

Highlights: 2025 CASS Annual Conference

The [2025 CASS Annual Conference](#), held at the Fantasyland Hotel in Edmonton from March 19–21, welcomed over 390 delegates, representing 93% of school authorities across Alberta. Participants engaged in a range of professional learning opportunities aligned with the Alberta [Leadership Quality Standard](#) (LQS) and the [Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard](#) (SLQS). For regulated members, conference attendance and participation fulfilled the equivalent of 10 [Continuing Education Program](#) (CEP) credits toward their annual accreditation requirement.



The pre-conference featured two CEP courses, combining five hours of in-person learning with two online sessions (2.5 hours each). *Visionary Leadership in Action: Implementing a Continuum of Supports and Services* was facilitated by Monica Mankowski, Dr. Dianne McConnell, and Pam Rannelli. *Leading to Support Effective Governance* was facilitated by Dr. Edgar Schmidt and Dr. Dwayne Zarichny.

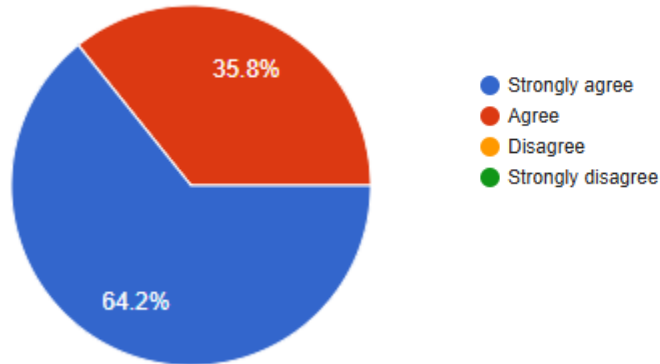
The conference officially opened on Wednesday evening with welcome remarks from CASS President Dr. Clint Moroziuk, Superintendent of Greater St. Albert Catholic Schools. Elder Daphne Alexis offered an opening blessing. Delegates then joined their respective [Communities of Practice](#), which are designed to support system education leaders in demonstrating professional competence and engaging in ongoing reflection.

Throughout the remainder of the conference, delegates selected from a [diverse menu](#) of 31 sessions. The feedback on the subsequent pages of this document will indicate that the conference was widely praised for its strong organization, relevant and timely session content, and meaningful opportunities for networking and collaboration. Delegates especially valued the chance to learn from colleagues across the province and apply new strategies directly to their leadership practice. CASS extends its sincere thanks to all facilitators who generously contributed their time and expertise. For more information about this event and previous conferences, please visit the [CASS Conference Program Archives](#).

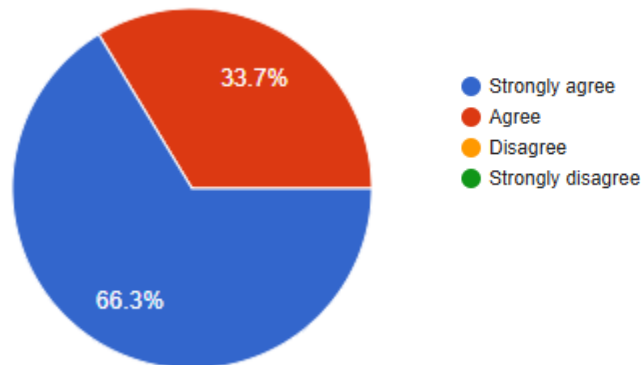
2025 CASS Annual Conference Feedback

The 2025 CASS Annual Conference Learning Survey received responses from 32% of the conference delegates.

1. *This professional learning opportunity contributed to my understanding of the professional practice standard. (e.g., content-related to one or more competency)*



2. *I plan to apply my learning in my school authority.*



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

- **Collaboration and Connection** – The most frequently mentioned theme was networking and collaboration. Respondents valued opportunities to connect with colleagues in similar roles and appreciated the chance to learn from other stories of practice. Table talk and conversations with those in similar roles were described as powerful and meaningful, with many noting that dialogue across school authorities helped them apply learning within their own contexts.
- **Relevant and Timely Learning** - Sessions were praised for being practical, timely, and directly applicable to system education leadership work. Respondents valued the

“just-in-time” learning that addressed immediate questions and challenges. Topics like AI, governance, curriculum implementation, and media training were highlighted as especially relevant, with many attendees noting they could immediately apply what they learned in their own school authorities.

- **Diverse and High-quality Content** - Respondents appreciated the wide range of session topics, which allowed them to explore areas most relevant to their roles. They also valued the flexibility in session formats and timing, such as pre-conferences, shorter sessions, and learning labs. Insightful and knowledgeable presenters, particularly those with real system-level experience, were highlighted as a key strength of the learning opportunity.
- **Learning through Stories and Application** - Many respondents found the sharing of resources and experiences from other school authorities to be both grounded and inspiring. Opportunities to reflect, synthesize, and apply learning were also highly valued. Practical strategies, such as leadership planning and aligning vision to action, were especially meaningful when connected to the SLQS competencies.

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

- **High satisfaction overall** - many respondents had nothing to add or explicitly said “all good.”
- **Venue and Logistics** – Consider space, room assignments, temperature, and sound for each room. More consistent microphone use needed from the presenters.
- **Relevance and Alignment** – Some respondents commented about a disconnect between session descriptions and the actual delivery. Others expressed desire for more advanced, practical, and in-depth content.
- **Communities of Practice** – Many respondents found value in the Communities of Practice (CoPs), and there is an interest in making them even more impactful. Suggestions to enhance their effectiveness included offering longer or dedicated CoP sessions and improving communication about the continuity and purpose of CoPs between conferences.

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

Respondents indicated they are highly engaged and appreciate CASS offerings. Participants expressed appreciation for CASS’s current conference offerings, especially CoPs, pre-conference CEP courses, and school authority stories. There was encouragement to continue or expand these formats. There is a clear call for:

- practical and timely professional content,
- more streamlined access to resources; some expressed frustration regarding the CASS website usability,

- built-in time for collaboration and reflection,
- interest in leadership topics tied to system transformation, governance, and complexity, alongside continued curiosity about AI and tech integration.

6. *Which SLQS competencies do you feel are your areas of greatest strength?*

The top 5 SLQS competencies participants felt were their areas of greatest strength were building effective relationships, modeling commitment to professional learning, leading learning, visionary leadership, and school authority operations and resources.

7. *On which SLQS competencies are you focusing your professional growth?*

The top 3 SLQS competencies participants are focusing their professional growth are leading learning, supporting effective governance, visionary leadership, ensuring First Nations, Métis, and Inuit education for all students, and school authority operations and resources.

8. *Which LQS competencies do you feel are your areas of greatest strength?*

The top five LQS competencies that participants identified as their areas of greatest strength were: embodying visionary leadership, leading a learning community, supporting the application of foundational knowledge about First Nations, Métis and Inuit, developing leadership capacity, and understanding and responding to the larger societal context.

9. *On which LQS competencies are you focusing your professional growth?*

The top five LQS competencies match exactly the top five growth areas: visionary leadership, leading a learning community, supporting the application of foundational knowledge about First Nations, Métis and Inuit, developing leadership capacity, understanding and responding to the larger societal context.

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

The conference was highly praised for structure and organization with minor recurring issues related to venue limitations (space, noise, food), and some thoughtful suggestions on schedule tweaks and format improvements. There's clear enthusiasm and appreciation for the conference's leadership and planning. Some mentioned sponsors taking too much time to share. Some respondents indicated some excitement about moving to a new conference venue next year.

11. *To support future conference planning, please suggest a keynote speaker whose insights would contribute to your professional growth.*

A few suggestions for keynote speakers were received and will be reviewed by the conference planning committee.

Summary

Overall, the conference was highly valued by respondents, who praised its strong organization, relevant and timely content, and meaningful opportunities for connection. Attendees appreciated the wide range of session topics, knowledgeable presenters, and the ability to apply learning directly to their leadership contexts. Networking and collaboration—especially through CoP groups, table discussions, and shared stories of practice, emerged as standout aspects. While there were suggestions for improving session descriptions, sound quality, and the depth of some topics, the overall tone was overwhelmingly positive, with many expressing gratitude for the thoughtful design and impact of the learning experience.