

# Leading OUR FUTURE Together



Necessary Conditions for Shared Leadership in Calgary Public Schools

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—*Jenny Regal, President, Calgary Public Teachers ATA Local 38*

## Foreword

Alberta is world famous for its top student learning results on the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) tests, and its teachers deserve the very best support to sustain their remarkable achievements. While PISA is only one small indicator of the successes of Alberta's education system, as I study high performing jurisdictions around the world, I am continually impressed by the professionalism of Alberta teachers and the work that they do.

This timely report indicates some of the key components of Alberta's success in its largest city, Calgary. As the study suggests, Calgary Public teachers enjoy working for the Calgary Board of Education (CBE), and they report high degrees of satisfaction in their relationships with the students they teach on a daily basis. They feel supported by colleagues within their buildings and by the parents and community members outside of them. At a time when many educators around the world are being deskilled, a majority of Calgary Public teachers report that their district supports their professionalism.

These findings offer hope for educators in other jurisdictions who are endeavouring to provide the best possible learning environments for children. Calgary—and Alberta, more broadly—shows that student achievement correlates with positive teacher morale, supportive collegial relationships, and continual learning and exchange at the district level.

At the same time, policy makers and the public more broadly should note some troubling trends in this report. For example, significant numbers of Calgary Public teachers feel that their professional views are not taken into account when new policies and initiatives are established. More specifically, the Alberta Initiative for School Improvement (AIS), one of Alberta Education's most inspirational and forward-looking reforms, does not appear to have been implemented in the CBE in a way that gives teachers a voice. Given the importance of AIS as a signature change enabling bottom-up and lateral forms of learning and experimentation, this is an opportunity that should be more fully taken advantage of in the future.

Calgary educators and Albertans need to know that, in many ways, the eyes of the world are upon you. In too many jurisdictions, student achievement progress has stalled or even declined. In too many schools in too many districts around the globe, outmoded forms of autocratic rule are combined with new forms of technocratic control that diminish rather than enhance learning.

Particularly troubling for me is the trend in some quarters toward equating investments in technology with improving student learning. While new technologies undeniably can be quite powerful, they can also be distracting and trivializing when it comes to grappling with the most serious educational challenges of the present. Genuine personalization of learning involves much more than learning to format a presentation on PowerPoint or to upload photographs on Facebook. Students have the right, and educators have the obligation, to address the insistent challenges of the present, whether in the form of income inequality, global warming or finding cures for cancer or the AIDS virus.

Whatever the appropriate policies that are eventually adopted related to school development, the professional voice of teachers must be a key component of the shared leadership needed to move the district forward.

Alberta is a global educational leader. Educators from around the world ask that you continue to represent a different path that is willing to try out new strategies, include the voice of students in policy deliberations and engage teachers as partners in long-term planning and development.

To understand what is at stake in the immediate future, this report provides timely information on the perspectives of Calgary Public's educators. Teachers, principals, policy makers and the public more broadly need to read this report carefully and to explore the recommendations in its design framework. Calgary has a distinguished educational past, and with proper steering and leadership, its future can be brighter still. This report points us in the right direction.

—Dennis Shirley, Professor of Education, Boston College, and coauthor of *The Fourth Way*

## Our Shared Leadership Opportunity

*We are all complicit in our future*  
—Walt Anderson, futurist

Calgary Public Teachers Local 38 of the Alberta Teachers' Association is committed to advancing its Preferred Futures, a future in which "Calgary Public teachers are well informed and actively participat[ing] in Local 38 decision making." For this reason, the local's Research Oversight Committee, in collaboration with provincial Association staff, initiated a comprehensive survey focused on the teaching and learning conditions affecting Calgary Public teachers during the 2009/10 school year. The survey was distributed and completed in April and May of 2010. The goal was to support the local's research efforts while, at the same time, placing the findings in a broader provincial context.

Education partners in Calgary are studying how to operationalize the forward-thinking vision outlined in *Inspiring Education: A Dialogue with Albertans* (Alberta Education 2010a) and the follow-up document, *Inspiring Action on Education: A Discussion Paper* (Alberta Education 2010b). As the voice of the teaching profession in Calgary Public Schools, Local 38 is committed to ensuring that these deliberations produce a shared commitment to enhance learning opportunities for students by identifying the teaching and learning conditions that will be necessary in the years ahead.

The next few months provide an opportunity to step back and ask some important questions about the conditions of professional practice and student learning in the province's schools. How effective

will current provincial education policies be in transforming the teaching and learning process, and how have those policies affected schools in the past? What do we mean by such terms as *personalized learning, inclusion, informed transformation* and *21st-century skills*? Do schools have the resources, information and technology necessary to give students the skills they will need to fulfill their career ambitions and become engaged citizens in a vibrant democracy?

This report analyzes the current teaching and learning conditions in Calgary Public Schools. Local 38 hopes that the board of trustees will use this analysis to set priorities and make key decisions in the months and years ahead. The report is divided into two sections: (1) a summary and analysis of the data collected during the spring 2010 survey of Local 38 members and (2) a design framework, focusing on six key areas, for moving forward.

The analysis of the data suggests that system planning and management require a shared leadership approach that takes into account the complex conditions of professional practice in today's schools. After discussing emerging trends, the report moves on to recommend the changes that will be necessary to achieve shared leadership and to bring about the kind of transformation envisaged in *Inspiring Action*. These recommendations, which take into account the priorities set out in Local 38's Preferred Futures, focus on (1) advancing the professional role of teachers as educational leaders, (2) removing obstacles to students' readiness to learn and (3) improving the teaching and learning conditions in Calgary Public Schools.

## Our Shared Design Challenge

This study and the literature review undertaken in conjunction with it suggest that Calgary Public Schools is currently designed in a way that is not optimally conducive to informed transformation. Whether it is managing short-term attempts at innovation or addressing the shortfall in support for Calgary Public's increasingly complex and diverse classrooms, the members of Local 38 want to be actively involved in helping to shape the future of the students they teach.

Much of the impetus for this study and the design framework it includes was influenced by the research undertakings of the provincial Association, including the publication of *The Courage to Choose: Emerging Trends and Strategic Possibilities for Informed Transformation in Alberta Schools: 2010–2011*. This study suggests that we must move past taken-for-granted assumptions about school improvement and the tendency to expect far too much from centralized system-level or structural changes. Over a decade ago, Levin (1998) identified “the epidemic of policy reform” as one of the key impediments to sustained and authentic transformation in schools.

Here are the major findings of the study:

- Overall, Calgary Public teachers are very satisfied with their relationships with students, colleagues and parents.
- Teachers enjoy working for the Calgary Board of Education (CBE).
- Teachers are very concerned about funding and programming for English as an additional language (EAL) and special education.
- The administration tends to view issues such as classroom support differently than do classroom teachers.
- Individual Program Plans (IPPs) and other non-instructional duties remain major concerns, particularly for teachers in Divisions I and II.

- In their efforts to report student progress, teachers are often frustrated by the technology infrastructure and by inappropriate expectations.
- Junior high teachers are particularly affected by large classes and concerns about workload.
- Local 38 is doing an effective job in negotiating and enforcing the collective agreement, keeping members informed about local activities and representing teachers' interests to the provincial Association.

Hargreaves and Shirley (2009) have identified three approaches that typically hamper efforts at reform: the path of autocracy (governance through forced compliance), the path of technocracy (excessive surveillance and bureaucratic standardization) and the path of effervescence (an obsession with achieving narrow, short-term and unsustainable targets). Hargreaves and Shirley also observe that highly performing jurisdictions share two characteristics. First, they gradually foster a culture in which teachers and principals, as professionals, are trusted to judge not only what is best for students but also how to report student progress. Second, they target resources and supports to schools and students who are at risk of failing or of being left behind.

As school boards look ahead, they face a fundamental choice: whether to begin building a culture of trust or whether to continue operating in an atmosphere of bureaucratic compliance, micromanagement and regulation. This study suggests that CBE exhibits some characteristics that are consistent with the three paths of distraction identified earlier: technocracy, autocracy and effervescence. However, as the study also concludes, the implementation of some key strategic design changes could help the CBE to begin building a culture of trust that will enable it to achieve transformation in the years ahead.

## Study Results and Analysis

### Study Participants

The teaching and learning conditions survey (see Appendix B) that Calgary Public Teachers Local 38 conducted in May 2010 was designed to obtain feedback from as many members as possible on a wide variety of issues related to the work life of teachers. The survey was distributed by school representatives to a random sample of approximately one-third of the local's 5,947 full-time and 608 part-time members. In all, 1,221 members (or 55 per cent of the sample) completed the survey. The demographics of the respondents with respect to such factors as full versus part-time employment, gender, age, designation and teaching level are well within the normal range of those of the provincial teaching population. As a result, the results can validly be extrapolated to reflect the views of the teaching population at large.

The respondent population was 79 per cent female and 21 per cent male. Classroom teachers made up 80 per cent of the cohort, and those with school administrative assignments, another 15 per cent. Almost 88 per cent of respondents held continuing contracts; the remainder had either probationary or temporary contracts. With respect to teaching assignments, 5 per cent taught kindergarten, 50 per cent, Grades 1 to 6; 18 per cent, Grades 7 to 9; and 18 per cent, Grades 10 to 12. About 45 per cent had fewer than 10 years of teaching experience; slightly less than 50 per cent had 10 to 30 years of experience.

### Teaching and Learning Conditions

Most respondents (71 per cent) agreed or strongly agreed that the CBE is a good place to work, and 65 per cent agreed that it values the professionalism of its teachers. However, a substantial proportion (45 per cent) disagreed with the proposition that CBE values teachers' views when it comes to making key educational decisions and determining programs, and 43 per cent disagreed that CBE values teachers' views when planning and undertaking Alberta Initiative for School Improvement projects. More

### Beyond the Numbers

- Division I respondents were more likely to report satisfaction in the areas of class size (ECS), class composition and student readiness for learning.
- Respondents with multiple-grade assignments were more likely to report dissatisfaction with class composition.
- Junior high respondents were more likely to report dissatisfaction with class sizes.
- Area III respondents were more likely to report dissatisfaction with class composition, the readiness of students to learn and supports for EAL students.
- High school respondents were more likely to report satisfaction with support for students with special needs.
- Classroom teachers having no administrative responsibilities were more likely to report dissatisfaction with special needs supports than teachers having administrative responsibilities.
- With respect to resources for field trips, satisfaction levels decline as grade levels rise, and females were more likely to report satisfaction than males.
- School administrators were more likely to report satisfaction with supports for visible minority students and EAL students.

than one-quarter were uncertain about the stance of the CBE in these respects, and only 30 per cent agreed with the statements.

Between 70 and 75 per cent of respondents expressed a general to high level of satisfaction with respect to a dozen current teaching and learning conditions, including expectations to report student progress to parents; access to print resources and textbooks, computers, other information technology, and professional development; and class composition. With reference to class size, however, 65 per cent of respondents indicated satisfaction, while 31 per cent indicated a level of dissatisfaction.

The next three items, in descending order of

overall satisfaction, were resources available for field trips; requirements to supervise and undertake other assigned tasks; and support for students representing visible minorities. Although these items obtained 55 to 57 per cent satisfaction levels, they also yielded moderate levels of uncertainty and dissatisfaction.

Only 49 per cent of respondents indicated overall satisfaction with the background readiness skills that students bring to learning, while 35 per cent noted dissatisfaction and 15 per cent indicated that they were uncertain. Support for English language learners yielded a similar finding. Support for students with special needs was the only item for which the combined levels of dissatisfaction (46 per cent) were higher than the combined levels of satisfaction (39 per cent).

### Well-Being of Teachers

Ninety-eight per cent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they have positive relationships with students, and 95 per cent indicated that they have positive relationships with parents. Furthermore, 90 per cent agreed that, overall, they have a positive collegial interaction with their colleagues. Over 80 per cent of respondents agreed that teaching brings them “great personal satisfaction” and that their work takes place in a “safe environment, free from harassment.” On the latter question about working environment, however, 12 per cent disagreed.

Respondents were less positive about whether they are valued and respected in their schools or enjoy a high degree of personal autonomy in selecting their career growth plan goals. On the question of respect, 74 per cent noted overall agreement, 14 per cent disagreed and 11 per cent were unsure. With reference to autonomy, 69 per cent agreed, 18 per cent disagreed and 12 per cent were unsure. Similarly, while 69 per cent agreed that teaching is a life-long career choice, 11 per cent disagreed and a sizable 20 per cent were uncertain. Respondents were most uncertain (25 per cent) in this exploration of teacher well-being when asked the extent to which they agreed with the statement “I would change careers if I could have the same salary and benefits.” One-quarter agreed and one-half disagreed. As to whether technology enhances the ability to teach, 72 per cent agreed, 13 per cent disagreed and 15 per cent were uncertain.

### Beyond the Numbers

- Teachers with elementary school assignments and females are more likely to purchase materials at their own expense.
- Full-time teachers are less likely to respond positively to their ability to balance personal and work life.
- Teachers are more willing to change careers for the same salary and benefits as age and teaching experience increase. Higher grade level teachers are also more willing to make this change.
- Respondents who have 20 or more years of experience or who are over the age of 56 are more likely to see teaching as a life-long career choice.
- Teachers who have continuing contracts, more teaching experience and administrative responsibilities are more likely to feel meaningfully involved in school decision making.
- School administrators and teachers having administrative duties are more likely to feel valued and respected in their schools.
- Respondents with temporary and probationary contracts are more likely to agree that they have access to professional development time during the school day.
- Teachers with probationary contracts are more likely to feel that they have a high degree of autonomy in choosing their professional growth plan goals, while teachers with continuing contracts are more likely to disagree that they have a high degree of autonomy in choosing their growth plan goals.
- Junior high teachers are more likely to feel that noninstructional duties interfere with their ability to teach.
- Elementary teachers with multiple-grade assignments are more likely to feel that technology enhances their ability to teach than intermediate secondary teachers with multiple-grade assignments.

The remaining items relating to well-being drew substantially different results. Only 54 per cent of respondents indicated that they are meaningfully involved in their school’s decision making. Barely one-half agreed that they are able to balance their personal and work lives. Over 55 per cent indicated that they had to purchase materials with their own money in order to carry out their jobs. Only 39 per cent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they can perform their job with no need to purchase materials at their own expense.

Over one-third agreed with the proposition that their noninstructional duties interfere with their ability to teach, 47 per cent disagreed and 18 per cent were uncertain. While 40 per cent agreed that they had access to professional development time during the school day, 45 per cent disagreed and 15 per cent were uncertain. Most disagreement (62 per cent) came in response to the statement “I work less than 50 hours per week.”

### Reporting Student Progress

Study participants were asked to rate the impact of various student assessment and reporting requirements on teaching and learning using a five-point scale ranging from very positive to very negative. Because the assessment practices are not universal throughout the system, the scale also included a neutral “no influence/not applicable” option.

Sixty-four per cent of respondents indicated that school policies and expectations to report student progress to parents were positive influences, and 62 per cent rated student-led conferences as positive. District policies to report student progress to parents obtained the next most positive result at 54 per cent. At the same time, 26, 34 and 34 per cent, respectively, chose “not applicable/no influence” for these items.

With the exception of the three items just mentioned, all the others related to student assessment and reporting received either a predominantly negative rating or else ratings that were decidedly split. For example, 55 per cent of respondents rated provincial achievement tests as negative, 12 per cent rated them as positive and 32 per cent indicated that they had no influence or were not applicable. Judgements were less certain with respect to diploma examinations: 17 per cent

### Beyond the Numbers

- Grades 10 to 12 teachers are more likely to report technological supports for reporting student progress as a positive influence, whereas Area II respondents are more likely than all others to report it as a negative influence.
- Junior high teachers are more likely to regard “no-zero policy” as a negative influence, whereas school administrators are more likely to see it as a positive influence.
- Elementary teachers have the most negative views with respect to the influence of provincial achievement testing. Teachers with continuing contracts are more likely to report that achievement testing has no influence, is inapplicable or has an overall negative influence.
- The role that a teacher plays appears to affect his or her view of the stress involved in marking and evaluating student work. Respondents with both classroom and administrative responsibilities found the activity more stressful. Increasing levels of stress may be associated with moving up through the grade levels.
- With reference to analyzing student/school results of provincial exams, respondents with administrative responsibilities are more likely to undertake this function and are also more likely to find it moderately to highly stressful.
- Classroom teachers are less likely to report that completing digital report cards is inapplicable and are more likely to report that it is highly stressful. Females and full-time respondents find the activity more stressful.
- With reference to completing IPPs, respondents with administrative and classroom responsibilities are more likely to report higher levels of stress, respondents with continuing contracts are more likely to report high levels of stress and high school teachers are more likely to report that completing IPPs is inapplicable.

indicated that they were positive influences, 27 per cent indicated that they were negative influences and 56 per cent indicated that they were of no influence or inapplicable.

Forty-two per cent of respondents rated technological supports for reporting student progress (such as SIRS and CITRIX) as positive, 38 per cent rated them as negative and only 20 per cent opted out of responding. Grade level of achievement reporting and “no-zero” policy obtained almost identical results: 23 per cent rated them as positive, 28 per cent as negative and 50 per cent indicated that they were of no influence or inapplicable.

When asked about personal stress levels associated with their assessment and reporting workload, 49 per cent indicated that completing Individual Program Plans (IPPs) is the most stressful. The next most stressful activity, judged so by 25 per cent of respondents, was completing digital report cards. The activity that respondents deemed to generate the highest level of moderate stress was marking and evaluating student work (52 per cent), followed by developing school-based assessments (39 per cent), completing digital report cards (35 per cent) and completing IPPs (34 per cent). Interestingly, all of the practices mentioned in this section of the survey—even the administration and supervision of provincial examinations, reported as not applicable by 41 per cent and low stress by 29 per cent—contribute to combined moderate and high stress levels in the range of 30 to 83 per cent. For the record, this survey was completed before the final student reporting in June.

### Local 38 Services and Supports

A number of survey questions were designed to elicit feedback on the services provided and activities undertaken by Local 38. Very few respondents rated any of these items as poor (the lowest rating). Most respondents (80 to 84 per cent) indicated that the local is doing a good to an excellent job in negotiating and enforcing the collective agreement, keeping members informed about local activities and representing teachers’ interests to the provincial Association.

Respondents were less enthusiastic about the local’s success in presenting a positive view of teachers and the work they do and in keeping the public informed about CBE issues: 60 per cent of

### Beyond the Numbers

- Teachers who have 20 or more years of teaching experience and who are 55 years of age or older are more likely to rate as excellent the local’s success in keeping members informed about local activities.
- Respondents on continuing contracts are the least likely to regard the LENZ podcast as useful, whereas respondents having temporary or probationary contracts are more likely to find the podcast useful. In all, 14 per cent of respondents did not answer this question.
- Teachers having five or more years of teaching experience are slightly more likely than others to find e-mail updates useful. Administrators and females are also more likely to report this source of information as useful.
- Female respondents are more likely to find the provincial ATA website to be useful or very useful. Males, by contrast, are more likely to regard it as somewhat useful or not useful at all.
- Experienced, full-time respondents with continuing contracts are more likely to rate updates from their local representative as very useful.

respondents indicated that the local was doing an excellent job and 30 per cent indicated that it was doing a fair or good job. Respondents were also asked to rate the usefulness of various information sources provided by the local or the provincial Association. On this question, 85 per cent of respondents reported finding updates from their school representative to be useful or very useful. The next most highly rated form of communication was e-mail updates from the local, which 70 per cent of respondents found to be useful or very useful. No other provincial or local communication vehicle obtained percentages approaching those already noted, but 55 per cent of respondents rated the local and provincial websites as equally useful, and 42 per cent gave the *ATA News* and the *ATA Magazine* a rating of useful or very useful. An additional 35 per cent of respondents indicated that they find these communications somewhat useful. At the other extreme, 62 per cent of respondents rated the LENZ podcast as not useful at all.

### Advancing the Interests of the Profession

Participants were presented with five issues and asked, in each case, whether the local should take a more aggressive or a more cooperative approach. In the case of only one issue, classroom conditions, did participants clearly favour a more aggressive approach. In that case, 63 per cent of respondents indicated that the local should be more aggressive, 27 per cent stated that it should be more cooperative and 10 per cent were uncertain. Respondents’ preferred strategies with respect to the other four issues were less clear. A slight majority favoured a more cooperative approach to the issue of student evaluation and reporting and to the issue of influencing the CBE in general. But in each case just over 30 per cent favoured a more aggressive approach and 16 per cent were unsure. Respondents were almost evenly divided on what approach the local should take on the issue of noninstructional duties and on the question of collective bargaining. In each case, respondents were split between favouring a more aggressive and favouring a more cooperative approach and, on each question, almost one-quarter of respondents were unsure.

Respondents were also asked whether their economic status relative to that of their community had improved over the past three years. Nearly 60 per cent of respondents affirmed that it had, whereas about 30 per cent indicated that their relative economic status had not changed.

Participants were presented with 11 topics related to teaching and learning conditions and asked to indicate, in each case, the degree of priority that the local should place on it in advocating with the CBE. Here’s how participants rank-ordered the issues:

1. Improved support for special education (90 per cent indicate very important or important)
2. Professional supports for new teachers (90 per cent)
3. Improved support for English as an additional language students (85 per cent)
4. Providing programs related to supporting wellness and work–life balance (80 per cent)
5. More professional development time during the school day/week (80 per cent)
6. Professional supports for new administrators (79 per cent)

### Beyond the Numbers

- Respondents with administrative responsibilities were more likely to identify professional supports for new administrators as a priority for advocacy.
- Respondents with temporary and probationary contracts, respondents from Area III, and respondents other than classroom teachers were more likely to identify programs to raise awareness about cultural diversity as a priority for advocacy.
- Respondents over the age of 45 and having 10 or more years of experience were more likely to identify improving access to, and flexibility of, maternity leave as a low priority.
- Respondents on temporary and probationary contracts were more likely to identify improving district processes for awarding continuing contracts as a very important priority.
- Respondents in secondary assignments were less likely than others to identify improving support for special education as a very important priority and more likely to identify improving support for special education as a somewhat important area for advocacy. Females were also more likely to identify support for special education as a very important priority.
- Area III and female respondents were more likely to identify improving support for EAL students as a very important priority for advocacy.
- Elementary teachers were more likely to report addressing online reporting of student progress issues as a very important priority for advocacy.

### Beyond the Numbers

- The likelihood that respondents plan to temporarily interrupt their careers within the next five years diminishes with age and experience.
- Female respondents and classroom teachers are more likely to be planning to interrupt their career.
- Of those planning to temporarily interrupt their careers, 37 per cent will be doing so to spend time with their family or to have a child, 12 per cent wish to pursue further education and 9 per cent wish to pursue other job interests.
- As age and experience increase, the likelihood of leaving the profession for reasons other than retirement decreases.
- Thirty-seven per cent of respondents predicted that they would be in a different school or system with the same job, and 5 per cent planned to leave the profession entirely.

7. Improving district processes related to awarding continuing contracts (71 per cent)
8. Improving communication about professional development opportunities (69 per cent)
9. Programs to raise awareness regarding cultural diversity (64 per cent)
10. Addressing issues related to reporting student progress online (62 per cent)
11. Improving access and flexibility for maternity leaves (50 per cent)

In another question, respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with four statements relating to the CBE. Most respondents (71 per cent) agreed or strongly agreed that the CBE is a good place to work and that it values the professionalism of its teachers (65 per cent). However, a substantial proportion disagreed with the proposition that the board values teachers' views in determining key educational decisions and programs (45 per cent) and that it values teachers' views in

planning and delivering AISI (43 per cent). More than one-quarter of respondents were uncertain about the stance of the board with respect to these matters, and only 30 per cent agreed with the statements.

Participants were asked to write down one recommendation that they would make to the local about advocating for improved teaching and learning conditions and one recommendation that they would make to the local about things it could do to make them more personally involved in the local. Of the 75 per cent of participants who responded to the first question, 24 per cent identified class size as the most crucial area requiring improvement and 18 per cent identified support for IPP students. Of the 25 per cent of participants who answered the second question, about 30 per cent suggested that the local should take more initiatives to stimulate participation. Among the actions suggested were school visits, more clearly written communications about opportunities for involvement, and less formality and tradition. About one-quarter of respondents suggested that the local should make more effective use of electronic communication, including online voting and online participation in local activities.

### Plans for the Future

Participants were asked to identify their plans for the future. Thirty-eight per cent of respondents indicated that they planned to temporarily interrupt their teaching career within the next five years to pursue other activities or interests. Of those who were planning to interrupt their career, between 37 and 50 per cent gave having a child and/or spending time with their family as the reason. Should these plans come to fruition, between 14 and 19 per cent of the local's membership could be on leave sometime during the next five years for this reason alone.

When asked about what they would be doing five years from now, 38 per cent of respondents predicted that they would be in a different school or system and 22 per cent opined that they would remain in their current location performing the same job. Another 13 per cent predicted that they would have new administrative duties, and 18 per cent said they would be retired. Only 5 per cent indicated an intention to leave the profession.

## Leading Our Future Together: A Design Framework

The challenge that the CBE shares with its educational partners is to ensure that all students learn well. Based on an analysis of the data obtained in this study, the local's executive, in collaboration with the Research Oversight Committee, provincial Association staff and several experts on education policy, developed a framework to assist the various partners in working together as they plan the future. This framework, which appears as Appendix A, identifies a number of strategies that will help the local ensure that teachers have a voice in making major decisions about the future of education. The framework provides the education partners with a starting point for addressing the major policy decisions that must be made in the months ahead.

In the framework, actions and strategies are organized into four categories:

1. *Sustain and improve*: actions and strategies that will enable CBE to continue building on current successes
2. *Redesign*: longer-term processes that require rethinking current structures and processes
3. *Start*: immediate steps requiring attention within the next six months
4. *Stop*: current activities that should be discontinued within the next year

As the CBE begins to operationalize *Inspiring Action* during the next few months, all of the education partners will need to take ownership and play a leadership role in bringing about informed transformation.

Management guru Peter Senge (2008) has observed that the leaders of highly effective organizations do not insulate themselves from bad news. Effective organizations should also not be reluctant to celebrate good news. In this regard, both the CBE and Local 38 have much to celebrate.

Gilles Paquet, author of numerous scholarly publications on governance and a professor emeritus

with the Centre on Governance and the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs at the University of Ottawa, has concluded that *structural changes are at least as important as transforming the ways in which information is exchanged*. The research team that undertook the current study believes that this conclusion is particularly applicable to the CBE as it sets out on the road to transformation in the months and years ahead. When confronted with opportunities and challenges, including the overhaul of bureaucracies, system leaders are naturally inclined to do little more than tweak structures and revise role descriptions. However, Paquet (2009, xix) points out that an equally—if not more—important task is transforming how information flows in the system. *Where structure and information meet is also where organizations find their truth*.

All systems of exchanging information are part of a social architecture. Looked at in this way, the decision-making and communication processes employed by the CBE are attempts to address the growing complexity and diversity of its classrooms and the work lives of its employees.

The design framework presents our education partners with a common challenge: namely, to avoid the three common distractions to reform that Hargreaves and Shirley (2009) have described. These distractions are the path of autocracy (governance through forced compliance), the path of technocracy (excessive surveillance through growing bureaucracies and standardization) and the path of effervescence (an obsession with achieving narrow, short-term and unsustainable targets).

Crozier (1970) has observed that public policy in democratic societies inevitably remains a contest between “cognitive despotism” and authentic public deliberation. The CBE and its partners, including Local 38, are united in their commitment to enhancing student learning.

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## Appendix A A Design Framework for Shared Leadership in Calgary Public Schools

Planning and Setting System Priorities			
Sustain and Improve	Redesign	Start	Stop
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focusing on building teaching and learning capacity in classrooms by reducing class sizes in all grades</li> <li>Recognizing that class complexity plays a significant role in the success of classroom instruction</li> <li>Ensuring that funding and supports for complex and diverse learners (such as English as an additional language [EAL], FNMI and students with special needs) are regularly monitored and evaluated</li> <li>Continuing research and data collection on emerging technologies to ensure that promising practices are taken into account when making decisions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Programs and supports that focus on inclusive education, no matter where that education sits on the inclusivity continuum</li> <li>Initiatives that are not clearly based on sound research on improving teaching and learning</li> <li>Career and Technology (CT) strategy so that it focuses on having highly skilled counselling professionals available to students throughout their program</li> <li>CT strategy so that it includes plans to meet the identified needs of students in Knowledge and Employability (K&amp;E) courses in the system</li> <li>People development models for encouraging leadership and determining the "best fit" when placing new administrators in high schools</li> <li>High school delivery model to better meet the learning needs of all students by ensuring that system leaders, high school teachers throughout the district and local representatives collaborate to coordinate and maximize learning experiences for students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring that classroom teachers have a voice in system planning, just as students have through the chief superintendent's new Student Advisory Council</li> <li>Involving stakeholders in designing the rollout of new initiatives and providing feedback before they are implemented systemwide</li> <li>Establishing a CBE communication protocol to ensure that all teachers receive common messages within a short time frame, thereby eliminating confusion and anxiety</li> <li>Tracking key indicators of sustainable innovation such as class size and composition</li> <li>Developing a joint project with the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA), CBE and the University of Calgary to address teaching challenges and opportunities posed by digital media</li> <li>Empowering high school teachers to discuss and offer solutions about improving high school completion rates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning and implementing the initiatives without consulting the profession</li> <li>Implementing new initiatives without analyzing the work already being done to determine whether such initiatives are really needed</li> <li>Implementing initiatives at the secondary level based on perspectives applicable to the elementary level</li> </ul>

Curriculum Implementation and Support			
Sustain and Improve	Redesign	Start	Stop
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognizing classroom teachers in collaboration with system staff as the leaders in curriculum design</li> <li>Providing teachers with enhanced professional development (PD) so that they can support a variety of learning styles</li> <li>Providing educational and psychological supports for students who have mental health concerns and disorders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School timetables to incorporate a variety of learning opportunities that will better address the diversity of students' needs</li> <li>Communication about the roles and responsibilities of Alberta Initiative for School Improvement (AIS) learning leaders and Information and Technology (IT) staff</li> <li>Timetables to create adequate time for PD during the school day</li> <li>Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) so that they promote authentic collaboration among teachers rather than focus on meeting accountability measures</li> <li>The structure of PLCs so that school leadership teams, non-school-based professional staff and teachers have direct input in designing strategies to meet teaching and learning needs</li> <li>K&amp;E courses offered as a program of choices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussing with Alberta Education ways of reducing the high numbers of Specific Learner Expectations in any given grade</li> <li>Supporting joint ATA/CBE mentorship programs for new teachers and new administrators</li> <li>Meeting with all stakeholders to consider a systemwide PD strategy that uses the strengths and expertise of partner organizations</li> <li>Resourcing changes adequately</li> <li>Prioritizing initiatives clearly and transparently so that school-based staff understand why they need to start doing new tasks and stop doing some existing tasks</li> <li>Ensuring that direct support for classroom teachers is in place before implementing new initiatives</li> <li>Encouraging the CBE, when examining new and current trends in education, to spend more money on classrooms rather than on system initiatives</li> <li>Using AISI and the expertise of other non-school-based teachers to provide direct service to students and teachers</li> <li>Including the perspectives of K&amp;E students in high school exit surveys</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The rate and pace of change in specific subjects given the current directives for improvement in such areas as daily physical education, character education, assessment, literacy, FNMI education and high school completion</li> <li>Reducing hands-on learning opportunities for K&amp;E learners</li> </ul>

Conditions of Practice			
Sustain and Improve	Redesign	Start	Stop
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consultation processes with curricular experts and classroom teachers before implementing initiatives using focus groups and professional facilitation services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Processes regarding school improvement so that staff can manage the sometimes competing expectations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring that the school day permits adequate time for planning lessons and assessing student learning</li> <li>Offering progressive and collaborative professional development</li> <li>Establishing wellness programs for all CBE staff</li> <li>Considering work-week options that will help employees achieve a healthier work-life balance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Viewing the school day as set in stone and instructional time as commensurate with success in students' attaining dictated learning outcomes</li> <li>Overloading staff with new initiatives and foci from different teams within the system</li> <li>Offering students the chance to learn "anytime, anywhere" without collaborating with internal stakeholders to plan and implement those opportunities and to ensure that they do not undermine collective agreement provisions</li> </ul>

Emerging Technologies			
Sustain and Improve	Redesign	Start	Stop
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investing in teacher professional development to support collaborative inquiry and innovation across the district</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaboration with respect to emerging technology projects to ensure that classroom teachers have input and that the projects focus on the curriculum</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Considering the research on the physiological and emotional effects that an overreliance on digital technologies can have on the brain development and mental health of students of all ages</li> <li>Considering whether technology should take second place to personal interaction with a teacher</li> <li>Providing equitable access to emerging technologies for all students in the district regardless of enrollment or location</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Purchasing technology without following a transparent consultation processes</li> <li>Funding unsustainable incubator projects that cannot be scaled out to the district level</li> <li>Implementing technology initiatives without evidence that they improve current teaching practice</li> <li>Implementing initiatives without providing appropriate technology support</li> <li>Viewing technology as separate from teaching and learning rather than as an integral aspect of curriculum development</li> </ul>

Assessment, Reporting and Accountability			
Sustain and Improve	Redesign	Start	Stop
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing teachers with professional development to enhance their expertise in assessment practices</li> <li>Recognizing and sharing teacher expertise in assessment practices</li> <li>Using authentic assessments to reflect the diversity of student learning</li> <li>Ensuring that district software intended to support the reporting process meets system needs</li> <li>Maintenance of assessment and reporting software</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Online and/or digital reporting tools and platforms so that they improve assessment and reporting practices rather than facilitate system-level data collection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talking to decision makers about abandoning the practice of considering provincial achievement tests as the “standard” for judging student performance</li> <li>Explaining to decision makers how Grade Level of Achievement assessments unnecessarily duplicate other current, authentic and useful assessment techniques and tools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Over relying on the now outdated Accountability Pillar measures</li> <li>Changing current practices without consulting stakeholders and obtaining evidence that the new practices are an improvement</li> <li>Using the reporting process to gather data for monitoring system ends and executive limitations</li> <li>Requiring reporting on any content that is not directly tied to the program of studies</li> </ul>

Inclusive Community Schools	
Sustain and Improve	Stop
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessing community and stakeholder supports for the student population</li> <li>• Increasing inner-city school utilization rates by inviting outside/parallel services to use/lease empty spaces</li> <li>• Working collaboratively with the Calgary Association of Parent and School Councils</li> <li>• Managing class size and composition issues for complex learners</li> <li>• Determining what services can be provided in community schools and what services are best provided in congregated or special settings</li> <li>• Ensuring that students attain Level 3 Literacy or higher before leaving school</li> <li>• Providing resources for K&amp;E learners across the system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitoring schools in communities in which the population is declining, a practice that has a negative impacts on future school enrollment</li> </ul>
Redesign	Start
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The concept of using schools in neighbourhoods where the population is declining to provide outside, “wraparound” services for the community</li> <li>• Staffing formulas to provide trained guidance and resource teachers outside of the Resource Allocation Method (RAM) when the nature of student enrolment demonstrates that need</li> <li>• Approach to supporting K&amp;E learners in segregated settings so that they can experience high school success</li> <li>• Accountability processes and paperwork so that support for students with special needs and EAL students can be accessed more efficiently at the school level</li> <li>• The RAM process so that “special needs dollars” can follow the students with special needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing active working relationships with a variety of community leaders to foster the development of vibrant communities</li> <li>• Working with city planners on issues of housing and transit development</li> <li>• Using space in underutilized schools for programs that support families in that community</li> <li>• Consulting partners about a definition of inclusion</li> <li>• Supporting provincial ATA leaders in their discussions with Alberta Education about the importance of enhancing funding for EAL students and students with special needs</li> <li>• Recognizing and accommodating the time teachers require to plan for, assess and report on students with special needs</li> <li>• Providing adequate resources for students with special needs (eg, technology, educational assistants, psychological supports)</li> </ul>

# Appendix B

## Teaching and Learning Conditions Survey—2010

Please take the time to complete this survey and return it to your CSR staff representative. *All responses will be kept confidential.*

### A. Current Teaching and Learning Conditions

1. Following are several key elements relating to your working conditions. Use the scale below to indicate your degree of satisfaction with each element.

1 Very satisfied	2 Generally satisfied	3 Unsure	4 Somewhat dissatisfied	5 Very dissatisfied	
<i>Please circle the appropriate number</i>					
a) The size of your classes.	1	2	3	4	5
b) Composition of your classes.	1	2	3	4	5
c) Support for students with special needs.	1	2	3	4	5
d) Access to computers and other information technology.	1	2	3	4	5
e) Access to print resources and textbooks.	1	2	3	4	5
f) Access to professional development.	1	2	3	4	5
g) Resources available for field trips.	1	2	3	4	5
h) Requirements to supervise and undertake other assigned tasks.	1	2	3	4	5
i) Background readiness skills students bring to learning.	1	2	3	4	5
j) Expectations to report student progress to parents.		2	3	4	5
k) Support for students representing visible minorities.	1	2	3	4	5
l) Support for English language learners (English as an Additional Language).	1	2	3	4	5

### B. Your Overall Well-Being as a Teacher

2. Using the scale below, indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

1 Strongly agree	2 Agree	3 Not sure	4 Disagree	5 Strongly disagree	
<i>Please circle the appropriate number</i>					
a) I can carry out my job without having to purchase materials out of my own pocket.	1	2	3	4	5
b) I work less than 50 hours a week.	1	2	3	4	5
c) I am able to balance my personal and work life.	1	2	3	4	5
d) I would change careers if I could have the same salary and benefits.	1	2	3	4	5
e) I see teaching to be a life-long career choice.	1	2	3	4	5
f) I feel teaching brings me great satisfaction.	1	2	3	4	5
g) I have positive collegial interactions with my teaching colleagues.	1	2	3	4	5
h) I work in a safe environment free from harassment.	1	2	3	4	5
i) I have a positive relationships with students.	1	2	3	4	5
j) I have positive relationships with parents.	1	2	3	4	5
k) I am meaningfully involved in my school’s decision making.	1	2	3	4	5
l) I feel valued and respected in my school.	1	2	3	4	5
m) I have access to professional development time within the school day.	1	2	3	4	5
n) I have a high degree of autonomy in selecting my professional growth plan goals.	1	2	3	4	5
o) My non-instructional duties interfere with my ability to teach.	1	2	3	4	5
p) Technology has enhanced my ability to teach.	1	2	3	4	5

### C. Student Assessment and Reporting Requirements

3. In the past few years, the Calgary Board of Education and Alberta Education have placed a significant focus on assessment and reporting practices. These include initiatives such as “assessment for learning” revisions to student reporting practices. Use the scale below to describe the overall impact the following have had on teaching and learning.

1 Very positive influence    2 Positive influence    3 No influence/not applicable    4 Negative influence    5 Very negative influence

	<i>Please circle the appropriate number</i>				
a) District policies and expectations to report student progress to parents.	1	2	3	4	5
b) School policies and expectations to report student progress to parents.	1	2	3	4	5
c) Grade level of achievement reporting (GLA).	1	2	3	4	5
d) Technological supports for reporting student progress (ie, SIRS, Citrix).	1	2	3	4	5
e) “No zero” policy.	1	2	3	4	5
f) Student-led conferences.	1	2	3	4	5
g) Provincial achievement testing (PAT Gr 3, 6, 9).	1	2	3	4	5
h) Diploma examinations.	1	2	3	4	5

4. Use the scale below and circle the appropriate number that applies to the level of stress you experienced associated with various workload student reporting and assessment requirements.

1 Not applicable    2 Low    3 Moderate    4 High

	<i>Please circle the appropriate number</i>				
a) Marking and evaluating student work.	1	2	3	4	
b) Administering and supervising provincial examinations.	1	2	3	4	
c) Analyzing student/school results of provincial examinations.	1	2	3	4	
d) Developing school-based assessments (ie, rubrics).	1	2	3	4	
e) Communicating with and responding to parents online.	1	2	3	4	
f) Completing digital report cards.	1	2	3	4	
g) Completing Individual Program Plans (IPPs).	1	2	3	4	

### D. Local 38 Services and Supports

5. Calgary Public Teachers Local 38 works on behalf of members on a number of specific fronts. Use the scale below to rate the success of the Local in carrying out the following responsibilities.

1 Excellent    2 Good    3 Fair    4 Poor

	<i>Please circle the appropriate number</i>				
a) Negotiating our collective agreement.	1	2	3	4	
b) Enforcing the terms and conditions of the collective agreement.	1	2	3	4	
c) Keeping members informed about Local activities.	1	2	3	4	
d) Keeping the public informed about Calgary Board of Education issues.	1	2	3	4	
e) Presenting a positive view of teachers and the work that they do.	1	2	3	4	
f) Representing teachers’ interests with the provincial Association.	1	2	3	4	

6. The following Local and provincial Association information sources are available to members such as you. Use the scale below to rate these information sources in terms of their usefulness to you.

1 Very useful    2 Useful    3 Somewhat useful    4 Not useful at all

	<i>Please circle the appropriate number</i>				
a) The Local 38 website.	1	2	3	4	
b) The LENZ podcast.	1	2	3	4	
c) Email updates from the Local.	1	2	3	4	
d) The ATA Magazine.	1	2	3	4	
e) The ATA News.	1	2	3	4	
f) The provincial ATA Website.	1	2	3	4	
g) Updates from my ATA Local school representative.	1	2	3	4	

7. Some members say that the Calgary Public Teachers Local 38 would achieve greater success by being more aggressive in advancing its goals, while others see benefit in a cooperative approach. Use the scale below to identify the approach that you feel is the most appropriate in terms of the issues listed.

1 Strongly agree    2 Agree    3 Not sure    4 Disagree    5 Strongly disagree

	<i>Please circle the appropriate number</i>				
a) In relation to collective bargaining.	1	2	3		
b) In relation to improving classroom conditions.	1	2	3		
c) In relation to dealing with non-instructional duties.	1	2	3		
d) In relation to influencing the Calgary Board of Education.	1	2	3		
e) In relation to student evaluation and reporting issues.	1	2	3		

8. Considering your current salary and overall benefits, how would you compare your current economic standing relative to your community over the last three years? Check (✓) one.

Improved significantly     Improved somewhat     No change     Declined significantly     Declined somewhat

### E. Advocacy Priorities for Local 38

9. Using the scale below, indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

1 Strongly agree    2 Agree    3 Not sure    4 Disagree    5 Strongly disagree

	<i>Please circle the appropriate number</i>				
a) Calgary Board of Education values teachers’ views in determining key educational decisions and programs.	1	2	3	4	5
b) Calgary Board of Education values teachers’ views in the planning and delivery of the Alberta Initiative for School Improvement (AISI)	1	2	3	4	5
c) Calgary Board of Education values the professionalism of its teachers.	1	2	3	4	5
d) Calgary Board of Education is a good place to work as a teacher.	1	2	3	4	5

10. The Local is committed to advocating for improved teaching and learning conditions in a number of areas. Use the scale below to indicate the degree of priority that the Local should place on its advocacy with the Calgary Board of Education in the following areas:

1 A very important priority    2 A somewhat important priority    3 Not an important priority    4 Not sure

	<i>Please circle the appropriate number</i>				
a) More professional development time during the school day/week.	1	2	3	4	
b) Improving communication about professional development opportunities.	1	2	3	4	
c) Professional supports for new teachers.	1	2	3	4	
d) Professional supports for new administrators.	1	2	3	4	
e) Programs to raise awareness regarding cultural diversity.	1	2	3	4	
f) Improving access and flexibility for maternity leaves.	1	2	3	4	
g) Improving district processes related to awarding continuing contracts.	1	2	3	4	
h) Improved support for special education.	1	2	3	4	
i) Improved support for English as an Additional Language students.	1	2	3	4	
j) Addressing issues related to reporting student progress online.	1	2	3	4	
k) Providing programs related to supporting wellness and work life balance.	1	2	3	4	

11. Considering the greatest challenge you face as a teacher, if you could make ONE recommendation to the Local in advocating for improved teaching and learning conditions on your behalf, what would it be?

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12. Your involvement as a member of Local 38 can take on many roles. If you could make ONE recommendation to the Local that would assist you in becoming more involved in the Local, what would it be?

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## 24 • Leading Our Future Together

### F. Your Plans for the Future

13. Looking ahead to the next five years, are you planning to temporarily interrupt your teaching career to pursue other activities or interests? [Note: this question does not refer to potential retirement plans—see question 14 below.]

Yes       No

If “yes”, indicate what your plans might include. Please check (✓) all that apply:

Travel       Pursue other job interests       Have a child/spend time with family  
 Care for an elderly family member       Educational leave       Other (please specify)

14. Which one of the following is the best descriptor of what you will likely be doing five years from now in the year 2015?

Please check (✓) only one box below.

I will be retired from the profession with a pension.  
 I will have left the profession for another occupation.  
 I will be in the same school and the same job as today.  
 I will be in a different school or system but doing the same job.  
 I will have taken on new administrative duties.  
 I will have moved from administration to classroom teaching only.  
 Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_.

### G. Demographic Data

Check (✓) only one response to each of the following questions.

15. Your years of teaching experience, including the current year

1 year       5 to 9 years       15 to 19 years       Over 30 years  
 2 to 4 years       10 to 14 years       20 to 30 years

16. Your current teaching assignment is related exclusively or mainly to students in

ECS/Kindergarten       Grades 4 to 6       Grades 10 to 12  
 Grades 1 to 3       Grades 7 to 9       Other combinations (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

17. You are employed     Full-time       Part-time       Substitute teacher

18. Your employment contract status:  Continuing     Probationary     Temporary

19. Your school is located in     Area I       Area II       Area III       Area IV       Area V       Other (school)

20. Your current work assignment

Classroom teacher       School administrator only  
 Substitute teaching       Other (eg, non-school based, cyber-school)  
 Combined classroom and administrative duties

21. Your age

25 and younger       36–40 years old       51–55 years old       Over 65  
 26–30 years old       41–45 years old       56–60 years old  
 31–35 years old       46–50 years old       61–65 years old

22. Your gender:     Female       Male

*Thank you for completing the survey. Please return it to your school representative by May 7.*

