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# Leadership Quality Standard

Alberta Education





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## Leadership Quality Standard

**Whereas** Alberta’s teachers, students, parents, educational leaders and members of the public have a strong will to ensure all Alberta students have access to quality learning experiences that enable their achievement of the learning outcomes outlined in programs of study.

**Whereas** the success of all members of the school community requires inclusive environments in which diversity is respected and members of the school community are welcomed, cared for, respected and safe.

**Whereas** principals and school jurisdiction leaders play a fundamental role in establishing and supporting the conditions under which the learning aspirations and the potential of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students will be realized.

**Whereas** principals and school jurisdiction leaders have an important role in fostering collaboration, engagement and empowerment of all partners in the education system to enable all students to achieve their potential.

**Whereas** principals and school jurisdiction leaders in Alberta schools are accomplished teachers able to create the conditions within which quality teaching and optimum learning can occur and be sustained.

**Whereas** the *Leadership Quality Standard* provides a framework to support the professional growth, supervision and evaluation of all principals and school jurisdiction leaders.

**Whereas** students, parents and other partners in education should be confident that Alberta principals and school jurisdiction leaders demonstrate the *Leadership Quality Standard* throughout their careers.

**Whereas** it is important to recognize the value of a consistent standard of professional practice for all principals and school jurisdiction leaders in the province.

## 1. In the context of this document:

- a. **“competency”** means an interrelated set of knowledge, skills and attitudes developed over time and drawn upon and applied to a particular leadership context in order to support quality leadership, teaching and optimum learning as required by the *Leadership Quality Standard*;
- b. **“inclusive learning environment”** means a classroom, school, online learning environment or other educational setting structured to anticipate, value and respond to the diverse strengths and needs of all learners;
- c. **“indicators”** means actions that are likely to lead to the achievement of a competency and which, together with the competency, are measurable and observable;
- d. **“leader”** means a principal or school jurisdiction leader;
- e. **“local community”** means community members who have an interest in education and the school community, including neighbouring Métis settlements, First Nations and other members of the public;
- f. **“principal”** means, for the purposes of this standard, principal as defined in the *Education Act*, assistant principal, associate principal or vice principal;
- g. **“reconciliation”** means the process and goal of creating societal change through a fundamental shift in thinking and attitudes, increasing intercultural understanding to build a better society through learning about First Nations, Métis and Inuit perspectives and experiences, including residential schools and treaties;
- h. **“school authority”** means a public school board, separate school board, Francophone regional authority, charter school operator or accredited private school operator;
- i. **“school community”** means the staff of the school authority, along with students, parents/guardians and school council members;
- j. **“school council”** means a school council established under the *Education Act* or a parent advisory council established under the Private Schools Regulation;
- k. **“school jurisdiction”** means a public school board, separate school board, Francophone regional authority, or charter school operator;
- l. **“school jurisdiction leader”** means a central office staff member, other than the superintendent or chief deputy superintendent, required by their leadership position to hold an Alberta teaching certificate;
- m. **“staff”** means all certificated and non-certificated persons whose role in the school is to provide educational and support services to students;
- n. **“student”** means, for the purposes of this standard, an individual enrolled in a school or required by law to attend, and includes a child younger than 6 years of age who is enrolled in an early childhood services program;
- o. **“superintendent”** means a superintendent appointed by a board pursuant to the *Education Act* and the chief deputy superintendent, if any, as referred to in the *Teaching Profession Act*; and
- p. **“teacher”** means an individual who holds a certificate of qualification as a teacher issued under the *Education Act*.

## 2. The Leadership Quality Standard:

**Quality leadership occurs when the leader’s ongoing analysis of the context, and decisions about what leadership knowledge and abilities to apply, result in quality teaching and optimum learning for all school students.**

3. The *Leadership Quality Standard* applies to all leaders employed in a school authority. All leaders are expected to meet the *Leadership Quality Standard* throughout their careers. Principals as defined under the *Education Act* are accountable for the demonstration of all the competencies. Other leaders are responsible for the demonstration of competencies directly related to their assigned role. In any given context, reasoned professional judgment must be used to determine whether the *Leadership Quality Standard* is being met.

4. The *Leadership Quality Standard* is described by the following competencies and indicators:

## Fostering Effective Relationships

### 1 | A leader builds positive working relationships with members of the school community and local community.

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- a. acting with fairness, respect and integrity;
- b. demonstrating empathy and a genuine concern for others;
- c. creating a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment;
- d. creating opportunities for parents/guardians, as partners in education, to take an active role in their children's education;
- e. establishing relationships with First Nations, Métis and Inuit parents/guardians, Elders/knowledge keepers, local leaders and community members;
- f. demonstrating a commitment to the health and well-being of all teachers, staff and students;
- g. acting consistently in the best interests of students;
- h. engaging in collegial relationships while modeling and promoting open, collaborative dialogue;
- i. communicating, facilitating and solving problems effectively; and
- j. implementing processes for improving working relationships and dealing with conflict within the school community.

## Modeling Commitment to Professional Learning

### 2 | A leader engages in career-long professional learning and ongoing critical reflection to identify opportunities for improving leadership, teaching and learning.

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- a. engaging with others such as teachers, principals and other leaders to build personal and collective professional capacities and expertise;

- b. actively seeking out feedback and information from a variety of sources to enhance leadership practice;
- c. seeking, critically reviewing and applying educational research to inform effective practice;
- d. engaging members of the school community to build a shared understanding of current trends and priorities in the education system.

## Embodying Visionary Leadership

### 3 | A leader collaborates with the school community to create and implement a shared vision for student success, engagement, learning and well-being.

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- a. communicating a philosophy of education that is student-centred and based on sound principles of effective teaching and leadership;
- b. recognizing the school community's values and aspirations and demonstrating an appreciation for diversity;
- c. collaborating with other leaders and superintendents to address challenges and priorities;
- d. supporting school community members, including school councils, in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities;
- e. promoting innovation, enabling positive change and fostering commitment to continuous improvement; and
- f. accessing, sharing and using a range of data to determine progress towards achieving goals.

## Leading a Learning Community

### 4 | A leader nurtures and sustains a culture that supports evidence-informed teaching and learning.

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- a. fostering in the school community equality and respect with regard to rights as provided for in the *Alberta Human Rights Act* and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*;
- b. creating an inclusive learning environment in which diversity is embraced, a sense of belonging

is emphasized, and all students and staff are welcomed, cared for, respected and safe;

- c. developing a shared responsibility for the success of all students;
- d. cultivating a culture of high expectations for all students and staff;
- e. creating meaningful, collaborative learning opportunities for teachers and support staff;
- f. establishing opportunities and expectations for the positive involvement of parents/guardians in supporting student learning;
- g. creating an environment for the safe and ethical use of technology;
- h. collaborating with community service agencies to provide wrap-around supports for all students who may require them, including those with mental health needs; and
- i. recognizing student and staff accomplishments.

## Supporting the Application of Foundational Knowledge about First Nations, Métis and Inuit

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**A leader supports the school community in acquiring and applying foundational knowledge about First Nations, Métis and Inuit for the benefit of all students.**

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- a. understanding the historical, social, economic and political implications of:
  - treaties and agreements with First Nations;
  - legislation and agreements negotiated with Métis; and
  - residential schools and their legacy;
- b. aligning resources and building the capacity of the school community to support First Nations, Métis and Inuit student achievement;
- c. enabling all school staff and students to gain a knowledge and understanding of, and respect for, the histories, cultures, languages, contributions, perspectives, experiences and contemporary contexts of First Nations, Métis and Inuit; and
- d. pursuing opportunities and engaging in practices to facilitate reconciliation within the school community.

## Providing Instructional Leadership

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**A leader ensures that every student has access to quality teaching and optimum learning experiences.**

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- a. building the capacity of teachers to respond to the learning needs of all students;
- b. implementing professional growth, supervision and evaluation processes to ensure that all teachers meet the *Teaching Quality Standard*;
- c. ensuring that student instruction addresses learning outcomes outlined in programs of study;
- d. facilitating mentorship and induction supports for teachers and principals, as required;
- e. demonstrating a strong understanding of effective pedagogy and curriculum;
- f. facilitating the use of a variety of technologies to support learning for all students;
- g. ensuring that student assessment and evaluation practices are fair, appropriate and evidence-informed;
- h. interpreting a wide range of data to inform school practice and enable success for all students; and
- i. facilitating access to resources, agencies and experts within and outside the school community to enhance student learning and development.

## Developing Leadership Capacity

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**A leader provides opportunities for members of the school community to develop leadership capacity and to support others in fulfilling their educational roles.**

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- a. demonstrating consultative and collaborative decision-making that is informed by open dialogue and multiple perspectives;
- b. identifying, mentoring and empowering teachers in educational leadership roles;
- c. promoting the engagement of parents in school council(s) and facilitating the constructive involvement of school council(s) in school life;

- d. creating opportunities for students to participate in leadership activities and to exercise their voice in school leadership and decision making; and
- e. promoting team building and shared leadership among members of the school community.

## Managing School Operations and Resources

### 8 | A leader effectively directs operations and manages resources.

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- a. identifying and planning for areas of need;
- b. applying principles of effective teaching and learning, child development and ethical leadership to all decisions;
- c. aligning practices, procedures, policies, decisions and resources with school and school authority visions, goals and priorities;
- d. following through on decisions made by allocating resources (human, physical, technological and financial) to provide the learning environments and supports needed to enable and/or improve learning for all students;
- e. facilitating access to appropriate technology and digital learning environments; and
- f. ensuring operations align with provincial legislation, regulations and policies, and the policies and processes of the school authority.

## Understanding and Responding to the Larger Societal Context

### 9

A leader understands and appropriately responds to the political, social, economic, legal and cultural contexts impacting schools and the school authority.

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- a. supporting the school community in understanding the legal frameworks and policies that provide the foundations for the Alberta education system;
- b. representing the needs of students at the community, school authority and provincial levels;
- c. engaging local community partners to understand local contexts;
- d. demonstrating an understanding of local, provincial, national and international issues and trends and their implications for education; and
- e. facilitating school community members' understanding of local, provincial, national and international issues and trends related to education.

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