

Preamble to the Leadership Frameworks for Principals and Vice-Principals and for Supervisory Officers

Introduction

Leadership is second only to teaching in its impact on student outcomes¹. Principals and vice-principals play an essential role as school leaders to achieve this impact. Supervisory officers, in turn, play a critical role by putting in place supportive system practices and procedures for school and system leaders. In the ministry discussion paper, *Leading Education: New Supports for Principals and Vice-principals in Ontario Publicly Funded Schools*, released in December 2005, a commitment was made to a number of initiatives intended to develop, support and sustain the highest quality leadership possible in schools and boards across the province. In keeping with this commitment, and in order to ensure a consistent and effective approach to implementing these initiatives, the Leadership Framework for Principals and Vice-Principals and the Leadership Framework for Supervisory Officers (the frameworks) were developed.

Purposes

The purposes of the frameworks are to:

- inspire a shared vision of leadership in schools and boards
- promote a common language that fosters an understanding of leadership and what it means to be a school and system leader
- identify the practices and competencies that describe effective leadership
- guide the design and implementation of professional learning and development for school and system leaders.

The frameworks are not intended as a job description for the leader, nor as a checklist against which to assess performance. Rather, they provide frameworks for growth, which are sufficiently detailed to describe good leadership, but broad enough to be applicable in the various contexts in which school and system leaders function throughout their career.

Structure of the Frameworks

The frameworks are made up of two parts:

- Part One – Leader Practices and Competencies
- Part Two – System Practices and Procedures

Part One – Leader Practices and Competencies

Leader practices are the actions, behaviours and functions found through research and professional experience to have a positive impact on student achievement. Leader competencies are the skills, knowledge and attitudes of effective school or system leaders.

Leader practices and competencies are organized into five domains, in no particular order: setting directions, building relationships and developing people, developing the organization, leading the instructional program, and securing accountability. Each domain is then described through the practices, skills, knowledge and attitudes relevant to the domain.

Part Two – System Practices and Procedures

System practices and procedures, which support successful school leadership, are organized into six domains, in no particular order: school and district improvement, fostering a culture of professionalism, leadership development, administrative structures, parent and community supports, and succession planning. Each domain is then described through indicators relevant to the domain. The Leadership Self-Review Tool² provides a set of materials leaders can use to assess the extent to which system practices and procedures provide the structures and supports principals and vice-principals need to be successful school leaders.

Background on the Development of the Frameworks

The Leadership Framework for Principals and Vice-Principals and the Leadership Framework for Supervisory Officers complement each other to the extent that successful leaders draw on the same fundamental repertoire of leadership practices. The Leadership Framework for Supervisory Officers is tailored to address the complexity of supervisory officer roles as reflected in legislation and in the wide-ranging academic and administrative settings within which they provide leadership.

Contextual factors that should be taken into account when reviewing the frameworks include the research foundations, the Ontario perspective, the evolving focus of school leaders, and the range in roles and responsibilities of supervisory officers in the Ontario context.

¹ Leithwood, K., Seashore Louis, K., Anderson, S., & Wahlstrom, K. (2004, September). How leadership influences student learning. (Review of research). *The Wallace Foundation, Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement and Ontario Institute for Studies in Education*, 87 pages.

² The Leadership Self-Review Tool is available on the ministry's website at www.ontario.ca/eduleadership.

Research Foundations

There is currently a large and evolving body of professional knowledge about effective leadership. The frameworks rely on this research to define leadership practice as a collection of patterned actions that draw on a set of competencies comprised of skills, knowledge and attitudes³. The core leadership practices delineated in the frameworks are those that have been found to have the greatest impact on student outcomes⁴.

These broad categories of leadership practices are the basis for the articulation of more finely detailed practices, informed by professional experience, in four of the five domains of the frameworks: setting directions, building relationships and developing people, developing the organization, and leading the instructional program⁵. The fifth domain, securing accountability, was developed to specifically address the accountability function of school and system leaders in all the domains, as practised in the Ontario context.

The Ontario Context

Successful school and system leadership is responsive to the diverse nature of Ontario's communities. The practices and competencies in the frameworks describe leadership broadly in a way that is intended to be inclusive of the diversity found in schools and communities across the province. Their application will be shaped and informed by the community context. For example, in francophone schools and school boards, the application of the practices and competencies will take into consideration the implementation of the *Politique d'aménagement linguistique (PAL)* already underway in these boards. In another example, leadership in Catholic schools and boards will be carried out in the context of the board's articulation of Catholic faith perspectives.

The demographic and contextual diversity in Ontario schools together with the province's commitment to high levels of student achievement have heightened the importance of school and system leaders as instructional leaders⁶ who support the diverse needs of all students through their commitment to equity in student outcome. As instructional leaders, principals and supervisory officers embed direct involvement in instruction in their daily work through team work with all staff focused on improved school and classroom practices. As leaders who are committed to equity of outcome, they help to ensure inclusive and instructionally effective learning environments that increase the likelihood that all students will be successful learners. School and system leaders carry out these specific aspects of their role using a growth-oriented and collaborative approach across all the domains of the frameworks.

The Leadership Framework for Supervisory Officers additionally takes into account the diverse functions and duties of system leaders: those with direct school accountability will apply leadership practices and competencies differently from those whose main focus is on district administration related to human resources or business.

Practices and competencies evolve as leaders move through various career stages, specialized assignments, and unique educational environments. School and system leaders expand and strengthen their repertoire of practices, skills, knowledge and attitudes over time, provided they have opportunities to grow and are supported by school boards that are committed to leadership development.

Note: The frameworks are working drafts which continue to evolve as a result of continued research in Ontario and international jurisdictions and through consultation with a cross section of stakeholders. Individual school and system leaders can provide feedback on the framework to the ministry or to the Institute for Education Leadership through their associations.

³ Elmore, R. (2006). Leadership as the practice of improvement. (Paper prepared for the International Conference on Perspectives on Leadership for Systemic Improvement). *OECD, London, UK.*

⁴ Marzano, R. J., Waters, T. & McNulty, B.A. (2005). School leadership that works: From research to results. *Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.*

Waters, J.T., & Marzano, R.J. (2006). *School District Leadership that Works: The Effect of Superintendent Leadership on Student Achievement.* Denver, CO: Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning.

⁵ Leithwood, K., Day, C., Sammons, P., Harris, A., & Hopkins, D. (2006). Successful school leadership: What it is and how it influences pupil learning, *UK: National College of School Leadership Report to the Department for Education Skills.*

⁶ Campbell, C., Fullan, M., & Glaze, A. (2006). Unlocking potential for learning. (Project report on effective district-wide strategies to raise student achievement in literacy and numeracy). *Ontario Ministry of Education.*

Leadership Framework for Principals and Vice-Principals

Part 1: Leader Practices and Competencies

Setting Directions	Building Relationships and Developing People	Developing the Organization	Leading the Instructional Program	Securing Accountability
<p>The principal builds a shared vision, fosters the acceptance of group goals and sets and communicates high performance expectations.</p> <p>Practices: <i>The principal:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensures the vision is clearly articulated, shared, understood and acted upon by all works within the school community to translate the vision into agreed objectives and operational plans which promote and sustain school improvement demonstrates the vision and values in everyday work and practice motivates and works with others to create a shared culture and positive climate ensures creativity, innovation and the use of appropriate technologies to achieve excellence ensures that strategic planning takes account of the diversity, values, and experience of the school community provides ongoing and effective communication with the school community <p>Competencies: Skills <i>The principal is able to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> think strategically and build and communicate a coherent vision in a range of compelling ways inspire, challenge, motivate and empower others to carry the vision forward model the values and vision of the board actively engage the diverse community, through outreach, to build relationships and alliances <p>Knowledge <i>The principal has knowledge and understanding of:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> local, national and global trends ways to build, communicate and implement a shared vision strategic planning processes ways to communicate within and beyond the school new technologies, their use and impact leading change, creativity and innovation <p>Attitudes <i>The principal demonstrates:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> commitment to setting goals that are not only ambitious and challenging, but also realistic and achievable a belief that all students can learn commitment to an inclusive, respectful, equitable school culture 	<p>The principal strives to foster genuine trusting relationships with students, staff, families and communities, guided by a sense of mutual respect. The principal affirms and empowers others to work in the best interests of all students.</p> <p>Practices: <i>The principal:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> treats people fairly, equitably and with dignity and respect to create and maintain a positive school culture develops effective strategies for staff induction, professional learning and performance review engages staff in professional learning develops and implements effective strategies for leadership development uses delegation effectively to provide opportunities for staff to self-actualize acknowledges and celebrates the achievements of individuals and teams encourages colleagues to take intellectual risk leads by example, modelling core values demonstrates transparent decision-making and consistency between words and deeds maintains high visibility in the school and quality interactions with staff and students <p>Competencies: Skills <i>The principal is able to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> foster an open, fair and equitable culture develop, empower and sustain individuals and teams give and receive effective feedback challenge, influence and motivate others to attain high goals communicate effectively with a diverse range of people, including the public and the media manage conflict effectively listen empathetically and actively foster anti-discriminatory principles and practices <p>Knowledge <i>The principal has knowledge and understanding of:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the significance of interpersonal relationships, adult learning and models of continuing professional development strategies to promote individual and team development the relationship between performance management and school improvement the impact of change on organizations and individuals <p>Attitudes <i>The principal demonstrates:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> commitment to effective working relationships commitment to shared leadership for improvement commitment to effective teamwork confidence, optimism, hope, and resiliency integrity 	<p>The principal builds collaborative cultures, structures the organization for success, and connects the school to its wider environment.</p> <p>Practices: <i>The principal:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> builds a collaborative learning culture within the school and actively engages with other schools to build effective learning communities nurtures and empowers a diverse workforce provides equity of access to opportunity and achievement supervises staff effectively uses performance appraisal to foster professional growth challenges thinking and learning of staff to further develop professional practice develops a school culture which promotes shared knowledge and shared responsibility for outcomes <p>Competencies: Skills <i>The principal is able to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> create efficient administrative routines to minimize efforts on recurring and predictable activities collaborate and network with others inside and outside the school perceive the richness and diversity of school communities foster a culture of change engage in dialogue which builds community partnerships listen and act on community feedback engage students and parents <p>Knowledge <i>The principal has knowledge and understanding of:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> building and sustaining a professional learning community change management strategies models of effective partnership strategies to encourage parent involvement ministry policies and procedures models of behaviour and attendance management <p>Attitudes <i>The principal demonstrates:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> acceptance of responsibility for school climate and student outcomes ethical behaviour 	<p>The principal sets high expectations for learning outcomes and monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of instruction. The principal manages the school effectively so that everyone can focus on teaching and learning.</p> <p>Practices: <i>The principal:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensures a consistent and continuous school-wide focus on student achievement, using system and school data to monitor progress ensures that learning is at the centre of planning and resource management develops professional learning communities to support school improvement participates in the recruitment, hiring and retention of staff with the interest and capacity to further the school's goals uses resources in support of curriculum instruction and differentiated instruction buffers staff from distractions that detract from student achievement implements strategies which secure high standards of student behaviour and attendance fosters a commitment to equity of outcome and to closing the achievement gap <p>Competencies: Skills <i>The principal is able to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate the principles and practice of effective teaching and learning access, analyse and interpret data initiate and support an inquiry-based approach to improvement in teaching and learning establish and sustain appropriate structures and systems for effective management of the school make organizational decisions based on informed judgements manage time effectively support student character development strategies <p>Knowledge <i>The principal has knowledge and understanding of:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> strategies for improving achievement effective pedagogy and assessment use of new and emerging technologies to support teaching and learning models of behaviour and attendance management strategies for ensuring inclusion, diversity and access curriculum design and management tools for data collection and analysis school self-evaluation strategies for developing effective teachers and leaders project management for planning and implementing change legal issues the importance of effective student character development <p>Attitudes <i>The principal demonstrates:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> commitment to raising standards for all students commitment to equity of outcome and closing the achievement gap belief in meeting the needs of all students in diverse ways commitment to sustaining a safe, secure and healthy school environment commitment to upholding human rights 	<p>The principal is responsible for creating conditions for student success and is accountable to students, parents, the community, supervisors and to the board for ensuring that students benefit from a high quality education. The principal is specifically accountable for the goals set out in the school improvement plan.</p> <p>Practices: <i>The principal:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensures individual staff accountabilities are clearly defined, understood, agreed to and subject to rigorous review and evaluation measures and monitors teacher and leader effectiveness through student achievement aligns school targets with board and provincial targets supports the school council so it can participate actively and authentically in its advisory role develops and presents a coherent, understandable, accurate and transparent account of the school's performance to a range of audiences (e.g., ministry, board, parents, community) reflects on personal contribution to school achievements and takes account of feedback from others participates actively in personal external evaluation and makes adjustments to better meet expectations and goals creates an organizational structure which reflects the school's values and enables management systems, structures and processes to work within legal requirements makes connections to ministry goals to strengthen commitment to school improvement efforts develops and applies appropriate performance management practices to goals and outcomes identified in the school improvement plan <p>Competencies: Skills <i>The principal is able to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> engage the school community in the systematic and rigorous evaluation of school effectiveness collect and use a rich set of data to understand and assess the strengths and weaknesses of the school combine the outcomes of regular school self-review with provincial and other external assessments for school improvement <p>Knowledge <i>The principal has knowledge and understanding of:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> accountability frameworks including self-evaluation the contribution that education makes to developing, promoting and sustaining a fair and equitable society the use of a range of evidence to support, monitor, evaluate and improve school performance the principles and practices of performance management <p>Attitudes <i>The principal demonstrates:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> commitment to individual, team and whole-school accountability for student outcomes commitment to the principles and practices of school self-evaluation commitment to personal self-evaluation

Leadership Framework for Principals and Vice-Principals Part 2: System Practices and Procedures

<p>School and School Board Improvement</p> <p>The commitment the board demonstrates to raising student achievement and closing student achievement gaps, to treating people ethically, and to empowering the whole board</p> <p>Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The board provides support for building a common vision and mission for the school. ▪ All members of the school system (e.g., trustees, leaders, staff, school council members) work together to take responsibility for the learning of all students. ▪ The board recognizes the importance of professional learning communities and communities of practice as ways of supporting school improvement. ▪ The board supports capacity-building as the route to improved student achievement. ▪ The board exhibits a culture that supports school-based innovation within the board's shared vision. ▪ The board provides financial resources to support school improvement planning. 	<p>Fostering a Culture of Professionalism</p> <p>The procedures that the board uses to ensure that it has positive working relationships with its school leaders, so that principals feel that they are respected and trusted leaders within the system and that their input is sought and considered</p> <p>Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The board has policies and processes in place that enhance positive working relationships. ▪ The board supports the development of a positive and supportive school climate in its schools. ▪ The board recognizes excellence at all levels of the organization. ▪ Flexible structures at all levels of the system communicate a culture of respect. 	<p>Leadership Development</p> <p>The approaches and activities that the board has in place to provide the necessary training and opportunities for principals to build their capacity to be visionary instructional leaders and managers of a changing culture in their schools</p> <p>Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The board's leadership development model is based on a definition and a shared understanding of effective leadership that is consistent with evidence of best practice. ▪ The leadership development model is consistent with evidence-based best practices, institutionalized, and communicated to all personnel. ▪ Leadership development processes reflect contemporary understandings of leadership and learning. ▪ The board's leadership plan is evaluated on an on-going basis. 	<p>Administrative Structures</p> <p>The procedures that the board follows and the administrative structures that it has in place to streamline and buffer internal and external requests (e.g., mail, e-mail, and requests for data) and to provide central office support, including technological resources, to reduce the administrative burden on principals.</p> <p>Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The board has a system for coordinating demands made on schools and for gate keeping external requests. ▪ The board provides support for school leaders to implement board policies and procedures. ▪ The board provides technical support for technology applications in schools and data-driven decision making. ▪ The board has clear lines of communication to support a variety of school leader functions. ▪ The board provides human resources to support principals as instructional leaders. 	<p>Parent and Community Supports</p> <p>The procedures that the board has in place to assist and to support schools in involving parents and community in the school.</p> <p>Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The board provides training for school council chairs. ▪ The board has developed protocols for schools' liaisons with community agencies and services (e.g., public health agencies, municipal services, community police). ▪ The board provides communication expertise for public communications (e.g., letters home, press releases for events, communications related to emergencies). ▪ There are protocols for communication between board and school leaders about parental concerns and complaints. ▪ The board provides support for the use of school volunteers. 	<p>Succession Planning, Including Recruitment, to Build Capacity and Retain and Sustain Effective Leaders</p> <p>The procedures the board has in place to ensure that high quality candidates are ready and willing to take on school leadership roles and that all aspects of the transition from one leader to the next have been carefully considered.</p> <p>Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The board has well-developed, well-communicated, and inclusive identification and recruitment practices. ▪ The board provides training and development for aspiring leaders. ▪ The board uses selection processes that are systematic, transparent and inclusive. ▪ Supports are in place for newly appointed administrators. ▪ The board's placement and transfer processes for school leaders include supports for success.
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