

CASS Fall Conference 2019 Highlights

300 Alberta system leaders representing 90% of all public, separate, Francophone, Charter and First Nations school authorities attended the fall learning conference November 6-8, 2019 in Calgary.

Sample comments from Delegates:

Aspects of the conference that participants found meaningful included: Bringing our attention to what really matters when times are tough; The SLQS Certification In-Service was excellent and totally worthwhile; Meaningful sessions with a good mix of presentation and ability to share/collaborate and Listening to other jurisdictions and the ways they are supporting student learning.

Aspects that delegates shared might be improved: Don't leave world cafe at the end. Have it immediately Friday morning; More overt ties to research; More movement between tables in order to get different perspectives; More focus on the standards, and the complex responsibilities of the superintendent and It is important to attend as a team otherwise it is more difficult to implement an idea.

Delegates shared "One thing I require to further support my learning":

Looking forward to accessing the links to the presentation slides; Follow up connections via technology would be useful. We plan on using the modules in house as well; To spend time on the resources on your web site as I have not used them effectively within my district. Keep sharing and putting up best practices around the province; Regular opportunities to have conversation around my professional practice and the professionalism of superintendent practices.

Delegates also shared that "As a result of your learning at the CASS Fall Conference, what have you committed to take action on?": Reflect more and inquire about employee wellness within the Division, and investigate how we can take proactive action in regards to this topic; Decided to clarify the difference between "pedagogy" and "curriculum" with our principals; turn what we have, into what we need, to accomplish what we want; Engaging in a district book study around Santiago's publication *Liberating Learning*, then moving forward with planning as to how our division might actualize some of this work; Focusing on how we learn to do our work differently in this time of budget restraints.


Presentation resources from the FALL conference keynotes, as well as other facilitators, are available under the conference reading and resource materials tab at: <https://cassalberta.ca/conferences-workshops/2019-cass-fall-conference/?tab=3>

One new resource provided are CASS Learning Guides.

The intent of **CASS Learning Guides** is to apply research, deepen understanding and enhance professional practice within the Alberta context. With a focus on optimum learning for all students, a Learning Guide provides an opportunity to grow system leader knowledge, resulting in quality school leadership and quality teaching throughout Alberta. Learning Guides include a summary of the resource, connections to the Alberta context and suggested questions for reflection and dialogue.

[CASS Learning Guide on Essential Features of Effective Networks in Education](#)

[CASS Learning Guide on Liberating Learning – Education Change as a Social Movement](#)



CASS College of Alberta School Superintendents

LEARNING GUIDE

Liberating Learning: Education Change as a Social Movement

Terrence Whelan-Gallardo
Knowledge Leading Change Series
Knowledge Taylor + Francis Group 2019

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Summary Points*

- Based on his research and existing stories of practice, the author argues that our conventional education system is dying and that a new system has yet to be born (p.ii). He suggests that:
 - within each of us lies the most powerful, untapped resource to turn schools and school systems into places for powerful learning.
 - radically transforming pedagogy at scale is a huge endeavor which requires cultural change.
- we must occupy the pedagogical arena and change the pedagogical core which is the most direct pathway to improved learning (p. 81);
- we must occupy the social arena to enable robust interaction and participation in our communities (p. 71);
- we must occupy the political arena to influence what needs to pass for widespread pedagogical change in our institutions (p. 87).

Connections with the Alberta context

On September 1, 2019 three professional practice standards agreed to ministerial order became policy in Alberta. Based on a scan of OECD professional practice standards it appears that Alberta is unique in articulating that the actions of professionals will result in optimum learning for students (Foster Adams, 2019). The Teaching Quality Standard (TQS) the Leadership Quality Standard (LQS) and the Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard (SLQS) all include the expectation to create optimal learning for students as their raison d'être. This educational change is what the author would describe as the beginning of a social movement which leverages a radical attempt to change the pedagogical core – that is the relationship between the educator, the learner in the presence of others, which is the most direct pathway to improve learning for all students. The author provides insight into how learning can be improved through occupying the pedagogical arena, the social arena, and the political arena.

Santiago Elvira-Gallardo's research areas in the pedagogical core, on the deep learning that the Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard requires each of us to lead in Alberta communities.

Acknowledgements
This guide was developed by CASS with input/review and support from Dr. Santiago Elvira-Gallardo, Fall 2019.
*https://www.knowledge.leadchange.org/knowledge-series/2019-10-15-articles-and-articles-from-our-knowledge-leadchange-series

This guide is provided in support of improved system leadership capacity and under the Learning Capacity Initiative banner.

Two keynotes were additional highlights of the conference.

Holocaust survivor Dr. Eva Olsson shared her story of survival as a Hungarian Jew herded into a cattle car and taken to Auschwitz in 1944, to amplify the power of hate and the need to stop it wherever it occurs. Since 1996, Olsson has shared her story with several schools, universities, colleges, and churches, saying “I cannot live in the past, but I must live with it. Perhaps writing my story will weaken the hold the past has had on me.”

Dr. Santiago Rincón-Gallardo, internationally renowned for his research on education leadership, shared his keynote address “Liberating Learning – Education Change as a Social Movement”. Highlights of his presentation include messages such as:

“Leadership is accepting responsibility for enabling others to achieve shared purpose under conditions of uncertainty.”

Marshall Ganz

“Throughout history, the most effective agents of widespread cultural change – and, cultural change that moves us closer to our human condition – have been social movements. Social movements offer a powerful metaphor for the new paradigm to guide how we think about and pursue educational change.” Dr. Santiago Rincón-Gallardo Liberating Learning - Educational Change as Social Movement

Three arenas of action • Pedagogical arena • Social arena • Political arena

Delegates felt that the messages around education change in these three arenas were timely given fiscal realities and pending new curriculum. All delegates received a copy of Dr. Santiago Rincón-Gallardo new book and the CASS learning Guide is intended as a resource to continue the conversation and learning based on his research and book.

Next CASS provincial learning opportunity

First Nations, Métis and Inuit Gathering

April 20th -April 22th 2020

The CASS/Alberta Education Annual Conference will follow the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Gathering being held in the same location and preceding the Annual Conference. April 20- 22. More information available at:

<https://cassalberta.ca/conferences-workshops/2020-first-nations-metis-inuit-education-gathering-2/>

CASS 2020 Annual Learning Conference

April 22th evening – April 24th 2020

<https://cassalberta.ca/conferences-workshops/2020-cass-annual-learning-conference-2/>

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 abilities to apply, result in quality school leadership, quality teaching and optimum learning for all students in the school authority.