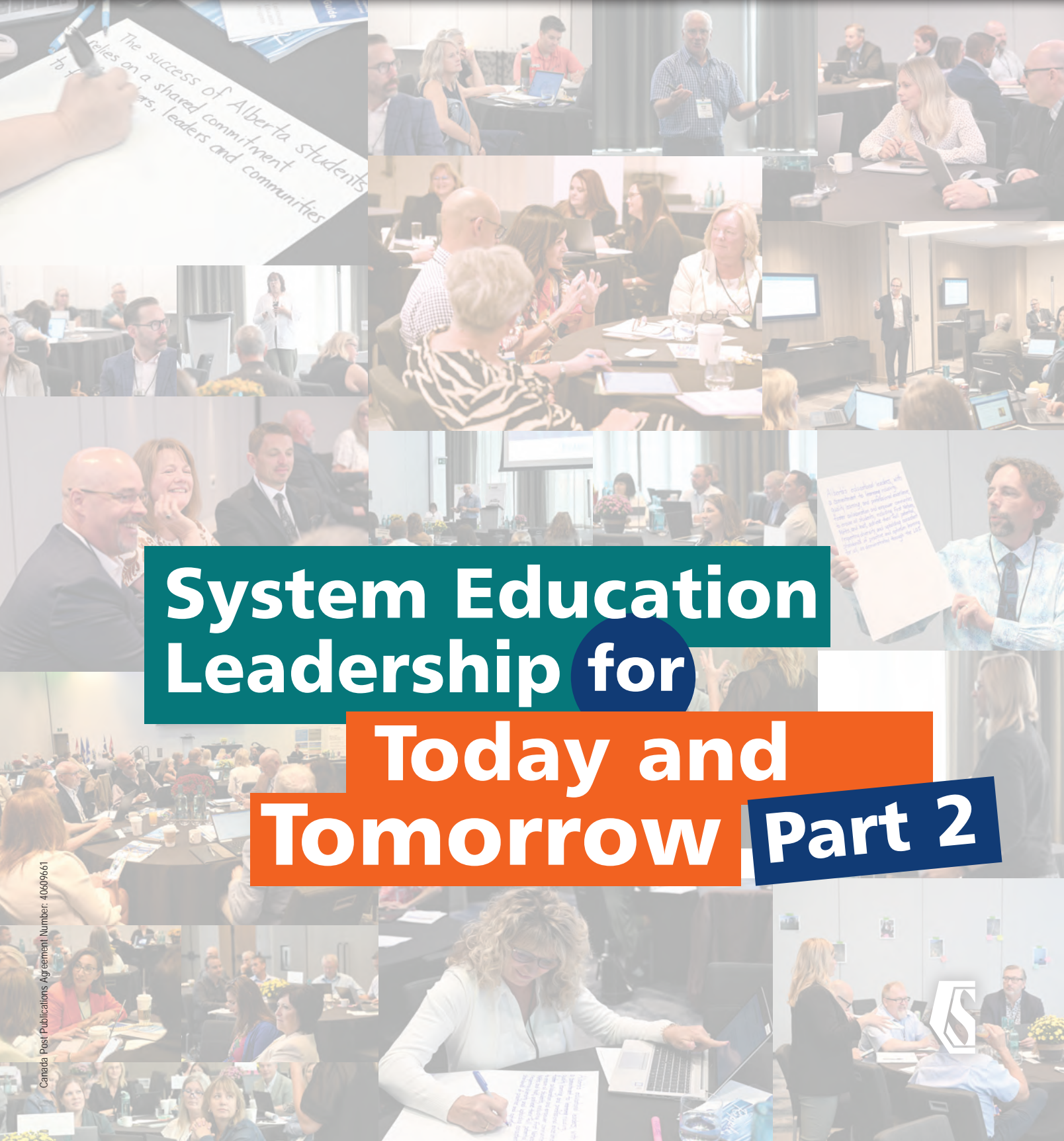


the CASS CONNECTION

The official magazine for the College of Alberta School Superintendents



System Education Leadership for

Today and Tomorrow

Part 2

Canada Post Publications Agreement Number: 40609661

The success of Alberta students relies on a shared commitment to teachers, leaders and communities

Alberta's education system is a cornerstone to our province's future. It's a system that's constantly evolving, and it's a system that's constantly being challenged. As we look towards the future, we need to ensure that our education system is equipped to meet the needs of our students and our society.



Post-Secondary Partnership to Power Rural Student Experience

By Michelle Webb and James Trodden, Buffalo Trail Public Schools

The longstanding partnership between Buffalo Trail Public Schools (BTPS) and Lakeland College has become a cornerstone of the robust learning opportunities offered across our rural school division. This partnership is providing students with unparalleled opportunities to excel in both trades and university pathways. This collaboration has allowed BTPS to offer a wide variety of Career and Technology Studies (CTS) programs, encompassing Mechanics, Carpentry, Welding, Interior Design, Electrical, Hair Styling, and Esthetics, to students in Grades 10 to 12.

For Grade 12 students, the partnership offers even more substantial opportunities. They can participate in two university transfer courses in Psychology and Sociology, effectively bridging the gap between high school and university. Additionally, the Dual Credit program provides over 300 hours of Year One Apprenticeship Training in specialized fields like welding, automotive technician, and carpentry. The success of this program is evident, as students are well-prepared to take the year one AIT exam, which further solidifies their future career prospects.

As shared by Superintendent Michelle Webb, “We’re fortunate to have Lakeland Community College within our division. They provide robust career and technology training to students in Grades 10 to 12.”

This sentiment is echoed by Board Chair Kara Jackson. “Lakeland College provides our students with valuable opportunities to enroll in diverse courses, enhancing their academic and career prospects,” she states. The richness of the partnership has Lakeland invested in the success of students and the value of the program.

“We are proud of our ongoing collaboration with Buffalo Trail Public Schools to provide opportunities for high school



Students who are a part of the Lakeland College Dual Credit Automotive Service Technician program for 2025. Photo courtesy of James Trodden.

students in our region to explore their interests and maximize their opportunities,” says Dave King, Dean of Lakeland’s School of Trades and Technology.

As a rural school division, the challenge of providing access to specialized facilities and expert instruction underscores the critical importance of partnerships with post-secondary institutions. These collaborations are not merely beneficial; they are essential in bridging the gap between limited local resources and the comprehensive educational experiences students require. The involvement of well-equipped facilities, journeyman instructors, and university professors ensures that students receive a level of education and practical experience that would otherwise be unattainable in a rural setting.

Furthermore, as we prepare students for life beyond the K-12 system, these partnerships facilitate a seamless transition to post-secondary education by offering them an early exposure to the rigor and expectations of higher learning. The unprecedented quality of these experiences fosters a supportive environment that equips students with the



A student participating in the welding program.

confidence and skills necessary to navigate the complexities of post-secondary education successfully.

At the heart of this partnership lies the invaluable learning opportunities and enriching experiences that students gain. The true impact of this collaboration is best reflected in the voices of the students themselves, who have shared a range of insights about their experiences. One student noted, “I got to be with like-minded kids, which helped to motivate me, and I got to do something that I enjoy.” Another remarked, “I received an actual college-level education with actual college instructors while still in high school – pretty cool.” Others highlighted personal growth, with one student sharing, “I have learned a lot and discovered how to balance my life and focus on what I need to do instead of what I want to do.” Another student expressed academic achievement and future aspirations: “I completed Psychology with an 80 per cent and felt as if my writing really developed throughout the course. I would love to maintain or push the limits of this skill, so I would like to take any other Dual Credit course because they really help you



Carpentry students in action.

to focus on the small things you will need in future situations.”

One of the three division priorities at BTPS is building strong collaborations with the outcome that students benefit from strong collaborations with families, our rural communities and external partners. The partnership

with Lakeland College is the power that drives the experience for students. ■

Superintendent Michelle Webb is the Superintendent, and James Trodden is the Assistant Superintendent of Learning for Buffalo Trail Public Schools.



LIMITED TIME OFFER

BUY ONE
FREE
GET ONE

ADMISSION

****expires 09/2025**




Travel Back in Time






335 1st St. E
Drumheller, Alberta



403-823-2593