



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

# THE ONTARIO LEADERSHIP FRAMEWORK

*A School and System Leader's Guide  
to Putting Ontario's Leadership  
Framework into Action*

*Revised: September 2013*



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# LEADING ON PURPOSE:

## Using the Lessons of Leadership to Achieve Results

As an education leader, you are contributing to one of the most exciting - and challenging - periods in the history of Ontario's education system. The goals being set and achieved in Ontario have put our education system on a world stage as a centre of excellence. At the same time, effective leadership has emerged as one of the critical foundations needed to sustain and enhance system-wide improvement. This resource was designed to introduce a set of leadership tools which will help individuals grow and refine their leadership skills. It also provides a roadmap for organizations to increase their leadership potential so that leaders and organizations can put advanced leadership concepts to work on a daily basis to meet educational goals and achieve concrete results.

- Navigating the leadership maze
- What the research says
- Needed: a leadership roadmap

## Navigating the leadership maze

We know that effective leadership is fundamental to the success of any organization, and we recognize leadership as one of our key professional responsibilities. But in the face of dozens of administrative tasks, day-to-day challenges and issues, achievement goals and demanding deadlines, leadership often remains an abstract concept, even for those in leadership positions.

What is leadership? What does effective leadership look like? What role does leadership play in the education setting? Most importantly, in the midst of day-to-day pressures, how can leadership practice help us to do more with less, streamline and focus our efforts, and achieve our practical goals?

## What the research says

The answers to these questions can be found in a substantial and growing body of professional knowledge and research that demonstrates a direct and powerful link between effective leadership and improved student achievement and well-being.

**School leaders** are pivotal to the development of excellent teaching, excellent schools and ultimately, enhanced student achievement and well-being.

**System leaders** play an essential role by putting in place supportive system practices and procedures for school leaders and providing system-wide leadership.

## Needed: a leadership roadmap

If the key to reaching our achievement goals lies in building our own leadership practice, how can we put that knowledge into action? What core processes do we need to put into place in our day-to-day practice as leaders? What specialized skills and understanding will we need to develop? How can we know with certainty that we have adopted the most effective leadership approach?

That is the purpose behind the Ontario Leadership Framework. Based on more than eight years of research by leading experts and extensive consultation with educators across Ontario, the framework provides principals, vice-principals, system leaders and aspiring leaders with a clear leadership roadmap representing leading edge research and the best thinking and experience, of successful leaders across Ontario and around the world.

In the framework, you will learn about the key practices of successful education leaders and organizations, and how you can put them into action to achieve your goals. You will also find out about:

- the traits of effective leaders;
- the characteristics of effective organizations; and
- a common leadership language.

These will facilitate effective dialogue, professional learning, and collaboration.

## About the OLF

The Ontario Leadership Framework (OLF) was introduced in 2006. Since that time, research, professional practice and the policy environment have changed and as a result, the OLF has been significantly revised. This resource is intended as a compact, practical guide to the Ontario Leadership Framework that both school and system leaders can put to daily use.

For a more detailed description of the revised OLF and the research foundations underlying the design and revision of this leadership resource, see *The Ontario Leadership Framework 2012, With a Discussion of the Research Foundations* by Ken Leithwood. This document is available on the Institute for Education Leadership website at [www.education-leadership-ontario.ca](http://www.education-leadership-ontario.ca)

## NEW!

In the spring of 2013, the IEL and the Council of Directors of Education (CODE) commissioned further research by Dr. Kenneth Leithwood on the role of districts and district leaders. This research resulted in changes to the System-level Leadership and District Effectiveness Framework placemats. Read the full report, *Strong Districts and Their Leadership (2013)* available on the IEL website.

## Important to understand!

No two regions, school districts, or schools are exactly alike; nor are their achievement goals or leadership challenges. Ontario's leadership framework has been designed to address the specific roles of both school and system leaders and of schools and districts as organizations. As well, it lays out a flexible pathway to effective leadership that can be applied to a wide variety of leadership roles and situations. At the same time, it provides a shared vision of leadership and a common leadership language that enables coherence of leadership across the entire education system. It supports a powerful collaborative approach to leadership and professional learning.



# GETTING STARTED:

## Understanding Ontario's Leadership Framework

Research suggests that leadership is second only to teaching in its impact on student outcomes. Principals and vice-principals play a critical role as school leaders to achieve this impact. System leaders such as supervisory officers, play an essential role by putting in place supportive system practices and procedures, and providing system-wide leadership. Ontario's leadership framework was developed and has continued to evolve, to support and sustain the highest quality leadership possible in schools and districts across the province.

- Purpose of the leadership framework
- Organization of the framework
- Applying the framework in a diverse Ontario
- Five Core Leadership Capacities
- Moving forward: an evolving process

## Purpose of the leadership framework

The Ontario Leadership Framework is designed to:

- facilitate a shared vision of leadership in schools and districts
- promote a common language that fosters an understanding of leadership and what it means to be a school or system leader
- identify the practices, actions and traits or personal characteristics that describe effective leadership
- guide the design and implementation of professional learning and development for school and system leaders
- identify the characteristics of highly performing schools and systems - K-12 School Effectiveness Framework (SEF) and District Effectiveness Framework (DEF)
- aid in the recruitment, development, selection and retention of school and system leaders

The leadership framework provides aspiring leaders at both the school and district levels with important insights about what they will need to learn to be successful. For those already in leadership positions, it serves as a valuable tool for self-reflection and self-assessment. Finally, the framework also supports the work of those responsible for recruiting, selecting, developing and retaining new leaders.

### The Big Picture: Key Concepts

**Leadership** is defined within the OLF as the exercise of influence on organizational members and other stakeholders toward the identification and achievement of the organization's vision and goals. Leadership is "successful" when it makes significant and positive contributions to the progress of the organization, and is ethical (supportive and facilitative rather than persuasive, manipulative or coercive).

**Management** is an integral part of leadership. While management is focused on processes and procedures that keep the organization running smoothly, effective leaders approach technical management matters in an adaptive way. For example, timetabling is seen as an opportunity to maximize instructional time for students, provide opportunities for collaborative work among teachers and, thus, moving the vision and goals of the organization forward.

**Authority** is not synonymous with leadership in the OLF. While formal authority in a school rests with leaders such as principals, vice-principals and aspiring leaders, the reality is that many people in the school can and do provide leadership, including teachers, parents, and students. At the system level, leadership is shared across academic and business leaders as well as board trustees. The OLF recognizes the importance of sharing leadership purposefully and in a coordinated way to create a more democratic organization, provide greater opportunities for collective learning and teacher development, and increase school and district capacity to respond intelligently to the many complex challenges they face.

"...one defining attribute of effective leaders is their ability to carry out even the most routine and seemingly trivial tasks in such a way as to nudge their organizations toward their purposes."

~ Leithwood, 2012

"An integrated approach to leadership and management also has significant consequences for the work of non-academic leaders – and their perspective on the purposes for that work. These leaders influence functions that are quite crucial to the accomplishment of the school's and district's goals."

~ Leithwood, 2012

“ Taken as a whole, this evidence indicates that school leaders not only need to provide fairly direct assistance to the instructional improvement efforts of their staffs, they also need to build organizational contexts which support and enable such efforts.”

~ Leithwood, 2012

“An additional and especially compelling reason for sharing leadership in schools is rooted in Ontario’s commitment to educational equity and inclusion and safe schools with a positive school climate...providing equitable opportunities to influence the school and school system’s decision making by those whose voices typically have not been heard will lead to significantly improved educational experiences for diverse and disadvantaged students.”

~ Leithwood, 2012

Created in 2010 and revised in 2013 by the ministry’s Student Achievement Division, the **K-12 School Effectiveness Framework (SEF)** is key to the work of schools and boards. It is a companion piece to the OLF, included as one of its components to show the link between school-level leadership and school effectiveness.

**Elementary and secondary school leadership** is often enacted differently, due to the many significant differences between these two contexts such as: the size of the school, the organizational culture (collaborative and student oriented, rather than more subject-discipline oriented in a secondary setting), differences in managerial roles, and the complexity of the curriculum. Many elementary principals, especially in smaller schools, will need to take personal responsibility for enacting most of the leadership practices or working closely with a small leadership team to do so. Secondary principals will need to enact some leadership practices themselves while distributing responsibility for some activities to other leaders in the school. Effective principals in both elementary and secondary schools keep close enough contact with shared leadership work to ensure that school improvement efforts are carried out in a coordinated way.

**Context** is important when enacting the leadership practices. The framework is explicitly “contingent”. While the practices are what most successful leaders do, they are to be enacted in ways that are sensitive to the specific settings in which they are working. As well, the contingent nature of the framework acknowledges the importance of time – the fact that the leader’s skills change over time; the internal dynamics of staff change over time; and building trust with staff takes time.

**The framework** includes the leadership practices found to be effective for most schools and systems in most contexts and a small but critical number of personal resources which leaders draw on in order to enact effective leadership practices including cognitive, social and psychological resources.

**The framework** is not a job description for the leader, neither is it a checklist for assessing performance. Rather, it provides a framework for growth, which is sufficiently detailed to describe good leadership, but broad enough to be applicable in the various contexts in which school and system leaders function throughout their careers.

**The framework** is based on current and extensive research. The leadership practices described in the framework are supported by robust evidence, and supplemented by examples of the ways effective leaders put these practices into action at the school or district level.

## Organization of the framework

The framework provides leaders with a clear picture of what effective leadership looks like at both the level of the individual leader and the organization. It describes what an effective leader does and what an effective organization does. The framework also distinguishes between leadership at the school level and at the district or system level. As a result the framework consists of four key components:

- school-level leadership;
- the K-12 School Effectiveness Framework;
- system-level leadership; and
- a district effectiveness framework.

### Personal Leadership Resources

The OLF also 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. While many traits or personal characteristics have been associated with leaders and leadership, the framework includes only those for which there is compelling research evidence. School leader and system leader practices are enacted most effectively using these Personal Leadership Resources (see the detailed description of these resources on page 23).



## Applying the framework in a diverse Ontario

Successful school and system leaders must be responsive to the diverse nature of Ontario's communities. The OLF describes leadership broadly in a way that is intended to be inclusive of the diversity found in schools and communities across the province. Application of the OLF should be shaped by the community context.

For example, in French-language schools and school boards, application of the leadership practices must take into consideration the mandate of French-language education as described in *Ontario's Aménagement Linguistique Policy*. In addition French-language schools and system leaders must enact leadership practices that will ensure that the French-language cultural approach to teaching is reflected in all aspects of the school and system. Likewise, leadership in Catholic schools and school boards will need to reflect the board's articulation of Catholic faith perspectives.

The demographic and contextual diversity in Ontario schools, together with the province's commitment to high levels of student achievement and well-being, have heightened the importance of effective leadership in schools and districts led by leaders who support diverse student needs by providing caring, safe, respectful and engaging learning environments.

As instructional leaders, principals and supervisory officers embed direct involvement in instruction in their daily work through teamwork with all staff focused on improved school and classroom practices. As leaders who are committed to equity of outcome, they help to create inclusive and instructionally effective learning environments that increase the likelihood that all students will be successful learners. School and system leaders carry out these specific aspects of their role using a growth-oriented and collaborative approach across all the domains of the framework.

Leaders' enactment of the practices will evolve as they move through various career stages, specialized assignments, and unique educational environments. School and system leaders expand and strengthen their repertoire of practices and personal leadership resources over time, provided they have opportunities to grow and are supported by districts that are committed to leadership development.

## The OLF at a Glance

### Key focus for school leaders:

- School leader practices
  - what effective school leaders do
- K-12 School Effectiveness Framework
  - a tool for school improvement planning
- Personal leadership resources
  - what personal traits effective leaders need to cultivate

### Key focus for system leaders:

- School leader practices
  - tailored to the school level, and may be enacted differently to apply to effective system leadership practice
- System leader practices
  - further refine effective leadership at the district level
- District effectiveness framework
  - what effective districts do
- Personal leadership resources
  - what personal traits effective leaders need to cultivate

### Ontario Leadership Framework Components



## Five Core Leadership Capacities

For the purpose of professional development, the ministry has identified five *Core Leadership Capacities* (CLCs) that the research suggests are key to making progress toward the province's current educational goals. These five CLCs, described below, are embedded in all provincially-sponsored professional learning and resources for school and system leaders. It is important to note that the CLCs tend to work across domains rather than residing within a single domain of school level leadership practices and they are supported by the use of the Personal Leadership Resources.

### 1. Setting Goals

This capacity refers to working with others to help ensure that goals are strategic, specific, measurable, attainable, results-oriented, and time-bound (SMART) and lead to improved teaching and learning.

### 2. Aligning Resources with Priorities

This capacity focuses on ensuring that financial, capital, human resources, curriculum and teaching resources, professional learning resources and program allocations are tied to priorities, with student achievement and well-being as the central, unambiguous focus.

### 3. Promoting Collaborative Learning Cultures

This capacity is about enabling schools, school communities and districts to work together and to learn from each other with a central focus on improved teaching quality and student achievement and well-being.

### 4. Using Data

This capacity is about leading and engaging school teams in gathering and analyzing provincial, district, school and classroom data to identify trends, strengths and weaknesses that will inform specific actions for improvement focused on teaching and learning.

### 5. Engaging in Courageous Conversations

This capacity relates to challenging current practices and fostering innovation through conversation, to listen and to act on feedback, and to provide feedback that will lead to improvements in student achievement and well-being.

## Moving forward: an evolving process

The Ontario Leadership Framework continues to evolve as a result of ongoing research in Ontario and international jurisdictions, and ongoing consultation with a cross section of stakeholders. Individual school and system leaders can provide feedback on the framework to the ministry or to the Institute for Education Leadership through their professional associations.

### NEW!

In the spring of 2013, further research on the role of districts and district leaders was conducted by Dr. Kenneth Leithwood as commissioned by the Institute for Education Leadership and the Council of Ontario Directors of Education. This research resulted in changes to the System-level Leadership and District Effectiveness Framework, now reflected in the placemats in this user guide. In addition, there are research connections and recommendations in the report that are important for district and district leaders to understand. The recommendations provide advice for districts in reviewing their leadership development plans including recruitment processes.



# FROM PURPOSE TO PRACTICE:

## The Leadership Framework for School & System Leaders

The leadership framework has been tailored to the roles and responsibilities of both school and system leaders. It describes the school-level practices that research has shown to have a positive impact on student achievement and the actions associated with each. In addition, it describes the system-level practices and associated actions that support effective school leadership. The charts on the following pages provide a convenient at-a-glance view of the leadership practices described by the OLF and a description of the personal resources associated with effective leadership.

- [K-12 School Effectiveness Framework](#) (revised 2013)
- [School-level Leadership](#) (revised 2013)
- [Catholic School-level Leadership](#) (revised 2013)
- [District Effectiveness Framework](#) (revised 2013)
- [System-level Leadership](#) (revised 2013)
- [Catholic System-level Leadership](#) (revised 2013)
- [Personal Leadership Resources](#) (revised 2013)

# K–12 School Effectiveness

A support for school and student success

## Assessment for, as and of Learning

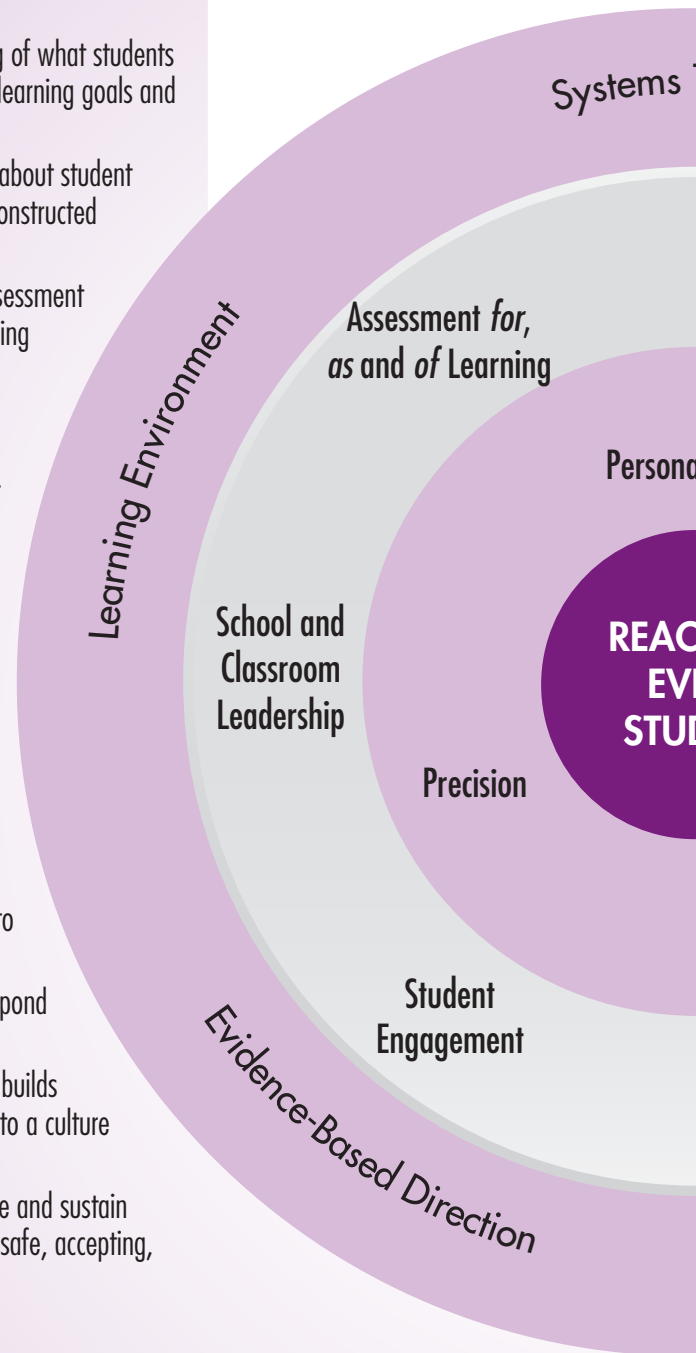
- 1.1 Assessment is connected to the curriculum, collaboratively developed by educators and used to inform next steps in learning and instruction.
- 1.2 A variety of relevant and meaningful assessment data is used by students and educators to continuously monitor learning, to inform instruction and determine next steps.
- 1.3 Students and educators build a common understanding of what students are learning by identifying, sharing, and clarifying the learning goals and success criteria.
- 1.4 During learning, timely, ongoing, descriptive feedback about student progress is provided based on student actions and co-constructed success criteria.
- 1.5 Students are explicitly taught and regularly use self-assessment skills to monitor, improve and communicate their learning within the context of the Ontario curriculum and/or Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- 1.6 Assessment of learning provides relevant and meaningful evidence to evaluate the quality of student achievement at or near the end of a cycle of learning and to determine next steps.
- 1.7 Ongoing communication about learning is in place to allow students, educators and parents to monitor and support student learning.

## School and Classroom Leadership

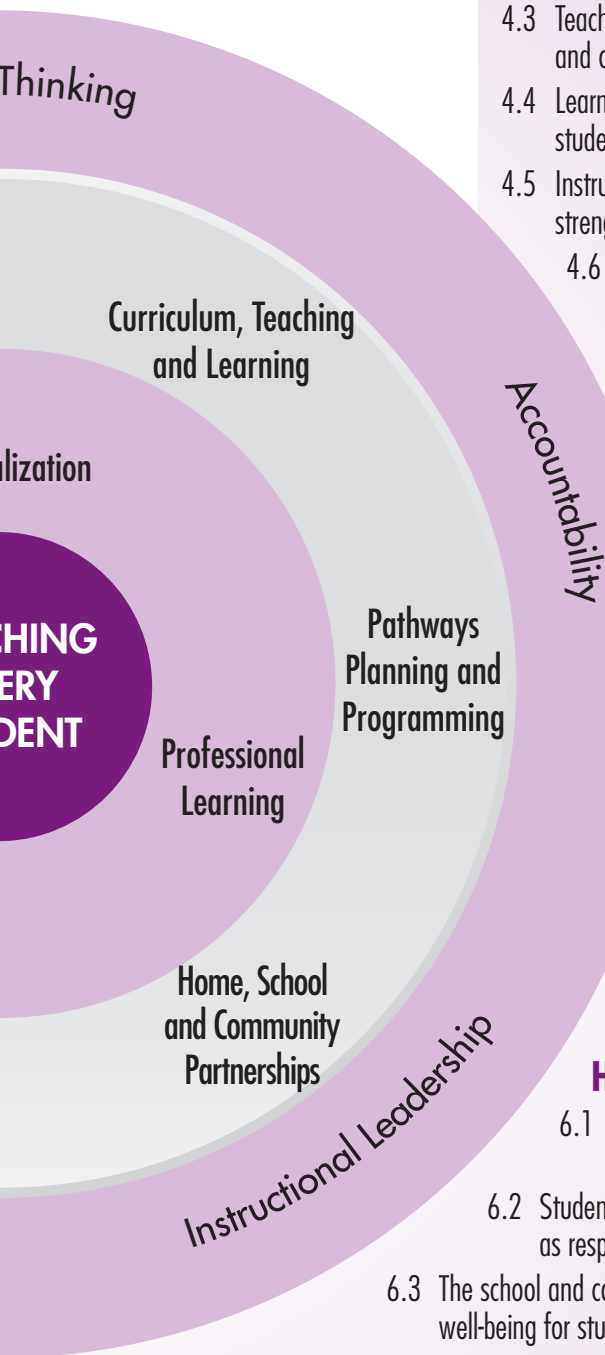
- 2.1 Collaborative instructional leadership builds capacity to strengthen and enhance teaching and learning.
- 2.2 Processes and practices are designed to deepen understanding of the curriculum and refine instruction to improve student learning and achievement.
- 2.3 Organizational structures are coherent, flexible and respond to the needs of students.
- 2.4 Job-embedded and inquiry-based professional learning builds capacity, informs instructional practice and contributes to a culture of learning.
- 2.5 Staff, students, parents and school community promote and sustain student well-being and positive student behaviour in a safe, accepting, inclusive and healthy learning environment.

## Student Engagement

- 3.1 The teaching and learning environment is inclusive, promotes the intellectual engagement of all students and reflects individual student strengths, needs, learning preferences and cultural perspectives.
- 3.2 Students' stated priorities that reflect the diversity, needs and interests of the student population are embedded in School Improvement Plans (SIPs).
- 3.3 Students are partners in dialogue and discussions to inform programs and activities in the classroom and school that represent the diversity, needs and interests of the student population.
- 3.4 Students demonstrate a wide range of transferable skills such as teamwork, advocacy, leadership and global citizenship.



# Effectiveness Framework for Student Improvement



## Curriculum, Teaching and Learning

- 4.1 A culture of high expectations supports the belief that all students can learn, progress and achieve.
- 4.2 A clear emphasis on high levels of achievement in literacy and numeracy is evident throughout the school.
- 4.3 Teaching and learning in the 21st Century is collaborative, innovative and creative within a global context.
- 4.4 Learning is deepened through authentic, relevant and meaningful student inquiry.
- 4.5 Instruction and assessment are differentiated in response to student strengths, needs and prior learning.
- 4.6 Resources for students are relevant, current, accessible, inclusive and monitored for bias.
- 4.7 Timely and tiered interventions, supported by a team approach, respond to individual student learning needs, and well-being.

## Pathways Planning and Programming

- 5.1 Comprehensive education and career/life planning programs meet the learning needs, interests and aspirations of all students.
- 5.2 Opportunities for authentic learning experiences and experiential learning exist in all classrooms, schools and community programs.
- 5.3 Students, parents, families, and educators understand the full range of pathways, programs, options and supports that are available.
- 5.4 Students build on in-school and out-of-school experiences to further explore and reflect upon their interests, strengths, skills and education and career/life aspirations.

## Home, School and Community Partnerships

- 6.1 The School Council has a meaningful role in supporting learning, well-being and achievement for students.
- 6.2 Students, parents and community members are engaged and welcomed as respected, valued partners in student learning.
- 6.3 The school and community build partnerships to enhance learning opportunities and well-being for students.
- 6.4 Learning opportunities, resources and supports are provided to help parents support student learning and have productive ongoing parent-teacher-student conversations.

2013

## Leadership is the exercise of influence on organizational members and diverse stakeholders

Setting Directions	Building Relationships and Developing People	Developing the Organization
<p><b>Building a shared vision</b></p> <p><b>School leaders:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>establish, in collaboration with staff, students, and other stakeholders, an overall sense of purpose or vision for work in their schools to which they are all strongly committed</li> <li>build understanding of the specific implications of the school's vision for its programs and the nature of classroom instruction</li> <li>encourage the development of organizational norms that support openness to change in the direction of the school's vision</li> <li>help staff and diverse stakeholders understand the relationship between the school's vision and board and provincial policy initiatives and priorities</li> </ul> <p><b>Identifying specific, shared short-term goals</b></p> <p><b>School leaders:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>facilitate stakeholder engagement in processes for identifying specific school goals</li> <li>build consensus among students, staff, and diverse stakeholders about the school's goals</li> <li>ensure the goals are clearly communicated to all stakeholders</li> <li>regularly encourage staff to evaluate their progress toward achieving the school's goals</li> <li>encourage staff to develop and periodically review individual goals for professional growth, as well as the relationship between their individual goals and the school's goals</li> <li>refer frequently to the school's goals when engaged in decision making about school programs and directions</li> </ul> <p><b>Creating high expectations</b></p> <p><b>School leaders:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>have high expectations for teachers, students and themselves</li> <li>devote additional effort to creating high expectations among staff for the achievement of students who have traditionally struggled to be successful at school</li> <li>encourage staff to be innovative in helping students meet those expectations</li> <li>encourage staff to assume responsibility for achieving the school's vision and goals for all students</li> <li>make their expectations known through words and actions</li> </ul> <p><b>Communicating the vision and goals</b></p> <p><b>School leaders:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>use many different formal and informal opportunities to explain to stakeholders the overall vision and goals established for the school</li> <li>demonstrate to all stakeholders the use of the school's vision and goals in day-to-day actions and decision making</li> <li>regularly invite different stakeholder groups to discuss how their work furthers the school's vision and goals</li> </ul>	<p><b>Providing support and demonstrating consideration for individual staff members</b></p> <p><b>School leaders:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>recognize the accomplishments of individual staff members</li> <li>consider staff members' opinions when initiating actions that affect their work</li> <li>build upon and respond to individual staff members' unique needs and expertise</li> <li>treat individuals and groups among staff equitably</li> </ul> <p><b>Stimulating growth in the professional capacities of staff</b></p> <p><b>School leaders:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>encourage staff to reflect on what they are trying to achieve with students and how they are doing it</li> <li>lead discussions about the relative merits of current and alternative practices</li> <li>challenge staff to continually re-examine the extent to which their practices support the learning of all their students</li> <li>facilitate opportunities for staff to learn from each other</li> <li>suggest new ideas for staff learning</li> <li>encourage staff to develop and review their own goals for professional growth and the relationship of those goals to school goals and priorities</li> <li>encourage staff to try new practices that are consistent with both their interests and school goals</li> </ul> <p><b>Modelling the school's values and practices</b></p> <p><b>School leaders:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>are highly visible in their schools</li> <li>are easily accessible to staff, parents and students</li> <li>have frequent, meaningful interactions with teachers, students and parents in order to further the school goals</li> <li>demonstrate the importance of continuous learning through visible engagement in their own professional learning</li> <li>exemplify, through their actions, the school's core values and its desired practices</li> </ul> <p><b>Building trusting relationships with and among staff, students and parents</b></p> <p><b>School leaders:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>model responsibility, integrity and thoroughness in carrying out tasks</li> <li>act in ways that consistently reflect the school's core values and priorities in order to establish trust</li> <li>demonstrate respect for staff, students and parents by listening to their ideas, being open to those ideas, and genuinely considering their value</li> <li>encourage staff, students and parents to listen to one another's ideas and genuinely consider their value</li> <li>establish norms in the school that demonstrate appreciation for constructive debate about best practices</li> <li>demonstrate respect, care and personal regard for students, staff and parents</li> <li>encourage staff, students and parents to demonstrate respect, care and personal regard for one another</li> </ul> <p><b>Establishing productive working relationships with teacher federation representatives</b></p> <p><b>School leaders:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>include federation representatives in processes for establishing goals for school improvement</li> <li>encourage federation representatives to keep their members well informed about their work with school leaders</li> <li>encourage federation representatives to collaborate in determining how to implement labour contract provisions in ways that support school improvement work</li> </ul>	<p><b>Building collaborative cultures and distributed leadership</b></p> <p><b>School leaders:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>model collaboration in their own work</li> <li>foster mutual respect and trust among those who work with them</li> <li>encourage the collaborative development of professional learning communities</li> <li>help develop clarity about goals and roles and responsibilities</li> <li>encourage a willingness to compromise among those who work with them</li> <li>foster open and fluent communication toward those who work with them</li> <li>provide adequate and consistently available resources</li> <li>involve staff in the design and implementation of school programs</li> <li>provide staff with leadership opportunities</li> </ul> <p><b>Structuring the organization to facilitate distributed leadership</b></p> <p><b>School leaders:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>create timetables for teaching that maximize the use of all staff</li> <li>provide regular opportunities and structures for staff to work together</li> <li>establish a structure of teams and groups that support the school's goals</li> <li>distribute leadership on selected tasks</li> <li>engage teachers in making decisions that affect the school's goals</li> </ul> <p><b>Building productive relationships with families and the wider environment</b></p> <p><b>School leaders:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>create a school environment in which parents and the wider community are encouraged to learn</li> <li>demonstrate the type of leadership that parents and the wider community can expect</li> <li>help develop staff commitment to engaging with families and the wider community</li> <li>work, with staff, directly with families of diverse backgrounds and cultures at home that will contribute to their success at school</li> <li>encourage staff to reach out to students with diverse backgrounds and cultures and help all students feel included</li> <li>encourage staff to adopt a broad view of parents and the wider community</li> <li>help connect families to the wider network of parents and the wider community</li> </ul> <p><b>Connecting the school to the wider environment</b></p> <p><b>School leaders:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>develop and maintain connections with other schools, community organizations and members of the education system</li> </ul> <p><b>Maintaining a safe and healthy environment</b></p> <p><b>School leaders:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>take measures to secure the school's physical environment</li> <li>ensure that the physical facility is maintained and safe</li> <li>communicate standards for non-violent behaviour</li> <li>empower staff in the school to play a leadership role in promoting safe and healthy behaviour</li> <li>implement and monitor the use of appropriate security measures</li> <li>develop, with the input of staff and students, policies and procedures for safety and security</li> <li>provide opportunities for staff and students to participate in safety and security measures</li> </ul> <p><b>Allocating resources in support of the school's goals</b></p> <p><b>School leaders:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>manage efficient budgetary processes</li> <li>distribute resources in ways that are closely aligned with the school's goals</li> <li>ensure that sustained funding is directed to support the school's goals</li> <li>secure resources as needed to support the school's goals</li> <li>revisit and adjust as needed the nature, amount and timing of resources</li> <li>ensure effective oversight and accountability</li> </ul>

## PERSONAL LEADERSHIP

Leaders draw upon the personal leadership resources they possess

Cognitive Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Problem-solving expertise</li> <li>Knowledge of effective school and classroom practices that directly affect student learning</li> <li>Systems Thinking*</li> </ul> <p>*Especially important for system leaders</p>

Social Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Perceiving emotions</li> <li>Managing emotions</li> <li>Acting in emotionally appropriate ways</li> </ul>

# LEADERSHIP

holders toward the identification and achievement of the organization’s vision and goals.

Organization to Support Desired Practices	Improving the Instructional Program	Securing Accountability
<p><b>Sharing leadership</b></p> <p>be involved in collaboration group processes and outcomes related to collaborative work along collaborators and building and sustaining professional learning communities resources to support collaborative work on of important school decisions and policies and support them as they take on these opportunities</p> <p><b>Collaboration</b></p> <p>time on task for students that support teachers in working together on instructional improvement, collaborative work that work together on problem solving effect their instructional work</p> <p><b>Families and the community</b></p> <p>ts are welcomed, respected and valued as partners in their children’s ents can trust – confident, systematic and attentive parents in the school erse backgrounds to help them provide their children with support in the school ch diverse viewpoints and experiences to enrich the classroom experience rental engagement and encourage more parents to be involved of social services as needed</p> <p><b>Environment</b></p> <p>er expert school and district leaders, policy experts, outreach groups, nal research community</p> <p><b>Security</b></p> <p>al facilities against intruders ed in a safe, healthy and attractive condition aviour and uphold those standards in an equitable manner ship role in promoting a positive school climate and modelling appropriate e disciplinary practices in classrooms and throughout the school processes to identify and resolve conflicts quickly and effectively to learn about effective conflict resolution strategies</p> <p><b>School’s vision and goals</b></p> <p>y aligned with the school’s improvement priorities the school’s improvement priorities instructional work of the school ount and alignment of resources as priorities for school improvement change y of resources to support priorities</p>	<p><b>Staffing the instructional program</b></p> <p><b>School leaders:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>recruit and select teachers who have the interest and capacity to further the school’s vision and goals</li> <li>retain skilled teachers by providing support and time for collaboration, sharing leadership, creating a shared vision and building trusting relationships</li> </ul> <p><b>Providing instructional support</b></p> <p><b>School leaders:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>actively oversee the instructional program</li> <li>coordinate what is taught across subjects and grades to avoid unnecessary overlap while providing needed reinforcement and extension of learning goals</li> <li>observe classroom instruction and provide constructive feedback to teachers</li> <li>provide adequate preparation time for teachers</li> <li>provide advice to teachers about how to solve classroom problems</li> <li>provide teachers with the opportunity to observe effective instructional practices among colleagues in their own school as well as in other schools</li> <li>participate with staff in their instructional improvement work</li> </ul> <p><b>Monitoring progress in student learning and school improvement</b></p> <p><b>School leaders:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>assist staff in understanding the importance of student assessment for, of, and as learning</li> <li>collaborate with staff during the process of data interpretation</li> <li>use multiple sources of evidence when analysing student progress</li> <li>give priority to identifying those students most in need of additional support</li> <li>incorporate the explicit use of data when making decisions that relate to student learning and school improvement</li> <li>examine trends in student achievement over time (one or more years), rather than just at one point in time, when analysing student learning</li> <li>collect and use data about the status of those classroom and school conditions that are the focus of the school improvement efforts</li> <li>provide conditions for teachers to use data effectively (time, support, partnerships with experts, a culture in which the use of data is valued)</li> </ul> <p><b>Buffering staff from distractions to their work</b></p> <p><b>School leaders:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>create and enforce consistent, school-wide discipline policies</li> <li>minimize daily disruptions to classroom instructional time</li> <li>implement a systematic procedure for deciding how best to respond to initiatives from outside the school</li> <li>develop, with staff, guidelines to govern the amount of time teachers spend on non-instructional and out-of-school activities</li> <li>regularly assess the contribution of all out-of-classroom activities to the learning priorities of students</li> </ul>	<p><b>Building staff members’ sense of internal accountability</b></p> <p><b>School leaders:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>regularly engage staff in analyzing data on the learning progress of all students</li> <li>insist on 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)</li> <li>promote collective responsibility and accountability for student achievement and well-being</li> <li>help staff make connections between school goals and ministry goals in order to strengthen commitment to school improvement efforts</li> <li>assess their own contributions to school achievements and take into account feedback from others on their performance</li> <li>participate actively in their own performance appraisal and make adjustments to better meet expectations and goals</li> </ul> <p><b>Meeting the demands for external accountability</b></p> <p><b>School leaders:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clearly define accountability for individual staff in terms that are mutually understood and agreed to and that can be rigorously reviewed and evaluated</li> <li>measure and monitor teacher and leader effectiveness using data about changes in student achievement</li> <li>align school targets with board and provincial targets</li> <li>provide an accurate and transparent account of the school’s performance to all school stakeholders (e.g., ministry, board, parents, community)</li> <li>create an organizational structure that reflects the school’s values and enables management systems, structures and processes to work effectively within legal requirements</li> </ul>

## LEADERSHIP RESOURCES

resources to effectively enact leadership practices

### Psychological Resources

- Optimism
- Self-efficacy
- Resilience
- Proactivity\*

\*Especially important for system leaders

## Leadership is the exercise of influence on organizational members and diverse stakeholders

Setting Directions	Building Relationships and Developing People	Developing the Organization
<p><b>Building a shared vision</b></p> <p><b>Catholic school leaders:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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</li> <li>build understanding of the specific implications of the school's vision for its programs and the nature of classroom instruction</li> <li>encourage the development of organizational norms that support openness to change in the direction of the school's vision</li> <li>help staff and diverse stakeholders understand the relationship between the school's vision and board and provincial policy initiatives and priorities</li> </ul> <p><b>Identifying specific, shared short-term goals</b></p> <p><b>Catholic school leaders:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>facilitate stakeholder engagement in processes for identifying specific school goals nurtured in a Christ-centred community</li> <li>build consensus among 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 created in the image of God</li> <li>ensure the goals are clearly communicated to all stakeholders</li> <li>regularly encourage staff to evaluate their progress toward achieving the school's goals</li> <li>encourage staff to develop and periodically review individual goals for professional growth, as well as the relationship between their individual goals and the school's goals</li> <li>refer frequently to the school's goals when engaged in decision making about school programs and directions</li> </ul> <p><b>Creating high expectations</b></p> <p><b>Catholic school leaders:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>have high expectations for teachers, students and themselves</li> <li>devote additional effort to creating high expectations among staff for the achievement of students who have traditionally struggled to be successful at school</li> <li>encourage staff to be innovative in helping students meet those expectations</li> <li>encourage staff to assume responsibility for achieving the school's vision and goals for all students</li> <li>make their expectations known through words and actions</li> </ul> <p><b>Communicating the vision and goals</b></p> <p><b>Catholic school leaders:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensure that a Catholic vision is clearly articulated, shared, understood and acted upon</li> <li>use many different formal and informal opportunities to explain to stakeholders the overall vision and goals established for the school</li> <li>demonstrate to all stakeholders the use of the school's vision and goals in day-to-day actions and decision making</li> <li>regularly invite different stakeholder groups to discuss how their work furthers the school's vision and goals</li> </ul>	<p><b>Providing support and demonstrating consideration for individual staff members</b></p> <p><b>Catholic school leaders:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>acknowledge and celebrate the accomplishments of individuals and teams</li> <li>consider staff members' opinions when initiating actions that affect their work</li> <li>build upon and respond to individual staff members' unique needs and expertise</li> <li>treat individuals and groups among staff equitably</li> </ul> <p><b>Stimulating growth in the professional capacities of staff</b></p> <p><b>Catholic school leaders:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>encourage staff to reflect on what they are trying to achieve with students and how they are doing it</li> <li>lead discussions about the relative merits of current and alternative practices</li> <li>challenge staff to continually re-examine the extent to which their practices support the learning of all their students</li> <li>facilitate opportunities for staff to learn from each other</li> <li>suggest new ideas for staff learning</li> <li>encourage staff to develop and review their own goals for professional growth and the relationship of those goals to school goals and priorities</li> <li>encourage staff to try new practices that are consistent with both their interests and school goals</li> </ul> <p><b>Modelling the school's values and practices</b></p> <p><b>Catholic school leaders:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>are highly visible in their schools</li> <li>are actively engaged in liturgies and prayers that nurture Catholic school culture and faith development</li> <li>evangelize and commit to life-long faith formation</li> <li>are easily accessible to staff, parents and students</li> <li>have frequent, meaningful interactions with teachers, students and parents in order to further the school goals</li> <li>demonstrate the importance of continuous learning through visible engagement in their own professional learning</li> <li>exemplify, through their actions, the school's core values and its desired practices</li> </ul> <p><b>Building trusting relationships with and among staff, students and parents</b></p> <p><b>Catholic school leaders:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>create and sustain a caring Catholic school culture</li> <li>foster the relationship among parents, parishes and the Catholic school community to support faith development and school programs</li> <li>model responsibility, integrity and thoroughness in carrying out tasks</li> <li>act in ways that consistently reflect the school's core values and priorities in order to establish trust</li> <li>demonstrate respect for staff, students and parents by listening to their ideas, being open to those ideas, and genuinely considering their value</li> <li>encourage staff, students and parents to listen to one another's ideas and genuinely consider their value</li> <li>establish norms in the school that demonstrate appreciation for constructive debate about best practices</li> <li>demonstrate respect, care and personal regard for students, staff and parents</li> <li>encourage staff, students and parents to demonstrate respect, care and personal regard for one another</li> </ul> <p><b>Establishing productive working relationships with teacher federation representatives</b></p> <p><b>Catholic school leaders:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>include federation representatives in processes for establishing goals for school improvement</li> <li>encourage federation representatives to keep their members well informed about their work with school leaders</li> <li>encourage federation representatives to collaborate in determining how to implement labour contract provisions in ways that support school improvement work and reflect Catholic social teachings</li> </ul>	<p><b>Building collaborative cultures and working relationships</b></p> <p><b>Catholic school leaders:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>model collaboration in their own work</li> <li>foster mutual respect and trust among staff</li> <li>encourage the collaborative development of school programs</li> <li>help develop clarity about goals and roles</li> <li>encourage a willingness to compromise</li> <li>foster open and fluent communication within the learning community</li> <li>provide adequate and consistently available resources</li> <li>involve staff in the design and implementation of school programs</li> <li>provide staff with leadership opportunities</li> </ul> <p><b>Structuring the organization to facilitate the school's vision</b></p> <p><b>Catholic school leaders:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>create timetables for teaching that maximize learning time</li> <li>provide regular opportunities and structures for staff improvement, and establish a system of ongoing learning</li> <li>establish a structure of teams and groups that support the school's vision</li> <li>distribute leadership on selected tasks</li> <li>engage teachers in making decisions that support the school's vision</li> </ul> <p><b>Building productive relationships with parents</b></p> <p><b>Catholic school leaders:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>create a school environment in which parents are encouraged to learn</li> <li>demonstrate the type of leadership that encourages staff to learn</li> <li>help develop staff commitment to engage with families</li> <li>work, with staff, directly with families in the home that will contribute to their learning</li> <li>encourage staff to reach out to students and parents, share their own experience and help all students feel welcome</li> <li>encourage staff to adopt a broad view of the school's role in the community</li> <li>help connect families to the wider network</li> </ul> <p><b>Connecting the school to the wider network</b></p> <p><b>Catholic school leaders:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>develop and maintain connections with the wider educational research community</li> <li>develop and maintain partnerships with other schools</li> </ul> <p><b>Maintaining a safe and healthy environment</b></p> <p><b>Catholic school leaders:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>take measures to secure the school's physical facility</li> <li>ensure that the physical facility is maintained</li> <li>communicate standards for non-violence</li> <li>empower staff in the school to play a leadership role in appropriate behaviour as reflected in the school's vision</li> <li>implement and monitor the use of appropriate policies</li> <li>develop, with the input of staff and students, a school culture reflected in Gospel teachings</li> <li>provide opportunities for staff and students to engage in service</li> </ul> <p><b>Allocating resources in support of the school's vision</b></p> <p><b>Catholic school leaders:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>manage efficient budgetary processes</li> <li>distribute resources in ways that are equitable</li> <li>ensure that sustained funding is directed to support the school's vision</li> <li>secure resources as needed to support the school's vision</li> <li>revisit and adjust as needed the nature of the school's vision</li> <li>ensure effective oversight and accountability</li> </ul>
<p><b>PERSONAL LEADERSHIP</b></p> <p>Leaders draw upon the personal leadership resources of each individual</p>		
<p><b>Cognitive Resources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Problem-solving expertise</li> <li>Knowledge of effective school and classroom practices that directly affect student learning</li> <li>Systems Thinking*</li> </ul> <p>*Especially important for system leaders</p>	<p><b>Social Resources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Perceiving emotions</li> <li>Managing emotions</li> <li>Acting in emotionally appropriate ways</li> </ul>	



# LEVEL LEADERSHIP

holders toward the identification and achievement of the organization's vision and goals.

## Organization to Support Desired Practices

### Distributing leadership

Engage those involved in collaboration  
 Identification of group processes and outcomes  
 Roles related to collaborative work  
 Trust among collaborators  
 Commitment among collaborators toward building and sustaining a Catholic professional

Allocate resources to support collaborative work  
 Identification of important school decisions and policies  
 Prioritize and support them as they take on these opportunities

### Foster collaboration

Maximize time on task for students  
 Structures that support teachers in working together on instructional  
 Processes for monitoring their collaborative work  
 Groups that work together on problem solving  
 Structures that affect their instructional work

### Engage with families and the community

Parents are welcomed, respected and valued as partners in their children's  
 Education that parents can trust - confident, systematic and attentive  
 Engaging parents in the school  
 Support of diverse backgrounds to help them provide their children with support in  
 Success at school  
 Invite parents with diverse viewpoints and experiences to enrich the classroom  
 Support of parental engagement and encourage more parents to be involved  
 Work of social services as needed

### Build a supportive environment

Engage other expert school and board leaders, policy experts and members of the  
 Engage other Catholic institutions, organizations and outreach groups

### Ensure a safe environment

Protect physical facilities against intruders  
 Maintain in a safe, healthy and attractive condition  
 Promote respectful behaviour and uphold those standards in an equitable manner  
 Leadership role in promoting a positive school climate and modelling  
 Gospel teachings  
 Appropriate disciplinary practices in classrooms and throughout the school  
 Processes to identify and resolve conflicts quickly and effectively as  
 Encourage students to learn about effective conflict resolution strategies

### Align the school's vision and goals

Ensure school goals are closely aligned with the school's improvement priorities  
 Align school goals to the school's improvement priorities  
 Prioritize faith formation and the instructional work of the school  
 Identify, amount and alignment of resources as priorities for school improvement  
 Ensure availability of resources to support priorities

## Improving the Instructional Program

### 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, sharing leadership, creating a shared vision and building trusting relationships

### Providing instructional support

#### Catholic school leaders:

- actively oversee the instructional program
- coordinate what is taught across subjects and grades to avoid unnecessary overlap while providing needed reinforcement and extension of learning goals
- observe classroom instruction and provide constructive feedback to teachers
- provide adequate preparation time for teachers
- provide advice to teachers about how to solve classroom problems by supporting a solution-focused learning environment based on Catholic values
- provide teachers with the opportunity to observe effective instructional practices among colleagues in their own school as well as in other schools
- participate with staff in their instructional improvement work
- ensure that the *Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations* are incorporated throughout the curriculum

### Monitoring progress in student learning and school improvement

#### Catholic school leaders:

- assist staff in understanding the importance of student assessment for, of, and as learning
- collaborate with staff during the process of data interpretation
- use multiple sources of evidence when analysing student progress
- give priority to identifying those students most in need of additional support
- incorporate the explicit use of data when making decisions that relate to student learning and school improvement
- examine trends in student achievement over time (one or more years), rather than just at one point in time, when analysing student learning
- collect and use data about the status of those classroom and school conditions that are the focus of the school improvement efforts
- provide conditions for teachers to use data effectively (time, support, partnerships with experts, a culture in which the use of data is valued)

### Buffering staff from distractions to their work

#### Catholic school leaders:

- create and enforce consistent, school-wide discipline policies
- minimize daily disruptions to classroom instructional time
- implement a systematic procedure for deciding how best to respond to initiatives from outside the school
- develop, with staff, guidelines to govern the amount of time teachers spend on non-instructional and out-of-school activities
- regularly assess the contribution of all out-of-classroom activities to the learning priorities of students

## Securing Accountability

### Building staff members' sense of internal accountability

#### Catholic school leaders:

- regularly engage staff in analyzing data on the learning progress of all students
- insist on 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 well-being
- help staff make connections between school goals and ministry goals in order to strengthen commitment to school improvement efforts
- assess their own contributions to school achievements and take into account feedback from others on their performance
- participate actively in their own performance appraisal and make adjustments to better meet expectations and goals
- ensure ongoing adult faith formation that addresses internal faith development

### Meeting the demands for external accountability

#### Catholic school leaders:

- clearly define accountability for individual staff in terms that are mutually understood and agreed to and that can be rigorously reviewed and evaluated
- measure and monitor teacher and leader effectiveness using data about changes in student achievement
- align school goals with board and provincial goals
- provide an accurate and transparent account of the school's performance to all school stakeholders (e.g., ministry, board, parents, and the Catholic community)
- create an organizational structure that reflects the Catholic school's values and enables management systems, structures and processes to work effectively within Catholic teachings and legal requirements

## LEADERSHIP RESOURCES

Resources to effectively enact leadership practices

### Psychological Resources

- Optimism
- Self-efficacy
- Resilience
- Proactivity\*

\*Especially important for system leaders

**This framework summarizes evidence about the characteristics of “strong” school districts – the leadership teams, developing the nine characteristics of strong districts in their organizations and the underlying goals. These nine characteristics enable the district’s schools to achieve their**

**1. A broadly shared mission, vision and goals founded on aspirational images of the educated person**

- System-wide focus on achievement (raising the bar, closing the gap, and nurturing student achievement and well-being) to support district-wide improvement efforts in the context of the values held by the community served
- Mission, vision and goals developed transparently through a strategic planning process and brought alive and sustained through consistent use as decision-making tools and beacons for the future

**2. A coherent instructional guidance system**

- Curriculum standards and frameworks, instructional practices, professional development emphases and assessment tools focused on achieving the district’s mission, vision and goals
- Collaboration across the system for school improvement purposes, consistency and coherence in priorities and expectations and focused support by system leaders for improvement work in schools
- School staffs encouraged to be innovative in their efforts to improve practices and to use *focused instruction*<sup>1</sup> to ensure their improvement efforts are addressing the needs of individual students
- Differentiated support to schools in response to variability in student performance

**3. Deliberate and consistent use of multiple sources of evidence to inform decisions**

- Effective use of existing research to guide policy making and planning
- Careful reading of relevant research evidence as the starting point for decisions about what to do to improve student performance
- Careful use of multiple sources of data about both achievement and improvement strategies for diagnosing weaknesses, setting targets, and monitoring progress
- Collaborative cultures nourished by networks to stimulate learning of new forms of instructions and support for staff members during implementation

**4. Learning-oriented organizational improvement processes**

- Coherent approach to improvement based on a small number of key improvement goals consistently pursued over a sustained time period
- Integration of new initiatives into existing routines and practices ensuring continuity and extension of core values
- Professional learning communities and networks within and across schools and with other districts to share, assess, and refine improvement efforts and to provide job-embedded, strategically directed professional learning

<sup>1</sup> Focused approaches to instruction are explicitly goal-directed and transparent about what students are intended to accomplish. There is constant monitoring by the teacher of what students are doing and direct interventions by the teacher to help ensure that students are actively engaged in meaningful learning as much as possible, including careful control over the timing and pace of instruction.

# ESS FRAMEWORK (DEF)

Those districts that are successful at improving the learning of their students. For district senior should be the immediate goals for their work, with student achievement and well-being as the pools and classrooms to do their school improvement work effectively.

## 5. Job-embedded professional learning for all members of the organization

- Professional learning aligned with board and school improvement initiatives differentiated to meet needs of schools, leaders and teachers and aimed at transferring learning into practice
- Job-embedded professional learning for supervisory officers, principals, and teachers through authentic engagement in solving school and district improvement problems (problems of practice)
- Close monitoring of progress and staff held accountable for applying their learning

## 6. Budgets, structures, time and personnel policies/procedures aligned with the district's mission, vision and goals

- Allocation of resources aligned with district focus on improving instruction and student achievement
- Resources used to help close achievement gaps by ensuring that struggling students have better access to supports (financial resources, high quality teachers and successful peer models)

## 7. A comprehensive approach to leadership development

- School leader development used as a high leverage strategy due to its potential to influence large numbers of teachers
- Well developed and implemented performance appraisal procedures for school leaders and regular feedback to principals about their leadership practices and improvement efforts
- Creation of large pools of well-qualified potential school and system leaders and on-the-job support for them once in leadership roles
- Orderly leadership succession and placement of leaders in schools based primarily on the needs or challenges faced by schools
- Priority focus on developing subsets of the personal leadership resources and leadership practices based on local circumstances at particular times

## 8. A policy-oriented board of trustees

- Board of trustees focused on strategic planning and ensuring district mission and vision for student achievement and well-being drive the district's improvement efforts
- Board of trustees help to create productive relationships in an engaging, supportive climate of excellence
- Board of trustees holds the director accountable for improving teaching and learning in the system
- Board members respect decisions reached by the board as a whole

## 9. Productive working relationships with staff and stakeholders

- Regular communication through the system nurtured by structures that encourage strong relationships and collaborative work based on a shared vision for student learning and well-being among staff, principals, system leaders, parents, community groups, trustees and ministry

## Leadership is the exercise of influence on organizational members and diverse stakeholders

Leadership practices described in the School-level Leadership section of the Ontario Leadership Framework (OLF) are exercised in different ways. This placemat of system-level leadership practices adds to those common leadership practices described in the districts outlined in the *District Effectiveness Framework* (DEF). The practices and personal leadership

Establish broadly shared mission, vision and goals founded on aspirational images of the educated person	Provide coherent instructional guidance	Build district and school staff's capacities and commitments to make informed decisions	Create learning-oriented organizational improvement processes	Provide job-embedded professional learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that a transparent visioning/direction-setting process is carried out</li> <li>• Consult extensively about district directions as part of the process</li> <li>• Spend sufficient time to ensure that the mission, vision and goals (directions) of the system are widely known, understood and shared by all members of the organization</li> <li>• Articulate, demonstrate and model the system's goals, priorities, and values to staffs when visiting schools</li> <li>• Embed district directions in improvement plans, principal meetings and other leader-initiated interactions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Align curricular goals, assessment instruments, instructional practices and teaching resources</li> <li>• Insist on ambitious goals for teaching and learning</li> <li>• Advocate for attention to the best available evidence to inform instructional improvement decisions</li> <li>• Expect schools to focus on needs of individual as well as groups of students</li> <li>• Encourage staff to be innovative within the boundaries created by the district's instructional guidance system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use data from all available sources to assist decision making in the central office</li> <li>• Insist on the use of the best available research and other systematically collected evidence to inform decisions wherever possible</li> <li>• Encourage collaboration in the interpretation and uses of data</li> <li>• Build system's capacity and disposition for using systematically-collected data to inform as many decisions as possible</li> <li>• Provide training for principals and staff on the use of data and research literature to sustain decision-making</li> <li>• Model evidence-informed decision making to school staffs</li> <li>• Ground interactions with, and advice to, trustees in sound evidence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Require improvement processes to be evidence-informed</li> <li>• Set a manageable number of precise targets for district school improvement</li> <li>• Include school-level leaders in decisions about district-wide improvement decisions</li> <li>• Create structures and norms within the district to encourage regular, reciprocal and extended deliberations about improvement progress within and across schools, as well as across the system as a whole</li> <li>• Develop and implement board and school improvement plans interactively and collaboratively with school leaders</li> <li>• Create structures to facilitate regular monitoring and refining of improvement processes</li> <li>• Acknowledge provincial goals and priorities in district and school</li> <li>• Allow for school-level variation in school improvement efforts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide extensive professional learning opportunities for both teachers and school-level leaders, most of it through some form of learning community or on-the-job context</li> <li>• Use internal system networks as the central mechanism for the professional development of school-level leaders</li> <li>• Align the content of professional training with the capacities needed for district and school improvement</li> <li>• Require individual staff growth plans to be aligned with district and school improvement priorities</li> <li>• Hold staff accountable for applying new capacities by monitoring the implementation of school improvement plans</li> </ul>

## PERSONAL LEADERSHIP

Leaders draw upon the personal leadership resources

### Cognitive Resources

- Problem-solving expertise
- Knowledge of effective school and classroom practices that directly affect student learning
- Systems Thinking\*

\*Especially important for system leaders

### Social Resources

- Perceiving emotions
- Managing emotions
- Acting in emotionally appropriate ways

# LEADERSHIP

## Leaders toward the identification and achievement of the organization’s vision and goals.

(OLF) are equally useful for both school- and system-level leaders, but those practices are enacted in qualitatively different ways. This table presents a set of unique practices demanded of system-level leaders organized by the nine characteristics of strong leadership resources below capture how system leaders contribute to the development of strong districts.

Align budgets, time and personnel/policies/procedures with district mission, vision and goals	Use a comprehensive performance management system for school and district leadership development	Advocate for and support a policy-governance approach to Board of Trustee practices	Nurture productive working relationships with staff and stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Align the allocation of resources with district and school improvement goals</li> <li>Align personnel policies and procedures with the district’s improvement goals</li> <li>Align organizational structures with the district’s improvement goals</li> <li>Provide principals with considerable autonomy in the hiring of teaching staff</li> <li>Expect and assist schools to allocate instructional resources equitably</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use the best available evidence about successful leadership (e.g. OLF) as a key source of criteria used for recruiting, selecting, developing and appraising school and district leaders</li> <li>Match the capacities of leaders with the needs of schools</li> <li>Provide prospective and existing leaders with extended opportunities to further develop their leadership capacities</li> <li>Develop realistic plans for leadership succession</li> <li>Promote co-ordinated forms of leadership distribution in schools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage trustees to focus on district policy and the achievement of the district’s goals and priorities (policy governance model of trustee practice)</li> <li>Encourage participation of the elected board in setting broad goals for its use in fulfilling its policy-setting and policy-monitoring responsibilities</li> <li>Regularly report to the board progress in achieving these broad goals</li> </ul>	<p><b>Internal district and school staffs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adopt a service orientation toward schools</li> <li>Develop communication systems and processes throughout the district to keep all members informed</li> <li>Develop open, accessible and collaborative relationships with principals</li> <li>Encourage reciprocal forms of communication with and among schools</li> <li>Promote high levels of interaction among school leaders. These interactions should include all school leaders and be driven by a shared sense of responsibility among school leaders for system improvement</li> <li>Create structures to facilitate reciprocal forms of communication. These structures and norms should result in deeply interconnected networks of school and system leaders working together on achieving the system’s directions.</li> <li>Buffer schools from external distractions to the district’s and schools’ priorities and goals</li> </ul> <p><b>Local Community Groups</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Routinely consult with community groups on decisions affecting the community</li> <li>Encourage staff to participate directly in community groups</li> <li>Demonstrate the importance the district attaches to its community connections</li> </ul> <p><b>Parents</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hold schools accountable for developing productive working relationships with parents</li> <li>Influence the work of schools toward fostering improved educational cultures in the home environments of their students</li> </ul> <p><b>Ministry of Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop/maintain high levels of engagement with the provincial ministry of education</li> <li>Engage frequently with the ministry proactively rather than only responsively</li> <li>Make flexible, adaptive use of provincial initiatives and frameworks, ensuring that they contribute to, rather than detract from, accomplishing system goals and priorities</li> </ul>

## LEADERSHIP RESOURCES

Resources to effectively enact leadership practices

### Psychological Resources

- Optimism
- Self-efficacy
- Resilience
- Proactivity\*

\*Especially important for system leaders

## Leadership is the exercise of influence on organizational members and diverse stakeholders

Leadership practices described in the Catholic School-level Leadership section of the Ontario Leadership Framework are practiced in different ways. This placemat of Catholic system-level leadership practices adds to those common leadership practices in the districts outlined in the *District Effectiveness Framework* (DEF). The practices and personal leadership practices

Establish broadly shared mission, vision and goals founded on aspirational images of the educated person	Provide coherent instructional guidance	Build district and school staff's capacities and commitments to make informed decisions	Create learning-oriented organizational improvement processes	Provide job-embedded professional learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that a transparent visioning/direction-setting process reflecting the mandate of the Catholic school system is carried out.</li> <li>• Consult extensively with stakeholders including the diocese about district directions as part of the process</li> <li>• Spend sufficient time to ensure that the mission, vision and goals (directions) of the system are widely known, understood and shared by all members of the organization</li> <li>• Articulate, demonstrate and model the system's goals, priorities, and gospel values to staffs when visiting schools</li> <li>• Embed the vision of the learner as expressed in the "Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations" and district directions in improvement plans, principal meetings and other leader-initiated interactions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Align curricular goals, assessment instruments, instructional practices and teaching resources</li> <li>• Insist on ambitious goals for teaching and learning</li> <li>• Advocate for attention to the best available evidence to inform instructional improvement decisions</li> <li>• Expect schools to recognize the dignity of all human persons, especially the poor and marginalized, in their focus on needs of individual as well as groups of student</li> <li>• Encourage staff to be innovative within the boundaries created by the district's instructional guidance system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use data from all available sources including the Catholic Tradition to assist decision making in the central office</li> <li>• Insist on the use of the best available research and other systematically collected evidence to inform decisions wherever possible</li> <li>• Encourage collaboration in the interpretation and uses of data</li> <li>• Build system's capacity and disposition for using systematically-collected data to inform as many decisions as possible</li> <li>• Provide training for principals and staff on the use of data and research literature to sustain decision-making</li> <li>• Model evidence-informed decision making to school staffs</li> <li>• Ground interactions with, and advice to, trustees in sound evidence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Require improvement processes to be evidence-informed</li> <li>• Set a manageable number of precise targets for district school improvement</li> <li>• Include school-level leaders in decisions about district-wide improvement decisions</li> <li>• Create structures and norms within the district to encourage regular, reciprocal and extended deliberations about improvement progress within and across schools, as well as across the system as a whole</li> <li>• Develop and implement board and school improvement plans interactively and collaboratively with school leaders</li> <li>• Create structures to facilitate regular monitoring and refining of improvement processes</li> <li>• Acknowledge provincial goals and priorities in district and school</li> <li>• Allow for school-level variation in school improvement efforts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide extensive PD opportunities for both teachers and school-level leaders, most of it through some form of learning community or on-the-job context</li> <li>• Use internal system networks as the central mechanism for the professional development of school-level leaders</li> <li>• Align the content of professional development with the capacities needed for district and school improvement</li> <li>• Require individual staff growth plans to be aligned with district and school improvement priorities</li> <li>• Provide faith development opportunities for principals and staff</li> <li>• Hold staff accountable for applying new capacities by monitoring the implementation of school improvement plans</li> </ul>

## PERSONAL LEADERSHIP

Leaders draw upon the personal leadership practices

### Cognitive Resources

- Problem-solving expertise
- Knowledge of effective school and classroom practices that directly affect student learning
- Systems Thinking\*

\*Especially important for system leaders

### Social Resources

- Perceiving emotions
- Managing emotions
- Acting in emotionally appropriate ways

# LEVEL LEADERSHIP

## Standards toward the identification and achievement of the organization’s vision and goals.

Work (OLF) are equally useful for both school- and system-level leaders, but those practices are enacted in qualitatively different ways. This document presents a set of unique practices demanded of Catholic system-level leaders organized by the nine characteristics of strong districts. The resources below capture how Catholic system leaders contribute to the development of strong districts.

Align budgets, time and personnel/policies/procedures with district mission, vision and goals	Use a comprehensive performance management system for school and district leadership development	Advocate for and support a policy-governance approach to Board of Trustee practices	Nurture productive working relationships with staff and stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Align the allocation of resources with district and school improvement goals</li> <li>Align personnel policies and procedures with the district’s improvement goals</li> <li>Align organizational structures with the district’s improvement goals</li> <li>Provide principals with considerable autonomy in the hiring of teaching staff</li> <li>Expect and assist schools to allocate instructional resources equitably</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use the best available evidence about successful leadership (e.g. OLF) as a key source of criteria used for recruiting, selecting, developing and appraising school and district leaders</li> <li>Match the capacities of leaders with the needs of schools</li> <li>Provide prospective and existing leaders with extended opportunities to further develop their personal faith and Catholic leadership capacities</li> <li>Develop realistic plans for leadership succession</li> <li>Promote co-ordinated forms of leadership distribution in schools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage trustees to focus on district policy and the achievement of the district’s goals and priorities (policy governance model of trustee practice)</li> <li>Encourage participation of the elected board in setting broad goals for its use in fulfilling its policy-setting and policy-monitoring responsibilities within the mandate of the Catholic school system.</li> <li>Regularly report to the board progress in achieving these broad goals</li> </ul>	<p><b>Internal district and school staffs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adopt a service orientation toward schools</li> <li>Develop communication systems and processes throughout the district to keep all members informed</li> <li>Develop open, accessible and collaborative relationships with principals</li> <li>Encourage reciprocal forms of communication with and among schools</li> <li>Promote high levels of interaction among school leaders. These interactions should include all school leaders and be driven by a shared sense of responsibility among school leaders for system improvement</li> <li>Create structures to facilitate reciprocal forms of communication. These structures and norms should result in deeply interconnected networks of Catholic school and system leaders working together on achieving the system’s directions</li> <li>Buffer schools from external distractions to the district’s and schools’ priorities and goals</li> </ul> <p><b>Local Community Groups</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Routinely consult with community groups on decisions affecting the community</li> <li>Encourage staff to participate directly in community groups</li> <li>Demonstrate the importance the district attaches to its community connections</li> </ul> <p><b>Diocese, Parishes and Catholic Partners</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborate with partners in Catholic education, on alignment and coherence of direction</li> <li>Routinely consult with diocesan bishops and diocesan staff on decisions affecting the Catholic school community</li> <li>Assist schools to develop and sustain effective working relationships with parish priests and parish communities</li> <li>Encourage schools to champion positive home-school-parish relationships</li> </ul> <p><b>Parents</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hold schools accountable for developing productive working relationships with parents</li> <li>Influence the work of schools toward fostering improved educational cultures in the home environments of their students</li> </ul> <p><b>Ministry of Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop/maintain high levels of engagement with the provincial ministry of education</li> <li>Engage frequently with the ministry proactively rather than only responsively</li> <li>Make flexible, adaptive use of provincial initiatives and frameworks, ensuring that they contribute to, rather than detract from, accomplishing system goals and priorities</li> </ul>

## LEADERSHIP RESOURCES

Resources to effectively enact leadership practices

### Psychological Resources

- Optimism
- Self-efficacy
- Resilience
- Proactivity\*

\*Especially important for system leaders

## Personal Leadership Resources

In addition to recognizing and undertaking effective leadership practices, effective leaders also tend to possess and draw on a small but critical number of personal leadership resources when enacting the leadership practices. There is a compelling research base for including cognitive, social and psychological resources, as briefly highlighted below.

Personal Leadership Resources		
Cognitive Resources	Social Resources	Psychological Resources
<p><b>Problem-solving expertise</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understanding/interpreting problems</li> <li>• identifying goals</li> <li>• articulating principles and values</li> <li>• identifying constraints</li> <li>• developing solution processes</li> <li>• maintaining calm/confidence in the face of challenging problems</li> </ul> <p><b>Knowledge about school and classroom conditions with direct effects on student learning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• technical/rational conditions</li> <li>• emotional conditions</li> <li>• organizational conditions</li> <li>• family conditions</li> </ul> <p><b>Systems Thinking (NEW!)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• being able to understand the dense, complex, and reciprocal connections among different elements of the organization</li> <li>• having foresight to engage the organization in likely futures and consequences for action</li> </ul>	<p><b>Including the ability to:</b></p> <p><b>perceive emotions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recognizing our own emotional responses</li> <li>• discerning emotional responses in others through verbal and non-verbal cues</li> </ul> <p><b>manage emotions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reflecting on our own emotional responses and their potential consequences</li> <li>• persuading others to likewise reflect on their responses</li> </ul> <p><b>act in emotionally appropriate ways</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• being able to exercise control over which emotions guide our actions</li> <li>• being able to help others act on emotions that serve their best interests</li> </ul>	<p><b>Optimism</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• habitually expecting positive results from our efforts</li> <li>• recognizing where we have, and do not have, opportunities for direct influence and control</li> <li>• taking positive risks</li> </ul> <p><b>Self-efficacy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• believing in our own ability to perform a task or achieve a goal</li> <li>• as a result of positive self-efficacy, taking responsible risks, expending substantial effort, and persisting in the face of initial failure</li> </ul> <p><b>Resilience</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• being able to recover from, or adjust easily to, change or misfortune</li> <li>• being able to thrive in challenging circumstances</li> </ul> <p><b>Proactivity (NEW!)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• being able to stimulate and effectively manage change on a large scale under complex circumstances</li> <li>• showing initiative and perseverance in bringing about meaningful change</li> </ul>

### Note:

The two new PLRs, “systems thinking” and “proactivity” are important for all leaders, but especially important for system leaders because of the contexts in which they lead - larger organizational size, greater operational complexity, greater interaction with a wider environment and the need to anticipate future demands that might require significant organizational adaptation.



## About the Institute for Education Leadership (IEL)

The Ontario Institute for Education Leadership brings together representatives from the principals' associations, the supervisory officers' associations, the council of senior business officials, the councils of directors of education, and the Ministry of Education to work in a collaborative partnership and model high calibre tri-level strategic leadership with school, board and provincial leadership. The mandate of the Institute is to support effective leadership through opportunities for professional learning based on research, effective practice and sound policy. Ultimately, its aim is to assist school and system leaders in maximizing the achievements of all students.

As part of its work on research into practice, the Institute has adopted The Ontario Leadership Framework. The framework identifies the practices of successful school and system leaders, as well as the organizational practices of successful schools and districts. In addition, the framework includes a small but critical number of personal leadership resources (leadership traits and dispositions) that have been found to increase the effectiveness of leadership practices.

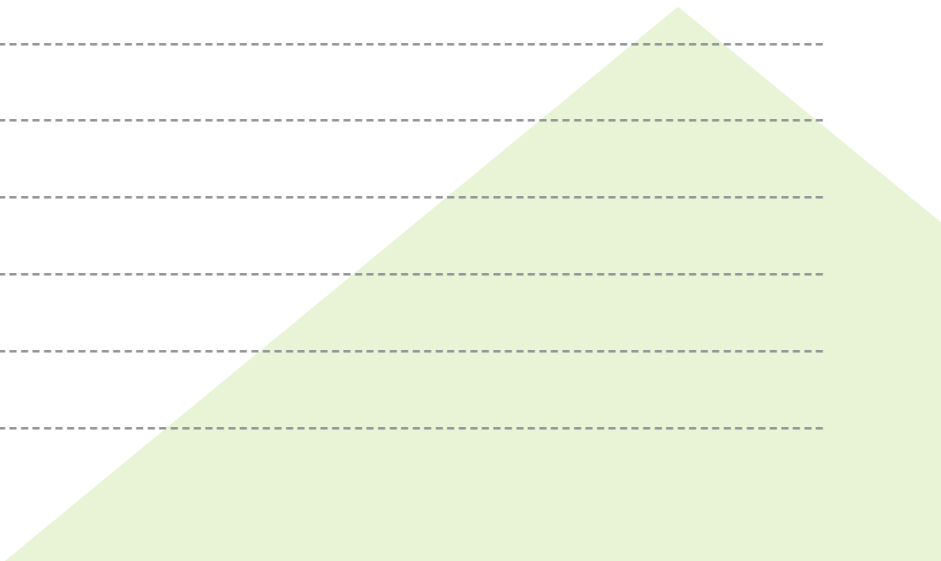
The Institute continues to work toward ensuring that all partners and stakeholders share a common vision of education leadership for Ontario that respects the diversity of all four sectors in our education system. As part of its mandate, the IEL leads the way in ensuring a more coherent, connected and coordinated approach to the integration of knowledge, research, policy and practice in education. APPLIKI, a comprehensive search engine featured on the IEL website, offers a wealth of exemplary resource materials for succession planning and talent development to promote collaboration, networking and sharing of good practice.

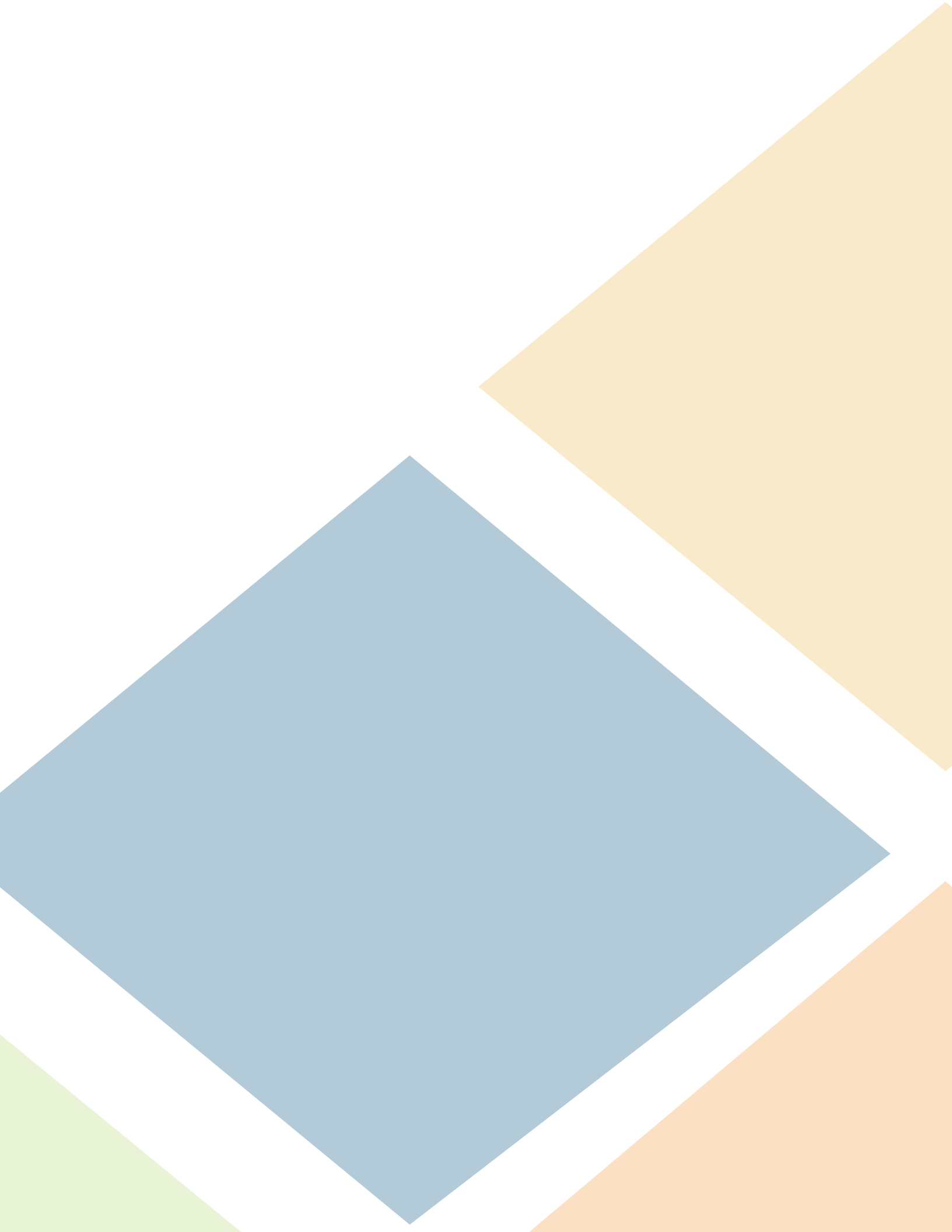
### The partner organizations for the Institute for Education Leadership are:

- Association des directions et directions adjointes des écoles franco-ontariennes
- Association des gestionnaires de l'éducation franco-ontarienne
- Catholic Principals' Council of Ontario
- Council of Ontario Directors of Education
- Council of Senior Business Officials
- Ministry of Education
- Ontario Catholic Supervisory Officers' Association
- Ontario Principals' Council
- Ontario Public Supervisory Officials' Association

# NOTES

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[www.education-leadership-ontario.ca](http://www.education-leadership-ontario.ca)

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