Leadership is the exercise of influence on organizational members and diverse stakeholders toward the identification and achievement of the organization’s vision and goals.

Catholic school-level leadership

Setting Directions

Providing support and demonstrating consideration for individual staff members

Catholic school leaders:
- Establish, in collaboration with staff, students, and other stakeholders, a commitment to purpose and vision which is embedded in the Gospel and energizes their work
- Build understanding of the specific implications of the school’s vision for its programs and the nature of the curriculum in the classroom
- Encourage the development of organizational norms that support openness to change in the direction of the school’s vision
- Help staff and diverse stakeholders understand the relationship between the school’s vision and board and provincial policy initiatives and priorities

Identifying specific, shared short-term goals

Catholic school leaders:
- Build collaborative engagement in processes for designing school goals, and ensure goals are reflected in a Catholic context
- Back up goals for students, staff, and diverse stakeholders about the school’s goals with a commitment to a positive school climate rooted in the belief that all students are capable of the image of God
- Ensure the goals are clearly communicated to all stakeholders
- Regularly encourage staff to evaluate their progress toward achieving the school’s goals
- Encourage staff to develop and periodically review individual goals for professional growth, as well as the relationships between individual goals and the school’s goals
- Remain frequent about the school’s goals when engaged in decision making about school programs and directions

Creating high expectations

Catholic school leaders:
- Have high expectations for teachers, students, and themselves
- Devise additional efforts to create high expectations among staff for the achievement of students who have traditionally struggled to succeed
- Encourage staff to help students succeed in meeting these goals
- Encourage students to recognize the importance of their role in helping themselves succeed
- Help students set and achieve personal goals
- Make their expectations known through words and actions

Communicating the vision and goals

Catholic school leaders:
- Ensure that a Catholic vision is clearly articulated, shared, understood, and valued
- Use many different formal and informal means to communicate the school’s vision and goals established for the school
- Demonstrate their understanding of the use of the school’s vision and goals in day-to-day actions and decisions
- Regularly invite different stakeholder groups to discuss how their work furthers the school’s vision and goals

Building collaborative cultures and distributing leadership

Catholic school leaders:
- Model collaboration in their own work
- Foster mutual respect and trust among those involved in collaboration
- Encourage the collaborative development of group processes and outcomes
- Help develop classroom goals and project goals related to collaborative work
- Encourage a willingness to compromise among collaborators
- Foster open and frequent communication among collaborators toward building and sustaining a Catholic professional learning community
- Provide adequate and consistently available resources to support collaborative work
- Involve staff in the design and implementation of important school decisions and policies
- Provide sufficient leadership opportunities and support them as they take on these opportunities

Structuring the organization to facilitate collaboration

Catholic school leaders:
- Create timeframes for teaching that maximize time on task for students
- Provide regular opportunities and structures that support teachers in working together on instructional improvement, and establish a system for monitoring their collaborative work
- Establish clear expectations for how collaborative working is to be done
- Support the development of instructional units, with clear definitions of responsibilities, in which teachers engage in making decisions that affect their instructional practice
- Encourage teachers in making decisions that affect their instructional practice

Building productive relationships with families and the community

Catholic school leaders:
- Create a school culture in which parents are welcomed, respected, valued, and respected members in their child’s learning
- Demonstrate the type of leadership that parents can trust – confident, systematic, and attentive
- Help develop staff commitment to engaging parents in the school’s work, with the aim of helping them provide their children with support in the home that will contribute to their success at school
- Ensure that parents are kept informed of important developments and experiences to enrich the classroom experience and help all students feel included
- Encourage staff to engage in a broad view of parental engagement and encourage more parents to be involved in helping to connect the family to the wider network of social services as needed

Connecting the school to the wider environment

Catholic school leaders:
- Create and sustain a caring Catholic school culture
- Foster relationships among parents, parishioners, and the Catholic school community to support faith development and school programs
- Promote the understanding and utilization of the Gospel in our cultures
- Act in ways that consistently reflect the school’s core values and priorities in order to call attention to the Gospel
- Demonstrate respect for students, staff, and parents by listening to their ideas and beliefs, and provide them with opportunities to articulate their thoughts and concerns
- Foster a culture where students and parents listen to one another’s ideas and genuinely consider them
- Establish norms in the school that demonstrate appreciation for constructive debate and the demonstration of mutual respect
- Provide opportunities for staff and students to deepen their understanding of the Gospel through faith development
- Foster an environment where the appropriate discipline practices in classrooms and throughout the school are used

Meeting the demands for external accountability

Catholic school leaders:
- Provide a safe and supportive learning environment, with a high level of safety and protective services
- Encourage the development of a school culture in which students, teachers, and parents understand the value of safety and protective services
- Help students understand the importance of being alert and aware of safety and protective services
- Help students learn to be responsible and accountable for their own safety and the safety of others

PERSONAL LEADERSHIP RESOURCES

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

Cognitive Resources
- Problem-solving expertise
- Knowledge of effective classroom practices that directly affect student learning
- Systems Thinking*

Social Resources
- Participating emotions
- Managing emotions
- Acting in emotionally appropriate ways

Psychological Resources
- Optimism
- Staff-efﬁcacy
- Resilience
- Proactivity*

*Exceptionally important for system leaders

Catholic school-level leadership

Staffing the instructional program

Catholic school leaders:
- Recruit and select educators who have the interest and capacity to further the school’s mission, vision, goals and culture of faith
- Retain skilled educators by providing support and time for collaboration, shared leadership, creating a shared vision and fostering trusting relationships

Providing instructional support

Catholic school leaders:
- Communicate the instructional program (coordinate what is taught across subjects and grades to avoid unnecessary overlap while providing needed reinforcement and extension of learning goals)
- Communicate classroom design and provide constructive feedback to teachers
- Provide adequate preplanning time for teachers (provide reasonable planning time for teachers in order to facilitate the development of activities and units of instruction)
- Ensure students have a safe and supportive learning environment based on Catholic values
- Facilitate staff meetings in which staff actively discuss in their own terms the school’s goals as well as in other schools
- Participate with staff in their instructional improvement work
- Ensure that The Diocese School Graduate Expectations are incorporated throughout the curriculum

Securing Accountability

Catholic school leaders:
- Clearly define accountability for individual staff in terms that are mutually understood and agreed to that can be rigorously reviewed and evaluated
- Measure and monitor teacher and leader effectiveness using data about change in student achievement
- Measure and monitor progress toward achieving measurable improvement goals over a specified period of time
- Ensure that teachers are accountable for student performance and that their performance is comprehensively assessed using a range of data sources and data analysis techniques
- Establish a system of accountability for classroom, school, and district performance
- Create an organizational structure that reflects the school’s values and enables management systems, structures, and processes that are effective and accountable within Catholic teachings and legal requirements

Bullying staff from distractions to their work

Catholic school leaders:
- Create and enforce consistent, school-wide discipline policies minimizing distractions to classroom work
- Implement a systematic procedure for deciding how best to respond to challenging behaviors
- Distribute, with staff, guidelines to prevent the amount of time teachers spend responding to student discipline
- Regularly assess the contribution of all out-of-classroom activities to the learning priorities of students

Building staff members’ sense of internal accountability

Catholic school leaders:
- Regularly engage staff in analyzing data on the learning progress of all students
- Focus the use of data that is of high quality, reliable, valid, collected using systematic collection processes, available in its original form, and has been subjected to collaborative interpretation
- Promote collective responsibility and accountability for student achievement and staff development
- Help make strategic connections between school goals and metrics goals in order to strengthen commitment to school improvement efforts
- Assist their own contributions toward achieving school objectives and take these ideas and efforts back to others on their performance review
- Encourage continuous improvement and performance appraisal and make better expectations and adjustments and goals
- Ensure ongoing adult faith formation that addresses internal faith development