relationships for Success: ESA](#),” the e-Leadership Guide is enriched by the contributions of various First Nations and provincial system education leaders, offering a wealth of knowledge and insights. These leaders emphasize the importance of establishing and maintaining respectful relationships as a cornerstone for the success of First Nation students. The guide showcases their perspectives through both text and video stories, providing heartfelt, candid, and inspiring guidance for those involved in ESAs. Their collective vision and commitment to student learning and well-being are evident, demonstrating the positive outcomes that are achievable through mutual respect and collaboration in creating environments where young people can flourish.

Superintendent **Bill Shade** of the Stoney Education Authority highlights the importance of starting ESA negotiations with a focus on the Treaty. In a [two-minute video](#), Shade explains that acknowledging and honouring Treaty rights is crucial in any ESA negotiation with First Nations communities. He stresses that making Treaty rights a primary point in agreements is essential for respecting the rights of current and future students. Shade emphasizes the collective responsibility of all parties involved to uphold and honour Treaty agreements, underscoring its significance in successful ESA negotiations. Be sure to find the Tsuut’ina story of practice video at the end of the section entitled “[Najuna Ats’ila-hi, The Process of Making Treaty](#).” Watch both videos, then find more information on treaties in CASS’ [Guide to Relationships and Learning With the Indigenous Peoples of Alberta](#).

"Reawakening the Spirit of the Collaborative Frameworks." This part of the guide emphasizes the importance of the collaborative planning tool, “[Successful Practices in First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Education: Collaborative Frameworks Building Relationships Companion Resource](#),” created by the Alberta Government in 2012. This tool was developed following the government's recognition of the need for Indigenous communities to be true partners in education. **Debbie Mineault**, director at Northland School Division, who was involved in the framework's creation, describes it as a tool that brought the spirit of culture and language to the forefront, serving as a living

document for collaboration. It aimed to shift the focus from teacher-centered to learner-centered instruction for Indigenous student success, emphasizing Indigenous resilience, resurgence, and nationhood. The guide suggests that working through the framework, educators can reawaken the spirit of past collaborative efforts and honour ongoing work with Indigenous peoples in Alberta.

One of the main considerations when designing Education Service Agreements is to keep young people at the forefront and to understand the uniqueness of each community. As outlined in the guide, successful agreements are rooted in the success of each young person. Listening to families, Elders, and young people's aspirations is crucial in shaping ESAs that truly reflect and support the community's vision for their children's success. The guide encourages provincial schools to actively seek and heed these community-driven insights, ensuring that young people's success remains central in all aspects of ESAs. Be sure to check out the three videos under the section "Keeping Young People/Community Forefront," where **Bill Shade**, superintendent of Stoney Education Authority, discusses the importance of focusing on young people in classrooms. Tsuut'ina Minor Chief **Steven Crowchild** and Director of Education **Jonathan Kaiswatum** also talk about the uniqueness of Tsuut'ina Nation.

Harnessing Resources on the Trades and Technology Summit

CASS has made available a [comprehensive document](#) providing access to the web content, slide decks, and resources from its inaugural Trades and Technology Summit. Held May 14-15, 2024, the event spotlighted crucial topics such as the integration of STEM curriculum with trades, proactive career pathway programming, and the significance of partnerships in career education. The document encapsulates the learning resources from all of the summit's 20 breakout sessions, allowing system education leaders to explore strategies for student career readiness, innovative apprenticeship opportunities, and strategies for integrating women into skilled trades. These materials serve as a robust tool for educators looking to deepen their approach to career-connected learning in Alberta.

Communication and Member Engagement

CASS Connects Readership Level Soars

According to the e-Newsletter platform, Constant Contact, CASS' membership e-newsletter, **CASS Connects'** average open rate from September 2023 to June 2024 was 81% **based on 832 active and life subscribers**. Given that the average **benchmark** for education is 41.45 per cent, the readership of CASS Connects significantly exceeds this industry standard suggesting that CASS Connects fulfills membership **interests much higher than that of other e-newsletters within the education sector**. **Membership satisfaction with the e-Newsletter continues to be a priority for CASS.**

CASS Pro-spective

It has been said that the most important journey in life is discovering what is most important. For system education leaders, professional growth and recognizing opportunities for accessible learning rank as top priorities in advancing their careers.

Through our member engagement tool, **CASS Pro-spective**, input from members regarding the aspects of professional learning that currently matter to them were gathered. The feedback assisted in designing experiences that align with their current needs and interests. We asked members two crucial questions, which helped shape the themes for our professional learning:

1. “Optimal learning for all students in Alberta” embodies our collective goal for student education. What research, readings/authors, or speakers are influencing your leadership journey toward achieving this goal?
2. Can you identify a “wicked problem,” a problem of practice, or an area of growth that you or your school authority is addressing this year?



PROJECT

ONGOING
Your Professional Learning Needs
2023-2024

Instructional Leadership Revisited

Instructional leadership is always top of mind within system education leadership. If we share in the belief that any strategic action dedicated to the improvement of outcomes for students is an act of instructional leadership, then we could argue that it embraces every circumstance involving planning and implementing learning activities for students. During the COVID years, the time and effort spent on different and responsive accommodations to programming that were continually made were significant examples of instructional leadership in action. But as we are now midway through the second year of a return to conventional educational processes, many of our members are asking questions about systemic leadership practices affecting the learning system, schools, and classrooms. These are practices that are explicit about influencing approaches to effective teaching, differentiating instruction to help students progress through learning, and meaningfully engaging students through the process.

Through a recent review of submissions by regulated members to “CASS Pro-spective,” we are learning that instructional leadership dedicated to ensuring the effectiveness of classroom teaching and learning is top of mind for our membership. This comes as no surprise. Just prior to encountering the adaptive shifts that needed to be made through COVID, a United States study entitled, “[What Matters Most in Superintendent Evaluation](#),” reminded leaders that “*despite the managerial activity trap that ensnares all but the most savvy of administrators, superintendents are still looked to for leadership in curriculum and instruction.*”

What is encouraging for CASS members about being responsive to this expectation is that the solutions for leading in both areas have long been illuminated by leaders who have blazed a trail before us in our own organization. Alberta's own **Dr. Jim Brandon** and **Dr. Paulette Hanna** are quoted within the study as contributing to knowledge of how school authorities respond to this responsibility. CASS' own practice standard would eventually pave the way for the development of the SLQS as a provincial leadership standard, which the LQS and then TQS would rest within. This guiding document set in motion throughout the province mounting evidence of how optimal learning becomes meaningfully enhanced within the classroom through complementary instructional leadership practices taking place within the school and school authority.

Feedback from our members gives great insight into the work that our members are engaging in as instructional leaders. This feedback not only sheds light on the diverse strategies our members are employing but also underscores the collective commitment to learning and growth within their respective school authorities. Although stated in different ways, it is clear to the contributors that instructional leadership means:

- taking time through work-embedded processes to intentionally explore its meaning according to a context for implementation and a shared declaration and understanding of what success looks like for students
- frequently considering what an alignment within the school system and the individual school looks like in planning and adaptive practice
- continually sharing and responding to barriers that get in the way of plans for improvement being implemented within the classroom, school, and jurisdiction
- avoiding a non-adaptive approach to growth by not focusing on simply “proving” success, but rather, “improving” practice through assessing and adapting instructional practice

CASS Connection Magazine - Telling a “Leader and Learning” Story

When a system education leader puts a story of practice down on paper or into a presentation, it is far from an act of vanity; it is a transformative exercise for both personal and professional growth. Executive coach **Dr. Steve Ober** refers to this practice as one of the most transformational leadership tasks that exists, noting that leaders often experience a pivotal shift in self-perception when they connect their current leadership style to their deeper narrative. He explains, “many clients describe seeing the connection between their present-day leadership and their deep story as transformational. They make a fundamental shift in how they view themselves in the world and as leaders. But the work does not stop there. They then create a new story that is aligned with the results they want to create and the kind of leader they want to be they identify new behaviours and assumptions; and they practice their new approaches to produce quantum leaps in their leadership effectiveness.” Moreover, sharing these leadership stories serves a dual purpose: it not only catalyzes the leader's own development but also enriches the learning experience for others, contributing to the collective growth of a profession.

Michael Fullan has described this practice as "talking the walk" and the ultimate testament to the successful implementation of his model for school system coherence. Over the years, CASS members have excelled in this practice, enriching conferences, and maximizing the impact of conditional grants through the exchange of such stories. The fall and spring editions of our CASS Connection magazine amplified these narratives across the province.

Continuing the Journey: Opening Doors and Expanding Opportunities (Part Two)

CASS' Fall 2023 Connection Magazine, "[Continuing the Journey: Opening Doors and Expanding Opportunities \(Part Two\)](#)", in addition to messages from the Minister of Education, CASS' President, and CEO, the fall edition is a great read with featured articles on:

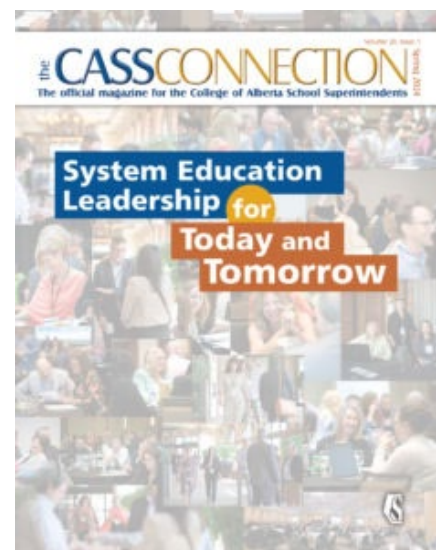
- "Building Leadership & Connecting Students with Indigenous Cultures and Ideas," by **Teresa Di Ninno** and **Sara Fairbrother**, CAPE Public Charter School
- "Aligned in Professional Practice," by **Christopher Fuzessy**, Foothills School Division
- "A Catalyst for Educational Innovation and Collaboration," by **Ian Gray**, **Joanne Higgins**, **Dean Lindquist**, and **Lynne Paradis**, Alberta Charter Public Schools
- "Dodgeball, Anyone?," by **Kathleen Finnigan**, Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools, and **Val Olekshy**, Education Consultant
- "Hop on the Wellness Bus: Inspiring Healthy Schools Through Quality Leadership," by **Magdalena Pawlowski** and **Jenn Flynn**, APPLE Schools, and **Paul Corrigan**, Elk Island Catholic Schools
- "Healthy People, Healthy Workplace: 55 Years of Dedication to Alberta's Education Sector," by **Kelli Littlechilds**, ASEBP



System Education Leadership for Today and Tomorrow

CASS' Spring 2024 Connection Magazine, "[System Education Leadership for Today and Tomorrow](#)", in addition to messages from CASS' President and CEO, the spring edition is a great read with featured articles on:

- "Flight, Fire, and Fields: A Triad of Educational Adventures," by **Dr. Reagan Weeks & Boyd Craven**, Prairie Rose Public Schools
- "Navigating the Path to Mathematical Proficiency," by **Thérèse deChamplain-Good**, **Jody Seymour**, & **Heather van Streun**, Elk Island Catholic Schools, & **Ulana Soletsky**, ERLC.
- "The Power of Career Pathway Partnerships," by **Jason Kupery**, Palliser School Division



- “Dual Credit: A High Leverage Strategy that Ensures Career and Post-Secondary Success,” by **Jackie Taylor**, Central Alberta Collegiate Institute, & **Jason Drent**, Chinook’s Edge School Division
- “Cultivating Instructional Leadership Capacity in Evergreen Catholic School Division,” by **Terri Lynn Guimond**, Evergreen Catholic Separate School Division
- Reinventing Report Cards: Two Divisions’ Path to Student-Centric Assessment,” by **Jackie Kark**, Palliser School Division, **Michele Jones**, The Alberta Assessment Consortium, & **Tammy Davis**, Northern Gateway Public Schools
- “ASEBP Was Built for You,” by **Kelli Littlechilds**, ASEBP

CASS extends its sincere appreciation to each of the authors for sharing their Alberta stories of practice.

EXL Award - Time to Celebrate System Education Excellence

One of the ways that CASS recognizes success in system education leadership is to annually be a part of a national movement that encourages provinces across Canada to recognize an individual who has especially excelled in this area.

Over the years, the criteria for award recipients have focused on educational system leaders who have brought honor to themselves, their colleagues, and the profession. These individuals have provided exemplary service to their provincial or national professional associations, made significant contributions to the field of education through their service, writings, or other endeavors, and have served as role models and mentors to others.



Dr. Wilco Tymensen, superintendent for the Horizon School Division, received the provincial EXL Award for Excellence in School System Leadership at CASS’ Annual General Meeting on March 21, 2024. His leadership extends beyond his 11-year tenure at Horizon, influencing educational practices across Alberta. Known for his expertise in curriculum, assessment, and leadership, Dr. Tymensen has contributed significantly through publications, presentations, and teaching roles. His involvement in the CASS Executive and Board, along with his work in community partnerships and advocacy, validates his commitment to fostering educational excellence and community engagement. As the Alberta recipient of the EXL Award, Dr. Tymensen was nominated as the CASS nominee for the national EXL Award as Canadian Superintendent of the Year, announced at the CASSA Conference, in Montreal, QC last July.

Partnerships – Conference Supporters

Conference supporters play a crucial role in the success and impact of our annual conferences. Their contributions go beyond financial sponsorship. Their participation help create an environment that fosters learning, innovation, and collaboration. By partnering with us, they enable the gathering of diverse professionals, experts, and thought leaders, all of whom benefit from the knowledge-sharing opportunities that shape the future of K-12 education.

Supporters allow us to enhance the quality and reach of the conference through enriched programming, advanced technology, and wider access to resources. Their commitment ensures that attendees not only experience insightful sessions but also engage with cutting-edge tools and ideas that can be implemented in their own work.

Moreover, conference supporters serve as catalysts for professional growth and networking. Their presence helps create meaningful connections between participants, facilitating partnerships, collaborations, and mentorships that continue to deliver value long after the event ends.

In essence, our conference supporters are key partners in advancing the mission of our conferences, helping us to inspire change, foster innovation, and drive excellence across the education community.

PLATINUM SPONSORS	
GOLD SPONSORS	SILVER SPONSORS

Fall Conference Supporters

Annual Learning Conference Supporters

PLATINUM SPONSORS	GOLD SPONSORS	SILVER SPONSORS	BRONZE SPONSORS

Alberta Post-Secondary Network

In 2024, CASS solidified a collaborative partnership with the Alberta Post-Secondary Network (APSN), marking a key step toward advancing education pathways for students across the province. This partnership enhances the work of the Trades, Apprenticeship, and Vocational Education (TAVE) Committee, aligning with CASS's commitment to workforce readiness and career development for high school students.

At the core of this partnership is the integration of **SkillUp**, an innovative online career-mapping system developed by Cybera. CASS has been invited to pilot this system, which allows students to upload resumes and receive personalized guidance on the additional skills, education, and career pathways they need for future success. The system also provides real-time job opportunities and insights into trends within the province. The pilot, launched at the end of February, has hopefully offered valuable feedback for refining the software and increasing its potential impact.

In addition, APSN's participation in TAVE will help support collaborative initiatives between education and industry, ensuring the continued success of the **Collegiate Model** and the **Dual Credit Program**. Together, CASS and APSN are exploring strategies such as enhancing career mapping, developing a teacher workforce, and studying international education models like the Germanic system.

This partnership represents a shared vision of supporting Alberta's students by providing them with the tools and pathways needed for success in today's evolving job market. By joining forces, CASS and APSN are creating opportunities that bridge the gap between secondary and post-secondary education while preparing students for the future workforce.

Advancing Educational Equity in Alberta Classrooms, Schools, and Structures (August 2024)

CASS is proud to support the innovative research project, **Advancing Educational Equity in Alberta Classrooms, Schools, and Structures**, being led by Dr. Emily Milne, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology MacEwan University and St. Paul Education school authority. This collaborative initiative aligns with CASS's mission to enhance system leadership and improve student outcomes by addressing inequities in Alberta's education system.

Partnering with community members, schools, and post-secondary researchers, CASS contributes \$8,400 in-kind support, participates on the project advisory committee, and assists with knowledge mobilization. The project also aligns with CASS's commitment to Truth and Reconciliation, fostering respectful relationships with First Nations and Métis communities. Through this partnership, CASS seeks to advance educational equity and enhance leadership capacity in Alberta's K-12 education system.

Rupertsland Institute (August 2024)

Rupertsland has been a key partner in promoting Métis education and awareness, providing curriculum resources that are accessible and suitable for various grade levels. Their commitment to establishing educational agreements with school authorities and supporting CASS' annual Indigenous Education Gathering has been greatly appreciated.

In addition, the Institute's expertise and guidance on First Nations, Métis, and Inuit initiatives have significantly enhanced CASS' efforts to support the Indigenous education practice standards. This partnership has been essential in advancing our shared goal of fostering understanding and appreciation of the Métis people within Alberta's education system.

CASS is pleased to support the Rupertsland Institute's nomination for the Indspire Indigenous Educator – Organization Award.

Portage College (June 2024)

CASS is proud to support Portage College in the development of a **Bachelor of Education with a specialization in Elementary Education** program. This initiative is timely, addressing the pressing need for skilled teachers in rural Alberta. By providing an entry point into post-secondary education for individuals with diverse interests, the program will help alleviate the current teacher shortage and ensure all students in Alberta have access to well-trained educators. This partnership aligns with CASS's commitment to enhancing education and supporting workforce development in rural communities.

Wellness Outcomes and Education Participation for Sick Children from Marginalized Populations (December 2023)

CASS supported the University of Calgary's Werklund School of Education on the **One Child, Every Child Strategic Catalyst Grant** application, which aims at understanding wellness in children and addressing the factors that contribute to marginalization and vulnerabilities. Both CASS and the university are excited to collaborate since the grant has been approved.

Their research team has developed a detailed research plan and will prepare an ethics application for the study. This will involve a mixed-methods approach, including an online survey, document analysis, and community focus groups. The project will unfold in four parts:

1. **Part I (April to August 2024)** will focus on developing and testing the online survey instrument, submitting the ethics application, and conducting a systematic literature review.
2. **Part II (September 2024 – February 2025)** **This is the part CASS will be involved in the implementation of the survey among senior education leaders in rural and remote areas of Alberta.**
3. **Part III (February – May 2025)** will engage with equity-seeking communities through consultation meetings to gather insights.
4. **Part IV (June – September 2025)** will analyze the consultation data and identify strategies for knowledge mobilization.

CASS is committed to supporting this initiative, which will enhance the professional growth of education leaders and improve outcomes for students across the province. We look forward to working closely with the University of Calgary on this vital research.

CityU's Graduate Studies (September 2023)

CASS is pleased to support CityU's initiative to establish a **Master's degree program in Inclusive Education** aimed at school and system education leaders. CASS recognizes the timeliness of this program and fully endorses its development, since it will significantly enhance the professional

growth of education leaders throughout the province. This partnership highlights our shared commitment to fostering inclusive practices in education and improving outcomes for all students.

Financial Statements

**COLLEGE OF ALBERTA SCHOOL
SUPERINTENDENTS**

Financial Statements

For The Year Ended June 30, 2024

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

To the Members of College of Alberta School Superintendents

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of College of Alberta School Superintendents (the College), which comprise the statement of financial position as at June 30, 2024, and the statements of operations, changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the College as at June 30, 2024, and its results of operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of our report. We are independent of the College in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Other Information

Management is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report, but does not include the financial statements and our auditors' report thereon. The Annual Report is expected to be made available to us after the date of this auditors' report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

(continues)



In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the College's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the College or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the College's financial reporting process.

Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditors' report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements. As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the College's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the College's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditors' report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditors' report. However, future events or conditions may cause the College to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

METRIX GROUP LLP

Chartered Professional Accountants

Edmonton, Alberta
September 20, 2024

COLLEGE OF ALBERTA SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS

Statement of Financial Position

As At June 30, 2024

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
ASSETS		
CURRENT		
Cash and cash equivalents (<i>Note 2</i>)	\$ 504,458	\$ 536,157
Investments (<i>Note 3</i>)	916,085	1,123,739
Receivables (<i>Note 4</i>)	44,717	36,267
Goods and Services Tax recoverable	5,162	10,019
Prepaid expenses	113,725	50,611
	<u>\$ 1,584,147</u>	<u>\$ 1,756,793</u>
LIABILITIES		
CURRENT		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 63,696	\$ 195,948
Deferred contributions (<i>Note 5</i>)	25,991	327,485
Deferred revenue (<i>Note 6</i>)	602,821	559,042
	<u>692,508</u>	<u>1,082,475</u>
NET ASSETS		
Unrestricted net assets	391,639	474,318
Internally restricted net assets (<i>Note 7</i>)	500,000	200,000
	<u>891,639</u>	<u>674,318</u>
	<u>\$ 1,584,147</u>	<u>\$ 1,756,793</u>

ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD:

_____ *Director*

_____ *Director*

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

COLLEGE OF ALBERTA SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS**Statement of Operations****For The Year Ended June 30, 2024**

	2024	2023
REVENUE		
Grants (<i>Note 8</i>)	\$ 2,835,677	\$ 2,440,960
Conference and workshop registrations	883,169	721,566
Membership fees	572,617	545,775
Contracted services (<i>Schedule 1</i>)	53,415	70,673
Interest	37,084	13,779
Rent	14,879	11,878
Other	7,347	5,367
Royalties	4,150	6,221
	4,408,338	3,816,219
EXPENSES		
Salaries, wages and benefits	2,693,765	2,359,986
Conferences and workshops	655,564	455,887
Consulting fees	517,668	401,958
Travel	81,833	77,277
Office lease	59,806	95,836
Office supplies	45,144	45,705
President's jurisdiction honorarium	45,000	45,000
CASSA membership	21,240	20,580
Meetings	21,156	17,219
Advertising and promotion	16,610	16,195
Professional fees	13,333	17,500
Training	6,348	5,376
Contracted services	4,154	5,094
CASA representative	3,285	5,411
Insurance	3,102	3,997
Bank charges	1,509	1,429
Scholarship	1,500	1,500
	4,191,017	3,575,950
EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	\$ 217,321	\$ 240,269

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

COLLEGE OF ALBERTA SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS**Statement of Changes in Net Assets****For The Year Ended June 30, 2024**

	Unrestricted Net Assets	Restricted Net Assets (Note 7)	2024	2023
BALANCE, BEGINNING OF YEAR	\$ 474,318	\$ 200,000	\$ 674,318	\$ 434,049
Excess of revenue over expenses	217,321	-	217,321	240,269
Transfers	(300,000)	300,000	-	-
BALANCE, END OF YEAR	\$ 391,639	\$ 500,000	\$ 891,639	\$ 674,318

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

COLLEGE OF ALBERTA SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS**Statement of Cash Flows****For The Year Ended June 30, 2024**

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Excess of revenue over expenses	<u>\$ 217,321</u>	<u>\$ 240,269</u>
Changes in non-cash working capital:		
Receivables	(8,450)	(16,906)
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	(132,252)	134,515
Goods and Services Tax recoverable	4,857	(4,938)
Deferred contributions	(301,494)	(36,984)
Prepaid expenses	(63,114)	(15,569)
Deferred revenue	43,779	134,422
	<u>(456,674)</u>	194,540
	<u>(239,353)</u>	434,809
INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Purchase of investments	(916,085)	(2,028,624)
Redemption of investments	1,123,739	1,704,885
	<u>207,654</u>	<u>(323,739)</u>
INCREASE (DECREASE) IN CASH FLOW	(31,699)	111,070
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS - BEGINNING OF YEAR	<u>536,157</u>	<u>425,087</u>
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS - END OF YEAR (Note 2)	<u>\$ 504,458</u>	<u>\$ 536,157</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

COLLEGE OF ALBERTA SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS

Notes to Financial Statements

Year Ended June 30, 2024

NATURE OF OPERATIONS

The College of Alberta School Superintendents (the "College") is a professional regulatory body for system education leaders as described in the College of Alberta School Superintendents Act (September 2022). The College is the voice of system educational leaders, providing leadership, expertise, and advocacy to improve, promote, and champion student success.

The College is a not-for-profit organization incorporated under the *Alberta Societies Act* and, as such, is exempt from income taxes.

1. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of Presentation

The financial statements were prepared in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include items that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash, are subject to an insignificant risk of change in value, and have a maturity of 90 days or less at acquisition.

Tangible Capital Assets

Tangible capital assets with original cost in excess of \$5,000 are capitalized. No capital assets in excess of \$5,000 were purchased in 2024 or 2023.

Revenue Recognition

The College follows the deferral method of accounting for contributions. Restricted contributions for operating expenses are recognized as revenue in the year in which the related expenses are incurred. Unrestricted contributions are recognized as revenue when received or receivable if the amount to be received can be reasonably estimated and collection is reasonably assured.

Membership and conference fee revenue are recognized in the period it relates to. Memberships are for a one-year period.

Contracted service fees are recognized as revenue in the year in which the service is provided.

Interest income is recognized as revenue when earned.

Use of Estimates

The preparation of financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the recorded amounts of assets and liabilities, the disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. All estimates are reviewed periodically and adjustments are made to the statements of operations as appropriate in the year they become known.

(continues)

COLLEGE OF ALBERTA SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS

Notes to Financial Statements

Year Ended June 30, 2024

1. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES *(continued)*

Contributed Goods and Services

Volunteers may contribute a time each year to assist the College in carrying out its service delivery activities. Due to the difficulty of determining their fair value, contributed services are not recognized in the financial statements.

Financial Instruments

Measurement of financial instruments

The College initially measures its financial assets and financial liabilities at fair value adjusted by, in the case of a financial instrument that will not be measured subsequently at fair value, the amount of transaction costs directly attributable to the instruments.

The College subsequently measures all its financial assets and financial liabilities at amortized cost, except for investments in equity instruments that are quoted in an active market, which are measured at fair value. Changes in fair value are recognized in net income.

Financial assets measured at amortized cost include cash and cash equivalents and receivables.

Financial liabilities measured at amortized cost include accounts payable and accrued liabilities.

The College has no financial assets measured at fair value.

Impairment

Financial assets measured at cost are tested for impairment when there are indicators of impairment. The amount of the write-down is recognized in net income. The previously recognized impairment loss may be reversed to the extent of the improvement, directly or by adjusting the allowance account, provided it is no greater than the amount that would have been reported at the date of the reversal had the impairment not been recognized previously. The amount of the reversal is recognized in net income.

2. CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
Operating account	\$ 120,893	\$ 88,212
Alberta Regional Professional Development Consortia account	332,571	394,751
Savings account	101,306	110,572
Zone 2/3 trust funds	(38,091)	(41,037)
Zone 5 trust funds	(12,221)	(16,341)
	<u>\$ 504,458</u>	<u>\$ 536,157</u>

3. INVESTMENTS

Investments are comprised of Guaranteed Investment Certificates bearing interest at rates ranging between 4.25% and 4.50% and maturing between October 2024 and June 2025.

COLLEGE OF ALBERTA SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS**Notes to Financial Statements****Year Ended June 30, 2024****4. RECEIVABLES**

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
Trade	\$ 27,881	\$ 31,893
Accrued interest	16,836	4,374
	<u>\$ 44,717</u>	<u>\$ 36,267</u>

5. DEFERRED CONTRIBUTIONS

Deferred contributions represents unspent externally restricted grant funding that is to be utilized in accordance with the applicable grant agreements. The changes during the year are as follows:

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
Balance, beginning of year	\$ 327,485	\$ 364,469
Grants received:		
Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard	210,923	363,960
Interest earned on grant funding	7,626	16,043
	<u>546,034</u>	<u>744,472</u>
Amounts recognized as grant revenue during the year	(520,043)	(302,583)
Amounts refunded to the Government of Alberta	-	(114,404)
	<u>\$ 25,991</u>	<u>\$ 327,485</u>
Balance, end of year		
Deferred contributions are comprised of the following:		
Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard	\$ 25,991	\$ 327,485
	<u>\$ 25,991</u>	<u>\$ 327,485</u>

6. DEFERRED REVENUE

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
Alberta Regional Professional Development Consortia	\$ 318,903	\$ 346,050
Registration fees	283,918	212,992
	<u>\$ 602,821</u>	<u>\$ 559,042</u>

COLLEGE OF ALBERTA SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS

Notes to Financial Statements

Year Ended June 30, 2024

7. INTERNALLY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
Operational reserve	\$ 200,000	\$ 100,000
Future educational support reserve	200,000	-
Legal reserve	<u>100,000</u>	<u>100,000</u>
	<u>\$ 500,000</u>	<u>\$ 200,000</u>

Reserves are appropriations of unrestricted net assets and are established at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

The operational reserve is comprised of funds set aside to ensure the continued operation of the College in the event of a funding shortfall.

The legal reserve is comprised of funds set aside for legal proceedings.

The future educational support reserve is comprised of funds set aside for future certification updates and services.

8. GRANTS

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
Alberta Education (<i>Schedule 1</i>)	\$ 2,315,634	\$ 2,138,185
Superintendent Leadership Quality standard	520,043	302,583
Wellness program	<u>-</u>	<u>192</u>
	<u>\$ 2,835,677</u>	<u>\$ 2,440,960</u>

9. CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATIONS

The College leases its office space pursuant to a lease agreement expiring January 31, 2032. The lease agreement requires annual base rent of approximately \$54,000 during years one to five and \$56,000 in years six to ten.

COLLEGE OF ALBERTA SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS

Notes to Financial Statements

Year Ended June 30, 2024

10. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

The College is not exposed to significant market, currency or other price risk through its financial instruments. The following analysis provides information about the College's risk exposure and concentration as of June 30, 2024.

Credit risk

The College is subject to credit risk with respect to receivables. Credit risk arises from the possibility that the College's customers may experience financial difficulty and be unable to fulfil their obligations. The College assesses, on a continuous basis, amounts receivable on the basis of amounts it is virtually certain to receive.

Liquidity risk

Liquidity risk is the risk that an entity will encounter difficulty in meeting obligations associated with financial liabilities. The College is exposed to this risk mainly in respect of its receipt of funds from the Ministry of Education, Government of Alberta and other related sources, and accounts payable and accrued liabilities.

The College mitigates this risk by monitoring cash activities and expected outflows through extensive budgeting and maintaining investments that may be converted to cash in the near-term if unexpected cash outflows arise.

Interest rate risk

Interest rate risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market interest rates. Interest rate risk arises when the College invests in interest-bearing financial instruments. The College is directly exposed to interest risk on its fixed income securities.

11. COMPARATIVE FIGURES

Some of the comparative figures have been reclassified to conform to the current year's presentation.

COLLEGE OF ALBERTA SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS

Schedule of Revenue and Expenses Alberta Regional Professional Development Consortia (Schedule 1) Year Ended June 30, 2024

	2024	2023
REVENUE		
Alberta Education grants (Note 8)	\$ 2,315,634	\$ 2,138,185
College of Alberta School Superintendents Administration fee	53,415	70,673
	<u>2,369,049</u>	<u>2,208,858</u>
EXPENSES		
Salaries and wages	2,311,524	2,096,928
Office Lease	3,733	40,954
Bank charges	377	303
	<u>2,315,634</u>	<u>2,138,185</u>
EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	<u>\$ 53,415</u>	<u>\$ 70,673</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.