



Living the Standards: A Resource for Educators

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The concept of shared leadership is significant to me. In light of that concept, we have done a lot of work around what used to be called building collaborative cultures. Now we talk more about building professional learning communities in our schools. This year we approved in one of our high schools an alternative timetable structure in order to free teachers to meet together for reflection and planning.

Vignettes from Practice, Principal

In June 2006, the council at the Ontario College of Teachers unanimously passed the revised *Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession* and the *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession*. Spontaneous applause erupted as the Council praised the review process that had included more than 10 000 individuals: members of the profession, students, parents, educators, members of the public and educational partners.

In the revised *Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession*, five areas are addressed: Commitment to Students and Student Learning; Professional Knowledge; Professional Practice; Leadership in Learning Communities; and Ongoing Professional Learning. This more accurately reflects the evolving nature of the profession. Concepts of social justice, inclusivity, equity, diversity, technology, collaboration and attention to individual needs have been enhanced and highlighted in the revised version.

The ethical standards are restructured into a principle-based framework. The ethics of **Care**, **Trust**, **Respect** and **Integrity** replace the earlier 12 statements that comprised the *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession*. Descriptions of each ethic now complement and combine with the standards of practice. These revised ethics provide the foundation for professional practice and guide the aspirational aims of the standards.

To support awareness, understanding and integration of these newly revised standards, the College has developed multimedia resources that consist of audio-visual and written resources. The name of this resource captures the intent: *Living the Standards*. Regional forums in the fall and winter months will introduce these inquiry-based materials to the profession and the public. *Living the Standards* was developed by educators and contains 11 video segments and seven written booklets that address members' recommendations for practical and useful methods for integrating the standards into professional practice.

Visual Resources

The 11 educative video segments are appropriate for many diverse educational contexts. As pedagogical and curricular resources, they support initial and in-service teacher education, induction and leadership development. They may be used to develop and sustain learning communities. School councils or school curriculum sessions with parents may also benefit from many of the videos. As well, these forums may be useful for developing deeper understanding of the teaching profession. These visual resources highlight the dedication, commitment and complexity of teaching and learning in Ontario. Each video may function as an introduction to initiate discussion, or as a forum to raise issues and insights about "What does it mean to be a member of the teaching profession?" - the question that underpins the standards. The visual resources are organized into three categories: Teacher Education, Educational Leadership and Self-regulation in the Public Interest.

The Teacher Education video series includes segments on classroom practice, initial teacher education, continuing teacher education and district school board practices. Classroom Practice: A Teacher's Story, the initiating segment of the audio-visual resource, dramatizes through words and student artifacts a teacher's professional knowledge, ethics and instructional strategies, reflecting how the standards have been seamlessly incorporated into the teacher's classroom management, assignments and professional knowledge.

The Educational Leadership video series depicts educational leaders exploring the ethical dilemmas they encounter in practice. The case discussion and case-writing process are demonstrated as inquiry-based approaches for facilitating leadership development.

Another video presentation, District School Board presents five committed teachers and principals from the Ottawa-

Carleton District School Board who share their insights and demonstrate meaningful implementation of the standards into practice with colleagues.

The Self-regulation in the Public Interest series highlights the significance of the standards for the teaching profession and the public. Parents Talk About Effective Teaching reflects a group of parents' perspectives regarding effective teaching. These parents illuminate how the standards have been realized in concrete strategies employed by teachers in their children's classrooms. The parents note that the ethical standards of Care, Trust, Respect and Integrity have truly been "lived out" in their school communities across Ontario.

Written Resources

To complement the video segments, the College has created seven booklets that support the audio-visual resources. These, like their visual counterparts, can be used alone or combined, depending on the needs or goals of a particular group. The booklets provide an interesting array of practical and thought-provoking suggestions.

For example, in Facilitating a Standards Professional Learning Session, a workshop developed by a secondary school teacher in Toronto, a step-by-step process examines the following topics:

1. Beginning to Work with the Standards: Premises
2. Beginning the Process: Level of Awareness
3. Teacher Professionalism: Reflecting on Our Practice
4. Reflection: Linking the Standards to Action
5. Professional Inquiry.

Useful for induction initiatives, mentoring, building strong collaborative communities, or working through the dilemmas that challenge all educators, this workshop process is easily adaptable to the aims of any group.

Vignettes from Practice provides readers with reflections by teachers, principals, superintendents and directors. Their words suggest the practical ways that the standards are integral to their own professional practices. These reflections might also stimulate deeper exploration of professional practice or extend a catalyst for professional conversations that reveal how the standards are already infused throughout educational communities.

Although only two written resources are highlighted here, we encourage you to take a closer look at the other booklets, videos and standards' resources available on the College's website: www.oct.ca.

Finally, continuing to focus on the ethical standards and standards of practice, the College and CPCO have combined their efforts in developing a *Leadership Casebook*. This casebook will support leadership development and education in Ontario. This exciting venture based on the talents of CPCO principals is yet another project to bring the standards to life in practical and meaningful formats.



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