



FORT McMURRAY
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Pressure & Support: Our Professional Learning Framework Journey

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We Value Learning. We Value People. We Value Community. We Value Responsibility.



A Little Bit About Us...



Natasha

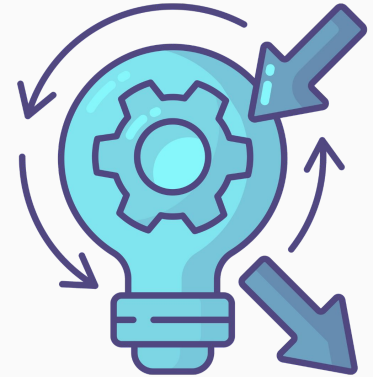


Danielle



Mat

Session Format



Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard

Quality superintendent leadership occurs when the superintendent's ongoing analysis of the context, and the superintendent's decisions about what leadership knowledge and abilities to apply, result in quality school leadership, quality teaching and optimum learning for all students in the school authority.

ALBERTA EDUCATION MINISTERIAL ORDER #003/2020

Leadership Quality Standard

Quality leadership occurs when the leader's ongoing analysis of the context, and decisions about what leadership knowledge and abilities to apply, result in quality teaching and optimum learning for all school students.

ALBERTA EDUCATION MINISTERIAL ORDER #002/2020

1 Building Effective Relationships

2 Modeling Commitment to Professional Learning ✓

3 Visionary Leadership ✓

4 Leading Learning ✓

5 Ensuring First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education for All Students

6 School Authority Operations and Resources ✓

7 Supporting Effective Governance

1 Fostering Effective Relationships

2 Modeling Commitment to Professional Learning ✓

3 Embodying Visionary Leadership ✓

4 Leading a Learning Community ✓

5 Supporting the Application of Foundational Knowledge about First Nations, Métis and Inuit

6 Providing Instructional Leadership

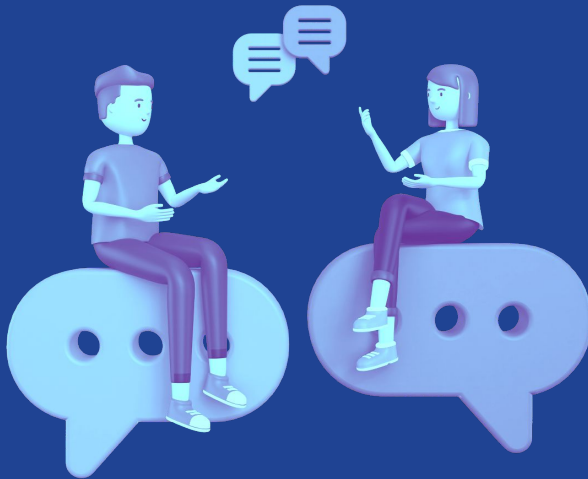
7 Developing Leadership Capacity

8 Managing School Operations and Resources ✓

9 Understanding and Responding to the Larger Societal Context

Effective System Leadership Practices

(Anderson & Young, 2018)



Introduce yourself and share which system leadership practice speaks to you the most right now.

Building and maintaining relations, learning communities, and district culture.

Facilitating infrastructure alignment.

Fostering a district-wide sense of efficacy.

Having a district-wide focus on student achievement.

Investing in instructional leadership.

Targeting school improvement beginning with low performing schools.

Using evidence for planning, organizational learning, and accountability.

Using proven approaches to curriculum and instruction.

Engaging strategically with the government's agenda.

Implementing district-wide job embedded professional development.

Focusing on equity.

Having an openness to change.

Placing importance on the individual.

Segment #1

Core Drivers

What are *Core Drivers?*

- ❖ Narrow the system's focus
- ❖ Capture the spirit of the work
- ❖ Help to triage competing priorities and new ideas
- ❖ Provide a research-supported, philosophical underpinning
- ❖ Could also be called *guiding beliefs*

What Successful Leaders Do

(Leithwood et al., 2020)

Domains of practice	Specific leadership practices
Set Directions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build a shared vision**• Identify specific, shared, short-term goals• Create high-performance expectations• Communicate the vision and goals**
Build Relationships and Develop People	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stimulate growth in the professional capacities of staff• Provide support and demonstrate consideration for individual staff members• Model the school's values and practices**• Build trusting relationships with and among staff, students and parents**• Establish productive working relationships with teacher federation representatives
Develop the Organization to Support Desired Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build collaborative culture and distribute leadership**• Structure the organization to facilitate collaboration**• Build productive relationships with families and communities**• Connect the school to its wider environment**• Maintain a safe and healthy school environment• Allocate resources in support of the school's vision and goals**• Staff the instructional program**
Improve the Instructional Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide instructional support• Monitor student learning and school improvement progress**• Buffer staff from distractions to their instructional work

Example

Fostering coherence amongst teachers and leaders within and across all schools is critical to the division's success.

Case Study Activity



5-8 minutes

What are the core drivers that underpin your school authority's approach to professional learning?

Example:

Fostering coherence amongst teachers and leaders within and across all schools is critical to the division's success.

1. The allocation of time for professional learning must strike a balance between advancing the strategic priorities outlined in the Division Education Plan, each School Education Plan, and individual teacher and leader professional learning needs.
2. The spirit of professional collaboration must be imbued throughout all aspects of the framework.
3. Fostering coherence amongst teachers and leaders within and across all schools is critical to the division's success.
4. Research-based and evidence-informed best practices along with current student learning data should form the foundation of all professional learning endeavors.
5. Teachers and leaders should have some degree of autonomy over their professional learning endeavors.
6. Accountability measures must be permeated throughout all aspects of the framework to ensure effective and appropriate stewardship of division resources.

Our Core Drivers



Segment #2

Professional Learning Frameworks



Triad Dialogue

10-12 minutes

1. Form a dialogue triad with two colleagues not from your table or your school authority.
2. Discuss the two questions for **5-6** minutes until we pause.
3. Open your envelope, hand out a slip to each member, read and reflect on the scholarly excerpt, and then allow it to enrich your discussion. (**5-6** minutes).

How does your school authority allocate professional learning time to address both school-specific and division-wide priorities?

What are the various formats of PL in your authority and how have they evolved over time?

Our Story



2012

PLCs

Changed from
weekly half-day Fridays to
biweekly full day Fridays.

PLFs were born.
Professional Learning Fridays



Fort McMurray Catholic Schools 2024-25 School Calendar

First & Last Day for Teachers
First & Last Day for Students
Stats/School Breaks-No School
PLF Fridays – No School
PD/Spiritual Development Day – No School
ATA
Institute Day/Support PD Day/ Convention – No School
Non Operational Day – No School

March 18, 2024

2024-25 important dates:

Sept. 3	First day for students
Dec. 23-Jan. 3	Christmas Break
Apr. 14-18	Spring Break
Apr. 18-21	Easter

2025-26 important dates (tentative):

Sept. 2	First day for students
Dec. 22-Jan. 2	Christmas Break
Apr. 3-6	Easter
Apr. 3-12	Spring Break

August 2024	September 2024	October 2024	November 2024
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First Semester
September 3 – January 28
85 Instructional Days
97 Operational Days

Second Semester
January 29 – June 26
84 Instructional Days
96 Operational Days

Total
169 Instructional Days
193 Operational Days



ERA #1



Mostly Principal-directed

PLCs
(various formats & expectations)

Staff Meetings

Essential Meetings
(division-led)

PD Sessions

Teacher Work Time

Mass

ERA #2



AM:
Principal-directed

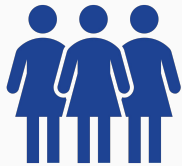
School Collaborations

Staff Meetings

Teacher Work Time

PD Sessions

Mass



PM: Teacher-directed

PLCs

ERA #1



Full Day
Mostly
Principal
directed

Mass

Essential Meetings

Teacher Work Time

PD Sessions

Staff Meetings

PLCs

ERA #2



Morning
Principal
directed

Mass

Essential Meetings

Teacher Work Time

PD Sessions

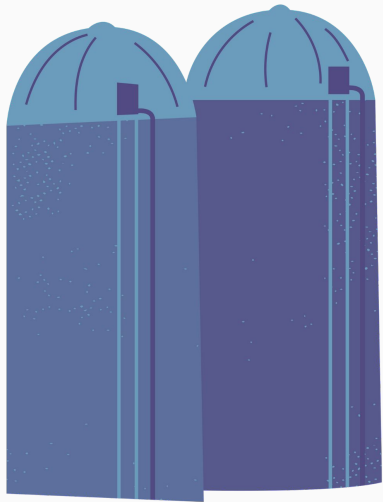
Staff Meetings

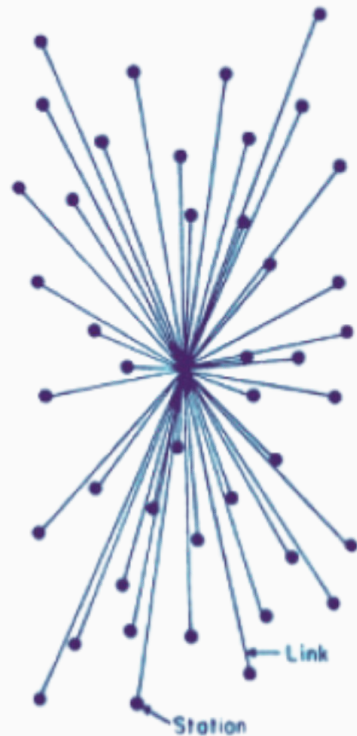


Afternoon
Teacher
directed

PLCs

From a
system
leadership
perspective,
what trends
or issues
may have
emerged?

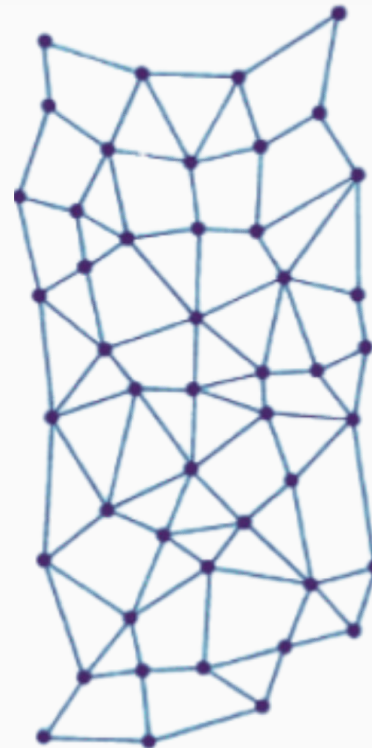




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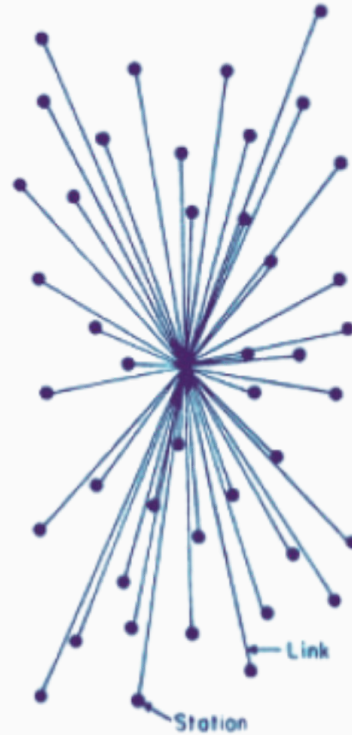
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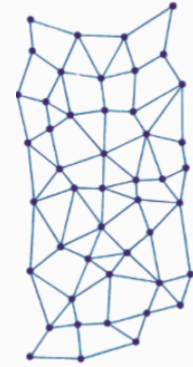
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ERA #3

**Professional
Learning
Communities**

**Collaborative
Learning
Cohorts**

+

**School-based
Time**

Mass

Measuring Success



PLCs



A moment on our starting place...

Activators

- ★ Voluntary (but required)
- ★ Training every 2 years
- ★ Google Classroom

Structures & Expectations

- ★ 5-7 members per group
- ★ Common Challenge cycle
- ★ Meeting agendas
- ★ Supporting documents
- ★ Exemplars

Accountability Measures

- ★ Common challenge
- ★ Leader-led reflections
- ★ Year-end report

YEAR
1



PD Blocks

YEAR
2



**Communities
of Practice**

YEAR 3 YEAR
3 4



CLCs

CLCs (Collaborative Learning Cohorts)

YEAR 1



PD Blocks

- ★ Varied options each PLF
- ★ Internal presenters & external experts (virtual)
- ★ Teacher choice

What We Heard

- ★ One-off
- ★ Sit & get
- ★ Not enough choice
- ★ No true collaboration time
- ★ Virtual was waning
- ★ Too many moving parts
- ★ Travel time

What We Noticed

- ★ Limited throughline
- ★ Minimal application
- ★ New curriculum
- ★ Organization

CLCs (Collaborative Learning Cohorts)

YEAR 2

- ★ Streamlined PD offerings
- ★ Division-wide grade level groupings
- ★ No structure other than meeting together
- ★ Expected to work on matters of importance
- ★ Central location



**Communities
of Practice**

What We Heard

- ★ Not enough structure
- ★ Needed a facilitator
- ★ Groups too large
- ★ Wasted time
- ★ Conflicting priorities
- ★ Awkward dynamics

What We Noticed

- ★ Cross-school collaboration
- ★ Lack of coherence
- ★ Minimal impact
- ★ Removed too many guardrails at once
- ★ Limited advancement of priorities

Emerging Factors

New Curriculum

New Literacy & Numeracy Assessments

Stagnant Diploma Exam and PAT Results

Fewer PLFs

Division Education Plan

YEAR 3 YEAR 4



CLCs

- ★ Division-wide priorities
- ★ Internal facilitators (mostly)
- ★ Ongoing sessions
- ★ Long range plan
- ★ Balance of PD and collaborative work time
- ★ Teachers assigned to groups

What We Heard

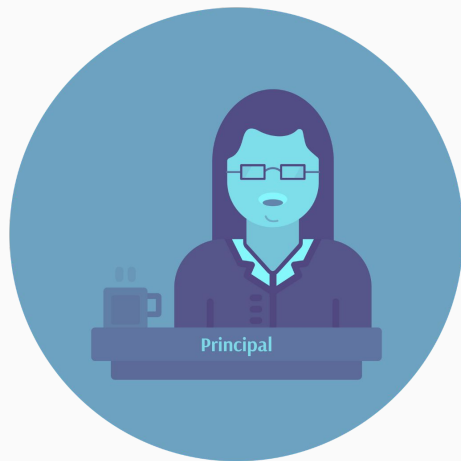
- ★ Facilitator helped
- ★ Cross-school collaboration
- ★ Practical and relevant
- ★ Ps/VPs liked the "same page"
- ★ Limited autonomy
- ★ Focus too strict

What We Noticed

- ★ Coherence
- ★ Impacts in classrooms
- ★ Increased engagement
- ★ Groups too large (Y3)
- ★ Hard to choose priority areas (Y3)

CLCs (Collaborative Learning Cohorts)

School-based Time



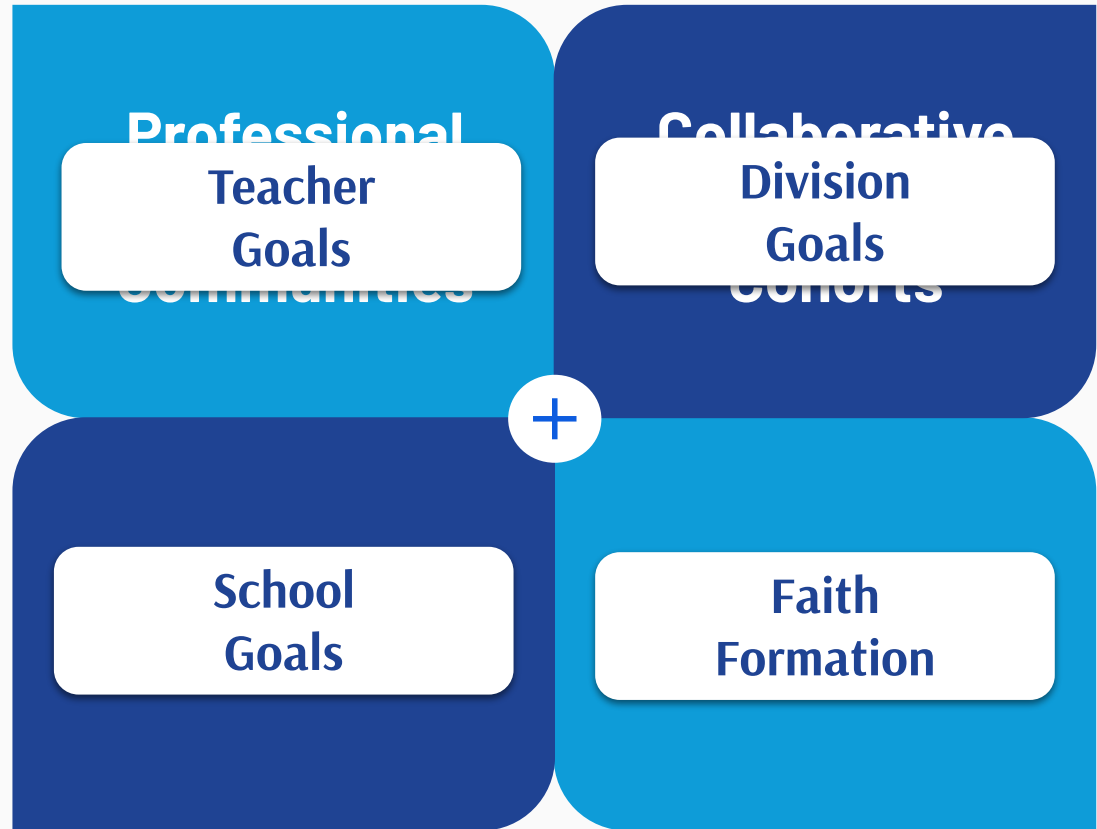
School-based Time

School Planning Template

School-Based Activity	Time Guideline
School Goals* <i>(Professional Development, Training, Collaborative Planning, Essential Meetings)</i>	30% - 35%
Staff Meetings* <i>(School operations and management)</i>	15% - 20%
Grade Level / Subject Area Team Planning*	10% - 15%
Team Building <i>(Community-building, wellness activities, celebrations)</i>	10% - 15%
Independent Classroom Work	10% - 15%

**The suggested time guideline for these activities is interchangeable.*

Putting It All Together



Putting It All Together

Initiative	Total Hours	Overall Percentage
Division-Led Initiatives		
Collaborative Learning Cohorts	11	14%
Mass	6	8%
School-Based Activities		
School-Based Activities	43	56%
Teacher-Directed Collaboration		
PLCs	14	18%
<i>Travel & Break</i>	3	4%



5-8 minutes

How do you measure the efficacy of PL initiatives, and respond to the results?

How might some aspects of our story inform your work in your school authority?

Q & A