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**ADDRESSING ALBERTA'S NEW LEADERSHIP QUALITY STANDARD THROUGH HIGH  
QUALITY COLLABORATIVE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING**

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### **Abstract**

Recognizing that effective leadership at the central office and school level can make a difference in student learning, there is a need for ongoing leadership professional learning. In this two-year action-based research study, researchers collaborated with a school division as part of a research-practice partnership to design and explore a collaborative professional learning and coaching model aimed at addressing the new leadership standard. Data collection included pre and post surveys, interviews, and a focus group. Quantitative data analysis of participants' perceptions of growth in leadership competencies indicated either growth or no change in meeting the following five leadership competencies during the study: (1) modelling commitment to professional learning, (2) embodying visionary leadership, (3) leading a learning community, (4) providing instructional leadership, and (5) developing leadership capacity. There was statistically significant growth in 6 of the 14 indicators related to modelling commitment to professional learning, embodying visionary leadership, leading a learning community, providing instructional leadership. Qualitative data analysis revealed there was an intentional focus and structure to the professional learning that emphasized collaborative approaches, fostered reflection, created opportunities for feedback through coaching. Four themes emerged from the overall findings following the integration of qualitative and quantitative data: (1) sustained focus and supporting practices, (2) collaborative professional learning, (3) reflection and feedback, and (4) continued learning through coaching. Overall, the findings from this study show that collaborative professional learning and coaching are contributing to leadership development and building leadership capacity in the school division. This study serves to inform school authorities implementing professional standards and professional learning. The findings are also significant for university faculty and educators involved in designing leadership professional learning and offers insights into building collective leadership capacity at the system level.

*Keywords:* collaborative professional learning, leadership development, professional standards, coaching, research practice partnerships

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## Section 1: Introduction

### Rationale for the Research

The link between leadership effectiveness and student success has been well documented in research (Leithwood et al., 2004; Robinson, 2011). This is also recognized in Alberta Education's Leadership Quality Standard (LQS) where it states, "Quality leadership occurs when the leader's ongoing analysis of the context, and decisions about what leadership knowledge and abilities to apply, result in quality teaching and optimum learning for all school students" (Alberta Education, 2020, p. 2). Fullan and Quinn (2016) state, "leaders need to find the glue that will increase the coherence of the district and school efforts at every level and build a clear path to improve learning in demonstrable ways" (p. 17). Clearly, effective leadership at both the central office and school level can make a big difference in student's lives. In this project, Battle River School Division (BRSD) aimed to increase this coherence by building collective leadership capacity in their district and schools in relation to the new LQS introduced in December 2017 and implemented in September 2019.

Collective leadership capacity building is important work as there is a recognized connection between teacher quality and leadership preparation (Gurr & Drysdale, 2015). Notions around capacity building to foster collective responsibility is also noted in the literature (Harris, 2011) and requires leaders at all levels to work together and alongside each other (Kaser & Halbert, 2017). Fullan and Quinn (2016) contend for leadership that creates "a culture of growth; know how to engage the hearts and minds of everyone; and focus their collective intelligence, talent and commitment to shaping a new path" and builds "deep collaborative work horizontally and vertically across their organization" (p. 47). Linking to the value of this collaborative work, principals are seen as a link between school districts and schools (Mombourquette & Bedard, 2014) which shows the importance of creating opportunities to promote leadership development. While leadership development is evident in pre-service programs (McCarthy, 2015), there is a noted lack of in-service opportunities aimed at leadership development and a need for additional research to examine the impact

of these programs on principals' practice (Darling-Hammond et al., 2007). However, in Alberta, in service leadership opportunities have been taking place in the last three years. With the introduction of the new leadership standard, school leaders across the province engaged in leadership certification training. As such, BRSD school leaders obtained their leadership certification prior to this study. There is a demand for professional learning for leadership development to offer ongoing opportunities for leaders to learn (Davis et al., 2005; Goldring et al., 2012).

In response to this need, BRSD designed and implemented a collaborative professional learning model aimed at developing leadership capacity in central office leaders and school-based leaders to support them in meeting the LQS. This project allowed BRSD to consider the work of both levels of leadership within their district. Central office leaders learned alongside, supported, and coached school-based administration. Since the LQS was newly approved, this research was needed to provide insights into the implementation of this new standard. Thus, the aim of this research was to explore how this model contributes to leadership development and how coaching impacts leaders in achieving their goals and developing leadership capacity. Furthermore, this research contributed a deeper understanding of professional learning for leaders.

### **Project Background**

Battle River School Division is a rural school division offering a variety of programs including traditional schools with innovative practices, alternative programs, and very specialized services. The school division's vision and goal is "*Every Student, Every Day, A Success*".

On December 15, 2017, the government of Alberta passed the School Amendment Act (Bill 28) which provides for the implementation of the new standards for teachers, leaders, and superintendents (Legislative Assembly, 2017) and came into effect under the Education Act on September 1, 2019. As an Alberta school division, BRSD was aware that these standards were going to be in place and would be key to building leadership capacity within their division. Prior to the implementation of the new standards, BRSD was using the

draft publication of these standards to focus their work on both provincial and divisional priorities and to build coherence across the district.

The original plan for the collaborative professional learning experience was to happen over a two-year period, with both senior, division and school-based leadership participating in seven sessions each year focused on Alberta's LQS. The project timeline is included in Appendix A and the project budget in Appendix B. However, the pandemic altered these plans, and the partners had to request an extension for the project. Consequently, year two sessions were hosted over one and a half years beginning in an in-person format and moving to an online format.

### **Prior Research that Informs this Work**

Effective school leadership directly impacts teaching practice and comes second when compared to classroom instruction in its impact on student learning and achievement (Davis et al., 2005; Hallinger & Heck, 1998; Leithwood et al., 2004; Leithwood & Louis, 2012). Given leadership's influence on teaching practice and student learning, there is a need for a sustained focus for leadership development (Davis et al., 2005; Goldring et al., 2012) and for ongoing opportunities for leadership professional learning. While there are leadership development and preservice programs linked to certification requirements (McCarthy, 2015), in-service opportunities that support sustained learning are necessary (Goldring et al., 2012; Grissom & Harrington, 2010; Mendels & Mitgang, 2013).

Sustained professional development for leaders can be a way to enhance impacts on teaching and student learning (Davis et al., 2005; Knapp et al., 2010). In their study, Grissom and Harrington (2010) found that ongoing professional development for principals was perceived as supportive in improving their knowledge, skills, and applying what they learned to their practice. Limited studies examine sustained opportunities for professional development for leadership development (Barnes et al., 2010; Davis et al., 2005; Grissom and Harrington, 2010). What is known is that school districts play an integral role in building supportive structures for leadership (Barnes et al., 2010). In a recent study, it was noted that supportive and engaged leadership is an important aspect of effective professional learning



willingness of an organization's "members to be concerned not only with their own practices but with the practice itself. Professional capital is created as a fabric of reciprocal responsibilities, and support woven among its faculty that adds value to teachers and students alike" (p. 40). High leadership capacity districts and schools "have developed a fabric of structures (e.g., teams, communities, study groups) and processes (reflection, inquiry, dialogue) that form a more lasting and buoyant interrelated actions" (Lambert, 2011, p. 35).

There is a distinction between developing leaders, focused on individual leaders, and developing leadership, focused "on a process of development that inherently involves multiple individuals" that expands the collective capacity to be effective leaders (Day et al., 2014, P. 64). Leadership development emphasizes an understanding of growth and change in leadership capabilities with developmental-based outcomes rather than performance-based outcomes (Day & Dragoni, 2015). Leadership development must also be viewed as a career-long process with ongoing and sustained opportunities for learning (Davis et al., 2005; Goldring et al., 2012). Engaging in quality preparation and ongoing learning experiences over time, both prior to assuming the principal position and once in the role, can have a positive impact on the effectiveness of the school leader's ability to influence teaching and have significant impact on student learning (Davis et al., 2005; Darling-Hammond et al., 2007; Mombourquette & Bedard, 2014).

Research has demonstrated that leadership development through ongoing professional development can provide support in maximizing the impact on teaching and ultimately on student learning (Davis et al., 2005; Knapp et al., 2010). Timperley (2011) distinguishes between professional learning and traditional forms of professional development and argues for professional learning where educators are engaged in ongoing inquiry focused on improving student learning. Professional learning contrasts with typical professional development where educators attend one-off or short-term sessions with limited experiential opportunities, difficulties in transferring ideas back to their unique contexts, and designs that pay little attention to the unique needs of the individual adult learners.

Professional learning designs should be experiential with an emphasis on active rather than passive approaches (Fogarty & Pete, 2009). School districts can work towards creating a framework of collaborative professionalism and focused professional learning where the “essence of system success is a culture of daily interaction, engaging pedagogy, mutual trust and development, and regular, quality feedback related to improvement” (Fullan & Hargreaves, 2016, p. 8). An effective leadership development framework requires significant resources, especially human resources, to support learning embedded in practice. These resources need to center on policy and procedural development that need to be addressed by the school districts to create a balanced approach to leadership development (Darling-Hammond et al., 2007). Recognizing the needs of adult learners is critical to designing for professional learning. Adult learners need reflective, experiential, and autonomous opportunities to help them make meaningful and relevant connections between theory and practice. Further, it is also valuable to consider the ways to foster professional learning for leadership development and this may include methods such as professional learning communities, coaching, and mentoring.

Because leadership development participants have differing experiences, skills, and needs, traditional frameworks for assessing leaders needs to go beyond summative evaluation, assessing against standards, to more of a formative assessment approach, identifying areas of growth for individual participants (Guskey, 2012; Ladegard & Gjerde, 2014; Solansky, 2010). As well, linking professional learning to outcomes and using multiple sources of evidence to determine effectiveness is critical (Guskey, 2012). The LQS provides focus for the district with specific goals that can be measured and assessed and aligned with professional learning activities and supports. Districts focusing on strengthening school leadership and to fully support their leaders, especially in their novice years, then need to develop ways to assess principals against district goals to determine how to best support them (Mendels & Mitgang, 2013).

The purpose of this action-based research study was to explore the impact of the collaborative professional learning model on leadership development and how coaching was

impacting leaders in achieving their goals and developing leadership capacity. Findings from this study also serve to inform school authorities in Alberta implementing the Leadership Quality Standard (Alberta Education, 2020).

### **Research Questions**

The research questions for this study were:

- How does the collaborative professional learning model contribute to leadership development related to meeting the LQS?
- How does the coaching model support leaders in achieving their goals?

### **Collaborative Professional Learning Series**

BRSD partners drew on research provided by university partners and from CASS (2021) resources (professional learning modules) to develop the professional learning series and adapted and used the CASS (2021) professional growth plan with their leaders. BRSD partners also drew on resources from the Australian Institute for Teaching School Leadership (AITSL) to build understanding about coaching and used a coaching trios' protocol that was used by a previous Learning Director to support leaders in their peer coaching (Appendix C). BRSD partners selected five competencies out of the nine total competencies from the Alberta Leadership Quality Standard to focus on in their professional learning series: Modelling Commitment to Professional Learning, Embodying Visionary Leadership, Leading a Learning Community, Providing Instructional Leadership, and Developing Leadership Capacity (Alberta Education, 2020).

BRSD partners started each year with a team building/relationship building activity and included time for leaders to take a pre-survey to select which of the following five Leadership Competencies would be their focus would be for the year: Modelling Commitment to Professional Learning, Embodying Visionary Leadership, Leading a Learning Community, Providing Instructional Leadership, and Developing Leadership Capacity. The remaining sessions were organized around foundational topics and understandings in relation to what current research findings point to as the "why" and "what" of:

- Quality Professional Learning
- Collaborative professional learning,
- Adult Learning Theory and;
- The role of coaching to support professional growth

During the first year (2018-2019), there were six half day professional learning sessions (Oct.17, Nov.21, Jan.16, Feb. 20, Apr.17, & May 28) and in the second year (2019-2020) there were three full days (Oct. 16, Dec. 16, Feb. 12) and then the remaining three full day sessions were cancelled due to COVID-19 and postponed and took place in the third year (2020-2021; Sept. 28, Nov. 4, Jan. 6).

In the beginning session for the professional learning series, BRSD partners worked with leaders to determine the set of norms they would use for the remaining professional learning sessions. Each session started with a team building activity. Leaders were organized into common competency focus groups for their learning. Once participants determined their competency focus, they developed their professional growth plans. BRSD adapted and used the College of Alberta School Superintendents (CASS) (2021) Practice Profile as a professional growth plan format for these sessions (Appendix D). The remaining sessions for each year focussed on leaders developing this professional growth plan to provide evidence of how they were practicing the leadership competencies and included reflections on areas of growth. The remaining sessions also included collaborative learning activities that deepened participants' understanding of their focus competency. An example of a session plan that shows how the sessions were organized has been included in Appendix E; these session plans were adapted from the CASS (2021) professional learning modules.

Another aspect of the professional learning series was that leaders were organized into coaching trios from their competency groups. The professional learning series included sessions to deepen leaders understanding of coaching. In their coaching trios, leaders used a coaching protocol (Appendix C) to aid peer coaching and to focus on supporting one another in achieving the goals outlined in their professional growth plans. Coaching trios also had opportunities to visit each other's work sites to gain a better understanding of each

other's leadership context and to have additional opportunities to engage in dialogue and feedback.

At the end of each year, participants completed a post-survey to reflect on their growth in their focus competency. During year two, learning opportunities were pivoted online due to the pandemic and were organized so that participants could reflect on their growth over the previous year and provide feedback on what else they feel could have supported them in achieving the goals they had outlined in their growth plans. Most of the collaborative professional learning sessions took place online during year two. Participants were still required to meet with their coaching trios outside of the whole group sessions and in this second year, many of these meetings took place online.

The study used an action-based research approach which included administering pre and post surveys and conducting interviews to collect data to learn about the impact of the collaborative professional learning model. Researchers and division leaders, the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent, involved in this research-practice partnership engaged in ongoing dialogue throughout the project, a characteristic of action-based research (Mills, 2013). After analysis, year one preliminary findings were discussed, and recommendations were shared by the researchers that informed year two of the collaborative professional learning.

## Section 2: Practitioner Researcher Collaboration

### Research Partnership Overview

BRSD and the University of Calgary are the partner organizations that collaborated on this research study and this section describes how the research-practice partnership was formed and how it evolved. As a school division, BRSD wanted to create a professional learning series for the leaders in their school district and when the Alberta Education second call for proposals was announced they decided to attend the Werklund School of Education Partner Research meeting in January 2018. At this meeting there were partners from previous research practice partnerships (RPPs) who shared about their projects including celebrations, challenges, and findings. Researchers and partner schools and districts, many who were part of the Alberta Research Network who were attending and interested in RPPs, had the opportunity to network with each other. At this meeting, the partners from this study met and discussed the potential for doing a research project to support school leaders in addressing the new leadership standard. After this meeting, BRSD central office staff and faculty from the Werklund School of Education formed a partnership and worked collaboratively to submit a proposal to the Alberta Education's Research Partnerships Program (2018-2019) (Figure 2).

### Figure 2

#### *Partnership Formation*



The proposal was accepted in February 2018 and following this, the partners began to draw on current research on professional learning and leadership development (Brown et

al., 2016 Campbell et al., 2016; Goldring et al., 2012; Kaser & Halbert, 2017; McCarthy, 2015; Rogers et al., 2016; Timperley, 2011) to design the collaborative professional learning sessions that commenced in Fall 2018. University of Calgary partners wrote a report summarizing the literature around leadership development, building leadership capacity, professional learning, and coaching informing the work (Thomas et al., 2018). Partners reflected on the partnership and the next section highlights celebrations and challenges.

### ***Celebrations***

Partners noted several celebrations as they reflected on the partnership. First, the partnership was mutually beneficial (Killion, 2011) and the partners developed a collaborative professional relationship (Stephens & Boldt, 2004). The partners met in both Camrose and at the University of Calgary to co-develop the proposal and the collaborative professional learning series. Action-based based research also involved the researchers and practitioners collaborating while cycling back and forth between data collection, analysis, and interpretation (Creswell, 2012). The collaborative partnership was influenced by criteria suggested by Woloshyn et al. (2005); “build rapport, establish compatible goals, negotiate tasks, and sustain a sense of commitment and satisfaction” (p. 24). To sustain this work, the partners met regularly to establish open lines of communication, shared updates, and utilized the expertise of our team members.

### ***Challenges***

Reflecting on the partnership, partners recognized a major challenge was COVID-19 and the delays and changes that had to take place because of the pandemic. These changes and delays included moving the professional learning series online and delaying data collection. However, the partners were able to navigate and mitigate these challenges because of the existing positive relationships between partners, ongoing communication, and flexibility.

### **RPP Cohort**

The partners were involved in several RPP Cohort events organized by the Alberta Research Branch and resources they provided were utilized by the team. Cohort meetings

were attended in the first year in person in Edmonton with representation from both partner organizations. Both partner organizations also attended cohort webinars in 2019 and 2021. Additionally, representatives from both partners presented at the Alberta Research Network meetings in November 2019 and in May 2021. Partners also attending RPP findings webinars, and these served as an opportunity to learn about other projects and to share about the partners own findings and network with others in attendance. These opportunities contributed to knowledge mobilization. The resources provided by the research branch were helpful in outlining requirements for the interim and final reports (e.g., Cohort 2 Final Research Report Requirements guide) with opportunities to give feedback to improve the process. The partners in the study were able to give feedback on the interim report and whenever there were questions the partners were able to contact the research branch to receive support. This access to the research branch supported the partners completing the reports and in provided guidance when needed.

### ***Celebrations***

Resources such as the templates and guides were helpful in completing interim and final draft reports that were required. Being part of the Alberta Research network also allowed the team to learn about findings from other projects across Alberta. Learning Directors from BRSD also attended sessions on Numeracy, and Literacy that were offered by Alberta Research Network. This promoted a deeper understanding of the role research and practice play in ensuring students are successful and educational leadership being aware of current best practices. The partners were able to disseminate findings and learn about other relevant or related research as well as the areas of research needed in the Alberta context to support teaching and learning.

### ***Challenges***

While there were several celebrations, our team did encounter some challenges. The in-person cohort meetings in Edmonton did pose a challenge with the time needed to set aside a day to attend because of the drive. Once these meetings moved online, it was easier

to plan to attend and ensure that both partner organizations were represented. In the future, it would be helpful to continue to offer the option of attending in person or online to support representation from all partner organizations. Although the reporting templates and guidelines took time to address which posed a minor challenge, overall, the partners found these served as checkpoints throughout the project. Additionally, the partners feel it is important to ensure that the research from these projects gets directly into the hands of the people who need to understand it to make the difference. Alberta Research Network has a broad audience and this could continue to be expanded to include more teachers and principals or representation from school districts to mobilize this knowledge.

### ***Lessons Learned***

Research practice partnerships have the potential to bring together researchers and practitioners to collaboratively research and this study's partnership is an example of this. While partnerships can be challenging give the time it takes to meet and collaboratively develop research proposals, there are ways to mitigate this and form a successful partnership that is mutually beneficially and draws on the strengths of each partner. The lessons learned from this study show that partnerships can be anchored and sustained by the following: (1) trust, (2) valuing expertise, (3) ongoing communication, and (4) flexibility (see Figure 3).

### **Figure 3**

*Lessons learned.*



TRUST



EXPERTISE



COMMUNICATION



FLEXIBILITY

***Trust and Respect***

The partners demonstrated trust and respect for each other, and this was reflected from the beginning at the first meeting and throughout the project in subsequent meetings and interactions. BRSD partners already had a connection with Werklund School of Education and Dr. Brandon through Dr. Marler's doctoral work. This early connection supported building relational trust. When BRSD partners met Dr. Thomas at the Research Partnership meeting hosted by Werklund School of Education in January 2018 and discussed their research project idea, they immediately realized they shared common interests around leadership and professional learning and knew that they could set compatible goals and form a solid partnership. Additionally, Dr. Turner, one of the research assistants for the study, and Dr. Marler had been in a class together during their doctoral work, so they knew each other. Dr. Turner was a great addition to the team as his research focus was directly related to this project. Furthermore, Dr. Thomas, the principal investigator, and BRSD partners met several times in both Camrose and Calgary and virtually on zoom which included providing BRSD with any research they needed to aid planning the collaborative professional learning series and collaborating on the research project. Partners reflections are included below and demonstrate how trust and respect anchored this partnership throughout:

*"From the onset of our research project with the University of Calgary, we have created a collaborative partnership. The strengths, skills and expertise of the individuals on each team (BRSD and University of Calgary) have allowed us to deepen the learning of our participants and to learn and grow through the research component". (Personal Communication, Rita Marler, BRSD Superintendent, May 16, 2019).*

*"Our research partnership with the University of Calgary on this professional learning project has been extremely valuable. Dr. Christy Thomas has been an invaluable support from completing our literature review, being a sounding board, writing reports, collecting*

*and analyzing data and co-presenting. Participants in this professional learning project appreciate knowing the research behind the work we are doing. I am looking forward to our continued partnership in the next year of this project". (Personal Communication, Shan Jorgenson-Adam, BRSD Assistant Superintendent, May 16, 2019).*

*"This research practice partnership has affirmed my belief in the importance of practitioners and researchers collaborating to solve problems of practice. I really valued the opportunity to work with BRSD and their leadership and to serve them in their context. The work they are doing is having a positive impact on their central office and school leaders and is inspiring. What we are learning from this study is exciting and will offer valuable contributions to the scholarship around leadership development and professional learning". (Personal Communication, Christy Thomas, Principal Investigator, May 29, 2021).*

*"From informal conversations, we knew that our leaders were enjoying connecting with one another and Ms. Jorgenson-Adam created engaging activities that allowed for great fun and deep learning. We have seen growth in all our leadership in relation to their competency focus. As a result of this project leaders across the division have a clearer understanding of leadership across our division, and across leadership roles". (Personal Communication, Rita Marler, BRSD Superintendent, April 2021).*

*"This action-based research, with BRSD, focuses our attention on one thing that truly matters, the choices we have in how we support our leadership teams in order to improve student learning. Framed within the LQS, I believe the work with the school district is highly intentional and that we have the ability to track the effectiveness of this work, both quantitatively and qualitatively. In turn, others have the ability to replicate*

*similar action-based projects through-out the province". (Personal Communication, Jeff Turner, Research Assistant, Werklund School of Education, May 17, 2019).*

*"Working with the BRSD senior leadership team on this project has provided a number of insights over the first year of collaborative involvement. Two of these points stand out. First, it has been interesting to see the enthusiastic application of evidence informed professional learning cycles. The BRSD team has worked methodically to provide engaging and productive professional learning experiences for school leaders. Leaders seem to have embraced and applied this learning in such ways that their individual and collective efficacy has been, notably, enhanced. Second, the collaborative learning sessions seem to have generated stronger and more open relational trust among participants. Reports of participant openness to authentic conversations leading to strengthened professional practice were inspiring". (Personal Communication, Jim Brandon, Co-Investigator, Werklund School of Education, May 17, 2019).*

Trust and respect were demonstrated in how partners valued each other's ideas, giving voice to each partner. The partners learned how essential it is to develop compatible goals and establish norms for working together in a way that shows respect and establishes relational trust.

### ***Valuing Expertise of Partners***

Each partner brought different skill sets that were valuable to the different aspects of the project. These strengths were utilized and drawn upon throughout the project. BRSD partners were familiar with creating collaborative professional learning and understood the needs in their school district, so that was their area of strength. University partners were able to provide the background literature on leadership development, professional development and learning, adult learning theory and conduct research activities and organize knowledge

mobilization. Partners learned that both practitioners and researchers have expertise that can strengthen a research-practice partnership.

### ***Ongoing Communication***

Partners communicated regularly to apprise each other of any updates or to identify needs. The partners met regularly throughout the project to share updates and to offer feedback, as well as make decisions around extensions to the project. Meetings took place in both Camrose and Calgary as well as online via Zoom. During the pandemic, partners continued to meet remotely in Zoom. Overall, the partners learned that communication is key to the success of partnerships.

### ***Flexibility***

The partners also exercised flexibility in their approach as they navigated revisions and unexpected changes such as the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent extensions to the project and need to adjust the timeline and data collection. This flexibility supported partners in pivoting online when it made sense to meet virtually during the pandemic. Project meetings moved online, and the collaborative professional learning series was adapted to and moved online for school leaders. While this was inconvenient, the partners were flexible and resilient in pivoting to online professional learning and in extending the data collection for year two. Dr. Marler, BRSD partner, said a challenge in this study was "COVID and having to shift to online sessions which extended the project into year 3" (Personal Communication, Rita Marler, BRSD Superintendent, April 2021). Thus, the partners learned that flexibility is valuable for partnerships navigating and mitigating challenges in research projects.

### ***Suggested Next Steps***

With such a successful partnership, where trust and respect were foundational to the partnership, the partners are excited at the possibility of further collaborative research projects. Future plans include co-authoring journal articles related to the research study and to engage in knowledge mobilization at future conferences and beyond.

### **Section 3: Research Design**

#### **Theoretical Framework and Design**

This project explored the impact of the professional learning series to see how effective it was in helping leaders address their LQS competency focus by using an action-based research approach (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Creswell, 2012; Parsons & Servage, 2005; Mills, 2013). Additionally, this project examined the role coaching played in assisting leaders to meet the LQS goals. Action-based research design was chosen as it allowed for partners to engage democratically in ongoing reflection and dialogue to set goals to learn, test out ideas, and see change (Mills, 2013). This research approach is often used by educators who are looking to solve problems of practice and make improvements in educational contexts (Creswell, 2012) as was in this case. The research approach involved partners cycling “back and forth between data collection and a focus, and data collection and analysis and interpretation” (Creswell, 2012, p. 580) and included developing action plans.

This research was focused specifically on the issue of building leadership capacity in relation to the new LQS. One of the challenges of using action-based research is the time it requires of practitioners and the limited experience they may have in conducting research (Creswell, 2012). This barrier was mitigated as the university partners supported BRSD by co-developing data collection instruments (e.g., interview and focus group questions, survey questions) and conducting the research activities. University partners also offered expertise and resources and provided a literature review around leadership development and professional learning. Both partners collaborated on the design of the professional learning series, but BRSD partners took the lead in this aspect of the study.

Using action-based research, the collaborative professional learning series was designed, implemented, and data was collected and analyzed to determine how effective this series was in helping leaders address their LQS competency focus and to determine whether coaching assisted leaders in meeting their goals. Pre-survey data was collected in Fall 2018 and at the end of May 2019, a post-survey was administered and followed by interviews and focus groups. Preliminary findings from year one were shared with the BRSD

partners by the university partners and informed the design of year two of the collaborative professional learning. For example, these findings showed that collaborative approaches and being able to focus on one competency were helpful in addressing the LQS in the professional learning. Additionally, these findings revealed that there was a need for more time and resources to develop coaching relationships and supporting leaders in focusing on self and on building their own leadership capacity. BRSD used this information to guide their planning for the professional learning series for year two. For example, BRSD partners modified the scheduled time by increasing from a half day to a full day for the professional learning series and providing resources and opportunities to support building coaching relationships. A pre-survey was administered at the start of year two, in Fall 2019, and then due to the pandemic, the post-survey was administered in February 2021. Interviews for year two of the study were conducted in March and April 2021. University partners shared preliminary findings with BRSD partners at the end of year two.

### **Research Questions**

- *How does the collaborative professional learning series contribute to leadership development related to meeting the LQS?*
- *How does the coaching model support leaders in achieving their goals?*

### **Participants**

There were 55 central office and school-based leaders who were invited to participate in this study who had previously obtained their LQS certification by completing Alberta Education by completing approved leadership coursework. Table 1 shows the response rate for the different components of the study in both years. During year two, the study was extended due to the pandemic and as such the post survey was conducted in year three. The population size changed from 55 (year one) to 51 (year two) during the study due to factors such as attrition or transition in role (school leadership role to teacher role) which is reflected in the different totals in the table. The response rate is based on those individuals who gave consent to participate in the two-year study.

**Response Rate****Table 1***Response rate for year one and two*

	<b>Year One</b>	<b>Year Two</b>
Pre-Survey	50/55	47/51
Post Survey	41/55	41/48
Interviews	17/55	14/51
Focus Group	1 (3/55)	0

**Recruitment**

There were 55 central office and school leaders who were invited to participate in this two-year study at the beginning of year one of the study. The research team obtained ethics clearance from the university and the school district prior to recruiting participants for the study. Participants were already part of the professional learning sessions that took place every 4 to 6 weeks and was a pre-existing requirement for leaders in the school district. Non-participants were also engaged in the professional learning sessions; completing the survey was one of the activities already taking place during their professional learning series.

Participants were recruited at their first professional learning session held by the school district in Camrose, Alberta in September 2018. The researchers introduced the research study to all the Central Office Leaders and School based leaders (principals and assistant principals) attending. An opportunity for questions was also provided. Leaders were invited to give consent to share their data from the professional learning session pre and post survey for the study, participate in an individual interview and/or focus group. The consent form was completed by both participants and non-participants and they were asked to indicate yes or no to participating in the study. The superintendent and assistant

superintendent were not present during this time to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. Time was provided for questions and completing the forms. The researchers collected the forms but also offered an option to submit the forms later via email. Email was used to contact leaders to arrange a time for the interviews and focus groups at the end of both years.

Participation in this study was completely voluntary and confidential and participants could consent to any, all or none of the research activities (e.g., interview, survey, focus group). Every effort was made to maintain anonymity. However, during the focus group interviews, participants knew each other, thus, anonymity and confidentiality could not be guaranteed. Participants in the focus groups were asked to keep comments confidential. In the consent form, participants were given this information about focus groups and the limits of their confidentiality if they choose to be part of the focus group interview. Participation in the surveys and interviews was anonymous and participants knew that they would not be identified in research reports or articles and that data would be reported as aggregate or would use pseudonyms. Any individual was able to refuse to participate altogether, refuse to participate in parts of the study, could decline to answer any or all questions and was able to withdraw from the study at any time. If the participant chose to withdraw then they had the right to withdraw their data by the end of year one and year two so reports could be completed.

The risks were no greater than those associated with day-to-day work for participants involved in this study. Potential benefits for participating in this study included reflecting on leadership practices and development, sharing leadership practices, and engaging in dialogue with member(s) of the research team.

### **Data Collection Instruments**

Three methods of data collection were used in this study and included:

- 1) Pre and post surveys were administered at the start and end of each year of the study. The pre and post survey questions are included in Appendix F. These questions were used in both years of the study.

- 2) Interviews were conducted at the end of year one and year two. The interview protocol can be seen in Appendix G and was used in both years of the study.
- 3) Focus groups were conducted at the end of year one. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, focus groups were not conducted at the end of year two. The focus group protocol can be seen in Appendix H and was used in both years of the study.

Table 2 provides a summary of the data collection over the two years.

**Table 2**

*Data collection during year one and two.*

<b>Year</b>	<b>Month</b>	<b>Data Collection</b>
1	September 2018	Pre-Survey
1	May 2019	Post-Survey
1	June - September 2019	Interviews & Focus Group
2	October 2019	Pre-Survey
2	January 2021	Post-Survey
2	March - April 2021	Interviews

The findings from this study highlight the overall findings from both the qualitative and quantitative data collected in year one and two.

### **Data Collection Procedures**

#### ***Pre and Post Survey Data***

At the start of each year, at the first professional learning session, both central office and school leaders completed a pre survey that was used by BRSD partners to organize collaborative professional learning groups around leadership competencies. The pre-survey took approximately 10-15 minutes for participants to complete. This survey was completed

by both participating and non-participating individuals. Participants were already part of the professional learning sessions that took place every 4 to 6 weeks and was a pre-existing requirement for leaders in the school district. Non-participants were also engaged in the professional learning sessions; completing the survey was one of the activities already taking place during their professional learning series. The university partners used the survey data for research purposes from those who provided consent to participate in the study.

At the end of both years, in the final professional learning session, both central office and school leaders completed a post-survey. In the second year, this was delayed due to the pandemic. The post-survey took approximately 10-15 minutes for participants to complete. This survey was completed by both participating and non-participating individuals. The university partners gathered survey data for research purposes from those who provided consent to participate in the study. BRSD partners reviewed the survey data at the end of both years and sought ways to make improvements to the professional learning series.

In both pre and post surveys, leaders reflected on their own ability in meeting five of the nine leadership competencies using a Likert scale (e.g., beginning, developing, achieving, excelling) based on the new LQS in the province of Alberta. The surveys also had open-ended questions. The pre-survey open questions asked participants to identify their focus competency, provide a rationale with related strategies, and the post-survey asked them to reflect on how they built capacity in their focus area, how professional learning impacted their growth and to provide suggestions for improving the professional learning.

University partners had access to the pre and post survey data in both years and then created a researcher copy. Non-participating individuals were identified and then their data was removed prior to analysis using the contact list, consent forms and identifying information (e.g., name) from the survey.

### ***Interviews***

41 out of 55 individuals who gave consent to participate in interviews at the beginning of the study were contacted by university partners at the end of both years of the study to

arrange a date and time. 17 individuals agreed to participate in the first-year interviews. 14 individuals agreed to participate in the second-year interviews. Again, during the second year, this was delayed due to the pandemic but took place once the post-surveys were completed. Interviews were recorded via phone or using video-conferencing software (e.g., via Zoom) and conducted by university partners. Video files were recorded and then stored electronically on secured and encrypted computers to ensure confidentiality of the data.

Only university partners had access to this data and only aggregated data was used for reports. For data management purposes, the data from this study will be retained for five years upon the closing of the study. This will allow the university partners to conduct further analyses and engage in knowledge mobilization activities (e.g., publications, presentations) with partners.

### ***Focus Groups***

The 33 individuals who gave consent to participate in focus groups at the beginning of the study were contacted through email to arrange a date and time in May 2019. Three individuals responded to the email and a date was arranged to conduct this one focus group during week one. In year two, due to COVID-19, focus groups were not conducted. Focus groups were recorded via phone or using video-conferencing software (e.g., via Zoom). Video files were recorded and then stored electronically on secured and encrypted computers to ensure confidentiality of the data.

Only university partners had access to this data and only aggregated data was used for reports. For data management purposes, the data from this study will be retained for five years upon the closing of the study. This will allow the researchers to conduct further analyses and engage in knowledge mobilization activities (e.g., publications, presentations) with partners.

## Data Analysis

### **Quantitative Data**

The survey (Appendix I) consisted of 18 items, 17 of which measured the participants' perceptions of their own ability in meeting five of the nine leadership competencies: *Modelling Commitment to Professional Learning, Embodying Visionary Leadership, Leading a Learning Community, Providing Instructional Leadership, and Developing Leadership Capacity*. The perception items employed a 4-point Likert scale:

1. Beginning - earliest stage of understanding/application to context,
2. Developing - partial and/or inconsistent application to context,
3. Achieving - successful/well-developed application to context, and
4. Excelling - exceptional/in-depth and broad application to context.

For the first phase of the survey data analysis an Exploratory Factor Analysis was first used to determine the validity of each item. The Cronbach's alpha measure was used to determine the internal consistency and reliability of the multiple items in the survey as connected to each leadership competency (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The optimal range being set to 0.700 or higher (Kline, 2016). As a result, two of the questions were rejected from further analysis. We then used descriptive statistics to calculate the frequency and central tendency for each survey item to establish our baseline.

For both years, post-survey analysis used a paired or matched approach using participants' pre- and post-survey responses. Individuals were matched to one of the five identified areas of the LQS based on their declared area of professional growth. The matched pair was used to determine the central tendency of responses based on participants' perception of their abilities in meeting one of the five leadership competencies. These findings were used to guide future work.

Finally, results from the pre-survey (fall, 2018) and the post-survey (winter, 2021) were paired-matched resulting in a sample of n=35. The merged dataset was then imported into IBM SPSS Statistics 27 software through which statistical analysis was performed. A Wilcoxon signed-rank test was used to determine if there was a median difference; either

growth, no change, or decrease in participants' perception of meeting each of the five of the nine leadership competencies in the LQS over the duration of the research project.

### ***Qualitative Data***

The qualitative data from interviews, focus groups and open-ended survey questions was analyzed using thematic data analysis and two cycle coding (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014). Spreadsheets, word processing documents and NVivo were used to support qualitative data analysis. This qualitative analysis included analysis for temporal similarities and differences. University partners engaged in multiple rounds of coding which included reviewing transcripts and assigning descriptive codes. Some example descriptive codes from the multiple rounds were collaboration, building relationships, trust, scheduled time. These rounds of coding were followed by meetings to collapse codes and discuss emerging themes for interrater reliability. Themes were then organized alongside the research questions. For example, the theme of “*structure*” emerged from the analysis and represented codes related to scheduled time, focus and resources that were supporting addressing the LQS competencies and related to the research question: How does the collaborative professional learning series contribute to leadership development related to meeting the LQS?

### ***Trustworthiness/Reliability***

Quantitative data and qualitative data were integrated each year and reviewed by multiple members of the research team. This process allowed for triangulation of the data and contributed to the trustworthiness and reliability of our findings. This report will focus on the overall findings from the study.



## Section 4: Findings

### Overview

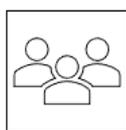
This study reports findings from a two-year action-based research project which explored how a collaborative professional learning series contributes to leadership development and how coaching impacts leaders in achieving their goals and developing leadership capacity. Three methods of data collection were used to inform the findings of the study: (1) pre and post surveys and (2) interviews, and (3) focus groups. We used the two research questions to guide the data collection and analysis. *How does the collaborative professional learning series contribute to leadership development related to meeting the LQS? How does the coaching model support leaders in achieving their goals?* Outlined below are the findings from the survey along with themes emerging from the qualitative data analysis from interviews and focus groups (see Figure 4). Quotations used in this section represent sample quotes from participants in the study.

### Figure 4

*Emerging themes from qualitative data analysis (e.g., interviews and focus groups)*



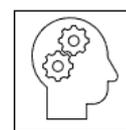
Structure



Collaborative  
Learning



Reflection



Coaching

### Findings Related to Research Question 1: How does the collaborative professional learning series contribute to leadership development related to meeting the LQS?

The findings related to research question one are included in this section and are organized in the following order: Findings 1.1., 1.2, 1.3, and 1.4.

**Finding 1.1: Survey findings**

Findings from the pre and post survey show participants' perceptions of growth in leadership competencies demonstrated either growth or no change but no decrease in meeting each of the five leadership competencies during the study: *Modelling Commitment to Professional Learning, Embodying Visionary Leadership, Leading a Learning Community, Providing Instructional Leadership, and Developing Leadership Capacity*. There was statistically significant growth in 6 of the 14 items related to the five competencies: *Modelling Commitment to Professional Learning, Embodying Visionary Leadership, Leading a Learning Community, and Providing Instructional Leadership*.

The Wilcoxon signed-rank test was used to determine if there was a median difference; either growth, no change, or decrease in participants' perception of meeting each of the five of the nine leadership competencies in the LQS over the duration of the research project (Appendix I) The Wilcoxon signed-rank test calculated the difference of individual 2018 pre-survey responses with the 2021 post-survey responses and then considered the magnitude of these differences for all participants when determining the mean for each question.

Based on the initial research questions, the question for the Wilcoxon signed-rank test is as follows: *Does the pre and post measurement, over the two years of the study, differ in determining participants' perception of meeting five of the nine leadership competencies in the LQS?* The majority of the 35 participants indicated either growth or experienced no change with respect to their perception in meeting each of the five specific leadership competencies over the duration of the research project (Appendix I). Of the 14 items, there was a statistically significant median increase in 6 of the items,  $p < .05$  with respect to indicating growth. These six items are displayed in Table 3 and Appendix I contains the full table with all 14 items.

Table 3  
*Pre (2018) & Post (2021) Nonparametric Survey Analysis: Matched Pair (n=35)*

Ranks	Wilcoxon Signed
-------	-----------------

Item #	Statement				Ranks Test	
		Negative Post < Pre	Positive Post > Pre	Tie Post = Pre	z-value	p-value
<b>Modeling Commitment to Professional Learning</b>						
1	I engage with others such as teachers, principals and other leaders to build personal and collective professional capacities and expertise.	3	11	21	2.14	.033*
2	I actively seek out feedback and information from a variety of sources to enhance leadership practice.	1	7	27	2.12	.034*
<b>Embodying Visionary Leadership</b>						
5	I access, share and use a range of data to determine progress towards achieving goals.	2	8	25	1.99	.046*
<b>Leading a Learning Community</b>						
8	I create meaningful, collaborative learning opportunities for teachers and support staff.	4	17	14	2.91	.004*
9	I create an environment for the safe and ethical use of technology.	1	9	25	2.53	.011*
<b>Providing Instructional Leadership</b>						
12	I demonstrate a strong understanding of effective pedagogy and curriculum.	2	10	23	2.39	.021*

\*  $p < 0.05$

As the Wilcoxon signed-rank test showed no significant mean difference in the other 8 items, we have no compelling evidence that participants responses indicated growth.

Based on these results, consideration must be given in understanding the limitation of the data, reflecting only four levels of measurement and the median value only reflecting two discrete levels (2 & 3). As a result, it is difficult to ascertain whether participant selection indicated a growth response or an undecided response (Hodge & Gillespie, 2007).

A possible reason for what might be impacting these results is an issue of data drift. During the second year of the project, 41% of the participants changed their focus on one of the five competencies. This change of focus, during this time, could be attributed to a change in participant perceptions based on current realities and settings and explains these results. The second year of the study was extended due to COVID-19 restrictions. A change of focus may be because of having to meet the dynamic challenges of COVID-19, being placed into a new leadership position, and/or being transferred to a new school or building.

***Finding 1.2: A key aspect of the collaborative professional learning was an intentional structure.***

A key aspect of the collaborative professional learning was an intentional structure which provided time, focus and resources to support leaders addressing the LQS competencies. Time provided was essential to participants being able to actively engage in the collaborative professional learning focused on the LQS competencies. *"Release time was available and sub costs covered"* for participants as well as *"freedom to schedule the time around their schedules"* giving them flexibility and autonomy. This time was particularly important for principals and assistant principals who are also required to teach a portion of their day. The expectation for number of meeting times was very well-defined with the topic, agenda and number of meetings expected being clearly laid out. Having meeting expectations communicated clearly allowed participants to plan and be prepared for all discussions. Participants also shared how *"on a district level, they were committed to, putting some dollars behind"* the collaborative professional learning to make sure they *"had the opportunity to support one another"*. While time was valued by participants, some requested more time be dedicated to the LQS competencies. Participants shared how *"more time on certain things"*, especially *"hands-on parts"* would have allowed them to be more productive, as well as create, build, and communicate more effectively.

Participants shared how the structure of choosing to focus on one LQS competency, and then being grouped with individuals who had selected the same LQS competency focus, was very beneficial. Having a singular area of concentration gave participants the opportunity to be *"hypervigilant and very focused"*, leading to meaningful and helpful discussions. Strategies, ideas, and resources that applied to practices were shared amongst participants. After participants applied their learning, they came back and discussed the outcomes and learning with the group, which allowed them to be resources for each other. These LQS competency groups gave focused space for participants to discuss their learnings and created accountability between the members. Participants shared how the targeted focus was the *"biggest piece [they] found most helpful and just what it looked like*

was that *[they] were all focussed on the same thing and sharing*", overtaking "broad strokes" of all the LQS.

The participants focus on a specific LQS competency was directly related to their professional growth plans, a useful resource. Participants went through their "LQS *professional growth plans and [gave] each other feedback, visited each other's schools and then helped support each other*" which participants found as "extremely valuable". This professional growth plan supported peer coaching conversations and coaching from central office. "Professional development around the coaching component", "what good feedback looks like", and a "framework that had group norms" was beneficial and viewed as very important because it allowed "everyone's voice in *[the] group [to be] heard*". Additionally, the professional learning "provided a focus around continual improvement" as participants, "*[were] not happy staying where [they were] at*". Participants spoke of sharing of resources with each other when collaborating at professional learning series or when meeting with the peer coaching partner and shared how hearing what individuals were doing became a "*part of [participants] toolbox*" that they used to "influence *[their] own work*".

***Finding 1.3: Collaborative learning was integral to the professional learning series.***

Collaborative learning was integral to the professional learning series and fostered meaningful relationships, expanded advice networks, developed teams, and cultivated coaching relationships. Focus on the collaborative response model led to increased collaboration and trust across the school district.

Participants communicated how the professional learning series "*opened up so much collaboration between schools*", fostered teamwork, built trust, and led to the sharing of strategies, ideas, and resources. Collaboration was also integral in creating a "*more collaborative leadership process, not just in involving the school leaders, but leaders within the staff themselves.*" Participants learned "*you definitely get the idea that other perspectives sometimes change your viewpoint on how you see an issue because... you may not of thought that way.*"

Additional quotes from participants further illustrate how collaboration was integral to the professional learning series:

*"I have no problem picking up the phone and talking to any one of the administrators within our division when I need information about a student...rather than all of us working individually, we work as a team across the division, and I think that's been super beneficial."*

*"One of the most valuable things is being paired with another administrator or sometimes two or three administrators, so people are working on the same competencies so that we can share ideas and strategies and a few resources here and there."*

In participant groups with the same LQS competency focus, they built deeper relationships with individuals with varying roles across the district, which led to a more comprehensive understanding of the system and value for the different perspectives of individuals in these roles. Barriers were removed between roles and departments and instead of looking out for oneself, area, or building, participants had a unified focus on looking at *"what's good for all kids"*.

Opportunities were given for participants *"to sit at tables with different leaders in different departments and see how [they were] all connected and serving a role for [the] students"*. For example, a participant talked about being *"able to see and interact with the people in the transportation department, in various sites, whether it was the bus garage or their office"* and this helped them get *"to know a little about the programs that they use for scheduling buses and some of the challenges that occur"*. Relationships were built between the participants and conversations were strengthened from what would have previously been *"just a passing acknowledgement"*. Participants spoke of *"not being individual schools, but a school system that works together"*. The following quote highlights the trust that was developed that supported working together and building coherence across the district:

*"There's a trust and I think that's important. There's more of a trust now, amongst administrators. There's an understand that we're more solidly now a division than"*

*separate schools. I think they see how as a school district, we're an organization. We're all under Battle River. And I think that's a huge, huge role and gain that our superintendency has put into place. So transformational and distributed leadership".*

***Finding 1.4: Leaders had opportunities to reflect on their leadership goals, receive feedback and show evidence of growth.***

Leaders had opportunities to reflect on their leadership goals, receive feedback and show evidence of growth which fostered shared leadership and developed leadership capacity. Participants went *"through [their] leadership quality standard professional growth plans and [gave] each other feedback, visited each other's schools and then helped support each other over the last couple of years."* The feedback, site-visits and support were found to be valuable to participants. Division leadership engaged with leaders and supported them by providing them with feedback on their goals. As one participant stated, *"we created our goals. They reviewed our goals. They gave feedback on our goals. And they [checked] in with us throughout the year on how our goals [were] going"*. Participants noted that this process of giving feedback was modelled by the division leadership and that this was an important aspect of the professional learning.

Feedback was given on the principal growth plans from *"both administrators, as well as division leadership, that was very helpful"*. The emphasis was on *"growth, and the biggest thing was that they kept focusing on it within the growth plan."* Participants shared about their *"growth and focus on the leadership quality standard"*.

Participants' reflections shifted from focusing on what they would do for teachers to help them to grow to focusing on their own growth which was an important learning. The notion of building leadership capacity among their staff at their schools was also a central focus:

*"If we were to compare before and after, I "would hope that there would be some indication of growth in my effectiveness in terms of being able to build that leadership capacity and in the building, seeing a greater degree of people taking up the load in various ways to support everything that's going on."*

Participants also used their principal growth plans to document “*evidence to show the growth*” in relation to their LQS focus competency. For example, a participant shared evidence of growth in relation to building leadership capacity and that a foundation was “*built upon trust and teamwork...the leadership [was] not resting in the hands of one person*”, and that was “*due in part to the work [done] with this project. It was building leadership capacity*”. Another participant shared how “*leadership [was] more distributed amongst the staff and staff [had] more influence on how the school is operated*” and a “*culture of leadership support amongst all the staff*” was built.

## **Findings Related to Question 2: How does the coaching model support leaders in achieving their goals?**

### ***Finding 2.1: Coaching was an overarching component of professional learning.***

Coaching was an overarching component of professional learning. Leaders received coaching from central office leadership but were also partnered with peers and engaged in peer coaching. Leaders were provided with specific resources and activities to support their peer coaching, and this was modelled by central office leadership. Through the coaching model trust was built in the division “*between leaders and administrators*”, which made the “*peer coaching piece easier*”. The development of trust also contributed to the creation of a “*safe space*” in groups for participants to foster dialogue focused on growth and development, which was seen as valuable for coaching and professional learning as illustrated here:

*“It allowed us to question each other. It included different questioning techniques that we could do modeling and allowed those conversations to go a little bit deeper, but it also allowed us to uncover some possible issues that we might not have. But then we were able to work through with our partners a collaborative approach to those solutions, to those, issues, to continue to support and grow. When we would check in with each other then, we could talk about, hey, last time you had mentioned you were dealing with this. How has that gone? Then we would talk about how they might’ve*

*grown in that process. So knowing that there were people from the division office that were sitting in our groups, but often there wasn't, I think it created a safe framework to have those discussions and not feel like we were being evaluated. I think because our norms are set up in such a way that everyone affected everyone in the group. It just gave us a great opportunity to just collaborate and share".*

During the professional learning series, BRSD partners provided resources on coaching. Participants said they were "*shown videos regarding coaching and peer to peer feedback*" as a specific resource for learning. Through the application of the coaching model "*clear and concise conversations involving trust and positive relationships*" were developed. Engaging in the ongoing coaching opportunities was described by participants as '*very self-reflective*' and "*key to growth as a leader*". Participants noted they could have conversations that were "*wide-open and weren't judgemental at all*".

## Section 5: Discussions and Conclusions

### Discussion of Findings

Quantitative (survey) analysis showed participants' perceptions of growth in leadership competencies demonstrated either growth or no change or no decrease in meeting each of the five leadership competencies during the study. Possible reasons for no change or no decrease could be the fact that in year two the participants selected another one of the five competencies to focus on. While year two took place in the pandemic, it is interesting that there was still growth, no change or no decrease. A possible explanation for this is that the professional learning series continued online and peer coaching relationships took place virtually even if participants were not able to visit each other's schools. While the professional learning was disrupted it did not end and this may explain the quantitative results. There was statistically significant growth in 6 of the fourteen items related to the 5 competencies: *Modelling Commitment to Professional Learning, Embodying Visionary Leadership, Leading a Learning Community, and Providing Instructional Leadership*. Qualitative (interview and focus group) analysis revealed emerging themes: (1) a key aspect of the collaborative professional learning was an intentional structure which provided time, focus and resources to support leaders addressing the LQS competencies, (2) collaborative learning was integral to the professional learning series and fostered meaningful relationships, expanded advice networks, developed teams, and cultivated coaching relationships, (3) leaders had opportunities to reflect on their leadership goals, receive feedback and show evidence of growth which fostered shared leadership and developed leadership capacity, and (4) coaching was an overarching component of professional learning where leaders were provided with specific resources and activities for coaching, and this was modelled by central office leadership. The quantitative and qualitative findings were integrated and converged on the following themes and will be discussed in this section: (1) sustained focus and practices, (2) collaborative professional learning, (3) reflection and feedback, and (4) continued learning through coaching (Figure 5).

**Figure 5**

*Emerging themes from integration of qualitative and quantitative data analysis.*

***Sustained Focus and Supporting Practices***

Effective professional learning requires substantial resources to support learning rooted in practice and school districts have a vital role in building supportive structures for leadership (Barnes et al., 2010). These resources should concentrate on policy and procedure development that is being addressed by the school districts to produce a balanced approach to leadership development (Darling-Hammond et al., 2007). Participants from this study were engaged in collaborative professional learning where a supportive structure was provided by the school district that included scheduled time, focus on LQS competencies and resources to support reflection, feedback, and growth. The school district created a sustained focus on leadership development with continuous opportunities for professional learning which is noted in the literature as being valuable (Davis et al., 2005; Goldring et al., 2012).

While leadership development and programs are linked to certification requirements (McCarthy, 2015), opportunities for sustained learning are essential (Goldring et al., 2012; Grissom & Harrington, 2010; Mendels & Mitgang, 2013) and can lead to enhanced impacts on teaching and student learning (Davis et al., 2005; Knapp et al., 2010). Participants had previously obtained their LQS certification requirements, however, being part of the collaborative professional learning contributed to building leadership capacity and fostered a

centralized focus on the LQS competencies. Limited studies examine sustained opportunities for professional learning leading to leadership development (Barnes et al., 2010; Davis et al., 2005; Grissom and Harrington, 2010). Participants of this study shared how this sustained professional learning opportunity created possibilities for growth in their leadership development.

### ***Collaborative Professional Learning***

Professional learning and development should be aimed at both the individual and collective within an organization to promote a culture of collaborative professionalism (Fullan & Hargreaves, 2016). The school district selected collaborative learning as an approach to professional learning and this was evidenced in the collaborative response model used in school and the focus on collaborative learning in this study. Fullan and Hargreaves (2016) suggest system success as a “culture of daily communications, engaging education, shared trust and development, and continuous improvement feedback” (p. 8). Collaborative learning was important to the professional learning of participants as they shared that this approach contributed to developing meaningful relationships, advice networks, teamwork, and coaching relationships.

Harris (2011) recommends that professional learning communities connect teachers within and between schools, provide supportive district leadership, and focus on student learning. Participants spoke of how the professional learning fostered collaboration between participants and schools. District leadership was engaged in this professional learning and these actions led to trust being built across the school district as well as a more unified focus on student learning. Professional learning communities are known to build capacity and provide an infrastructure for systemic change (Harris, 2011).

### ***Reflection and Feedback***

The school district in this study focused on strengthening school leadership and supporting their leaders, as well as providing ways to assess growth and provide feedback (Mendels & Mitgang, 2013). Participants described this approach as very supportive and

beneficial to building leadership capacity. During the professional learning, participants selected leadership goals based on a focus LQS competency and integrated them into their growth plan, where they reflected on these goals, received feedback, and tracked evidence of their growth.

Since school leaders have varying experiences, skills, and learning styles, research indicates traditional structures for assessing growth should be shifted to formative assessment approaches that emphasize individual areas of growth (Guskey, 2012; Ladegard & Gjerde, 2014; Solansky, 2010). Day and Dragoni (2015) share the importance of seeing growth in leadership capabilities through a developmental-based outcome rather than performance-based outcomes and assessment. In this study, the professional growth plan was central to how the school district assessed growth which created opportunities for participants to focus on their identified goals and reflect on individual growth. Rogers, Hauserman, and Skytt (2016) note the importance of school leaders being able to clarify goals, form new understandings, self-reflect, refine processes, identify success factors, and show evidence of growth.

Participants also shared how the professional learning included experiential learning opportunities such as coaching, site visits, and small group discussions which contributed to accountability. Research indicates professional learning designs should be experiential and emphasis active over passive approaches (Bransford et al., 2000; Forgarty & Pete, 2009) which can lead to fostering accountability (Bransford et al., 2000,; Fogarty & Pete, 2009; Merriam, 1987; Ng, 2013).

In this study, the participants engaged in sustained professional learning and experiential opportunities. These participants shared the positive impact that these sustained experiences had on their leadership capacity and subsequent impacts in their schools. Research shows that engaging in leadership development over-time through professional learning can provide support in maximizing the impact on teaching and student learning (Davis et al., 2005; Knapp et al., 2010). Participants expressed that the approach grew their leadership capacity and fostered distributive leadership in their schools. Fink (2011)

suggests building leadership capacity that fosters sustainable leadership and promotes distributive leadership.

### ***Continued Learning through Coaching***

Coaching is a valuable investment in professional learning that can support leaders (Killion & Hirsh, 2013). The reciprocal relationship of coaching provides opportunity for one-on-one inquiries, problem solving, and new skill development (Duncan & Stock, 2010; Goldring et al., 2012) and is often associated with professional development (Goldring et al., 2012). Coaching focuses on improving performance related to a problem of practice; it is a collaborative partnership between colleagues. Coaching also supports reflection and adult learning theory. Adult learners need reflective and experiential opportunities to assist them in making connections between theory and practice (Merriam, 1987). In this study, participants shared how coaching provided both experiential and reflective opportunities that helped them make meaningful and relevant connections to their LQS competency focus, professional growth plan, and student learning.

Participants shared how the coaching component of professional learning was supported by the school district and continued the focus on LQS competencies. Campbell et al. (2016), conveys how supportive and engaged leadership is integral to effective professional learning. The school district played a role in sustaining coaching and central office participation and modelling was described by participants as an essential part of the coaching process in this study. Coaching contributes to the growth and continual learning of an individual, that can benefit all levels of the school district (Robinson et al., 2009). Participants spoke of how coaches provided both feedback and modeling of leadership practices (Knapp et al., 2010) that supported their professional learning and implementation of the LQS competencies. The coaching model emphasized inquiry learning and incorporated active listening and questions while ensuring alignment with both district and provincial goals.

## Research Limitations

**Limited scope of research to one rural school division.** A limitation of this study was that it only involved one rural school district in the province. In Alberta, there are several different school districts with leaders who are also required to meet the LQS requirements, and it would be interesting to see how other districts are supporting leaders in developing in these competencies.

**Limited to one LQS competency focus per year.** Another limitation to this study was that the professional learning required participants to select one LQS competency focus each year. An area of additional research would be to understand how the focus on one of the LQS competencies influences growth in the other competencies or if focusing on a particular LQS competency strengthens leadership development in the others.

## Potential Scholarly and Educational System Benefits

While LQS certification is necessary for leaders to meet government standards or requirements, a focus on LQS competencies can be beneficial to the educational system by helping leaders develop knowledge, understanding and familiarity and can support leadership development as they use it to reflect on their growth. The focus on LQS competencies can serve to support developmental-based outcomes for in-service professional learning and leadership development. Leaders need opportunities to engage in ongoing professional learning to support their leadership development in ways that focus more on formative rather than summative measures. Collaborative leadership professional learning series help create a space that supports building trusting relationships, collaborative inquiry, and feedback on growth in relation to leadership competencies. Peer coaching models can further support individuals to engage in ongoing dialogue with their peers around their growth and development which may build collective leadership capacity.

System leadership modeling and engaging in the professional learning and offering feedback is also important. At the system level this includes modeling effective professional learning practices and demonstrates how leadership can be modelled at all levels of the organization. Furthermore, the school system is stronger and leadership capacity is built

when these professional learning practices are taken into schools. This study offers scholarly benefits including adding to the body of research on professional learning that emphasizes collaborative learning approaches and peer coaching. Additionally, designs for leadership professional learning identified in this study offer further insights into creating sustained opportunities for in-service leadership development. The knowledge mobilization plan and knowledge mobilization artifacts developed to share these scholarly and educational benefits are included in Appendix J and Appendix K.

### **Implications for Practice**

Reflecting on the findings from this study, there are several implications for practice (Figure 6). First, system level support is needed for sustained leadership professional learning. Second, collaborative approaches to professional learning including opportunities for peer coaching are needed. Third, this study points to the value of school leaders engaging in action-based research in their districts and in their schools with potential to impact their contexts. Finally, school leaders need expanded networks or informal opportunities to connect with each other outside of formal professional learning.

### **Figure 6**

*Implications for practice*



### **Recommendations for Future Research**

These are the recommendations both partner organizations suggest for future research:

- Examine additional school districts and explore these models of sustained professional learning for leadership development

- Explore leadership professional learning networks and communities of practice that are building leadership capacity outside of school districts.
- Conduct further research to see if the types of collaborative professional learning impact individuals with different levels of experience
- Explore direct impacts of professional learning for leadership on teaching practice and impacts on student learning and achievement
- Examine how school leaders are modelling professional learning practices in their schools
- Explore action-based research school leaders are doing in their schools following their own professional learning
- Examine how school leaders establish informal professional learning networks
- Investigate how the LQS competencies relate to each other and how growth in these competencies links to impacts on teaching and learning

## **Conclusion**

Partners from Battle River School Division joined faculty from Werklund School of Education and formed a research-practice partnership to address Alberta's new leadership quality standard through high quality collaborative professional learning. The purpose of this study was to explore the impact of a collaborative professional learning series on leadership development and to find out how coaching was impacting leaders in achieving their goals and developing leadership capacity. An action-based research approach using quantitative (pre and post surveys) and qualitative data (interviews and focus groups) was analyzed over two years. Findings from the surveys which were administered at the beginning and end of each year of the study showed participants' perceptions of growth in LQS competencies demonstrated growth in four of the competencies: (1) modelling commitment to professional learning, (2) embodying visionary leadership, (3) leading a learning community, and (4) providing instructional leadership. In the fifth competency, developing leadership capacity, the related items showed no change, or no decrease. One of the possible for no change or

no decrease is data drift because participants changed their focus after year one and during COVID-19, participants responded to new challenges including changed roles and schools. Findings from the interviews and focus group conducted at the end of each year of the study revealed these themes: (1) a key aspect of the collaborative professional learning was an intentional structure which provided time, focus and resources to support leaders addressing the LQS competencies, (2) collaborative learning was integral to the professional learning series and fostered meaningful relationships, expanded networks, and cultivated coaching relationships, (3) leaders had opportunities to reflect on their leadership goals, receive feedback and show evidence of growth which fostered shared leadership and developed leadership capacity, and (4) coaching was an overarching component of professional learning where leaders were provided with specific resources and activities for coaching, and this was modelled by central office leadership.

Four themes emerged following the integration of the quantitative and qualitative findings. First, school leaders shared how the professional learning provided a sustained focus and supportive practices such as scheduled time and resources (e.g., professional growth plans, coaching model) to aid in their leadership development and building capacity in LQS competencies. Second, the collaborative approaches to professional learning were viewed as positive by the school leaders and created opportunities for them to engage in dialogue and inquiry into their leadership practices as well as build relationships and network with other school leaders in different roles including those in central office leadership. Third, the collaborative professional learning created ongoing opportunities for reflection and feedback. School leaders selected a focus LQS competency, identified goals, reflected on their growth, and used their professional growth plans to document their development in relation to this. Professional growth plans served as a tool to support feedback from peers and central office leadership. Fourth, coaching between peers and central office leadership offered another layer of feedback and opportunity for experiential learning including site visits to each other's schools. A coaching protocol was modeled by district leadership and was used to help facilitate coaching conversations; professional growth plans supported this.

Overall, the findings from this study show that collaborative professional learning and coaching seemed to be building leadership capacity in at least four of the five competencies: (1) modelling commitment to professional learning, (2) embodying visionary leadership, (3) leading a learning community, and (4) providing instructional leadership. As a result of this study, both partners argue sustained opportunities for leadership professional learning should be supported and that these learning experiences should emphasize collaborative learning approaches as well as coaching. Both partners also argue that system leadership be actively engaged in this professional learning to encourage and model how leaders at all levels can learn together to build collective leadership capacity. School leaders need professional learning networks and communities of practice to continue to build their leadership capacity.

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## **Appendices**

## Appendix A: Research Project Timeline

This research study began in the Fall of 2018 and was to be completed in August 2020.

This timeline has been adjusted due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The table below outlines the updated timeline with the key dates and study milestones.

<b>Research Design Elements – May through to 2018</b>		<b>Progress</b>
<b>May – July 2018</b>	· Draft Research Plan	Complete
	· Literature review	Complete
	· Development of outline for professional learning sessions	Complete
	· Development of consent form and pre-study survey	Complete
	· Completion of ethics approval process	Complete
	· University of Calgary	Complete
	· Battle River School Board	
	· Knowledge Mobilization – CASS Article, Spring 2019	Complete
	· Knowledge Mobilization – Ulead Conference May 12-14 <sup>th</sup> 2019	Complete
	· Knowledge Mobilization – IDEAS Conference, July 2019	
<b>Implement, Reflect, Evaluate, and Refine Research Study – August 2018 through August 2019</b>		
<b>Aug 2018</b>	· Present research proposal to BRSD leadership	Complete

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finalize materials for professional learning sessions</li> </ul>	Complete
<b>Sept 2018 – May 2019</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Division Leadership Academy afternoon sessions (Sept 19, Oct 17, Nov 21, Dec 19, Jan 16, Feb 26, Mar 20, Apr 17, May 28)</li> </ul>	Complete
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data collection (artefacts, individual and/or focus group interviews, post-survey)</li> </ul>	Complete
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data analysis</li> <li>Collaboration and sharing data</li> </ul>	Complete
<b>May 2019 – Aug 2019</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interim Report (<i>due June 3, 2019</i>)</li> <li>Iterative process and planning for year 2 or professional learning study</li> </ul>	Complete
<b>Implement, Reflect, Evaluate, and Refine Research Study – September 2020 through April 2021</b>		
<b>Sept 2019 – July 2021</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Division Leadership Academy sessions (dates to be determined by Summer 2019)</li> <li>Distribute and collect consent forms</li> </ul>	Complete
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data Collection (Artefacts, individual and/or focus group interviews, post-survey)</li> </ul>	Complete
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data Analysis</li> <li>Collaboration and sharing of data</li> </ul>	In progress
<b>Final Analysis, Report Writing, and Knowledge Mobilization – May 2020 through June 2022</b>		

<b>May - June 2022</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Final Analysis of data (May to August 2021)</li> </ul>	Complete
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Final Analysis of Data (July to August 2021)</li> </ul>	Complete
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Synthesis and Final Report (October 15, 2021)</li> </ul>	In progress
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Knowledge Mobilization (May 2019 – June 2022)</li> </ul>	In progress (see Appendix C)

**Appendix B: Final Budget**

Cost	Description	Actual Spent	Budget Request	WSE In-Kind Support	BRSD In-Kind Support	WSE Matching Support	BRSD Matching Support
Personnel	BRSD planning time; personal/administrative services (staff cost) (in-kind)				\$ 100,000		
	Researchers: WSE estimated amount for researchers' time commitment (e.g., research design, data analysis, ethics process, report writing) (in-kind)			\$ 149,260			
	Estimated amount of WSE personnel/administrative services (in-kind)			\$5,000			
	Graduate Research Assistant: The amount is requested for supporting one or two graduate students to assist in the project, with an hourly rate of approximately \$32.53 (including benefits).	\$25,029	\$ 30,100				
	Substitute Cost (20 PL Sessions for year 1 & year 2) and cash equivalent of costs (in-kind)					\$ 126,000	
	Substitute release time for participation in the research & professional learning activities	\$ 5,400	\$ 5,400				
	Supplies, materials, & Space	WSE support for materials, space (online and meeting spaces) and other			\$ 3,500		\$ 500

	supplies, software (in-kind) (matching)						
PL Sessions	Facility Rental Food and Mileage Cost (20 PL Sessions for year 1 & 2) expertise and cash equivalent of costs (in-kind; matching)				\$ 200,000		\$1,000
Research Supplies	Estimated amount for research supplies (digital recording, storage, copying consent forms)		\$ 500				
Travel to Project Sites & Knowledge Mobilization	Mileage/travel expenses to project site and/or to meet with research team members. Alberta-based knowledge mobilization.	\$1841.68	\$7,000				
Technical Services	Estimated amount for University of Calgary technical and research services (in-kind)			\$ 5,000			
Transcription Service	Transcription of individual and focus group interview audio recordings (\$1-2/min).	\$1156.00	\$7,000				
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$ 33,427</b>	<b>\$ 50,000</b>				

## Appendix C: Coaching Trio's Protocol

Source: unknown; used by previous BRSD Learning Director



### Coaching Trios – The Gift of Feedback

15 min per Team member



- 1) **Presenter – Professional Learning Plan Sharing (4 minutes)**  
 (Other team members are simply listening, making meaning, without asking questions)
  - a. Share one of your goals and the strategies you have to address this goal.
  
- 2) **Listening Colleagues Expand Beyond Non-Verbal Feedback (notice/wonder) (5 minutes)**
  - a. Provide feedback for support and stretching thinking. What do you notice?
 


    - \_\_\_\_\_ sounds intriguing/interesting/challenging...
    - \_\_\_\_\_ feels refreshing/reasonable/unexpected....
    - \_\_\_\_\_ takes into account your role/colleagues/ perspective of ...
  - b. **1-2 questions for stretching –**
    - We wonder what would happen if...?
    - Have you considered....?
    - How could....?
  
- 3) **Presenter Reflects and Responds**
  - a. **1-3 minutes:**
    - Your feedback reminds me that...
    - Your feedback is helping me see...
    - The questions that are surfacing for me are....
    - I'm now thinking/wondering...
    - Something that is clearer or more resolved for me ....



## Appendix D: Professional Growth Plan for LQS adapted from CASS Practice Profiles



## Every Student, Every Day, A Success

Leadership Quality Standard:

# PROFESSIONAL GROWTH PLAN

Name:

The *Leadership Quality Standard* applies to all leaders employed in a school authority. All leaders are expected to meet the *Leadership Quality Standard* throughout their careers. Principals, as defined under the School Act, are accountable for the demonstration of all the competencies. Other leaders are responsible for the demonstration of competencies directly related to their assigned role. Each competency includes indicators designed to provide illustrative examples of competent leadership practice. Indicators are actions that are likely to lead to the achievement of the competency and which, together with the competency, are measurable and observable.

### The Leadership Quality Standard:

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

Alberta Education 2018

**MODELING COMMITMENT TO PROFESSIONAL LEARNING**  
**LEADING A LEARNING COMMUNITY**

**EMBODYING VISIONARY LEADERSHIP**  
**PROVIDING INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP**

**DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP CAPACITY**

Using this tool:

### Evidence in Practice

- Review the indicators for your focus competency.
- Identify those practices you demonstrate in the "Evidence in Practice" column. (Are the practices observable? Are they measurable?)
- If you currently demonstrate a practice that is not described in the Alberta Education indicators, consider adding it to the indicator column.
- Additional indicators that represent your context based on examples of practice shared in the "Evidence in Practice" column may also be added.

### Areas for Growth

- Reflect on your practice and use the LQS on your own indicators to assist you in identifying specific areas for growth.
- Areas for growth should be able to be supported by observations and measures of practice.
- You may choose to add additional indicators based on Alberta stories of practice and/or emerging research that identify areas in which you would like to grow.
- The development of a professional learning and implementation plan for the areas of growth you identified will be supported through our work in the Division Leadership Academy

Battle River School Division adapted the CASS Practice Profile tool as a Professional Growth Plan for LQS and TQS, based on content from Alberta Education.

This [Practice Profile](#) tool was developed by CASS and is based on the [Professional Practice Standard](#) content from Alberta Education. It is freely provided in support of improved teaching and learning under the following Creative Commons license.



MODELING COMMITMENT TO PROFESSIONAL LEARNING 2020 -2021	
A leader engages in career-long professional learning and on-going critical reflection to identify opportunities for improving leadership, teaching, and learning.	
Indicators	Evidence in Practice
<p>Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Engaging with others such as teachers, principals and other leaders to build personal and collective professional capacity and expertise;</li> <li>(b) Actively seeking our feedback and information from a variety of sources to enhance leadership practice;</li> <li>(c) Seeking, critically reviewing and applying educational research to inform effective practice;</li> <li>(d) Engaging members of the school community to build a shared understanding of current trends and priorities in the education system.</li> <li>(e) Ongoing completion of Masters' program. - <b>complete</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>staff conversations</b> - ongoing feedback and reflective practice - <b>daily google meets with staff during Covid - allowed for sharing of issues and ideas</b></li> <li>● using/understanding the data to ensure student success - <b>using data to drive student profiling</b></li> <li>● use classroom observations to move school goals forward - vocabulary building - ongoing - cross-curricular - higher level questioning discussion and observation</li> <li>● <b>role modelling</b> personal learning - <b>learning about online education by connecting with teachers in Google Classroom and SeeSaw</b></li> <li>● Teachers engaging in differentiation - making the rubric fit the outcome - <b>ongoing discussion on how to help students who struggle -</b></li> <li>● Divisions collaborate with each other</li> <li>● Make IPPs more meaningful and active engagement on an ongoing basis - <b>encourage frequent interaction with and updating of IPP</b></li> <li>● PGP conversations directly connected with TQS</li> <li>● Personal reflection on my leadership practice and how it relates to the LQS</li> <li>● Successful completion of Leadership Quality Standard certification - <b>complete</b></li> </ul>
	Areas for Growth
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Further develop the skills, knowledge and abilities to create a school climate that is responsive to and supportive of creating a school</li> </ul>

	<p>culture where best practice is encouraged and sought after.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing work with the new quality standards.</li> <li>• Masters courses - successful completion X</li> <li>• Create more effective methods of feedback for staff when supervising</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Goal One:</b></p> <p><b>Model ongoing professional growth through personal practice.</b></p>	
<p><b>Strategies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Discuss work from Masters as it applies to our school setting - (differentiation - led PD on best practice taken from my spring course last year)</li> <li>● First Nation Metis Inuit - <b>collegial conversations and PD opportunities (staff meetings)</b></li> <li>● CRM staff development</li> <li>● Personal sharing of PGP with staff</li> <li>● <b>talk about being a learner</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Resources:</b></p> <p>Carol Ann Tomlinson - Differentiated Instruction in the Classroom</p> <p>Truth and Reconciliation Document - Government of Canada</p> <p>Jigsaw Learning</p> <p>Division Supports</p> <p>TQS/LQS</p> <p>ATA - documents re: supervision and evaluation</p>
<p><b>Evidence: (through staff growth in identified school focus areas)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Differentiation becomes common language/best practice</li> <li>● Observe teachers using different strategies to teach the same concept</li> <li>● First Nations, Metis Inuit teaching is taking place in every classroom</li> <li>● Authentic conversations with staff regarding red flag students - see intentional teaching response to the needs of these students</li> <li>● Initiate development of pyramid of intervention - <b>completed fluid document</b></li> <li>● Observing strong connections between outcomes and assessment - as identified as a goal</li> </ul> <p><b>Make available resources which focus on school direction.</b></p> <p><b>Keep the work going - be cautious in introducing new until staff have embraced past goals</b></p> <p><b>Build a RHS Pyramid of Intervention - staff collaboration - created a document for RHS which highlights the intervention strategies being used in our school</b></p>	
<p><b>Notes:</b></p> <p><b>Encourage staff to recognize that growth is ongoing and we should never rely on the way things used to be.</b></p>	

<p><b>Goal Two:</b></p> <p><b>Build on my personal understanding of the TQS and LQS documents.</b></p>	
<p><b>Strategies:</b></p> <p>Work on Teacher evaluations using the new TQS                  Visit classrooms and offer teacher's feedback based on the new TQS                  Build staff self-efficacy                  Opportunity to evaluate probationary teacher</p>	<p><b>Resources:</b></p> <p><b>TQS document - Alberta Education</b>  <b>The Principal 50 - Baruti Kafele</b>  <b>Professional Capital - Hargreaves and Fullan</b>  <b>Never Underestimate your teachers - Robyn Jackson</b>  <b>LQS - document - Alberta Education</b>  <b>Supervision and Evaluation documents - Alberta Education</b></p>
<p><b>Evidence:</b></p> <p><b>Through collegial conversations teachers are able to articulate their growth.</b>  <b>Meaningful feedback to teachers after classroom observations.</b>  <b>Staff seek out opportunities to observe each other or invite me into the classroom to observe</b>  <b>Collaborative opportunities</b>  <b>Meaningful evaluative opportunity with probationary teacher allows for authentic discussion with new teacher and allows for opportunity to encourage growth and learning</b></p>	
<p><b>Notes:</b></p> <p>Maintain a constant revisiting of TQS and LQS to ensure personal growth is maintained in areas identified as essential for growth.</p>	



## Appendix E: Session Format Example for Professional learning series

This was adapted from CASS 2021 professional learning modules)



### Every Student, Every Day, A Success

Division Leadership Academy (DLA) 2018-19

## Session Two

MODELING COMMITMENT TO PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

EMBODYING VISIONARY LEADERSHIP

LEADING A LEARNING COMMUNITY

**Our WHY:** Leadership capacity in division and school-based leaders will be developed through a focused collaborative professional learning model. In turn their leadership capacity will enable them to ensure high levels of success for staff and students.

#### The Plan:

- 1- Welcome/Your Team
- 2- Foundational Understandings – The Learning Journey Continues!
  - a. Review from last session
    - i. Quality Professional Learning
    - ii. Collaboration
  - b. Coaching
  - c. Norms
  - d. Professional Growth Planning
- 3- Next Session - Homework

### 1. Welcome/Your Knowledge Building Team

#### Knowledge Building Teams/Relationships

##### Activity: Team Name and Logo

- ⇒ This will be your knowledge building team for the year. How would you like others to see you as a team? What will be your team name?

##### Activity: Getting to Know Each Other

- ⇒ Have each member of your team answer each question. Record their answer with their name beside it.

### 2. Foundational Understandings

#### A - Review

This tool has been adapted from the CASS Support for Implementation Professional Practice Standard Module Participant Guide 2018

- i. Quality Professional Learning
- ii. Collaboration

## B- Coaching

*"Increasingly, people are finding that one of the most powerful ways to improve is to partner with a coach. As Harvard researcher Atul Gawande has written, Coaching done well may be the most effective intervention designed for human performance." (Knight, 2017)*

*"The purpose of coaching is to foster improvement...if done well, coaching can be incredibly important since improvement stands at the heart of so much that matters in life. When we choose to learn and get better, on our own or with a coach, we open ourselves to a better life of healthier relationships, greater success, deeper feelings of competence, and more vitality and growth....When we grow, improve and learn, when we strive to become a better version of ourselves we tap into something deep in ourselves that craves that kind of growth." (Knight, 2017)*

### Research Excerpt:

Whilst it takes many different forms, coaching is principally a joint enterprise in which one person supports another to develop their understanding and practice in an area defined by their own needs and interests. ... Coaching often involves integrating new or alternative approaches into the professional's existing repertoire of skills and strategies. (Creasy & Paterson 2005)

Coaching is a process of professional learning that can support participants to improve their practice. Coaching is for anyone who is willing to undertake a process of growth/change. The coach creates awareness and responsibility through questioning, modelling and conversation. The coachee is encouraged to identify their development needs, uncover appropriate solutions and take action with support from the coach. (AISTL, 2012)

Coaching is... a professional learning strategy using questioning and conversation to support professional growth.

Coaching may, at times, cross into the following:

#### Mentoring

- generally a relationship between a more experienced mentor and less experienced mentee
- about learning from an expert and gaining knowledge from his or her experience
- often occurs during transition to a new career stage or role.

#### Teaching by instruction

- about teaching particular skills
- typically a one-way transfer of knowledge but can be two-way

#### Counselling

- focuses on unravelling particular problems and difficulties
- is often sought in times of change or crisis. (Hay Group, 2013)

### Activity: Reflecting

Have you had a positive coaching experience? Describe the experience. What made it so successful? Describe your coach? What made them a good/great coach? Share your reflections with your knowledge building group.

### Activity: Video

This tool has been adapted from the CASS Support for Implementation Professional Practice Standard Module Participant Guide 2018



**Activity: Establishing Team Norms**

- Step One: Individual Identification of Norms
- Step Two: Partner/Trio Consolidation
- Step Three: Small Group Consolidation
- Step Four: Development of Large Group Norms



Shan will provide more detailed directions during this activity

**D – Professional Learning Plans**

“Advocates of professional learning for leaders are not arguing that leadership is of poor quality and must be fixed. Their advocacy for professional development for leaders reflects the recognition that leading is so hard that it is never perfect; no matter how good a worksite/school/division is, it can always be improved.” Paraphrased from Danielson, *Talk About Teaching* (2009).

**Research Excerpt:**

In an Alberta study of wide scale mandatory implementation of professional growth plans (PGPs) in Canadian school systems, as an approach to fostering continuous professional learning, reported benefits included:

- greater commitment to learning
- increased focus on purposes for their own development
- increased collegiality
- a sense of self-affirmation. (Fenwick, 2003)

In a separate study the researcher concluded “an individualized approach to professional development utilizing professional plans holds great promise for promoting professional growth and improved practices.” Results of this study found that individual professional growth plans:

- allow participants to have ownership of their own professional learning
- promote self-reflection and evaluation
- endorse the determination of personal goals
- participation in professional learning which is personally meaningful and relevant to daily work
- facilitate active participation in professional learning
- allows for choice and acknowledges differing needs of professionals. (Eadie-Gyori, 1999)

Professional growth plans as an approach to professional learning allows for diversity in meeting the learning needs of the participant.

This tool has been adapted from the CASS Support for Implementation Professional Practice Standard Module Participant Guide 2018

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UY75MQte4RU>

What were the 5 stages of this coaching process? What stage is the most important? Do you feel that anything was missed out in this short depiction of coaching? Share your thoughts with your knowledge building group.

### C – Norms

“Collaboration is not a natural process for teachers collectively. In the book *Failure is not an Option* (2004), Alan Blankstein elaborates on this point: *Collaboration is not natural or common in the traditional school environment. For generations, teachers characteristically closed the classroom door behind them and acted as independent monarchs of their own domains, expecting neither oversight nor support from colleagues* (p. 137).

When planning to establish collaborative practices for educators, whether in grade level, departmental, or any other team configuration, including professional Learning collaboration, establishing team norms are an important but sometimes overlooked process. However, these team norms are crucial, particularly for staff teams just venturing into the collaborative waters.” Kurtis Hewsen, Jigsaw Learning, [jigsawlearning.ca](http://jigsawlearning.ca)

#### Research Excerpt:

Assigning professional learning members to a team is a start, but in order to guarantee meaningful, sustained conversations that increase each ones' learning, it is critical to spend time establishing norms. Educators wouldn't dream of assigning students to work in groups without establishing guidelines for their behaviour and a structure for their conversations, therefore it is important that we do this for our own collaborative learning teams.

According to the research of Patrick Lencioni in his book *Overcoming the Five Dysfunctions of a Team: A Leadership Fable*, there are five areas where collaborative learning teams fall apart:

- When teams have an absence of trust
- When teams fear of conflict
- When teams lack commitment to one another
- When teams avoid accountability
- When teams don't maintain a focus on results

In contrast, high performing learning teams are characterized by:

- An ability to take perspectives and understand others' point of view
- Confront issues such as other team members' violating commitments
- Communicate respectfully
- Solicit feedback
- Resolve issues proactively
- Remain positive

Norms govern the behaviours of the members of a learning team. They set expectations for the group, encourage risk taking and participation, and establish accountability. Norms represent promises made between team members, ensure commitment and trust, protect team members, and strengthen the learning team experience for every member. Ultimately, norms help learning teams to achieve their shared goals and are an essential step of the learning team process. (nscd, 1999)

This tool has been adapted from the CASS Support for Implementation Professional Practice Standard Module Participant Guide 2018



**Activity: Developing Your Professional Learning Plan**

We will walk through this activity as a group.

**DLA Homework**

Journal Reflect:

1. Something I learned today?
2. Something I have a question about?

Professional Growth Plan;

- Be prepared to share it with members of your group next DLA.



This tool has been adapted from the CASS Support for Implementation Professional Practice Standard Module Participant Guide 2018

## Appendix F: Pre and Post Survey Instrument

### Pre-Survey Instrument




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#### Survey Questionnaire (start of the study)

##### *Evaluating the Effectiveness of a High-Quality Collaborative Professional Learning Model in Addressing Alberta's Leadership Quality Standard*

Below is a list of survey questions participants will be when filling out the survey questionnaire. If you provided consent to be part of the research "*Evaluating the Effectiveness of a High-Quality Collaborative Professional Learning Model in Addressing Alberta's Leadership Quality Standard*" then your responses will be used to inform the study. You will not be identified in any of the research reports, as data will be reported as aggregate findings using a pseudonym.

#### Division Leadership Academy Pre-Survey

##### MODELING COMMITMENT TO PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

A leader engages in career-long professional learning and ongoing critical reflection to identify opportunities for improving leadership, teaching and learning.

1. I engage with others such as teachers, principals and other leaders to build personal and collective professional capacities and expertise.

Beginning	Developing	Achieving	Excelling
-----------	------------	-----------	-----------

2. I actively seek out feedback and information from a variety of sources to enhance leadership practice.

Beginning	Developing	Achieving	Excelling
-----------	------------	-----------	-----------

3. I seek, critically review and apply educational research to inform effective practice.

Beginning	Developing	Achieving	Excelling
-----------	------------	-----------	-----------

##### EMBODYING VISIONARY LEADERSHIP

A leader collaborates with the school community to create and implement a shared vision for student success, engagement, learning and well-being.

4. I promote innovation, enabling positive change, and foster commitment to continuous improvement.

Beginning	Developing	Achieving	Excelling
-----------	------------	-----------	-----------

5. I access, share and use a range of data to determine progress towards achieving goals.

Beginning	Developing	Achieving	Excelling
-----------	------------	-----------	-----------

**LEADING A LEARNING COMMUNITY**

A leader nurtures and sustains a culture that supports evidence-informed teaching and learning.

6. I develop a shared responsibility for the success of all students.

Beginning	Developing	Achieving	Excelling
-----------	------------	-----------	-----------

7. I cultivate a culture of high expectations for all students and staff.

Beginning	Developing	Achieving	Excelling
-----------	------------	-----------	-----------

8. I create meaningful, collaborative learning opportunities for teachers and support staff.

Beginning	Developing	Achieving	Excelling
-----------	------------	-----------	-----------

9. I create an environment for the safe and ethical use of technology.

Beginning	Developing	Achieving	Excelling
-----------	------------	-----------	-----------

**PROVIDING INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP**

A leader ensures that every student has access to quality teaching and optimum learning experiences.

10. I build the capacity of all teachers to respond to the learning needs of all students.

Beginning	Developing	Achieving	Excelling
-----------	------------	-----------	-----------

11. I ensure that student instruction addresses learning outcomes outlined in programs of studies.

Beginning	Developing	Achieving	Excelling
-----------	------------	-----------	-----------

12. I demonstrate a strong understanding of effective pedagogy and curriculum.

Beginning	Developing	Achieving	Excelling
-----------	------------	-----------	-----------

13. I ensure that student assessment and evaluation practices are fair, appropriate, and evidence-informed.

Beginning	Developing	Achieving	Excelling
-----------	------------	-----------	-----------

14. I interpret a wide range of data to inform school practice and enable success for all students.

Beginning	Developing	Achieving	Excelling
-----------	------------	-----------	-----------

**DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP CAPACITY**

A leader provides opportunities for members of the school community to develop leadership capacity and to support others in fulfilling their educational roles.

15. I identify, monitor, and empower teachers in educational leadership roles.

Beginning                      Developing                      Achieving                      Excelling

16. I create opportunities for students to participate in leadership activities and to exercise their voice in school leadership and decision making.

Beginning                      Developing                      Achieving                      Excelling

17. I promote team building and shared leadership among members of the school community.

Beginning                      Developing                      Achieving                      Excelling

### CHOICE

Please reflect on your responses to questions 1 through 17 and select one of the dimensions of leadership below to focus on in your professional learning through the Division Leadership Academy.

\_\_\_\_\_ 1. Modeling Commitment to Professional Learning

\_\_\_\_\_ 2. Embodying Visionary Leadership

\_\_\_\_\_ 3. Leading a Learning Community

\_\_\_\_\_ 4. Providing Instructional Leadership

\_\_\_\_\_ 5. Developing Leadership Capacity

Please explain why you have chosen the specific dimension of leadership (*open-ended response*)

Please indicate 2-3 strategies you will employ in building your leadership capacity in the dimension you have chosen to focus on (*open-ended response*).

If you have any further questions or want clarification regarding this research and/or your participation, please contact:

Dr. Christy Thomas  
(403) 220-7544  
[cthoma@ucalgary.ca](mailto:cthoma@ucalgary.ca)

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[jbrandon@ucalgary.ca](mailto:jbrandon@ucalgary.ca)

**Post Survey Instrument**


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 UNIVERSITY OF  
**CALGARY**
**Survey Questionnaire (end of the study)**
*Evaluating the Effectiveness of a High-Quality Collaborative Professional Learning Model in Addressing Alberta's Leadership Quality Standard*

Below is a list of survey questions participants will be when filling out the survey questionnaire. If you provided consent to be part of the research "*Evaluating the Effectiveness of a High-Quality Collaborative Professional Learning Model in Addressing Alberta's Leadership Quality Standard*" then your responses will be used to inform the study. You will not be identified in any of the research reports, as data will be reported as aggregate findings using a pseudonym.

**Division Leadership Academy Post-Survey****MODELING COMMITMENT TO PROFESSIONAL LEARNING**

A leader engages in career-long professional learning and ongoing critical reflection to identify opportunities for improving leadership, teaching and learning.

1. I engage with others such as teachers, principals and other leaders to build personal and collective professional capacities and expertise.

Beginning	Developing	Achieving	Excelling
-----------	------------	-----------	-----------

2. I actively seek out feedback and information from a variety of sources to enhance leadership practice.

Beginning	Developing	Achieving	Excelling
-----------	------------	-----------	-----------

3. I seek, critically review and apply educational research to inform effective practice.

Beginning	Developing	Achieving	Excelling
-----------	------------	-----------	-----------

**EMBODYING VISIONARY LEADERSHIP**

A leader collaborates with the school community to create and implement a shared vision for student success, engagement, learning and well-being.

4. I promote innovation, enabling positive change, and foster commitment to continuous improvement.

Beginning	Developing	Achieving	Excelling
-----------	------------	-----------	-----------

5. I access, share and use a range of data to determine progress towards achieving goals.

Beginning	Developing	Achieving	Excelling
-----------	------------	-----------	-----------

**LEADING A LEARNING COMMUNITY**

A leader nurtures and sustains a culture that supports evidence-informed teaching and learning.

6. I develop a shared responsibility for the success of all students.

Beginning	Developing	Achieving	Excelling
-----------	------------	-----------	-----------

7. I cultivate a culture of high expectations for all students and staff.

Beginning	Developing	Achieving	Excelling
-----------	------------	-----------	-----------

8. I create meaningful, collaborative learning opportunities for teachers and support staff.

Beginning	Developing	Achieving	Excelling
-----------	------------	-----------	-----------

9. I create an environment for the safe and ethical use of technology.

Beginning	Developing	Achieving	Excelling
-----------	------------	-----------	-----------

**PROVIDING INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP**

A leader ensures that every student has access to quality teaching and optimum learning experiences.

10. I build the capacity of all teachers to respond to the learning needs of all students.

Beginning	Developing	Achieving	Excelling
-----------	------------	-----------	-----------

11. I ensure that student instruction addresses learning outcomes outlined in programs of studies.

Beginning	Developing	Achieving	Excelling
-----------	------------	-----------	-----------

12. I demonstrate a strong understanding of effective pedagogy and curriculum.

Beginning	Developing	Achieving	Excelling
-----------	------------	-----------	-----------

13. I ensure that student assessment and evaluation practices are fair, appropriate, and evidence-informed.

Beginning	Developing	Achieving	Excelling
-----------	------------	-----------	-----------

14. I interpret a wide range of data to inform school practice and enable success for all students.

Beginning	Developing	Achieving	Excelling
-----------	------------	-----------	-----------

**DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP CAPACITY**

A leader provides opportunities for members of the school community to develop leadership capacity and to support others in fulfilling their educational roles.

15. I identify, monitor, and empower teachers in educational leadership roles.

Beginning                      Developing                      Achieving                      Excelling

16. I create opportunities for students to participate in leadership activities and to exercise their voice in school leadership and decision making.

Beginning                      Developing                      Achieving                      Excelling

17. I promote team building and shared leadership among members of the school community.

Beginning                      Developing                      Achieving                      Excelling

### CHOICE

I chose the following dimension of leadership to focus on this year:

\_\_\_\_\_ 1. Modeling Commitment to Professional Learning

\_\_\_\_\_ 2. Embodying Visionary Leadership

\_\_\_\_\_ 3. Leading a Learning Community

\_\_\_\_\_ 4. Providing Instructional Leadership

\_\_\_\_\_ 5. Developing Leadership Capacity

How have you built personal capacity in this dimension? (*open-ended response*)

What strategies employed during the Division Leadership Academy have impacted your growth? (*open-ended response*).

What other factors impacted your growth? (*open-ended response*)

### Other Comments:

What suggestions do you have to enhance the professional learning model for the Division Leadership Academy? (*open-ended response*)

**Appendix G: Interview Protocol****Semi-Structured Interview Questions (Conclusion of Study)**

*Evaluating the Effectiveness of a High-Quality Collaborative Professional Learning Model in Addressing Alberta's Leadership Quality Standard*

**Participant Information:** If you provided consent to be part of the research "*Evaluating the Effectiveness of a High-Quality Collaborative Professional Learning Model in Addressing Alberta's Leadership Quality Standard*" then your responses will be used to inform the study. You will not be identified in any of the research reports, as data will be reported as aggregate findings using a pseudonym.

1. In what ways have you found this professional learning opportunity to be helpful in addressing your focus area from the LQS?
2. In what ways could this professional learning opportunity be improved?
3. How has the coaching component of this professional learning supported you in your professional growth?
4. In what ways can the coaching component of this professional learning be improved?
5. How did your focus on the one dimension impact developing leadership capacity in the other dimensions? How do these interplay with each other?
6. If I walked into your building, what would I see or observe that would be different?
7. What artifacts are you using to personally build and reflect on your leadership capacity?

**Appendix H: Focus Group Protocol****Focus Group Semi-Structured Interview Questions (Conclusion of Study)**

*Evaluating the Effectiveness of a High-Quality Collaborative Professional Learning Model in Addressing Alberta's Leadership Quality Standard*

**Participant Information:** If you provided consent to be part of the research "*Evaluating the Effectiveness of a High-Quality Collaborative Professional Learning Model in Addressing Alberta's Leadership Quality Standard*" then your responses will be used to inform the study. You will not be identified in any of the research reports, as data will be reported as aggregate findings using a pseudonym.

1. In what ways has this professional learning model contributed to leadership development for you as participants? Can you give an example of this?
2. How has coaching impacted you in achieving your individual goals? Can you provide an example?
3. What has been the most beneficial part of this professional learning? Least beneficial? Why?

**Appendix I: Pre and Post Full Survey Table 3**

Table 3  
*Pre (2018) & Post (2021) Nonparametric Survey Analysis: Matched Pair (n=35)*

Item #	Statement	Ranks			Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test	
		Negative Post < Pre	Positive Post > Pre	Tie Post = Pre	z-value	p-value
<b>Modeling Commitment to Professional Learning</b>						
1	I engage with others such as teachers, principals and other leaders to build personal and collective professional capacities and expertise.	3	11	21	2.14	.033*
2	I actively seek out feedback and information from a variety of sources to enhance leadership practice.	1	7	27	2.12	.034*
<b>Embodying Visionary Leadership</b>						
4	I promote innovation that promotes positive change, and foster commitment to continuous improvement.	5	13	17	1.53	.127
5	I access, share and use a range of data to determine progress towards achieving goals.	2	8	25	1.99	.046*
<b>Leading a Learning Community</b>						
6	I develop a shared responsibility for the success of all students.	6	11	18	1.21	.225
7	I cultivate a culture of high expectations for all students and staff.	7	12	16	0.85	.394
8	I create meaningful, collaborative learning opportunities for teachers and support staff.	4	17	14	2.91	.004*
9	I create an environment for the safe and ethical use of technology.	1	9	25	2.53	.011*
<b>Providing Instructional Leadership</b>						
10	I build the capacity of all teachers to respond to the learning needs of all students.	5	10	25	1.29	.197
11	I ensure that student instruction addresses learning outcomes outlined in programs of studies.	4	11	20	1.81	.071
12	I demonstrate a strong understanding of effective pedagogy and curriculum.	2	10	23	2.39	.021*
13	I ensure that student assessment and evaluation practices are fair, appropriate and evidence informed.	2	6	27	1.41	.157
14	I interpret a wide range of data to inform school practice and enable success for all students.	7	9	13	0.69	.491
<b>Developing Leadership Capacity</b>						
15	I identify, monitor, and empower teachers in educational leadership roles.	7	15	13	1.71	.088
17	I promote team building and shared leadership among members of the school community.	7	11	17	0.94	.346

\*  $p < 0.05$

## Appendix J: Knowledge Mobilization Plan

The team has engaged in several knowledge mobilization activities (e.g., conferences, professional publication, meetings) and has plans to engage in further activities between June 2021 and June 2022. Appendix D contains the artifacts for these activities. Below is a list of past and future knowledge mobilization activities:

- ULead 2019 – The Summit of Educational Leadership, Banff, May 10-15, 2019
- Ulead 2022 – Banff, AB, April 10-12, 2022 (*Proposal submitted*)
- IDEAS conference, July 2019, 2020
- CASS Annual Learning Conference (Fall 2021; *Spring 2022, plans to submit proposal*)
- CSSE 2021, 2022
- AARE 2021 (proposal accepted)
- AERA 2019, 2020\*, 2022 (proposal submitted) (\*canceled due to the pandemic)
- BRSD board meetings
- Alberta Research Network (Spring 2018, 2021; December 17, 2021)
- Articles prepared and submitted for publication in academic journals (Fall 2021 – June 2022)
- Draft Final Report submitted to Alberta Education (August 31, 2021)
- Final Reports submitted to Alberta Education (October 15, 2021)

**Appendix K: Knowledge Mobilization Artifacts*****Articles in Professional Publications***

Jorgenson-Adam, S., Marler, R., Thomas, C., & Brandon, J. (Spring, 2019). Implementing the LQS through collaborative professional learning. *CASS Connection*, (14)3.

[https://o.b5z.net/i/u/10063916/f/CASB\\_01-19\\_FINAL.pdf](https://o.b5z.net/i/u/10063916/f/CASB_01-19_FINAL.pdf)

***Alberta Research Network Presentations***

Jorgenson-Adam, S., Marler, R., & Thomas, C. (Spring 2021). *Resilience in research: Continuing our learning journey*. Alberta Research Network, Alberta Education.

Jorgenson-Adam, S., Marler, R., & Thomas, C. (Spring 2018). *Addressing Alberta's New Leadership Quality Standard through High Quality Collaborative Professional Learning*. Alberta Research Network, Alberta Education.

***Conference Papers in Proceedings***

Thomas, C., Jorgenson-Adam, S., Brandon, J., Marler, R., Turner, J. & Friesen, S. (2020). Leading collaborative professional learning for school systems. In S. Friesen, J. Brandon, & M. Jacobsen (Eds.). *Selected Proceedings of the IDEAS Conference: Transforming Pedagogies*, pp. 51-56. Werklund School of Education, University of Calgary.

<http://hdl.handle.net/1880/111767>

***Conference Presentations Non-Peer Reviewed***

Jorgensen-Adam, S., Marler, R., Thomas, C., & Turner, J. (*proposal submitted*). *Leadership Professional Learning*. uLead Conference, April 10-12, 2022, Banff, AB.

Marler, R., Jorgensen-Adam, S., Thomas, C., & Brandon, J. (2019). Implementing the Leadership Quality Standard (LQS) Through High Quality Collaborative Professional Learning. uLead Conference, May 12-14, 2019 Banff, AB.

***Conference Presentations Peer Reviewed***

Turner, J. & Thomas, C. (submitted). Professional Learning for Leadership Development. Canadian Society for the Study of Education (CSSE), May 14-20, 2022, Virtual Conference.

Thomas, C., Turner, J. & Koehn, J. (accepted). Collaborative Professional Learning for Leadership. Australian Association for Research in Education (AARE), Nov 28 - Dec 2, 2021, Hybrid Online & RMIT City Campus, Melbourne, Australia.

Thomas, C., Turner, J. & Koehn, J. (submitted). Leadership Professional Learning. Division I – Section 5: Leadership Preparation Development, American Educational Research Association (AERA), April 22-25, 2022, San Diego, CA.

Turner, J. & Thomas, C. (2021). Developing Leadership through Collaborative Professional Learning. Canadian Society for the Study of Education (CSSE), May 29 – June 3, University of Alberta, Columbia, Edmonton, AB.

Thomas, C., Turner, J., Brandon, J., & Friesen, S. (*accepted; cancelled due to COVID-19*). Developing leadership through collaborative professional learning. Administration, Division A – Section 5, American Educational Research Association (AERA), April 17-21, 2020, San Francisco, CA.

***Research Report***

Thomas, C., Turner, J., Brandon, J., & Friesen, S. (2018). Building Leadership Capacity through High Quality Professional Learning. Report prepared for Battle River School Division. <http://hdl.handle.net/1880/107676>