

COMMUNITY



COMMUNITY OF practice

We've all heard the term 'school community' and been part of one too. In Alberta, school is a special place where people come together to learn as well as unites the greater community.

Communities of practice are groups of people who share a passion for something that they know how to do and who interact regularly to learn how to do it better. It's an idea that is gaining ground in the education sector. For many, it's all about learning from and reflecting on our experiences, and mentoring others to share these lessons. So, encouraging a community of practice is a natural fit.

Besides providing a place to share professional learnings, establishing a community of practice also builds a sense of teamwork. And teamwork helps us to become better in ways we might not have imagined.

GROW YOUR COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

When we feel part of a community, or a community of practice, there are fewer times that we feel like we're in conflict. This results in stronger emotional well-being, linked to a feeling of belonging, which is sometimes called 'connectedness.' This is especially important during stressful situations.



Take some time on your own or as part of your team meeting to grow your knowledge by using these three professional learning methods:



BUILD SHARED UNDERSTANDINGS

Expand the definitions that you use every day and respectfully present, or respond to, multiple perspectives on a topic in a reflective way.

UNPACK THE RESEARCH

Try following research and sharing these great ideas with your colleagues. When possible, have face-to-face discussions about the research, even if it's only for a few minutes!

REFLECT ON PRACTICE

Discuss helpful changes to practice through a 'more or less' approach. Pick a topic and share what elements you'd like to see more or less of. Possible topics include the use of technology, streamlining interactions with parents and colleagues, allowing more time to work on other things, or how to set boundaries around work-life balance.



Community Connection Tip

Take time to visit the [Create Communities of Practice website](#).

It's created by Alberta educators and includes some great activities!



You're not always in charge of what you have to do every day, but you're always in charge of who you are.

- DREW DUDLEY

SOURCES

Creating Communities of Practice
College of Alberta School Superintendents (CASS). [Learning Guide – CASS Community of Practice: Workplace Wellness](#)