

CASS – Start Right, July 2020

Shared through the generosity of Kayla Colbert 😊

- Alberta Education Values:
 - Opportunity – learners are exposed to rich learning experiences that enable them to discover their passions and achieve their highest potential
 - Fairness – learners have access to the programs, support services, and instructional excellence needed to achieve desired outcomes
 - Citizenship – learners have pride in their community and culture. They have a sense of belonging and work to improve both the community and the world.
 - Choice – learners have a choice of both programs and methods of learning
 - Diversity – learners’ differing needs, cultures, and abilities are respected and valued within inclusive learning environments
 - Excellence – learners, teachers and governors achieve high standards
- When they leave school, students should be able to:
 - Know how to learn – to gain knowledge, understanding, or skills through experience, study and interaction with others
 - Think critically – conceptualize, apply, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate to construct knowledge
 - Identify and solve complex problems
 - Manage information – access, interpret, evaluate, and use information effectively, efficiently and ethically
 - Innovate – create and generate new ideas or concepts
 - Create opportunities – through play, imagination, reflection, negotiation, and competition – with an entrepreneurial spirit
 - Apply multiple literacies – reading, writing, mathematics, technology, languages, media, and personal finance
 - Demonstrate good communication skills and the ability to work cooperatively with others
 - Demonstrate global and cultural understanding
 - Identify and apply career and life skills
- Documents to download/refer to:
 - Teaching profession act
 - School act
 - Education act
 - Collective agreement

Day 1 - Empowering School Leaders and Inspiring Change in Indigenous Education and Reconciliation

- Defining FNMI success:
 - Pull and isolate FNMI results from screeners (3T, TNT, etc.) to measure their growth (and use the data to inform instruction)
 - Sense of belonging
 - MOASAIC day
 - Visible cultural representations
 - Bring history into the curriculum
- Use strength-based language
- Achievement gap – not the students, but the system
- “Nothing about us without us” – learn alongside
- Don’t use the acronym when you can avoid it
- Reconciliation needs:
 - Action to change behavior
 - Awareness of the past
 - Atonement for the causes
 - Acknowledgement of the harm

- Promising practices: <http://empoweringthespirit.ca/district-practices/>
- ATA website & Walking Together (resources and ideas)
 - Link: FNMI funding ideas
- Attendance is not a measure of success – it is linked to something else in their lives
- Teachers have the greatest impact on students
 - We do not have teachers who do not want to do a great job -admin job is to find their barriers and remove them
- The historical education system has trained us to think of aboriginal people in a negative way – it will take generations to change this
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Day 2 – The Science of Well Being

- LQS/PGP – choose an area of focus (9 competencies)
- Wellness
 - H – hope
 - E – efficacy (ability to produce a desired result)
 - R – resiliency
 - O – optimism
- Purpose over vision
- Effective strategies
 - Venting does more harm than good
 - Focus on positive emotions
- Burn in
 - Energized – making choices that improve our mental and physical health
 - Optimism – noticing the good in self & others; identifying what is controllable; remaining connected to reality; challenging counterproductive beliefs
 - Self-Efficacy – one’s belief in one’s ability to succeed
- Cell-phones – we look at them avg of 150 times/day – takes 10 minutes to fully refocus after

Pessimistic Thinking	Optimistic Thinking
Permanent – this will last forever	Temporary – this will pass
Pervasive – this is going to undermine everything	Specific – this relates to just 1 situation
Personal – it’s all my fault	Not Personal – this is not (entirely) my fault
Uncontrollable – there’s nothing I can do about it	Controllable – there is something I can do, even if that something is letting it go

- Relational routines
 - Student shout outs
 - Staff meetings – kudos AND thank yous
- Resilience – can’t go back – learn from it and move one
- Connection needs BIG TALK – PsyCap playbook (p.15 & 32)
- 4 main sources of teacher stress and burn out:
 - School organization: leadership, culture and climate
 - Job demands
 - Work resources
 - Teacher’s personal resource: social and emotional competence
- Strategies to improve:
 - Implement evidence-based programs that promote teacher’s Social Emotional Competence (SEC)
 - Find ways to promote your own happiness and well-being

Day 3 – Leading for Inclusion

- Essential understanding: “being” and “doing” inclusion becomes the lens through which we develop mindsets of respect, understanding and belonging, leading to a natural way of being
 - “Alberta’s education system is built on a values based approach to accepting responsibility for all children and students. Inclusion is a way of thinking (being) and acting (doing) that demonstrates universal acceptance of and belonging for all children and students.”
- Principles of Inclusion:
 - Anticipate, value and support diversity and learner differences
 - Set high expectations for all learners
 - Understand learners’ strengths and needs
 - Remove barriers within learning environments
 - Build capacity
 - Collaborate for success
- Shelley Moore on Inclusion (YouTube)
- Trust the **process** and the **people**
- Learners are most successful when they:
 - Learn collaboratively
 - Exercise some choice in their learning
 - Exercise some control in the pace of their learning
 - Receive immediate feedback targeted to scaffold their learning
 - Experience the optimum level of challenge
 - Are supported in ways that meet their individual learning needs and address their personal interests
- Equality vs. Equity
 - Equality (the outcome)
 - Fundamental right to education in Canada
 - Equity (the process)
 - Assures those who need additional supports get them
- Inclusion – bringing head and heart into harmony
 - A work in progress
- Being – how you show up; relationship
- Engagement technique: 5-2-1 (5 minutes of teacher talk, 2 minutes of student reflection, 1 minute of student talk); numbers can be changed based on lesson/age/need
- Contexts of schools are different everywhere – we need to be responsive to ours
- Values and beliefs
 - All students can learn with the right education
 - Everyone is doing the best with what they got (up to admin to support their needs)
 - Connection before direction
- Aesthetic experiences – when your senses are at their peak (most alive)
- Divergent thinking decreases as they get older because of the way they are taught
- Most great learning happens in groups
- What do our students need?
 - Creativity
 - Resilience
 - Perseverance
 - Collaboration
 - Tech literacy
 - Confidence
 - Critical thinking
 - Flexibility
 - Innovation
 - Adaptability
 - Divergent thinking (multiple solutions)
- Focus on student strengths and use their strengths to meet their needs
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Day 4 – Seeing the Big Picture: Leading Upward and Outward

- Best leadership: tap into the expertise in the room
- Advocate – as a noun and a verb
 - Does your community know what you stand for? Do your actions show it?
- Important to get to know the school community
 - Traditions
 - Contexts
 - Invite people in (community, trustee – gr.6 curriculum)
- School Council
 - Large part of competency 9
 - Get to know the bylaws
 - Involve them, meet with them and build relationships
 - Preapprove their messages before they send them out (they are not the ones running the school)
- Admin partners
 - Talk ALWAYS (set aside times to do so)
 - Key messages = united front
 - Don't make decisions alone
 - 3 essentials: communication, organization, follow-through
- Communicate with staff
 - White board messages
 - Weekly emails
 - Face-to-face meetings (weekly?)
- Use your staff! Use their expertise
- Lack of communication creates a vacuum – critics will fill it
- Treat everyone the same (respect your teachers the same way you respect division staff)
- What's App – staff group chats
- Work alongside teachers – creates trust and credibility, they see you planning, marking, etc.
- COVID – online after school clubs an option?

Day 5 – Creating Safe and Caring Schools

- Visibility, relationships, academic caring, teacher supervision, and logical consequences and intervention
- The Jungle – the most important place for admin to be is in the unstructured environments (be visible)
 - Who am I to tell those how to teach and what to do?
 - Face the fear or you won't get in (the fear will stay with you)
- Whatever your teachers feel is the school's biggest problem/issue needs to become your biggest as well
- Don't ask teachers to do anything that you're not willing to do better – they will follow your ACTIONS
- So often we interact with kids at their worst. The end of the day is the best part of their day – this is the best time to maximize on your interactions with them. We want to associate ourselves with positive experiences of our students.
- Be visible consistently with intentionality
- Catch your teachers doing **good**
 - Valentines – came from a weekly meeting with admin team discussing the great things they saw in classrooms and around the school. They wrote notes to the teachers recognizing these actions and placed them in their mailboxes.
 - These should be specific. Link them to school goals, vision and mission.
- Hawthorne: change behavior by noticing and observing it
 - Uncover the magic (can't be done sitting in your office)
 - Being visible creates a different culture – kids show up, teachers show up (and want to!)
- Relationships
 - Consider a more welcoming message (than Visitors MUST report to the office) upon entry to the building
 - 15 seconds – build relationships on supervision; use these times to be silly and not so serious

Day 6 – Teacher Supervision

- Lessons Learned:
 - We don't have all the answers
 - We're all here for the students and we're in it together
 - There's a time to show true emotion and a time to be the strong leader they need
 - APs should have the principal's back – understand he makes the final decisions and whether you agree or not, always show a united front
- Resistance to coaching
 - Change approach
 - Get to know the teacher (build a relationship, know their experiences and philosophy)
 - Find their strengths
 - Ask “How can I help?”
- Documentation
 - Written notes in a notebook/sticky notes are safer for FOIP (can't be questioned that you wrote it)
 - See divisional records retention policy
- Teacher Evaluation & Supervision
 - Don't let it be a work of fiction – make sure you know what's going on in classes
 - Evaluation appeals must go through different levels, admin shouldn't talk to super first
 - 2nd hand data – listen, but get in the classrooms to verify (never use 2nd hand)
 - 3:1 (3 positives, 1 constructive)
- A principal of a school MUST:
 - Create a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe environment
 - Foster diversity, sense of belonging
 - Instruction is consistent with programming
 - Meet standards
 - Manage school
 - Maintain order
 - Promote cooperation (w/community as well)
 - Supervise & evaluate students/teachers
- Instructional Leadership
 - CRMs – collective responsibility for student success
 - Common lesson plans/teaching
 - Plan a common lesson, watch each other teach it and reflect together
 - Be visible
 - Model explicit strategies and pick them apart (staff meetings and in classes)
- Developing a Supervision Plan
 - Consider:
 - Staff descriptions
 - Experience levels of teachers
 - How many teachers at each grade
 - Unique characteristics
 - Succession planning/mentoring
 - Teacher professional needs
 - How/when do I explain the process of supervision/evaluation to staff?
 - How/when do I review TQS to develop shared understanding?
 - How/when do I discuss Policy 2.1.5 and Board policy
 - Your style and technique

- How do I plan for the time?
 - Do I stick to the plan? Why or why not?
 - How do I gather the information I need?
 - How do I observe the teaching of others?
- Support and Guidance
 - What kind of support or guidance do I provide?
 - Coaching, mentoring, articles, PLCs, etc.
- Timeline
 - What does a supervision timeline look like at my school?
- Relationship to TQS
 - How do I use the TQS to document my supervisory practices?
 - Each month look for competencies/indicators in school
 - Review TQS competencies at staff meetings
 - How are we meeting the competencies? What is the evidence?
- Create a supervision plan for a week
 - Email it to the secretary so she can locate you (not for others to see)
 - You can tell teachers when you are going to be in if they are anxious, but try to wean them off of this
 - Talk about it at staff meetings (Principal can let staff know that the AP will be in as well to do some observations)
- Reasons for evaluation (see flow chart)
 - Teacher request
 - Employment decision
 - Supervision – not meeting TQS
 - Measuring growth of a teacher
 - Permanent certification
 - Must inform teacher of:
 - Reasons/purpose for evaluation (must be based on policy)
 - Process, criteria, and standards used
 - Timelines to be applied
 - Possible outcomes
 - Must be founded on TQS
 - Ask: How is this optimum learning for all students?
 - Be clear about the indicators you want to see
 - Note taking tip: use a claim, evidence, interpretation & judgement template
- Supervision vs. Evaluation
 - Supervision
 - Guidance at the school and individual level
 - Conducted to help each teacher meet with success
 - Part of instructional leadership
 - Supportive process
 - Evaluation
 - Formal process of gathering and recording information or evidence over time
 - The application of reasoned professional judgment by principal
 - Determines whether one or more aspects of the teaching of the teacher exceeds, meets or does not meet the TQS
 - Principal must communicate clearly and in writing explicit reasons and the purpose of the evaluation
 - A single concern or complaint should not warrant an eval. A series of concerns or a complaint accompanied by other concerns of the principal may be sufficient

- Process must be reasonable and based on the rules of procedural fairness and national justice
- Rules of Fairness and Natural Justice
 - Teachers must know what standards are expected as well as what criteria and procedures will be used in judging their performance
 - If there are performance concerns as a result of information from a source other than the principal or superintendent, the information provided to the teacher in sufficient detail for him/her to understand the concern and have an opportunity to respond
 - The teacher should understand the possible outcomes of a failure to improve performance, including:
 - Possible termination of contract (after 2nd evaluation) or
 - A review of his/her professional practice by a Professional Practice Review Committee
- Procedural Rights
 - The right to notice of termination
 - Right to reasons
 - Right to hearing before the School Board
 - Right to present to the Board
 - Right to sufficient time to respond
 - Right to know the evidence against
 - Right to expect School Board will decide with open mind

Day 7 -Surviving & Thriving in a New Role

- Improve importance by improving your attitude
- How to get fired...
 - Not building trust and relationships
 - Failure to communicate positively and effectively
 - No process or structure for making wise decisions
 - Ineffective when building confidence and offering support
 - Inability to manage complex problems and influences
- Caution: Voting!
 - Divides staff
 - Miss the reasons why people are voting a certain way
- Communication and processes – change the energy of teachers so they can focus on students instead of negative issues/concerns
- Every interaction, every day!
 - Be positive, be helpful, be you – for your students, staff & parents
- Think about how your decisions impact STUDENTS
- Plan learning based on strengths (not deficits)
- Ideas for Improvement (role play debrief)
 - Get in and observe for the better part of the year before jumping into all the changes
 - Develop a feedback recess – learn from your flaws and accept it with a growth mindset
 - Relationships are important but the focus NEEDS to be about LEARNING
 - Do not lose touch with your parent or student groups (don't focus solely on staff)
 - Get the focus back – why are we doing this in the first place?
- Point of continuous contract – when in doubt, don't
- Parents
 - Todd Whitaker book

- Look for the kernel of truth
- Remember: one common place – the student! (for parents, staff, you)
- Be a parent volcanologist
 - Think about volcanoes
 - They build up over time
 - They require pressure
 - Every volcano is predictable if you:
 - Have an understanding of its history
 - Monitor and interpret data
 - Respond before eruption
 - Treat every one of them as an individual entity
 - Have a common goal with parents:
 - Start with their child (focus)
 - Look beyond the story
 - See their perspective
- Admin Support
 - Treat your secretaries like royalty!
 - Think about your behaviors – don't act like your better than the rest
 - Great leaders – deep personal humility & intense professional will
- Listen
 - REALLY listen
 - Shut everything down, make eye contact, be available
- Power struggles
 - Avoid them
 - Listen to what they're really looking for – is there another solution?
- Data
 - There's good insight in it – reflect on it and deal with it
 - Not the end all, be all
- CO
 - They are human too!
- Your role
 - Be united as a team no matter what
- Voice
 - Lead with legitimate authority
 - Hear from students, staff and parents
 - Parent council & student idea: ask for their positives and negatives to begin addressing their concerns
- Discipline
 - Be clear with staff about your expectations
 - Why/when should they send students to the office?
 - Close the loop twice – check in twice with staff after dealing with an issue to ensure they're okay with the outcome (space check ins apart 2-3 days to give them time to think)
- High levels of learning – think about streaming students – are we opening or closing doors?
- Staff Roles
 - Put them where they're going to fly! They are better at their best.
- Hiring
 - Be relentless
 - Check references
 - This shows staff: this is where we're going and this is who WE hire
- Don't play favorites

- Easy to do
- No inner groups
- Like great teachers do for students– look for the good in staff and bring it out (no matter how difficult)
- Address performance issues
 - If you're ignoring it you're not helping anyone
 - Don't set a low standard
 - Need direction and support
 - 1st years
 - Like an infant, it doesn't look good if you ignore that child
 - Make time
 - Everyone is watching you
- Last words:
 - Teaching/leading is about giving – you can't give what you don't have
 - Every interaction, every day, every individual
 - Step it up for the ones that test you
 - Maximize on positive interactions
 - Relentless about student learning – high expectations
 - Don't fall into the trap where relationships are your only focus
 - Learning should be top priority
 - High expectations means "I believe in you"
 - No excuses (not even a pandemic) to let learning fall to the wayside
 - As a leader, everyone is watching how you handle complexities
- Remember: you have less control over your time than you do your energy (take care of yourself so you can take care of them)
- 5 Leadership Take-Aways
 - Networking
 - Relationships
 - Communication
 - Show up!
 - Don't be too busy to be awesome (for yourself and your family too)