



# YEAR IN REVIEW

JULY 1, 2023 - JUNE 30, 2024



**CPLED**  
Canadian Centre for  
Professional Legal Education

# MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR

In March 2024, CPLED celebrated a remarkable 20 years of delivering innovative bar admission education. I am honoured and proud of the organization's achievements, including the development of a new competency-based bar admission program, courses for applicants educated outside Canada, and services that support students' needs. This significant milestone is a testament to the hard work and dedication of the Board of Directors, staff, and partners.

I am pleased to announce that Cori Ghitter, KC was appointed Vice-Chair of the Board of Directors this past year. Cori has served on the Board since February 2018 and was appointed Vice-Chair in December 2023. She is the Deputy Executive Director and Director of Policy and Education at the Law Society of Alberta. I look forward to working closely with Cori as she steps into the role of Board Chair and I take on the Past Chair position in September 2024.

In addition, our Board of Directors welcomed Brendan Nagle as a Director in December 2023. Brendan has a distinguished career as an educator, learning technologist, and entrepreneur. With his extensive background in education across the non-profit and private sectors and experience serving on boards, Brendan brings valuable expertise that will strengthen our governance as we transition to a competency-based Board and advance our strategic initiatives.

The Board approved a new three-year strategic plan (July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2027) with a focus on growth and innovation. The plan establishes clear strategic priorities and goals to ensure CPLED continues to make meaningful contributions to the education of entry-level lawyers and the legal community.

This year the Board established an Education Committee. It is responsible for reviewing all CPLED education programs and courses to ensure they develop the competencies required of pre-bar call lawyers, and for reviewing the effectiveness of testing methodologies used to assess these competencies.

I want to extend my heartfelt appreciation to our Board of Directors and partners who continue to support CPLED. As we celebrate our 20th anniversary, we are excited to look ahead to the next two decades with a renewed commitment to growth, innovation, and impact. By building on our strong foundation, we are poised to make an even greater difference in the years ahead.



**Don Thompson, KC**

# MESSAGE FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

I am incredibly fortunate and grateful to have had the opportunity to lead CPLED during its milestone 20th anniversary. A key highlight of the year was developing a purpose-driven strategic plan that will guide CPLED over the next three years. We will focus on creating and delivering innovative competency-based Canadian legal education programs, courses, and services that develop and assess critical thinking skills, professionalism, and the practical skills required of competent entry-level lawyers.

CPLED delivered the Practice Readiness Education Program (PREP), the Bar admission program for candidates pursuing a license to practice law in Alberta, Manitoba, Nova Scotia, and Saskatchewan, to approximately 900 students during the fiscal year. We also successfully delivered Legal Research and Writing (LRW) courses to over 1,450 internationally-trained students, achieving significant growth in student registration worldwide. The LRW course satisfies the National Committee on Accreditation (NCA) policy, which requires NCA applicants to complete a legal research and writing component to obtain a Certificate of Qualification.

With a focus on continuous improvement, CPLED enhanced its programs and courses and introduced new services to further support our students. This year, we launched Articling Assist, a paid service that provides students with one-on-one articling search support through coaching and targeted job application guidance. This initiative reflects our commitment to supporting aspiring lawyers as they navigate and progress through their professional journey.

I would like to express my gratitude to our dedicated Board of Directors, staff, partners, Assessors, Facilitators, and Practice Managers, whose contributions have been essential to CPLED's continued success. Through our collaborative efforts, we have achieved another successful year, and I look forward to working together to build on this success in the years to come.



**Liza Worthington,  
BComm, MBA, FCPA, ICD.D**

# 2024-2027 Strategic Plan

CPLED's July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2027, Strategic Plan focuses on three strategic priorities:

- Deliver Outstanding Competency-Based Legal Education**

CPLED will deliver, through its Practice Readiness Education Program (PREP) and skills-based legal courses, highly regarded and recognized programs. CPLED will set and exceed legal education industry standards.

- Pursue Quality Growth Opportunities**

Through relevant partnerships in the legal community, CPLED will pursue new opportunities, expand its influence, and establish itself as a leader in legal education.

- Optimize Operational Capability**

CPLED will achieve sustainable growth by continuously improving its processes and practices and optimizing the use of resources and talents to deliver exceptional outcomes.



## The Practice Readiness Education Program (PREP)

The Practice Readiness Education Program is CPLED's online Bar admission program. The program consists of four distinct phases. The first three phases (the Foundation Modules, Foundation Workshops, and the Virtual Law Firm) are learning phases, and the program concludes with a Capstone Evaluation. During the first three phases, candidates actively build and develop their lawyer skills and competencies, laying a foundation for the Capstone Evaluation.

The Capstone Evaluation is a four-day high-stakes evaluation. Candidates are evaluated on their writing, oral, practice management, ethics, and client relationship management skills at entry-level competence.

One hundred sixty-five candidates were enrolled in the Winter 2022 PREP intake, and 506 were enrolled in the 2023/2024 PREP. The Capstone Evaluation pass rates for these intakes were 84% and 83%, respectively. These results are comparable to those of prior years.



## Accelerated PREP

Accelerated PREP is a compressed version of PREP. It is an immersive program that requires a candidate's full commitment for 14 intensive weeks. CPLED launched Accelerated PREP in the summer of 2021 with a small cohort of 60 Alberta students. Feedback from law firms indicated that participants in this inaugural session arrived prepared and confident on their first day of articles.

Building on the success of the first offering, CPLED initiated a soft launch of Accelerated PREP in 2022, expanding the program to cohorts across all four CPLED jurisdictions. This intake attracted 120 registered students, highlighting the growing interest in the accelerated pathway.

In 2023, Accelerated PREP saw remarkable growth, with 255 candidates enrolled in the program and an 87% Capstone Evaluation pass rate.

## The Legal Research and Writing (LRW) Course

CPLED developed the LRW course in collaboration with the NCA. Launched in January 2022 to support Internationally Trained Lawyers, the LRW course has generated significant student interest internationally. In the past year, CPLED successfully delivered four course offerings to 1,468 students, experiencing a 54% increase in student enrollment compared to the previous year. The course pass rate was 73%, comparable to the prior year's pass rate.





## Financial Reports

CPLED engages PwC as its external auditor to review its financial records, statements, and transactions. CPLED's 2023-2024 financial statements are available on [our website](#).

## Looking Forward

As we look ahead, CPLED is focused on building upon our successes by actively pursuing quality growth opportunities and optimizing our operational capabilities. We remain committed to delivering outstanding competency-based legal education that meets the evolving needs of the legal community. We are enthusiastic about the opportunities ahead of us and are dedicated to ensuring that CPLED not only thrives but also continues to adapt and innovate in an ever-changing landscape. Together, we will redefine excellence in legal education.

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