

**DATE:** April 30, 2019

**TO:** Board of Trustees

**FROM:** Darrel Robertson, Superintendent of Schools

**SUBJECT:** Strategic Plan Update: Leadership Framework

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## ISSUE

The purpose of this Strategic Plan Update report is to provide the Board of Trustees with an overview of the new provincial Teacher Quality Standard (TQS) and Leadership Quality Standard (LQS) and District efforts to prepare District staff for the September 2019 implementation of these standards.

## BACKGROUND

In 2018, Edmonton Public Schools formally reaffirmed the District Strategic Plan for the 2018-2022 term. The District Strategic Plan has three priority areas with supporting goals and outcomes. The plan provides common direction and alignment between the work of the Board of Trustees, the Superintendent of Schools and District staff. The plan serves as the foundation for a District culture of evidence-based decision making, assurance and accountability.

To demonstrate the District's commitment to transparency and accountability, Strategic Plan Update reports were introduced in 2016–2017 as an extension of the Annual Education Results Report (AERR). The reports are intended to provide the Board of Trustees with detailed progress towards the goals and outcomes of our Strategic Plan.

## CURRENT SITUATION

This Strategic Plan Update report reflects the work to build capacity through a culture of diversity, collaboration and distributed leadership with an outcome that throughout their careers all staff are provided opportunities to enhance their professional capacity and leadership and is in direct response to Priority 2 Goal 3 of the 2018-2022 District Strategic Plan.

## KEY POINTS

This Strategic Plan Update report provides the Board of Trustees with an overview of work in support of the new Provincial Professional Practices Standards, TQS and LQS.

## ATTACHMENTS and APPENDICES

ATTACHMENT I Strategic Plan Update: Leadership Framework

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# Strategic Plan Update:

## Leadership Framework

April 30, 2019

## INTRODUCTION

Priority 2 Goal 3 of the 2018-2022 District Strategic Plan calls for the District to build capacity through a culture of diversity, collaboration and distributed leadership with an outcome that throughout their careers all staff are provided opportunities to enhance their professional capacity and leadership. The work of developing leaders in Edmonton Public Schools is a shared responsibility among schools, catchments and central decision units. This Strategic Plan Update provides the Board of Trustees with an overview of the new provincial Teacher Quality Standard and Leadership Quality Standard and District efforts to prepare District staff for the September 2019 implementation of these standards.

### Background to the new 2019 Teacher and Leadership Practice Standards

In 1997 Alberta Education released the Teaching Quality Standard (TQS), holding teachers across the province accountable to their profession and the Minister of Education. The District, building upon the provincial TQS, developed and implemented the Principal Quality Practice Standard (PQPS) in support of school leadership. In recent years, Alberta Education has worked with stakeholders across the province to revise and update the TQS to reflect a contemporary set of competencies for Alberta teachers. This work has also informed the development of a complementary provincial Leadership Quality Standard (LQS) and Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard (SLQS). All three standards were signed off in February 2018, holding teaching professionals in Alberta accountable through Ministerial Order. All three standards come into effect September 1, 2019. For the purpose of this report, the focus will be on the TQS and LQS, as the SLQS pertains primarily to superintendents.

### A Closer Look at the TQS and LQS

The revised TQS identifies six competency areas that teachers are expected to demonstrate in their practice; while the LQS, building upon the TQS, identifies nine competencies that principals and certificated central leaders are expected to demonstrate in their practice. The new competencies align with the previous TQS standards, with the inclusion of two new competency areas. Both the TQS and LQS contain the addition of competencies two and five, focusing on ongoing professional learning and foundational knowledge of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit respectively.

The following provides an overview of the competency areas for both standards, as well as a link to each of the standards documents, further breaking down each competency area by indicators of achievement.

The [TQS](#) is comprised of the following six areas:

1. Fostering effective relationships: A teacher builds positive and productive relationships with students, parents/guardians, peers and others in the school and local community to support student learning.
2. Engaging in career-long learning: A teacher engages in career-long professional learning and ongoing critical reflection to improve teaching and learning.
3. Demonstrating a professional body of knowledge: A teacher applies a current and comprehensive repertoire of effective planning, instruction and assessment practices to meet the learning needs of every student.
4. Establishing inclusive learning environments: A teacher establishes, promotes and sustains inclusive learning environments where diversity is embraced and every student is welcomed, cared for, respected and safe.
5. Applying foundational knowledge of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit: A teacher develops and applies foundational knowledge about First Nations, Métis, and Inuit for the benefit of all students.
6. Adhering to legal frameworks and policies: A teacher demonstrates an understanding of and adherence to the legal frameworks and policies that provide the foundations for the Alberta education system.

The [LQS](#) is comprised of the following nine areas:

1. **Fostering effective relationships:** A leader builds positive working relationships with members of the school community and local community. Trust is a critical component for leading an organization as it is the foundation for all relationships in the school and community.
2. **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. How leaders approach, engage and partner in professional learning is critical.
3. **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. Having a vision for a school has been noted as an essential skill of new and experienced leaders.
4. **Leading a learning community:** A leader nurtures and sustains a culture that supports evidence-informed teaching and learning.
5. **Supporting the application of foundational knowledge about First Nations, Métis, and Inuit:** A leader supports the school community in acquiring and applying foundational knowledge about First Nations, Métis, and Inuit for the benefit of all students.
6. **Providing instructional leadership:** A leader ensures that every student has access to quality teaching and optimum learning experiences.
7. **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.
8. **Managing school operations and resources:** A leader effectively directs operations and manages resources.
9. **Understanding and responding to the larger societal context:** A leader understands and appropriately responds to the political, social, economic, legal and cultural contexts impacting schools and the school authority.

The competencies outlined through the TQS and LQS address and enable the essential conditions within a learning environment that foster inquiry, risk-taking, collaboration and ultimately student success.

## PROVINCIAL EFFORTS TO SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TQS AND LQS

The work to prepare and support school jurisdictions across the province for the September 1, 2019, implementation of the new standards has been a collaborative effort among Alberta's education partners: Alberta Regional Professional Development Consortia, Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA), Alberta School Boards Association, Alberta School Councils' Association, Association of School Business Officials of Alberta, College of Alberta School Superintendents (CASS), faculties of education at Alberta universities and Alberta Education.

The provincial partners conducted their work supporting the implementation of the standards through a shared vision to the intended outcome, research and evidence, awareness of existing resources and consideration to teacher professional growth and time.

Ultimately, emerging from the work of the provincial education partners was the importance of system coherence as represented through the following Venn diagram (p.3). It is important to note that central to this model is the focus on enhanced student learning.



To be intentional towards achieving this systemic coherence, the provincial educational partners collaborated to:

- Develop a range of supporting resources.
- Deliver LQS train-the-trainer training.
- Organize professional training opportunities for teaching professionals across the province.

Presently, there are eight District leaders who have been trained to deliver the two-day *Leadership Certification In-Service Program* throughout the province.

## IMPLICATIONS FOR DISTRICT CERTIFICATED STAFF

The TQS and LQS are applicable for all teaching professionals in Alberta. The following is a summary of how District staff can understand the implications of these standards with respect to their individual professional circumstances:

- Teachers currently possessing an Alberta teaching certificate will not need to recertify when the revised TQS takes effect September 2019; however, going forward they will be expected to meet the requirements of the new standard in their practice.
- Current principals in the 2018-2019 school year qualify to apply for grandparented leadership certification.
- Current Assistant Principals (APs) and certificated central staff identified as school jurisdictional leaders are not required to hold leadership certification but must meet the LQS in their practice effective September 2019. Should staff in either of these leadership roles wish to acquire certification status, they may do so through completion of a two-day *Leadership Certification In-Service Program* offered in partnership with the ATA, CASS and the Association of Independent Schools & Colleges in Alberta (AISCA), which is available until December 2019. To support further growth, this program provides participants with an extensive bibliography for each competency area.
- After September 1, 2019, any certificated staff member wishing to acquire leadership certification will be required to take a formal program of study through one of the post-secondary institutions in the province.

## DISTRICT EFFORTS TO BUILD AWARENESS, CONFIDENCE AND CAPACITY RELEVANT TO THE TQS AND LQS

In anticipation of both the TQS and LQS, the District began work in 2017 in preparation to support District leaders and teachers in their transition to the new standards. The following is a summary of District efforts intended to support staff and to reflect system alignment with the new standards.

- Engagement: Human Resources (HR) solicited feedback from school and central leaders on how to best prepare and support staff for the upcoming changes.
  - Working collaboratively across central units and with principals, staff from HR used the feedback to inform the development of a TQS [video](#) and the [TQS](#) and [LQS](#) implementation guides. The guides outline the required competencies, indicators for each competency, as well as internal and external (e.g., Alberta Education, ATA) resources to support further growth.
- Communication and Information: To support District staff in their understanding of the expectations effective this fall and the options available to them, the District has been communicating all information regarding the LQS generated by the provincial implementation group, as well as all internal District information relevant to the LQS. This communication has been multi-pronged and has included a designated LQS space within Connect, Bulletin Board notices, District News items and direct emailing to staff. These messages have been timely and emergent as new information becomes available and have helped District staff in their awareness and understanding of:
  - What the LQS is.
  - How the LQS applies to them based on their current role and future aspirations.
  - What steps they need to consider in respect to LQS certification.
  - Certification training opportunities available between now and September 1, 2019.
  - How certification training will be provided after September 1, 2019.
- LQS Capacity Building and Integrating LQS into Current Leadership Professional Learning:
  - The District has hosted delivery of the two-day *Leadership Certification In-Service Program* sessions; these sessions have been attended by both District staff and teaching professionals from other Alberta jurisdictions.
  - LQS resources and content have been integrated into principal pre-DLM professional learning sessions this year.
  - First year and aspiring principals programming has been aligned to reflect the new LQS.
  - Second year principals are working from the PQPS for their confirmation; however, the new LQS has been embedded into the delivery of their professional learning program.
  - District communication regarding the LQS includes links and information to additional learning opportunities offered through both the ATA and the University of Alberta.
- Building Capacity and Confidence in Support of Competency Five: Both the TQS and LQS define expectations pertaining to foundational knowledge of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit. The District's First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Education Team, in collaboration with staff from across Central, have developed professional learning intended to support building staff capacity, confidence and knowledge in relation to competency five. This learning has been incorporated into pre-DLM professional learning sessions, First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Lead Teacher Days, aspiring and first year principal training and includes the following topics:
  - *Residential Schools & Their Legacy*
  - *Legislation & Agreements with Métis*
  - *Treaties & Agreements with First Nations*
  - *Foundational Knowledge of First Nations, Métis and Inuit: Implementing the OECD recommendations*
  - *Restorative Practices for School Leaders: What you need to know*
  - *Restorative Practices - Changing Relationship, Changing Culture*
  - *Building and Applying Foundational Knowledge About First Nations, Métis, and Inuit People in Relational Ways*

- Leading Change: To support District leaders manage the element of change related to the introduction of the standards, the professional learning opportunities available to District leaders relevant to change management have increased from previous years and include:
  - *Implementing Support for the Teaching Quality Standard.*
  - *Turn and Face the Change: Leading Change in Your School.*
  - *Leading Change for Principals.*
  - *Leading Change...the Moral Imperative.*
  - *Change Management: Just a Trend?*

## SHIFTING FOCUS TO THE TQS

Much of the work to date, both with provincial education partners and internal to the District, has been deliberately focused on the LQS. Moving forward, the District will focus on the following to support the implementation of the new TQS:

- Principals have been working at the catchment level to prepare for TQS; this work has included professional learning as well as some consideration to professional growth plans.
- Staff from the District's research team are in the process of analyzing current activities underway across schools and catchments in support of TQS preparation. The information from this work will be summarized in a report and shared with District leaders as a source of information and support.
- Two catchments have been part of an inquiry based professional growth plan pilot; findings from the pilot will be explored further in respect to how they may inform/support teachers' self reflective practice relative to the TQS competencies.
- Supports are being developed centrally to ensure school leaders have access to the resources they need to walk alongside their staff in both the implementation of the new TQS and the ongoing use of these standards to serve as the foundation to enhancing the efficacy of teaching across the District.
- Centrally offered professional learning will continue to be updated to reflect both the TQS and LQS as appropriate.

## ADDITIONAL PROVINCIAL EFFORTS IN SUPPORT OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

To further support quality educational leadership at the provincial level, the District has contributed to the following provincial initiatives:

- CASS Review of Provincial Leadership Development Programs: The District had the opportunity to take a lead role in a provincial review of existing leadership development programs across the province. Our HR and Research departments collaborated to conduct the provincial environmental scan and provided CASS with this summary of findings. ([Review of Leadership Development Programs for Alberta School Authorities System Leaders 2017-2018.](#))
- CASS Leadership Development Literature Review: The District's Research department took a lead role in a literature review of best practices in support of education leadership development; this work was published on the CASS website and shared provincially. ([School System Leadership Development Best Practices Literature Review.](#))

Additionally, the District is currently participating in a provincial longitudinal, mixed methods research study focused on the implementation of the new Professional Practice Standards (TQS, LQS and SLQS). Staff from the research team will support District participation. Results from the study are intended to assess, deepen and extend the implementation of the professional practice standards.

## SUPPORTING LEADERSHIP GROWTH ACROSS STAFFING GROUPS

The focus of this report has been primarily on the LQS and TQS; however, there are many initiatives intended to build leadership capacity in the District. Central units work together to deliver professional learning that is

relevant to the various roles of staff within the District, as building the capacity of all leaders is a shared responsibility across the organization. These opportunities are focused on ensuring there are well trained staff to support the work of excellent teaching and high quality learning for all students. All staff have the opportunity to engage in a variety of professional learning through the District's Leadership Development Framework (LDF), professional learning days, other internal courses (e.g., technology and summer institutes) and external courses. The following is a brief summary of these opportunities:

- **Custodial:** Staff Development has worked collaboratively with CUPE Local 474 to develop training specifically for custodial leadership staff to support the ongoing District need for trained head custodians. Additional learning opportunities are available based on the needs and interests of custodial staff including power engineering courses through the District and NAIT.
- **Administrative Staff:** Through the Lead Administrative Assistant Program, both permanent and newly hired support staff have the opportunity to prepare for the role of lead administrative assistant in a school office. Program participants attend in-class training on District software and learn hands-on through a practicum placement in a school office under the guidance of an experienced administrative assistant. As well, the Administrative Assistant D/E Program was developed and piloted in 2016–2017 to assist support staff in preparing for intermediate assignments in school offices.
- **Educational Assistants:** Educational assistants can access a number of sessions delivered through central decision units, catchment learning opportunities (PD days) and summer institutes. New educational assistants complete one of several five-day orientations offered throughout the year, which includes Nonviolent Crisis Intervention (NVCi) training.
- **Exempt, Maintenance and other Support Staff:** Staff in these groups may attend sessions through the LDF based on their self-reflection and professional growth goals, as well as participate in external course opportunities relevant to their role in the District.

“It turns out that leadership not only matters: it is second only to teaching among school-related factors in its impact on student learning.”

The Wallace Foundation - Review of Research - How leadership influences student learning, 2004