

Supporting Effective Governance Module

PARTICIPANT GUIDE



Supporting Effective Governance Competency

A superintendent of schools, as referred to in the *School Act*, as chief executive officer of the board and chief education officer of the school authority, provides the board with information, advice and support required for the fulfillment of its governance role, and reports to the Minister on all matters required of the superintendent as identified in the *School Act* and other provincial legislation.

Supporting Effective Governance Module Outcomes

Participants will develop, and apply strategies to:

1. work within a contextually appropriate policy governance model to establish and sustain a productive working relationship with the board that is based on mutual trust, respect and integrity.
2. engage in ongoing education for board members and jurisdiction leaders to foster collaboration, reciprocity, and interdependency among professionals, trustees, and the wider community.
3. support trustee participation in assessing community values and interests, and mobilizing parents and the wider community in supporting the school authority's education plan to optimize learning for all students.

Acknowledgements

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Thank you as well to Foundations for the Future Charter Academy Superintendent Roger Nippard and to Education Consultant Dr. Naomi Johnson, who will be facilitating the *Supporting Effective Governance Professional Learning* module at the 2018 CASS/ASBOA Summer Learning Conference.

OVERVIEW

Learning modules are designed to deepen and apply system leaders' professional practice with opportunities to examine Alberta context through a "community of inquiry" approach based on research. Learning modules begin with a focus on personal capacity leading to the valuable role system leaders play in supporting quality school leadership and teaching to create optimum learning for all students in Alberta.

The CASS professional learning modules are founded on the *Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard* requirement that the professional practice of "jurisdiction leaders and superintendents must be informed by current, relevant educational research, with a focus on career-long improvement" (Alberta Education, 2018, p. 2).

This participant guide supports your examination of ways through which superintendents and system leaders establish and sustain a learning culture that promotes ongoing critical reflection on practice, shared responsibility for student success, and continuous improvement.

Drawing on research involving highly successful and learning focused school districts, you will critically examine your current practices and reflect on how these practices are informed by research about effective learning, teaching and leadership.

Through professional collaboration with other system leaders, you will co-construct strategies for building shared and distributed approaches to overall leadership in your systems. You will develop and enact a responsive and empowering plan to continuously enable high quality leadership and teaching for all students, and to cultivate an interdependent and coherent learning system.

Learning materials for these modules will be posted online at: <https://cassalberta.ca/conferences-workshops/cass-asboa-summer-learning-conference/> and <https://cassalberta.ca/resources/>

SESSION A

Wednesday 9:00 am - 12:00 pm

Terms

“Standard”

A standard (lower case s) is a policy that identifies the requirements for the competent professional practice of members of a profession. In turn, Alberta’s “Capital S” Standards adopted by Ministerial Order are authorized under Section 39(1) (f) of the *School Act*. This makes them part of the legislative framework under the *School Act*. Within each of the TQS, LQS and SLQS “Standard” policies is the “standard” statement. This standard is the clear expression of the outcome of competent practice.

“Competency” means an interrelated set of knowledge, skills, and attitudes developed over time, and drawn upon and applied to a particular leadership context in order to support quality leadership, teaching and optimum learning as required by the Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard (e.g., Visionary Leadership).

“Descriptor of the competency” refers to the sentence that explains the competency. A superintendent engages with the school community in implementing a vision of a preferred future for student success, based on common values and beliefs.

“Indicators” means actions that are likely to lead to the achievement of the competency and which, together with the competency, are measurable and observable.

CASS Terms

Competency Overview – “Two-pager” providing awareness of the competency based on 4 frames: Legal and Key References, Research, Practice in Alberta, and Resources.

Learning Modules – are designed to deepen and apply the system leader’s professional practice with opportunities to examine Alberta context through a “community of inquiry” approach based on research.

Braid – the image CASS developed to represent that competencies are interrelated and interdependent (top, pg. 1).

Practice Profile

This profile tool is intended to frame your reflection on your practice, based on the indicators for each competency from Alberta Education’s SLQS. Additional indicators specific to your context, your practice and your plans for growth may be added. Indicators may also be representative of Alberta stories of practice and/or emerging research.

<https://cassalberta.ca/resources/>

Supporting Effective Governance

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Indicators	Evidence in Practice
<p>Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) establishing and sustaining a productive working relationship with the board, based on mutual trust, respect and integrity; (j) ensuring that all students and staff are provided with a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging; (k) ensuring that all students in the school authority have the opportunity to meet the standards of education set by the Minister of Education; (l) ensuring that the board's plans, resource allocations, strategies and procedures lead to the achievement of its goals and priorities; (m) ensuring that the board's fiscal and resource management is in accordance with all statutory, regulatory and board requirements; (n) supporting the board in the fulfillment of its governance functions in the fiduciary, strategic and generative realms; (o) implementing board policies and supporting the regular review and evaluation of their impact; 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (p) ensuring the support, ongoing supervision and evaluation of all staff members in relation to their respective professional responsibilities; (q) facilitating collaboration among the board, staff and First Nations, Métis and Inuit leaders, organizations and communities to establish strategic policy directions in support of First Nations, Métis and Inuit student achievement and development; (r) building the capacity of the board and staff to predict, communicate and respond to emergent circumstances, including emergency readiness and crisis management, and to political, social, economic, legal and cultural contexts and trends; (s) supporting the board in its engagement with the school community to develop a vision of a preferred future for student success; (t) facilitating ongoing public communication about the board's operations and the achievement of its goals and priorities; and (u) promoting constructive relations between the board and staff, as well as provincial authorities, post-secondary institutions and education stakeholder organizations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>Areas for Growth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

A.1 Do School Boards Matter? What Does the Research Say?

Words, Phrases, Sentences

1. Read this research summary and use three separate index cards to record one key word (green card), one phrase (pink card), one sentence (blue card). Each card should represent an important idea or concept for you.
2. Place your cards by category on the table (all of the one-word statements, all phrases, all sentences.) Group similar index cards with your tablemates.
3. How might you compare and contrast your individual choices?

Galway, Sheppard, Wiens, and Brown (2013)

In their examination of the attributes of effective school boards and the nature of educational governance in Canada, Galway, Sheppard, Wiens, and Brown (2013) provide the following description of school boards:

School boards are by legislation valid and legitimate governments in their own right. The authority of school boards is established by provincial legislation, which sets out the parameters, mandate, duties, and powers of the boards (Shields, 2007). School boards are responsible for directing the activities of the school district in terms of organization, strategic planning and operations, and accountability for finances and student learning (Seel & Gibbons, 2011). School board members (also known as trustees, or in some provinces, commissioners) do not hold administrative positions, but are members and representatives of the public, and are legally responsible for the organization (Shields, 2007). The school board functions as a legal entity, which exercises its authority as a single corporate body; therefore, board members do not possess any authority as individuals (Carpenter, 2007). However, they make and act on decisions related to the organization's mission, develop policies and monitor their implementation, establish decision-making processes, put in place control mechanisms for the allocation and distribution of power and resources, institute procedures for performing specific tasks, and self-evaluate (Kelleher-Flight, 2005; Ranson, 2008).

Among the key findings of this pan-Canadian study were the following:

Several near-synonymous themes emerged from the (trustee) focus group data relating to roles in maintaining local autonomy including regional representation, maintaining a community-based presence, the importance of local culture, and localized decision making. Other roles included accountability for student learning, financial accountability, oversight of the professional staff, advocacy and negotiation with government, and serving as a middle layer or buffer between government and the school community. (p. 14)

Although the responses from superintendents were similar to those of school board trustees in many areas, superintendents focused more on policy roles, the democratic mandate of school boards, and the relationship of school boards and government. Both groups were insistent that school boards serve a vital role in sustaining the success of Canada's education system. (p. 14)

Sheppard, Galway, Brown, and Dibbon (2013)

“There is a growing evidence base that supports the position that board-governed school districts contribute to successful public education systems.” (p. 1)

Brandon, Hanna, Morrow, Rhyason, & Schmold (2013)

Leithwood (2010) indicates that, in highly effective school systems, trustees contribute in two major ways; first, by focusing their work on supporting and monitoring progress being made in implementing the system’s strategic multi-year plan, and second, by nurturing the wider community’s understanding and support for their system’s efforts. He further advises that systems adopting a policy governance model should provide ongoing training for all elected board members, system leaders, and staff. This approach fosters collaboration and interdependency between professional and elected system leaders. (p. 13)

Johnson (2017)

There is very little written in the literature about governance, and the metaphors about governance are notably impoverished. The link between public education and democracy is so deep that, if one fails, so might the other. True public governance promotes democracy and revitalizes social institutions. Public engagement is viewed as a way to rebuild public life. The challenges facing our current public education system require fundamental shifts in our thinking; what we do today in education will create the democracy of tomorrow.

Many are sceptical about the value of public boards in general. In the National Post on Monday Dec. 23, 2013, Chris Eustace wrote:

“Provincial governments should ditch elected school boards. They are anachronistic institutions, which have no pedagogical, economical, or cultural value to any school and cannot keep up with our high-tech communications world. Characterized by puny voter turn at school election time, which contribute to their arrogance, negligence, and extravagance, spendthrift boards are no friend to the student nor the taxpayer.”(pp. 20 -21)

Most boards want to remove themselves from the preoccupation of the day-to-day work of the organization, but still need to feel that they have operational accountability to their owners. This type of policy served that purpose. According to Dawson & Quinn (2011): “Operational Expectation policies allow the Board either to direct that certain actions occur or prohibit those conditions and actions the Board would find unacceptable.” (p. 4). There are two components to these policies: “do this” and “don’t do this.” (p. 56)

Brandon, Turner, Donlevy, and Parsons (2017)

Despite claims to the contrary, effective educational governance flourishes in many Canadian school districts. Such democratically-oriented jurisdictions are typically well served by elected school trustees, who work closely with their superintendents to focus the lion’s share of their political efforts on supporting student success locally and provincially. District leadership teams in these settings invest in the capacity of principals to meaningfully engage parents and teachers in effective governance at both the school and district levels. In their provincial relations, proactive trustees and district administrators actively take part in the larger policy discourse, realistically advocate

for local needs, and regularly convey their ideas and feedback to the Ministry of Education on important policy matters. District leadership plays a key role in effective governance at all three levels of the Canadian education system. (p. 1)

Recent studies of educational governance in Canada (Brandon, 2016; Galway, Sheppard, Wiens, & Brown, 2013; Leithwood, 2011; Leithwood & McCullough, 2016; Seel & Gibbons, 2011; Sheppard, Brown, & Dibbon) inform us of the importance of adopting a policy governance model well suited to the local context. No governance model is the “one size that fits all”. Ongoing education for both elected board members and jurisdiction leaders can foster collaboration, reciprocity, and interdependency among professionals, trustees, and the wider community.

Seel and Gibbons (2012)

Seel and Gibbons (2012) view school board governance as “a decision-making process that strategically determines direction, engagement, and roles” (Graham, Amos, and Plumptre, 2003). They also cite Gill’s (2005) definition of governance as the “exercise of authority, direction and control of an organization in order to ensure that its purpose is achieved”. (p. 15)

To Seel and Gibbons (2012), the practice of governance needs to change, moving from predominantly fiduciary and strategic domains of governance to include “generative governance” (Chait, Ryan, & Taylor, 2005). Such change centres on the following seven principles:

1. learner centred
2. shared responsibility and accountability
3. engaged communities
4. inclusive, equitable access
5. responsive, flexible approach
6. sustainable and efficient use of resources
7. innovation to promote and strive for excellence

Parsons and Brandon (2017)

Six Canadian superintendents from three separate regions of the country cited persistent and troublesome governance challenges. Although all six indicated that student success was the intended focus of their work, they “felt hindered by the divisive board politics, political interference, numerous conflicts, the 24/7 work of the superintendent, the loss of privacy, lack of resources, among others”. (p. 35)

In the words of one superintendent, “the divisive politics surrounding the board, nasty in-fighting, trustees with single agendas and multiple conflicts” made it “virtually impossible to focus on the real purpose of educating students”. She felt the impact of the divisive politics so strongly that she said:

“If I could change one aspect of my job as superintendent to enhance my personal and family life I would get rid of school boards...if they were abolished, then I could probably do the job I was hired to do.” (p. 29)

Another participant questioned why school boards, which are supposed to be in the governance realm, could not “meet quarterly” like other large corporations, thereby freeing up much of the evening and weekend time the board now takes in the superintendent’s schedule. This was yet another call for structural change. (p. 29)

A.2 Alberta Governance Rules, Regulations and Legislation

Framing Educational Governance in Canada (Brandon, 2016, from Manzer, 1994)

In Canada, responsibility for public education governance is assigned to the provinces; yet, with few exceptions, public schools have historically been established as local institutions. Tensions have long existed between the provinces’ constitutional educational authority on the one hand, and claims for local autonomy on the other.

The more centralized theoretical takes on this relationship view school districts as both representative and subordinate administrative agents of the state. In these conceptions, basic policy is developed at the provincial level, but implemented and administered locally. At the opposite end of the theoretical spectrum, *communal autonomy* views local governments as the primary public authorities with greater legitimacy.

Policy interdependence theory conceives of central and local governments as separate institutions sharing powers. Understanding educational governance in a rapidly changing, pluralistic, and globalized context involves more than conceptualizing central-local relations. However, policy interdependence theory does shed light on several aspects of what works in the current environment, wherein administration, policy, and politics are often intertwined. Governance and policy-making at the ministry, the district, and – increasingly – the school level now involves continuous engagement in complex, interdependent webs of policy and influence bargaining with interest groups as well as intergovernmental and cross-ministry agents.

The terms *reciprocal*, *collaborative*, and *interactive* begin to capture the types of governance relationships that have the best chances of supporting student success within these dynamic realities of contemporary Canadian education. Within districts, high levels of interaction among school and district leaders are best driven by a shared sense of responsibility for student learning and well-being; similarly, student success is also better served through district-ministry relationships which feature high levels of reciprocity and parallel attention to both provincial and district goals.

Legislation in Alberta	Notes
Must do	<i>School Act</i>
Want to do	
Delegate to	

A.3 Governance Models

Model 1. ASBA Governance Support (2016) G-TEC Policy Model: Governing Through Engagement and Collaboration

Boards create policies and policy handbooks in order to ensure that their collective will is carried out within the parameters set in provincial legislation. The board policy processes used by any board are perfectly designed to get the results the board is now getting. If the collective will of the board is not being carried out, the board should consider changing its policy processes.

The G-TEC policy model has been designed to ensure that the board's corporate or collective will become reality, and that there is school division compliance within the letter and spirit of the current *School Act* and amendments. The key inter-related features of the model are:

1. Clarity of Roles (e.g. board, trustee, chair, vice-chair, committees, CEO). One of the most fundamental purposes of a *Board Policy Handbook* is to clarify the authority the board wishes to retain and the authority it wishes to delegate. In most instances, this delegation will be to the CEO.
2. Accountability - through CEO evaluations, accountability reporting and annual board reviews.
3. Assurance, which includes accountability but involves accountability actions that are done in a manner that builds public confidence. Assurance requires boards to perform well their fiduciary, strategic, and generative roles, and to engage in shared governance with the public they serve in order to achieve student success in relation to identified outcomes.
4. Engagement, and 5. Collaboration - engaging the community in ongoing dialogue to deepen understanding of issues and trends, and to generate ideas.

The simplest definition of governance is anything a board can legally do and chooses to do. Significant differences in the chosen role of any school board in the province might reasonably be expected to exist. Once defined, accountability for carrying out the chosen role is expedited by the development and implementation of an annual board work plan that defines generative engagement, strategic planning, initiatives and decisions which must be made month-by-month. In addition, an annual facilitated board self-evaluation, culminating in a commitment to a positive path forward, is fundamental to the G-TEC model.

Model 2. Quinn & Dawson (2011) Good Governance is a Choice: A Way to Re-create Your Board—the Right Way

Quinn and Dawson claim that the principles of their *Coherent Governance* model enable boards to effectively lead, direct, inspire, and control organizations through a set of very carefully crafted policy statements.

Boards using Coherent Governance adopt a policy that defines the board's job description. This job description includes clear recognition that the board serves as a trustee or "owner representative" on behalf of the public. Their job? To lead, represent and serve the people who put them in office.

Coherent Governance provides a framework to enable boards to lead the organization through policy, rather than the usual custom of board approval of administrative recommendations. The Coherent Governance board usually manages to effectively guide the organization with a policy manual that includes not more than 35 to a maximum of 40 policies grouped into the following four categories:

1. Results: Defined organizational products and outcomes. These policies clearly state the "bottom line" which the organization is expected to achieve over time: What Results? For Whom? At What Cost?

The Results policies become the superintendent's and the organization's performance targets. They also form the basis for judging organizational and superintendent performance.

2. Operational Expectations: The board can, through policy, control day-to-day operational decisions without making them through the category of policies called Operational Expectations.

These policies define both the non-negotiable expectations and the clear boundaries within which the superintendent and staff must operate. They clarify the latitude and authority the board vests in the superintendent and staff. These policies articulate the actions and decisions the board would find either absolutely necessary or totally unacceptable.

Once the policies are stated, the superintendent is authorized to make all other operational decisions as long as they fall within the board's stated values. This process enables boards to articulate with precision the superintendent's decision-making authority. The result is absolute role clarity - no more guessing about whether the decision belongs to the board or to the superintendent. The board's control over organizational performance is increased dramatically.

3. Governance Process: The board defines its own work and how it will be carried out. These policies clearly state the expectations the board has for individual and collective behaviour, and also clarify the role and function of any board committees.

Taken in their sum, the Governance Process policies constitute the governing culture within which the board commits to work. They also serve an important long-term function: the culture is much more likely to be perpetuated if it is deliberately stated in policy, and carefully monitored to assure board compliance.

4. Board-Superintendent Relationship: The board stipulates in policy how authority is delegated to its superintendent and how the superintendent's performance will be evaluated.

Ask participants to work in pairs or triads in their participant guides to

- 1. identify similarities and differences between the two governance models, and*
- 2. indicate strengths and limitations of each model in terms of their jurisdiction contexts, in preparation to*
- 3. engage in large group sharing and dialogue about the two models.*

Similarities Between the Two Models	Differences Between the Two Models

ASBA (2016) G-TEC Policy Model: Governing Through Engagement and Collaboration

Strengths	Limitations

Quinn & Dawson (2011) Coherence Model

Strengths	Limitations

Large group sharing and dialogue about the two models.

Context really, really matters!

Based on the model your school authority uses, how does your work support effective governance?

Share superintendent and system leaders' practices that support effective governance.	Share examples of superintendent and system leaders' practices that represent challenges for the work of governance.

Research Synthesis

Principles Synthesized from the Research on Effective School Board Governance (Brandon, 2016)

Effective governance models call for trustee participation in assessing community values and interests, and incorporating these into the school jurisdiction's beliefs and vision for student learning and well-being. In such systems, trustees play a vital role in mobilizing parents and the wider community in supporting the vision, and helping to create a culture of excellence that makes achieving the vision possible.

Effective school boards	Alberta Stories of Practice - Exemplars
1. Use the district's beliefs and vision for student learning and well-being as the foundation for strategic planning and ongoing evaluation of board governance.	
2. Focus most policy making on the improvement of student learning and well-being, consistent with the beliefs and vision.	
3. Support and monitor progress on the district's multi-year strategic plan for the improvement of student learning and well-being.	
4. Maintain productive relationships with senior staff, school staffs, community stakeholders, and provincial education officials.	
5. Support and act, individually, in accordance with decisions made by the board of trustees as a whole.	

Report of the Governance Committee to Ontario Minister of Education (2009)

The report concluded that governance by an elected board is not *corporate* governance, and cannot be made so. Boards of trustees need to develop a governance model that best suits their context, taking into account such things as the system's mission, culture, traditions and relationships. The following principles of effective school board governance were offered:

Effective school boards	Alberta Stories of Practice - Exemplars
1. The board of trustees has a clearly stated mission that includes high expectations for student achievement.	
2. The board of trustees allocates its resources in support of the goals it has set.	
3. The board of trustees holds its system accountable for student achievement through its director of education (superintendent) by regular monitoring of evidence of student achievement.	
4. The board of trustees engages with its constituents in the creation of policies that affect them and communicates its progress in raising student achievement.	
5. The board of trustees monitors its own performance and takes action to continually improve its governance processes.	

A.4 Professional Growth - Supporting Effective Governance

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Indicators	Evidence in Practice
Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) establishing and sustaining a productive working relationship with the board, based on mutual trust, respect and integrity; (j) ensuring that all students and staff are provided with a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging; (k) ensuring that all students in the school authority have the opportunity to meet the standards of education set by the Minister of Education; (l) ensuring that the board's plans, resource allocations, strategies and procedures lead to the achievement of its goals and priorities; (m) ensuring that the board's fiscal and resource management is in accordance with all statutory, regulatory and board requirements; (n) supporting the board in the fulfillment of its governance functions in the fiduciary, strategic and generative realms; (o) implementing board policies and supporting the regular review and evaluation of their impact; (p) ensuring the support, ongoing supervision and evaluation of all staff members in relation to their respective professional responsibilities; (q) facilitating collaboration among the board, staff and First Nations, Métis and Inuit leaders, organizations and communities to establish strategic policy directions in support of First Nations, Métis and Inuit student achievement and development; (r) building the capacity of the board and staff to predict, communicate and respond to emergent circumstances, including emergency readiness and crisis management, and to political, social, economic, legal and cultural contexts and trends; (s) supporting the board in its engagement with the school community to develop a vision of a preferred future for student success; (t) facilitating ongoing public communication about the board's operations and the achievement of its goals and priorities; and (u) promoting constructive relations between the board and staff, as well as provincial authorities, post-secondary institutions and education stakeholder organizations. 	<div style="background-color: #e0e0e0; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;">Areas for Growth</div> <div style="background-color: #e0e0e0; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;">Emerging Questions</div>

A.4 Reflection Questions

1. How are the indicators of practice in the SQLS informed by what you have learned in this session?
2. What questions have emerged in this session about supporting effective governance within your school authority?

SESSION B

Wednesday 1:00 pm - 3:30 pm

B.1 Effective Governance and Superintendent Leadership What Does the Research Say?

Research Preamble for Session B

Effective Governance and Superintendent Leadership

Brandon (2016)

Enlightened district leadership plays a key role in strengthening governance at all three levels of the Canadian education system. At the school board level, effective superintendents work with trustees to meaningfully engage members of the wider community in understanding and supporting their district's strategic plans for the learning, engagement, and well-being of all students. At the school level, district leadership teams foster the collective leadership capacity of principals so that the voices of teachers, students, and parents have greater influence in shaping direction. At the provincial level, proactive trustees and district administrators actively contribute to policy interdependence by engaging in policy discourse, advocating for local needs, and providing feedback to the Ministry.

Johnson (2017)

Most boards want to remove themselves from the preoccupation of the day-to-day work of the organization, but still need to feel that they have operational accountability to their owners. This type of policy served that purpose. According to Dawson & Quinn (2011): "Operational Expectation policies allow the Board either to direct that certain actions occur or prohibit those conditions and actions the Board would find unacceptable." (p. 4). There are two components to these policies: "do this" and "don't do this."

Galway, Sheppard, Wiens, and Brown (2013)

A national study by Galway, Sheppard, Wiens, and Brown (2013) presented the perceptions of school board trustees and district superintendents on the governance roles and effectiveness of school boards, and the governance roles of provincial governments.

Several near-synonymous themes emerged from the (trustee) focus group data relating to roles in maintaining local autonomy, including regional representation, maintaining a community-based presence, the importance of local culture, and localized decision making. Other roles included accountability for student learning, financial accountability, oversight of the professional staff, advocacy and negotiation with

government, and serving as a middle layer or buffer between government and the school community. (p. 14)

Mutual Benefits at the Province–District Nexus

Brandon, (2016)

Operating from a policy interdependence perspective benefits educational governance at the provincial level in at least two ways. First, legislative agendas and policy ideas can be strengthened through ongoing engagement with trustees and administrators who bring forward perspectives from the broader geographic, demographic, social, and economic spectrum. When the combined and more fully-articulated views of the organizations representing teachers, school boards, superintendents, school councils and other members of the educational policy community are factored into this ongoing dialogue, greater policy interdependence and enhanced student success can accrue. Second, implementation tends to go more smoothly when the voices of those who are impacted have been solicited, heard, acknowledged, and acted upon through the design and adoption phases. Even more success is achieved when attention continues to be paid to these perspectives throughout the implementation phase.

Governing from a policy interdependence perspective also benefits school districts. A growing body of research indicates that savvy district leaders often see provincial policies as mechanisms for achieving local goals. Their strategic engagement with the Ministry of Education can take a number of forms, including active interpretation of provincial initiatives in light of local needs, mobilization of local resources, and actively participating in provincial decision-making processes. Three distinct approaches to working with the government’s agenda have been identified in this literature: (a) complying with the government’s initiatives and implementing them well; (b) supplementing the province’s initiatives in order to increase local impact; and (c) leveraging the initiatives in the interests of the district’s priorities.

Successful districts actively engage with government initiatives and resources in order to strengthen support for their own strategic directions. Successful ministries of education focus on student success, encourage collaboration across the system, and encourage multiple pathways to student success. Policy interdependence can provide the theoretical foundations for effective governance and student success in our complex and evolving educational realities.

Louis, Anderson and Thomas (2012) found that superintendents “see state policies as a vehicle for achieving local goals” and that smaller districts more generally view state education agencies “as a source of support: medium and larger districts have other sources that are more important” (p. 203). The researchers suggest that district authorities should develop “networks that engage with state policy development and adaption”, particularly in relation to district needs and priorities. (p. 225)

Leithwood (2010) suggests that strategic engagement with the Department of Education includes:

- Active “interpretation” of provincial initiatives in light of local needs

- Mobilization of local resources
- Active engagement of provincial decision making and provincial decision makers
- Proactive efforts to influence the provincial agenda to support local priorities and needs.

Three distinct approaches to working with the government's agenda for change were identified.

- First, complying with the government's initiatives and implementing them well.
- Second, supplementing the government's initiatives in order to increase their local impact.
- Third, leveraging the initiatives in the interests of the district's priorities.

Individual and Table Activity

Ask participants to record their thoughts to the prompts below in the participant guide. They should feel free to diverge from these prompts if there is something else they'd like to write in response to the research summaries.

1. *What are your initial reactions?*
2. *What strikes you as hopeful in the research? Where do you see an opportunity?*
3. *Where did you feel most challenged?*
4. *What are the implications of this research for the superintendent, your system leadership team, and school trustees?*
5. *What are your questions at this point?*

Large Group Sharing and Dialogue

B.2 Effective Governance and Superintendent Leadership

The Dual Role of the Alberta Superintendent - Value of CASS

In carrying out their dual professional roles of chief executive officer of the board and chief education officer of the school authority, school superintendents play vitally important roles in the success of the provincial school system. Though the challenges and complexities associated with the role of the Canadian superintendent have been quite well documented (e.g. ATA, 2016; Hetherington, 2014; Parsons, 2015; Parsons & Brandon, 2017), it is also recognized that “quality leadership occurs best when superintendents collaborate with teachers, principals, school councils, and parents in enabling all students to achieve their potential” and that “superintendents must be informed by current, relevant educational research, with a focus on career-long improvement” (Alberta Education, 2018, p. 2).

Challenges within the dual role of the superintendent have been longstanding. For instance, the following resolution was passed at the 2008 CASS AGM.

Be it resolved that the following principles be adopted as the CASS position on the superintendent of schools.

1. As the chief executive officer, the superintendent of schools is accountable to the local board.
2. The contract of employment between the superintendent of schools and school authority should specify all contractual matters related to the superintendent’s employment, including:
 - a. provisions for ratification and renewal of the contract by the board and the superintendent;
 - b. the term of the contract, and
 - c. the amount of severance to be paid in the event of termination.
3. As the chief education officer, the superintendent of schools must be an accomplished teacher, with five years of administrative experience who holds a valid Masters Degree.
4. As a member of the College of Alberta School Superintendents, the superintendent of schools must consistently meet the expectations of the *CASS Practice Standard* (2008).
5. As a member of the College of Alberta School Superintendents, the superintendent of schools must consistently meet the expectations of the *CASS Code of Conduct* (2008).

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

This CASS position proposes the foregoing five principles as fundamental terms of employment for superintendents of schools in Alberta. The College believes that these principles set direction for the future of this key leadership position based on a research-informed review of the history of the locally-appointed superintendent in this province. Rationale and background for the principles are provided below.

1. As the chief executive officer, the superintendent of schools is accountable to the local board.
2. The contract of employment between the superintendent of schools and the school authority should specify all contractual matters related to the superintendent's employment, including:
 - a. provisions for ratification and renewal of the contract by the board and the superintendent,
 - b. the term of the contract, and
 - c. the amount of severance to be paid in the event of termination.

The history of the locally-appointed superintendent in what is now Alberta can be traced back to the late nineteenth century. Urban school districts have appointed their chief executive officers from our earliest days. The responsibility for locally appointing school superintendents was extended to all Alberta school jurisdictions in the 1970 School Act. Superintendents of schools were made chief executive and chief educational officers by the School Act of 1988.

In 1994, these advancements were reversed through changes to the *School Act*, as well as to the *Superintendent of Schools Regulation*. Limitations were placed on the term of employment and on the amount of severance in the event of the termination. These restrictions were accompanied by the requirement that all superintendent appointments by local boards be ratified by the Minister of Education. Superintendents were from this point forward challenged by a dual reporting relationship. Not only are they accountable to their employing boards under these legislative changes, they now also accountable to the Minister of Education.

Principles One and Two seek to reform two conditions of employment that have remained contentious since the mid-1990s. By almost all organizational definitions, the chief executive officer (CEO) must be accountable solely to the board. It then follows that contractual agreements between the board and the CEO should be negotiated by these two parties. This is not a matter in which the Province should be involved. Superintendents should be accountable to their boards. Boards should be accountable to their constituents and to the province.

3. As the chief education officer, the superintendent of schools must be an accomplished teacher, with five years of administrative experience, who holds a valid Masters Degree.

The Alberta educational system is highly regarded locally, nationally and internationally. Throughout its history, our provincial system has benefitted from strong educational leadership at the level of superintendent. The superintendent as chief educational officer is a concept enshrined in the *School Act*. It is a conception of school system organizational leadership that has worked very well for the students of Alberta. Research into school system effectiveness suggests that this model will continue to serve our students well into the future as twenty-first century learners. Our children deserve school authority leadership that is intimately conversant with current trends and developments in teaching and learning.

4. & 5. As a member of the College of Alberta School Superintendents, the superintendent of schools must consistently meet the expectations of the *CASS Practice Standard/Code of Conduct* (2008).

As the professional voice of system education leaders, CASS has provided expertise, advocacy and advice that has improved, promoted and championed public education for more than four decades. In order to achieve our vision of *Leadership Excellence for World-Class Public Education*, the College must ensure that its members are transparently accountable to the highest standards of practice, and that their behavior adheres to a professional code of conduct that protects the public interest. Both the *CASS Code of Conduct* and the research-informed and member-supported *Standard of Practice* are to be adopted at the 2008 Annual General Meeting.

To ensure that each of Alberta’s children meets with learning success and makes daily progress toward achieving his or her life potential, it is imperative that superintendents belong to a professional learning organization whose members adhere to the highest of professional and ethical standards.

The Ministerial Order to formalize the *Professional Practice Standards* was signed by Minister Eggen on February 7, 2018. Access to all documents is available at <https://cassalberta.ca/resources/professional-practice-standards/>

The *CASS Practice Profile* will replace the *CASS Standard of Practice* to align with the *Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard*.

The 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.

Next Steps	Commitment to Practice
Ministry involvement Via CASS	
Ministry involvement Via Ministry	

B.3 Effective Governance and Superintendent Leadership - Mutual Benefits of the Province-District Nexus: What Does the Research Say?

Leithwood (2008) suggests that strategic engagement with the Department of Education includes:

1. Active “interpretation” of provincial initiatives in light of local needs
2. Mobilization of local resources
3. Active engagement of provincial decision making and provincial decision makers
4. Proactive efforts to influence the provincial agenda to support local priorities and needs

Three distinct approaches to working with the government’s agenda for change were identified.

1. Complying with the government’s initiatives and implementing them well.
2. Supplementing the government’s initiatives in order to increase their local impact.
3. Leveraging the initiatives in the interests of the district’s priorities.

Business Plan 2018-21

Education

Strategic Context

The outcomes and key strategies identified in this business plan are aligned with the strategic direction of the Government of Alberta.

Alberta has a high quality Kindergarten to Grade 12 (K–12) education system that prepares students for success in a fast-changing world. Education enriches the lives of students, prepares individuals for their future careers, and contributes to an inclusive and diverse society built on a foundation of mutual respect. Alberta’s education system equips students with relevant, meaningful, and engaging learning opportunities so they are ready to meet the demands of an evolving economy. Alberta’s curriculum and assessments are being updated, strengthening literacy, numeracy, and the competencies that are the foundations for future success across subjects and grades. The education system will deliver curriculum that enables equitable, inclusive, and accessible learning opportunities for all Alberta students.

All students deserve schools that are welcoming, caring, respectful and safe. The education system ensures that children and students are not discriminated against, for any reason, and that they have access to meaningful and relevant learning experiences that include appropriate instructional supports.

The ministry is actively addressing the significant need to improve supports for the success of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students. Improvements are being realized by implementing the objectives and principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission: Calls to Action for education. Improvements are also being made by setting targets and strengthening the accountability of the education system, monitoring student success and well-being, and implementing system changes where results are not achieved. The ministry is implementing initiatives so that all children, students, teachers, and school leaders learn about the history and legacy of residential schools, treaties, agreements, and the diverse perspectives and experiences of First Nations, Métis and Inuit in Alberta and Canada. Teachers and school leaders will participate in professional development opportunities to ensure they meet the quality standards’ competency in First Nations, Métis and Inuit education. Targeted supports and close collaboration with communities and partners, including ministries and the

federal government, are essential to ensure that all First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students in Alberta achieve the same educational outcomes as all Alberta students.

Alberta Education works closely with stakeholders, including school jurisdictions, leaders, and educators, to enhance the education system. Together, the ministry and stakeholders are working to develop legislation and regulations to guide Alberta's education system and the teaching profession. Collaboration is also taking place to implement quality standards for teachers, school leaders, and superintendents, and to set the direction for how the education system can better provide assurance to the public that results and expenditures benefit students. Given the need for the education system to be mindful of the realities of the Alberta economy, the ministry is striving for an education system that can achieve robust student outcomes in a financially sustainable way.

Advancing gender equality is a priority for the Government of Alberta. Gender equality is intrinsically linked to social and economic growth and is vital to the realization of human rights for all. Across government, this commitment has been operationalized through the adoption of Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA+) and the establishment of Centres of Responsibility in each ministry to assess the gender and diversity implications of engagement processes, policies, programs, and initiatives.

Outcome One: Alberta's students are successful

The ministry develops curriculum and assessments that enable all students to achieve Alberta Education's student learning outcomes. Programs of study are being revised to develop a strong foundation of literacy, numeracy, and competencies across subject and discipline areas. This includes multiple, diverse perspectives that reflect our pluralistic society and the important roles and responsibilities of Alberta citizens within provincial, national, and international contexts.

Key Strategies:

- 1.1 Develop and prepare to implement revised curriculum for Kindergarten to Grade 12, in English and French, that integrates competencies in the learning outcomes, supports teachers in fostering student knowledge, ensures students have a strong foundation in literacy and numeracy in all subjects, and includes First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and Francophone perspectives and experiences.
- 1.2 Develop and implement online assessments to improve responsiveness to students' needs.
- 1.3 Continue to implement systemic actions to further support student learning and achievement in Mathematics.
- 1.4 Provide students with more aligned support for career and life planning, post-secondary learning and employment training to deliver personalized and responsive approaches to high school completion.
- 1.5 Expand the school nutrition program by strategically investing in schools across the province to help prepare students for a healthy and successful future.

What "Strategic Context" and "outcomes/strategies" really mean...

Reading and Reviewing

- Read alone and highlight key concepts and keywords.
- Discuss with a partner. Similarities? Differences? What did you find most interesting?
- Join another group of 2 (should have 4 together - a square) and share: highlight one key item you all agree on - an item that inspires you in your work. Record on chart paper/notepaper for posting/sharing.
- Share in large group.

B4. Whereas Activity

Each practice standard has a section focused on “whereas” statements. An activity from the CASS “Getting Ready for Implementation Workshop” focused on unpacking meaning from the whereas statements. You could do this activity with your system leaders and/or school leaders, and they could replicate for their work with teachers. (workshop resources, materials and google slides at: <http://bit.ly/2myURiM> including one-pagers of the “Whereas” statements)

- Read alone and highlight key concepts and keywords.
- Discuss with a partner. Similarities? Differences? What did you find most interesting?
- Join another group of 2 (should have 4 together - a square) and share: highlight one key item you all agree on - an item that inspires you in your work. Record on chart paper/notepaper for posting/sharing.
- Share in large group.

The intent of this activity is to inspire a commitment to education in Alberta based on the key messages shared in the “front matter” via the Whereas section of the practice standards. Reflective questions for the group:

- What value is there in reading the front matter?
- How might you introduce to, or share this content with, others?

Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard

Alberta Education

February 2018

WHEREAS Alberta’s teachers, students, parents, educational leaders, and members of the public have a strong will to ensure all Alberta students have access to quality learning experiences that enable their achievement of the learning outcomes outlined in programs of study.

WHEREAS the success of all members of the school community in their respective roles requires inclusive environments in which diversity is embraced and its members are welcomed, safe, cared for and respected.

WHEREAS superintendents play a fundamental role in establishing and supporting the conditions under which the learning aspirations and the potential of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students are realized.

WHEREAS quality leadership occurs best when superintendents collaborate with teachers, principals, school jurisdiction leaders, school councils and parents in enabling all students to achieve their potential.

WHEREAS the professional practice of teachers, principals, school jurisdiction leaders and superintendents must be informed by current, relevant educational research, with a focus on career-long improvement.

WHEREAS it is important to recognize the value of a consistent standard of professional practice for all superintendents in the province.

The 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.

B.5 Practice Profile – Reflection

B.4 Reflection Questions

1. How are the indicators of practice in the SQLS informed by what you have learned in this session?
2. What questions have emerged in this session about supporting effective governance within your school authority?

SESSION C

Thursday 8:30 – 11:30

C.1 Fostering Collaboration Among Professionals, Trustees and the Wider Community: What Does the Research Say?

Focused Reading

Read research summaries.

In your participant guide, use the following annotations:

- ✓ = Got it. I know or understand this.
- ! = This is really important information.
- ? = I'd like clarification or elaboration of this material.

Research Summaries

1. School Boards as Stewards of the Community Conversation About Schools

Rallis, Shibles & Swanson (2002) indicate that one important purpose of school boards is to connect the public to its schools, and as such they are “stewards of the community conversation about schools.” To fulfill this task, they suggest, school boards and school trustees have to provide a range of invitational forums - formal school board meetings being only one - for such conversations characterized by *inclusion*, *dialogue* and *deliberation*. This requires a proactive stance from school boards that:

1. seeks out multiple voices and ensures that they are listened to;
2. fosters a process whereby different perspectives are properly explained and understood; and,
3. when choices are to be made between different courses of action, they are well reasoned and carefully articulated

2. School Board Contributions to Student Success

Leithwood (2010) found that in highly effective school systems, trustees contribute to student success in two major ways.

- a. by focusing their work on supporting and monitoring progress being made in implementing the system's strategic multi-year plan.
- b. by nurturing the wider community's understanding and support for their system's efforts to support student success.

He further advises that systems adopting a policy governance model should provide ongoing training for all elected board members, system leaders, and staff. This approach fosters collaboration and interdependency between professional and elected system leaders. (p. 13)

Coherent Connections – a School Board and School Council Partnership. A large urban school board in our province has developed an elaborate and effective series of engagements with school council leaders within the district. The program has three purposes:

Educate – give parents opportunities to learn about the many district initiatives which include budget process, local and provincial initiatives, new and existing programming, effective pedagogy and provided opportunities for parents to take part in sessions with guest presenters on topics of current and identified relevancy.

Connect – build relationships with school council chairs and school council members.

Communicate – improve the flow of information between school council chairs and Board of Trustees so that the Board is able to attend the specific needs of each Ward.

The schedule for each school year includes a new school council chair orientation, a school council chair and trustee general meeting, and four parent/trustee forums. The design of each of parent forum aims to use the time available for structured interaction through table conversations. In the lead trustee’s view, the forum structure and process reflect the evolution of district’s efforts to strengthen community engagement. “We need to hear what the issues are, so that we can work with administration to find solutions and move forward. The forums are highly interactive. They provide us with a lot of good information and help to build awareness of what we are doing to better support our students” (Trustee Mark, 2013).

A superintendent and principal both spoke about the problem-solving power of the parent and trustee forums. From the central office perspective, the forums give administration and trustees ongoing opportunities to enter into educational dialogue with parents in all parts of the system.

From the school council perspective, the sessions provide opportunities to learn about and influence system directions. The fact that agendas are developed with parent input and are circulated in advance conveys respect and helps to utilize time effectively. The fact that written question responses and meeting summaries are posted on the website reflects efforts to be accountable, open and transparent. Such actions build public confidence in the system. (Brandon & Hanna, 2013, pp. 41- 42)

Governance as Collaborative Community Engagement

Young (2010) argues that community engagement is a core function of school boards and school trustees in the 21st century. He stresses the importance of ongoing public participation in the educational processes as critical to a healthy public school system.

Rallis, Shibles & Swanson (2002) indicate that one important purpose of school boards is to connect the public to its schools and, as such, they are “stewards of the community conversation about schools.” To fulfill this task, they

suggest, school boards and school trustees have to provide a range of invitational forums - formal school board meetings being only one - for such conversations characterized by *inclusion, dialogue* and *deliberation*. This requires a proactive stance from school boards that:

- seeks out multiple voices and ensures that they are listened to;
- fosters a process whereby different perspectives are properly explained and understood and, when choices are to be made between different courses of action, they are well reasoned and carefully articulated.

It is through these processes that trustees demonstrate their integrity and their commitment to the educational well-being of the community's children, and cultivate the support needed to make difficult decisions that invariably go with the role.

Additional Research Readings

Leithwood (2010) determined that in highly effective school systems trustees contribute in two major ways. First, by focusing their work on supporting and monitoring progress being made in implementing the system's strategic multi-year plan. Second, by nurturing the wider community's understanding and support for their system's efforts. He further advises that systems adopting a policy governance model should provide ongoing training for all elected board members, system leaders, and staff. This approach fosters collaboration and interdependency between professional and elected system leaders. (p. 13)

Nurturing Effective School Governance

Brandon, Turner, Donlevy, and Parsons (2017)

Effective school and school system leaders understand that school councils do important work and make a variety of significant contributions to school and division learning cultures. Through two-way connections – partnerships – school councils help educators and school trustees to better understand community contexts and, at the same time, take steps to help schools maintain positive learning environments

Brandon (2016)

Recent research on effective governance at the school level has yielded at least two important findings. The first is that highly effective school councils are now frequently participating as members of the *collective leadership* teams in schools and school districts. Collective leadership is the total amount of influence attributable to all the participants in a given educational system: teachers, parents, principals, district office staff, and community members. This is good news for students in view of the evidence that in schools “with more democratic collective leadership practices that include parents in influential positions, student achievement is higher.” District leadership support of schools in their parent engagement initiatives has greater effects on student success than system efforts to engage parents.

The importance of the organizations frequently known as *councils of school councils* in strengthening system-level planning, deepening community engagement, and assuring public confidence is another important research finding. Ongoing connections among school council representatives across a school system can be of tremendous help to leaders navigating transformative change. Sustained community dialogue on important educational initiatives can build support and/or guide course adjustments.

Building Engagement Capacity in Schools

Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom & Anderson (2010) advise districts to develop policies and clear expectations that support community and parental engagement. They further suggest a system of incentives that principals may need to increase the influence of parents and community members within schools (incorporating indicators of parental and community involvement into principal assessment practices, for example.).

District engagement policies can have long-lasting effects on principals. The more principals get used to interacting with the community, the more open they become to involving outside stakeholders in school improvement efforts. The role of the principal in interpreting district engagement policies and in creating and communicating school level expectations for parent engagement is critical. (p. 11)

System and school leadership practices that engage parents and community members in service of student learning have a significantly positive impact as demonstrated by Leithwood (2008, 2011, 2012) and additional research reports cited. From this literature, the following four district leadership strategies are identified:

1. The district provides school staffs with helpful opportunities to acquire the capacities needed to productively engage parents *in schools*.
2. The district provides school staffs with helpful opportunities to acquire the capacities they need to assist parents in creating *conditions in the home* that support the success of their children at school.
3. The district has a formal policy on parent engagement and conducts periodic audits across schools about the extent to which that policy is being implemented. School staffs and parents are asked for evidence as part of these audits.
4. Community groups are routinely recognized for their contribution and support and consulted on almost all decisions affecting the community. School system staff are regularly members of these groups themselves.

Gordon and Louis (2012) found that schools with more collaborative and inclusive leadership achieved stronger learning results than those with similar demographic profiles that operated with less emphasis on collective leadership. District policies that promote school/community engagement increase participation and encourage principals to interact with the community. They recommend that

“...district leaders engage in dialogues with principals about what openness to community and parental involvement means in practice, beyond merely establishing policies and structures. Pertinent topics for such discussions would include the value of partnering with parents and community members in school-

improvement efforts, parents as vital partners in the learning process, the importance of shared leadership, and the critical role that the community plays in every child's life." (p. 105)

Brandon, Hanna, Morrow, Rhyason, & Schmold (2013)

Maguire's (2003) study, for example, had "more links with community partners and agencies capable of supporting students" (p. 10). Similarly, Ragland et al. (1999) emphasized the relationships between the superintendent and parents, as well as between the superintendent and members of the school board. These relationships depended on creating trust which, once it was established, allowed for the alignment of everyone's efforts in the service of raising achievement levels. Skrla et al. (2000) and Skrla and Scheurich (2001) found that not only the superintendent, but also other district level leaders, school board members, and members of the wider community were involved in the effort to create an equity-focused school system in response to the Texas state accountability system. These districts nurtured active alliances with business, government, and other community groups.

Leithwood, Anderson, Mascall and Straus (2009) maintain that effective parent engagement accounts for as much as fifty per cent of the variation in student achievement across schools. As such, influencing variables on the "Family Path" is a high leverage option for school leaders (p.8).

Robinson (2011) contends that schools need to employ a wide range of strategies to engage parents. Further, teachers need appropriate support and professional development to effectively engage parents. The focus should be on increasing teachers' knowledge of the school's communities, their confidence in communicating with parents from diverse backgrounds, and ways of utilizing community resources for learning (p. 141).

Perhaps most important is that school leaders have the knowledge and skills required to build trust to fashion stronger community-school relationships. Such school conditions make it easier for parents and teachers to work together to improve students' engagement and achievement (p. 136).

Brandon and Hanna (2014)

Survey, interview and documentary data indicate that many school councils are now very well integrated into the functioning of their schools and school systems. Effective school and school system leaders understand that school councils do important work and make a variety of significant contributions to school and division learning cultures. Through two-way connections – partnerships – school councils help educators to better understand community contexts and, at the same time, take steps to help schools maintain positive learning environments.

Relationships are foundational to school council effectiveness. The principal's approach to working with members of the school council is particularly important in the relationship-building process. Relational trust between the principal and the chair is, and will continue to be, a vital contributor to how well the school council functions as an inspired partner in student success as the educational system moves forward with the transformational agenda.

Engagement in school and system planning can play an important role in strengthening parent – educator partnerships. Participants in our study consistently indicated that school council members feel valued when their voices are included in such planning processes. More importantly, our findings reinforce research that demonstrates a strong relationship between such involvement and improved student learning (Gordon & Louis, 2012). Though the linkages between school council involvement and measures of student success are indirect,

study participants and other research provide reason to believe that such engagement can be an important contributor.

Councils of school councils can serve as important vehicles for strengthening system-level planning and for deepening community engagement during this time of educational transformation. Evidence from the four cases is instructive on the benefits of fostering inspired partnerships of this kind. Ongoing connections with school council representatives across a school system can be of tremendous help to leaders navigating change. Sustained community dialogue on important and emerging educational initiatives and issues can build support and/or guide course adjustments to better address varying needs. These networks can provide an important two-way communication conduit between school communities and their school boards.

C.2 Politics of Governance: Keys to Successful Superintendent, Board and Ministry Relationships

Panel discussion

Panel Member – Representation	Lessons Learned
Board Chair	
Former Minister of Education	
Governance Consultant	

C.3 Reflection

Engaging your community
International Association of Public Participation
<https://www.iap2.org/>

Overview of process <http://www.theworldcafe.com/>
<http://www.theworldcafe.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Cafe-To-Go-Revised.pdf>

What are ways that I can:

- (a) ensure that the board's plans, resource allocations, strategies and procedures lead to the achievement of its goals and priorities;
- (b) ensure that the board's fiscal and resource management is in accordance with all statutory, regulatory and board requirements;
- (c) build the capacity of the board and staff to predict, communicate and respond to emergent circumstances, including emergency readiness and crisis management, and to political, social, economic, legal and cultural contexts and trends;
- (d) support the board in its engagement with the school community to develop a vision of a preferred future for student success;
- (e) facilitate ongoing public communication about the board's operations and the achievement of its goals and priorities; and
- (f) promote constructive relations between the board and staff, as well as between provincial authorities, post-secondary institutions and education stakeholder organizations?

SESSION D

Friday 8:30 – 11:30

D.1 Deepening Understanding and Applying the Learning

Based on your learning, respond to these prompts:

Here's What – Identify a new idea, insight or learning you gained this week.	
So What? – What significance will your learning have in your work?	
Now What? – What actions will you take now? What questions do you still have?	

D.2 Competency Overviews and Additional Supports for Implementation

Visit the professional learning component of the CASS website at www.cassalberta.ca.

Key resources:

- Competency overviews (updated this fall based on your input) <https://cassalberta.ca/professional-learning/>. Click on a competency to access the overview, or visit the resources page to download a set (<https://cassalberta.ca/resources/>).
- Planning for implementation planning templates and samples of CASS plans at <https://cassalberta.ca/planning-for-implementation/>
- Conferences/modules include current learning opportunities as well as conference reading and resource materials (<https://cassalberta.ca/conferences-workshops/>).
- Research/resources page includes current resources with new materials coming this fall.
- Check out the new research summaries focused on developing leadership programs.

Additional Resources

Motion Leadership – Michael Fullan

Santiago Rincon-Gallardo

- Fullan and Rincon-Gallardo worked with CASS members focusing on supporting implementation of the professional practice standards. Based on practice in Alberta, *Coherence: the Right Drivers in Action for Schools, Systems and Districts*; * Fullan & Quinn, 2015, Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin via [Corwin with links to infographics and other resources](#), or Michael Fullan at <http://www.michaelfullan.ca/>
- Numerous handouts from CASS conferences are posted at <https://michaelfullan.ca/handouts/>
- Additional resources:
- New Pedagogies for Deep Learning (NPDL) www.NPDL.global
- One example of a template from [The Taking Action Guide for Building Coherence in Schools, Districts and Systems, Corwin 2016](#)

5. Coherence Framework Assessment Protocol

Purpose

- Use the Coherence Framework Assessment Protocol to assess the degree of coherence in your school/district.

Coherence Framework Assessment Protocol

1. As a school or district team, review the Coherence Framework Assessment Protocol.
2. Provide evidence for the statements as an assessment of your school or district's degree of coherence.

Component	Evidence
Focusing Direction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared purpose drives action. • A small number of goals tied to student learning drives decisions. • A clear strategy for achieving the goals is known by all. • Change knowledge is used to move the district forward.
Cultivating Collaborative Cultures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A growth mind-set underlies the culture. • Leaders model learning themselves and shape a culture of learning. • Collective capacity building is fostered above individual development. • Structures and processes support intentional collaborative work.
Deepening Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning goals are clear to everyone and drive instruction. • A set of effective pedagogical practices is known and used by all educators. • Robust processes, such as collaborative inquiry and examining student work, are used regularly to improve practice.
Securing Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educators take responsibility for continuously improving results. • Underperformance is an opportunity for growth, not blame. • External accountability is used transparently to benchmark progress.

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The Coherence Framework

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