

Leadership Quality Standard

Alberta Education



Leadership Quality Standard

Whereas Alberta’s teachers, students, parents, educational leaders and members of the public have a strong will to ensure all Alberta students have access to quality learning experiences that enable their achievement of the learning outcomes outlined in programs of study.

Whereas the success of all members of the school community requires inclusive environments in which diversity is respected and members of the school community are welcomed, cared for, respected and safe.

Whereas principals and school jurisdiction leaders play a fundamental role in establishing and supporting the conditions under which the learning aspirations and the potential of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students will be realized.

Whereas principals and school jurisdiction leaders have an important role in fostering collaboration, engagement and empowerment of all partners in the education system to enable all students to achieve their potential.

Whereas principals and school jurisdiction leaders in Alberta schools are accomplished teachers able to create the conditions within which quality teaching and optimum learning can occur and be sustained.

Whereas the *Leadership Quality Standard* provides a framework to support the professional growth, supervision and evaluation of all principals and school jurisdiction leaders.

Whereas students, parents and other partners in education should be confident that Alberta principals and school jurisdiction leaders demonstrate the *Leadership Quality Standard* throughout their careers.

Whereas it is important to recognize the value of a consistent standard of professional practice for all principals and school jurisdiction leaders in the province.

1. In the context of this document:

- a. **“competency”** means an interrelated set of knowledge, skills and attitudes developed over time and drawn upon and applied to a particular leadership context in order to support quality leadership, teaching and optimum learning as required by the *Leadership Quality Standard*;
- b. **“inclusive learning environment”** means a classroom, school, online learning environment or other educational setting structured to anticipate, value and respond to the diverse strengths and needs of all learners;
- c. **“indicators”** means actions that are likely to lead to the achievement of a competency and which, together with the competency, are measurable and observable;
- d. **“leader”** means a principal or school jurisdiction leader;
- e. **“local community”** means community members who have an interest in education and the school community, including neighbouring Métis settlements, First Nations and other members of the public;
- f. **“principal”** means, for the purposes of this standard, principal as defined in the *Education Act*, assistant principal, associate principal or vice principal;
- g. **“reconciliation”** means the process and goal of creating societal change through a fundamental shift in thinking and attitudes, increasing intercultural understanding to build a better society through learning about First Nations, Métis and Inuit perspectives and experiences, including residential schools and treaties;
- h. **“school authority”** means a public school board, separate school board, Francophone regional authority, charter school operator or accredited private school operator;
- i. **“school community”** means the staff of the school authority, along with students, parents/guardians and school council members;
- j. **“school council”** means a school council established under the *Education Act* or a parent advisory council established under the Private Schools Regulation;
- k. **“school jurisdiction”** means a public school board, separate school board, Francophone regional authority, or charter school operator;
- l. **“school jurisdiction leader”** means a central office staff member, other than the superintendent or chief deputy superintendent, required by their leadership position to hold an Alberta teaching certificate;
- m. **“staff”** means all certificated and non-certificated persons whose role in the school is to provide educational and support services to students;
- n. **“student”** means, for the purposes of this standard, an individual enrolled in a school or required by law to attend, and includes a child younger than 6 years of age who is enrolled in an early childhood services program;
- o. **“superintendent”** means a superintendent appointed by a board pursuant to the *Education Act* and the chief deputy superintendent, if any, as referred to in the *Teaching Profession Act*; and
- p. **“teacher”** means an individual who holds a certificate of qualification as a teacher issued under the *Education Act*.

2. 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.

3. 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 *Education 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. In any given context, reasoned professional judgment must be used to determine whether the *Leadership Quality Standard* is being met.

4. The *Leadership Quality Standard* is described by the following competencies and indicators:

Fostering Effective Relationships

1 | A leader builds positive working relationships with members of the school community and local community.

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- a. acting with fairness, respect and integrity;
- b. demonstrating empathy and a genuine concern for others;
- c. creating a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment;
- d. creating opportunities for parents/guardians, as partners in education, to take an active role in their children's education;
- e. establishing relationships with First Nations, Métis and Inuit parents/guardians, Elders/knowledge keepers, local leaders and community members;
- f. demonstrating a commitment to the health and well-being of all teachers, staff and students;
- g. acting consistently in the best interests of students;
- h. engaging in collegial relationships while modeling and promoting open, collaborative dialogue;
- i. communicating, facilitating and solving problems effectively; and
- j. implementing processes for improving working relationships and dealing with conflict within the school community.

Modeling Commitment to Professional Learning

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

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- a. engaging with others such as teachers, principals and other leaders to build personal and collective professional capacities and expertise;

- b. actively seeking out feedback and information from a variety of sources to enhance leadership practice;
- c. seeking, critically reviewing and applying educational research to inform effective practice;
- d. engaging members of the school community to build a shared understanding of current trends and priorities in the education system.

Embodying Visionary Leadership

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

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- a. communicating a philosophy of education that is student-centred and based on sound principles of effective teaching and leadership;
- b. recognizing the school community's values and aspirations and demonstrating an appreciation for diversity;
- c. collaborating with other leaders and superintendents to address challenges and priorities;
- d. supporting school community members, including school councils, in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities;
- e. promoting innovation, enabling positive change and fostering commitment to continuous improvement; and
- f. accessing, sharing and using a range of data to determine progress towards achieving goals.

Leading a Learning Community

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

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- a. fostering in the school community equality and respect with regard to rights as provided for in the *Alberta Human Rights Act* and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*;
- b. creating an inclusive learning environment in which diversity is embraced, a sense of belonging

is emphasized, and all students and staff are welcomed, cared for, respected and safe;

- c. developing a shared responsibility for the success of all students;
- d. cultivating a culture of high expectations for all students and staff;
- e. creating meaningful, collaborative learning opportunities for teachers and support staff;
- f. establishing opportunities and expectations for the positive involvement of parents/guardians in supporting student learning;
- g. creating an environment for the safe and ethical use of technology;
- h. collaborating with community service agencies to provide wrap-around supports for all students who may require them, including those with mental health needs; and
- i. recognizing student and staff accomplishments.

Supporting the Application of Foundational Knowledge about First Nations, Métis and Inuit

5

A leader supports the school community in acquiring and applying foundational knowledge about First Nations, Métis and Inuit for the benefit of all students.

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- a. understanding the historical, social, economic and political implications of:
 - treaties and agreements with First Nations;
 - legislation and agreements negotiated with Métis; and
 - residential schools and their legacy;
- b. aligning resources and building the capacity of the school community to support First Nations, Métis and Inuit student achievement;
- c. enabling all school staff and students to gain a knowledge and understanding of, and respect for, the histories, cultures, languages, contributions, perspectives, experiences and contemporary contexts of First Nations, Métis and Inuit; and
- d. pursuing opportunities and engaging in practices to facilitate reconciliation within the school community.

Providing Instructional Leadership

6

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

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- a. building the capacity of teachers to respond to the learning needs of all students;
- b. implementing professional growth, supervision and evaluation processes to ensure that all teachers meet the *Teaching Quality Standard*;
- c. ensuring that student instruction addresses learning outcomes outlined in programs of study;
- d. facilitating mentorship and induction supports for teachers and principals, as required;
- e. demonstrating a strong understanding of effective pedagogy and curriculum;
- f. facilitating the use of a variety of technologies to support learning for all students;
- g. ensuring that student assessment and evaluation practices are fair, appropriate and evidence-informed;
- h. interpreting a wide range of data to inform school practice and enable success for all students; and
- i. facilitating access to resources, agencies and experts within and outside the school community to enhance student learning and development.

Developing Leadership Capacity

7

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

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- a. demonstrating consultative and collaborative decision-making that is informed by open dialogue and multiple perspectives;
- b. identifying, mentoring and empowering teachers in educational leadership roles;
- c. promoting the engagement of parents in school council(s) and facilitating the constructive involvement of school council(s) in school life;

- d. creating opportunities for students to participate in leadership activities and to exercise their voice in school leadership and decision making; and
- e. promoting team building and shared leadership among members of the school community.

Managing School Operations and Resources

8 | A leader effectively directs operations and manages resources.

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- a. identifying and planning for areas of need;
- b. applying principles of effective teaching and learning, child development and ethical leadership to all decisions;
- c. aligning practices, procedures, policies, decisions and resources with school and school authority visions, goals and priorities;
- d. following through on decisions made by allocating resources (human, physical, technological and financial) to provide the learning environments and supports needed to enable and/or improve learning for all students;
- e. facilitating access to appropriate technology and digital learning environments; and
- f. ensuring operations align with provincial legislation, regulations and policies, and the policies and processes of the school authority.

Understanding and Responding to the Larger Societal Context

9

A leader understands and appropriately responds to the political, social, economic, legal and cultural contexts impacting schools and the school authority.

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- a. supporting the school community in understanding the legal frameworks and policies that provide the foundations for the Alberta education system;
- b. representing the needs of students at the community, school authority and provincial levels;
- c. engaging local community partners to understand local contexts;
- d. demonstrating an understanding of local, provincial, national and international issues and trends and their implications for education; and
- e. facilitating school community members' understanding of local, provincial, national and international issues and trends related to education.

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Ideas to Engage the School Community

These ideas will have different applications and success based on your unique school community. The annual cycle of effective engagement includes evaluation, and the School Council should include an evaluative component in every engagement activity (ie. survey or evaluation form). A School Council should also consider its resources and participants' availability when choosing an engagement strategy, to ensure it does not overload the School Council.

- Personally invite people to participate in any or all activities and meetings.
- Host a School Council Booth (Meet the Teacher/Family Night, school registration day, school BBQ, first day of school, coffee with the principal) providing School Council info and extending invitations to attend meetings, receive information, volunteer or provide opinions.
- Publish the agenda 7 – 10 days in advance of the meeting. Email it to parents or post it in the school newsletter asking for people who have thoughts, opinions, or information to attend or e-mail.
- Translate School Council documents into other languages, if necessary.
- Respect every parents' choice and understand that engagement with School Council is not necessarily defined by attending meetings.
- Use Social Media (Twitter, Facebook, etc.) to update your school community (check school board policy first).
- Distribute a Family Engagement Form (see page 2) at any time of the year asking how they would like to be engaged.
- Publish a School Council calendar of events every month including the School Council meeting agenda. Also publish a School Council Annual Agenda (year-at-a-glance).
- Provide a hard copy and on-line access of the School Council's 1-year plan.
- Engage community members: Trustee, alumni, religious figures, political figures (past or present), Elders, leaders in the media, retired people, cultural groups.
- Have a School Council presence at school community events—providing School Council activity sign up sheets at those events illustrating the range of School Council activities.
- Ask parents for short term assistance in areas of interest or expertise.
 - e.g. advising on strategic planning, research, budget, craft fair, library
- Sponsor workshops on topics of interest for parents.
- Provide parents with information and opportunities for training/orientation, skill development which will support student learning.
- Invite parents to become a committee chair.
- Mentor new School Council meeting attendees.
- Make presentations to the kindergarten parents.
- Encourage School Council meeting attendees to bring new parents to the meeting to introduce them to the business of School Council.



Ideas to Engage the School Community

20__ -20__ School Year

Engagement Opportunities for Families, Friends and Community Members of _____ School

(Including, but not limited to, School Council Members)

There are many engagement opportunities for families, friends, school council and community members throughout the school year. In addition, or as an alternate, to regular meetings, there are other activities that result from our work that you may be able to help with.

As a committed and involved supporter of our children's education, your time and expertise are greatly valued. If you would like to participate in any of the following activities, please check those of interest and return this form to:

- Committees:** Small committees may be organized throughout the school year, based on the needs identified by our school community. Engagement on these committees provides participants with an opportunity for meaningful contributions while increasing their knowledge of our school.
- Media Requests:** Occasionally, the media is looking for the parent, family or community perspective on stories they are reporting. If you would feel comfortable talking to the media, check here. The school council chairperson or principal will contact you first to determine your interest and availability for each request.
- Surveys:** For those who aren't able to attend additional meetings, online, mail and/or telephone surveys providing input on current or future issues and initiatives is a great opportunity to express your opinions.
- Email or phone updates about School Council, Fundraising Association, or Division events/meetings.**
- Mentorship and Skills Bank:** School Councils are all about people working together to support student learning and school improvement. This is an opportunity for everyone to contribute to the success of our students. Completing this section does not commit your time, but you may be contacted as a valuable resource for potential learning opportunities or special projects in the school. Other family members and friends can complete this, too!
- Skills or interests I can share with students, staff and parents:** (Please list any/all you'd like to share)

Student(s) Name: _____

Parent/Adult Name(s): _____

Relationship to Student(s): _____

Home Phone: _____ Work/Cell Phone: _____

Email Address(es): _____

Preferred Contact Method: Phone Email Printed Material sent with student(s) listed above

Signature*: _____ Date: _____

** Permission Release: As a parent/guardian of a student attending this school, I give consent for representatives from the school council to contact me for the purposes of information and input regarding school council business/activities. I understand that I have the right to cancel my consent in the future.*

We will communicate as much information as possible via email.



Permission for School Council to Contact Parents/Guardians Directly

School Council Name: _____

School Year(s) Date: _____

School council is a structured group of parents, school administrators, teachers, secondary students and community representatives whose purpose is to advise the principal and the school board respecting matters relating to the school. It is a means for parents and community members to work together with the school to support and enhance student learning.

School council contacts parents/guardians regarding information about:

- meetings, special events and other activities sponsored by the school council;
- obtaining opinions and comments about school matters to work with the principal; and
- sharing information on matters that affect public education.

School council must obtain consent to collect, use or disclose any personal information of members of the school community. The school council must follow privacy rules from the *Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA)*, use the information only for the purpose it was collected, and an individual may choose to take back his or her consent by informing school council in writing.

To permit members of your school council to be able to contact you directly, please complete this form and return it to the school.

As a parent/guardian of a student enrolled at this school, I give consent for representatives from the school council to contact me for the purposes of information and input regarding school council business/activities. I understand that I have the right to cancel my consent in the future.

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

For questions about the collection of your information, please email the School Council Chair at

_____.

Your contact information will be kept confidential and made available only to members acting on behalf of the school council for the purpose of school council business/activities.



School Council Web Pages

Things to Consider to Enhance the Information on Your Website About Your School Council:

With an informative information page on your school’s website, your School Council may find an increase in informed and engaged parents in your school! It is proven that parental involvement results in higher student achievement, better student attendance, positive student attitudes and behaviours, and higher student graduation rates.

Some great examples of School Council web pages (as of August 2022):

[Westboro Elementary School Council](https://www.westboroelementary.ca/council/school-council) (Elk Island Public Schools) <https://www.westboroelementary.ca/council/school-council>

[Whispering Ridge Community School](https://wracs.pwpsd.ca/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=1102358&type=d&pREC_ID=1374441) (Peace Wapiti Public SD)

https://wracs.pwpsd.ca/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=1102358&type=d&pREC_ID=1374441



Content is equally important. People visit websites for the primary purpose of finding content. The information provided should be clear and concise in regards to the: who, what, where, when and why. The information should also be up to date and maintained on a regular basis.

What a school council is in general and what its purpose is (and what benefits council offers to the school community)?

What YOUR school council is and what is its unique purpose in your school and/or community?

Who are the members of your school council?

What information do you feel should be on the school council page?

Ease of access to information is important. Users that go to your site will leave it if the information they are looking for is not easily found. Have you tried having a “Parents” tab on the school website (in consultation with and permission from the principal)?

From the home page of the school website, how easy is it to find the School Council page?

Under which heading can information about School Council be found and does that heading make sense?

Is there a clear way that users of the site can access more information once on the School Council information page?

Examples

Minutes	Agendas	School Council Resource Guide
Executive listings	Contact information	Meeting dates
Upcoming events	Operating Procedures	Policy Manual



School Council Annual Agenda Framework

Creating an Annual Agenda or year-at-a-glance is an important step when planning School Council work for the year. A School Council would adapt the annual agenda to reflect their preferred level of engagement using this sample framework, shown below. A School Council would incorporate the activities and initiatives they decide to undertake for the year into the framework. For example, the planning for the School Council's involvement with a winter carnival may be an agenda item for the October/November meeting.

Ed. Act 55(5): Items in black are activities that pertain to the operation of the school council.

ED. Act 55(4)(a) and (c): Items in blue are areas of parent engagement that will support Alberta Education's Assurance Framework. Processes, opportunities, and timing for participation will vary by School Division.

Leadership Quality Standard & Teaching Quality standard: Items in green relate to competencies identified in these Standards.

ASCA: Items in red relate to opportunities for member school councils.



1st Meeting of the Year (September or October)

- Welcome and orientation of new School Council members
 - Overview of legislation, regulations, policy and School Council operating procedures (addressing governance and the decision-making model), meeting Rules of Order
 - Overview of the current school budget and the process for advising regarding the next school year's budget
 - **Refer to ASCA's School Council Resource Guide and ASCA's website as information sources for School Councils and parents**
- Review School Council plan (if there is one)
- **Discuss ASCA's School Council Engagement Task Force (register or re-register for it on website)**
- **Principal shares key events of upcoming school year**
- **Principal and teacher outline areas School Council may be involved, or their advice will be solicited**
- Review school community needs assessments results from June
- Discussion of what School Council members would like to work on during the school year and their expectations of the School Council and individual School Council members
- Determine which School Council members will be reps with other education stakeholders and organizations and committee assignments (if any)
- Distribute reading materials or website addresses for School Council members to prepare for discussion at the next meeting

2nd Meeting of the Year (October or November – possible Annual General Meeting)

- Elections of Executive, presentation of School Council report (from previous year)
- **Update School Council contact information with ASCA**
- **Discussion of the Jurisdiction's Three-year Education Plan**
- **Discussion of the School's Three-year Education Plan**
- Create or review and update a School Council plan

3rd Meeting of the Year (November or December)

- **Receive highlights of the Division's and School's Results Report**
- **Discuss assessment practices and/or Diploma Exam Results**
- **Accountability Pillar information presented as it pertains to the school, when available**
- **Discuss and submit a provincial education issue to ASCA for consideration at the Annual General Meeting (Proposed Advocacy Resolution)**
- Committee reports

School Council Annual Agenda Framework

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Leadership Quality Standard & Teaching Quality standard: Items in green relate to competencies identified in these Standards.

ASCA: Items in red relate to opportunities for member school councils.

4th Meeting of the Year *(December or January)*

- Provide input for the next year's school budget (this may be an ongoing agenda item as needed)
- Provide input for the next year of the School's Three-year Education Plan (this may be an ongoing agenda item as needed)
- Committee reports

5th Meeting of the Year *(January or February)*

- Alberta School Councils' Association's Conference and AGM registration
- Committee reports

6th Meeting of the Year *(February or March)*

- Evaluation of any projects School Council is coordinating or involved in (this function is ongoing as projects are completed and reflecting the cycle of the projects undertaken)
- Discussion of ASCA Proposed Advocacy Resolutions

7th Meeting of the Year *(March or April)*

- Recruitment Strategies and Succession Planning for next year
- Prepare needs assessment
- Discussion of ASCA Proposed Advocacy Resolutions; advise voting delegate

8th Meeting of the Year *(May or June – possible Annual General Meeting)*

- Annual General Meeting (AGM) Planning (or being held)
- Share information from ASCA conference
- Renew Alberta School Councils' Association membership and other memberships pertinent to the School Council
- Needs Assessments sent to school community
- Celebrate your successes!!

At any School Council meeting during the year, Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA) Members may decide to discuss and submit a provincial issue to ASCA for consideration at the Annual General Meeting. Please visit the ASCA website (www.albertaschoolcouncils.ca) for more details.



Communication Specialist Duties

The Communication Specialist works under the direct supervision of the School Council and undertakes all responsibilities in consultation and cooperation with the School Council Chair and the School Principal.

In general, the Communication Specialist applies his/her communications expertise to improve the links between the School Council and the School Community and to advance the goals and profile of the School Council.

The Communication Specialist of the School Council, in consultation with the Chair and the Principal, may:

- Assist the School Council in developing, implementing and evaluating a Communication Policy and Communications Plan.
- Prepare School Council Newsletters and the School Council's section of the School Newsletters.
- Provide information for the School Council section of the School website to inform of the purpose and structure of the School Council, highlight activities and accomplishments of the School Council and to promote parental involvement.
- Ensure that the information in the School Council section of the (School Name) Parent's Handbook is updated annually.
- Develop promotional material for the Annual General Meeting, special events, projects and programs and other School Council materials as directed by the School Council and in keeping with the School Council Communications Policy and the Communications Plan.
- Collaborate with Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA) in obtaining templates and samples for promotional and other School Council materials.
- Assist the Chair and the School Council by proofreading and editing reports, correspondence and other material, to ensure they reflect the School Council in a professional and consistent manner.
- Develop communication strategies which facilitate two-way communication between the School Council and the School Community. (Surveys, discussion groups, social media).
- Promote the School and its activities with the public (local media, community newspapers), as requested by the Principal.
- Assess the effectiveness of School Council publications, distribution systems, etc. and recommend improvements.
- Attend School Council meetings regularly.
- Managing social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, website).

