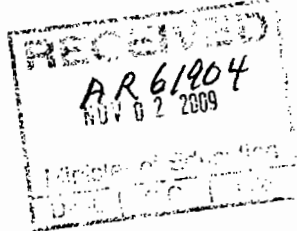




October 30, 2009

The Honorable Dave Hancock
Minister of Education
Executive Branch
224 Legislature Building
100800 - 97 Avenue
Edmonton AB T5K 2B6



Dear Minister Hancock;

The College of Alberta School Superintendents (CASS) recently reviewed our meeting with you in June where we discussed a number of issues leading up to the *Inspiring Education: A Dialogue with Albertans* Forum from last week. Many of us attended the impressive event.

One of the topics we discussed last June was recognition of membership in the College of Alberta School Superintendents within the Superintendent of Schools section in the new "School/Education Act". You suggested there might be separate legislation such as an "Education Professions Act". You asked us to remind you of the significance of this as the work progressed.

Given your feedback at that meeting we realize separate legislation is unlikely at this time. We believe that our efforts are those of a professional organization and should be recognized within the revised legislation. This would not affect the employment relationship between Boards and their superintendent but would recognize standards and support professional learning of their leaders. This is also the work of the Moving and Improving project to build system leadership capacity in Alberta. Attached are the Code of Professional Conduct and CASS Practice Standards that model our expectations for Superintendents in their service to Albertans through the roles as Chief Education and Chief Executive officers of our school jurisdictions.

The College of Alberta School Superintendents is writing to reiterate our request that membership in the College of Alberta School Superintendents be included in the forthcoming legislation, policy or regulations. This action would empower the College of Alberta School Superintendents to continue our work as a professional organization.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. We are available to discuss it further should you so request.

Yours truly,

Greg Woronuk
President

Attachments

c.c Keray Henke, Deputy Minister
CASS Executive

COLLEGE OF ALBERTA SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS

College of Alberta School Superintendents

Code of Professional Conduct

Background:

The College of Alberta School Superintendents requires high standards of conduct from its members to maintain the honour and dignity of the profession. It is acknowledged that the actions of CASS members will be viewed and appraised by professional colleagues, trustees, staff members, students, parents, guardians and the community-at-large. Therefore, the College of Alberta School Superintendents has established a Code of Professional Conduct that makes explicit the principles and obligations of the profession. Violation of the Code may constitute an independent basis for investigation and possible disciplinary action by the College of Alberta School Superintendents.

I. Principles

1. Protection of the Public Interest

A distinguishing feature of a profession is acceptance of its responsibility to the public and its commitment to serve and honor the public interest. The public interest, for the purpose of this Code, is defined as the collective well-being of the communities of people served by members of the College of Alberta School Superintendents.

Membership in the College of Alberta School Superintendents requires a commitment to protect the public interest. CASS members must place the public interest above their own at all times.

2. Integrity

Integrity is the fundamental quality from which the public trust derives. CASS members are employed in positions of trust; therefore, integrity must be an element of character of every individual who seeks to practice as a member of the College of Alberta School Superintendents.

CASS members must exemplify high standards of integrity in all interpersonal relationships and in the discharge of professional responsibilities. The trustworthiness of a CASS member must never be in question.

3. Objectivity

Objectivity is a quality that enhances integrity and helps safeguard the public interest. It requires CASS members to be impartial and free from conflicts between their private interests and professional responsibilities.

II. Obligations

The principles of the public interest, integrity and objectivity impose the following obligations on each member of the College of Alberta School Superintendents:

1. Falsification or Misrepresentation

The CASS member SHALL refrain from engaging in conduct involving falsification or deliberate misrepresentation, including omission or concealment, of a material fact.

2. Discrimination

The CASS member SHALL respect the requirements of human rights and constitutional laws in force in Canada. Except where differential treatment is permitted by law, the CASS member SHALL NOT discriminate in professional dealings with any person on grounds including, but not limited to, a person's ancestry, colour, perceived race, nationality, national origin, ethnic background or origin, language, religion, creed or religious belief, religious association or activities, age, gender, physical characteristics, pregnancy, sexual orientation, marital or family status, source of income, political belief/association/activities, or physical or mental disability.¹

3. Sexual Harassment and Harassment

The CASS member SHALL refrain from engaging in vexatious comments or conduct that is known or reasonably to be known to constitute sexual harassment or harassment. Harassment – sexual or otherwise – includes any improper, abusive, or unwelcome conduct that offends, embarrasses, humiliates, or degrades another person.²

4. Confidentiality

The CASS member SHALL comply with provincial and school system requirements relating to the confidentiality of student, staff and parent/guardian information.

5. Personal Interests and Private Gain

The CASS member SHALL refrain from acting in a professional capacity when personal interests or relationships might reasonably be expected to result in private gain or impair objectivity or effectiveness in the discharge of professional responsibilities.

6. Fundamental Justice

The CASS member SHALL comply with the principles of fundamental justice in all staff performance issues.

¹ Canadian Bar Association (2006), *Code of Professional Conduct* (Ottawa, Ontario), 115.

² Canadian Bar Association (2006), *Code of Professional Conduct* (Ottawa, Ontario), 118.

7. Contractual Matters

The CASS member SHALL fulfill all of the terms and obligations in his/her employment contract with the Board of Trustees, for the duration of the contract. Furthermore, the CASS member SHALL honour all terms and obligations in the employment contracts of other school system staff.

8. Conduct of a Criminal Nature

The CASS member SHALL refrain from engaging in conduct that may lead to being convicted in a court of law of a criminal offense which, in the opinion of the Professional Conduct Committee of CASS, represents serious misconduct relevant to the individual's suitability as a member of the profession.

9. Conduct of CASS Colleagues

When concerns arise regarding the professional conduct of a CASS colleague, the CASS member SHALL first advise the colleague of the concern and subsequently attempt to resolve the matter collegially and in a confidential manner. If these attempts at resolution are unsuccessful, the CASS member SHALL file a formal complaint with the College of Alberta School Superintendents. However, the CASS member SHALL refrain from initiating, participating in, or encouraging the filing of complaints that are malicious, unwarranted or without basis in fact. Furthermore, the CASS member SHALL refrain from knowingly assisting or inducing a colleague to contravene the Code of Professional Conduct.

10. Complaint Proceedings

The CASS member SHALL assist in the process of enforcing the Code of Professional Conduct by cooperating with investigations, participating in proceedings, and complying with directives from the College of Alberta School Superintendents.

Reference:

Canadian Bar Association (2006). *Code of Professional Conduct*. Ottawa, Ontario.

CASS Practice Standard, Leadership Dimensions and Descriptors

Membership in the College of Alberta School Superintendents (CASS) requires a commitment to serving the public interest by providing exemplary educational leadership. This commitment requires a high standard of practice that maintains the honour and dignity of CASS. The CASS Practice Standard and its eight leadership dimensions—with supporting descriptors—reflect the Alberta context. Due to differences in roles and job descriptions, the applicability of the dimensions will vary within school system educational leadership positions held by CASS members.

CASS Practice Standard

The CASS member is an accomplished leader and teacher who ensures each student is provided the opportunity to achieve optimum learning.

Leadership Dimension 1: Visionary Leadership

The CASS member provides exemplary leadership by ensuring the school system's culture is characterized by shared values and beliefs, and a collective vision that focuses on student learning.

Descriptors

The CASS member ensures:

- 1) the school system's culture is flexible, collaborative, innovative and supportive of efforts to improve student learning.
- 2) a collective vision of a preferred future, reflecting shared values and beliefs of the school system community, is clearly articulated.
- 3) high levels of student achievement and staff performance are promoted.
- 4) each student has the opportunity to develop a strong foundation for citizenship, employment and life-long learning.
- 5) school system planning is evidence-based.

Leadership Dimension 2: Instructional Leadership

The CASS member provides exemplary leadership by ensuring each student has access to programs to meet provincial and school system goals.

Descriptors

The CASS member ensures:

- 1) each student has access to appropriate programming based on individual learning needs.
- 2) each teacher consistently meets the Alberta Teaching Quality Standard.

- 3) exemplary instructional practices are identified, implemented and supported.
- 4) opportunities are provided for teachers to share their practice and engage in reflective dialogue and collective inquiry about teaching and learning.
- 5) alignment of teaching and student assessment with the provincial curriculum.
- 6) student learning is assessed, evaluated and reported using a fair, appropriate and balanced program of multiple indicators and sources of evidence.
- 7) student assessment is used to inform and shape instruction.
- 8) school administrators provide effective instructional leadership.
- 9) student and staff accomplishments are recognized and celebrated.

Leadership Dimension 3: Human Resources Leadership

The CASS member provides exemplary leadership by ensuring the sustained implementation of effective staff recruitment, selection, development, supervision and evaluation processes.

Descriptors

The CASS member ensures:

- 1) recruitment strategies lead to the selection of qualified and effective staff.
- 2) all staff members are supervised and evaluated in accordance with school system requirements.
- 3) staff development programs are aligned with provincial, school system, and school education plans.
- 4) the implementation of effective leadership development programs.
- 5) contractual obligations with staff are fulfilled.
- 6) principles of fundamental justice are followed in dealing with all staff performance issues.
- 7) staff accomplishments are recognized and celebrated.

Leadership Dimension 4: Ethical Leadership

The CASS member provides exemplary leadership by modeling and inspiring ethical behavior that honors the principles of integrity, objectivity, and protection of the public interest.

Descriptors

The CASS member ensures:

- 1) decisions are ethical and are in the best interests of students.
- 2) personal actions are consistent with the *CASS Code of Professional Conduct*.

Leadership Dimension 5: Effective Relationships

The CASS member provides exemplary leadership by building trust and effective relationships within the school system community.

Descriptors

The CASS member ensures:

- 1) Board decisions and directional statements are communicated to the school system community in a timely and accurate manner.
- 2) trust and effective relationships are built and sustained with staff members, school councils, parents/guardians, Board members, Alberta Education, and other stakeholders.
- 3) parents/guardians and community members are meaningfully involved in the school system.
- 4) effective team-building, consensus-building, problem-solving, and conflict resolution.

Leadership Dimension 6: Organizational Leadership and Management

The CASS member provides exemplary leadership by managing the operations and resources of the organization in a manner that creates a responsible and responsive environment.

Descriptors

The CASS member ensures:

- 1) compliance with all statutory, regulatory, and Board requirements and timelines.
- 2) school plant, equipment and support systems operate safely, effectively and efficiently.
- 3) human, material and financial resources are secured, allocated and managed in an effective, responsible, fair, and accountable manner.
- 4) organizational structures and operational plans provide clear direction for all activities within the school system.
- 5) the financial management of the school system is in accordance with the terms and conditions of funding received under the School Act or any other applicable Act or regulation.
- 6) organizational performance is monitored and adjustments made when necessary.