

International Symposium on School and System Improvement

Wednesday, February 10, 2010

Salons 8, 9 and 10 Shaw Conference Centre

9797 Jasper Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

AGENDA

7:30 am – 8:15 am	Registration and Continental Breakfast
8:15 am – 8:40 am	Welcome – Dr. Dianna Millard, Director School Improvement Branch Dr. Jim Brandon, CASS Moving and Improving O Canada – Leduc Composite High School Choir Greetings – Michael Walter, Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic Services
8:40 am – 9:45 am	Plenary Keynote Panel Dr. Sharon Friesen, Dr. Pasi Sahlberg, Dr. Dennis Shirley and Dr. Dennis Sumara
9:45 am – 9:50 am	Move to assigned tables and Introduction of Session 1 Presenters
9:50 am – 10:45 am	Session 1 – Thematic Presentation (two – 10 minute presentations) Round Table Discussions <i>Theme: 21st Century School and System Improvement</i>
10:45 am – 11:00 am	Wellness Break and Networking
11:00 am – 11:05 am	Introduction of Session 2 Presenters
11:05 am – 12:00 pm	Session 2 – Thematic Presentation (two – 10 minute presentations) Round Table Discussions <i>Theme: Sustainability and Leadership for the Future</i>
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm	Lunch and Networking
1:00 pm – 1:10 pm	Move to assigned tables and Introduction of Session 3 Presenters
1:10 pm – 2:05 pm	Session 3 – Thematic Presentation (two – 10 minute presentations) Round Table Discussions <i>Theme: 21st Century School and System Improvement</i>
2:05 pm – 2:20 pm	Wellness Break and Networking
2:20 pm – 2:25 pm	Introduction of Session 4 Presenters
2:25 pm – 3:20 pm	Session 4 – Thematic Presentation (two - 10 minute presentations) Round Table Discussions <i>Theme: 21st Century School and System Improvement</i>
3:20 pm – 3:25 pm	Return to Main Salon and Introduction of Plenary Keynote Panel
3:25 pm – 4:20 pm	Plenary Keynote Panel Summary Dr. Sharon Friesen, Dr. Pasi Sahlberg, Dr. Dennis Shirley and Dr. Dennis Sumara
4:20 pm – 4:30 pm	Conclusion Dr. Dianna Millard

WELCOME

HONOURABLE DAVE HANCOCK, Q.C. – MINISTER OF EDUCATION

As Minister of Education, I am pleased to welcome you to the Invitational International Symposium on School and System Improvement sponsored by the Alberta Initiative for School Improvement Education Partners and the College of Alberta School Superintendents – Moving and Improving.

I think all educators are keenly aware that we are preparing our students for a world that is rapidly changing. This symposium is an excellent opportunity to share and learn from international, national and local educators and researchers about 21st century perspectives on school and system improvements, as well as sustainability and leadership for the future. The educational leaders of today must work to build learning environments that will offer our students the opportunity to develop the skills they will need to meet the challenges of tomorrow and beyond. It is about looking ahead, being bold and finding ways to ensure each and every student has the opportunity to achieve success.

I am also pleased to welcome all of you to Alberta! If this is your first visit, or your 100th, I hope you have the time to explore our capital city and experience firsthand the hospitality of our people and the beauty of our province.

My best wishes for a productive and successful symposium.

WELCOME

GREG WORONUK – CASS PRESIDENT

It is my pleasure, on behalf of the College of Alberta School Superintendents, to welcome each of you to this Research Symposium.

This is a wonderful opportunity to build on last year's inaugural Research Symposium at the University of Calgary, which focused on links between research and student learning. A major focus of *Moving and Improving: Building System Leadership Capacity* is to enhance the research related to system leadership and student learning. This symposium is designed to bring recent research forward in a way that will foster discussion and debate.

The *CASS Framework for School System Success* currently has 11 dimensions that describe key aspects of highly performing school authorities. The Framework has been developed and modified through the efforts of many individuals and functions as the heart of the *Moving and Improving* initiative. I anticipate that further modification to the Framework may be needed as a result of this symposium.

I would like to thank the representatives from AISI Partners who worked together with CASS *Moving and Improving* to plan and hold this symposium. I particularly want to thank the presenters who have given their time to share their work with us.

I hope that you find this summary of research to be helpful in your discussions and again welcome and thanks for getting involved in the symposium.

PLENARY KEYNOTE PANEL

8:40 – 9:50 am and 3:25 – 4:20 pm

DR. SHARON FRIESEN, DR. PASI SAHLBERG, DR. DENNIS SHIRLEY and DR. DENNIS SUMARA

Our four internationally recognized panel members will set the stage for reflection and dialogue over the course of our day together. Following their opening remarks, panelists will join us for extended conversation in four break-out sessions on the two symposium themes:

- *21st Century School and System Improvement and*
- *Sustainability and Leadership for the Future.*

The panel will re-convene at the end of the day to share observations and thoughts about how symposium presentations and dialogue might inform:

- *classroom practice,*
- *school leadership'*
- *system leadership and*
- *education research.*

PLENARY KEYNOTE PANEL MEMBER

DR. SHARON FRIESEN – UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

Dr. Friesen is a founding partner and president of the Galileo Educational Network and an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Education at the University of Calgary. She consults on a wide range of teaching and learning topics related to curriculum reform and school improvement.

She is a co-principal researcher with Doug Willms and Penny Milton on *What did you do in school today?* a research and development initiative funded by the Canadian Council on Learning and sponsored by the Canadian Education Association. As an extension of her academic research interests, Dr. Friesen has co-authored three books: *Back to the Basics of Teaching and Learning: Thinking the World Together* (winner of the 2004 AERA Division B Book Award); *Curriculum in Abundance* and *Back to the Basics of Teaching and Learning: Thinking the World Together 2nd edition*. Over the course of Dr. Friesen's career, she has received numerous awards for her research and teaching.

PLENARY KEYNOTE PANEL MEMBER

DR. PASI SAHLBERG – UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

Dr. Sahlberg is an educator, researcher and school improvement activist. He has experience in educational reforms, training teachers and leaders, coaching schools and advising education policy-makers around the world. He is interested in educational change, school improvement and global education for tolerance and community engagement. His professional record includes teaching, teacher

training, research, state-level administration (Ministry of Education in Finland) and international education development (World Bank, OECD, European Union). He has a PhD from the University of Jyväskylä (Finland) and is Adjunct Professor at the University of Helsinki and the University of Oulu. He works as a Director General of CIMO (Centre for International Mobility and Cooperation) in Helsinki.

PLENARY KEYNOTE PANEL MEMBER

DR. DENNIS SHIRLEY – BOSTON COLLEGE

Dr. Dennis Shirley's work in education spans from the micro-level of assisting beginning teachers to the macro-level of designing and guiding large-scale research and intervention projects for school districts, states, and nonprofit agencies. Dr. Shirley recently collaborated with Dr. Andy Hargreaves on a study of the *Specialist Schools and Academies Trust: Raising Achievement, Transforming Learning Project*, which raised pupil learning results in over 200 schools in England at double the national rate in a 2-year period. The findings of that research have been presented in Hargreaves' and Shirley's first collaboratively authored book, *The Fourth Way: The Inspiring Future for Educational Change*.

For four years, Dr. Shirley has led a teacher inquiry project along with Boston Public Schools teacher-leader Elizabeth MacDonald; their research has been published in *The Mindful Teacher*. Dr. Shirley serves on the Scholars Forum of the Public Education Network, advises the One Square Kilometer of Education school improvement project of the Freudenberg Foundation in Berlin, and collaborates with the California Teachers Association on improving 480 schools in struggling circumstances. He has led three school improvement efforts with more than 13 million dollars in funding, and his research has been translated into German, Swedish, Spanish, and French. He holds a doctorate from Harvard University.

PLENARY KEYNOTE PANEL MEMBER

DR. DENNIS SUMARA – UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

Dr. Dennis Sumara is Dean of the Faculty of Education, University of Calgary. His areas of research include curriculum theory, teacher education, and literacy education, as oriented by conceptual interests in hermeneutic phenomenology, literary response theory, and complexity science. Specific topics of research include literary engagement and curriculum, problems and possibilities of learning and teaching, and normativity and counternormativity in teacher education. He is the author of many articles and several books, including *Why reading literature in school still matters: Imagination, interpretation, insight* (2002), recipient of the 2003 National Reading Conference's (USA) Ed Fry Book Award.

THEMATIC SESSIONS – SALONS 8 and 9	
SESSION ONE:	9:45 am – 10:45 am
SESSION TWO	11:00 am – 12:00 pm
SESSION THREE:	1:00 pm – 2:05 pm
SESSION FOUR:	2:20 pm – 3:20 pm

Each of our four thematic sessions features two short presentations followed by individual reflection and facilitated dialogue at assigned tables. Through reflection and dialogue, participants will be asked to consider how lessons learned from the research presentations might inform:

- *classroom practice,*
- *school leadership,*
- *system leadership, and*
- *education research.*

9:45 – 10:45	Session 1: <i>21st Century School and System Improvement</i> Chair: Dr. Jim Brandon, College of Alberta School Superintendents
Presentation A	Dr. Donna Barrett, Ms. Jenise Bidulock and Mr. Edgar Schmidt, Edmonton Public Schools <i>Building School and System Leadership Capacity through Principal Networks</i>

Abstract: Edmonton Public Schools *Moving and Improving* initiative is strengthening leadership practices through the use of principal networks. This project is exploring how principal networks contribute to the building of leadership capacity and the achievement of district and school goals related to student learning. The work of principal networks is being aligned with district priorities, the District plan and the *Framework for School System Success*. Evidence of improved system and school leadership is being gathered to determine the impact of this work on student achievement over time.

Donna Barrett is Assistant Superintendent, Edmonton Public Schools. She currently has responsibility for Curriculum, Resource Development and Research Support, Programs, and 35 schools. Dr. Barrett has worked for several years as a staff developer, coordinating leadership development programs for aspiring and practicing principals. Donna has administrative experience as a principal at the elementary and junior high levels. She worked as a consultant in programming for student differences serving students in Edmonton and northern Alberta. Donna has a Master’s degree in educational psychology and a Doctoral degree in secondary education with focus on the role of the principal in school reform and renewal.

Jenise Bidulock brings a wealth of experience to her current role as an Assistant Superintendent at Edmonton Public Schools. She is a former teacher, principal and director of planning and student transportation. Ms. Bidulock oversees more than 35 schools in addition to the District’s Consulting Services and Leadership Services departments. Consulting Services’ staff members support student success by providing leadership in teaching and learning, pursuing leading-edge research and

development and nurturing a collaborative learning community. Providing expert advice and counsel is also at the centre of efforts made by staff in the Leadership Services department. Here, schools, parents, community members and other educational partners get the support they need to address any number of situations. These services include mediation, coaching, training and proactive planning.

Edgar Schmidt is Superintendent of Edmonton Public Schools. With over 25 years experience as a teacher, principal, researcher and author, Edgar Schmidt continues his lifetime of service to public education. He proudly bears the responsibility for leading the District’s ongoing work to help students succeed in school and in life. Since becoming Superintendent in 2007, Mr. Schmidt has focused on strengthening a district-wide commitment to assist every learner in realizing their potential, regardless of their background, needs or abilities. This overarching goal is rooted in principles of social justice and the belief that a collaborative and vibrant corporate culture fosters student achievement. Indeed, in the last few years, the District has made gains in key areas, reporting an increase in high school completion rates and a decrease in the number of students dropping out.

9:45 – 10:45	Session 1: <i>21st Century School and System Improvement</i> Chair: Dr. Jim Brandon, College of Alberta School Superintendents
Presentation B	Ms. Jean Courtney, Ontario Ministry of Education <i>The Ontario Student Success Strategy</i>

Abstract: In 2003, the Ontario Government introduced the first component of a three-phase, \$1.3 billion Student Success / Learning to 18 strategy. The core priorities for the Ministry of Education are: high levels of student achievement; reduced gaps in student achievement and increased public confidence in publicly funded education. This presentation will give an overview of the strategy, an update regarding our target of increasing the graduation rate to 85% by 2010-11 and the role that research and key indicator data have played.

Jean Courtney is an Education Officer with the Ontario Ministry of Education. At the Ministry, her responsibilities involve supporting the implementation of Student Success initiatives in particular the expansion of Co-operative Education, the Provincial Partnership Council, its *Passport to Prosperity* campaign and the Employer Registry. Jean is the team lead for the Ministry’s explicit student voice initiative known as *SpeakUp* launched in February 2008.

11:00 – 12:00	Session 2: <i>Sustainability and Leadership for the Future</i> Chair: Dr. J.C. Couture, Alberta Teachers’ Association
Presentation A	Mr. Richard Brown, Mathew Halton High School, Livingston Range School Division and Ms. Jacqueline Skytt, Alberta Teachers’ Association <i>Applying Standards and Authentic Evaluation Processes to Enhance the Practice of School Principals</i>

Abstract: World-wide education systems are interested in implementing policy frameworks to deal with the leadership challenges facing public education in the 21st century and research acknowledges that effective school leadership is a critical factor in high achieving schools. Alberta Education recently released the *Principal Quality Practice Guideline* which is intended to guide the preparation, recruitment, professional growth and evaluation of school leaders. This presentation will feature a 2-

year research project undertaken by the Alberta Teachers' Association and the Livingstone Range School Division to apply the provincial *Principal Quality Practice Guideline* in the development of a district policy and procedures for administrator professional growth, supervision and evaluation intended to support the development of excellent school leaders who have the capacity to ensure the provision of optimum learning for all students in the school. The presenters will provide an overview of the project and work of the steering committee, describe and share policy documents and discuss the results of the project evaluation. In addition, one of the school principals involved in the project will share his personal reflections of the evaluation policy, procedures and its impact on his professional practice.

Richard Brown is principal of Matthew Halton High School in Pincher Creek, Alberta. MHHS is a grade 7-12 school with approximately 350 students and 30 teaching and support staff and is part of the Livingstone Range School Division #68. During his career Richard has taught every grade except 1 and 6, been a guidance counsellor, a special education teacher, a technology coordinator, an assistant principal and principal. He has a strong passion for teaching and still teaches Biology to grade 11 and 12 students.

Jacqueline Skytt is Assistant Executive Secretary of the Alberta Teachers' Association and a member of the School Administrators Issues and Concerns Committee. Jacquie has been involved in the development of the provincial *Principal Quality Practice Guideline* and local projects focused on the professional growth and evaluation of school leaders. Jacquie has a Masters in Curriculum and Instructional Supervision from the University of Oregon.

11:00 – 12:00	Session 2: <i>Sustainability and Leadership for the Future</i> Chair: Dr. J.C. Couture, Alberta Teachers' Association
Presentation B	Dr. Paulette Hanna, Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools <i>Instructional Leadership and Student Achievement</i>

Abstract: This qualitative research study investigated how principals, in districts with high student achievement levels, managed the dimensions of instructional leadership and the relationship of their behaviors to student learning. This mixed method case study also examined how teachers perceived the behaviors that principals thought constituted instructional leadership. Interviews, document analyses, and Alberta Provincial Achievement Test results were used to collect data. The study revealed that the principals demonstrated instructional leadership practices as defined by a broad definition of instructional leadership. They performed a variety of duties but did not achieve a balance between managing the school and leading the instructional program. Most principals did not have a solid structure to accurately monitor accountability and allow teachers the opportunity to learn together, apply learning to the classroom, and reflect on what works and why.

Paulette Hanna is completing her 38th year as an educator. Dr. Hanna has experience as a classroom teacher, school principal, deputy superintendent, and superintendent of schools. She is presently Superintendent of Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools. Paulette earned her Bachelor of Education Degree from the University of Calgary, followed by a Master of Arts Education from San Diego State University and she has just received a Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership from the University of Calgary. Leadership is very important to Paulette. She believes that principals who are effective instructional leaders make a positive impact on student achievement. Her Division has had a strong focus on training effective instructional leaders over the past five years. The AISI Cycle Four project in Red Deer Catholic focuses on building leadership capacity in schools through instructional coaching.

She served as CASS President in 2009/10 and is now serving as Past President. She is also completing her last year of a six year term as a director on the Red Deer College Board of Governors.

1:00 – 2:05	Session 3: <i>21st Century School and System Improvement</i> Chair: Dr. George Bedard, University of Lethbridge
Presentation A	Ms. Sacha Innes, Agriteam Canada <i>International Development, Culture, Learning and Change</i>

Abstract: Improving educational systems in the ‘Second’ and ‘Third’ Worlds has been a priority of Canada’s international aid program for some time. Sacha will share her experiences with programs funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) in the Middle East: Egypt and Jordan. Both projects focus on school and system improvement. Concepts related to development education as it plays out in Middle Eastern cultures will be introduced. These projects will be presented through the lens of DeStafano and Crouch’s scaffold for change found in their Education Reform Support (ERS) work. Where these countries sit vis-a-vis Hargreaves’ and Shirley’s *Fourth Way* will also be examined. The intended outcome of the session is that participants will learn something of what it is like to work in international development and, more importantly, what the international experience can teach us about leading educational change at home. The presentation will invoke discussion about intersections of development and change, the impact of culture on change, and the appropriateness of modifying education models to suit varying contexts.

Sacha Innes has a BEd in special education from the University of British Columbia and a MA in international education with a focus on family literacy from the University of Calgary. She has ten years international development experience, primarily in the field of education reform. As Canadian project manager on several CIDA-funded education projects, including projects in Egypt, Bangladesh and South Africa, Sacha understands well the process and challenges inherent in school and system change. She also provides technical expertise on aspects of education reform, primarily teacher professional development and gender and education expertise to projects in Jordan, Mongolia, China and the Philippines. Prior to working for Agriteam, Sacha was employed as a teacher and department head of special education in British Columbia. She spent several years overseas working for an international school in the Philippines. During her time in the Philippines, she established a family literacy program in an urban Manila slum.

1:00 – 2:05	Session 3: <i>21st Century School and System Improvement</i> Chair: Dr. George Bedard, University of Lethbridge
Presentation B	Mr. David Lynn, former Project Director for the Kosovo Educator Development Project (KEDP) and Supporting Jordan’s Education project (SJE) <i>International Development, Societal Aspiration, Relationships and Change</i>

Abstract: KEDP was evaluated as one of CIDA’s best international development projects in the past twenty-five years. Despite having access to outstanding Canadian educators, SJE’s results have been inconsistent at best. What can be learned from the profound difference of the impact of these two projects? How did societal aspiration, organizational culture within the world of education and the relationships between ‘internationals’ and ‘locals’ differ in the two projects? What was the impact of these differences in terms of the outcome of these two projects? The intended outcome is that participants will consider the impact of organizational culture on change in their own organizations and

examine the critical importance of relationships as cited by Hargreaves and Shirley. Some insights will be shared from Anderson and Wenderoth (2007) *Facilitating Change - Reflections on Six Years of Education Development Programming in Challenging Environments*.

David Lynn is a Past President of the College of Alberta School Superintendents (CASS) having served on the Executive from 1995 to 1999. He is a former teacher, counsellor, school administrator and Superintendent. Originally from BC, David served in British Columbia, Alberta and Nova Scotia. He has an abiding interest in change and improving schools and school systems for students. Since retiring, David has worked as Project Director in two international development projects: one in Kosovo and another in Jordan and as a Sessional Instructor at the University of Calgary. At the initiative of CASS, David received the *Distinguished Service Award* from the Canadian Association of School Administrators in 1999. David is currently Interim Executive Director of the Sheep River Health Trust and an occasional consultant to the CIDA funded and Agriteam Canada managed project, Supporting Jordan's Education.

2:20 – 3:20	Session 4: <i>21st Century School and System Improvement</i> Chair: Ms. Donna Pechanec, Alberta Education
Presentation A	Dr. Donald Gray and Dr. Edward Sosu, University of Aberdeen, Scotland <i>The Contribution of Effective Teacher Qualities to School and System Improvement</i>

Abstract: There has in recent years been increasing recognition for evidence-based approaches to education and school improvement. This requires teacher education programs to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for teachers to engage in such processes. Such knowledge, skills and attitudes can be argued to be important attributes of effective teachers. In an attempt to achieve this, the *Scottish Teachers for a New Era* initiative, drawing from current literature and experiences, developed a framework of effective teacher qualities. A three-layered model consisting of seven effective teacher qualities is proposed. Findings from application suggest that this framework can serve as a catalyst for successful teacher education reform through being used as an evaluation tool that aids program development. This paper will explore the structure of the framework within the context of the *Scottish Teachers for a New Era* initiative.

Donald Gray is a senior lecturer in the School of Education at the University of Aberdeen. He holds a degree in zoology and a PhD in science education. He had a background in science, environmental and outdoor education before joining the Scottish Council for Research in Education in 1992. He subsequently joined the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow and also held a post at Humboldt University, Berlin, before returning to Strathclyde. He joined the University of Aberdeen in 2005. He is currently the Research Director for the *Scottish Teachers for a New Era* initiative at the University of Aberdeen.

Edward Sosu is a Research Fellow on the *Scottish Teachers for a New Era* initiative in the School of Education, University of Aberdeen. He has a background in psychology, education and environmental science. His current work has focused on teacher effectiveness, teacher commitment and the development of measurement instruments. He is also interested in the application of statistical models in education research.

2:20 – 3:20	Session 4: <i>21st Century School and System Improvement</i> Chair: Ms. Donna Pechanec, Alberta Education
Presentation B	Ms. Chloe Ross, Deputy Director, Prime Minister’s Strategy Unit , UK Cabinet Office <i>The English School System Improvement Model</i>

Abstract: This paper summarizes the *English School System Improvement Model*, and the influence of international case studies on recent policy developments. The English schools system is now in its third phase of reform since 1997. There have been considerable improvements in schools system performance and capacity over the past twelve years. However, challenges remain in delivering government’s stretching targets, including the Prime Minister’s stated objective that the system be world class. In evaluating potential policy for the most recently announced phase of reform, policy makers reviewed the evidence on the organization of world class systems, and looked closely at the evidence from Alberta and Ontario. Directly ‘importing’ policies from overseas is fraught with challenges, but some of the key lessons from world class systems are reflected in a number of policies announced in the 2009 schools white paper.

Chloe Ross is Deputy Director in the Prime Minister’s Strategy Unit in the UK Cabinet Office, where she currently leads the Education team. She has advised No. 10 Downing Street and Ministers on a range of areas, including school system reform, apprenticeships, youth policy, child protection and labour market regulation. Prior to joining the Cabinet Office she spent seven years working in corporate strategy at firms including Microsoft and Accenture. Her work on the UK vocational education system was awarded the London School of Economics MacKenzie Prize in 2007. She holds degrees in Comparative Political Economy from the London School of Economics; and in Politics, Philosophy and Economics from the University of Oxford.

THEMATIC SESSIONS – SALON 10

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SESSION FOUR:	2:20 pm – 3:20 pm

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9:45 – 10:45	Session 1: <i>21st Century School and System Improvement</i> Chair: Dr. Norman Yanitski, Alberta Education
Presentation A	Dr. Donald Gray and Dr. Edward Sosu, University of Aberdeen, Scotland <i>The Contribution of Effective Teacher Qualities to School and System Improvement</i>

Abstract: There has in recent years been increasing recognition for evidence-based approaches to education and school improvement. This requires teacher education programs to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for teachers to engage in such processes. Such knowledge, skills and attitudes can be argued to be important attributes of effective teachers. In an attempt to achieve this, the *Scottish Teachers for a New Era* initiative, drawing from current literature and experiences, developed a framework of effective teacher qualities. A three-layered model consisting of seven effective teacher qualities is proposed. Findings from application suggest that this framework can serve as a catalyst for successful teacher education reform through being used as an evaluation tool that aids program development. This paper will explore the structure of the framework within the context of the *Scottish Teachers for a New Era* initiative.

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development of measurement instruments. He is also interested in the application of statistical models in education research.

9:45 – 10:45	Session 1: <i>21st Century School and System Improvement</i> Chair: Dr. Norman Yanitski, Alberta Education
Presentation B	Ms. Penny Milton, Canadian Education Association <i>What did you do in school today?</i>

Abstract: For the past three years, the Canadian Education Association’s *What did you do in school today? (WDYDIST)* initiative has been mobilizing new ideas, data, and networks around the powerful relationships among student engagement, learning and achievement. The initiative’s multidimensional framework of student engagement in school and classrooms has provided a foundation for new ways of thinking about the nature and outcomes of adolescent learning in Canadian schools. In this presentation Penny Milton (CEO, Canadian Education Association) will draw on qualitative and quantitative findings from *WDYDIST* to discuss a theory of action for transforming classrooms into spaces of effective teaching and deep learning. Through the presentation and roundtable discussion, participants will be invited to explore CEA’s theory of action and its relationship to engaging all students to become expert learners of 21st century knowledge and competencies.

Penny Milton is the CEO of the Canadian Education Association, a national, bilingual, charitable organization that mobilizes research and ideas about learning. She has served as an elected school trustee and Chair of the former Toronto Board of Education, held staff positions in a teacher union, a provincial school board association and served on numerous provincial and federal advisory committees. She served a term as Deputy Minister of the Ontario Premier's Council on Health, Well-being and Social Justice. Penny has written and presented widely on many aspects of education as social policy including education and childcare in schools. She is a co-author with Doug Willms and Sharon Friesen of *What did you do in school today?: Transforming Classrooms through Social, Academic and Intellectual Engagement*. Penny is a former Director of the Toronto Community Housing Corporation, a Director of Goodwill Industries and a member of the Ontario Minister’s Curriculum Council. She holds a Masters in Management from McGill and an Honours BSc in Biology from the University of Nottingham, UK.

11:00 – 12:00	Session 2: <i>21st Century School and System Improvement</i> Chair: Dr. David Townsend, University of Lethbridge
Presentation A	Ms. Chloe Ross, Deputy Director, Prime Minister’s Strategy Unit, UK Cabinet Office <i>The English School System Improvement Model</i>

Abstract: This paper summarizes the *English School System Improvement Model* and the influence of international case studies on recent policy developments. The English schools system is now in its third phase of reform since 1997. There have been considerable improvements in schools system performance and capacity over the past twelve years. However, challenges remain in delivering government’s stretching targets, including the Prime Minister’s stated objective that the system be world class. In evaluating potential policy for the most recently announced phase of reform, policy makers reviewed the evidence on the organization of world class systems, and looked closely at the evidence from Alberta and Ontario. Directly ‘importing’ policies from overseas is fraught with challenges, but some of the key lessons from world class systems are reflected in a number of policies announced in the 2009 schools white paper.

Chloe Ross is Deputy Director in the Prime Minister’s Strategy Unit in the UK Cabinet Office, where she currently leads the Education team. She has advised No10 Downing Street and Ministers on a range of areas, including schools system reform, apprenticeships, youth policy, child protection and labour market regulation. Prior to joining the Cabinet Office she spent seven years working in corporate strategy at firms including Microsoft and Accenture. Her work on the UK vocational education system was awarded the London School of Economics MacKenzie Prize in 2007. She holds degrees in Comparative Political Economy from the London School of Economics; and in Politics, Philosophy and Economics from the University of Oxford.

11: 00 – 12:00	Session 2: <i>21st Century School and System Improvement</i> Chair: Dr. David Townsend, University of Lethbridge
Presentation B	Ms. Christie Whitley, Yukon Department of Education <i>Starting an Epidemic: Fresh Thinking about Student Success in the Yukon</i>

Abstract: This presentation will highlight staff, student, community and First Nations expectations for change in Yukon Education, and how it is responding to over 400 recommendations for change contained in a far-ranging report on Yukon’s education system. The discussion will proceed within the context of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* as well as current educational research. Shifting norms, re-aligning major systemic structural changes, developing leadership capacity and creating unity in purpose through community engagement and collaborative dialogue, will be key concepts addressed in this presentation.

Christie M. Whitley is the Assistant Deputy Minister of Education and Superintendent of Schools in Yukon. She took on this role in 2007 to assist with facilitating a major territorial education reform project. Working in a variety of capacities in education, she has been a facilitator of system improvement throughout her 31 years as an educator. Ms. Whitley has worked in Manitoba, British Columbia and Yukon as a classroom teacher, counsellor, school administrator, district administrator and with the British Columbia Principals’ and Vice Principals’ Association as the Manager for Professional Programs. Ms. Whitley has for many years worked as a facilitator and trainer in the area of curriculum and educational and administrative leadership. She is an accredited ethics trainer with Dr. Rushworth Kidder’s Global Institute. She has been consistently recognized for her work in creating caring and inclusive learning environments that support student success.

1:00 – 2:05	Session 3: <i>Sustainability and Leadership for the Future</i> Chair: Dr. Ann Sherman, University of Calgary
Presentation A	Dr. Rosemary Foster, University of Alberta and Dr. Phil McRae, Alberta Teachers’ Association <i>Distributed and Pervasive Leadership: Implications for School and System Improvement Writ Large</i>

Abstract: Broadening an interpretation of leadership at different stages of a school or system improvement project’s evolution is an essential condition to innovative approaches to educational change. This session will share the key findings of a decade of research on AISI which indicates that school improvement leadership is found to be in the hands of the students, teacher leaders, the school community and/or AISI coordinators at certain times within an initiative’s life cycle, while at other critical stages, the sustainability, direction and growth of the project came from the more formal leadership positions of principal and/or district level administrator. To inform this discussion the

presenters will draw from their original AISI research studies, and from related scholarly articles published in the area of leadership and administration.

Phil McRae is an Executive Staff Officer with the Alberta Teachers’ Association (A.T.A.) and Adjunct Professor within the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta where he earned his Ph.D. He was the Director of the Alberta Initiative for School Improvement (AIS) at the University of Alberta from 2005-2009, and taught several graduate courses in the Master of Education in Educational Studies program. Phil has worked in many secondary and post-secondary educational contexts while living and teaching in the Middle East (United Arab Emirates), Asia (Japan), Europe (Spain), the Lethbridge Public School District and on the Blood (Kainai) Reservation in Alberta, Canada.

Rosemary Foster is currently a professor in Educational Administration and Leadership, and a former Associate Dean of Teacher Education (2005-2008) at the University of Alberta. Before coming to the University of Alberta, Rosemary held a faculty position at the University of Manitoba (1999-2000) where she was very involved in the implementation of that University’s innovative teacher education program. Before becoming an academic, she was for more than 20 years a high school teacher of English and French/français, and administrator in the province of Alberta.

1:00 – 2:05	Session 3: <i>Sustainability and Leadership for the Future</i> Chair: Dr. Ann Sherman, University of Calgary
Presentation B	Ms. Dot Negropontes, Chinooks Edge School Division <i>Rural Alberta Educational Leaders’ Perspectives on Accountability</i>

Abstract: Rural educational leaders in Alberta are challenged with continued emphasis on accountability through the implementation of the *Alberta Education Renewed Funding Framework* (2004). Conducted from an Interpretivist stance, this qualitative study examined the evolution of accountability policy at the provincial level to deepen our understanding of the inter-linkage between some of the local actors, namely superintendents and principals, and their experience of accountability in the context of the larger societal framework. Research in transformative leadership influenced the conceptual framework guiding this study. The research methodology was an explanatory, multi-case study approach, utilizing semi-structured interviews and document analysis to explore the issue of accountability and the perspectives of educational leaders. The findings of this study indicate some rural educational leaders have developed a “mediated accountability” approach that acknowledges bureaucratic, professional, and holistic accountability. By employing three leadership practices: (1) focusing on student learning, (2) aligning of strategic planning, and (3) building of capacity, they enact their perspectives of mediated accountability to improve student learning.

Dot Negropontes is the Assistant Superintendent of Student Services for Chinook’s Edge School Division and a Doctoral Candidate at the University of Calgary. For three years beginning in 2006, she was seconded to act as the Executive Director of the Community Learning Campus project to bring the CLC from concept to reality. Dot is completing a doctorate in educational leadership and brings a background in curriculum and instruction to the program development of the CLC. Dot has provided educational leadership in Alberta in a number ways, but particularly as a workshop and keynote presenter on leadership. She was a founding member of both the Alberta Middle School Association and the annual Alberta Leading and Learning Conference. She has served as the Chair for the Central Alberta Professional Development Consortium.

2:20 – 3:20	Session 4: <i>21st Century School and System Improvement</i> Chair: Dr. Frank Peters, University of Alberta
Presentation A	Ms. Jean Courtney, Ontario Ministry of Education <i>The Ontario Student Success Strategy</i>

Abstract: In 2003, the Ontario Government introduced the first component of a three-phase, \$1.3 billion Student Success / Learning to 18 strategy. The core priorities for the Ministry of Education are: high levels of student achievement; reduced gaps in student achievement and increased public confidence in publicly funded education. This presentation will give an overview of the strategy, an update regarding our target of increasing the graduation rate to 85% by 2010-11 and the role that research and key indicator data have played.

Jean Courtney is an Education Officer with the Ontario Ministry of Education. At the Ministry, her responsibilities involve supporting the implementation of Student Success initiatives in particular the expansion of Co-operative Education, the Provincial Partnership Council, its *Passport to Prosperity* campaign and the Employer Registry. Jean is the team lead for the Ministry's explicit student voice initiative known as *SpeakUp* launched in February 2008.

2:20 – 3:20	Session 4: <i>21st Century School and System Improvement</i> Chair: Dr. Frank Peters, University of Alberta
Presentation B	Dr. J.C. Couture and Dr. Pasi Sahlberg <i>Teacher Leadership as an Intended Consequence of School Improvement</i>

Abstract: While much of the literature affirms the importance of teacher leadership in facilitating school development, relatively little is known about the forces that support and sustain the emergence of teacher leaders. While the era of bureaucratic accountability and outcomes driven reform, now in retreat in some quarters, diminished opportunities for teacher leadership, the growing recognition of the central role of building teacher efficacy as a vehicle for improving student learning raise important issues concerning the nature of distributed leadership in schools. Based on an analysis of a variety of school improvement endeavours drawn from Finland and Alberta, this paper suggests three key characteristics of teacher leadership that will foster ingenuity and creativity in schools: i) curriculum development is seen as an ongoing process rather than focused on distinct projects; ii) teacher curriculum inquiry is the heart of education improvement, and; iii) research and deliberative judgment form the basis of professional practice. The experiences of the teachers involved in the school development efforts examined in this paper, offer an opportunity to rekindle a new narrative for Alberta schools – one that affirms the role of teacher leadership in sustaining school development efforts.

Pasi Sahlberg is an educator, researcher and school improvement activist. His work record includes teaching, teacher training, research, state-level administration (Ministry of Education in Finland) and international education development (World Bank, OECD, European Union). He has a PhD from the University of Jyväskylä and is an adjunct professor at the University of Helsinki and the University of Oulu. He currently works as the Director of CIMO in Helsinki

J-C Couture currently co-ordinates the research program of the Alberta Teachers' Association. A classroom teacher for twenty years, he completed his PhD from the University of Alberta focused on a cultural psychoanalytic analysis of teachers' work life. His current research interests include the impact of strategic planning on organizational growth and the role of technology in education.

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We would like to thank presenters and participants for contributing to our symposium.

Participants are invited to take a moment during the next week to share their symposium assessment thoughts online at www.surveymonkey.com/cassaisiresearchsymposium