

## Supporting Implementation is a Shared Responsibility

Successful implementation is possible in environments where education stakeholders are committed to sharing the responsibility for supporting implementation within a culture of learning.

### Shared Responsibility

Shared responsibility is a commitment among education stakeholders — Alberta Education staff, school boards, jurisdictional and school leaders, teachers, professional learning<sup>5</sup> providers, students, parents, and school councils — to develop a shared understanding of and commitment to their respective roles and responsibilities to support implementation. In some cases education stakeholders’ implementation support responsibilities might be shared, in other instances they will have distinct responsibilities.

### Culture of Learning

A culture of learning is a social/emotional environment in which inquiry, risk-taking, sharing and collaboration are encouraged in order to optimize student learning.

#### Guiding Question:

How are education stakeholders working towards a shared understanding of and commitment to their respective roles and responsibilities to support implementation?

#### Guiding Question:

How are education stakeholders fostering a culture of learning to optimize learning for all students?

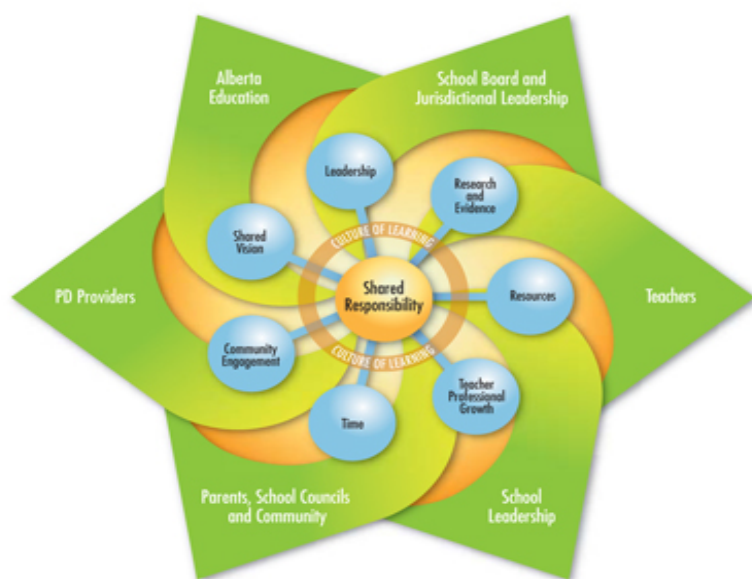


Figure 1. Essential Conditions to Support Implementation

## Essential Conditions to Support Implementation

Successful implementation is possible when education stakeholders share responsibility to address the seven essential conditions — shared vision, leadership, research and evidence, resources, teacher professional growth, time, and community engagement. Figure 1 names the seven essential conditions (blue circles), identifies the education stakeholders involved in collaboratively addressing these essential conditions (green fins), and depicts the culture of learning within which educational policies, curricula, programs, initiatives, and priorities are implemented (orange circle).

<sup>5</sup> Professional learning is based on a model of continuous improvement that acknowledges career-long growth and development. It involves interactions and collaborations among educators engaged in a learning community, and is best supported by comprehensive professional growth plans that consider those conditions essential to successful implementation. The terms professional learning and professional development (or PD) are used interchangeably in this guide.



## Planning for Successful Implementation

Planning for successful implementation requires an understanding of the characteristics of successful implementation; coherence among plans and priorities; and the intentional efforts by education stakeholders to collaboratively address the essential conditions.

### Characteristics of Successful Implementation

As education policies, curricula, priorities, programs and initiatives evolve, they need to be successfully implemented to ensure student learning success. Research shows that successful implementation

- is a shared responsibility among stakeholders;
- is developmental and contextual;
- is systematically planned, systemic, and sustained;
- is meaningful, purposeful and focused on key priorities;
- involves learning opportunities that focus on enhancing professional practice and leadership capacity among educators<sup>6</sup>;
- involves a variety of learning opportunities by and for all education stakeholders including support staff, students, parents, school councils and community members; and
- involves change at both organizational and individual levels.

### Successful Implementation Requires System Coherence

Successful implementation is complex work requiring coherence among several plans and priorities. Provincial policy requires that all certificated teachers develop annual **professional growth plans** based on self-assessments of their learning needs relative to the *Teaching Quality Standard*. School boards and jurisdictions<sup>7</sup>

are required to develop annual **education plans**. Professional growth plans and annual education plans also need to align with evolving **provincial education goals**. Annual education plans need to specify how jurisdiction professional development plans will support implementation of school board and provincial goals. Figure 2 illustrates the need to build coherence among all of these plans to improve professional practice focused on enhanced student learning.

Figure 2:  
System Coherence



### Addressing the Essential Conditions

Intentionally addressing the essential conditions requires that education stakeholders collaborate to

- answer several guiding questions as they develop their implementation plans;
- use a variety of implementation strategies that identify who will be responsible for what, by when and at what cost; and
- establish what evidence will be accepted that the essential conditions have been addressed.

Implementation planning templates and tools focused on addressing each of the essential conditions are provided on the following pages.

<sup>6</sup> See *A Guide to Comprehensive Professional Development Planning* (2005). This Guide is intended to support collaborative conversations and planning related to professional development. As such it serves as an important complementary resource to *A Guide to Support Implementation: Essential Conditions*.

<sup>7</sup> Jurisdictions refer to Alberta school authorities, including private and charter schools. Jurisdiction staff is identified as personnel in the school or jurisdiction that support student learning (e.g., certificated teachers, administrators, non-teaching staff, and others).

