LEADERSHIP UPDATE

Autumn greetings everyone!

This edition of the Leadership Update contains valuable information to support you in the work that you do and to inform you of some ways you can access very high quality professional learning activities for school leaders in Alberta throughout the year.

Professional Learning Opportunities and News

To obtain information about upcoming professional learning events and programs for school leaders you need only remember www.uLead.ca to access up-to-date news about school leadership in Alberta, provincial and regional professional learning events, and the uLead conference that takes place every year. This year, uLead will run from April 15–18. Please visit uLead.ca on a regular basis as the events and news will change frequently.

Leadership Essentials for Administrators, November 20–21

We are pleased to share some timely information about the Leadership Essentials for Administrators (LEA) Conference in Calgary from November 20–21.

The LEA Conference is an annual event for school leaders (principals and assistant principals) serving in their first five years in the role, and for administrators who have recently moved to Alberta from outside of the province. LEA is a strong support to new school leaders in Alberta and will feature many concurrent sessions to assist attendees in their roles.

This year LEA will feature two keynote presenters. Sam Sellar, a highly respected scholar from the University of Manchester, UK, will deliver the opening keynote presentation on the future of educational assessment and school leadership. Simon Breakspear, from Agile Schools in Australia, will be the closing keynote presenter. He will share information on the subject of innovation for better learning.

Registration is open right now at https://atapd.ca/initiative/lea.

> **Teacher leaders should have the capacity to reflect on the purpose of their work, so that they can judge individually and as a profession whether what is required of them and their students is desirable or not.**
>
> **René Kneyber**

Council for School Leadership

ATA Agile Schools Network

The ATA Agile Schools Network is a collaborative initiative which seeks to boost the quality and equity of Alberta's education system and increase our ability to create a learning ecosystem where all students can demonstrate their numeracy skills at a level that reflects their potential. More than 70 classroom teachers, together with their school leadership teams and a district lead teacher from each participating school district, have been engaged in a process that sees innovative networked teams come together in a design hub to create and contextualise targeted teaching practices to enhance K–9 numeracy outcomes for their students. The Agile Schools Network is fully scaleable—as teachers and school leaders learn the techniques involved in driving positive change in their schools, they, in turn, can train the next cohort (or innovation hub) and pass on the "how to" of the process of learning sprints.

Throughout the past year at Barnett House the first ATA Agile Schools Network cohort met to learn together and identify potential focus areas for each individual teacher for the 2017/18 school year. They learned how to design and implement an improvement sprint, a team-based method for improving student outcomes in their classrooms and schools. They also set goals for conducting an improvement sprint in their classrooms between August and November. An improvement sprint involves a teacher defining a teaching or learning challenge, understanding what is causing that challenge, designing a solution for the challenge, and implementing the designed solution in a sprint over one to four weeks of time. The teacher then engages in a review of the process and a subsequent reset.

If the solution works, it is scaled up within the school. If the proposed solution does not work, then the teacher goes through another quick sprint process in an attempt to solve the challenge he or she has identified. A key to the success of this process is that it is the teacher in the classroom who is identifying the challenges he or she wishes to address. These challenges are not identified for the teacher through district or provincial standardized tests, for example, but are set by each teacher in a way that makes sense for the teacher's classroom and school. School leaders are an integral part of each school team and participate fully in the process.

Teachers in the network do not just scale up their solutions within their school with their peers. Innovative solutions to the learning challenges that teachers have been identifying are being shared with colleagues from other schools in the cohort and will be shared provincewide as well.

Recently, Alberta assistant principal Corey Haley shared that the learning sprints that are at the heart of the ATA Agile Schools initiative "give teachers the structure for effective collaboration." He added, "I have seen too many collaboration sessions where teaching professionals waste their most important resource, time, with conversations that do not ultimately lead to impacts on learning. Learning sprints give a structure and keep the conversation oriented to the intervention and the result."

Over 250 teachers, school leaders and district lead teachers gathered at the Fantasyland Hotel in September for the 2017 launch of the ATA Agile Schools Edmonton Cohort.

2

Regarding her school's participation in the ATA Agile Schools Network school principal Terri Lynn Guimond said, "How do I know learning sprints are having an impact? Because teachers and students are showing me … sharing their stories of success and failure. Learning sprints have drastically changed the conversations teachers are having with one another, improving professional practice and student learning one sprint at a time."

There is a great deal of interest throughout the province in the ATA Agile Schools initiative. One of the most positive elements of the program is that it represents teacher-driven change from the classroom level and incorporates classroom teachers, school leaders and district-level leaders working together collaboratively, by design.

More information about the ATA Agile Schools Network is available at: https://vimeo.com/ideafactory/review/186492968/3cab8d8eaa or by contacting Jeff Johnson at jeff.johnson@ata.ab.ca.

ATA Agile Schools participant Principal Terri Lynn Guimond sharing her thoughts.

International Education Exchange Program

Short-term administrator exchanges are available as two-week job shadow experiences for Alberta school leaders. Participants are billeted by their exchange counterpart and work shadow in their exchange partner's school for one to two weeks. They then host their counterpart for one to two weeks so they can experience the Alberta education system. Administrators arrange cultural visits to correspond with the interests of both parties. Opportunities exist in Australia, Germany, Spain, Denmark and the United Kingdom. Exchanges overseas occur during the summer months, and counterparts are hosted

Teachers participanting in the 2017 IEEP exchange in Austraila

in Alberta in September or October. Participants require an Alberta Permanent Professional Teaching Certificate and the approval of their superintendent. For a successful, engaging experience, participants

should be flexible, adaptable, positive, open to other cultures and comfortable with ambiguity. They should also have demonstrated leadership qualities. Interested? Find out more at www.ieep.ca.

3

Join us at uLead this year.
tinyurl.com/uLead18

uLEAD 2018

April 15–18, 2018

Register at: tinyurl.com/ulead18

uLead Conference
Banff Springs Hotel

Each year the **Council for School Leadership of the Alberta Teachers' Association** hosts one of the most respected conferences worldwide for school leaders, aspiring school leaders and central office teachers in Banff.

We invite you to join us in April for uLead 2018—*Leading Schools by Design!*

The Alberta Teachers' Association

Distinguished Leadership Awards

The Council for School Leadership (CSL) is pleased to invite nominations from throughout Alberta for the CSL Alberta Distinguished Leadership Awards, with recipients being honoured in May. Please consider nominating a deserving school leader for this honour.

The CSL Distinguished Leadership Awards create a learning community of outstanding principals throughout Alberta who can share professionally, interact collegially and act as mentors to new colleagues to provide avenues for research and the sharing of best practices. The cadre of distinguished Alberta school leaders are people who are looking to challenge the status quo, improve learning in their contexts, and be equipped for higher levels of leadership. These individuals will become role models in the Council for School Leadership, a vibrant network of educational leaders with the confidence and capabilities to lead innovative change for 21st century learning.

The deadline for nominations is midnight, April 1, 2018. All nominees must be active members of the Council for School Leadership to be eligible to receive the award. Nominees can join the CSL at any time by going to bit.ly/joincsl. Complete your nomination online at tinyurl.com/CSL-Leadership following the guidelines below.

What will I need to do?

- Once you have entered the nomination site, make a short comment related to your nominee's leadership in each of Alberta's Principal Quality Practice Competencies.
- Provide an indication that your nominee has consented to being nominated (required), and provide the nominee's school name, school telephone number and email address.
- Provide supporting evidence of your nominee's leadership in each of Alberta's Principal Quality Practice Competencies:
    - Fostering effective leadership
    - Embodying visionary leadership
    - Leading a learning community
    - Providing instructional leadership
    - Developing and facilitating leadership
    - Managing school operations and resources
    - Understanding and responding to the larger societal context

Detailed information about the Principal Quality Practice Competencies can be found at tinyurl.com/PQPCOMPTENCY. Prior to submitting the survey you will also have an opportunity to enter additional comments regarding the nominee, should you wish to do so.

uLead 2018 Conference— Call for Proposals

Planning for uLead 2018 has begun in earnest, and the call for proposals for both English and French language sessions has already begun.

Do you have a school leadership story to share with colleagues from around the world? The theme for uLead 2018 is Leading Schools by Design, and it seeks to provoke attending delegates to think about those intentional actions taken by education leaders at a school or system level to bring forth particular learning outcomes. The resulting conversation will range from how we intentionally design the physical structures that we teach and learn in, to design theory in education, to how we might want to make our education system more vibrant as we go forward.

If you wish to offer a presentation at uLead 2018, visit tinyurl.com/present-at-ulead18 to submit your proposal as soon as possible. We would love to have you share your Alberta leadership story with the world.
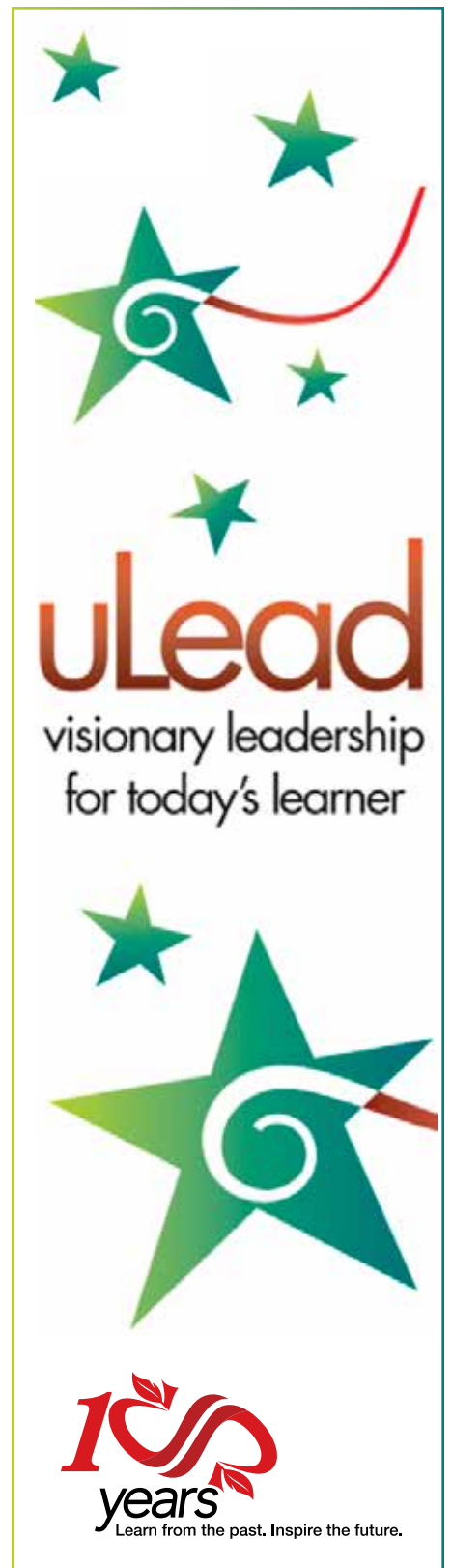
uLead Conference — April 15–18, 2018

Join educational leaders from around the world in the beautiful world-heritage location of Banff, Alberta, a setting that has been called the jewel of the Rockies, at Canada's premier conference for school-based, district-level, and provincial and state education leaders.

uLead will feature a wide array of engaging, world-class keynote speakers, and we expect 1100 principals, assistant principals, district leaders, national ministers of education, and education ministry representatives from around the world to attend. Many different strands of leadership sessions will be available at uLead including a dedicated strand for central office teachers and leaders. uLead 2018 is sponsored by the Council for School Leadership, a specialist council of the Alberta Teachers' Association.

Registration for uLead 2018 is already open, and hundreds of delegates have already taken advantage of super-early-bird registration rates. The call for proposals for the conference has already begun, but there is still time for you to make a proposal to present if you would like to do so.

Registration is now open at tinyurl.com/ulead18 with super-early-bird discounts for those registering prior to midnight on October 31, 2017 and continued early-bird discounts for those registering prior to the end of December 2017.

Great Sources of News for School Leaders

Are you searching for interesting articles and ideas about school leadership? You will find some very timely articles in a range of school leadership documents that are available online.

Canadian Association of Principals (CAP) Journal is published quarterly and is the official voice of the Canadian Association of Principals. Find it at http://cdnprincipals.org/blog/category/cap-journal/.

European School Heads Association (ESHA) Magazine is published regularly throughout the year and contains articles that highlight issues Alberta school leaders share with their European colleagues. Subscribe to it for free at http://www.esha.org/eshamagazine/.

Principal is an award-winning magazine written specifically for K–8 principals and published by the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP). You'll find the latest issue at https://www.naesp.org/principal-mayjune-2017-next-level-leadership/principal-mayjune-2017-next-level-leadership. You may also wish to check out their blog, The Principal's Office, which is full of great tips for school leaders, at https://www.naesp.org/front-page-blog-archive.
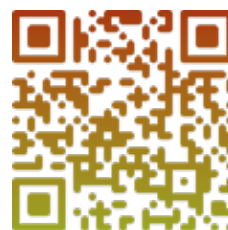
Principal Leadership is a publication of the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) that focuses on school leaders' real needs, offering them practical, hands-on strategies for improving their schools in a constantly evolving educational environment. The latest issue is available at https://www.nassp.org/news-and-resources/publications/principal-leadership/principal-leadership-archives/principal-leadership-volume-18-2017-18/principal-leadership-september-2017?SSO=true.

The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) has a massive, searchable and free collection of scholarly research materials on school leadership. Access AITSL's comprehensive archive at http://www.aitsl.edu.au/school-leadership-ecollection.

iTunes U—Each month new courses and materials are added to the Alberta Teachers on iTunes U site at tinyurl.com/ATAiTunes. Currently, new courses on Alberta's School Leader Standards are being added to the site.

Alberta Teachers on iTunes U

This month we highlight a course called It's Our Time AFN Education Tool Kit. The course provides an opportunity to look in depth at a wide range of Indigenous education materials created by the Assembly of First Nations, including numerous multitouch digital books. It is well worth subscribing to and is full of good ideas that school leaders and teachers should consider regarding their work. To access the ATA's iTunes U site, please visit tinyurl.com/ATAiTunes or scan the QR code on this page. To access the It's Our Time AFN Education Tool Kit, visit https://itunes.apple.com/ca/course/its-our-time-afn-education-tool-kit/id1199604596.

Council for School Leadership

As an Alberta school principal or assistant principal you are encouraged to select the Council for School Leadership as your automatically renewing specialist council. If you are not already a member of the Council for School Leadership please take a moment today to go to bit.ly/joincsl and follow the steps to join this school leadership specialist council. It is custom-made for school leaders and aspiring school leaders.

JOIN THE CSL TODAY AT bit.ly/joincsl

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An ATA/CSL publication for school administrators

The Alberta Teachers' Association