



# **A Professional Development Plan**

to support the

## **DIMENSIONS OF PRACTICE**

for the

### **BC School Superintendents Association**

Developed in 2000

*Adapted from Professional Standards for the Superintendency, American Association of School Administrators*

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

In 1998, the B.C. School Superintendents Association adopted the Dimensions of Practice for Superintendents, Assistant Superintendents and Directors of Instruction or Equivalent. The eight Dimensions are to be a foundation for forming and continuously improving professional development programs for district leaders. The opportunities to move into these roles will increase over the next few years as more of the BCSSA's members retire. At present, there is no succession plan in place for the education and preparation of aspirants to these positions.

Recent research on district leadership indicates that a new style of leadership has emerged—one that encourages shared decision-making among school and district staff, community, business and other stakeholders. Therefore, reform efforts for preparing the new leaders have led to greater emphasis on team-building, shared leadership, collaboration, problem-based learning and instructional improvements.

The Dimensions of Practice link the new leadership skills with the elements of school district leadership. The dimensions are intended to provide a focus for personal and professional growth planning as individuals evolve in their district leadership roles.

## **II. THE PROFESSIONAL DIMENSIONS**

### ***Dimension 1: Leadership and District Culture***

BCSSA members will know and be able to develop a collective district vision; shape school culture and climate; demonstrate an understanding of international issues affecting education; formulate strategic plans, goals and change efforts with staff and community; set priorities in the context of community, student and staff needs; serve as an articulate spokesperson for the welfare of all students in a multi-cultural context of public education.

### ***Dimension 2: Policy and Governance***

BCSSA members will be able to develop procedures for working with the board of trustees that define mutual expectations, working relationships and strategies for formulating district policy for external and internal programs; adjust local policy to provincial requirements, and recognize and apply standards involving accountability across the system.

### ***Dimension 3: Communications and Community Relations***

BCSSA members will be able to articulate district purpose and priorities to the community and mass media, request and respond to community feedback, and demonstrate consensus-building and conflict mediation.

They will be able to identify, track and deal with issues; formulate and carry out plans for internal and external communications; exhibit an understanding of school districts as political systems; apply communication skills to strengthen community support of district priorities; build coalitions to gain financial and programmatic support; develop and implement related political initiatives for the wellness of children.

#### ***Dimension 4: Organizational Management***

BCSSA members will be able to exhibit an understanding of the school district as a system by defining processes for gathering, analyzing and using data for decision-making.

Further, they will manage the data flow; frame and solve problems; frame and develop priorities to formulate solutions; assist others to form reasoned opinions; reach logical conclusions and make quality decisions to meet internal and external customer expectations; plan and schedule personal and organizational work; establish procedures to regulate activities and projects; delegate and empower at appropriate organizational levels; secure and allocate human and material resources; develop and manage the district budget; and maintain accurate fiscal records.

#### ***Dimension 5: Curriculum Planning and Development***

BCSSA members will demonstrate leadership in the design of curriculum and a strategic plan that enhances teaching and learning in multiple contexts. They will provide planning and future methods to anticipate occupational trends and their educational implications; identify taxonomies of instructional objectives and validation procedures for curricular units, using theories of cognitive development; align and sequence curriculum; use valid and reliable performance indicators and testing procedures to measure performance outcomes; and describe the proper use of computers and other learning and informational technologies.

#### ***Dimension 6: Instructional Management and District Accountability***

BCSSA members will be able to exhibit knowledge of instructional management by implementing a system that includes research findings on learning and instructional strategies, instructional time, advanced electronic technologies, and resources to maximize student outcomes. They will be able to describe and apply research and best practices to integrating curriculum and resources for multi-cultural sensitivity, and to assessment strategies for helping all students achieve high levels.

#### ***Dimension 7: Human Resources Management***

BCSSA members will be able to develop a staff evaluation and development system to improve the performance of all staff members. They will be able to select appropriate models for supervision based on adult motivation research. They will be able to understand and be able to lead in a unionized environment.

#### ***Dimension 8: Values and Ethics of Leadership***

BCSSA members will be able to understand and model appropriate value systems, ethics and moral leadership. They will know the role of education in a democratic society; exhibit multi-cultural and ethnic understanding and related behaviour; adapt educational programming to the needs of diverse constituencies; balance complex community demands in the best interest of the student; scan and monitor the environment for opportunities for staff and students; respond in an ethical and skilled way to the electronic and print media; and coordinate social agencies and human services to help each student grow and develop as a caring, informed citizen.

### **III. MODULES FOR INSTRUCTION BY DIMENSION**

The dimensions are intended to provide a professional and personal development framework. As such, it is necessary to organize them into instructional units as the scope of each dimension is very large. These sub-groups or instructional modules are defined by the clusters of competencies and skills required for each dimension. Therefore, each dimension is accompanied by a series of modules, and each module has a set of competencies and skills required for district-level educational leaders. In order to measure the successful attainment of the competencies and skills, a series of goals support each module. The modules have some overlap between dimensions and these areas of overlap are identified under the appropriate competencies and skills.

Aspirants to and incumbents in these positions will already have attained or partially attained many of these skills. This is readily acknowledged but there is a need to have a systematic and encompassing professional and personal development plan. One person may only have to demonstrate goal attainment for a module while another may have to devote some significant time and study to attain the same goal. Much will depend on the range and depth of experience a person brings to the professional and personal development plan at the outset.

## Dimension 1: Leadership and District Culture

### Module 1.1 Future Directions

#### Competencies and Skills:

- Knowledge and understanding of current and potential future directions in education at the provincial, national and international levels
- Understanding of the implications of current and future directions at the local level
- Knowledge of various methodologies to conduct district and school climate assessments

#### Goal Attainment:

- ✓ formulate a written vision statement of future directions for the district
- ✓ conduct district and school climate assessments

### Module 1.2 Sharing the Vision

#### Competencies and Skills:

- Knowledge and understanding of personal and organizational needs for people to achieve at the highest level
- Knowledge and understanding of the new style of leadership and models of this leadership
- Knowledge and understanding of various collaborative planning models

#### Goal Attainment:

- ✓ facilitate comparative planning between constituencies
- ✓ promote academic rigor and excellence for staff and students
- ✓ empower others to reach high levels of performance

### Module 1.3 Leadership Style

#### Competencies and Skills:

- Knowledge and understanding of problem-solving models
- Understanding the necessity of risk-taking as a leader
- Knowledge of priority-setting methods
- Awareness of various time management models and the match to personal style

#### Goal Attainment:

- ✓ exhibit creative problem-solving
- ✓ promote and model risk-taking
- ✓ manage time effectively

### Module 1.4 Meeting Personal Needs

#### Competencies and Skills:

- Knowledge and understanding of the personal needs of people working in organizations
- Awareness of the multi-cultural diversity of the province and specific districts
- Understanding that their own personal needs are important to the organization

#### Goal Attainment:

- ✓ maintain personal, physical and emotional wellness
- ✓ build self-esteem in staff and students
- ✓ respect and encourage diversity among people and programs
- ✓ promote the value of understanding and celebrating school/community cultures

## Dimension 2: Policy and Governance

### Module 2.1 Governance in Public Education

#### Competencies and Skills:

- Knowledge and understanding of the history of public education in British Columbia
- Knowledge and understanding of the *School Act* and accompanying Regulations and Orders in Council as pertaining to governance and the duties of school boards
- Knowledge and understanding of the role and responsibilities of school boards

#### Goal Attainment:

- ✓ describe the system of public school governance in our democracy
- ✓ describe and implement for superintendent-board processes effective working relationships

### Module 2.2 Regulatory Procedures in Public Education

#### Competencies and Skills:

- Knowledge and understanding of the *School Act* and accompanying Regulations and Orders in Council as pertaining to the operation of the school district
- Awareness of the purpose of school district policy and differences between policy, regulations and administrative procedures
- Knowledge of means to access policy information and of the collaborative development of policy
- Knowledge of the process for regular review and maintenance of current policies

#### Goal Attainment:

- ✓ relate local policy regulations and requirements
- ✓ formulate a district policy for external and internal programs

### Module 2.3 Public Sector Labour Relations

#### Competencies and Skills:

- Knowledge and understanding of the history in British Columbia of professional and support staff collective organizations
- Awareness of the collective organizations in the public education sector nationally
- Knowledge and understanding of the labour legislation in British Columbia as it pertains to the public education sector
- Knowledge and understanding of the collective agreements and their evolution over the past several decades in British Columbia
- Knowledge and understanding of the management organization (BCPSEA) and the role of school- and district-based management personnel in British Columbia
- Knowledge and understanding of the bargaining process and grievance procedures in British Columbia

#### Goal Attainment:

- ✓ understand and be able to work effectively in a unionized environment

## Dimension 3: Communications and Community Relations

### Module 3.1 Communication Skills

#### Competencies and Skills:

- Demonstration of excellent verbal skills
- Demonstration of excellent written skills
- Knowledge and understanding of the elements of effective communications plans
- \* See also: *Modules 1.1 and 1.2*

#### Goal Attainment:

- ✓ write and speak clearly and forcefully
- ✓ communicate and project an articulate position for education
- ✓ articulate the district vision, mission and priorities to the community
- ✓ understand and be able to communicate with all cultural groups in the community
- ✓ develop and carry out internal and external communications plans

### Module 3.2 Understanding the Community

#### Competencies and Skills:

- Knowledge and understanding of methods to analyze the components of a community
- Knowledge and understanding of methods to survey a community
- \* See also: *Module 1.1*

#### Goal Attainment:

- ✓ identify the political forces in the community
- ✓ identify the political context of the community environment
- ✓ develop formal and informal means to gain external perception of the district by means of surveys, advisory groups and personal contact

### Module 3.3 Community Implementation

#### Competencies and Skills:

- Knowledge and understanding of methods to effectively reach all members of the community
- Awareness of the inter-relationships of private and public organizations in the community
- \* See also: *Modules 1.3 and 1.4*

#### Goal Attainment:

- ✓ implement an understanding of political theory and skills needed to build community support for district goals and priorities
- ✓ persuade the community to adopt an initiative for the welfare of students
- ✓ be able to develop and initiate programs that enhance school/community relations, school/business partnerships and related public service activities

### Module 3.4 Issue Identification / Conflict Resolution / Consensus-Building Skills

#### Competencies and Skills:

- Knowledge and understanding of methods to anticipate and identify issues
- Ability to formulate strategies to manage issues
- Demonstration of conflict resolution skills
- Demonstration of facilitation skills
- Demonstration of consensus-building skills
- \* See also: *Module 1.3*

#### Goal Attainment:

- ✓ identify, track and deal with issues
- ✓ understand theories of conflict resolution and be able to use these skills in practice
- ✓ understand theories of consensus-building and be able to use these skills in practice

## Dimension 4: Organizational Management

### Module 4.1 General Management Skills

#### Competencies and Skills:

- Demonstration of collection and use of data for decision-making
- Knowledge and understanding of a variety of problem-solving approaches
- Knowledge and understanding of quality management theory

\* See also: Modules 1.1 and 1.3

#### Goal Attainment:

- ✓ define processes for gathering, analyzing and using data for informed decision-making
- ✓ utilize problem-framing processes in decision-making when appropriate
- ✓ define the major components of quality management
- ✓ develop, implement and monitor change processes to build capacities to serve clients

### Module 4.2 Public Education Management Skills

#### Competencies and Skills:

- Knowledge and understanding of legislation, codes and regulations as they pertain to school district operations

\* See also: Module 2.2

#### Goal Attainment:

- ✓ discuss legal concepts, regulations and codes for school operations

### Module 4.3 Finances and Resources Management Skills

#### Competencies and Skills:

- Demonstration of basic knowledge of accounting practices
- Knowledge and understanding of the formula for provincial school funding procedures
- Knowledge and understanding of the rules for school district spending procedures
- Knowledge and understanding of the application and potential use of technology for resource and fiscal management for school districts
- Awareness of consultative processes for budget development and monitoring

\* See also: Module 2.2

#### Goal Attainment:

- ✓ develop a process for maintaining accurate fiscal reporting
- ✓ acquire, allocate and manage human, material and financial resources to effectively and accountably ensure successful student learning
- ✓ use technological applications to enhance administration of business and support systems
- ✓ understand and be able to use financial forecasting, planning and fiscal management systems
- ✓ perform budget-planning, management, account-auditing, and monitoring

## Dimension 5: Curriculum Planning and Development

### Module 5.1 Curriculum Theory

#### Competencies and Skills:

- Knowledge and understanding of curriculum theory and practice
- Demonstration of successful curriculum needs assessment, development and implementation
- Demonstration of successful curriculum monitoring, review and revision

#### Goal Attainment:

- ✓ describe cognitive development and learning theories and their importance to the sequencing of instruction
- ✓ describe and implement an understanding of instructional taxonomies, goals, objectives and processes

### Module 5.2 Curriculum Development Processes

#### Competencies and Skills:

- Knowledge and understanding of curriculum implementation processes at the district, school, classroom and student levels
- Knowledge and understanding of the requirements for cultural and ethnic curriculum adaptations
- Knowledge and understanding of methods to monitor future occupational trends
- Knowledge and understanding of the applications and potential for technology to support curriculum delivery

#### Goal Attainment:

- ✓ describe a process to create developmentally appropriate curriculum and instructional practices for all children and adolescents
- ✓ develop core curriculum design and delivery systems for diverse school communities
- ✓ describe curriculum-planning and future methods to anticipate occupational trends and their educational implications for lifelong learners
- ✓ develop the effective use of a plan for technology in educational programming

### Module 5.3 Curriculum Review Processes

#### Competencies and Skills:

- Knowledge and understanding of the inter-relationship between curricular outcomes and measurement of the outcomes
- Knowledge and understanding of the requirements for a range of levels of thinking to be integrated into curriculum/assessment models
- Knowledge and understanding of current effective assessment models at the district, school, classroom and student levels

\* See also: Modules 1.2 and 1.3

#### Goal Attainment:

- ✓ model an understanding of curricular alignment to ensure improved student performance and higher-order thinking
- ✓ develop a process for faculty input in continued and systematic renewal of the curriculum to ensure appropriate scope, sequence and context
- ✓ conduct assessments of present and future student learning needs

## Dimension 6: Instructional Management and District Accountability

### Module 6.1 Instructional Theory and Practice

#### Competencies and Skills:

- Knowledge and understanding of child and adolescent cognitive development
- Demonstration of the knowledge and skill to develop instructional scope and sequence
- Knowledge and understanding of a wide variety of instructional strategies
- Knowledge and understanding of the appropriate application of instructional strategies
- Knowledge and understanding of motivational theory as it pertains to child and adolescent instructional strategies

\* See also: *Modules 5.1 and 5.2*

#### Goal Attainment:

- ✓ describe cognitive development and learning theories and their importance to the sequencing of instruction
- ✓ encourage the knowledge of research findings in the use of a variety of instructional strategies
- ✓ know and be able to implement an understanding of motivation in the instructional process

### Module 6.2 Assessment Theory and Practice

#### Competencies and Skills:

- Knowledge and understanding of student assessment practices
- Knowledge and understanding of adult staff development requirements
- Knowledge and understanding of the elements of effective school learning climate
- Demonstration of the skill to utilize students' assessment results to review, adjust and revise instructional programs
- Knowledge and understanding of provincial requirements for student reporting procedures
- Demonstration of the skill to effectively communicate student performance outcomes

\* See also: *Module 5.3*

#### Goal Attainment:

- ✓ develop, implement and monitor change processes to improve student learning, adult development, and climates for learning
- ✓ describe how to interpret and use testing/assessment results to improve education
- ✓ describe and know how to develop a student achievement monitoring and reporting system

## Dimension 7: Human Resources Management

### Module 7.1 Staff Development

#### Competencies and Skills:

- Knowledge and understanding of adult learning theory and the age-related stages of adult learning
- Awareness of various models of adult staff development
- Knowledge and understanding of adult learner needs-assessment models
- Demonstration of the skill to implement, monitor and revise adult staff development programs
- Knowledge and understanding of the inter-relationship between staff development and student performance

\* See also: Modules 1.2 and 1.4

#### Goal Attainment:

- ✓ encourage knowledge of adult learning theory and motivation in education practice
- ✓ develop a plan to assess system and staff needs to identify areas for concentrated staff development
- ✓ evaluate the effectiveness of comprehensive staff development programming to determine its effect on professional performance

### Module 7.2 Organizational and Personnel Health

#### Competencies and Skills:

- Knowledge and understanding of organizational health theory and practice
- Knowledge and understanding of the needs of individuals in organizations

\* See also: Modules 1.2 and 1.4

#### Goal Attainment:

- ✓ diagnose and improve organizational health/morale
- ✓ assess individual and institutional sources of stress and develop methods for reducing stress (e.g., counselling, exercise programs and diet)

### Module 7.3 Personnel Management

#### Competencies and Skills:

- Knowledge and understanding of various evaluation methods for personnel practices
- Knowledge and understanding of methods to develop, implement and review personnel policy
- Knowledge and understanding of appropriate collective agreements
- Knowledge and understanding of British Columbia labour legislation
- Demonstration of experience and skill in bargaining processes, contract implementation and grievance resolution
- Demonstration of knowledge and experience in developing, implementing and supervising district and school student services and special programs

\* See also: Modules 2.2 and 2.3

#### Goal Attainment:

- ✓ provide for the use of system and staff evaluation data for personnel policy and decision-making
- ✓ implement personnel management strategies
- ✓ understand the skills needed to be able to work in a unionized environment
- ✓ demonstrate knowledge of pupil personnel services and special programs

## Dimension 8: Values and Ethics of Leadership

### Module 8.1 Personal Attributes

#### Competencies and Skills:

- Demonstration of excellent ethical practices
- Demonstration of high personal integrity
- Demonstration of an established record of ethical behaviour
- Demonstration of respect for multi-cultural and ethnic diversity

\* See also: *Module 1.4*

#### Goal Attainment:

- ✓ demonstrate ethical and personal integrity
- ✓ model accepted moral and ethical standards in all interactions
- ✓ exhibit multi-cultural and ethnic understanding and sensitivity

### Module 8.2 Valuing Public Education

#### Competencies and Skills:

- Demonstration of respect for democratic values
- Demonstration of respect for the value of public education

\* See also: *Modules 2.1 and 2.2*

#### Goal Attainment:

- ✓ describe how public education undergirds a free and democratic society
- ✓ describe the role of schooling in a democratic society

### Module 8.3 Honouring All Students

#### Competencies and Skills:

- Knowledge and understanding of the theory of moral education
- Knowledge and understanding of the expectations for social responsibility by all students
- Knowledge and understanding of the rights and responsibilities of students
- Awareness of legislation, policies and regulations for ensuring students rights
- Knowledge and understanding of roles and responsibilities of other Ministries, agencies and services for children and adolescents
- Demonstration of knowledge and skill in establishing, implementing and managing inter-ministerial and inter-agency structures

\* See also: *Modules 1.4 and 2.2*

#### Goal Attainment:

- ✓ describe a strategy to promote moral and ethical practices being established and practiced in each classroom and school
- ✓ describe a strategy to ensure that diversity of religion, ethnicity and a way of life in the district are not violated
- ✓ formulate a plan to coordinate integrated services for social, health and other community agencies to support each child in the district

#### **IV. CONCLUSION**

It is recognized that these dimensions of practice will change as the realities of the world of public education changes and, consequently, affects the roles of district leaders. The competencies and skills identified with each dimension provide a focus for personal and professional development as district leaders continue to be better prepared to meet the challenges in public education today.