

## ***Leading & Learning Philosophy Statement***

First and foremost, I believe that an effective system leader is passionate about students and their learning. Students are at the centre of all of our decisions and actions. As leader, I am a student advocate who cares about success for all learners and works diligently to ensure responsive programming is in place. I have faith in students' willingness to learn and reach high standards, while I trust that they have confidence in my experience as an educator and lifelong learner to construct environments that support their achievement. We are to embrace new learning paradigms and be innovative in our practices to enable students in *how* to construct knowledge, in a complex and ever changing world. To be engaged in learning, students are to sense purpose, relevancy, and connection; at the foundation of engagement is positive relationship. It is paramount that all students believe they belong in our schools, feel safe, and find acceptance for their individual diversity. Student voice and input in decision-making are vital in this inclusion; in addition, we are to be attentive in developing their critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Empowering students and helping them create self-efficacy involves risk and placing their needs before our own. It is my overall aim to continuously purvey hope to students and their families, for life and learning, with supports and positive influence. We provide true opportunity for each learner in our care to be contributing community members. Although our mission may not be easy, the rewards last a lifetime.

Second, I believe that a trustworthy system leader is committed to building relationships on an ethical foundation of integrity, morality, and mutual respect. Trust is not demanded, through a position of authority, but is earned by a leader being visible, competent, and caring. My ability to effectively organize, prioritize, and focus on the effective management of resources instills the faith that structures are in place to support the pursuit of learning excellence. In addition, I endeavor to be seen as authentic, open, and transparent in my leadership practice. Students, staff, parents and community members are to be treated in a fair and respectful manner, with a sincere interest in their wellbeing. When people feel valued, along with validation of their experience, there is optimal opportunity to foster empathy and shared responsibility for improvement. True collaboration

can only take place with involvement from all members of the learning community, including students and parents. It is crucial for leaders to carefully listen to all voices, even those of dissent, and ask many questions. We are to operate on the assumption that everyone desires what is best for students; through that belief, we can integrate diverse ideas to effectively scaffold innovation. A leadership attitude of invitation, encouragement, and professionalism are key factors to successfully set the stage for all partners to actively participate in change and feel secure to take risks. Status quo is to be resisted; we must be relentless in making incremental change through relationship, inclusion, and role modeling.

Third, I am committed to continuous improvement in schools and our system, as well as myself. I have an inquisitive mind; research, data, and reflection are essential to inform best practice and optimize results. Solid instructional leadership is fundamental in this process, with regular administrative support to coach and guide effective pedagogy in each school. Every student is owed learning experiences that offer engaging opportunities, answer questions of essential curriculum, and utilize assessment that is informative to improve. Every parent is owed universal learning environments, with appropriate instruction, that respond to the unique needs of their child. While a leader provides direction and meaning in a system's culture, it is critical that all community members collaborate to develop and implement vision, mission, and values for learning. I am dedicated to empower others; a true leader distributes and mentors leadership, is thoughtful in communication, promotes teamwork, and admits that others have greater proficiencies to support transformation. Through collaboration and teaming of students, staff, parents, school division personnel, and the greater community, tremendous leadership capacities can develop in all. As a learning collective, we must celebrate our successes, be resilient in our failures, and see the humor along the way. When everyone leads and influences, we all learn to grow and make change as stronger individuals and communities. Education is a true movement for social equity and the building of 21<sup>st</sup> Century competencies. Our calling as educators in society is challenging, yet we make a significant contribution in making our world a better place. (Annually revised: May 20)