

THE TAAPCS

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP LEARNING INITIATIVE – September 17, 2012

OVERVIEW

The Association of Alberta Public Charter Schools has received an Alberta Education grant to develop processes for demonstrating the efficacy of the *Professional Practice Competencies for School Leaders in Alberta* (PPC) during the 2012-2013 school year. This 2-page document explains the project's purpose and describes its major components: (1) professional leadership learning, (2) research design, and (3) the roles of the steering committee, executive director, project consultant and superintendents.

PURPOSE

The goal of our one-year *School Leadership Learning* (SLL) initiative is to engage charter school superintendents and school leaders in inquiry, exploration and research to identify practices and action strategies for promoting exemplary school leadership within the PPC framework.

PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP LEARNING

Superintendents, principals and other charter school leaders who commit to the SLL initiative will be expected to engage in the following leadership learning activities:

1. Professional Learning Sessions (4)

Charter school community expertise will be utilized to deepen understanding and application of the PPCs through a series of 4 professional learning sessions. These sessions will build upon the charter school administrator professional development program initiated in May 2011. The sessions will foster school leader growth through differentiated and job-embedded professional learning experiences designed to address the realities of varying school contexts. Superintendents and school administrators will engage in the program as co-learners.

A more detailed plan will be developed with participant input during the first session. Ongoing opportunities will be provided to reflect on implementation of the project plan, to share feedback and to make modifications to the plan.

2. Professional Leadership Growth Plans

Each school leader will develop a professional leadership growth based on one or more of the *Professional Practice Competencies*. The growth plan will be shared with the superintendent and will serve as a primary school leadership learning document.

3. Reflective Leadership Practice and Co-Learning Tools

Our initiative is based on the shared belief that exemplary leadership emerges from personal reflection that identifies areas of strength and areas for growth to inform action strategies.

Hence, opportunities will be provided to consider evidence from multiple sources:

- a. Leadership Survey:** The SLL consultant has developed a survey based on the *competencies* for two purposes. First, it will be used for research purposes by the consultant in October and May to gauge the impact of the initiative. Second, it will be available to school leaders for individual reflection and to gather feedback data from school staff members for leader reflection, dialogue and growth planning.

- b. Leadership Rubric:** A *Draft Charter School Leadership Rubric* based on the PPCs is also provided to foster participant reflection, dialogue and co-learning. Our rubric is derived from the *Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools Catholic Administration Practice Model* (2011).
- c. Co-Learning Partners:** Arrangements will be made for participants to develop peer learning partnerships and to engage in co-learning visits to partner schools. Logistical considerations will be addressed during the fall sessions.
- d. Reflective Journals:** Participants are asked to maintain a reflective journal of their leadership learning experiences within the initiative with emphasis on making the PPC framework a living document to guide practice.

TAAPCS SCHOOL LEADERSHIP LEARNING INITIATIVE ROLES

1. Steering Committee

A steering committee made up of the Executive Director (Garry Andrews), charter school superintendent and administrative representatives (Jay Pritchard, Garry McKinnon, Joe Frank Dale Bischoff, Phil Butterfield, Kathy McCauley and Judi Hadden), Alberta Education representatives (Bob Garneau and Karen Shipka) and the project consultant (Jim Brandon) will provide direction and oversee the implementation of the project plan.

2. Executive Director

The Executive Director will attend all meetings, provide administrative support, assist in the data collection process and facilitate the work of the steering committee in preparing the final report to Alberta Education.

3. Project Consultant

Jim Brandon has been contracted to serve as an "outside expert" to assist in project planning, implementation and assessment. He is working with others in the charter school community to lead professional learning sessions and will complete the research component.

4. Superintendents

The superintendents serve in two key roles in the initiative. In addition to their ongoing roles in providing feedback and maintaining ongoing working relationships with school principals and others on school leadership teams, they will be participating as co-learners in the project.

RESEARCH COMPONENT

The project consultant is designing and conducting research on the impact of the initiative. This includes administering a survey and conducting interviews to gather data on the implementation of the project plan. A project assessment report will be written at the conclusion of the initiative. Highlights, exemplary practices along with challenges and barriers will be reported. Recommendations and lessons learned that may be applicable to other jurisdictions will also be provided.