



Research Highlights

The Association of Alberta Public Charter Schools supports and is actively engaged in innovation and research that occurs in our member schools and with our stakeholders.

Research Support and Promotion Committee

TAAPCS has established a standing committee on Research Support and Promotion comprised of charter school administrators, practitioners, and researchers, as well as post-secondary and Alberta Education representatives that currently includes:

- ❖ Dr. Eugene Kowch, Leadership Chair, Werklund School of Education, University of Calgary
- ❖ Dr. Belina Caissie, Senior Manager, Research, Alberta Education
- ❖ Dr. Cristian Rios, Faculty of Mathematics, University of Calgary
- ❖ Dr. Paul Wozny, Aurora Academic Charter School
- ❖ Dr. Damien Cormier, Faculty of Education, University of Alberta

The Research Support and Promotion Committee's mandate is to provide support to charter schools endeavoring to do high calibre educational research, and review and assist with the dissemination of charter school research within the broader educational community.

Alberta Research Partnership Program Projects with Alberta Education

Two TAAPCS member schools are successfully engaged in collaborative multi-stakeholder research projects as part of the Alberta Research Partnership Program.

- ❖ Aurora Academic Public Charter School is undertaking a project involving analysis of parents' perspectives on social connectedness as lived through their experiences in parent/teacher interview processes. This research

project includes partners from Simon Fraser University, the University of Alberta, Edmonton Public Schools along with Aurora Elementary and Middle Schools.

- ❖ Foundations for the Future Charter Academy (FFCA) is undertaking a project entitled *Exploring the Global Competence (GC) of Teachers and Students: The Impact of Diversity, Classroom Pedagogies and Teacher Professional Learning*. This project is being completed in partnership with Golden Hills School Division, the International School of Macau, Calgary Regional Consortium, University of Calgary Werklund School of Education, and University of Alberta.

Additional Research Projects occurring in Alberta Public Charter Schools

Almadina:

- ❖ Partnered with the Reading Foundation to examine the *efficacy of "Discover Reading", a systematic reading program designed to introduce and provides strategies on how to decode and encode simple, complex and multi-syllable word structures.*
- ❖ Partnered with Dr. Hetty Roessingh, University of Calgary, on several projects relating to efficacy of intervention strategies with ESL students.

Aurora Academic Public Charter School:

- ❖ Established an Action Research program with its staff that has led to the publication of 14 research projects in

two volumes of *Action Research - Community of Practice*, research journal compilations of Aurora and partner organizations research projects from 2016-2018.

- ❖ Partnered with the University of Alberta and six Alberta School jurisdictions to compare *mathematics provincial achievement test (PAT) results and related longitudinal trajectories for 3 cohorts of students with a goal of identifying curriculum outcome achievement trends and analysis* that can be shared with other colleagues and stakeholders for the improvement of numeracy learning.

Boyle Street Education Centre

- ❖ BSEC and University of Alberta interdisciplinary scholarly team has secured grant funding to explore the following research question beginning in the 2019-2020 school year and extending to three years in length: Research questions: *The objective of this research project is to explore how to define and measure the successes and strengths of students put at risk in culturally sensitive ways, with a focus on social-emotional strengths.*
- ❖ BSEC has also entered into a partnership with the University of Alberta Aboriginal Teacher Education Program and will be taking part in a pre-service teacher mentoring research project. The goals of this Project are to develop a mentorship relationship between Pre-Service Teachers and Mentor Teachers in secondary schools and to engage in research to understand the process. This project will investigate and document, Aboriginal Teacher Education Program (University of Alberta) pre-service teachers' and partner school mentor teachers' readiness for implementing foundational knowledge about First

Nations, Metis and Inuit in secondary schools.

Calgary Arts Academy:

- ❖ Participating in the University of Calgary Werklund School of Education Partner Research Schools *Leading and Learning* project.

Calgary Girls School:

- ❖ Undertaking an empirical study to explore *how integrating coding into the K-12 curriculum, using gender-responsive pedagogy and a design for use approach, can attract and keep girls in STEM related studies.*

Centre for Academic and Personal Excellence (CAPE):

- ❖ Undertaking a 3-year research project investigates the *effectiveness of four types of mentoring strategies used by administration to increase teacher confidence and efficacy* in developing and delivering integrated learning experiences for students.

Connect Charter School:

- ❖ Partnering with Mount Royal University to examine *The Impact of Outdoor Education on Executive Functions in Adolescence*, in a mixed methods research project exploring Connect Charter School's Journey to Experiential Place-based and Experiential Learning.

Foundations for the Future Charter Academy (FFCA):

- ❖ Partnering with the University of New South Wales to examine *Central Office Leadership that Works: Examining how a common focus on collaborative inquiry facilitated the development of a cohesive central office leadership team and impacted school leadership across our campuses.*

January, 2020

- ❖ Partnered with Mount Royal University to examine physical literacy development including a published study on *Enhanced Object Manipulative Skills Programming for Girls in Elementary School*.

New Horizons Charter School:

- ❖ Undertaking a study examining how teachers might change individualized student learning to more collaborative student learning in a project-based learning context.
- ❖ Undertaking a study examining the PAT performance of students who have been accelerated up to two grades ahead in mathematics to see if gaps in their understanding exist at the time of writing which may be connected to their accelerated program.

Suzuki Charter School:

- ❖ In collaboration with the University of Alberta received a Social Humanities and Research Council Canada grant to pursue an examination of formative instructional and assessment strategies for academic and personal excellence including the role of social and emotional factors such as student-teacher trust, attitudes towards mistakes, and beliefs about learning guided by learning errors and formative feedback (LEAFF) model.

Valhalla Community Charter School:

- ❖ Examining the *impact of implementing the Writing and Thinking Road to Reading* and Spelling program measuring the impact on the number of phonograms and words kindergarten to grade 3 students are able to read and write from dictation, and the volume and clarity of writing in personal stories, subject reports and written responses to questions about text.

- ❖ Examining the *impact of the implementation of a cursive writing program in lower grades exploring the links between handwriting and reading* as well as the written expression of ideas with the intention of developing measures of note-taking effectiveness and capacity for immediate written expression of ideas in students in upper grades.

Westmount Charter School:

- ❖ Exploring the *Linguistic profile of Gifted ESL Students* highlighting the linguistic and academic reality of the majority of gifted English as a second language (ESL) students enrolled in English schools in Alberta;
- ❖ Researching an *Anxiety-based Psychological Intervention to Examine its Efficacy and Applicability with Gifted Children*: The purpose of this study is to better understand anxiety struggles in gifted students. This study will focus on application of mindfulness-based cognitive therapy to determine its efficacy in reducing anxiety symptoms in grades 4-7 gifted children.

