

LEADERSHIP FRAMEWORK FOR PRINCIPALS AND VICE-PRINCIPALS

PART 1: PRACTICES AND COMPETENCIES

Understanding the framework

The leadership framework for principals and vice-principals consists of two parts:

- Part 1: Leader Practices and Competencies is displayed on this page
- Part 2: System Practices and Procedures is displayed on a separate page

The System Practices and Procedures portion of the framework is common to both the framework for principals and vice-principals and the framework for supervisory officers.

Assumptions about leadership

- There is an evolving body of professional knowledge about good leadership
- Leadership must be responsive to the diverse nature Ontario's communities
- Leadership is contextual and multi-dimensional
- The practices and competencies of leaders will evolve as leaders move through a variety of career stages
- Leadership practices and competencies are distributed members of school and system professional learning teams working together to accomplish goals

SETTING DIRECTIONS

The principal builds a shared vision, fosters the acceptance of group goals and sets and communicates high performance expectations.

PRACTICES

The principal:

- 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.

COMPETENCIES

Skills:

The principal is able to:

- 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.

Knowledge:

The principal has knowledge and understanding of:

- 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.

Attitudes:

The principal demonstrates:

- 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.

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS AND DEVELOPING PEOPLE

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.

PRACTICES

The principal:

- 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.

COMPETENCIES

Skills:

The principal is able to:

- 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.

Knowledge:

The principal has knowledge and understanding of:

- the significance of interpersonal relationships, adult learning and models of continuing professional learning;
- strategies to promote individual and team development;
- the relationship between performance management and school improvement;
- the impact of change on organizations and individuals.

Attitudes:

The principal demonstrates:

- commitment to effective working relationships;
- commitment to shared leadership for improvement;
- commitment to effective teamwork;
- confidence, optimism, hope, and resiliency;
- integrity.

DEVELOPING THE ORGANIZATION

The principal builds collaborative cultures, structures the organization for success, and connects the school to its wider environment.

PRACTICES

The principal:

- 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.

COMPETENCIES

Skills:

The principal is able to:

- 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.

Knowledge:

The principal has knowledge and understanding of:

- 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.

Attitudes:

The principal demonstrates:

- acceptance of responsibility for school climate and student outcomes;
- ethical behaviour.

LEADING THE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

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.

PRACTICES

The principal:

- 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;
- provides 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.

COMPETENCIES

Skills:

The principal is able to:

- 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.

Knowledge:

The principal has knowledge and understanding of:

- 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.

Attitudes:

The principal demonstrates:

- 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.

SECURING ACCOUNTABILITY

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.

PRACTICES

The principal:

- 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.

COMPETENCIES

Skills:

The principal is able to:

- 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.

Knowledge:

The principal has knowledge and understanding of:

- 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.

Attitudes:

The principal demonstrates:

- 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.