



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

By Nelly Kelders, Program and PQP Coordinator

In December 2005, the Minister of Education announced the creation of an Institute for Education Leadership. This is one of the initiatives outlined in the *Role of the Principal* paper responding to workload issues by principals and vice-principals.

This institute will build on the efforts of principals' associations and school boards through a "virtual" model that will allow us to retain the best of what exists today.

Developing Partners in Education (Dec. 2005)

A transition team comprised of Ministry staff, representatives of the three principals' associations and a representative from the Council of Ontario Directors of Education was established in February 2006 to begin discussions about what the Institute would look like.

The focus for the institute began to shape into a tri-level approach to leadership, with school administrators, senior board administrators and the Ministry working together to improve student success across the province.

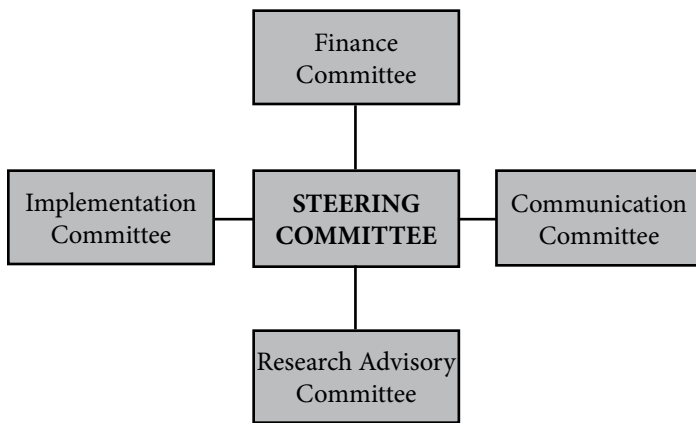
The Institute supports the development of school and system leaders based on research and effective practice in order to improve student achievement. Through the support of research, information will be disseminated on successful practices and gaps will be identified in development activities needed to support the role of the principal as an instructional leader. The Institute will address the needs of all leaders from the vice-principal to the director of education. On May 29, 2006, the Minister of Education, announced that the government has committed \$4 million in funding to support the work of the Institute

The formation of the Institute continues to evolve. The transition team has been replaced with a steering committee consisting of representatives from: the three principals' associations - Association des directions et des directions adjointes franco-ontariennes (ADFO), the Catholic Principals' Council of Ontario (CPCO), and the Ontario Principals' Council (OPC); the three supervisory officers' associations - Association des gestionnaires de l'éducation franco-ontarienne (AGEFO), the Ontario Catholic Supervisory Officers' Association (OCSOA), and the Ontario Public Supervisory Officials' Association (OPSOA); three members from the Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE); and the Ministry.

The guiding principles for the Institute include the following:

- The Institute will model a high calibre of results-based strategic tri-level leadership to support school and system leaders in order to improve student outcomes.
- The relationship among the members of the Institute will be a partnership based on respect, responsibility, cooperation and collaboration.
- The Institute will operate on a consensus model of decision-making.
- The Institute will support school and system leaders with professional development and opportunities to share effective practice. It will allow and foster greater collaboration and cooperation throughout the sector. It will contribute to and influence the streamlining and aligning of initiatives affecting school and system leaders.
- The Institute recognizes there is a range of members' needs. Responses need to be tailored to the level of development of members, whether new, experienced or expert practitioners and to the varying perspectives of the sector, whether French or English, Catholic or public.
- The Institute will seek expert advice from multiple sources, both within and outside the education sector, in order to ensure that its understanding of leadership reflects current research.
- The Institute will support research to identify effective practices and facilitate the dissemination of this information.
- The Institute will operate according to the agreed upon governance structure.
- The Institute will evaluate its mandate and direction each year in developing a strategic plan. It will prepare an annual report of its activities and will report this to the public.

The governance model adopted by the Institute includes a steering committee consisting of representatives from all the partners and four subcommittees. The subcommittees advise the steering committee in its work. President Don Rait, executive director Lou Rocha, professional development director Barbara McMorrow and program and PQP coordinator Nelly Kelders represent the Catholic Principals' Council of Ontario on the steering committee and subcommittees.



The Institute for Education Leadership is a new and innovative partnership forged to create a more authentic model of collaboration among principals/vice-principals, senior administration and the Ministry of Education, thereby bringing together the complex systems that characterize the educational landscape in Ontario.

The Institute's inaugural event in May 2006 focused on Strategic Leadership - *Multiple Perspectives and Collaboration in Strategic Leadership*. Twelve school boards representing the four publicly funded education systems were invited to send a tri-level team of administrators to attend the conference. The intent of the conference was to gather input from these teams on how to support and strengthen a tri-level approach to leadership at the district level. Ron Heifetz, a member of the faculty of the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University was the keynote speaker. His address on strategic leadership provided participants with a framework for discussion about what leadership looks like in Ontario's education system today. Moderator for the event was Dr. Ken Leithwood, professor of educational leadership and policy at OISE/UT, who connected the message from the guest speakers with the Ontario context. Feedback from this event was used to

develop the program for the December 2006 conference in which all school boards in Ontario were invited to participate.

In December 2006, 69 school boards accepted the invitation to attend the Institute's second event. Again, the focus was on strategic leadership. Ron Heifetz was invited to return to Toronto to address the group on *Exercising Adaptive Leadership*. He told the audience that the most common error made in leadership today is to jump to solutions before clarifying the nature of the error. The problem is then treated as a technical error leaving the adaptive challenge behind. In an adaptive challenge, the solution to the problem comes from the people with the problem not the leader. He also talked about the need to get off the dance floor and onto the balcony. It is here that the leader is able to get some breathing space and perspective to be able to see the big picture.

Andy Hargreaves is the Thomas More Brennan Chair in Education in the Lynch School of Education at Boston College. He talked about *Sustainable Leadership* in his keynote address. Hargreaves described his seven principles of sustainable leadership: depth, endurance, breadth, justice, diversity, resourcefulness and conservation. He said that all leadership is distributive; the choice is whether to distribute leadership willingly or by force.

Participants at the conference also had the opportunity to hear from the 12 participating boards in the first conference. They learned how these boards implemented their learning at the board level. *A Leadership Self-Review Tool* for school boards was also presented as a means to support boards' work in leadership development and school improvement planning.

More information regarding the conference and information provided will become available on the Institute's website in mid-March. A link to the site will be available on the CPCO homepage, www.cpc0.on.ca.

The vision for the Institute is based on four key pillars:

Leadership Development

- Define and shape leadership and leadership development
- Distinguish skills/knowledge for school leaders and district leaders
- Identify competencies/skills for specific roles and locales
- Discover and close gaps in current practice
- Support management and leadership
- Remain futuristic

Research

- Support research and practice focused on leadership
- Focus on leadership that is relevant and practical, removing the redundancies and overlap
- Explore out-of-Ontario practices
- Remain current, looking over the horizon
- Match leadership with the new needs of education
- Establish a world class system of leadership and professional development of high quality
- Address the demographic needs of leaders at various stages of their learning continuum

Exercising Leadership

- Focus on sustainability
- Emphasize collaboration at all levels
- Address challenges of diversity and specific needs
- Network a continuum of learning
- Develop a common language
- Impact on policy; remove barriers
- Establish communication networks
- Support coaching, professional learning teams and supportive networks

Communication

- Disseminate good practice through communication networks
- Promote interactive dialogue
- Become facilitators for communication
- Establish credibility beyond education
- Protect the 'corporate memory'
- Bring coherence among themes, calendars and opportunities for growth
- Support integration of leadership roles
- Communicate coherence and coordination
- Create a virtual presence