

LEADERSHIP



by

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MATTERS

As partners in PLD, Dr. Andrea McComb and I have been settling into our new roles as Directors of Professional Learning and Development. Since starting our roles in August 2021, we have revisited and reassessed all of the traditional PLD offerings that have been available to our BCPVPA members.

Andrea and I have been working closely with our PLD Advisors and our PLD Representatives to ensure that we maintain and develop professional learning opportunities that provoke your thinking, and are transferrable to your own personal leadership growth and school context.

We know your leadership matters in the schools you lead. ‘Leading and Learning’ is a common theme throughout all our program offerings and new content development. As we have dug in, our team motto has evolved as ‘Leadership Matters’; the phrase has multiple meanings, as we know *your* leadership matters, and that there are many *matters* that affect your leadership in your schools. This is the lens we are using when developing our PLD offerings.

We have reviewed the many challenges involved in offering quality professional and development opportunities to all of members. We understand that your district may offer outstanding PLD, and acknowledge that there are many other organizations that offer PLD: you have many places to turn for your learning. Andrea and I believe that the BCPVPA offers PLD that focuses on *your* leadership at this point of the development of *your* career here in British Columbia. We will be offering multiple modalities, and the ability to connect to your Principal colleagues within your district and around the province.

After all, there are only 2,600 Principals and Vice-Principals in BC. We want to empower you to share your story, and to be an integral part of delivering leadership content across the province. In the way that teachers tend to have other teachers deliver

their professional development, we want to have our members deliver professional learning to their colleagues.

We know some of the challenges you face in choosing your PLD direction are drawn from your unique school district circumstances, perspectives, and professional learning values. Your local context may not be the same as in the rest of the province, but we feel that educational leadership has many attributes that are common, regardless of the school or district.

Effective professional learning is characterized as purposeful in its design, content, process, and application stages, and there is an intent to attain alignment and balance between personal and school needs.

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As well, effective professional learning design is long-term and embedded in one’s work, and incorporates high-quality facilitators who are knowledgeable, engaging, and skilled, and who ground their approaches in research-based content, practices, and an understanding of BC’s educational context. We will help you, as a Principal, to become a highly effective facilitator, a skill you can then take to your school, district, and region.

In Dianne Turner’s research paper “Leadership Learning and Development”, she suggests that PLD should offer ongoing support for leaders once they are assigned to a school leadership role, in the form of mentoring, participation in Principals’ networks

and study groups, school visits, and coaching. We agree, and we will strive to continue to develop these leadership support systems.

Dianne points out that researchers identify three features that appear to be particularly meaningful to school leaders, and she suggests that exemplary leadership programs have a coherent and comprehensive system-wide approach.

1. A learning continuum that begins with pre-service preparation, includes induction and in-service throughout the career, and utilizes the expertise of experienced and retired Principals in mentoring;

2. Leadership learning that is grounded in practice, which includes learning to analyze classroom practice, supervision of staff, and professional development that uses real in-school learning experiences, readings, and discussions; uses some inquiry methodology; and is organized around a leadership development framework; and

3. Collaborative and collegial learning networks that provide a community of practice experience, such as study groups, mentoring or peer coaching, and that engage in ongoing support.

You will find that BCPVPA's professional learning incorporates all of Dianne Turner's suggestions. Our programs focus on leadership, grounded in our acclaimed *BCPVPA Leadership Standards for Principals and Vice-Principals in BC*, and support all career levels from aspiring teachers to new Principals and Vice-Principals to experienced Principals and Vice-Principals. Each program incorporates the critical aspects of the exemplary leadership programs that Turner identifies.

As former Principals in BC, we understand that lack of time, funding, and resources can be significant obstacles to your professional learning initiatives. As a member of the BCPVPA, we believe that BCPVPA's PLD should be one of the best PLD value propositions you can access.

Our members have expressed to us the necessity for cultivation of a supportive safe learning culture that has no embedded judgements or unconscious bias attached. We have created that safe learning environment for you within all our PLD programs. We are excited by the diversity of interests and needs of school leaders across BC, and the necessity for a wide range of choices and entry points for developing knowledge, skills, and critical understanding of leading our schools.

As we continue to revisit and reimagine the professional learning options for our members across the province, we are truly excited by the possibilities.

Our October 22, 2021 – the provincial professional learning day – we saw more than 700 school leaders participate in a virtual and in-person **Connecting Leaders Conference**. Connecting school leaders with other school leaders from across the province is an important facet of our PLD offerings, and something very few PLD organizations demonstrate to be a priority. We have continued the learning from the October conference with the ongoing **Leading for Equity Series**. Our conferences are not 'one and done!' We are looking to make the sharing of our learning easier as we refine and enhance the experience of connection for our members.

Our programs are charted from the beginning of your leadership journey. For teachers who are aspiring to become an administrator, their professional learning and development starts with the program called **Explorations for Aspiring School Leaders**. This program, now in its second year, offers insight into leadership roles through the eyes of current Vice-Principals and Principals.

With the input of our members, BCPVPA has recently changed the naming conventions for some of our traditional program offerings. If you are a newly-appointed Principal or Vice-Principal, *congratulations* and welcome to **Foundations for New School Leaders**. Previously titled Short Course I, this program has a 45-year history in partnership with UBC. Foundations is scheduled to be live and in person at the UBC campus July 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8, 2022.

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This program has proven to be a powerful learning experience that lasts a lifetime.

We will also be gathering content and developing a program called **Extensions for Experienced School Leaders**, based on our previous offering Short Course II. This leadership program acknowledges that we require different leadership understandings depending on our leadership experience and context.

In our continuing efforts to present the best in leadership development programming, we have acquired the content of FranklinCovey's leadership programs and will be weaving these training materials throughout our programming. In addition, we have access to the Adaptive Schools Network programming and Compassionate Systems Leadership content. As we continue to acquire some of the finest leadership content available, we will tweak it to our BC context to support your ongoing leadership development.

All of the BCPVPA PLD programing will have exemplary pre- and in-service leadership development that incorporates:

A comprehensive and coherent PLD program that is aligned to our professional leadership standards, in particular the leadership standards which emphasize instructional leadership or leadership of learning;

- A leadership program that emphasizes leadership of instruction and school improvement;
- Expert leadership programs (including

FranklinCovey, Adaptive Schools Network, and Compassionate Systems), and training for Principals in facilitating these leadership programs to help further develop leaders' skills, draw on their personal experience in school leadership roles, and deliver the school's context;

- Leadership programs that integrate the theory and practice of BC schools, stimulate reflection, and engage participants in action-oriented learning experiences that include action research, inquiry, field or case studies, problem-based learning, reflective journal writing, and feedback assessment processes by peers, faculty and self;
- Leadership programs that include cohort, mentorship, and coaching structures that provide social and professional support, and may result in a Principal network that will provide support throughout your career.

As a provincial organization, we strongly believe that professional learning and development content needs to facilitate leadership for our members across the entire province. We will be developing Principals across BC to become facilitators in their region. We feel that professional learning and development should come from our Principal colleagues as much as possible.

Along with acquiring leadership development content, we continue to develop our Member Portal which will house a variety of webinars and personal professional learning opportunities that can be accomplished independently and collaboratively, in-person and online. This library of offerings will grow, and we look forward to the feedback and requests of our members.

Andrea and I are ecstatic about the potential of our PLD offerings. We are leaders in one of the highest performing educational systems in the world. We believe that the local public school is the hope of our province, and its future rests primarily in the hands of its leaders. We are excited to be a part of your leadership journey.