



ONTARIO

The Institute for Education Leadership
L'Institut de leadership en éducation

SELF ASSESSMENT TOOL

for
ASPIRING
SCHOOL LEADERS

revised 2014



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Education Leadership

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en éducation

www.education-leadership-ontario.ca

The Institute for Education Leadership (IEL) brings together representatives from the principals' associations, the supervisory officers' associations, councils of directors of education and the Ministry of Education in a unique collaborative partnership. It advances and advocates for tri-level leadership (school, district and system). Its main objective is to assist school and system leaders in maximizing the achievement of all students.

The IEL has articulated four key goals: development, research, practice and communication. Development includes defining leadership, identifying the necessary leadership practices and personal leadership resources (see the Ontario Leadership Framework) and staying on the leading edge of leadership knowledge and practice. The IEL supports research on effective leadership practices both in the Ontario context and internationally. It connects leadership practice to initiatives that support student achievement and well being.

To learn more about the work of the IEL and to access resources including the Leadership Self-Assessment Tools, go to <http://www.education-leadership-ontario.ca/home.shtml>.

As part of its work on research into practice the IEL has adopted the Ontario Leadership Framework (OLF) and continues to support and promote it as a powerful vehicle for strengthening school and system-level leadership in the province. This Leadership Self-Assessment Tool is another resource aspiring leaders may choose to use to inform their professional practice.

Self Assessment Tool for Aspiring Leaders

Purpose

The purpose of the Self Assessment Tool for Aspiring School Leaders is to enable leaders to assess their practices with reference to those identified in the research that are required to lead schools in the province of Ontario. Using the practices identified in the Ontario Leadership Framework (OLF), the approach is evidence-based, giving leaders the opportunity to reflect upon and cite evidence of the experiences that have contributed to their leadership development. Using this self assessment as a starting point, leaders can identify areas for growth and can give further thought and planning to the development of their Annual Learning Plan. The purpose of this tool is to help to develop reflective practitioners who can lead schools towards achieving the three provincial education priorities of: high levels of student achievement; reduced gaps in student achievement; and increased public confidence in publicly funded education.

Context

The Board Leadership Development Strategy (BLDS) requires that boards develop a plan to assist leaders in continuing their professional growth. Aspiring leaders need a clear understanding of their present level of leadership development as well as direction in ongoing leadership growth efforts. The development and implementation of a self assessment tool, based on the Ontario Leadership Framework, informed by evidence of practice and supported by school boards across the province will provide the foundation for the development of talented potential leaders in our school system.

Development

The development of the Self Assessment Tool for Aspiring Leaders was based on the assumption that leadership development begins with leadership practices in the classroom. Teachers from various District School Boards worked at developing the leadership practices at the classroom, school and system level, based on the Ontario Leadership Framework. Aspiring school leaders from various school boards validated the self-reflection tool to provide further precision in the indicators of the leadership practices. The self assessment of personal leadership resources is based on research by Ken Leithwood and is designed to assist leaders in recognizing the personal characteristics associated with cognitive, social and psychological resources. These resources have been found to help enact the leadership practices more successfully.

Implementation Tips

The Ontario Leadership Framework (OLF) provides an excellent “roadmap for the path to effective leadership.” The Self Assessment Tool for Aspiring Leaders uses the OLF to identify key classroom, school and system/community practices required to develop the leadership practices and personal leadership resources for effective leadership. In addition, alignment with the Ontario College of Teachers’ Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession guides the daily practice of teachers.

The following tips were suggested by members of a provincial validation team. It is hoped that the list can be expanded by users of the assessment tool.

Growth and Development

Use the self assessment tool:

- ✓ To highlight leadership practices and reflect on how you as a leader are implementing the practice. As part of identifying evidence, focus on three main practices and highlight the indicators that helped you identify areas for growth.
- ✓ For personal self-reflection to help identify areas of growth for inclusion in the Annual Learning Plan (ALP).

Professional Development

Use the self assessment tool:

- ✓ As the basis for evaluating the effectiveness of leadership development programs and further development you require.
- ✓ To guide conversations between mentors and mentees and to collaboratively determine areas for further development.
- ✓ To help analyse case studies and to determine steps required to address issues and concerns.
- ✓ For networking with those who have used the self assessment tool.

Leadership Development

Use the self assessment tool:

- ✓ As a foundation for the development of leadership programs.
- ✓ To prepare for the promotion process and related interviews or activities and to develop a leadership portfolio containing evidence of the leadership practices in each of the five domains.
- ✓ To document leadership growth and development throughout leadership internship.
- ✓ To help leaders in the organization to provide authentic leadership development opportunities for aspiring leaders in their schools and/or in the district:
 - ✓ Utilizing the self assessment tool not as a checklist, but rather to focus on evidence to determine results and to analyse the development of required leadership practices and personal leadership resources;
 - ✓ To collaboratively identify evidence of leadership; and,
 - ✓ To consider demonstrating leadership in the classroom as evidenced by their work with students, parents and colleagues.

Leadership Practices for Aspiring Leaders

Setting Directions

Aspiring leaders contribute to

- ✓ building a shared vision
- ✓ identifying specific, shared short-term goals, creating high expectations
- ✓ communicating the vision and goals

Classroom Indicators	Aspiring Leader in the Classroom	School Indicators	System / Community Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish expectations for a safe, trusting, respectful learning environment • Model the belief that students can learn to their full potential • Articulate learning goals for students • Ensure equity of opportunity for all students • Demonstrate that learning is an ongoing and collaborative effort between families, teachers and students 	<p><i>How am I deepening and extending my learning in the classroom?</i></p> <p><i>What am I doing in a more meaningful way to share my practices?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model commitment to the school’s vision. • Use relevant data to create divisional or department team goals aligned with initiatives in the school improvement plan • Lead school teams and committees to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Establish school improvement goals ○ Foster continuous improvement • Facilitate team effectiveness by valuing all members and ensuring meaningful collaboration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with colleagues from other schools and boards • Establish community partnerships and utilize their expertise for staff professional development (e.g., health, service agencies) • Gain experience at the system level – e.g., system committees, curriculum writing teams, union leadership opportunities • Communicate effectively with the greater community • Promote and demonstrate system/board vision to the greater community

Impact / Evidence / Reflection

What strategies do I use to implement these leadership practices?

What is the evidence of my influence on my school's learning conditions?

What do I need to change/improve/adapt?

What Personal Leadership Resources might help with improving my practice?

Classroom	Aspiring Leader in the Classroom	School	System / Community

Leadership Practices for Aspiring Leaders

Building Relationships and Developing People

Aspiring leaders

- ✓ Provide support and demonstrate consideration for individual staff members
- ✓ Stimulate growth in the professional capacities of staff
- ✓ Model the school's values and practices
- ✓ Build trusting relationships with and among staff, students and parents

Classroom Indicators	Aspiring Leader in the Classroom	School Indicators	System / Community Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respects students by providing differentiated, evidence-based instruction to meet varied needs and learning styles • Creates a positive, supportive and professional environment that treats each person with dignity and respect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Communicates effectively with students ○ Encourages risk-taking ○ Provides opportunities for student input and decision making in a collaborative manner ○ Resolves conflict and utilizes restorative practices with the goal of reconciliation • Provides effective classroom management practices and applies rules in a fair, consistent and equitable manner • Initiates meaningful contact with parents to communicate successes and areas for improvement. 	<p><i>How am I deepening and extending my learning about building trusting relationships in the classroom?</i></p> <p><i>What am I doing in a more meaningful way to share my practices?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops a positive and inclusive school climate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Engages in positive interactions with all school staff ○ Values and respects effective working relationships • Approaches resistance with respect, listens to, understands and engages in constructive problem-solving • Creates and sustains a professional learning community: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Collaborates with all staff ○ Demonstrates flexibility and openness to new ideas ○ Supports staff to develop trusting working relationships that foster change ○ Celebrates and recognizes success • Supports and initiates school events and facilitates extra-curricular activities • Acknowledges and recognizes the efforts and contributions of others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engages and welcomes parents and community members as respected, valued partners • Supports school council initiatives • Collaborates with community partners to enhance learning opportunities for students • Advocates for the school with the community at large • Collaborates with cross-panel personnel to provide elementary students and their families with a positive, seamless transition to secondary school

Impact / Evidence / Reflection

What strategies do I use to implement these leadership practices?

What is the evidence of my influence on my school's learning conditions?

What do I need to change/improve/adapt?

What Personal Leadership Resources might help with improving my practice?

Classroom	Aspiring Leader in the Classroom	School	System / Community

Leadership Practices for Aspiring Leaders

Developing the Organization to Support Desired Practices:

Aspiring leaders

- ✓ build collaborative cultures
- ✓ structure the organization for success
- ✓ build productive relationships with families and the community
- ✓ connect the school to the wider environment
- ✓ maintain a safe and healthy environment
- ✓ help with the allocation of resources to support the school's vision and goals

Classroom Indicators	Aspiring Leader in the Classroom	School Indicators	System / Community Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitates the development of a collaborate classroom culture: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Utilizes a variety of groupings to build student engagement ○ Engages students in decision-making and problem-solving ○ Establishes peer mentoring programs; ○ Demonstrates perseverance and flexibility ○ Models respectful behaviour, continuous ○ improvement and life-long learning • Scaffolds instruction to build on students' knowledge and skills 	<p><i>How am I deepening and extending my learning about building collaborative cultures in the classroom?</i></p> <p><i>What am I doing in a more meaningful way to share my practices?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively participates in a professional learning community: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Engages in inquiry-based professional learning to identify and implement evidence-based instructional and assessment strategies ○ Shares resources to support student achievement and success ○ Encourages the sharing of best practice through classroom and school visits ○ Provides differentiated support and professional development to meet team members' needs • Mentors new teachers and pre-service candidates • Participates in learning networks with other professional learning teams in the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicates and engages with the home and community in a regular, reflective, informative and invitational manner – e.g., inviting feedback, reporting progress, soliciting involvement, and encouraging school council to be active partners • Engages in system professional development and shares best practice • Participates in learning networks with other schools in the system and shares appropriately with colleagues • Creates and sustains mentoring relationships with system leaders

Impact / Evidence / Reflection

What strategies do I use to implement these leadership practices?

What is the evidence of my influence on my school's learning conditions?

What do I need to change/improve/adapt?

What Personal Leadership Resources might help with improving my practice?

Classroom Indicators	Aspiring Leader in the Classroom	School	System / Community

Leadership Practices for Aspiring Leaders

Improving the Instructional Program

Aspiring leaders

- ✓ Provide instructional support
- ✓ Monitor progress in student learning and school improvement

Classroom Indicators	Aspiring Leader in the Classroom	School Indicators	System / Community Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses data to establish student and class learning profiles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Assesses skills, knowledge, learning styles and interests ○ Understands socio-economic and cultural factors that may impact learning • Utilizes evidence-based and differentiated instructional strategies to meet student needs and abilities • Engages students in meaningful and relevant learning activities • Utilizes a variety of assessment strategies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Assessment <i>for</i> learning ○ Assessment <i>as</i> learning ○ Assessment <i>of</i> learning • Provides additional resources to help students achieve success • Incorporates 21st century content, global perspectives, learning skills, resources and technologies 	<p><i>How am I deepening and extending my learning about assessment for/as/of learning in the classroom?</i></p> <p><i>What am I doing in a more meaningful way to share my practices?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocates for at-risk learners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Utilizes in-school resource personnel to support student learning ○ Plans tiered interventions – i.e., programs that are individualized, precise and guided by evidence-based practice • Engages in inquiry-based professional learning to inform instructional practices and to contribute to a culture of learning • Builds capacity by sharing and encouraging others to take on leadership roles • Creates a fiscally-responsible budget that supports the school improvement plan • Models team-work and reflective practice to sustain continuous improvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilizes system and community support personnel to plan tiered interventions for at-risk learners • Engages school council in meaningful role supporting learning and achievement for students • Participates in learning networks to share and implement best practice and to support student achievement • Attends system professional development programs, encourages other to attend, and shares learnings with school staff • Supports community learning opportunities (e.g., field trips, cultural events)

Impact / Evidence / Reflection

*What strategies do I use to implement these leadership practices?
What is the evidence of my influence on my school's learning conditions?
What do I need to change/improve/adapt?*

What Personal Leadership Resources might help with improving my practice?

Classroom	Aspiring Leader in the Classroom	School	System / Community

Leadership Practices for Aspiring Leaders

Securing Accountability

Aspiring leaders are responsible for creating conditions for student success and contributing to the effective management of the school so that everyone can focus on teaching and learning. They are accountable to students, parents, the community, supervisors and to the Board for ensuring that students benefit from a high quality education.

Classroom Indicators	Aspiring Leader in the Classroom		School Indicators	System / Community Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure a positive, safe learning environment • Maximizes student engagement by establishing effective classroom management practices and by protecting instructional time • Utilizes relevant data to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Inform instructional and assessment practices ○ Improve student achievement ○ Close achievement gaps • Uses diagnostic, formative and summative assessment practices to accurately evaluate students • Identifies and provides support for at-risk learners • Develops annual learning plans based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reflective practice ○ Sustaining continuous improvement aligned with divisional / department and school improvement plans • Engages in ongoing communication with parents in regards to student progress 	<p><i>How am I deepening and extending my learning and supporting all learners in the classroom?</i></p> <p><i>What am I doing in a more meaningful way to share my practices?</i></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilizes data to measure and report results of divisional, department and school improvement plans • Responds to individual learning needs by planning and monitoring timely and tiered interventions in collaboration with school support personnel • Promotes and sustains student well-being and positive student behaviour in a safe and healthy learning environment • Models effective supervision practices and reporting responsibilities • Understands and implements all school and organizational policies and procedures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accepts constructive feedback from system reviews and incorporates suggestions in divisional / department and school improvement plans • Consistently communicates with parents to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report student progress • Solve problems and celebrate successes • Promotes the school to strengthen relationships between the school, home and the community • Ensures students and parents understand the full range of pathways, programs and supports that are available

Impact / Evidence / Reflection

What strategies do I use to implement these leadership practices?

What is the evidence of my influence on my school's learning conditions?

What do I need to change/improve/adapt?

What Personal Leadership Resources might help with improving my practice?

Classroom	Aspiring Leader in the Classroom		School	System / Community

Personal Leadership Resources

I draw upon the personal leadership resources to effectively enact leadership practices

The OLF describes the characteristics of effective leaders such as optimism, emotional intelligence and problem solving abilities, which the research indicates create the variation among leaders in how well they are able to enact the framework practices. Personal self assessment of the characteristics associated with cognitive, social and psychological resources is a critical component of leadership growth and development. The purpose of this tool is to assist aspiring leaders in identifying those characteristics that are contributing to or detracting from effective leadership practices.

Cognitive Resources	Social Resources	Psychological Resources
Problem-solving expertise and knowledge about conditions which have direct effects on student learning and which can be influenced by schools.	The ability to understand the feelings, thoughts and behaviours of persons, including oneself, in interpersonal situations and to act appropriately on that understanding.	The characteristics that enable leaders to be productive and effective in the highly complex environment of school leadership.
Problem-solving expertise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I spend time analyzing the nature of a problem, before seeking a solution. I prioritize problem-solving efforts based on impact on student learning. My values and principles are central to how I respond to problems. I remain calm and confident during the problem-solving process. 	Perceive emotions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am able to recognize my own emotional responses and how those emotional responses influence my actions. I am able to recognize the emotions of others. 	Optimism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am usually able to see many ways around a problem. I see the positive elements of most situations. I approach school leadership with an optimistic point of view.
Knowledge about School and Classroom Conditions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am knowledgeable about powerful learning conditions in the school and classroom. I am aware of my students' emotions from their behaviour. I am aware of my colleagues' emotions from their behaviour. I understand the influence of family conditions on student learning and implement policies to improve parental involvement. 	Manage emotions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am able to understand my own emotional responses and reflect on the potential consequences of those responses. I am able to help others to be more reflective about their own emotional responses and to reflect on the potential consequences of those responses. I am usually able to calm my school colleagues when they are feeling agitated. 	Self-efficacy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I feel confident analyzing long-term problems to find solutions for my classroom. I have confidence in my ability to achieve the goals I set in my job. I will persist in a task regardless of the obstacles.
Systems Thinking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am able to understand the dense, complex, and reciprocal connections among different elements of the organization. I have foresight to engage the organization in likely futures and consequences for action. 	Act in emotionally appropriate ways <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am able to control my own emotions. I am able to control my temper and handle difficulties rationally. I can usually persuade my school colleagues to act in emotionally appropriate ways in our school. My school colleagues can usually rely on me to help calm them down when they get upset. 	Resiliency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I usually take stressful things at work in stride. I thrive in challenging situations and am able to rise to the occasion. When things are uncertain for me at work, I usually expect the best.

		<p>Proactivity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am able to stimulate and effectively manage change on a large scale under complex circumstances. • I demonstrate initiative and perseverance in bringing about meaningful change.
<p>Reflect upon your own experiences. <i>When did you feel confident in these situations?</i> <i>When did you not feel confident?</i> <i>What steps are you taking to further develop your personal leadership resources?</i></p>		
<i>Cognitive Resources</i>	<i>Social Resources</i>	<i>Psychological Resources</i>

Next Level of Learning

What strategies do I use to implement these leadership practices?

What do I need to change, improve or adapt?

What personal leadership resources might help with improving my practice?

Classroom	Aspiring Leader in the Classroom	School	System / Community

Next Steps for Leadership Development:As you consider each domain described in the self-assessment tool, ask yourself to what extent you demonstrate each leadership practice. Select the most suitable response.

Setting Directions

Building a shared vision

1	2	3	4
Not at all evident	Somewhat evident	Evident	Very evident

Identifying specific, shared short-term goals

1	2	3	4
Not at all evident	Somewhat evident	Evident	Very evident

Creating high expectations

1	2	3	4
Not at all evident	Somewhat evident	Evident	Very evident

Communicating the vision and goals

1	2	3	4
Not at all evident	Somewhat evident	Evident	Very evident

Building Relationships and Developing People

Providing support and demonstrating consideration for individual staff members

1	2	3	4
Not at all evident	Somewhat evident	Evident	Very evident

Stimulating growth in the professional capacities of staff

1	2	3	4
Not at all evident	Somewhat evident	Evident	Very evident

Modelling the school's values and practices

1	2	3	4
Not at all evident	Somewhat evident	Evident	Very evident

Building trusting relationships with and among staff, students and parents

1	2	3	4
Not at all evident	Somewhat evident	Evident	Very evident

Establishing productive working relationships with teacher federation representatives

1	2	3	4
Not at all evident	Somewhat evident	Evident	Very evident

Developing the Organization to Support Desired Practices

Building collaborative cultures and distributing leadership

1	2	3	4
Not at all evident	Somewhat evident	Evident	Very evident

Structuring the organization to facilitate collaboration

1	2	3	4
Not at all evident	Somewhat evident	Evident	Very evident

Building productive relationships with families and the community

1	2	3	4
Not at all evident	Somewhat evident	Evident	Very evident

Connecting the school to the wider environment

1	2	3	4
Not at all evident	Somewhat evident	Evident	Very evident

Maintaining a safe and healthy environment

1	2	3	4
Not at all evident	Somewhat evident	Evident	Very evident

Allocating resources in support of the school's vision and goals

1	2	3	4
Not at all evident	Somewhat evident	Evident	Very evident

Improving the Instructional Program

Staffing the instructional program

1	2	3	4
Not at all evident	Somewhat evident	Evident	Very evident

Providing instructional support

1	2	3	4
Not at all evident	Somewhat evident	Evident	Very evident

Monitoring progress in student learning and school improvement

1	2	3	4
Not at all evident	Somewhat evident	Evident	Very evident

Buffering staff from distractions to their work

1	2	3	4
Not at all evident	Somewhat evident	Evident	Very evident

Securing Accountability

Building staff members' sense of internal accountability

1	2	3	4
Not at all evident	Somewhat evident	Evident	Very evident

Meeting the demands for external accountability

1	2	3	4
Not at all evident	Somewhat evident	Evident	Very evident

Next Steps for Leadership Development:

- 1. What leadership practices do I need to develop?*
- 2. How will I know that I've developed the leadership practices that I've chosen? What evidence and results will inform me?*
- 3. What personal leadership resources do I need to develop?*
- 4. How will I know that I've developed the personal leadership resources that I've chosen? What evidence and results will inform me?*
- 5. What available resources support the development of my leadership practices?*
- 6. What specific commitments will I make?*
- 7. Who can support me?*

The principals professional association would like to support you in your professional growth. In order to do so, they require data on provincial needs. Would you be interested in sharing your results with the Ontario Principals Council (OPC)? Respondents will not be identified.

Yes _____ No _____