



Ontario Institute for Education Leadership L'Institut de leadership en éducation de l'Ontario

*Ontario Leaders Collaborating for Student Achievement, Equity and Well-being
La collaboration des leaders en Ontario assure la réussite, l'équité et le bien-être des élèves.*

2019-20 Annual Report

The mandate of the Institute for Education Leadership (IEL) is to promote and support effective leadership through opportunities for professional learning based on research, effective practice and sound policy. Ultimately, its aim is to help assist school and system leaders in maximizing the achievement and well-being of all students.

Priority Goals of the IEL

- engage in professional inquiry as it relates to Ontario's framework of effective leadership practices and personal leadership resources;
- influence leadership practice through ongoing development and implementation of Ontario's framework of effective leadership practices and personal leadership resources; and
- promote and mobilize research on effective leadership practice.

Qualities and Strengths

The IEL recognizes the need to be responsive to supporting each of the four sectors of publicly funded education (French Public, French Catholic, English Public and English Catholic) by seeking expert advice from multiple sources and evaluating and reporting annually on its activities.

The IEL identifies gaps and needs of leaders in the education sector, including a strong partnership with the business leaders of district school boards. One of the IEL's greatest strengths is its broad-based collaborative network that is fully representative of the leadership-oriented organizations within the provincial education sector specific to school administrators (Principals and Vice-principals), Supervisory Officers (Superintendents and Directors of Education), and Chief Executive Officers (Directors of Education).

An Influential Collaborative Leadership Network

The IEL has many accomplishments that the sector has recognized. In particular, the IEL has become a valued forum for collaborative education networking that brings leaders from all professional leadership organizations in education together with the Ministry to contribute to student achievement, equity and well-being. This networking and collaboration are driven by the ever-changing learning and development needs of the leaders in the education sector.

The IEL has the flexibility and capacity to reach out to and take into account the expertise and experience of leaders in other sectors including post-secondary and business partners, both within and outside of Ontario.

Key accomplishments in 2019-20

Model Approaches for Strengthening Effective Leadership:

The IEL Steering Committee plays a pivotal role in leading the work of the IEL. The Steering Committee is a forum that promotes collaboration, focused on strengthening leadership in the province. Members of the Steering Committee demonstrate their commitment to the IEL's mandate in countless ways that include:

- volunteering time to set Steering Committee meeting agendas;
- participating in formal meetings scheduled annually; and,
- contributing significant time in between formal Steering Committee meetings to committee work focused on communications, deepening the implementation of the Ontario Leadership Framework (OLF), finance, sessions for newly appointed supervisory officers, seminars for newly appointed principals and vice-principals and professional inquiries (Leader as Coach and Well-being for Leadership).

During the 2019-20 year the IEL Steering Committee held six meetings, five that were virtual using a Zoom platform and one face-to-face. During this time, the IEL has grown its capacity to promote collaboration and networking using a virtual format and has become a functional approach for building provincial leadership capacity through virtual learning.

Professional Inquiry: Building School and System Leader Capacity

Leader as Coach:

- The IEL *Leader as Coach* cycle of inquiry resulted in resources that are posted on the IEL website. The IEL Steering Committee will continue to promote these rich resources and make explicit connections with other resources on the website and to add materials such as those that districts have produced. In addition, the IEL will respond to satisfaction survey data which indicates types of changes and revisions needed to the *Leader as Coach* section of the website. The IEL continues to promote and mobilize *Leader as Coach* resources through social media channels.

Well-being for Leadership:

- The IEL *Well-being for Leadership* Facilitation Committee has established a working definition of well-being for leadership that includes five domains of well-being which serve as the foundation for this inquiry. Data obtained through a Thoughtexchange question has informed the IEL's next steps.
- Based on the results from the exchange, three major themes were identified:
 - 1. Building Capacity**
 - Individual Well-being – Starting with Ourselves and Others
 - The Power of Vulnerability and Belonging (Brené Brown)
 - Daring leadership assessment
 - Strengthening the Ontario Leadership Framework's elements related to the Personal Leadership Resources (PLRs) – social, psychological and cognitive
 - 2. Collaboration and Communication**
 - focus on self-awareness, having courageous conversations, giving and receiving feedback, team-building.
 - 3. Leading during a Time of Work Intensification**
 - Work Environments – supporting virtual working and learning environments
 - Staffing – sharing data collected with decision-makers
 - Flexibility – achieving work and life balance
- Resource to support leaders in strengthening their own well-being and that of others was created. The Building Capacity presentation includes slides, detailed notes and instructions.

Professional Learning Sessions for Newly Appointed Supervisory Officers:

- The IEL offered two virtual professional learning sessions to newly appointed Supervisory Officers (November 6th, 2019 and February 27th, 2020) and planning is underway for three sessions in 2020-21. A planned third session in 2019-20 was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Themes of these sessions were:

- During the first session, Supervisory Officers (SO) participated in a conversation with the Deputy Minister and the Assistant Deputy Ministers about roles and priorities for the upcoming year. Supervisory Officers discussed the relevance of their messages to system leadership in their context. They also had the opportunity to discuss challenges and/or opportunities that these priorities might present to system leaders.
- The February 27th session theme was: *The SO's influence in supporting student achievement, equity and well-being in schools and districts.*
- This IEL-sponsored professional learning program continues to be a collaborative undertaking between the IEL, the Ministry and the Supervisory Officers' professional associations. This is an important offering that strengthens relationships. Its priority is to focus on people and on leaders and on their leadership. It brings together system leaders in a context that promotes learning with and from each other about real-life issues in schools and districts.
- 2020-21 session dates are Thursday, November 12th, 2020, Thursday, January 28th, 2021 and Wednesday, March 31st, 2021 from 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

New Administrators' Seminar:

- Another example of the IEL's direct and timely support of leaders is the IEL's New Administrators' Seminar which is an annual three-session professional learning initiative for newly appointed Vice-Principals and Principals.
- This seminar provides participants with the opportunity to build a network with their colleagues across the province.
- Three New Administrators' Seminar were offered in 2019-20:
 - George Couros – Being a Transformational Leader and Learner, Innovate Inside the Box
 - Andrew Miki - Starting with Self-Care, Put your own oxygen mask on first
 - Louise Moreau - Leadership for Improved Mental Health and Well-Being
- Planning is underway for the sessions scheduled to take place in 2020-21.

Promoting Collaborative Professionalism

The IEL continues to add value to the Ministry's priorities as an essential professional forum of education leaders. In this role the IEL provides the Ministry with input and expert advice on the development and implementation of key Ministry leadership initiatives from a school and system leadership perspective.

- Deepening the Implementation of the Ontario Leadership Framework (OLF):
 - The IEL continues to play a dominant role in ensuring the implementation of the OLF resulting in impact that has been evident provincially. Beginning in the fall of 2019, with the guidance of Dr. Kenneth Leithwood, Leadership Advisor to the IEL, the IEL has designed an action plan for deepening the research and implementation of the OLF. This action plan focuses on deepening research and implementation of key domains of the framework to include student achievement, equity and well-being.
 - This plan includes designing interactive online tools that help users make direct and easy connections with the evidence that underpins the leadership practices and personal leadership resources (PLRs) of the OLF all with the goal of strengthening school and system leadership.

Assessing the Impact of the IEL

Communicating the IEL's value-added impact to stakeholders:

- The IEL identifies needs of leaders in the education sector, including a strong partnership with the business leaders in school districts. Association representatives promote the IEL when meeting with various stakeholder groups.

- IEL Steering Committee members share key statements from each IEL meeting with their membership. The IEL continues to promote its resources and research through social media and newsletters.
- School and system leaders were recently surveyed regarding their knowledge of the IEL, its resources and their needs.
 - Examples of leaders' needs identified are:
 - Professional development on leadership
 - Mental Health and Well-being resources
 - Engaging in difficult conversations
 - Conflict resolution
 - Special education supports for the school Principals and parents
 - Building capacity in staff, sharing best practices- promising leadership strategies
 - Instructional Leadership Support
 - Managing a unionized workplace setting
 - Offer a common goal-setting software across Ontario
 - Increase personal leadership resources

IEL's projected next steps in 2020-21

- Enhance the Value and Deepen the Implementation of the Ontario Leadership Framework (OLF)
- Leading Schools & School Districts during a Global Pandemic – Key Leadership Lessons
- Communicate the benefits and value-added of the IEL to stakeholders through newsletters and using social media.
- **Manage and promote the IEL website as one of the primary communication tools for responding to the needs of school and system leaders;**
- Identify the needs of positional leaders in the education sector.
- Support school and system leaders **and promote collaborative professionalism, and;**
- **Collect feedback and assess the work of the IEL as an “impact” organization.**