

A Welcome from the President

Dr. Shannon Behan, qathet (SD47)

2024-2026 President

Sitting at my desk on a warm summer day, I am putting myself into the shoes of close to 3,000 leaders who are preparing for 'start-up'. This is a time that is filled with excitement, nervousness, anxiety, joy, and so much more. It is a time where we reacquaint ourselves with our families and students, while welcoming new families and students to our school communities. It is a great time to connect with and support new and returning school staff as they busily prepare their classes and lessons. We are also working closely with maintenance to ensure the building and landscaping is prepped and polished, ready to welcome our students and usher in the new school year!

Regardless of whether you run a large school set in an urban region of this province, or lead a school set in a more remote location, perhaps with a smaller, multi-aged classroom, this is a time filled with optimism and excitement, joy and curiosity. Principals and Vice-Principals have a significant influence on student success, and motivate both the school community and the greater community. No matter the size or location of your school, the work you do as leaders in your buildings and districts is crucial. The role is dynamic, intense, exciting, creative, and at times can be challenging. And *that* is exactly why we signed up for it!

I have been privileged to serve as a school leader for the past twenty years. After teaching for about ten years, I jumped into administration and have led in elementary, middle, and high schools, and at a certified BC Offshore School in Beijing, China. I am grateful to have completed both a Master's in



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Educational Leadership from the University of Calgary, and a Doctorate in Education Leadership and Policy from the University of Kansas. The opportunities are endless in this profession, and the work is rich and rewarding.

This year, I look forward to getting to know you as I travel all over British Columbia to visit our members in their Chapters. I have a deep pride in our public school system, as well as a personal interest in why our BC public schools consistently outperform those in other jurisdictions. I am looking forward to finding out more about how you lead in your schools, to hear your experiences, and to share what I learn with our Association and our sector partners to ensure that you are supported in your work. Please remember to reach out to Sharon North to schedule a Chapter visit!

In all the work we do, I hope you will remember one thing. While we are often the first to arrive at our buildings, and the last to leave at night, however you can do it, I urge you to build time for yourself into your schedule. That can be time to take on physical activity,

connect with friends, read, or cook, any way that you can fill your cup! Remember, this is a marathon and not a sprint, so pace yourself. And always remember, the BCPVPA is here to support you in your school leadership through advocacy, representation, leadership development, and support. You are part of a network of colleagues throughout this province. The BCPVPA represents 94% of the Principals and Vice-Principals in BC's K-12 public education system, and you are not alone! Please take time to connect directly with me, or with anyone at the Association. We are here for you.

Have a wonderful start-up and stay in touch. I look forward to connecting with you and supporting the work you do, in the years ahead.

With appreciation,

Dr. Shannon Behan

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Invite the BCPVPA
President to visit
your Chapter in the
2024-2025 school year!

Contact
Sharon North

7 Steps to Create an Environment of Trust on Your Team

The majority of leaders today still operate from a “Command and Control” leadership style. This leadership style focuses on efficiency and getting things done. They view their employees as fragmented people versus a whole person. It’s about motivating rather than inspiring, and controlling instead of unleashing potential.

In the modern education landscape, we must adapt to what is more timely and relevant—a “Trust & Inspire” leadership model. A “Trust & Inspire” leader knows that building trust with their team is absolutely essential to the success of their team and the school, but knowing where to start can be difficult. The best way to build trust is to model it. It starts from the inside out; a leader’s job is to go first. Implement these seven steps to create conditions in which trust can flourish in your school and district.

1. Start by modeling trust yourself.

Leaders set the tone for their teams. Brush up on the 13 Behaviors® of High-Trust Leaders from FranklinCovey’s Leading at the Speed of Trust®—in particular, speak in an open, honest way.

2. Eliminate rules or processes that send the signal “We don’t trust you.”

When you can, eliminate unnecessary restrictions, and tell your direct reports that you trust them to do their jobs well and do what’s right for your students and your school.

3. Set up transparent communication protocols to keep team members informed.

When you set a standard with your team that transparency helps everyone, trust flows in all directions. Build a habit of asking yourself and others, “Who else should know about this?”

4. Encourage teachers to speak up—and always respond constructively when they do.

Your direct reports may hold back their ideas and concerns when they fear that their views will be rejected or held against them.

5. Help teachers collaborate in ways that rely on and develop each other’s strengths.

You’re the boss, so your direct reports will naturally come to you for feedback and guidance.

6. Regularly highlight how each direct teacher’s efforts contribute to achieving team goals.

As a leader, you can inspire others to feel a sense of purpose and excitement by recognizing their accomplishments and showing them how their work connects to the bigger picture.

7. Use feedback to reinforce high-trust behaviours—and redirect trust-damaging ones.

Reinforce these high-trust behaviours in your direct reports.

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