

SUPPORTING THE ONTARIO LEADERSHIP STRATEGY

Ontario Leadership Framework 2012

What Is the Ontario Leadership Framework 2012 (OLF 2012)?

The OLF 2012 describes what good leadership looks like, based on evidence of what makes the most difference to student achievement and well-being. It 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 for Education Leadership (IEL)** is leading the launch, distribution, and implementation of the Ontario Leadership Framework 2012.

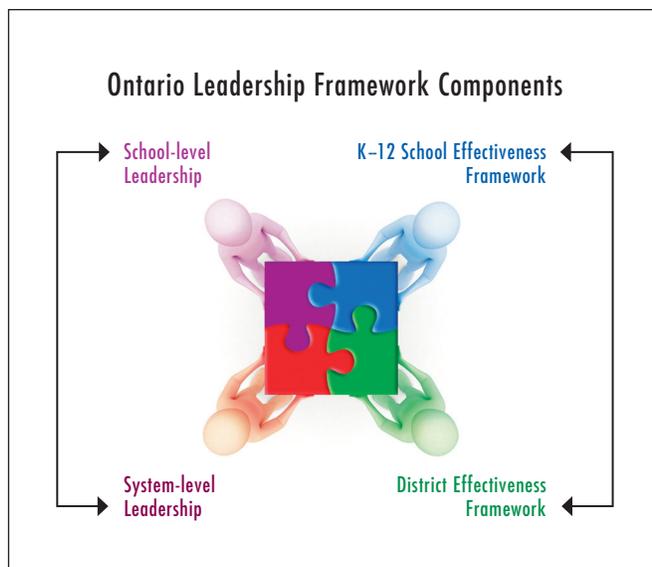


Why a Framework?

The framework, first set out in 2006, provides the foundation for all aspects of the Ontario Leadership Strategy (OLS). It is a resource that can assist educators in building coherence and aligning practices across schools and districts. Discussion of the OLF practices provides opportunities for educators to determine areas of strength and areas for growth. The framework is not a checklist but rather a tool for discussion.

Key Components of the OLF 2012

- **School-level Leadership Practices.** Identifies 21 distinct practices, organized in five domains, for formal and informal leaders in schools. As before, the five Core Leadership Capacities – setting goals, aligning resources with priorities, promoting collaborative learning cultures, using data, and engaging in courageous conversations – are seen as fundamental to all leadership practice.
- **Characteristics of Effective Schools: The K–12 School Effectiveness Framework (K–12 SEF).** Identifies evidence-based indicators of successful practice in six components of effective schools. Created in 2010 by the ministry’s Student Achievement Division, the K–12 SEF is key to the work of schools and boards. It is a companion piece to the OLF 2012, included as one of its components to show the link between school-level leadership and school effectiveness.
- **Characteristics of Successful School Systems: A District Effectiveness Framework (DEF).** Describes features of school systems, in four domains, that make positive contributions to growth in student achievement and well-being.
- **System-level Leadership Practices.** Identifies a set of unique practices required of system-level leaders (academic and business), in four domains matching those in the DEF, that enhance the school-level practices.
- **Personal Leadership Resources.** Describes a set of personal attributes, in three categories, found to be key to the effective enactment of leadership practices at both the school and system level.



Goals of the OLF 2012

The framework is intended to:

- provide a robust research foundation on which to base the elements of the Ontario Leadership Strategy;
- help ensure that Ontario leadership practices and resources support the key goals of improving student achievement and well-being; and
- provide a common language for leaders to engage in discussions about effective practice.

What Are the “Big Ideas” in the OLF?

- **Context is important.** Leaders enact practices in ways that are sensitive to the circumstances and settings in which they work.
- **Leadership and management are integrated.** Effective leaders lead instructional activities in their schools *and* manage organizational contexts that support and enable the work of their staff.
- **Formal leaders enact practices directly and indirectly.** Formal leaders take personal responsibility for some tasks and ensure that other staff members have the capacity to do other tasks. They always monitor distributed responsibilities to bring about effective and coordinated implementation.
- **Leadership is best shared in a planned and coordinated way.** Many people make important contributions to the leadership in schools, including staff, parents, and students. The principal’s role is to coordinate these contributions in a way that brings coherence to school leadership overall.

Resources and Supports

The framework is communicated through three basic products:

- *The Ontario Leadership Framework 2012, With a Discussion of the Research Foundations*, by Kenneth Leithwood, Advisor on Leadership for the Ministry of Education.
- *The Ontario Leadership Framework 2012: A School and System Leader’s Guide to Putting Ontario’s Leadership Framework into Action*. The online version of this user guide provides hyperlinks to the various resources.
- Four placemats that give “at-a-glance” views of school and system leadership practice at both the individual and organizational levels. The placemats are included in the user guide and can also be downloaded separately for use in professional learning contexts. They should be read together with the research report for a full understanding of the leadership practices and the personal leadership resources.

Personal Leadership Resources

The OLF includes a small but critical number of personal leadership resources that leaders draw on to enact leadership practices effectively.

Cognitive resources, including:

- problem-solving expertise
- knowledge of school and classroom conditions that directly affect student learning

Social resources, including the ability to:

- perceive emotions
- manage emotions
- act in emotionally appropriate ways

Psychological resources, including:

- optimism
- self-efficacy
- resilience

What’s Next?

- The IEL intends to embed opportunities in a variety of professional learning activities to enable school and system leaders to engage in discussions about how to use the OLF 2012 to support improved practice.
- Additional resources will be developed, posted on the IEL website, and linked to the web-based version of the framework. They will include, for example, a video on how Ontario leaders used the practices from the framework to drive improvements in mathematics learning in their schools and districts, and vignettes from principals in the Leading Student Achievement project that illustrate the practices in action.

LEARN MORE

For more information, go to

www.education-leadership-ontario.ca/content/home