



Category: Operations

Policy Number: 2.7

Subject: Information Technology (IT) Collaboration

Policy Statement:

Chinook's Edge School Division (CESD) and Olds College (OC) Boards have entered into a Joint Venture Agreement to collaborate in order to accomplish their:

- a. Respective vision, mission and mandates, and
- b. The CLC vision, mission and mandate

Additionally, CESD and OC are publicly funded entities and have an obligation to use their resources in the most effective and efficient manner. Government policy supports collaboration among Crown funded entities to achieve this end.

Guidelines:

CESD and OC IT departments agree to the following guidelines to drive cooperation and collaboration to achieve our respective and collective outcomes:

1. Common Vision

The IT staff of OC and CESD is committed to the fulfillment of their Board's vision of collaboration. Collaboration will respect jurisdictional independence of CESD and OC, and will be sensitive to compliance obligations placed upon each party by legislation, policy and administrative frameworks.

2. Learner Focus

Collaboration will be learner-centric to achieve positive outcomes for the collective learners of CESD, OC and the CLC. In addition, collaboration will also seek efficiencies in administrative systems and technologies.

Community Learning Campus

Information Technology Collaboration

3. Leadership, Trust and Respect

Staff must demonstrate, through action, a willingness to make collaboration succeed and will focus on seeking reasons "why" to collaborate rather than reasons "why not". The foundation to effective collaboration is demonstrated trust and respect of all parties involved in the collaboration process. Staff will be forthright in identifying their institutional needs and will commit to active listening, effective communication and open sharing of information.

Shared decision-making, creativity and innovation allow staff to learn from each other and enhance the effectiveness of our collaborative efforts. The focus of decision-making will be to achieve the collective benefits of the two organizations and the Community Learning Campus.

4. Standardization

The creation of agreed upon standards and adoption best practices will be employed to guide collaboration work. Early identification of dissimilarities, combined with incremental steps toward their elimination, is expected. The process of developing standards and adoption of best practices will be collaborative: the needs of data users must be considered, as well as, the impact of external forces. Standardized processes should exemplify efficient and effective operations and embed necessary operational safeguards.

Existing standards and best practices will be adopted where appropriate with preference given to standards that have the broadest application. Where standards do not exist, a process will be agreed to develop standards.

5. Trouble Shooting

Trouble shooting processes for both new initiatives and existing collaborative projects will be conducted in a learner-centric manner that focuses on:

- a. achieving collaborative outcomes
- b. improving existing collaborative performance, and
- c. prevention of future issues.

To ensure timely resolution to operational problems, each organization will be proactive in informing the other about developing or existing operational problems. Trouble shooting processes continue to hold staff accountable for their work, but will not seek to assign blame. Trouble shooting processes and staff conduct will be aligned to create an optimal solution oriented environment.

6. Confidentiality

Staff recognizes the confidential nature of information that may become available through collaborative arrangements and will commit to protect the confidentiality of information in a manner expected by the host institution. Staff will immediately disclose any breach of confidential information so remedial action can be implemented. Where necessary or prudent, confidentiality agreements and data sharing agreements will be developed to formalize confidentiality expectations.

7. Commitment of Resources

OC and CESD will commit staff time and financial resources to ensure collaborative efforts succeed. Each organization will consult with the other in the advent that resource commitments to a collaborative initiative must change.

While the commitment of resources will generally be proportional to the benefits each party will receive; collaborative efforts will intentionally be flexible and will vary from shared management to one entity exclusively providing services to both organizations.

To ensure maximum effectiveness; collaborative efforts will not centre on ownership or control of assets unless required by legislation or by funding arrangements.

8. Staff Performance

Each institution will be responsible for evaluating their respective IT staff performance. Where appropriate, supervisors will solicit input from the other organizations regarding the staff member's performance in collaborative initiatives.