

**CAPE: Centre for Academic and Personal
Excellence Institute
Medicine Hat, Alberta
Charter School Evaluation Report
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I. INTRODUCTION

Background

The Centre for Academic and Personal Excellence (CAPE) is a publicly funded charter school located in the city of Medicine Hat; a city of approximately 63,000 people in the south-eastern corner of Alberta. The region is rich in natural resources and is steeped in the farming and ranching tradition. Within the area is a flourishing scientific community as well as several organizations promoting the fine arts.

The community is renowned for its opportunities and support of music, culture, the arts and sports. CAPE School is located within easy access to all parts of the city, which is an asset especially in view of community partnerships. CAPE is in close proximity to accessible facilities and learning locations that include City Hall, the Medicine Hat College, Cultural Centre, Miywasin Centre, Medicine Hat Library, Esplanade Museum and Art Gallery, YMCA, Family Leisure Centre, arenas, curling rink, swimming pools and parks.

The school is in its twenty-fourth year of operation as a charter school. Opening in September 1994, CAPE operated as a private school for one year with the goal and purpose of fostering academic and personal excellence. CAPE has been operating since September 1995 as a charter school and is one of the original charter schools in Alberta. The school's goals remain unchanged and its mandate is to foster each child's academic and personal excellence. The charter was renewed in 1998, 2001, 2006, 2011, and 2016.

CAPE's integrated personalized program has evolved over time in response to identified needs within its population. Their program started as the integration of complementary subjects only, moved to the addition of mathematics/science and language/social integration, and eventually developed into its current total integration form. The personalized program supported a select number of students through Individualized Program Plans while the majority benefited from adapted and/or modified programs within the classroom. In its current iteration, CAPE's personalized program is grounded in research, is data-driven, provides Individualized Program Plans for every child and student, benefits from the expertise of an on-site psychologist and external services, responds quickly to student needs, and supports the whole person. CAPE's evolution has and continues to be based on investigations of research-based practices to best meet the needs of their ever-changing population.

Facility

CAPE moved into a recently modernized facility in December 2018. This building was modernized as a result of a capital approval announced in January 2014, by Alberta Education, to Medicine Hat School District No.76. The school is located in a separate building adjacent to and on a shared site with Medicine Hat High School. This modernized facility includes sufficient space for student learning, a learning commons (library), a new gymnasium, playground, parking and a parent pick up and drop off zone. The Alberta Education rated student capacity for this building is 300 students.

This newly modernized building is currently in the process of being transferred from Medicine Hat School District No.76 to CAPE.

Prior to this move, CAPE operated out of a leased building, St. Louis School from the Medicine Hat Catholic Separate Regional School Division, for 18 years. The school facility had undergone several renovations and modifications since originally opening in 1911.

Student Enrolment

As of September 30, 2018, CAPE had an enrolment of 192.5 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) students; 7.5 (15 actual) in Kindergarten, 69 in grades 1-3, and 116 in grades 4-9.

Enrolment per grade as of September 30, 2019 was as follows:

School year	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Total
2018-2019	15	24	30	15	24	28	18	17	16	13	200 192.5 FTE
2019-2020 (Projected)	36	22	32	34	14	26	22	22	13	12	233 215 FTE

CAPE's current enrolment cap is 264.

Staff

Each K-3 class is supported by a certificated Full Time Equivalent (FTE) teacher and a FTE educational assistant. As well, each grade 4-9 class is supported by a FTE certificated teacher and if the demographics of the group warrant, one or more FTE educational assistants. Further supports are provided in response to the needs of each learning group. The student-teacher ratio in the school for 2018/19 school year is 16:1.

Current staffing as of May 1, 2019 is:

- Teaching staff of 12.5 FTE;
- Educational assistants 10.0 FTE;
- Administrators 2.5 FTE;
- Director of Student Services (registered psychologist) 1.0 FTE; and
- Administrative assistants 3.0 FTE.
- Custodian services are staffed through contracted services.

Vision

To promote the development of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that support 21st century citizenry and life-long learning within a holistic, personalized, integrated, flexible learning environment.

Mission

To foster the development of academic and personal skills through the provision of a personalized, integrated program so that each child or student may achieve success in the pursuit of personal and academic goals, strive for personal excellence, become engaged thinkers and ethical citizens with an entrepreneurial spirit, independent learners, and world citizens.

Guiding Philosophies and Principles

CAPE's personalized, integrated program within a community of learners that encompasses the school, parents, and community that supports each student's efforts in a welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe learning environment. Each learner is offered opportunities for engagement in the pursuit of personal and academic goals at a pace that is appropriate for the learner, that utilizes a learning style that best suits the learner, and provides the learner with avenues for demonstration of learning. Because this program is student-centred, each learner is provided opportunities for investigations and explorations within an open-ended curriculum within the context of Alberta Education Program of Studies.

CAPE believes that:

1. Each student, as an individual, presents with particular academic and personal needs because of a variety of factors.
2. Students have the greatest potential of becoming successful students and life-long learners when placed in a student-centred environment.
3. Students are best served through a personalized integrated program which is flexible, innovative, and responsive.
4. The school, as a collaborative instructional team, creates a shared learning atmosphere for all members to develop and maintain a student-centred learning environment. Students are grouped and/or streamed to create highly effective learning environments.
5. Parents, as partners in the learning community, provide valuable perspectives and support for their students and deserve to have a choice in an educational program which best supports individualized learning.
6. The community is a partner in the learning as it provides the domain for opportunities and experiences which expand beyond the school, including leadership, collaboration, diversity, and resourcefulness.

Key Charter Elements

Class Size

CAPE is committed to ensuring that class sizes are "kept small". This approach is based upon current and past research. "CAPE's small class size and low adult/learner ratio, flexible learning groupings, integrated learning, and differentiated and personalized opportunities provide learners with essential personal, physical, intellectual, emotional,

and social experiences as they pursue academic and personal excellence.” (Cape Charter, Revised, June 1, 2016, page 7).

Classes are capped at 18+/- 1 for Kindergarten to grade 3, at 22+/- 1 for grades 4 and 5, and at 24+/- 1 for grades 6 to 9. CAPE believes the smaller class sizes allow for greater time for personalized supports and reasonable, responsive implementation of accommodations and recommendations from assessments and research.

Individualization and Personalization

The administration attributes much of their success to the individualized and personalized approach they implement with all their students. This process begins with data collected through a thorough assessment of academic and personal competencies, capacities and attributes. Individualized learner profiles are developed for each student. This is followed with the development of a comprehensive Individualized Program Plan (IPP) for the student, involving collaboration between teachers, support staff, administration, school psychologist, parents, students, and community agencies. All students at CAPE have an IPP.

CAPE believes in providing each student with a personalized, integrated, flexible, school-wide program that seamlessly blends and supports the whole child. Timely response to assessed student needs through a collaborative, multidisciplinary team are deemed as essential through partnerships. The school and parents work together to create a flexible, responsive environment to maximize learning. Partnerships with community provide access to external services and environments that support both personalized learning and groups of learners. Each student’s personalized program is developed, implemented, monitored, and re-evaluated to maximize the achievement of personal goals through the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

Integrated Program

CAPE’s personalized program is delivered within the context of an integrated learning and teaching approach. A cross curricular approach to program development is enhanced through meaningful experiences that include the arts, wellness, multiculturalism and global awareness, citizenry, community involvement, and skills development. The program foundations come from the social studies and sciences curricula with language arts and mathematics, as well as other curricula, purposefully woven into the learning experience. Learning experiences and opportunities are added to enrich the environment, increase the relevancy of the material, and engage learners. Within this context, assessment practices are varied and reflect the diverse concepts explored.

CAPE’s integration program has evolved over time from integration of elective subjects only to integration under the broad descriptors of “Humanities” and “Sciences”. The timetable provides for large blocks of time in support of this practice. Physical Education is accommodated within the schedule so as to provide daily physical activities while Second Languages (French and Spanish) courses offer basic second language skills integrated with cultural elements.

Literacy – Numeracy Teaching and Learning Blocks

Each day, 60 minutes is designated for literacy and 30 minutes (four times a week) for numeracy to focus specifically on developing and enhancing knowledge, skills and abilities for students. These sessions are deemed as a high priority by administration: scheduling fieldtrips, presentations or other activities during these scheduled learning blocks is prohibited. Students are grouped by multi-grade levels of achievement, with ongoing assessment, then repositioned to their appropriate learning levels. Literacy and numeracy is addressed in these sessions through an integrated curriculum approach.

The basis of developing this blocked off literacy and numeracy time was based on a strategic plan to improve student's achievement and skill development. The administration believes this focused approach is having a significant positive impact on student achievement. The most recent Provincial Achievement Test (PATs) results at the grade 6 and 9 levels were identified by the administration as evidence of progress and success.

Charter Goals and Outcomes (from 2018 – 2021 Three Year Education Plan)

CAPE Charter School Goal 1: CAPE School is focused on achieving academic excellence.

- Outcome 1: Student learning is improved so that students are working at their own personal best.
- Outcome 2: Student progress shows above average growth.
- Outcome 3: Students become well-rounded individuals with a broad knowledge base which they can apply in flexible contexts.
- Outcome 4: Students have a greater awareness of the world around them through exposure to other cultures, ideas, and beliefs and integrate ideas from various disciplines.

CAPE Charter School Goal 2: CAPE School is focused on achieving personal excellence.

- Outcome 1: Students acquire personal and interpersonal skills so that they may become productive citizens of the world and life-long learners.
- Outcome 2: Students learn the importance of caring for others, learn respect for others, and treat others fairly in both smaller and larger contexts.

Terms of Reference

The *Charter Schools Regulation* requires that all charter schools in the province be evaluated at least once in the term of their charter. There are a number of purposes for the evaluation of a charter school:

- To provide evidence to the Minister and the board that the charter school is in compliance with provincial requirements and the requirements of the Charter, inclusive of charter amendments, approved by the Minister.
- To report to staff, parents and the community on the success of the charter school and to identify areas of strength and areas that may require additional attention.
- To focus the attention of the board and staff on the goals and objectives of the Charter and the need to establish and confirm measurable outcomes and measures.

- To facilitate continuous improvement in the charter school consistent with the assurance requirements of the Ministry and with the local direction established by the charter school community and authorized by the board of directors.

The criteria by which the charter school is evaluated are:

1. The school meets the terms and conditions of its charter and has performance measures that show clear evidence of success.
2. The school operates in a manner consistent with all applicable provincial requirements.
3. The students, parents, staff, school council and community members consider the school program to be successful.
4. The school is financially viable and responsible.
5. Student success is determined in accordance with Ministerial Order (#001/2013)
6. Student achievement at the charter school is consistently strong or improving.
7. The charter school uses research-informed practices to create innovative learning environments and improve student learning.
8. The charter school shares its innovative practices and learning outcomes with others in the educational community.
9. The charter school reaches out beyond its walls to demonstrate broad and sustained levels of community engagement.
10. The charter school is governed effectively.
11. The school is administered effectively.
12. The charter school is committed to engaging students, teachers, parents and community members in a model of continuous improvement.

Evaluation Process

The findings of the evaluation were established using the following processes and activities:

1. The charter school was asked to develop and submit to Alberta Education a self-evaluation report based on the 12 criteria named above. (See Appendix page 18)
2. Alberta Education established a team of four individuals to review the self-evaluation report submitted by the school and to determine appropriate school site evaluation processes.
3. During the two-day onsite meeting process with the Alberta Education four-member team, focus group sessions were established to provide opportunities for the board, superintendent, principal, teachers and staff, students and parents to share insights about the school's successes and ideas about how the charter school might become even more effective.
 - Two focus groups were held with students.

- Individual interviews were conducted with the superintendent, principal, director of student services and secretary-treasurer.
 - One focus group session with teachers was conducted.
 - One focus group session was conducted with support staff.
 - One focus group session with board members took place.
 - Two focus groups were held with parents. These groups included representatives from the School Council.
4. Evaluation team members participated in classroom observations throughout grades K-9 to observe instruction, the design of student learning activities and student engagement. While debriefing these classroom observations, individual impromptu conversations were held with teachers and support staff.

II. EVALUATION CONCLUSIONS, COMMENDATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND REQUIRED CHANGES:

1. The school meets the terms and conditions of its charter and has performance measures that show clear evidence of success.

CAPE has met the terms and conditions of its charter. CAPE's board, administration, staff and students have a shared understanding of the charter.

The board, administration and staff members are able to articulate the principles on which CAPE is established. Through the use of Individual Program Plans each student has an individualized program that is continually being assessed. Personalization for student learning with an increased focus on data collection informs adaptation to instruction and supports, as well as provides opportunities for those in need of greater challenges.

A required change from the CAPE Charter Evaluation (2014) was to update the school's charter. Charter revisions with stakeholder engagement took place in 2016 with updated language and research that is more goal oriented and aligns with the *Ministerial Order (#001/003) on Student Learning*.

CAPE uses a number of performance indicators to show evidence of meeting the terms and conditions of its charter. CAPE uses a variety of local satisfaction surveys, standardized assessments and formative and summative assessments to inform the effectiveness of the program and in achieving the CAPE goals. With a focus on literacy and numeracy growth of achievement, the school uses Star Math and Star Reading to measure continuous growth in grade level knowledge and skill development. Personalized program reporting of individual student growth and achievement grounded in their IPP gives feedback on how the student is achieving their goals. The school also uses a number of diagnostic assessments to support individual student needs to inform instruction and identify the supports needed.

Commendation: Focus on academic achievement

The school is to be commended for their focus on improving the literacy and numeracy skills of their students with time dedicated to continuous growth of the learner.

Commendation: Revisioning of the Charter

The charter evaluation in 2014 identified as a required change, to undergo a revisioning of the charter. The process included a confirmation of the student profile for admission and an articulation of the best practices related to teaching, learning and leading at CAPE.

CAPE did undergo a revisioning process and Minister Eggen at the time approved CAPE's new charter on June 1, 2016. 'To foster the development of academic and personal skills through the provision of a personalized, integrated program so that each child or student may achieve success in the pursuit of personal and academic

goals, strive for personal excellence, become engaged thinkers and ethical citizens with an entrepreneurial spirit, independent learners, and world class citizens’.

2. The school operates in a manner consistent with all applicable provincial requirements.

Based on the findings and evidence, CAPE School meets the provincial requirements of the *Charter Schools Regulation* (Alberta Regulation 212/2002) and the *School Act*. The school follows the *Alberta Programs of Study* and meets the required amount of instructional time. Regular monitoring of the school by Alberta Education staff confirms its coherence with Ministry expectations including policy development and review. The school complies with Alberta Education planning, reporting and funding requirements in providing complete and timely information.

Recommendation: First Nation, Metis and Inuit Knowledge

CAPE staff develop and enhance background knowledge and understanding of First Nation, Métis and Inuit cultures to build capacity in preparation for the implementation of the Teacher Quality Standard in September 2019.

Requirement: New Quality Standards

That CAPE Charter School staff demonstrate the requirements of the Teacher Quality Standard, Leadership Quality Standard and System Leadership Quality Standard when it comes into effect in September 2019.

3. The students, parents, staff, school council and community members consider the school program to be successful.

Overall, students, parents and staff see CAPE Charter School as being effective and successful. There is strong stakeholder support for the focus on personalized programming and small class size. CAPE’s Annual Satisfaction Survey demonstrated a high degree of parental support for CAPE’s personalized program and small class size.

Feedback from interviews with stakeholders identified satisfaction with IPPs for all students and leveled literacy and numeracy programs. Stakeholders suggested that CAPE has a focused and responsive approach to meeting students’ learning and social emotional needs.

Parents indicated a high degree of satisfaction with the opportunity to provide input in the development of the student profile. It is one component of the IPP which is reviewed four times a year.

Commendation: Stakeholder Support for the School

The school and all its stakeholders are to be commended for establishing a strong and committed charter school.

The school and all its stakeholders acknowledge the significance of the individualized approach for supporting students.

Recommendation: Technology plan

It is recommended that staff continue to build understanding of how technology can be implemented to support the individualization of the learning experience for students. The capacity of staff to maximize technology use is varied. The Alberta Education Learning and Technology Policy Framework (2013) is a resource to inform technology policies, practices and outcomes. It can be found on the Alberta Education Website.

As well, stakeholders expressed a desire for distinction between consequences for personal use devices and the use of devices for learning. Revisiting current policies and practices is recommended.

4. The school is financially viable and responsible.

In the past three school years, CAPE has budgeted on modest enrolment numbers of approximately 215 students who enter and exit their school throughout a school year. In 2018, 87 per cent (\$2.2 million) of the school's revenue was from Alberta Education.

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Actual Expenses	\$2,708,279	\$2,646,815	\$2,488,840
Budgeted Expenses	\$2,743,345	\$2,588,845	\$2,610,972
Adjusted Accumulated Surplus (Deficit) from Operations	(\$10,397)	(\$25,166)	\$62,008

Enrolment Data:

Year	Funded Students	FNMI Declared	Severely Disabled
2015/16	214	-	1
2016/17	218	4	-
2017/18	213	2	1

CAPE incurred an Accumulated Deficit from Operations (ADO) in the past two years as of August 31, 2017 and August 31, 2018. The ADO represented a shortfall of financial resources to cover CAPE's financial liabilities. CAPE was able to reduce their expenditures in the 2017/18 which eliminated the ADO as of August 31, 2018. However, the financial viability of CAPE is very sensitive to changes in enrolment numbers. The current enrolment is 213 students and the school administration had predicted a decline of 27 students in the 2018- 2019 school year. CAPE believes that their new facility and location will provide an opportunity to increase enrolment with additional learning space available.

Commendation: Financial Stewardship

The school is to be commended for the responsible stewardship of its finances. This prudent approach to finances is vital to the continued operation of the school.

Commendation: Compliance of Financial Reporting

CAPE is to be commended for compliance of their financial reporting and for their ability to adhere to their Accumulated Deficit from Operations (ADO) plan to eliminate their deficit.

Requirement: Monitor Student Enrolment and Building Operation Costs

It is recommended that moving forward, the school monitor its finances and the repercussions that a decline in enrolment and cost of owning a building will have on its ability to balance a budget.

5. Student Success is determined in accordance with Ministerial Order (#001/2013).

CAPE's Self Evaluation Report indicates an understanding of the Ministerial Order (#001/2013) and the wider importance of engaged thinkers. CAPE's Charter identifies the importance of the learning environment reaching into the community to create partnerships which are not only conducive to student engagement but also foster a sense of belonging and of community. These relationships foster and promote life-long learning, global citizenry, and the entrepreneurial spirit.

The school focuses on community partnerships to provide opportunities for students to learn from interactions with adults and contribute to the external community to develop empathy and core competencies. These interactions with community members will also provide a strong foundation from which to develop critical thinking skills. The charter outlines the importance of critical thinking as part of the educational experience at the school. As well, CAPE's focus on inquiry learning through projects reinforces the opportunity for students to develop key competencies as engaged learners and ethical citizens with an entrepreneurial spirit. CAPE's Annual Satisfaction Survey indicates 91.8% of students and parents are satisfied with the level of awareness and involvement in community, social consciousness, social justice and social responsibility.

Commendation: Ministerial Order (#001/2013)

CAPE is to be commended for aligning with the Ministerial Order (#001/2013) through practice and policy.

6. Student achievement at the charter school is consistently strong or improving.

Provincial Achievement Tests (PATs) results indicate scores are historically inconsistent in terms of student achievement. The staff at CAPE are aware of this trend and annually analyzes the results on an individual student basis. Factors contributing to this fluctuation, as identified by the Superintendent, include; the high

rate of student exemptions (high exemption rates artificially lower the results), a diversity of student needs and small student cohorts writing exams. Administration expressed their commitment to enhancing student achievement through their efforts to assess results and needs, adapt programs, track student progress and achievement, use research and measures that are responsive to student’s needs, plan strategically, implement needed supports at school and at home, set learning goals and targets for students and prepare students for high school both academically and personally. Staff and parents expressed that the committed focus on literacy and numeracy development will positively impact student achievement. Longitudinal data CAPE plans to collect on the impact of the literacy and numeracy focus will further define the success of this initiative.

Based on a review of the Accountability Pillar Overall Summary – October 2018, student achievement results have shown a significant increase, compared to the previous year and three year averages. PAT results in all grade 6 subject areas have improved.

		Current Result	Prev. Year Result	Prev. 3 Year Average
Student Learning Achievement (Grades K-9)	PAT: Acceptable	91.8	64.1	67.3
	PAT: Excellence	42.7	12.0	13.2

CAPE recognizes the importance of closely monitoring achievement results to inform and provide greater understanding of critical factors impacting and influencing student achievement and success. Their strategic approach to personalized and individualized learning, along with their focus on literacy and numeracy appears to be moving CAPE toward more consistent and improving student achievement results.

Commendation: Literacy and Numeracy Focus

CAPE is commended on their focused approach to numeracy and literacy that maintains personalization of student’s learning experiences and honors their current level of performance.

Recommendation: Develop more local measures

It is recommended that CAPE consider exploring other ways to represent student success and improvement. For instance, an examination of literacy and numeracy data to determine ways to represent information to staff and parents. To share publically the research and data that is guiding their planning and assessment of student progress.

It is recommended that CAPE continue to reflect on student performance on assessments and achievement results to ensure consistent and improving results over time.

7. The charter school uses research-informed practices to create innovative learning environments and improve student learning.

CAPE consistently uses research based strategies and action research projects to inform and improve their practices and, as a result, to enhance the educational experience of their students.

CAPE is able to list 19 different action research projects that they have undertaken since 2003. The most recent is in the area of teacher mentorship. As well, the school has implemented numerous research-informed programs such as levelled literacy, numeracy blocks and assessment tools to identify areas of concern and track student progress. Other informed practices that have evolved from their research is reflected in the implementation of their full day kindergarten program, daily physical education, an Integrated Setting for Enrichment Education (I.S.E.E.) and their approach to community partnerships.

CAPE staff have collaborated with educational researchers and successful implementers from the University of Lethbridge, Simon Fraser University, Medicine Hat College and Westmount Charter School as they explore ways to enhance teaching, learning and student achievement and success.

Commendation: Strong Historical Research Base

CAPE is to be commended for their application of action research and for their commitment to continuously explore new ways to meet the needs of their students.

8. The charter school shares its innovative practices and learning outcomes with others in the educational community.

CAPE has demonstrated a strong desire to be informed, but also to share innovative practices and learning outcomes with others in the field. They are active and contributing member of The Association of Alberta Public Charter Schools (TAAPCS), as demonstrated through their collaborative involvement in the areas of giftedness and leadership. Through their partnership, CAPE annually makes presentations to education students from Medicine Hat College, welcomes the students into their school for classroom observations and continues to host student teachers.

CAPE has published eleven articles; several of which have been presented at local and national conferences sponsored by the College of Alberta School Superintendents (CASS), South Eastern Alberta Teachers Convention, Alberta Education and the Canadian Association of School System Administrators (CASSA). The school invites and welcomes educators and visitors requesting the opportunity to learn about their school and feel this is a valuable opportunity to also gain insights and perspectives from others.

Commendation: Willingness to share

CAPE is commended on their willingness to share their knowledge, experiences and action research with the education community at large and are encouraged to continue in this mutually beneficial practice.

Recommendation: Working relationship for student transitions

Continue the development of working relationships with the local schools to support transition of CAPE students in and out of their school.

9. The charter school reaches out beyond its walls to demonstrate broad and sustained levels of community engagement.

The purpose and beliefs as stated in the charter are guiding elements toward promoting community engagement. CAPE has established a strong network of relationships in the local community and beyond. Over 100 entities (individuals, groups, organizations) were identified as having a presence in the school as a contributing educational resource. CAPE is guided by their underlying belief that, "CAPE is an integral part of the community, and values and respects the various voices within our community and welcomes the diverse ideas and opinions within it." and "Every voice is heard. Every voice counts." The administration has identified these entities as essential resources to meet and achieve their desired outcomes and goals in the overall success and achievement of their students.

A strong sense of social justice, social responsibility, citizenry, acceptance and respect for diversity, awareness of community needs, altruism and volunteerism instilled in students and staff has created a strong desire to give back to the community. This is reflected in their contributions to such causes as the local foodbank, a women's shelter, donations to the SPCA and Jump Rope for Heart. The school is proud of what they have been able to achieve in terms of "community engagement", yet are determined to continue to strengthen and build upon what exists.

CAPE provides students in junior high school with the opportunity to participate in volleyball and basketball and to compete against other schools. Student fieldtrips, participating in the Rotary Music Festival, Math contests and competitions, science fairs and the local/schools Heritage Fair and Cultural Days are additional ways community engagement takes place.

The school is focused on building a better understanding of their educational role and contributions to the community for those who are not directly affiliated with the school and focusing on ways to better develop community engagement.

Commendation: Wrap around support for their students from the community

The school is to be commended on their diligent efforts to seek and provide learning and educational supports to enhance teaching and learning for their students.

10. The charter school is governed effectively.

There is a clear separation in the roles and responsibilities of the board and administration. The board focuses on the governance of the charter school and leaves the operations to the superintendent. The board has developed Codes of Conduct for board members, staff and students to support the understanding of the roles and responsibilities. The board, superintendent, administration and staff are clear in the lines of communication and this is reflected in the operations of the school. There is an open line of communication between the board and the superintendent.

The superintendent, principal, a staff representative and a school council representative attend all board meetings. The board has designated two non-parent positions on the board.

The decisions of the board are grounded in the mission and vision of CAPE's charter. Through the lens of continuous improvement, the board reviews the vision of the school. The board reviews their policies on a regular basis.

Commendation: Governance and Leadership

The board is to be commended for its governance and team approach. Community members and parents of the community serve on the board and provide strong leadership.

Commendation: Roles and Responsibilities

The CAPE board is very clear on their roles and responsibility.

11. The school is administered effectively.

CAPE School is being effectively administrated by a focused and committed leadership team including the Superintendent, Secretary-Treasurer, Director of Student Services, Principal, and Assistant Principal. This team meets formally on a monthly basis but maintains strong lines of communication in between. The school leadership team is committed to working with the students, staff and parents. All required documentation is submitted in a complete and timely manner. These administrators follow the legislation, regulatory and policy requirements of Alberta Education and the board. Staff and parents were very complimentary about the approachability and responsiveness of school leadership. Staff indicated that they were not only provided effective and focused professional development but were comfortable approaching their administrators when they needed advice or had questions.

Students indicated satisfaction with the school leadership, however, were less satisfied with their opportunity to be involved in and influence decisions that affect their learning and environment.

Commendation: Commitment

The leadership team members are committed to the charter of the school. They demonstrate a strong awareness of the intent of the Charter and how it connects to the needs of the students and staff.

Commendation: Communication and Collaboration

Administration works hard to ensure they communicate effectively and work collaboratively with staff, students and parents.

Recommendation: Student Voice

That school administration explores ways to enhance opportunities for student voice.

12. The charter school is committed to engaging students, teachers, parents and community members in a model of continuous improvement.

CAPE stakeholders are highly supportive of and expressed confidence in the school to ensure the best possible education for students. Staff and parents are familiar with the charter goals and are committed to the individualized, personal and integrated program approach to teaching and learning. Staff are committed to achieving the best possible results with all students, and teachers demonstrate that they are able to provide supports to ensure all students are successful. Teachers and the principal were able to give numerous examples of how they are consistently reflecting on their practice and taking steps to improve.

The school continues to focus on improving an already strong communication plan and approach with parents and stakeholders. The school recently updated their website and continue to build upon their abilities to use social media effectively. There are multiple other strategies employed at the school to engage stakeholders in their efforts to continuously improve. Parents are provided with regular and frequent curriculum updates.

The Alberta Education Evaluation Report of 2014 identified a number of commendations, four recommendations for consideration and two required changes. The two required changes referred to “charter revisioning” and “sharing of research and connection to post secondary institutions”. CAPE has addressed these two required changes as they have revisited and revised their admissions policies and updated the language in their charter. As well, they have established working partnerships with post secondary institutions in the region and have enhanced working relationships and sharing with other charter schools.

Commendation: Commitment

Required changes from the 2014 Charter evaluation have been addressed.

Conclusion

As a result of our evaluation processes, the Alberta Education Evaluation Team is satisfied that the Centre for Academic and Personal Excellence (CAPE) is meeting the requirements of legislation and regulations for charter schools. There is some variance in the degree to which the evaluation criteria are met. This variance is reflected in the commendations, recommendations and required changes identified in the body of this report. As CAPE moves forward in its endeavour to provide the best possible education for students, it is encouraged to celebrate its successes,

while implementing the recommendations and directions provided by the Alberta Education Evaluation team.

The Alberta Education Evaluation Team extends its sincere thanks to the board, administration, staff, students, and parents for their time, perspectives, insights and hospitality.

APPENDIX

CAPE: CENTRE FOR ACADEMIC AND PERSONAL EXCELLENCE SELF-EVALUATION – NOVEMBER 29, 2018

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CAPE-Centre For Academic and Personal Excellence Institute (CAPE)

Charter School Evaluation 2018-2019

CAPE-Centre For Academic and Personal Excellence Institute, commonly referred to as CAPE, is pleased to present our self-evaluation as one of Alberta's first charter schools. We are proud of our continued efforts to meet the needs of our students. These efforts have resulted in a culture of life-long learning, continuous improvement, and collaboration between staff, parents, and community. The CAPE program has evolved over time from a rudimentary, integrated, personalized program to a refined, purposeful, integrated personalized program in response to the needs of our students.

The contents of this evaluation are divided into the 12 indicators of success as requested by Alberta Education.

1. The school meets the terms and conditions of its charter and has performance measures that show clear evidence of success.

"To foster the development of academic and personal skills through the provision of a personalized, integrated program so that each child or student may achieve success in the pursuit of personal and academic goals, strive for personal excellence, become engaged thinkers and ethical citizens with an entrepreneurial spirit, independent learners, and world citizens." CAPE charter

CAPE has since its inception focused on the following goals and outcomes:

"CAPE Charter School Goal 1: CAPE School is focused on achieving academic excellence.

Outcome 1: Student learning is improved so that students are working at their own personal best. Measures within this area focus on kindergarten readiness for learning i.e. grade 1, on grades 1 to 3 readiness for the next grade, and increase in academic engagement. Of importance for our student body is continuous growth towards grade level knowledge and skills in language and mathematics measured via Start Math and Star Reading. Personalization is the major element of our program that supports this outcome. Our measures also look at acceptable standard and standard of excellence in core subjects year-end marks (formative assessments) and core subjects final exam marks (summative assessments). Data clearly show a positive increase in student knowledge and skills as well as very high satisfaction with the program.

Outcome 2: Student progress shows above average growth.

Star Math and Star Reading data indicate that a significant number of our students are indeed showing above average growth. Parents and students believe that at least some of that growth is due to increased engagement. The personalized program, in unison with the integrated learning and teaching, support this outcome.

Outcome 3: Students become well-rounded individuals with a broad knowledge base which they can apply in flexible contexts.

Integrated teaching and learning within core and through projects offer opportunities for the acquisition of a myriad of concepts within various areas of study. Stakeholders definitely believe that our students are indeed developing skills and knowledge in a multitude of areas. Our high school completion rate is very good (90.8% of our students graduate after 3 years while another 5.9% graduate after 4 years). This is a very good indicator of the effectiveness of our program in preparing students for the future.

Outcome 4: Students have a greater awareness of the world around them through exposure to cultures, ideas, and beliefs and integrate ideas from various disciplines.

Measurers within this outcome focus on the development of personal skills such as community awareness, social justice, social responsibility, cultural awareness, and more. Community projects and integration support the development of the social skills and global citizenry. Stakeholders clearly believe that community is a crucial element in the effectiveness of such components of our program.

“CAPE Charter School Goal 2: CAPE School is focused on achieving personal excellence.

Outcome 1: Students acquire personal and interpersonal skills so that they may become productive citizens of the world and life-long learners.

Outcome 2: Students learn the importance of caring for others, learn respect for others, and treat others fairly in both smaller and larger contexts.”

Community projects and integration support the development of the social skills and global citizenry. Stakeholders clearly believe that community is a crucial element in the effectiveness of such components of our program and that our students are becoming contributing members of our society, empathetic young people that not only are accepting of each other but also support each other, are becoming more and more aware of the needs within our community, and are reaching out to those in need.

CAPE’s personalized program has evolved in response to identified needs within its population. In its current iteration, CAPE’s program is grounded in research, is data-driven, provides Individualized Program Plans for every student, benefits from the expertise of a full-time psychologist and external services, responds quickly to student needs, and supports the whole person. Providing for each of these students requires an increasing understanding of assessment procedures, recommended supports from research, implementation, impacts on learning, tracking and reassessment. Our collaborative team approach is integral to our ability to support our students. We strive to respond efficiently and effectively. Our ability to respond and, as one evaluator once said, ‘turn on a dime’ is facilitated by our small size, school-based decision-making, capped classes, and extensive use of educational assistants. CAPE’s personalized program requires commitment at multiple levels; Board of Directors, administration, staff, parents, and community. Personalization is evidenced within our literacy and numeracy programs that aim to teach focused skills to homogenous groups of learners, and through the IPPs for every student.

The literacy and numeracy programs are school-wide, non-negotiable times and are supported by the timetable. We are focused on demonstration of competencies and student growth, both of which are reported to parents on the report cards. Our defined literacy program combines reading and

comprehending with writing and representing. Numeracy blocks blend basic math skills that require daily practice with focused math work that can be applied to real world contexts. Graded benchmarks were created with and provided to teachers to track student growth by demonstration of skills. Cross-referencing the data from standardized tests, with input and observations from teachers, the students are divided into fairly homogenous groups. These groups are therefore not grade level assigned, but are current skill level assigned. Skill grouping means that classes are multi-aged; kindergarten to grade 3, and grades 4-9. Once a student meets the benchmarks in one group, the student is advanced to another. At a minimum, students are reassessed 3 times a year with standardized assessments. The groups, being fluid, allow for students to grow at their own pace and to move fluidly between groups.

Integration via projects was an integral part of the CAPE Program in the early years with the integration of elective subjects in the afternoon time. Over time, the focus on personalization increased and integration seemed to take a back seat. Integration in its current iteration takes two forms: total integration in core and integration within projects. Total integration is a term used to describe a “whole” learning process where the core content is made richer with experiences that include the arts, physical education, health and wellness, on-site learning in the community, and social skill development. The program foundations come from the social studies and science. Language skills are developed within the social studies concepts while the mathematics skills merge with the science concepts. Integration experiences are added to enrich the learning and help the material flourish to become more meaningful, more interactive, and more personal for the students. However, in this evolution, students clearly told us that they missed the projects as the integrated subjects were not as identifiable or concentrated as they were in projects. As a result, Friday projects were re-introduced in September 2017. These projects visibly provide students with choice in education, combines skills from a number of areas, and allows students to work with others from different grades.

In order to more accurately measure achievement in the pursuit of both academic and personal goals, we periodically review our results and look for more accurate tools (standardized tests, rubrics, etc.). We also strive to use a variety of measures that utilize satisfaction surveys, standardized tests and summative and formative assessments to arrive at a wholistic assessment of the effectiveness of the program in achieving the CAPE goals.

Our students’ post-CAPE educational efforts are tracked, proving that our students acquire the personal and academic skills they need to achieve success in the pursuit of personal and academic goals, strive for personal excellence, become engaged thinkers and ethical citizens with an entrepreneurial spirit, independent learners, and world citizens.

Moving forward ...

- We aim to continue to track student progress, to review the latest research, to review and revise our program in an effort to support our students in the achievement of their own personal and academic goals. We will track students and adapt instruction so that those who are not yet at grade level approach grade level, to support our students emotionally, socially, and intellectually, and to provide opportunities for those in need of greater challenges.
- We believe in the partnerships that we have established with parents and community, in the value they bring to our program and in the benefits they bring to the students. Therefore, we will continue to strengthen on existing partnerships to develop new.

2. The school operates in a manner consistent with all applicable provincial requirements.

CAPE strives towards a student-centred learning and teaching environment that is welcoming, caring, respectful and safe.

CAPE's calendar respects and surpasses provincial requirements for number of hours and minutes accorded to each curriculum area. It also integrates collaborative planning time, professional development and program review time.

We ensure that the Annual Educational Results Report, the Annual Education Plan, the Annual Education Plan summary and related documents are submitted on time and posted on the school website in accordance with provincial requirements.

CAPE operates annually with a budget that respects all provincial requirements. We strive for a balanced budget, and rarely have a deficit. Our personalized program is supported by our class caps, our educational assistants, and our full-time educational psychologist. Staffing represents 91% of our budget. These factors are crucial to our being able to support each member of a challenging population.

Moving forward...

- CAPE will continue to enhance the work with the Ministerial Order through its focus on literacy and numeracy, projects, integration, and more.
- CAPE is planning to continue its work in strengthening competencies within the new curriculum. • CAPE will continue to work towards meeting the Teaching Quality Standard because CAPE believes that teaching quality is critical in preparing students for the 21st century, citizenship, and life-long learning.
- CAPE will continue to work towards meeting the Leadership Quality Standard because CAPE believes that principals and other school leaders have an important role in fostering collaboration, engagement and empowerment of all partners in the education system to enable all students to achieve personal and academic goals.
- CAPE will continue to work towards meeting the Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard because CAPE believes that quality leadership is crucial in establishing and maintaining a open and accepting, empowering and challenging, safe and caring environment that supports student success.
- CAPE will continue to promote and actively support stakeholder engagement because the partnership among staff, parents and community is fundamental to its beliefs and practices.

3. The students, parents, staff, school council and community members consider the school program to be successful.

Our CAPE Annual Satisfaction Surveys and Accountability Pillar Survey results are consistently similar, lending greater validity to the results. Our parents, students, staff, school council members, community and Board are very satisfied that the CAPE program is successfully preparing our students for future academic challenges, the world of work, life-long learning, world citizenry, social responsibility, and entrepreneurship. Parents indicate satisfaction and an overall good experience with teachers and with the school and program as a whole.

Moving forward...

- Our focus will continue to be on improving parental involvement with the school, the program and the students.
- We will continue to work towards ensuring that parents have a clear understanding of our philosophy, program and knowledge of what happens within the school on a daily basis.

4. The school is financially viable and responsible.

The CAPE budget is student-centred (as is our program) so that 91% of our dollars are directed towards the students. The annual CAPE audit is conducted according to regulations and confirms the accounting procedures of the school. With a budget that is extremely tight, we have mastered the art of creative

problem-solving so that we can engage in initiatives that better support our students. We rely on our community partners, our School Council, and fundraising for this.

Moving forward...

- We are in the process of relocating to a bigger better facility. We are hoping that this move will bring about an increase in enrolment and thus an increase in revenue and a little bit of a less tight budget.

5. Student success is determined in accordance with Ministerial Order (#001/2013).

The Ministerial Order is wide-ranging in its details, but the primary descriptors are Engaged Thinkers and Ethical Citizens with an Entrepreneurial Spirit.

“Mission To foster the development of academic and personal skills through the provision of a personalized, integrated program so that each child or student may achieve success in the pursuit of personal and academic goals, strive for personal excellence, become engaged thinkers and ethical citizens with an entrepreneurial spirit, independent learners, and world citizens.

The purpose of CAPE’s personalized, integrated program is to support the learner’s acquisition of cross-curricular competencies, critical thinking and problem-solving skills, and other academic skills while also developing personal skills such as relationships-building, self-advocacy, creation of opportunities, risk-taking, and achieving goals.” CAPE charter

A critical outcome of the ministerial order is to “employ literacy and numeracy to construct and communicate meaning.” CAPE’s literacy and numeracy programs effectively enable our students to make sense of the world and to communicate effectively. A strong foundation of essential skills and knowledge is essential to development and use of processing skills and competencies. CAPE’s focus on knowledge and skills facilitates the development of competencies, just as background knowledge is the first criteria in developing critical thinking. These programs have already shown their potential for success. We believe that with continued review and revisions, this program has the potential to be very effective and could serve as a model.

Integrated teaching and learning fosters the development of research skills, analysis of information, effective communication both verbal and in written form, and the development of creativity. The public speaking focus through Heritage Fairs, Science Fairs, and in class presentations develops in students the capacity to access, organize, and apply information effectively, increases student engagement, develops logic, and stimulates thinking and metacognition. The combination of integration and personalization has shown itself to be foundational for the development of engaged and critical thinkers who are innovative and effective.

Ethical Citizens with an Entrepreneurial Spirit

“CAPE’s learning environment reaches into the community to create partnerships which are not only conducive to student engagement but also foster a sense of belonging and of community. These relationships foster and promote life-long learning, global ethical citizenry, and the entrepreneurial spirit. Collaboration within the community allows for learnersmentors and/or role model interactions and for opportunities to participate in experiences that support successful engagement.”

CAPE charter

The projects also provide students with choice in education, combines skills from a number of areas, and allows students to work with others from different grades.

Research increasingly shows that the development of a sense of community is the essential element in schools. Community partnerships enrich learning and help material flourish to become more meaningful, more interactive, and more personal for the students. The emphasis on service to the community within the school, as well as without, develops strong attitudes of respect and responsibility as do opportunities to witness and to hear about the efforts of adults in the community to be involved and to contribute. These opportunities in turn help to understand that initiative and creative solutions to problems are critical to a healthy life and community. CAPE students are afforded opportunities to reach out into the community, to interact with adults, to learn from their experiences and knowledge, to become more and more aware of the needs within our community and to contribute to that society, to develop empathy and acceptance, to support others, to become global citizens with well-developed social conscience. Community partnerships also permit students to practice the competencies in “

Moving forward...

- We believe in the partnerships that we have established with parents and community, in the value they bring to our program and in the benefits they bring to the students. Therefore, we will continue to strengthen existing partnerships and to develop new ones.

6. Student achievement at the charter school is consistently strong or improving.

There is strong student achievement in areas such as the fine arts program, particularly dramatic arts and public speaking. Reading and math skills are improving. The anecdotal evidence and hard data for the level of improvement that we have seen in students who have come to us significantly below grade level is impressive. In the years, our PAT results have been inconsistent. The results of the cohorts and those of the students writing have been diametrically opposed. This is due to the diverse needs of our students (ranging from severe to moderate to complex) and the small size of our groups. The latest data seem to indicate a definite increase in achievement. The grade 6 PAT results were very good; 100% of the students writing achieved the acceptable standard in all four subjects while 31.8% of those writing language, 22.7% writing math, 87.5% writing science and 75% writing social achieved the standard of excellence. 100% of the grade 9 students writing achieved the acceptable standard in language, math and science while 87.5% did so in math. 60% of the students writing achieved the standard of excellence in science and social. However, consistently achieving good to great results within our students writing is something that has eluded us.

Moving forward...

- Continued emphasis on literacy and numeracy is a priority so as to build a solid foundation for all learning.
- CAPE is committed to adapting programs, tracking students, using research and measures that are responsive to students needs, to setting high goals for students, and to getting them ready for high school.
- Because of the type of programming and supports CAPE offers, we tend to attract a high percentage of students with identified issues: mild-moderate codes, gifted codes, twice exceptional codes, multiple codes, high functioning autism, and a conglomerate of challenges. By acknowledging the individual learner profile, CAPE strives to provide the program best suited to each student's gifts, abilities, and interests. We are able to respond efficiently and effectively to the challenges our students face. We expect that the bigger, better facility will cause an increase in enrolment which in turn will affect our response time. Plans are being tentatively discussed to establish a councillor position.

7. The charter school uses research-informed practices to create innovative learning environments and improve student learning.

“Personalized Program A research-based, data-driven, purposeful, collaborative, and cyclical process through which each student's personalized program is developed, implemented, monitored, and re-

evaluated to maximize the achievement of personal goals through the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and attitudes.”
CAPE charter

The CAPE staff has been heavily involved in Action Research, guided over the years by Dr. David Townsend, University of Lethbridge, Dr. Pamela Adams, University of Lethbridge, and Dr. Sharon Allan, Medicine Hat College (at the time) who conducted in-service sessions. It is this process that guides the efforts of the teaching staff in supporting student learning.

The I.S.E.E.(Integrated Setting for Enrichment Education) is based on the most recent reputable research. The criteria for participation and the screening process are also research-based. During the 2015-2016 year, we engaged in a review of our I.S.E.E. We then reached out to Dr. Janneke Frank, Westmount charter school, and tied into Westmount’s professional development session. As a result of that work, we connected with Dr. Lannie Kanevsky, Simon Frasier University, who graciously agreed to work with us over several days and assisted us with teacher in-service, a parent, board and community evening session, and worked one-on-one with various teachers. We also engaged in a literature review of two of the most reputable and informative works on giftedness; Giftedness 101 (2014-2015) and Living with Intensity (2015-2016). Our southeast Alberta education colleagues were invited to join us in this work.

Our principal engaged in a three-year study on mentorship guided by Dr. Sharon Allan, Medicine Hat College (at the time) which yielded some very powerful and useful information. While a plethora of research speaks to a multitude of vehicles used for professional development, there is much less research that addresses the need for individualized teacher development and professional development programs as noted by Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002; Zwart, Wobbles, Bergen & Bolhuis, 2007, as cited by Hilton et al., 2015. Clarke and Hollingsworth agreed that many models of professional development have failed to take into account individual learner variables and what is required for these individuals to change or improve practice. Her findings clearly indicate that, in our setting, mentorship is indeed a suitable vehicle for the identification, development, mentoring and support of skilled and confident school-based leaders as part of succession planning.

After a year of intense research and planning, CAPE implemented the school-wide daily literacy and numeracy blocks to teach focused skills to homogenous groups of learners. During the research phase, time was dedicated to selecting assessments to determine the current achievement of students, and to pinpoint tools that would identify areas of concern and track student progress. Standardized tests from different sources were used: some online, some paper tasks, some group administered, some individually administered.

These are but a few examples of research-informed practices at CAPE to create innovative learning environments and improve student learning.

Moving forward...

- CAPE is fully committed to continue to use research-informed practices to support the maintenance of innovative learning environments and improve student learning.

8. The charter school shares its innovative practices and learning outcomes with others in the educational community.

Partnerships with southeast Alberta education colleagues, the charter school community, and the Alberta Education community is foundational to remaining informed, but also in being able to share our innovative practices and learning outcomes. Our southeast Alberta education colleagues have been invited to join us in various professional development and parent development initiatives. Dr. Lannie Kanevsky, Simon Frasier University, assisted our teachers via in-service, informed parents, board members and community in an evening session, and worked one-on-one with various teachers. We engaged in a

literature review of two of the most reputable and informative works on giftedness; *Giftedness 101* (2014-2015) and *Living with Intensity* (2015-2016). CAPE was heavily invested in the TAAPCS Leadership Study from 2012 to 2016. Representatives from other jurisdictions joined us when Aaron Rennert came to engage our teachers about numeracy and teaching mathematics. CAPE was heavily invested in the TAAPCS Leadership Study from 2012 to 2016.

CAPE annually makes presentations to education students from Medicine Hat College in the spring and welcomes the students into the school for a day or two of classroom visits.

We have published several articles during the last five years and presented at conferences.

1. "Effective Stakeholder Engagement within a Small Rural Charter School". The CASS Connection, Spring 2018.
2. "Inclusion through Personalized Programming". The CASS Connection, Spring 2017.
3. "Mentorship: An Effective Model in A Small School ". The CASS Connection, Fall 2018.
4. "Community Connections". CASSA Leaders & Learners, Winter 2017.
5. "CAPE's Personalized Program: Every Student Matters". CASSA Conference, July 2018.
6. "Mentorship as a Vehicle for Staff and Student Development". CASS/Alberta Education Annual Learning Conference, 2016.
7. "Integrated Curriculum: Getting More out of Learning". Annual Alberta Rural Education Symposium, 2016.
8. "Parent Engagement". Annual Alberta Rural Education Symposium, 2016.
9. "Collaboration over Cooperation". South Eastern Alberta Teacher Convention, 2016.
10. "Mentorship and Collaboration". South Eastern Alberta Teacher Convention, 2015.
11. "Student Engagement within a Total Integration/Personalized Setting". TAAPCS Conference, October 2011.

Moving forward...

- CAPE plans to continue to share its innovative practices and learning outcomes with others in the educational community whenever the opportunity presents itself.

9. The charter school reaches out beyond its walls to demonstrate broad and sustained levels of community engagement.

"Purpose The purpose of CAPE's personalized, integrated program is to support the learner's acquisition of cross-curricular competencies, critical thinking and problem-solving skills, and other academic skills while also developing personal skills such as relationships-building, self-advocacy, creation of opportunities, risk-taking, and achieving goals.

Beliefs

- 4. The school, as a collaborative instructional team, creates a shared learning atmosphere for all members to develop and maintain a student-centred learning environment. Students are grouped and/or streamed to create highly effective learning environments.*
 - 5. Parents, as partners in the learning community, provide valuable perspectives and support for their children and deserve to have a choice in an educational program which best supports individualized learning.*
 - 6. The community is a partner in the learning as it provides the domain for opportunities and experiences which expand beyond the school, including leadership, collaboration, diversity, and resourcefulness.*
- Learning Environment*
CAPE's learning environment reaches into the community to create partnerships which are not only conducive to student engagement but also foster a sense of belonging and of community. These relationships foster and promote life-long learning, global ethical citizenry, and the entrepreneurial

spirit. Collaboration within the community allows for learnersmentors and/or role model interactions and for opportunities to participate in experiences that support successful engagement.”

CAPE charter CAPE has established strong relationships with community organizations (on average over 100 groups, individuals and organizations come into the school or welcome our students) each year. Partners also reach out to CAPE when in need of support. CAPE is an integral part of the community, and values and respects the various voices within our community and welcomes the diverse ideas and opinions within it. Every voice is heard. Every voice counts.

Over the years CAPE has welcomed student teachers from the Medicine Hat College as well as practicum students from the Child & Youth Care Counsellor and Office Administration programs at Medicine Hat College, Master of Counselling Psychology students, Youth Counselling student supervised by our educational psychologist, nursing students from the community nursing program, Social Work program at the MHC, and office assistant practicum student.

Moving forward...

- CAPE has invested energy and time to build community relationships because these are crucial to our program. We plan to strengthen the existing relationships and foster new ones as we move forward.

10. The charter school is governed effectively

From its very inception, CAPE has reached out to parents and community and established a collaborative process of decision-making:

- Community and parent Board of Directors,
- School Council representative on the Board of Directors,
- Staff representation at Board meetings and School Council meetings.

The CAPE Board of Directors is elected by members of the Society at the Annual General Meeting held in the spring each year. The Board of Directors consists of parents of enrolled students, at least one community member, and an elected/appointed School Council Representative. Reports from committees are presented at the AGM.

The CAPE Board meets on a monthly basis, on the fourth Wednesday of the month. Agendas are built by the Board Chair and the Superintendent, and are sent in advance to Board Members and to staff who attend the meetings. Minutes of the previous meeting are sent in advance as well, and adapted, approved, and posted on the website. The Board has a solid understanding of their governance role, and meetings operate under a format that respects Roberts Rules of Order. The Board has a clear set of policies and a schedule for regular review of each policy. The CAPE Board has two standing committees with clear membership rules and mandates, and these function effectively in having regular committee meetings, with recommendations submitted to the Board well in advance of Board consideration.

In their governance role, the Board has delegated operational control to the Superintendent, and seeks to clearly maintain an appropriate relationship with staff and parents in regard to communication with the Board. The Board has established a self-evaluation document and a Superintendent Evaluation Document and conducts yearly evaluations of the work of the Superintendent and of the Board. Sections within the CAPE Annual Satisfaction Survey address the work of the Superintendent and of the work of the Board so that the voice of as many stakeholders as possible can be clearly heard and acted upon. The Annual Education Report is distributed to all board members early in the new academic year and is thoroughly vetted at one board meeting minimum. Based on a review of the report, the board then reviews and advises the three-year education plan. The CAPE board has developed an extensive policy manual and a procedures manual as well as Codes of Conduct for Board members, certificated staff and non-certificated staff, and students.

Moving forward...

- We are continuously working at succession planning as board members move on, to ensure smooth transitions and continuity on what is a strong board.
- The Administration Manual is scheduled for review in the near future.
- The development of a Directors Handbook is also planned.

11. The school is administered effectively.

CAPE school has a number of administrators. The full-time principal is responsible for the school program (regular & I.S.E.E.), FOIP, staffing & schedules, student assessment/reporting, office and teachers supervision/ evaluation, Literacy/Numeracy Tiers 1&2, drills and safety, report cards, and more. The half-time vice principal is responsible for technology support, discipline, educational assistant supervision/evaluation, technology training of staff, and technology inventory/repairs. As the front office personnel, the full-time administrative assistant looks after parent/student concerns, mail, communications & phone, attendance & guest assistance, registration support, school supply, photocopier maintenance, School Council, and booking appointments. The full-time Building Manager/Administrative Assistant addresses PASI, student information systems, field trip & transportation bookings, facility & safety, First Aid Kits, documents (drills), student & family lists, technology, advertising & social media, school-based fundraising, and custodial contact. The full-time Executive Assistant works with the Superintendent and the Secretary-Treasurer and is responsible for finance & board, Alberta Education, staff files, data collection, orders, receivables, transportation, and contracts. CAPE also employs a full-time Director of Student Services, a chartered psychologist, with responsibilities such as referrals, assessments, standardized tests, & IPPs, Literacy/Numeracy Tiers 2&3, modified/amended programs, AR Math/Reading/Star Math/Reading, Capacity Builder Community of Practice Action on Inclusion IPPs, crisis counselling, and student files. The Superintendent is a half-time position while the Secretary-Treasurer is a full time position. Meetings within the administration team are scheduled monthly. The CAPE Annual Satisfaction Survey assesses the work of the administration by position so that the voice of as many stakeholders can be clearly heard and acted upon. There is consistently very high satisfaction among all stakeholders with the work of the CAPE administration team.

Moving forward...

- CAPE will continue to work towards meeting the Leadership Quality Standard because CAPE believes that principals and other school leaders have an important role in fostering collaboration, engagement and empowerment of all partners in the education system to enable all students to achieve personal and academic goals.
- CAPE will continue to work towards meeting the Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard because CAPE believes that quality leadership is crucial in establishing and maintaining an open and accepting, empowering and challenging, safe and caring environment that supports student success.
- CAPE, a founding member of TAAPCS, will continue to be a member of this organization because it believes in charter schools, choice within education, and qualities unique innovative programs.
- CAPE will continue to be involved with curriculum re-design because we believe that a well-developed curriculum empowers teachers to prepare students for an ever-changing future. A teacher is involved in the Arts curriculum development, the principal is involved in mathematics curriculum development and the Superintendent represented CASS as part of the Science curriculum review.
- CAPE was involved in SHIP and currently in RCSD. Our Director of Student Services is part of the Leadership Team while our Superintendent is part of the governance team. We will continue to be involved because we truly value the work of the RCSD and how that work benefits students and the community.

- Senior administration and site administration will continue to reporting to the Board so that the Board can have accurate timely information for decision-making as it guides the school towards achieving its vision.
- Professional development for administration remains a priority at CAPE.

12. The charter school is committed to engaging students, teachers, parents and community members in a model of continuous improvement.

Since its very inception CAPE has been engaged in a continuous series of decisions and strategies to ensure improvements to the long-term stability of the school community and building, to the school program, to teaching practice, to parental engagement, and to student success.

The calendar includes time for Parent Intake Meetings, Goal Setting Meetings, Professional Development workshops and presentations, time for the teaching staff to develop research-embedded Professional Learning Plans in collaboration and with support from administration, time to work on IPPs with support from peers and administration, Student-Parent-Teacher Conferences, and planning time as well as time to decompress. This structure is the direct result of the school's efforts to engage the staff in continuous learning and improvement.

The School Council has over the years taken the lead in providing parents and community with learning opportunities via seminars. The school has not only included parents and community in professional development initiatives but has engaged in collaborative planning for school-wide initiatives such as the Multiculture Day, Academic Fair and Talent Show, and the Spring Fling.

The Board has committed its very limited resources to the provision of much needed additional teaching space via the modulars and the rental of space at the River Park Church. The Board has worked tirelessly with Capital Planning to secure a facility that supports our program. Our needs have been heard, and in December 2018, we are finally going to transfer to a facility that has been modernized to suit our needs. The Board has not only also supported but mandated training for all staff in First Aid and WHIMS, it also supports the involvement of staff in VTRA (Violent Risk Threat Assessment), participation in information sessions on the Leadership Quality Standard, the multi-year TAAPCS Leadership Study, and much more.

CAPE endeavours to offer students opportunities to expand their knowledge and to build meaningful relationships through teamwork. We encourage and support our students so that they may develop as ethical citizen that value contribution, recognize their role as stewards of the earth, value diversity, display empathy and assume responsibility. Universal access to technology is integral to these efforts. We belief that technology should be harnessed to support innovation and discovery, not simply to aid teaching. We strive to engage learners to use technologies as designers and creators of knowledge. To this end CAPE has established one-on-one computing in 1994 expanding its scope as CAPE evolved.

CAPE students are involved in school-wide activities such as science fairs, heritage fairs, drama productions and School Art, national mathematics contests, poster contests, poetry and essay contests, and more. In addition, CAPE students are encouraged to participate in regional science fairs and heritage fairs, the provincial geography challenge, and any other endeavour as available. CAPE's students accept challenges and take risks, and are excellent ambassadors for the school and its program. Over the years CAPE students have been recognized at the provincial and national levels receiving medal and certificates of distinction in the Gauss and Pascal math contests, Ribbon of Excellence awards at Heritage Fairs and were invited to participate in the Young Citizen Competition. One student was one of the two Alberta representatives at the Young Canadians Youth Forum in Ottawa. The Medicine Hat community also recognizes student contributions through such awards as the YMCA Peace Medal and the Leaders of

Tomorrow award. These are but some of the many efforts to engage students, teachers, parents and community members in a model of continuous improvement.

Moving forward...

- CAPE charter school strives to continue to be a student-centred community of learners committed to continuous improvement. Stakeholder, student and staff input into the decision-making will continue be an integral part of the collaborative decision-making model. Input, suggestions and recommendations are welcomed and considered for implementation if in alignment with Alberta Education's priorities for learners.
- CAPE will continue to present its students with opportunities for learning locally, provincially and nationally.