

University of  
Lethbridge



FACULTY OF  
**EDUCATION**

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**MASTER OF EDUCATION  
(Educational Leadership)  
INTERNSHIP HANDBOOK**

**Education 5635 and 5637**

Approved: May 2013  
Revised: August 2024

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## **Master of Education (Educational Leadership) Internship Handbook** *Education 5635 and 5637*

Inquiries regarding graduate programs should be made to:

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Additional information, including policies and report forms, can be accessed at:  
<https://www.ulethbridge.ca/future-student/graduate-studies/graduate-programs-faculty-education>  
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# 1 | Introduction

The MEd (Educational Leadership) program was originally informed on a model that advocates a practical component be an integral part of leadership preparation (Daresh, 1988). This model was reaffirmed in a discussion paper that further saw leadership preparation as a balance among academic, practical, and professional experiences (Berry & Beach, 2009). Recently Leadership Internship experiences have been implemented in many preparation programs in response to a stinging rebuke that the training opportunities received by graduates in masters' programs were marginally utilitarian at best (Levine, 2005).

Further, the Alberta context reflects the importance of a practical understanding of leadership in a culture that is experiencing a great deal of change. For example, classroom assessment practice, the support of professional learning communities, considerations of equality, inclusion, and fairness, and the impact of technology and media on schools in general and on classrooms in particular have each been focal points for school improvement initiatives in the last 10-15 years. Leadership competencies have emerged that have positioned instructional leadership as the substance of leadership preparation and practice. The competencies stress what a school principal should know and be able to do. It is the "be able to do" part of this statement that provides an imperative in our leadership program to provide opportunities for Interns to integrate their academic and professional knowledge with reflective practical experience.

As Interns approach the conclusion of their master's program the Leadership Internship experience affords them the opportunity to apply their understanding of leadership in a real-time setting. Interns, with the guidance of their instructor, design a part-time leadership project that is generally hosted at their home school or place of employment. In an ideal world Interns would benefit from a full-time Internship experience. However, that is not the reality of Interns in our program as they are typically maintaining a full-time position with their school districts while they are completing their master's studies. Most Interns take two Internship courses. The university calendar requires approximately 10 hours leadership experience per week per course over a 12-week period (i.e., 120 hours per course). In the leadership program we work outside the calendar parameters in that we encourage Interns to stretch their two Internship courses over an extended period of time—one and one-half to two years. The extended period removes the intensity of the 10-hour-a-week model, caters to ongoing leadership work that supplements classroom courses that are conducted concurrently, and allows for meaningful reflection.

Leadership Internship experiences will vary from Intern to Intern. Responsibilities undertaken by the Intern will be context-dependent. The leadership courses are closely aligned with leadership competencies and Interns are encouraged to propose Internship experiences that facilitate practice in the leadership competencies. The Intern will complete some context-specific activities throughout the Internship and submit a reflection paper to the University Instructor at the conclusion of the Internship.

Participation in the Internship program is restricted to students in the Educational Leadership cohorts and is subject to the approval of the Mentor. Each participating school jurisdiction receives an email ([Appendix B](#)) acknowledging that the Internship curriculum will not require release time from the Intern's regular assigned duties. In cases where the Principal is not the Mentor, a similar email ([Appendix D](#)) is communicated.

This handbook of information and materials is intended to guide the Intern in planning and completing the Internship. Interns are advised to review the procedures thoroughly before submitting their Internship proposal.

## 2 | Purpose of the Leadership Internship

The overall purpose of the Leadership Internship in the MEd (Educational Leadership) program is to provide opportunities for the Intern to learn about the practical application of leadership competencies in a real-work context. The deliverables in the program are intended to help the Intern integrate and synthesize their academic, professional, and practical knowledge.

More specifically, the goals of the program are:

- ❖ To provide the Intern with opportunities to observe leadership practiced by experienced school leaders.
- ❖ To have the Intern make informed leadership decisions guided by academic knowledge with the help of the Mentor.
- ❖ To provide opportunities for the Intern to lead colleagues in learning community settings.
- ❖ To allow for hands-on experiences in school managerial or technical tasks such as budgeting, scheduling, implementing safety measures, or managing Interns in large scale settings.
- ❖ To provide opportunities for Interns to engage in research experiences which comply with faculty research standards.
- ❖ To enable Interns to gain experiences that will enhance their career path.

## 3 | Procedures for Enrolment

1. Instructor and Intern collaborate on Internship inquiry question and design
2. Student provided with Internship Handbook
3. Student prepares proposal
4. Instructor approves proposal
5. Student gains approval from Mentor to undertake proposal (and Principal if the Mentor is not Principal) and emails Instructor notifying them of approval. Note: no form is required.

6. Instructor emails introduction to Superintendent and invites questions about the Internship ([Appendix B](#))
7. Instructor emails introduction to Mentor (and Principal if the Mentor is not Principal) and invites questions about the Internship ([Appendix C](#) and [Appendix D](#))
8. Student emails Superintendent an invitation to ask for clarification on Internship (notice of undertaking Internship) ([Appendix E](#))
9. Instructor meets with Mentor and Intern.

## 4 | Roles and Responsibilities

### 4.1 Intern

- 1) Acquire the Leadership Internship Handbook from the designated EDUC 5635/5637 University Instructor.
- 2) Consider the Indicators in the Professional Practice Competencies as taken from **Alberta Education Leadership Quality Standards** ([Appendix G](#)) as a source of possibilities for Leadership Internship activities.
- 3) Complete and submit a proposal on the **Education 5635/5637 Planner** ([Appendix A](#)) form by email. The proposal contains the following:
  - a) Internship observations and experiences
  - b) Timelines for each activity
  - c) Alignment between the leadership courses and the Internship activities.
  - d) Alignment between the professional practice competencies and the Internship activities.
  - e) Contact data for the school and the district.
- 4) Assist the University Instructor to set up the meeting with the Intern and the Leader-Mentor. Be prepared to discuss implementation details at this meeting.
- 5) Implement the Internship proposal in accordance with timelines specified in the proposal.
- 6) Maintain a journal throughout the duration of the Internship.
- 7) Prepare Internship reflection papers—one for EDUC 5635 and one at the conclusion of EDUC 5637—in compliance with the course requirements. See **Written Submissions Requirements** ([Appendix F](#)).
- 8) Ensure that the Leader-Mentor has an opportunity to read the reflection papers prior to submission.

### 4.2 Mentor

- 1) Agree to act as a Mentor to the Intern.
- 2) Assist the Intern in developing the Internship proposal.
- 3) Meet with the University Instructor and the Intern to review details of the Internship experience.
- 4) Provide opportunities for the Intern to discuss progress throughout the Internship.
- 5) Advise and guide the Intern where appropriate.

### 4.3 University Instructor

- 1) Inform the cohort about Internship procedures in the term prior to registration in the Internship course.
- 2) Review and approve Intern's proposals.
- 3) Communicate the program intents with the Intern's school jurisdiction.
- 4) Communicate with the Intern's principal about the Intern's Internship.
- 5) Meet face-to-face and/or virtually with the Intern and the Leader-Mentor to review the proposal, outline the Mentor's role, set the deadlines, and clarify the intents of the program.
- 6) Advise the Intern about expectations for course deliverables (journal and reflection papers).
- 7) Maintain the course in Moodle or an equivalent platform to share documents, course expectations, submissions, and regular communication.
- 8) Evaluate the Intern and assign a final grade (Pass/Fail).

## 5 | Evaluation

The calendar lists a total requirement of 120 hours for each EDUC 5635 and 5637.

Interns should endeavor to keep track of the hours invested and record this in their journal entries (or a log). The University Instructor may ask to see the journal (or log) as evidence of the Internship experiences.

Interns will submit two reflection papers—one at each of the semester deadlines for EDUC 5635 and EDUC 5637. The University Instructor will issue specific requirements for the papers. The reflection paper should be written in such a way that people and schools are not identified.

The course will be evaluated on a **Pass/Fail** basis.

## APPENDIX A: EDUC 5635/5637 Planner

**Guidelines:** You select a number of school-based leadership projects to be completed during the internships. Each of the projects should focus on an aspect of leadership you would like to explore in the school setting. You should enter into a conversation with the person who will be the Leader-Mentor and ensure that the person is comfortable with the projects being proposed. You then begin the process of writing the proposal for submission to the University Instructor. Consider course work completed to date when writing the proposal. For example, you should look at the first three courses completed in the program when writing the proposal for Internship One:

- EDUC 5630 Educational Leadership and the Change Process. An interpretation of the change process, leadership models, administration theory, and the role of vision in leadership.
- EDUC 5631 School Culture and the Instructional Program. An examination of the leader's role in facilitating a positive school culture and in positioning teaching and learning as the focal point of schools.
- EDUC 5400 Research Literacy. A focus on the Action Research methodology as a means of exploring how educators can identify and address problems, concerns, and opportunities regarding the teaching and learning process.

As you take more leadership courses you may need to update your proposal in consultation with your University Instructor to include additional course content. The University Instructor will work with you to determine how much is enough. Some activities will be of sufficient breadth and depth that no other activities will be required. Another proposal might require a series of smaller leadership activities to satisfy requirements.

Once you have mapped out your internship in summary form then complete a more detailed written explanation of the Internship. The written description should include the following details:

1. Provide a project overview in an opening paragraph or two.
  - Description of what your project(s) will entail.
  - Rationale for doing the project(s).
  - Desired outcomes of the project(s)
2. Identify and articulate a scope, sequence and timing.
  - What are the generic descriptions and activities that you hope to accomplish (ie motivation, capacity building, etc.)?
  - How will you order the project?
  - What time frame will you use to complete each section of your project(s)?
3. Connect the Professional Practice Competencies to your project(s) by providing a written description of how they relate to what it is you want to do.
4. Connect course learning to the project(s). Be explicit in stating how you believe what you have taken in your course work will be reflected in your project(s).

**Timing and Staging:** Do not attempt to begin your Internship activity until your proposal has been approved.

**Send your University Instructor a proposal** that includes the details of your project(s).



**Education 5635/5637 Planner**

As appropriate, submit this form for **Internship I** to the University Instructor for EDUC 5635, or for **Internship II**, to the University Instructor for EDUC 5637.

**Intern:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Superintendent Contact Information:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School Jurisdiction: \_\_\_\_\_

Address (*mailing*): \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Mentor Contact Information:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Address (*mailing*): \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Principal** (*if different than -Mentor*)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Address (*mailing*): \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Written statement outlining your project(s) for the Internship.**

## **APPENDIX B: Sample Communication – Instructor to Superintendent**

### **Notification of MEd (Educational Leadership) Internship**

You are receiving this communication as a staff member in your district is completing the MEd (Educational Leadership) program at the University of Lethbridge.

<<Student First Name>> <<Student Last Name>> is currently registered to complete an Internship course. I am the Intern’s instructor at the University of Lethbridge.

As a condition of earning the master's degree, the leadership student has agreed to participate in a field Internship at <<School>> during the <<Year-Year>> time period.

The Intern’s projects, research, and leadership activities will be designed around leadership themes and standards (e.g. school culture, vision, community, management, and professional development).

The Mentor for the Internship will be <<Mentor First Name>> <<Mentor Last Name>> and their involvement will include:

- inviting the Intern to observe the Mentor’s leadership activities
- facilitating the Intern’s participation in agreed-upon administrative duties
- acting as the Intern’s primary supervisor
- communicating with the University Instructor to discuss the program and the Intern’s progress from time to time.

The Intern understands that the school is under no obligation to provide release time or additional consideration for the services provided by the Intern as part of the Internship. Further, we are acknowledging that the Internship curriculum will not require release time from the Intern’s regular assigned duties.

Should you have any questions regarding the Internship do not hesitate to contact me.

## APPENDIX C: Sample Communication – Instructor to Mentor

The University of Lethbridge Educational Leadership Team wants to thank you for agreeing to serve as a Mentor for your colleague who is registered in the University of Lethbridge MEd (Educational Leadership) program. Our hope is that by providing counsel and support to your Intern that they can experience, observe, and reflect on leadership in the school setting. The Leadership Internship experience is designed so that the Intern can spread the Internship projects over a 2-year period rather than having to comply with the traditional semester approach.

In your role as Mentor we would suggest the following as a list of possible contributions you could make to your Intern's development as a leader. Please note that these are suggestions only and that you are encouraged to use discretion regarding the degree to which you engage in any of these processes:

### General:

- Help to create a school or district-based support system for the leadership Intern.
- Collaborate with the Intern in the planning of activities that are described in the Internship.
- Dialogue with the Intern on a regular basis regarding expectations, advice, and quality of the Intern's work. The level and depth of the mentorship should reflect the Intern's emerging needs as she/he progresses through the Internship.
- Advise the Intern regarding balance and integration between observation, benchmark activities (Internship requirements), and regular duties.

### Specific Mentorship Functions (*depending on the context*):

- Serve as coach—providing guidance, counsel, and advice.
- Facilitate professional development.
- Facilitate networking.
- Provide knowledge and wisdom on a variety of leadership issues.
- Provide feedback and opportunities for reflection.
- Provide moral support.
- Act as role model.
- Maintain contact with the University Instructor.

The Intern is required to complete and submit a reflection paper at the conclusion of each Leadership Internship course. Your feedback to the Intern during the Internship will, no doubt, inform part of that submission. The Internship grade is simply Pass/Fail for the Intern. If the Intern's performance becomes an issue, please consult the University Instructor.

We would ask that upon completion of the Internship, should you see fit, you complete a statement regarding the Intern's experience. You might address the following:

- Effort in completing the Internship.
- Growth in leadership knowledge, skills, and attributes.
- Future needs evident for the Intern in Leadership training to be able to assume a leadership role in a school congruent with the Intern's leadership aspirations.

We invite questions about the Leadership Internship.

Thank you, once again, for agreeing to support the Leadership Internship program.

**Reference:** Capusso, R. L., & Daresh, J. C. (2001). *The school administrator internship handbook: Leading, mentoring, and participating in the internship program*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

## **APPENDIX D: Sample Communication – Instructor to Principal**

*(in Situations where Mentor is not Principal)*

The Faculty of Education wants to thank you for allowing your staff member, <<**Mentor First Name**>> <<**Mentor Last Name**>> to serve as a Mentor for <<**Student First Name**>> <<**Student Last Name**>>, who is also a staff member. <<**Student First Name**>> is registered in the University of Lethbridge MEd (Educational Leadership) program and is undertaking a Leadership Internship. Our hope is that by having the Mentor provide counsel and support to this Intern that they can experience, observe, and reflect on leadership in the school setting.

The Intern understands that the school is under no obligation to provide release time or additional consideration for the services provided by the Intern as part of the Internship. Further, we are acknowledging that the Internship curriculum will not require release time from the Intern's regular assigned duties.

We invite questions about the Leadership Internship.

Thank you, once again, for agreeing to support the Leadership Internship program.

## **APPENDIX E: Sample Communication – Student to Superintendent**

I am communicating with you today regarding my undertaking of a Leadership Internship within the MEd (Educational Leadership) program at the University of Lethbridge. I am currently a student and will be undertaking an Internship component as part of my program.

I understand that the school is under no obligation to provide release time or additional consideration for the services provided by me as part of the Internship. Further, I acknowledge that the Internship curriculum will not require release time from my regular assigned duties.

If you would like clarification about the efforts I intend to undertake as part of my Leadership Internship, please don't hesitate to connect.

Thank you in advance for your support while I undertake this program.

## APPENDIX F: Written Submission Requirements

**Journaling in the Leadership Internship:** Your Leadership Internship journals will provide a forum for evidence of your growth during the Internship. The content of your journal may prove to be very helpful for preparing your capstone paper. **It is NOT a portfolio, and neither is it a logbook!**

Characteristics of Journals and what they contain:

- Written in narrative form
- Subjective
- Deal with perspectives, opinions, or personal experiences
- Pose questions
- Responses to literature
- Reaction to events
- Connections between class content and the field
- Evidence of thinking or reflection

A journal is more descriptive, longer, open-ended, and free flowing than a log. It can help the Intern make connections between what is important to her/him, the leadership curriculum, and the education world. Entries are dated. A journal can be used to:

- *Record* activities, ideas, or events
- *Predict* what will happen next
- *List* questions
- *Summarize* the main ideas of the literature
- *Reflect* on information and learning
- *Connect* ideas and events to theory
- *Monitor* a change in practice
- *Respond* to questions posed by an advisor
- *Identify* problems
- *Track* projects

Some implementation hints:

- Write regularly
- Write freely (save the editing for later)
- Organize entries under headings (it will provide you with easier access later)
- Keep it personal (but remember your University Instructor may ask to see it)
- Use it to inform your reflection paper and your Capstone paper.

**Writing the Leadership Internship Reflection Papers (1000 words):** You will submit two reflection papers to meet your Internship requirements. Due dates will be set by the University Instructor, but as a guideline, your first paper is due near the conclusion of the official EDUC 5635 term, and the second is due near the conclusion of the EDUC 5637 term. The reflection paper will provide a clear and concise description of the Internship activities. The paper will highlight the features of the Internship that went well, but also refer to the disappointments. The Intern will make observations about the professional practice competencies that came into play during the Internship and how well they informed practice. Appropriate literature that informed the Internship activity may be cited. The paper will conclude with a summary of the key learning and some thoughts on how the Intern might approach specific leadership issues given another opportunity.

**References:** East Michigan University Department of Leadership and Counselling. (2011). *Educational leadership internship handbook: A student and faculty guide for the master's specialist and doctoral internship process*. Michigan, WI: Author.

## APPENDIX G: Leadership Quality Standard

Ministerial Order #002/2020 (Amended 2023)

4. The *Leadership Quality Standard* is described by the following competencies and indicators:

### Fostering Effective Relationships

**1** | A leader builds positive working relationships with members of the school community and local community.

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- a. acting with fairness, respect and integrity;
- b. demonstrating empathy and a genuine concern for others;
- c. creating a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment;
- d. creating opportunities for parents/guardians, as partners in education, to take an active role in their children's education;
- e. establishing relationships with First Nations, Métis and Inuit parents/guardians, Elders/knowledge keepers, local leaders and community members;
- f. demonstrating a commitment to the health and well-being of all teachers, staff and students;
- g. acting consistently in the best interests of students;
- h. engaging in collegial relationships while modeling and promoting open, collaborative dialogue;
- i. communicating, facilitating and solving problems effectively; and
- j. implementing processes for improving working relationships and dealing with conflict within the school community.

### Modeling Commitment to Professional Learning

**2** | A leader engages in career-long professional learning and ongoing critical reflection to identify opportunities for improving leadership, teaching and learning, and completes professional learning on the code of professional conduct for teachers and teacher leaders.

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- a. engaging with others such as teachers, principals and other leaders to build personal and collective professional capacities and expertise;
- b. actively seeking out feedback and information from a variety of sources to enhance leadership practice;
- c. seeking, critically reviewing and applying educational research to inform effective practice;
- d. engaging members of the school community to build a shared understanding of current trends and priorities in the education system.

### Embodying Visionary Leadership

**3** | A leader collaborates with the school community to create and implement a shared vision for student success, engagement, learning and well-being.

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- a. communicating a philosophy of education that is student-centred and based on sound principles of effective teaching and leadership;
- b. recognizing the school community's values and aspirations and demonstrating an appreciation for diversity;
- c. collaborating with other leaders and superintendents to address challenges and priorities;
- d. supporting school community members, including school councils, in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities;
- e. promoting innovation, enabling positive change and fostering commitment to continuous improvement; and
- f. accessing, sharing and using a range of data to determine progress towards achieving goals.

### Leading a Learning Community

**4** | A leader nurtures and sustains a culture that supports evidence-informed teaching and learning.

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- a. fostering in the school community equality and respect with regard to rights as provided for in the *Alberta Human Rights Act* and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*;

- b. creating an inclusive learning environment in which diversity is embraced, a sense of belonging is emphasized, and all students and staff are welcomed, cared for, respected and safe;
- c. developing a shared responsibility for the success of all students;
- d. cultivating a culture of high expectations for all students and staff;
- e. creating meaningful, collaborative learning opportunities for teachers and support staff;
- f. establishing opportunities and expectations for the positive involvement of parents/guardians in supporting student learning;
- g. creating an environment for the safe and ethical use of technology;
- h. collaborating with community service agencies to provide wrap-around supports for all students who may require them, including those with mental health needs; and
- i. recognizing student and staff accomplishments.

### Supporting the Application of Foundational Knowledge about First Nations, Métis and Inuit

**5** | A leader supports the school community in acquiring and applying foundational knowledge about First Nations, Métis and Inuit for the benefit of all students.

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- a. understanding the historical, social, economic and political implications of:
  - treaties and agreements with First Nations;
  - legislation and agreements negotiated with Métis; and
  - residential schools and their legacy;
- b. aligning resources and building the capacity of the school community to support First Nations, Métis and Inuit student achievement;
- c. enabling all school staff and students to gain a knowledge and understanding of, and respect for, the histories, cultures, languages, contributions, perspectives, experiences and contemporary contexts of First Nations, Métis and Inuit; and
- d. pursuing opportunities and engaging in practices to facilitate reconciliation within the school community.

4

### Providing Instructional Leadership

**6** | A leader ensures that every student has access to quality teaching and optimum learning experiences.

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- a. building the capacity of teachers to respond to the learning needs of all students;
- b. implementing professional growth, supervision and evaluation processes to ensure that all teachers meet the *Teaching Quality Standard*;
- c. ensuring that student instruction addresses learning outcomes outlined in programs of study;
- d. facilitating mentorship and induction supports for teachers and principals, as required;
- e. demonstrating a strong understanding of effective pedagogy and curriculum;
- f. facilitating the use of a variety of technologies to support learning for all students;
- g. ensuring that student assessment and evaluation practices are fair, appropriate and evidence-informed;
- h. interpreting a wide range of data to inform school practice and enable success for all students; and
- i. facilitating access to resources, agencies and experts within and outside the school community to enhance student learning and development.

### Developing Leadership Capacity

**7** | A leader provides opportunities for members of the school community to develop leadership capacity and to support others in fulfilling their educational roles.

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- a. demonstrating consultative and collaborative decision-making that is informed by open dialogue and multiple perspectives;
- b. identifying, mentoring and empowering teachers in educational leadership roles;
- c. promoting the engagement of parents in school council(s) and facilitating the constructive involvement of school council(s) in school life;

Leadership Quality Standard | Alberta Education



- d. creating opportunities for students to participate in leadership activities and to exercise their voice in school leadership and decision making; and
- e. promoting team building and shared leadership among members of the school community.

### Managing School Operations and Resources

#### 8 | A leader effectively directs operations and manages resources.

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- a. identifying and planning for areas of need;
- b. applying principles of effective teaching and learning, child development and ethical leadership to all decisions;
- c. aligning practices, procedures, policies, decisions and resources with school and school authority visions, goals and priorities;
- d. following through on decisions made by allocating resources (human, physical, technological and financial) to provide the learning environments and supports needed to enable and/or improve learning for all students;
- e. facilitating access to appropriate technology and digital learning environments; and
- f. ensuring operations align with provincial legislation, regulations and policies, and the policies and processes of the school authority.

### Understanding and Responding to the Larger Societal Context

#### 9 | A leader understands and appropriately responds to the political, social, economic, legal and cultural contexts impacting schools and the school authority.

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- a. supporting the school community in understanding the legal frameworks and policies that provide the foundations for the Alberta education system;
- b. representing the needs of students at the community, school authority and provincial levels;
- c. engaging local community partners to understand local contexts;
- d. demonstrating an understanding of local, provincial, national and international issues and trends and their implications for education; and
- e. facilitating school community members' understanding of local, provincial, national and international issues and trends related to education.