

Creating a Principal Leadership Development Program (PLDP)

Introduction

School leaders are the connection between teachers, students and their parents or guardians, the education system and the wider community in which a school exists. Because their central role is combined with rising expectations of schools and schooling in a century characterized by technological innovation, migration and globalization, we understand that school leaders can no longer be simple managers many regard instructional leadership as the most important professional responsibility with which principals are entrusted. OECD 2014

Research tells us that principal performance is critical for student achievement. As such, high performing educational jurisdictions have programs, policies, and procedures to ensure the highest level of principal performance. This proposal sets out a series of initiatives to support this work in a jurisdiction.

Conceptual Framework

The PLDP requires a strong conceptual framework that brings together what is known to be effective in supporting ongoing leadership development (Figure 1).

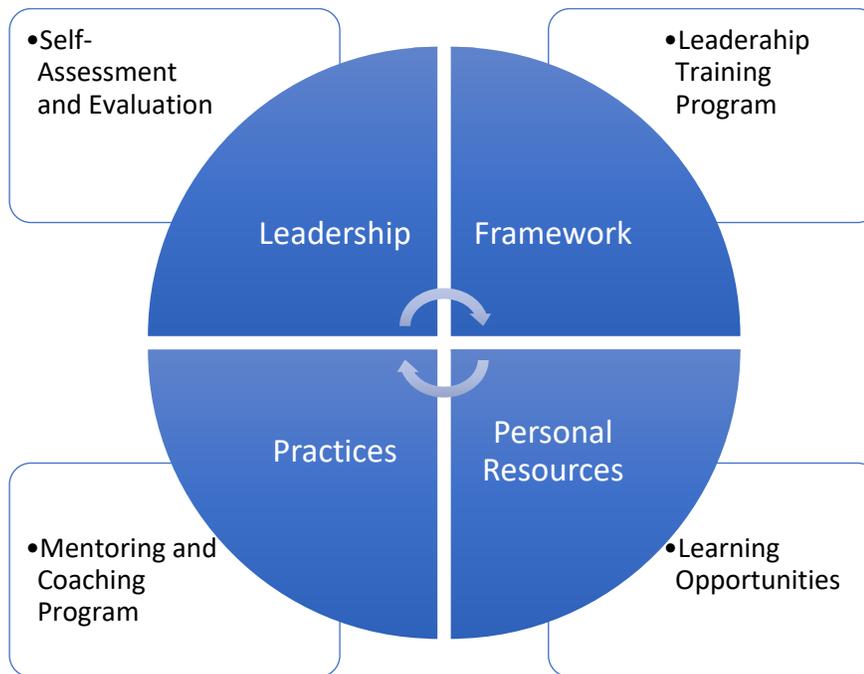


Figure 1: Components of a PLDP

Specifically, addressing overall principal performance requires a number of key elements:

- (1) a leadership framework that sets out the specific practices of an effective school principal – a framework reflective of the local context, but based on international research and examples;
- (2) an initial training program that is based upon the framework and supports the principal in executing the various practices;
- (3) self-assessment tools and a process to ensure personal reflection is a critical part;
- (4) an evaluation policy that serves to collect and analyze performance data as well as validating personal reflections;
- (5) clear guidelines and requirements for the preparation of an annual learning plan;
- (6) a mentoring and coaching program; and
- (7) opportunities for ongoing learning, including abroad educational study tours.

Stages of Program Development

Stage 1: Pre-Program: Understanding Your Needs and Interests:

Step 1: Creation of a PLDP Steering Team: The jurisdiction will identify a team of school leaders (school and system level) to work with in the development of the .

Step 2: Our consultant will facilitate a discussion with the PLDP Steering Team to assist in self-reflection and the identification of professional learning needs. Effective educational systems research will be used to provide a conceptual and theoretical framework for the discussion. An introductory workshop will provide everyone with the research and an understanding of how the professional learning needs will be identified.

In conjunction with the facilitated discussion, our consultant will review educational policies and procedures, professional learning plans for principals, and other information deemed by the jurisdiction to be important to the task. Our consultant will also visit several schools and conduct focus groups with selected principals.

The Pre-Program Stage will result in a report from the consultant along with a refinement of the draft program contained in this proposal - all for the consideration of the jurisdiction.

Stage 2: Define the Work of a Principal: Our consultant will facilitate a 3-day process with a small team of leaders to develop a draft principal leadership framework. Research from around the globe will be presented with a focus on frameworks from a wide-variety of jurisdictions. The team will also set out the consultation process for the refinement of the framework.

Stage 3: Develop a Leadership Training Program: Our consultant will lead a team through a process to customize the ISL Leadership Program to reflect the Principal Leadership Framework

and local priorities. The team will also provide recommendations for the implementation of the program, achieving capacity building and the slow release of responsibility to the jurisdiction.

Stage 4: Deliver the Leadership Training Program: Instructors will deliver the program to a select group of school leaders who may become instructors for the program. Members of the PLDP Steering Team will be involved in the training.

Our consultant will monitor the delivery and impact of the program and prepare a report for the jurisdiction.

Stage 5: Develop and Implement an Evaluation Policy and Self-Assessment Policy: Our ISL consultant will facilitate a 3-day process with a team of leaders. Examples of assessment and evaluation policies from other jurisdictions will lead to a discussion about the intended purposes, roles and responsibilities, process, data, and reporting format. A draft policy will result from this work.

Stage 6: Develop and Implement Learning Plans for School Leaders; The team established for Stage 4 will prepare recommendations for the Learning Plans. These are central to the evaluation process.

Stage 7: Establish a Principal Mentoring Program: Our consultant will deliver a 3-day workshop to a select team of school leaders. The first component of the program will focus on a review of research and the experience of Ontario educators. The second component will result in the creation of a draft plan for the implementation of a mentoring program.

Stage 8: Create a Framework for the Delivery of Professional Learning: Our consultant will facilitate the development of a culturally sensitive framework for ongoing learning opportunities. The framework will ensure alignment of all professional learning for principals, deputies and aspiring school leaders.