

Transformation and a Culture of Trust



Leading Our Future Together

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CALGARY
Public Teachers
ALBERTA TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION LOCAL 38



The Alberta
Teachers' Association

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—Frank Bruseker, President, Calgary Public Teachers ATA Local 38

Foreword

Our province continues to receive accolades from around the world for the quality of our education system and high-performing students. There is substantial desire from stakeholders to maintain that status, hence the vision and direction put forward in *Inspiring Education* (Alberta Education, 2010). As well, the profession's roadmap for educational transformation has been comprehensively outlined in *A Great School for All: Transforming Education in Alberta* (Alberta Teachers' Association [ATA], 2012) and *Transformation and Alberta's Schools: A Time for Action* (ATA, 2013).

In the previous publication of *Leading Our Future Together*, Dennis Shirley points out that “the professional voice of teachers must be a key component of the shared leadership needed to move the district forward.” This report seeks to map out a course of action to do just that, working within the context of some of the twelve dimensions of transformation identified in *A Great School for All: Transforming Education in Alberta* (ATA, 2012) such as “school leadership”, “optimal conditions of practice”, “teacher leadership”, and “professional development and autonomy.” Likewise, demonstrating that teachers across the province are speaking with one voice, this report, combined with the aforementioned documents by government and the provincial Association, seeks to guide school leaders in the creation of conditions that will enable the lasting transformative change envisioned in *Inspiring Education* that maintains Alberta's status as one of the best education systems in the world.

The conditions of professional practice and student learning, as pointed out by the 2013 member survey, are not yet ideally placed to enable transformative change. Leaders in research such as Linda Duxbury, Andy Hargreaves, and others, being familiar with the situation in Alberta, are exceptionally well placed to provide insight on multiple dimensions of transformational change. Keeping ahead of other systems by staying on the leading edge of educational research will help Alberta's schools to perform beyond local and international expectations.

Transformation in a Culture of Trust: Leading Our Future Together should be positioned in the context of local and province-wide conversations about transformation, serving as a catalyst for discussion and change. If the goal of education partners is to improve learning conditions for our students and foster an environment that enables high performance for all children, this report provides the foundation for that sort of transformational change to occur.

The Road We've Taken

In spring of 2010, Calgary Public Teachers, Alberta Teachers' Association Local 38, conducted its first member survey. Teachers responded in droves, with the Local achieving a 55 per cent survey response rate, nearly unprecedented in the world of statistics and data gathering. With a very representative sample of Calgary's teaching population, we learned a number of things about the state of education in Calgary public schools.

Most teachers agreed that the CBE was a great place to work in 2010 – about 71 per cent of respondents. They had a strong sense that their professionalism was valued and that learning conditions in the system were largely satisfactory. Exceptionally positive relationships with students and parents were reported.

These results contrasted, however, with some major concerns identified by teachers. Class sizes were on the rise, and 46 per cent of teachers were dissatisfied with the supports in place for special needs students. 62 per cent of teachers were working more than 50 hours per week, and 45 per cent of teachers did not have access to professional development during the school day. Reporting of student progress was identified as an issue, with digital reporting tools and the now-defunct Grade Level Assessments (GLAs) providing major headaches for teachers.

Concerned by these findings, Calgary Public Teachers embarked on a journey to promote shared leadership within the Calgary Board of Education. Teachers care about children and are highly trained professionals – working together, we believe that collaborating with system administration could produce positive results and improve the state of education for Calgary's children. *Leading Our Future Together: Necessary Conditions for Shared Leadership in Calgary Public Schools* [LOFT] was published in January 2011 as a roadmap for change. It contained the results of the member survey, but also laid out a design framework for shared leadership.

The design framework advocated for specific actions and strategies that could be jointly implemented in order to build on current successes, rethink current structures, create new strategies, and discontinue ineffective practices. The key messages from the framework are expressed below.

Planning and Setting System Priorities

- *Sustain & Improve* continuing support for teachers to provide more attention to our diverse and complex students
- *Redesign* inclusion, the CT Strategy, leadership development, and high school delivery models
- *Start* involving stakeholders in decision-making processes and solution-making for system issues/goals
- *Stop* implementing initiatives without analysis, consultation, and perspective

Curriculum Implementation and Support

- *Sustain & Improve* enhanced professional development supports for students with mental health concerns
- *Redesign* AISI initiatives, school timetables, PLCs, and K&E courses
- *Start* engaging stakeholders to support initiatives such as system professional development and mentorship
- *Stop* the high rate and pace of change, and the degradation of the K&E program

Conditions of Practice

- *Sustain & Improve* consultation processes with curricular experts and classroom teachers
- *Redesign* processes regarding school improvement
- *Start* initiatives that promote professional and personal health in all employees
- *Stop* new initiatives without collaboration and planning

Emerging Technologies

- *Sustain & Improve* investment in teacher professional development
- *Redesign* emerging technology projects such that collaboration and teacher input is required
- *Start* considering the physiological and emotional impacts of technology on students and teacher/student relationships
- *Stop* technology initiatives that lack consultation, support, funding and relevance to teaching & learning

Assessment, Reporting and Accountability

- *Sustain & Improve* recognizing, supporting and enhancing teacher expertise in assessment
- *Redesign* online and/or digital reporting tools
- *Start* encouraging the province to abandon unnecessary GLA assessments and Provincial Achievement Tests
- *Stop* the misuse of reporting and unnecessary reporting

Inclusive Community Schools

- *Sustain & Improve* practices for increasing inner-city school utilization rates, supporting literacy, and meeting the needs of complex learners
- *Redesign* RAM funding and accountability processes to better support schools and students

- *Start* working with the government, provincial ATA, the city, and other partners to enhance funding and supports for students in all communities
- *Stop* monitoring schools in communities with declining populations

The following years were characterized by the Local advocating for the change priorities identified by LOFT, with mixed results. While GLA reporting practices were discontinued, for example, some initiatives continued to be implemented without consultation or proper planning.

In an attempt to advance discussion, Calgary Public Teachers engaged a series of speakers over the course of 2011 and 2012 to comment on specific themes of LOFT. Dr. Joel Westheimer spoke about engaged citizenship; Dr. Dennis Shirley reviewed concepts relating to student diversity and assessment practices; Dr. Linda Duxbury focused our attention on teacher health and welfare.

Meanwhile, elected officials in the Local continued to meet with system leaders as they strove to improve teachers' conditions of professional practice and help accomplish the goals set out in LOFT's design framework for shared leadership in Calgary Public Schools.

2013 Study Results and Analysis

Study Participants

Like its predecessor, the teaching and learning conditions survey conducted by Calgary Public Teachers in April 2013 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 members using the same sampling method as in 2010. In all, 811 responses were received (or approximately 38 per cent of the sample and 12.7 per cent of the full and part-time population of the Local.) Although respectable, this rate of return is much inferior to that of 2010 when 1,221 responses were received, representing 56 per cent of the sample and 18.6 per cent of the membership.

The demographics of the respondent group are largely consistent with actual population characteristics. For example, 90.5 per cent of Calgary Public's membership is employed full time as compared with 95 per cent of the respondents. The Area distribution of respondents is virtually identical to that obtained in 2010, as is contract status. Both age and experience compare well with baseline data, considering a three-year transition.

The most prominent difference between the current year and 2010 is the proportion of respondents identifying themselves as high school teachers. In 2010, that figure stood at 17.6 per cent, while this year it represents 9.32 per cent. The second largest decline in proportional representation is associated with respondents having multiple-grade responsibilities, a group that includes full-time administrators, specialists and coaches. The respondent population was 80 per cent female and 20 percent male. Classroom teachers comprised over 84 per cent of the cohort, and those with administrative designations a further 13 per cent.

Teaching and Learning Conditions

Responses from the survey indicate a marked decline in teaching and learning conditions in the Calgary Board of Education. Indicators of dissatisfaction increased on all measures in section A of the survey, including class size, class composition, computer and IT access, print and text resource access, professional development access, field trip resources, and supervision and other assignments. Particularly distressing were the major declines in special needs support (67 per cent somewhat dissatisfied or very dissatisfied as compared with 46 per cent in 2010), and support for EAL students (51 per cent somewhat or very dissatisfied as compared with 32 per cent in 2010). Teachers also report a decline in student readiness skills for learning, as satisfaction in this area dropped by more than 10 per cent.

Teachers' overall well-being also declined over the past three years. In terms of economic well-being, 12 per cent more teachers are resorting to using their own finances to compensate for the underfunding of the education system, with a slightly greater number of teachers experiencing doubts about remaining in the profession given the current salary and benefits compensation package.

This survey also confirms the results of an independent study conducted by Dr. Linda Duxbury & Dr. Christopher Higgins (2013) indicating that teachers are less able to balance work and personal commitments than in the past. A startling 81 per cent of teachers are working greater than 50 hours per week. Unsurprisingly, then, 63 per cent disagree or strongly disagree that they are able to balance personal and work lives. This compares with 63 per cent and 37 per cent, respectively, three years ago. A disproportionate number of those experiencing difficulties with work-life balance are female. One potential causational factor for work-life imbalance might be the precipitous increase

experienced in non-instructional duties interfering with respondents' ability to teach. 54 per cent agreed that this accurately represented their current situation as compared with only 35 per cent in 2010.

Teachers continue to report extremely positive relationships with colleagues, students, and parents. Other measures, such as meaningful member involvement in school decision-making, feeling valued and respected in schools, and having a high degree of autonomy in choosing one's personal growth plan goals, also worsened over the past three years. Ultimately, despite a worsening in teaching and learning conditions, teachers continue to agree that the work of teaching provides them with immense personal satisfaction.

The State of Student Assessment and Reporting

Major concerns were identified with the rapidly rising dissatisfaction with student progress reporting expectations, as discontent rose by more than 44 per cent over 2010, particularly among the upper-elementary and junior high levels. A great deal of this dissatisfaction appears to be directed at district leadership's shifting policies and expectations when it comes to student reporting. The number of respondents reporting that the district's direction in this area had a positive influence on teaching and learning declined sharply, with only 22 per cent responding affirmatively compared with 54 per cent three years ago. A negative influence on teaching and learning was reported by 50 per cent of respondents, with 29 per cent reporting a net neutral influence.

Changing school policies and expectations about student reporting also declined in their positive impact, with 36 per cent reporting a positive influence compared to 64 per cent in 2010. The implementation of the district's results reporting accountability measure appears to account for a large proportion of the degradation of assessment, with a massive 45 per cent reporting that it had a very negative influence, and a further 23 per cent reporting a negative influence. Less

than 1 per cent of respondents reported a very positive influence in this area.

Technological supports provided little assistance in the area of student reporting. As software became increasingly complex and more demanding on system resources, a stall in the development in network infrastructure and capacity appears to have been the cause of a decrease in rating for technological supports from over 42 per cent rating its influence positively in 2010 to just 23 per cent in 2013.

Teachers continued to affirm that provincial achievement testing does not serve a positive or useful purpose in reporting student achievement (almost 60 per cent of respondents rated it unfavourably), while a majority of teachers continues to report on the positive effects of student-led conferences and the value of face-to-face interaction with students' families.

Sources of Stress in Teaching

This section was expanded from the 2010 member survey in order to further distill the causes and effects of work-life imbalance. Generally, respondents did not report large changes in the amount of stress previously surveyed items provided them with. Marking and evaluating student work continued to provide an overall moderate amount of stress, for example, and communicating with parents online remained to be a relatively low-stress duty. The highest stressor reported was completing individual program plans, with 54 per cent of respondents identifying it as a high-stress activity. This is unchanged from 2010.

New survey items reveal additional sources of high-level stress for teachers, including a lack of preparation time (54 per cent of respondents rated the amount of stress caused by this as high). Keeping up with the demands of teaching generally (48 per cent rated this as high and 42 per cent rated as a moderate stressor) and job pressures interfering with family or personal life (43 per cent rated as high stress, 40 per cent as moderate) were also sources of pressure for teachers. Class composition and student diversity

appears to be a far larger source of stress than merely large class sizes.

While it appears that teaching and learning resources are available for teachers (this item was identified as one of the few low-stressors), teachers stretched to the limit for their time and lacking essential support services for special needs students rated the unmet needs of students in their classes as yet another source of high stress (47 per cent), with 38 per cent rating it as a moderate stressor.

The attitudes of school boards and government towards teachers also has an impact on stress. 45 per cent rated government's attitude towards teachers as a high stressor, with 32 per cent rating the school board's attitude as a high stressor. At the time of the survey, the teaching profession in Alberta was embroiled in a discussion about the proposed tripartite framework agreement, which caused a great deal of dissension and disagreement between teachers, school boards, and government. The Calgary public board even went so far as to release a letter to Calgarians decrying the potential of increasing teachers' influence on decision-making for student learning, and expressing concern over the possibility of teachers having greater autonomy with respect to professional development (Cochrane, 2013). With these public statements fresh in respondents' minds, it may have had a negative influence on their responses, particularly to these questions.

Local 38 Services and Supports

The influence of the framework agreement may also have been felt in this section of the survey, as many respondents reported a worsening opinion of the Local's ability and efforts in negotiating and enforcing the collective agreement. The Local's members did not feel the Local was doing as good a job as it did three years ago in keeping members informed about its activities, keeping the public informed about CBE issues, presenting a positive view of teachers and their work to the public, or in representing teachers' interests to the provincial ATA. That said, a large majority of

members still rated the Local's performance in these four areas as either good or excellent.

Ratings for the Local's modes of communication were largely unchanged – the majority of members found the Local 38 website to be useful or somewhat useful (89 per cent collectively). The Local has increased its social media presence on Facebook and Twitter since the previous survey and a new question indicates that just over half the membership views this as a useful practice in some manner. Email updates from the Local continue to be the preferred mode of direct contact, but school representatives are increasingly being relied upon by members as the ultimate source of information, receiving a rating of 'very useful' from more than 53 per cent of the respondents.

Members are advocating for a more aggressive approach when dealing with the Calgary Board of Education administration in the areas of bargaining, improving classroom conditions, influencing the CBE in general, but particularly regarding student evaluation and reporting issues. There was a staggering 25.4 per cent increase in respondents who advocated for a more aggressive approach in this area over three years ago. The survey indicates that respondents with grades 1-9 teaching assignments are more likely than others to endorse a more aggressive approach. This rise in respondents requesting a more aggressive approach has coincided with a rise in discontent in each of these areas as well, indicating that members have an interest in seeing these issues addressed in any way possible. It will be the work of the Local to balance the rising levels of dissatisfaction with the most effective means of achieving resolution on issues important to teachers.

Underscoring the discontent being felt across the teaching population, survey data indicates that teachers' economic standing is stagnating. Most participants (42 per cent) report no change in standing over the previous three years, while 35 per cent still reported improvements, but this appears to be tied to teachers who have four years or less of experience, who were more likely than other respondents to indicate an improved

economic status. Teachers' overall economic standing is slowing as compared to 2010, where the previous collective agreement tied teacher wage increases to the Alberta Average Weekly Earnings Index.

Advocacy Priorities for Local 38

Teachers assigned declining ratings in the survey to the CBE's involvement with and treatment of educators. There was a 27 per cent increase in respondents who disagree with the fact that the CBE values teachers' views in determining key educational decisions and programs. A new question this year also shows that 61 per cent of teachers are not involved with decision making in school development plans as part of the process of personalizing learning. There was also a significant minority of respondents (42 per cent) who believe that the CBE does not value the professionalism of its teachers. A further 17 per cent were unsure of the CBE's stance on this value.

Despite all this, a strong minority (49 per cent) of respondents agree that "the CBE is a good place to work as a teacher". This contrasts starkly with the 71 per cent of respondents who agreed with this statement just three years ago.

Survey participants were asked to respond to two open-ended questions regarding changes in education. The first asked participants about what they perceived to be the single greatest change they saw in education this year. A wide variety of answers resulted, and while not identified by respondents as positive or negative, some major themes emerged:

- **Reports, reporting and CBE results reporting.** These issues combined for a total of 17.9 per cent of respondents. In the Calgary Board of Education this year, results reporting played a major role in how elementary and junior high teachers communicated with parents. Changes to some schools' report card formats were piloted in a limited number of schools while conversations about changes in reporting practices was a major topic of discussion across the system. A document entitled "Making Teaching and Learning Visible: Guiding Principles of Assessment" was produced by the CBE with an intent to "provide a coherent CBE framework for the assessment of outcomes from the Program of Studies and/or a student's Individualized Program Plan", and was introduced to all school principals. Some of these principals passed this along to school staff and the document is in various stages of implementation depending on the school site.
- **Class size.** 8.4 per cent of respondents identified class size as a major change experienced this year. Statistical information from the 2012 and 2013 CBE budgets suggests that a total certificated staff increase of 69.5 FTE was budgeted for the year. The CBE's student population increased by 2922 over the previous year. As the increase in staff was insufficient to accommodate the total student population increase, excess students would have been distributed throughout the system, resulting in larger class sizes experienced by many teachers.
- **Workload.** This concern has been discussed throughout this research summary and was touched upon by many of the survey questions. 6.4 per cent of respondents identified workload as the single biggest change in education this year.
- **Inadequate support for students with special needs and resource reduction.** These concerns are potentially quite closely interconnected, along with workload and class size. 9.6 per cent collectively responded with answers related to these two items. This is the second year of the CBE's redesigned special needs resource allocation system. Personalized learning became increasingly entwined with the concept of inclusion, reducing the amount of pullout special education services that students received.

- **Student diversity, IRIS and personalized learning.** These issues are also connected, accounting collectively for 8.3 per cent of responses. As with the previous item, teachers are experiencing a higher amount of inclusion in their classrooms, increasing student diversity. IRIS is still an option for implementation at schools. Less than 25 per cent of schools have currently adopted this program for use. Personalized learning continues to be a major topic of discussion at the system level and throughout schools, including during the production and review of school development plans.

When considering the greatest change anticipated for education in the coming school year, survey respondents identified areas that suggest a direct relationship to the recent government of Alberta and CBE budget cuts. The top two responses were **class size** (19.4 per cent) and **resource reduction** (17.0 per cent). These two areas may be significantly related, given that “resource reduction” may refer to fiscal, classroom, or other resources, a reduction of which could potentially have a direct impact on class sizes.

The third most-common answer was **reports and reporting** at 7.6 per cent. Teachers are anticipating a change in the way results reporting

for the Board of Trustees is accomplished, as this was announced to principals late in the school year. Some teachers were also informed of major changes to the K-9 report cards in advance of the public receiving notification in mid-June of 2013. **Workload** (6.9 per cent) and **inadequate support for students with special needs** (5.2 per cent) rounded out the top responses, again implying a relationship to budgets and resource reductions, although those identifying workload as a major change did not indicate whether they anticipated an increase or decrease in overall workload.

Plans for the Future

The number of teachers planning a temporary interruption to their careers over the next five years remained stagnant at 38 per cent. The primary reasons for this interruption are childbirth or spending time with family, educational leave, or pursuing other job interests. Other data related to teacher plans for the future remain largely unchanged from 2010. It is interesting to note, however, that the cross-tabulation of those who say they will leave the profession with demographic variables provides no evidence that these intentions are restricted to relatively younger and less-experienced teachers. The 2013 respondents with this intention, for example, are normally distributed by age peaking in the 36-40 category.

Rethinking Transformation

Alberta has been celebrated worldwide for its innovative approach to education (ATA, 2012). Our system produces students who perform well on international tests, and researchers come from around the world to examine our organizational structures and teaching practices. This, however, does not stop us from a drive for improvement. Despite our high-performing students, it is in our nature to strive for better.

School boards across the province have implemented a number of change initiatives for school improvement over the past decade. Much of the funding for this has come from the province's celebrated and successful Alberta Initiative for School Improvement [AISI] program (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2012). It appears, however, that teachers are reaching a plateau in terms of workload – many are expressing feelings of burnout (Duxbury, 2012).

Despite many transformational change agendas across the province being based on data collected in so-called rigorous, scientifically-based research studies, significant pedagogical change in schools remains elusive. Examining the current change process, we find that board administration will often review literature, decide on a new strategic direction, develop policy and provide school leaders with a basic action plan for improvement. At the school level, however, implementation is often done grudgingly, sometimes even under

objection. Qualitative feedback about current change initiatives in the Calgary Board of Education shows that the system direction has been inconsistently implemented, sometimes being met with skepticism or outright resistance (Calgary Public Teachers, 2012). Put simply, the current process is not working.

The transformation process in schools needs to be rethought. If the goal of government and school boards is sustainable transformational change, we must first follow a number of steps in order to facilitate the necessary *conditions* for change. A redesign of the change process must first work to remove current change barriers. This must be followed by determining what preconditions must exist in order for sustainable change to occur in places like the Calgary Board of Education. After meeting the preconditions that *enable* change, implementing a process that *fosters* sustainable change at all levels of the organization is vital. This will include building trust among employee groups, and better engaging employees from all levels of the organization in the overall system direction. Once the foundation for change has been laid, an inclusive engagement process that actively involves change stakeholders and utilizes the analysis of accessible, relevant data is necessary in order to produce lasting transformative change.

Removing Barriers and Valuing Professionalism

Silo Communication as a Barrier

An examination of current change practices will reveal a number of barriers to change that currently exist in the school district. Before embarking on a change journey, there is significant value in examining current barriers to change and attempting to remove them. Removing change barriers makes it far more likely that initiatives will experience success over the long-term; shorter, more temporary transformational bursts are increasingly probable when barriers to change remain in the system. Indeed, teachers and districts are both more likely to indicate that continuous, sustainable change is preferable to transformational bursts. The problem resides in being able to achieve such a feat.

Continuous, sustainable change requires system-wide buy-in and a collective commitment to the ideologies behind the change initiative. Many researchers cite that a major roadblock in school improvement has been teacher resistance (Lachat, 2001; Wagner, Kegan, Lahey, Lemons, Garnier, Helsing, Howell & Thurber Rasmussen, 2006). The reasons for teacher resistance are varied and complex, but the 2013 member survey cites a severe undervaluing of teacher expertise. Only 0.74 per cent of survey respondents strongly agreed that “the CBE values teacher views in determining key educational decisions and

The vast majority of teachers feel disengaged and uninformed in the change process.

programs”. The implication of this is that the vast majority of teachers feel disengaged and uninformed in the change process; moreover, they feel as though their viewpoints and expertise are neither welcomed nor valued. The number of teachers feeling undervalued is also on the rise – whereas 44.5 per cent disagreed or strongly disagreed in 2010 with the earlier value statement, that number now sits at a staggering 71.21 per cent in 2013. An utter lack of

collaboration and involvement in setting a change direction or defining a plan for change, as well as poor communication practices, have negatively impacted the transformational change agenda in the Calgary Board of Education. How can stakeholder groups be expected to embrace change when they have not been consulted and feel that their viewpoints are unwelcomed and unvalued?

One possible rationale for this has been proposed by Buhle & Blachowicz (2009). “*Silo communication* describes an organizational environment in which people or groups do not communicate with other people or groups within the organization. Instead, each person or department tends to operate as a separate entity, frequently making decisions that do not take other aspects of the organization into consideration.”

Silo communication can also be said to occur *within* an individual or group, referring to the inability to rationally connect one body of information with another. It may be the case that school districts, as large and complex organizations, are plagued by the inability to connect with teachers because the full body of information available to the decision-making authority is not being made available to staff at the “bottom” of the organizational hierarchy. Further, it stands to reason that even if all the information *were* to be made available, and employees given due time to consider the full implications of it, staff might not come to the same conclusions as the system leaders. Buhle & Blachowicz (2009) describe a situation where teachers were presented with a body of research about kindergarten student literacy that appeared to contradict their teaching practices, but the educators wanted to continue with their current practice because the teachers’ “extensive internal menu of literacy activities and rich literacy curriculum knowledge were situated in another silo. Neither silo communicated with or informed the other” (*ibid.*, 2009). Extensive coaching and facilitated support activities were

required from the research group in order to help guide staff to connect the two bodies of knowledge. Ultimately, the idea to change teaching practices *originated from the teachers themselves* and fit into the general framework of the research presented. *Teachers engaged in the change process only when they were independently able to come to the conclusion that it made sense to change teaching practice.* The process of arriving at this conclusion, however, came only after extensive time provided for collaboration with colleagues and reflection on personal teaching practice, something that is largely absent from initiative proposals and implementations in Calgary.

Teachers engaged in the change process only when they were independently able to come to the conclusion that it made sense to change teaching practice.

A number of implications follow from the idea that teaching professionals must have the opportunity to independently believe that change is necessary. Given a finite amount of time in the workday, time for collaboration and reflection would need to be carved out of current responsibilities in order for staff to be able to adequately assimilate new data and research, integrating this with their silos of knowledge. This would necessitate the reduction of workload in other areas of teachers' responsibilities. Professional development opportunities provided with release time by the district that are accessible to all teachers is necessary to enable dialogue that engages teachers in the process of reflective practice. Also inherent in this concept is the idea that teachers might require assistance or facilitation to move out of silo communication; this carries a potential cost factor, but makes it no less important in setting up the proper preconditions for transformational change.

The Problems of Forced Compliance and Contrived Collaboration

Without processes such as those described above, providing opportunities for collaboration and reflection, teachers are likely to view change directives as *forced compliance* initiatives. In *Change Leadership*, Wagner et al (2006) explain that forced compliance as a driver of change is ineffective.

[The] culture of compliance may promote a degree of managerial efficiency, but it does not enable the kind of intellectual inquiry and engagement required for authentic and sustainable improvement. In a highly bureaucratized culture that values buy-in rather than ongoing debate and discussion, teachers and principals may appear to 'go along,' while instead harboring a great deal of skepticism or even cynicism about the new project or program they've been told to use. So they may do the minimum or adopt a 'wait and see' attitude. Veteran educators, who have seen too many reforms come and go, frequently sit silently in meetings, saying to themselves, 'This, too, shall pass.'

(Wagner et al, 2006 p. 68-69)

Forced compliance initiatives are still likely to include opportunities for teacher collaboration, but this is often artificial, or, as Datnow (2009) describes it, "*contrived collaboration*". This does produce change, but only over the short-term.

Consider the popular concept of professional learning communities – when the initiative was implemented, some school staff in Calgary reported being directed by their school administrators to meet at specified times, with pre-determined (and immutable) groupings, take meeting minutes (in order to show accountability frameworks that collaboration was taking place), and discuss prescribed topics. This is not organic teacher collaboration, such as takes place in schools under normal circumstances, and was inconsistent with the philosophy of professional learning communities (DuFour, 2004); the implementation of this demonstrated contrived collaboration. Allowing teachers the flexibility to

choose when, where, with whom, and about what they will meet allows for richer, timely conversations about topics that are relevant to student needs. Districts can *facilitate* these conversations by providing opportunities for collaboration, at teachers' discretion, within the school day. Facilitators must be extremely cautious, however, not to prejudice the discussions by leading staff towards a predetermined outcome which, while perhaps sensible and consistent with district thoughts and goals, may not be consistent with the context that exists at each school site and amongst that school's staff. This further works toward the goal of moving out of a pattern of silo communication and being able to achieve broader discussions about transformational change while respecting

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the uniqueness of each school and valuing the experience and opinions of school staff.

In further examining current change initiative processes at the

Calgary Board of Education, we find a strong reliance on the work of John Hattie guiding the direction change should take. Hattie's meta-analysis of multiple initiatives appears to recommend a number of programs of change that would be most effective in raising student achievement. Hattie (2012) argues against implementation of new initiatives without first considering the "effect size", that is, the level of impact a change will have on the measured outputs, as he does in his meta-analysis. While it is certainly advisable with any new initiative to do as Hattie suggests, effect size cannot be the only consideration given to deciding what change might be necessary. The industrial model of change management would have a small number of key policymakers at the "top" of the hierarchy examining research (such as Hattie's) and directing individual schools to implement a specific initiative, or to choose a program of change from a prescribed list based on research done in other districts about the effect size of the

project. This forced-compliance model forgoes the vitally important process of staff involvement in change and operates on a basic assumption that may be flawed – it assumes first that change is necessary, and that the change necessary *must* be one of those that Hattie describes as having the greatest overall effect size.

This process completely disregards work already being done in classrooms and also skips the scientific process whereby controlled experimentation would look at the particular *context* a new initiative might be implemented into and measures both a control group and the experimental group, ultimately finding whether the change is effective in that context. Findings would then be interpreted and a decision made about whether to fully operationalize the change, or to abandon it. An additional problem arises with the industrial model of change when utilizing the work of Hattie: "It's important to know which practices have the biggest positive effects, but a list like [Hattie's] has little value by itself unless you are working with a group of other professionals sharpening the operational meaning of the items on it, and determining how and when to use these different strategies with one's own students." (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012)

Diverse systems will invariably have intervening contextual factors that make a standardized initiative implementation ineffective. Teachers must have the autonomy to be able to consult with their colleagues and implement new practices to the level that they deem appropriate given their specific context. A top-down implementation model that does not give consideration to the uniqueness of each school site is inherently flawed because education is simply not a "one size fits all" system. Take, for example, school development plans. District administration currently provides all school-based administrators with the same direction on the focus of school development plans – a top-down approach. Why can the uniqueness of each school's context not be valued and recognized? Only 1.12 per cent of teachers currently strongly agree with the statement that "the Calgary Board of Education engages and involves teachers with decision making in school development plans as part of the process of personalizing learning";

A top-down implementation model that does not give consideration to the uniqueness of each school site is inherently flawed.

school development plan process becomes precariously short on the contextual factors impacting each school's success. When change directives are implemented in a top-down manner, it suppresses engagement, buy-in and collaboration.

Wagner et al. (2006) would likely agree, although they employ a slightly different angle on this

77.17 per cent are either unsure, disagree, or strongly disagree. Without respecting the voice of school staff and seeking their collaboration and feedback, the

ideology through the consideration of *best practices*. For Wagner, best practices are not "best practices", but rather "practices that work well in that place at that time." There is recognition that context and site-specific characteristics play a significant role in whether a new initiative, or a "best practice" will be able to be implemented effectively, and whether it will ultimately be of any benefit (or, for Hattie, of *sufficient* benefit to be meaningful) to students. Naturally, then, teachers will meet the *imposition* of "best practices" with a strong degree of skepticism if implemented as a forced compliance initiative. In this way, forced compliance does not produce lasting sustainable change, but rather, shorter, temporary transformative bursts.

Building a Culture of Trust

Developing Professional Capital

If we remove barriers such as forced compliance and silo communication, then what can system and school leaders do to encourage transformation? Transformation, after all, cannot occur in isolation – the conditions that promote sustainable, long-term, positive change take time to cultivate. One of the key preconditions for transformation appears to be the development of professional capital in schools. Professional capital refers to a combination of human, social and decisional capital where teachers experience a high degree of collaboration and involvement in decision-making. Researchers suggest a number of strategies for developing professional capital, or elements thereof. Perhaps not surprisingly, these strategies are directed at the development of groups of individuals as opposed to specific key people. This is explained by Hargreaves & Fullan (2012) – “the group is far more powerful than the individual. You need individuals, of course, but the system won’t change, indeed individuals won’t change in large numbers, unless development becomes a persistent collective enterprise.”

A collective enterprise built on systemic trust, such as the one described by Hargreaves & Fullan, is deeply rooted in social capital. Leana (2011) describes a research study

demonstrating that “when the relationships among teachers in a school are characterized by high trust and frequent interaction – that is, when social capital is strong – student achievement scores improve.” Hatch (2012) agrees, explaining that “without these kinds of relationships, giving schools and districts money (or a new strategic plan, a better curriculum, or a new set of assessments) is much less likely to have a significant, positive, organization-wide impact on

The system won’t change, indeed individuals won’t change in large numbers, unless development becomes a persistent collective enterprise.

student learning.” Short transformative bursts are certainly possible in any system – characterized by a documented increase in student achievement, which may or may not be temporary (Hattie, 2012) – but lasting change is harder to achieve and requires different conditions. As Hargreaves & Fullan (2012) would suggest, “certainty [of success] was situational, not statistical – arising out of trust, advice, and shared expertise.”

A few school boards such as the Calgary Board of Education have started down the road towards one of the first strategies used to create professional and social capital – shared understanding. Hatch (2005) suggests that shared understanding builds a common sense of purpose in an organization. This is important in that change cannot occur in a sustainable, long-term fashion unless the change direction is perceived widely enough by the organization’s members to be of value.

One way in which to build shared understanding is through collaborative approaches “that undertake collective examinations of the organization’s history, operations, values, and/or performance” (Hatch, 2005). The Calgary Board of Education has been successful in the past in engaging with employee groups to put forward a collective statement of values in the Working Relationship Commitment Document. This is the exception to the rule, however – the CBE has only started to consider engaging teachers in major change initiatives such as the now-defunct AISI Cycle 5 (Calgary Board of Education, 2012), but has encountered one of Hatch’s “fatal errors” in building shared understanding – “strategies that foster collective understanding in one ‘unit’ of an organization (like a department or a school) may not work when trying to build shared understanding across units”. There was a basic assumption in AISI Cycle 5 that school units can build shared understanding by focusing on the school development planning process. Is the school development planning process the appropriate place for creating shared

understanding, however? The creation of a school development plan ought to instead be a *product* of shared understanding – one cannot create a full school development plan without all staff members first coming to a collective understanding of the problem and the context surrounding the issue. Shared understanding must be built upon *before* school development planning can take place.

Shared understanding cannot be developed exclusively by one party; a high degree of collaboration between members of a school staff will need to take place in order to achieve this goal. A reservoir of professional capital is required beforehand. One way to start building professional capital while concurrently working towards shared understanding can be through professional development, an activity long synonymous with instructional improvement. There appears, however, to be a reversal in ideology suggesting “a need to shift from involving individual teachers in a roster of short-term activities that cover a wide-range of topics to engaging groups of teachers in a series of related activities that are more closely connected to teachers’ day-to-day classroom responsibilities and are focused on the improvement of student learning in a specific content area” (Hatch, 2005).

Teachers, as professionals, recognize the value in receiving development on new initiatives. Professional learning cannot, however, be reduced to teachers merely being lectured on the principles and ideologies inherent in the concept under discussion. Teachers must have ample opportunity for professional collaboration in order to reflect on how theory will guide their own personal practice, as well as consider whether the initiative itself is a viable new direction for a school. Teachers in Calgary recently pointed out that a lack of adequate professional development and collaboration time has been, and continues to be, a major barrier in the implementation of the ideologies of personalized learning (Calgary Public Teachers, 2012). Respondents in the 2013 member survey clearly identified that access to PD within the school day does not exist for 58.34 per cent of teachers. A further 12.11 per cent were unsure. Only 6.3 per cent strongly agreed that they could

access professional development during the school day, which indicates a significant lack of ability for participating in collaborative activities and growth. An increased provision of timely, flexible professional development that engages groups of teachers on topics relevant to their context during a time that integrates well with their other professional obligations would help to build significant amounts of professional capital amongst teachers, as suggested by Hargreaves & Fullan. A particular emphasis is placed here on collaborative participation of teachers in professional development opportunities, as this also helps to satisfy the request of teachers for greater time to collaborate with colleagues.

A lack of adequate professional development and collaboration time has been, and continues to be, a major barrier in the implementation of the ideologies of personalized learning.

Teacher collaboration activities are central to the idea of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) as envisioned by Richard DuFour (2004). Cultivating learning communities is a complex task for any school leader – they “must be built on trust, effective communication, clear goals and objectives, with strong and sure administrative support, before much productive work can be accomplished.” (Ciurysek, Handsaeme, Palko, Sterling, & Toth, n.d.). With the amount of work school leaders need to put into creating the right conditions for effective PLCs to flourish, it comes as no surprise that many have fallen into the trap of then creating a contrived system of accountability to monitor them. This is often done in the hopes of encouraging teachers to view PLCs as vital work:

If someone doesn’t push PLCs, there is a worry that individually autonomous teachers may not get around to purposeful interaction. This push might come from administrators if capacity in a school or a group of schools has been weak and teachers have little prior

experience with professional collaboration. It might equally be teacher leaders who may have to push their administrators to give them time to collaborate on learning agendas about which they are more knowledgeable than their principals.

(Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012, p. 129)

The goal of creating PLCs can be met without rigid accountability structures. Teachers regularly collaborate and engage in pedagogical discussion with colleagues. Given the right conditions, organic PLCs are likely to develop due merely to the nature of teaching. In those cases where they do not, as Hargreaves & Fullan explain, a small “push” may be all that is necessary. Teachers, as professionals, can be trusted to participate in PLCs in pursuit of the goal of school or instructional improvement without being monitored by rigid and artificial accountability structures. Similarly, school leaders need not dictate topics for PLCs, as teachers’ professional and instructional needs will naturally guide conversation towards areas requiring improvement. The prerequisite in this process is the element of *trust*.

The Importance of Trust in Building Professional Capital

Fostering high levels of trust is an absolutely vital component of developing professional learning communities and professional capital.

Hargreaves & Fullan (2012) examined a high-performing system in England and identified trust as an essential and irremovable element of that system’s success. “Knowledge of and presence in the schools by district staff provide support, build trust, and ground intervention in consistent and direct personal knowledge and communication more than in the numerical data

Trust is an essential and irremovable element of success.

that eventually appear on spreadsheets. Time and again, school leaders say they trust and are trusted by the district, and district leaders say the same.”

The process of school and district leaders engendering trust came from their fulfillment of the role of an instructional leader. Since teachers tend to trust their colleagues more than outsiders (Buhle & Blachowicz, 2009), what if the district leadership became more visible, and visibly engaged, in schools? Staff may, at first, feel some shock and suspicion, but the experience of being in schools would ultimately accomplish two things: an increased ability of district leaders to understand the day-to-day life of a classroom teacher, and an increased sense from teaching staff that district leaders are actually active and engaged colleagues in the learning process, not directors. The combination of increased understanding and collegiality then engenders greater trust throughout the district.

While this is a highly time-consuming process, district leaders getting involved in schools is only one prong of trust-building. Supporting the behaviours and actions of school staff that are consistent with the *collectively* agreed-upon values of the district is also key. The Calgary Board of Education has made some movement in this direction with the introduction of the Working Relationship Commitment (CBE, n.d.), which commits all employees in the CBE to “a culture of respect, trust and participation in support of student learning.” The difficulty employee groups encounter, however, comes from an apparent inability of many within the system to actually *live* the commitment, or enforce it, despite the document’s forward-thinking philosophy. Anecdotal feedback from a number of Calgary public teachers has shown that while support exists for the ideologies behind the Working Relationship Commitment, there is a significant lack of trust in the ability of the organization to live by this standard. Indeed, teachers expressed fear of negative repercussions and backlash against them were they to speak out about an individual who was not adhering to the Working Relationship Commitment. This speaks once again to the lack of trust exhibited within the organizational culture.

Building organizational trust is a task that requires the dedication of employees at all levels of an organization. Six & Sorge (2008) performed a study that recommends changes to

organizational policy that help to build high-trust environments.

- (1) Creation of a culture in which relationships are important and showing care and concern for the other person's needs is valued.
- (2) Facilitation of (unambiguous) relational signaling among colleagues (vertically and horizontally).
- (3) Explicit socialization to make newcomers understand the values and principles of the organization and how 'we do things around here'.
- (4) Mechanisms to manage, match, and develop employees' professional competencies.

(Six & Sorge, 2008, p. 866)

Barriers to change in the Calgary Board of Education hinge on a number of these points. First, employees perceive that there is systemic opportunistic behaviour exhibited by management; that is, the trust employees have traditionally placed in management is perceived to be taken advantage of, with management sacrificing the welfare of employees in favour of achieving organizational goals. Nowhere is this more evident than the recent work-life balance study by Dr. Linda Duxbury & Christopher Higgins (2013), indicating that teachers face significant role overload, and that work is heavily interfering with family life (74.0 per cent of respondents indicated a high level of interference). Respondents in the Duxbury survey indicated a strong perception (61.0 per cent) that the organizational culture in the CBE is concentrated on the belief that work ought to be the employee's primary priority. This data was further corroborated by Calgary Public Teachers' 2013 member survey, where 81.07 per cent of respondents indicated their working in excess of 50 hours per week, and 62.98 per cent stating an inability to balance work and personal life.

A vital aspect of employee welfare is maintaining a healthy balance between work and home life. With the imbalance indicated in Duxbury & Higgins' research, and concerns that remain

largely unaddressed by administration, employees feel a lack of care and concern from the employer. The CBE is not currently demonstrating their belief in the first of Six & Sorge's recommendations, as employees are feeling a significant deficit in concern for their needs. In a system where leadership decisions do not keep employee welfare in mind, trust is lost. For example, 42.87 per cent of teachers indicate that "job pressures interfering with family or personal life" is a high stressor in their lives. A further 40.4 per cent identify it as a moderate stressor. This kind of demand on employee welfare does not create a workplace environment built on trust and mutual benefit. Further to this, survey data indicates teachers perceive a lack of effort to build and maintain positive relationships with individual employees in the system, further resulting in a loss of trust. When 63.18 per cent of teachers feel that the attitude of their school board towards teachers is a moderate-to-high stressor, that

presents a significant challenge for the employer to overcome. An atmosphere like this does not foster trust in employees – the result is, in fact, quite the opposite.

When management is perceived to be sacrificing the welfare of employees in favour of achieving organizational goals, trust is lost and employees feel taken advantage of.

Tying in with this is ambiguous relational signaling that pervades system messaging. Most system messaging received by all employees is electronic, which lacks any sort of relational signal from the sender – everything is left open to interpretation by the recipient. What the sender views as a positive relational signal may be interpreted by the recipient as potentially ambiguous or negative, leading to caution or distrust. Where system messages are distributed by school administrators in face-to-face staff meetings, the intended relational signaling varies widely from what central administration intends, as they have delegated the messaging to a third party. This, too, is ineffective in achieving organizational goals. If the objective is to have consistent messaging to build shared

understanding, there can be no ambiguity as to what the subtext of the message might be; likewise, messaging must be clear, concise and direct. Six & Sorge (2008) discuss how it takes a considerable amount of time for consistently positive relational signaling to improve the trust relationship between employer and employees, but that it is no less vital to the process of organizational trust-building.

One consistent message delivered by central administration has been expressing that their actions are done in the best interests of students, and the assertion that this goal is and must be common to all employee groups as well. What is often forgotten is the fact that the best interests of students cannot be achieved at the expense of employee well-being, and that acting in a manner that adversely affects employee well-being leads

Acting in a way that can be perceived to negatively impact employee well-being also results in a loss of trust, even if that perception was not intended or adverse impacts are not actually extant.

to a loss of trust. In equal measure, acting in a way that can be perceived to negatively impact employee well-being also results in a loss of trust, even if that perception was not intended or adverse impacts are not actually extant. While positive, unambiguous messaging has occurred in some cases, the subtext or latent content of any given communication may transgress one of the other three of Six & Sorge's tenets for trust-building. The misinterpretation of well-meaning messaging can be quite frustrating for district administration, but a workplace characterized by a low-trust environment will yield greater instances of misunderstanding in communications than one characterized by high-trust conditions (Six & Sorge, 2008). One side effect of low workplace trust is that employees desire to have greater involvement and control over new system initiatives and directions in an effort to stem the erosion of employee wellness, as they do not trust management to look out for

their welfare while acting in the best interests of students.

Six & Sorge's third recommendation – inducting new employees into a revised workplace culture – may be difficult to implement. The CBE is a large organization of more than 14 000 employees and any company of this size will experience a significant amount of renewal in its workforce on a regular basis. This, however, does not mean that concerted efforts cannot be made to acculturate new employees to this unique work environment. Common practices around orienting employees new to the system have been proposed by Calgary Public Teachers, Local 38 of the Alberta Teachers' Association, for a number of years. Six & Sorge's third recommendation would indicate that the co-development of an orientation program with the CBE would be beneficial for employees and the overall organizational culture. A number of configurations of new employee socialization could be considered that do not have major cost implications. This serves to build *instructional capacity*, characterized by Hatch (2012) as the “understandings, experiences, and attitudes” that teachers bring to the classroom, in addition to the instructional content. While building an organizational culture in an educational institution, instructional capacity must be a key focus for school leaders in order to begin building shared understandings at the start of the employment relationship.

Finally, Human Resource processes need to be examined surrounding employee professional competency management, matching and development. For example, making the hiring process for leadership positions clear and transparent will help to build trust in subordinates that the successful applicants have been promoted free from undue internal or external influences and are indeed the most qualified individuals for the job. As happens in any organization, there have been some that are concerned that those hired to upper management may have achieved these positions based more on a willingness to “go along” with current CBE philosophy than demonstrated leadership capacity and ability to innovate or provide instructional leadership. Concentrating

additional CBE resources on developing professional competencies would also prove invaluable, as it further demonstrates to employees that administration is truly concerned with helping workers achieve their full potential. Another example of management practice changes that could positively impact employee trust would be to clarify the rules surrounding staff surplussing and offering of contracts. Anecdotal comments received by Local 38 on an annual basis indicate that uncertainty surrounding staffing processes have a negative impact on employee trust in management. A topical change in this area could be greatly beneficial.

Taken collectively, if we choose to undertake Six & Sorge's recommendations for organizational policy development, there are clear directions for the Calgary Board of Education. A basic adjustment of the goals of the organization needs to take place. Setting policy directions that eliminate "opportunistic behaviour" and sees administration consider employee welfare *as a central element* of the organizational goals when participating in decision-making is an essential element to trust-building in the CBE. This is in

Considering employee welfare as a central element of the organizational goals when participating in decision-making is an essential element to trust-building.

stark contrast to the current relational messaging demonstrated by the employer, wherein employees' prevailing impression is that any conceived policy emphasizing the primacy of employee wellness runs counterproductive to organizational goals and the "best interests of students". In what way is the promotion of teacher wellness not in the best

interests of students? Why does employee wellness necessarily conflict with organizational productivity? A number of researchers have identified positive employee health and wellness as being effective in boosting productivity and organizational outcomes (Duxbury, 2012). A

realignment of system values will be ineffective without an examination of the additional policy that facilitates unambiguous relational signaling; that is, implementing a communications strategy that allows employees to correctly receive positive trust-building messaging for what it is. An organization cannot simply state that they have placed concern for employee welfare at the center of decision-making; they must also exhibit relational signals that confirm this belief in order to build trust. The Working Relationship Commitment document is a statement of the organization's values, but relational signals across the system run contrary to the content of the Commitment. This is an example of why Six & Sorge's four recommendations for trust-building need to be considered as a package – individually, none of the recommendations would alone be sufficient to revive the trust relationship between employer and employees.

Furthermore, shared understandings of system problems cannot be achieved when the distraction of mistrust is impeding development. In this way, trust can be perceived as a major precondition to sustainable transformation. The current desire of

Shared understandings of system problems cannot be achieved when the distraction of mistrust is impeding development.

employees to serve as "watchdogs" or "overseers" on new system initiatives demonstrates a clear lack of trust; during meetings about initiative development, are participants focused on the viability of the project and applying their unique contextual lens to the value of the project, or are they focused on ascertaining the level of negative impact the project will have on their core work? Employees and employer would both prefer the former, but without trust in the employer looking out for employee welfare, the latter focus might be prevalent. A shared focus on mutually agreed upon organizational goals greatly aids in the transformational change process; trust is a key enabling element in creating this shared focus.

Teachers are the Key to Transformation

Data Users in Transformative Change

After the preconditions for change have been met, stakeholders can begin the process of effecting sustainable transformative change in schools. With sustained trust relationships in place, the focus can pass exclusively to the issues facing each school site. As stakeholders begin to collaboratively build shared understanding and identify issues that merit targeting for improvement, the question of data collection for the purposes of informing decision-making comes to the fore. There appears to be disagreement in research over *how* data should be used in education and *by whom*. Hess (2009) describes the transition experienced by the education system from a mindset of data evasion to one of utter reliance on data as the basis for any sort of decision-making process. Whereas data may have been used almost exclusively in the 1990s for research and study, it now appears to be utilized primarily by central office staff and school administrators for policy and improvement initiative development purposes. Hess notes the dangers of overreliance on data, a sentiment mirrored by Hargreaves & Shirley (2009) – if a school system’s leadership becomes distracted by the belief that their newly developed data-based policies are correct and leave no room for discussion, divergence, or questions from the field, the resulting forced compliance will ultimately prove ineffective, even damaging, despite good intentions. Conversely, ignoring the available data could also prove to be a negative course of action:

The key is not to retreat from data but to truly embrace the data by asking hard questions, considering organizational realities, and contemplating unintended consequences. Absent sensible restraint, it is not difficult to envision a raft of poor judgments governing staffing, operations, and instruction – all in the name of ‘data-driven decision making’.
(Hess, 2009)

District leaders run the risk of a failed change initiative when implementing new programs on

the basis of incomplete data, or without fully exploring the consequences of implementation and consulting with stakeholders to garner feedback on the potential

impacts of these new policies. Consulting the teaching profession, during school development planning, for example, about what these changes will actually look like in practice is an essential step prior to any implementation or initiative rollout, as this produces vital feedback and dialogue that helps staff to move out of silo communication and demonstrate a greater commitment to transformative change. Charging ahead without sufficient consultation or forethought will not induce sustainable transformative change.

Charging ahead without sufficient consultation or forethought will not induce sustainable transformative change.

Even as data-based (as opposed to data-informed) decision-making has become increasingly commonplace in education, there has been debate as to what kind of data qualifies for consideration in the decision-making process. “Current research suggests that the use of standardized test scores, school, community and student demographic data have been effective to inform general program improvement objectives” (Pella, 2012), but other data such as formative assessments and qualitative observations by teachers should also be taken into consideration.

In addition, other school management data readily available to school boards, currently being ignored as irrelevant to the teaching and learning process, needs to be examined. Data on employee satisfaction with human resource processes, for example, would be of exceptional use; likewise, work-life balance surveys and employee health measures would provide invaluable direction to preventative health initiatives, among other things. Healthy teachers mean a better learning environment for students.

Teachers have access to a wide array of data, more so given the advent of specialized software that has the potential to disaggregate data into teacher-specified groupings. All of these data are useful, but should not be utilized for decision-making in isolation. Education is a complex field influenced by many factors and cannot be pigeonholed or summarized by one set of statistics. For example, the 2013 member survey indicates that 54.06 per cent of members agree with the statement that “non-instructional duties interfere with my ability to teach.” Taken in isolation, this can be interpreted in a limited manner, but when considered collectively with other statistical measures and contextual factors, one can understand *which* non-instructional duties are interfering with the ability to teach,

Education is a complex field influenced by many factors and cannot be pigeonholed or summarized by one set of statistics.

and *why*, as well as the extent of the impact on student learning. One might also be able to get a sense of whether the additional duties are necessary or not.

Similarly, the member survey points out that 13.44 per cent of teachers report working in an unsafe, harassing environment. This is an increase from 11.5 per cent in 2010. This information is interesting in isolation, but taken collectively with other school and education data, would provide a more complete picture of school culture and potentially then aid in the development of a direction for school improvement. While data reporting student feelings of safety is often examined, teacher measures are not typically data that is usually examined by school leaders.

Key Questions

- Should teacher ratings of feeling safe be taken into consideration when participating in school development planning?
- More than a tenth of the CBE’s teaching population (roughly 700 employees) feels unsafe and harassed while at work. Is this an acceptable number?
- Are student interests best served when school staff are distracted by feeling unsafe and harassed?
- Can data on employee safety be ignored in the school development planning process?

Data Informing Transformative Change

In “Data-Driven High School Reform: The Breaking Ranks Model”, Lachat (2001) describes a variety of data sources administrators ought to take into consideration when seeking school improvement. *Figure 1* illustrates the data utilized by the Breaking Ranks model and its intended use. Taken collectively, the data suggested by Lachat is rich in variety and has the potential to be disaggregated in multiple ways for many different purposes. The core assumption in this model, however, is that these are the only factors impacting achievement and school performance. While “economic status” is suggested as a component for consideration under the category of demographic data, Berliner (2012) is clear in stating that the social problems caused by inequality and poverty have a far greater impact than is currently being considered by models such as *Breaking Ranks*. Despite the inability of individual schools to impact social policy directly, it would still be instructive to take this type of demographic data into account when considering the viability of a proposed initiative at a specific site.

It has been a long-standing belief of the Alberta Teachers’ Association that teachers’ teaching conditions are students’ learning conditions. What is the impact of teacher stress due to overload on student achievement? The 2013 member survey would suggest that assessment and reporting produces a moderate-to-high level of stress for teachers, with 76.63 per cent reporting stress in this area, a 6 per cent increase over the 2010 survey. If higher stress has caused teachers to invest more time into student assessment, it follows that time working directly with students may have decreased as a result. Has the increasing requirement for summative and anecdotal reporting to the community decreased teacher use of formative assessments?

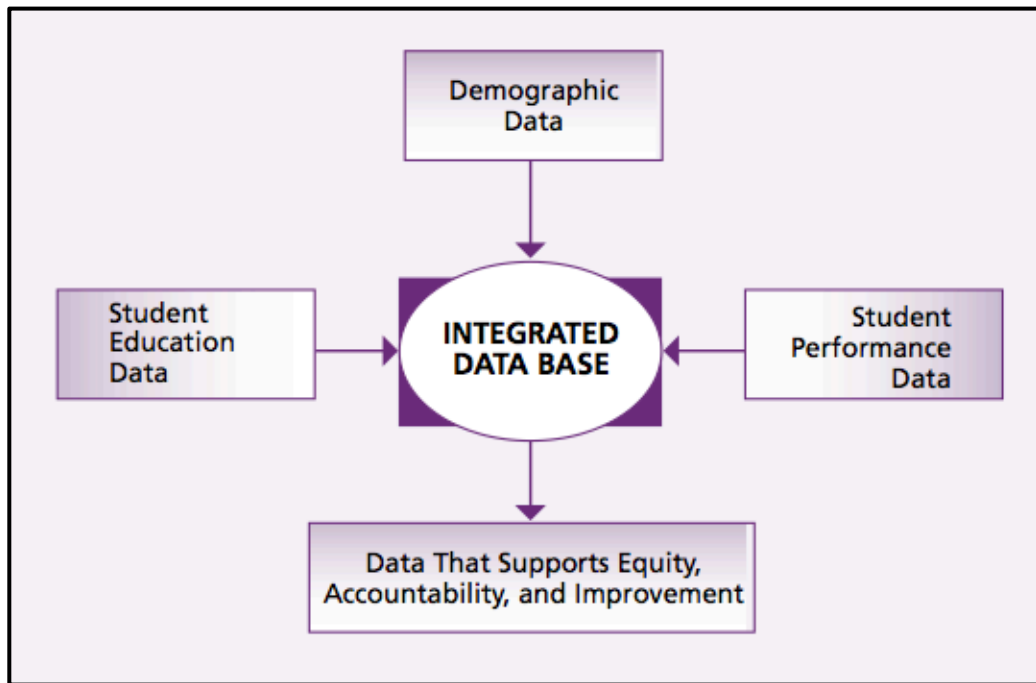


Figure 1 – *Breaking Ranks Model Integrated Database* (Lachat, 2001)

If so, what is the impact on student learning? 49.62 per cent of survey respondents indicate that current district policies and expectations to report student progress to parents, including frequent, detailed report cards, is having a negative or very negative impact on students. This is a massive increase of almost 300 per cent over 2010. These data points are valid information to consider when attempting to engage in transformational change.

School management data has also been largely ignored in the reform movement (Hess, 2009), although it also impacts school performance. What is the impact of the mismanagement of a teacher’s pay on educators’ ability to implement pedagogical change? Data-based decision-making structures “in which leaders give short shrift to the operations, hiring, and financial practices that are the back-bone of any well-run organization and that are crucial to supporting educators” (Hess, 2009) could be having negative impacts on students and schools. The employer, however, does not find much place for this data in system transformation discussions. Certainly, Lachat finds no place for it in the *Breaking Ranks Model*. Are the myriads of employees in school districts who do not interact directly with students irrelevant to the learning process? If they are, why then do we employ them? If they are not,

why are we excusing them from sharing accountability for their involvement in the learning process? This supports the consideration of a much wider array of data in decision-making than is currently being employed.

Measure the factors that we care about, rather than caring only for the things we measure.

It would be fallacious to state that resource availability plays no part in school performance (41.64 per cent of CBE teachers identify inadequate teaching and learning resources as a moderate or high stressor in teaching); likewise, it would be inappropriate to ignore the role that *timely* formative teacher feedback plays in deep student learning. Dr. Joel Westheimer advocates for the measurement of factors that we care about, rather than caring only for the things we measure (2011) – this means that we may need to measure factors that are not easy to capture in a simple statistic. If a factor influences student achievement but does not easily lend itself to input in a database for disaggregation, does that justify its removal from consideration? Is anecdotal, qualitative data not equally as useful as measured, quantitative data? How can we integrate these two types of data into a new form of holistic data-based decision-making?

System Leaders Facilitate the Co-Creation of Great Schools for All

Transformational Change to Create a Great School for All

The wide variety of data *available* for collection is staggering. With the development of new technologies, data is more readily available to us today than it ever has been before. The system administration needs to provide leadership in *collecting* data relevant to each site's improvement process as requested by school leaders – indeed, in cases such as human resource data, system leaders will be the only ones who *can* collect this. Engaging change stakeholders at each school site in a discussion about the *kinds* of data that need to be collected is essential; likewise, consultation surrounding the *manner* of data collection would be well advised given the potentially intrusive and disruptive nature of some data collection methods. The district, in facilitating the data collection and research efforts of individual sites, will be able to suggest efficiencies which would otherwise not be available to stakeholder groups.

It is also the task of system leaders to build organizational capacity in facilitating the interpretation and use of the data by stakeholders who are engaging in building improvement initiatives into school development plans. Despite the system having access to data from across the Board, the task of *interpreting* the data must fall to the professionals at each site tasked with developing change goals and implementing new programming. System specialists certainly have the ability to interpret the data themselves, but it is vital that stakeholders at the school level have the opportunity to reach their own conclusions about the data sets they have requested. In grappling with the data themselves, they may very well reach entirely different conclusions than system specialists, not to mention the fact that new understandings or issue identification could come from the process of data interpretation. This

helps to break down internal silo communication barriers.

As a focal connection to the array of change initiatives being implemented, system leaders can play a crucial role in connecting school sites with similar issues or projects. Facilitating this collaboration is important in that schools can certainly learn from each other; there must be

The system facilitator's role would be to connect school leaders, provide opportunities for collaboration, and suggest, rather than impose, possible efficiencies.

recognition, however, that transformative change will not look the same at any two sites. Contextual factors and differences in the teaching and student populations will necessarily dictate differences in the goals of the change program as well as

personalize the method of implementation, even if there are similarities to another site and cross-site sharing is possible. The system facilitator's role would be to connect school leaders, provide opportunities for collaboration, and suggest, rather than impose, possible efficiencies that could be achieved through collaboration.

The school development planning process is then an efficient forum in which to engage in sustainable transformation. The cycle begins with strong trust relationships having already been developed. As a result, stakeholders are ready to cultivate shared understanding and identify issues for improvement. These same stakeholders will follow by identifying the data required to inform change on those issues, which may perhaps require facilitation from a system leader. The data collection process begins at a time and in a manner appropriate to that school's needs, after which the system leader may be

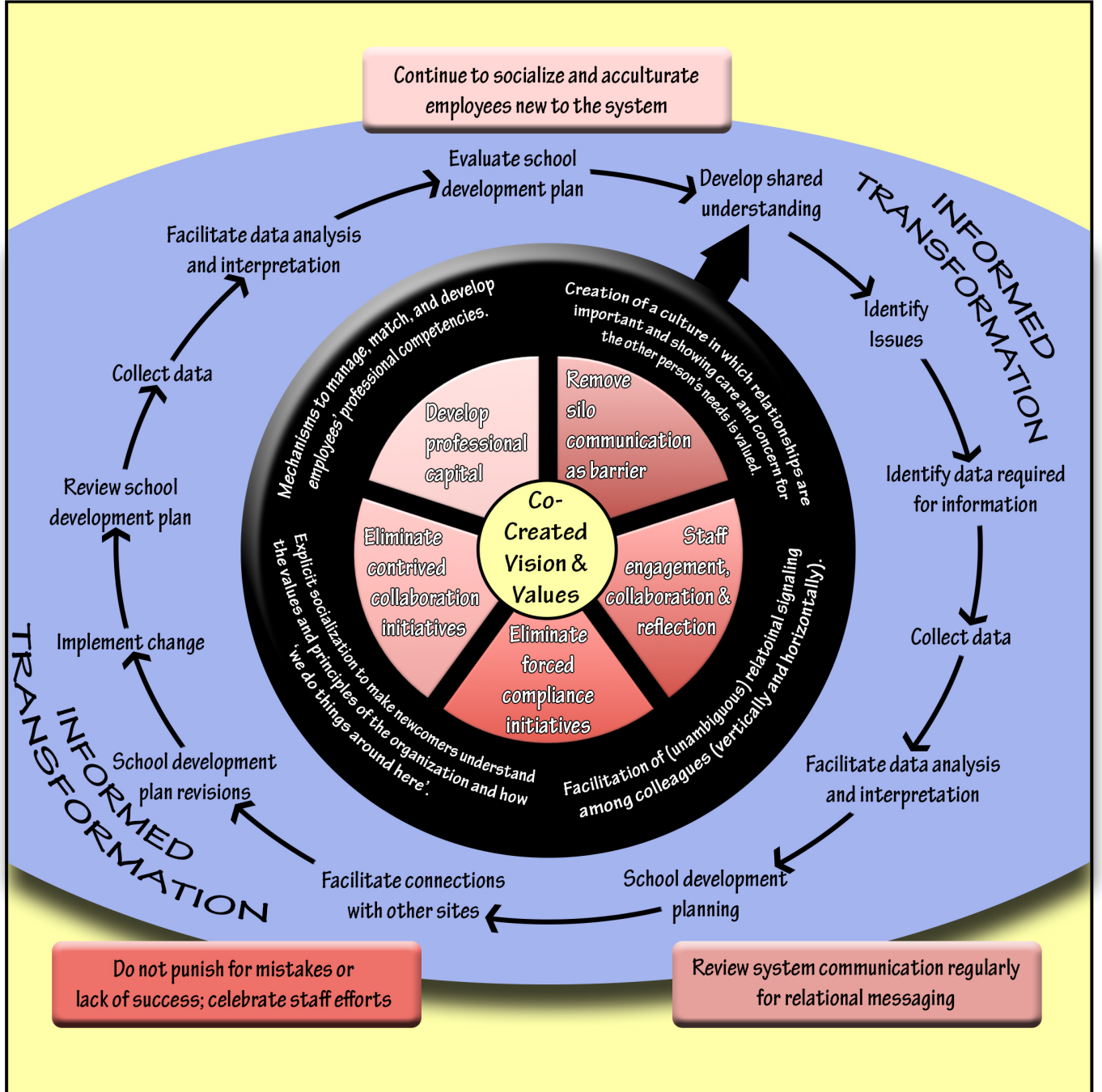
invited to facilitate a conversation about data interpretation and analysis. The data, now collected and having been interpreted by the stakeholders themselves, can be integrated with staff members' current silos of knowledge. In the creation of the school development plan document (which will not have been done until now) can begin in earnest, as teachers' professional judgment will have enabled a contrast of the issues and data collected, thus resulting in a discussion of potential courses of action and a decision as to which course to take. System leaders, upon reviewing schools' plans, may see opportunities for the facilitation of connections with other school sites in order to find efficiencies in practice or to build broader professional learning communities. These opportunities may be offered to each school site, the stakeholders of which may then decide whether to participate in a broader engagement or not. After finding connections with other sites and providing time for staff to reflect on the draft school development plan, revisions to the plan can be made. At this point, the plan will be ready for implementation in the school. When the expiration of the plan's term is approaching, school staff should complete a further review of the planning document to determine what final data ought to be collected for evaluative purposes. Once again, system leaders may be able to *facilitate* this process as specialists in the area of data collection and analysis, *aiding school leaders* in developing effective data collection tools or processes. Once again, the reflective professionals at each site would analyze and interpret the data collected describing the effect of the change brought about by the school development plan. This would flow into the final stage in the planning process, an evaluation of the effectiveness of the plan.

Because sustainable transformation is an ongoing developmental process (Alberta Teachers' Association, 2012; Patton, 2011), the results obtained in evaluating the newly-completed school development plan would be used to inform the creation of shared understanding and issue identification in the construction of the *subsequent* development plan. While this is a process that may take years to complete, the dynamic nature of education makes change the

only constant. There are some additional things to keep in mind throughout the change process, however, based on the earlier preconditions and enabling factors for effective change. The process of trust-building, for example, is not one that ends after achieving some arbitrary milestone. Trust must continue to be built and maintained in order for sustainable transformation processes to continue to operate effectively. A breakdown in trust during the implementation phase of the school development plan, for example, could cause staff to become disillusioned and disengaged, thus adversely impacting the goals of the change plan. Part of building trust is also embracing failure. While this may, initially, appear counterintuitive, this demonstrates to stakeholders at school sites that the system places value on engaging in the change process, even if the goals are ultimately unsuccessful. The celebration of the efforts of the staff, whether they bear fruit or not, continues to build on the foundation of trust that was laid before engaging in transformational change. Punishing schools, leaders, or individuals for failure would quickly erode the trust built in previous stages. System leaders need to closely monitor this, and all of the preconditions to change, to ensure that the best environment exists for school leaders and professional educators to engage in transformational change. Consistently reviewing system messaging to check for relational messaging is important, as is the need to continually socialize and acculturate employees that are new to the system. These tasks are difficult at a site-based level, but far easier to perform on a system-basis. As schools cycle through the change process, system leaders provide visible leadership as the pillar of support that allows the change cycle to run smoothly and effectively.

The dynamic nature of education makes change the only constant.

Co-Creating a Culture of Trust



Conclusions

Achieving sustainable transformational change to create a great school for all is not a small undertaking. At its most basic level, it will require the co-development of collectively agreed upon organizational values and vision, followed by massive organizational trust-building and considerate use of a wide range of data. Removing barriers to change is an essential first step. Two main barriers common in education districts are silo communication and forced compliance/contrived collaboration initiatives. Reimagining the role of system leaders as facilitators of professional dialogue rather than directors of education processes, a demonstration of visible leadership by breaking down silo communication and eliminating forced compliance initiatives serves to begin creating the conditions for transformative change.

True transformational change also requires professional capital; that is, the capacity of teachers, schools, and districts, to be able to achieve change. The challenge of building professional capital in the Calgary Board of Education involves approaching transformation from multiple angles. First among them is building trust, but providing opportunities for authentic, organic teacher collaboration is absolutely essential. Without creating an atmosphere of contrived collaboration, opportunities for teachers to have professional dialogue with their colleagues serves to facilitate the breakdown of silo communication. Boards can help to foster this dialogue, which might be a role that key system leaders can play as part of their responsibilities for school improvement. With their ability to access a significant quantity of data, system leaders have the ability to facilitate collaborative discussion around multiple data sets. It is important, however, that the conclusions drawn from the data belong to school staff, not the district-selected representative. Sustainable transformative change will occur from the bottom up in this process, not from the top down. Teachers require the autonomy to be able to own the data themselves, come to their own conclusions, and

reflect on their practice without being told what the expected outcome ought to be.

Professional development goes hand-in-hand with collaboration, as effective PD, more often than not, involves teachers reflecting on current practice with their colleagues based on new information and concepts presented to them. Here again, system leaders may have a role to play as part of the instructional leadership of the organization. It does not work to simply “tell” teachers what the direction of the district will be, or how teachers “should” change their practice – professional practice is an intensely personal quality, the transformation of which comes after a great deal of time, reflection, collaboration, and experimentation.

An examination of a district’s organizational culture is also necessary before starting transformative change processes. Six & Sorge (2008) suggest a four-pronged approach to changing an organization’s culture that helps to build trust, but also enable collaborative change processes to occur:

- (1) Creation of a culture in which relationships are important and showing care and concern for the other person’s needs is valued.
- (2) Facilitation of (unambiguous) relational signaling among colleagues (vertically and horizontally).
- (3) Explicit socialization to make newcomers understand the values and principles of the organization and how ‘we do things around here’.
- (4) Mechanisms to manage, match, and develop employees’ professional competencies.

(Six & Sorge, 2008, p. 866)

After all of this has happened, district administration can move towards building shared understanding and collaborating to set mutual

goals. The current process of transformation has assumed that achieving shared understanding is the first step in the transformation process, when in fact it is likely to be one of the last. One cannot have shared understanding without trust, and trust requires all parties to feel personal regard, care and concern for each other. Absent this, we cannot rely on the capabilities of each other in this complex system. In developing shared understanding between change stakeholders, it is likely that engagement in issue identification for the purposes of building a school development plan will engender a cohesive working relationship between stakeholder groups. System leaders may facilitate discussion and propose efficiencies that can be achieved in the areas of data set identification, collection, and assist in interpretation. Additionally, facilitating connections with other school sites that have identified similar projects for their own school development plans is a helpful and unique role system leaders can play in aiding schools to find efficiencies in practice.

While system leaders may facilitate conversations about data to be used in decision-making, they need to keep in mind the advice of Hess (2009), who dictates four keys to making good use of data: first, ensuring data use coincides with sound judgment. School staff may demonstrate silo communication, but system leaders may be able to facilitate an interpretive process that enables the breakdown of these barriers to change. This is different that dictating the system leader's own interpretation of the data, however – it must remain the domain of staff at each school site to determine what the appropriate use

of data might be. Second, utilizing a variety of data relevant to areas in which change may occur is an important role for system specialists, as they will have the experience necessary to be able to suggest and access potentially valuable data sets that school staff might not otherwise have known about. Third, system leaders must remind themselves to avoid the dictation of outcomes of change and instead focus on facilitating conversations on the insights research can provide. Finally, rewarding attempts at transformational change, whether they are successful or not, is vital inasmuch as it demonstrates to stakeholders that their efforts are valued and that their professional judgment continues to be trusted as we participate in the shared work of transformational change. Ultimately, however, appropriate data use cannot *produce* sustained change; it can only *inform* it.

The Calgary Board of Education's Working Relationship Commitment statement indicates that "[a]s proud employees of the Calgary Board of Education we commit to a culture of respect, trust and participation in support of student learning" (CBE, n.d.) The goal of both the employer and employee is to support student learning – in order to accomplish this goal, teachers' voices must be recognized; the district must build a stronger, supportive working environment and involve its professionals more authentically in the system direction and change development. It is in that spirit that we suggest, here, ways in which to make this statement a reality and produce true transformational change for the better in Calgary's schools.

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Appendix A: 2013 Member Survey

Teaching and Learning Conditions Survey—2013

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

Please circle the appropriate number

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 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. | 1 | 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 |
| m) The access that students and families have to needed mental health services. | 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

Please circle the appropriate number

| | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 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 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

Please circle the appropriate number

| | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 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) Ends/Results Reporting. | 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 |

D. POTENTIAL SOURCES OF STRESS IN TEACHING

4. The following statements identify possible sources of work stress that can inhibit your personal well-being. Use the scale below and circle the appropriate number that applies to the level of stress you experienced associated with each of the following situations.

1 Not applicable 2 Low 3 Moderate 4 High

Please circle the appropriate number

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| a) Marking and evaluating student work. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| b) Administering and supervising provincial examinations. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| c) Analysing 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 |
| h) Completing Student Learning Plans and Learner Profiles (Iris). | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| i) Keeping up with the demands of teaching generally. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| j) Job pressures interfering with my family or personal life. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | | | | |
| k) Lack of preparation time. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| l) The size of my classes. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| m) The composition of my classes (eg, unsupported students with special needs). | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| n) The unmet needs of students in my classes. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| o) Students with disruptive behaviors. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| p) Inadequate teaching and learning resources. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| q) Lack of control over my professional practice. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| r) Attitude of the public toward teachers. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| s) Attitude of my school board toward teachers. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| t) Attitude of the government toward teachers. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

E. 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

Please circle the appropriate number

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 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

Please circle the appropriate number

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| a) The Local 38 website. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| b) Local 38 social media (Twitter, Facebook, YouTube). | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| c) Email updates from the Local. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| d) The <i>ATA Magazine</i> . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| e) The <i>ATA News</i> . | 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 A more aggressive approach 2 A more cooperative approach 3 Not sure

Please circle the appropriate

number

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 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

F. 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

Please circle the appropriate number

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 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 engages and involves teachers with decision making in school development plans as part of the process of personalizing learning. | 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. What is the single greatest change you saw in education **this year**, either positive or negative?

11. What is the single greatest change you see coming for education **next year**, either positive or negative?

G. YOUR PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

12. 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 13 below.]

- Yes No

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

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Travel | <input type="checkbox"/> Pursue other job interests |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Have a child/spend time with family | <input type="checkbox"/> Care for an elderly family member |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Educational leave | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____ |

13. Which one of the following is the best descriptor of what you will likely be doing five years from now in the year 2018?

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) _____.

H. DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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

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

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 year | <input type="checkbox"/> 10 to 14 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 20 to 30 years |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 to 4 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 15 to 19 years | <input type="checkbox"/> Over 30 years |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5 to 9 years | | |

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

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ECS/Kindergarten | <input type="checkbox"/> Grades 4 to 6 | <input type="checkbox"/> Grades 10 to 12 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grades 1 to 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> Grades 7 to 9 | <input type="checkbox"/> Other combinations (specify) |

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

17. Your employment contract status

- Continuing
 Probationary
 Temporary

18. Your school is located in

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Area I | <input type="checkbox"/> Area IV |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Area II | <input type="checkbox"/> Area V |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Area III | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (school) |

19. Your current work assignment

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom teacher | <input type="checkbox"/> School administrator only |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Substitute teaching (school) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (eg, non-school based, cyber-) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Combined classroom and administrative duties | |

20. Your age

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 25 and younger | <input type="checkbox"/> 41–45 years old | <input type="checkbox"/> 56–60 years old |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 26–30 years old | <input type="checkbox"/> 46–50 years old | <input type="checkbox"/> 61–65 years old |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 31–35 years old | <input type="checkbox"/> 51–55 years old | <input type="checkbox"/> Over 65 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 36–40 years old | | |

21. Your gender Female Male

Thank you for completing the survey.
 Please return it to your school representative by May 3.

CALGARY
Public Teachers
ALBERTA TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION LOCAL 38



**The Alberta
Teachers' Association**