QUICK FACTS: 2009/10

Ontario Leadership Strategy

The Ontario Leadership Strategy was developed to foster leadership of the highest possible quality in schools and school boards across the province. The Ontario Leadership Strategy delivers on our commitment of ensuring the leadership required to create an education system that is second to none. Our efforts are sharply focused on three core priorities: 1) High levels of student achievement; 2) Reduced gaps in student achievement; and 3) Increased public confidence in publicly funded education.

Why a leadership strategy?
School leaders have a profound impact on student achievement, second only to teachers among school related factors, and play a critical role in fulfilling our educational priorities: increased student achievement, reduced gaps in student achievement, and increased public confidence in publicly funded education. System leaders likewise have a crucial role to play in creating the conditions of success for principals. They provide the system leadership needed to encourage professional growth, foster excellence and support the important role of the principal.

What is the leadership strategy?
The Ontario Leadership Strategy is a comprehensive plan of action designed to support student achievement and well-being by attracting and developing skilled and passionate school and system leaders. It incorporates a collaborative approach through which schools, school boards, education partners and the ministry work in partnership to make a difference for every student. The commitment to develop a comprehensive leadership strategy is outlined in Reach Every Student: Energizing Ontario Education (2008).

Who benefits?
- School leaders benefit by getting the supports they need to succeed in a complex and challenging role
- System leaders benefit through supports that enable them to foster successful school leadership
- School boards benefit from guidance, tools and support in developing succession plans and leadership strategies
- Students benefit as they are supported to reach their highest potential.

Who are the key partners?
Development and implementation of the leadership strategy is a system-wide, collaborative process based on extensive research and broad consultations. The strategy involves a broad spectrum of partners including:
- School boards who provide direction and support for leadership
- Associations representing principals, supervisory officers and directors of education who partner in implementation and resource development, provide member support and collaborate with boards to create conditions for success
- The Institute for Education Leadership, which models a tri-level approach, commissions/dissemimates research on leadership, develops resources and promotes/advises on sector engagement and alignment
- Teacher federations who provide advice about recruiting and attracting teachers to the role of the principal and support shared leadership opportunities
- OCT which organized the Principal’s Qualification Program Guideline into the five domains outlined in the Ontario Leadership Framework to support candidates in their development and application of leadership competencies
- Academic experts who conduct research, stimulate thinking and heighten the level of discourse on leadership
- The Ministry of Education, which provides direction and support for the Ontario Leadership Strategy, maintains internal connections across ministry initiatives and with other ministries and sectors.
How is the strategy being implemented?
The leadership strategy has evolved and will continue to evolve through ongoing research and consultation with key partners. It was launched in 2008-09 and is being implemented in phases to support a theory of action founded on the guiding principles of partnership, individual and organizational development, alignment, and communication.

Year 1 – Highlights (2008/09)
- Launched the Ontario Leadership Strategy and the Premier’s Leader-to-Leader initiative through the Minister’s Principal Reference Group and ten regional, tri-level sessions throughout the province
- Promoted continuous professional growth through the Mentoring for Newly Appointed School Leaders and Principal Performance Appraisal
- Supported networks of principals in focusing on improving students’ literacy and numeracy achievement through the Leading Student Achievement Strategy
- Engaged school and system leaders in an inaugural session of the Principal Congress and continued meetings with the Minister’s Principal Reference Group
- Supported tri-level collaboration through the Institute for Education Leadership, the promotion of the Leadership Framework and the Leadership Self-Review Tool to guide the development and assistance of leaders
- Disseminated succession planning research and succession planning tools to attract aspiring leaders
- Shared the Effective Practices Guide for Principal/Vice-Principal Terms and Conditions of Employment across the province
- Provided executive development for supervisory officers and directors of education through The Learning Partnership/Rotman programs
- Expanded field test of Mentoring for Newly Appointed Directors of Education and Supervisory Officers

Year 2 – Implementation (2009/10)
- Every school board has a succession and talent development plan
- Continued implementation of the Ontario Leadership Framework (OLF), including a ministry commitment to embed five core leadership capacities within ministry professional learning and implementation supports
- The five core leadership capacities are drawn from competencies and practices identified in the Ontario Leadership Framework: Setting Goals, Aligning Resources with Priorities, Promoting Collaborative Learning Cultures, Using Data, Engaging in Courageous Conversations
- Advancement of the Principal Congress as essential to the engagement of school leaders in sharing effective practices
- Continued implementation of Year 1 initiatives including Premier’s Leader-to-Leader initiative, Leading Student Achievement, Mentoring for Newly Appointed School and System Leaders and Principal Performance Appraisal
- Dissemination of leadership support materials such as In Conversation, engaging leaders in the latest strategic and topical issues that matter most to student success in Ontario
- Ongoing support for education leaders through boards, associations and the Institute for Education Leadership

Year 3 – Forward Planning (2010/11)
- Every school board has a leadership development strategy
- Continued implementation of Year 1 and 2 initiatives
- Ongoing support for education leaders through boards, associations and the Institute for Education Leadership

WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE?
Contact your Regional Office or the Leadership Development Branch at 416-325-2623. Stay tuned for updates to the Ministry’s Leadership Development website at www.ontario.ca/eduleadership.
Go to Ontario’s Institute for Education Leadership website for further resources and information at www.education-leadership-ontario.ca/home.shtml.

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