**Key Issues and Questions for the November 30 Panel**

**Introduced by John**

**1. Accountability and Data** – What components of a **comprehensive provincial K-16 data system** are needed for that system to best meet the respective needs of superintendent, principal and teacher leaders, the Ministries of education and the wider education community?

A.J. Bowers (ELDA Research Group - <https://www.tc.columbia.edu/elda>) has identified five key challenges (paraphrased below) for building an effective **Educational Leadership Data Analytics system** – what is the status of meeting these challenges within the current provincial accountability model?

See <https://www.alberta.ca/accountability-education-system> to assess the accountability model oneself

1. **Collaborative partnerships** between stakeholders and schooling organizations
2. Capacity-building and **training infrastructure**
3. Focus on equity and **data accuracy and fairness**
4. **Data** privacy and **security**
5. **Open, comprehensive and accessible data** and analytical tools using FOIP data standards
6. **Research** - Mixed methods research where both qualitative and quantitative methods are used, depending on the topic of study, may produce the best results in educational research. Is there an appropriate capability and balance currently in applied research in K-16 education (in Alberta) focused on improving educational outcomes?

See <https://cass.ab.ca/> to assess the role and impact of CASS on research at this collectivity especially the CASS Connection Magazine.

1. **Leadership –** A 1991 study of K-12 educational leadership in Alberta (available @ <https://www.academia.edu/73135848/Educational_Leadership_in_Alberta_A_Study_Conducted_on_Behalf_of_the_Consortium> ) found **five key issues**. Do any of these issues still apply, and if so, to what degree?

Issue 1 - The apparent **absence of meaningful collaborative undertakings** among educational stakeholders was perhaps the single most often-voiced criticism of the state of educational leadership in the Province.

Issue 2 - …they [interview respondents] were **unable to identify any clear vision for education** in Alberta to which leaders and others are asked to subscribe.

Issue 3 - Many of those interviewed lamented the **absence of "trust'', "innovativeness" and "vision**" arming leaders in the educational enterprise. The absence of risk-taking, worry and vulnerability of position, and the political nature of the positions… were seen to militate against creativity and risk-taking.

Issue 4 - There is a fairly general agreement that there is a **need to modify current courses and programs** at Alberta universities to bring about a more appropriate balance between theoretical content and field-based experiences.

Issue 5 - Financial constraints are detrimental to the development of collaborative activities and cooperation between agencies and work to buttress the **inclination of Alberta educational leaders to become increasingly insular** and protective of turf.

The 1972 report, A Choice of Futures, retrieved from: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED077069.pdf> identified multiple social challenges that appear hauntingly similar to contemporary challenges:

* declining influence of marriage and the family, religious institutions and the work-ethic;
* continuing relaxation of the norms governing personal behavior;
* growing emphasis upon generosity, sincerity and service in human relationships;
* mounting tension between major groups in society;
* rising mental illness, crime, drug abuse and alcoholism;
* expanding concern for individuality and the well-being of society;
* increasing potential for social unrest;
* decreasing emphasis on values pertaining to law and order, patriotism and cultural identity;
* growing need for governmental regulation in inter-personal and inter-group relations.

**In considering, Failing our kids and our future. What's needed? and the extant social challenges, how do the following key themes from *A Choice of Futures* hold relevance going forward?**

1. **Re: higher education**, universities …”will destroy themselves by becoming political instruments.”p.58 – a call for institutional neutrality as social critics.
2. Trust and individual respect placed in **learners as active participants** in educational planning is crucial. P.167
3. **Evaluation (data)** must 1, support accurate learner self-evaluation, 2, appraise all learning objectives, 3, organize teaching and learning, 4, generate appropriate (transparent) records, 5, simplify reliable decision making at all levels. P.204
4. **Integrate(d)** education **planning** with general social and economic planning. P.223- and across early, basic, higher and further education levels p232
5. **Change momentum** is achieved via inner direction vs. outer direction “Commitment is caught, not taught.” P.300 A system of holistic “recurrent education” requires “a total rethinking of the educational system… in all its aspects…” p. 301