School Leadership Development
Curriculum Framework

Leading
Partnerships

Leading
Innovations

Perspective
on
School Leadership

Developing Self

Building and
Leading Teams

Transforming
Teaching-Learning
Processes

National Centre for School Leadership
National University of Educational Planning and Administration
New Delhi

National Centre for School Leadership-NUEPA

Transforming schools into effective centres of imparting quality education demands a strong and well informed leadership that is capable of engaging in a process of change and innovation. While NUEPA has been bringing together heads of the schools as well as administrators periodically for orientation and exchange of experiences, it is felt that the effort needs to be augmented significantly. Establishment of the National Centre for School Leadership (NCSL) in NUEPA is a step towards addressing this need on a sustainable basis.

The leading priority for NCSL, therefore is to build leadership capacities for change, eventually leading to transforming schools. To achieve this mission, the Centre will engage in capacity building programmes for the school heads, based on a curriculum that is grounded on the needs and issues of the states and the diversity therein, in the area of school education. The Centre will also encourage networking among schools and related resource institutions so as to facilitate meaningful exchange of experiences, lateral learning and shared problem-solving. It will also organize and promote research on leadership and governance of school education with a view to encourage evidence-based decision making at systemic and institutional levels. The Centre will also function as a repository of information for all developments in the areas of leadership and governance in school education.

The leadership programmes would cover existing and freshly inducted school principals and administrators as well as senior teachers from elementary to higher secondary level, functioning in both government and government-aided sectors. The essence of the programme is to build leadership at all levels - institution, village, district, state and national level - to transform the way in which schools and school education systems are managed and led.

Introduction

The curriculum framework for school leadership is a comprehensive and flexible document that reflects the evolving role of school heads, the context of the schools and the challenges of the 21st century. The curriculum framework is built around six key areas dealing with the concepts and practices in school leadership. This document has been developed after national level consultations with educationists and practitioners actively engaged in this field in India. Recognising the rich diversity that constitutes Indian school system, this curriculum framework would be adapted to accommodate the varying contexts of different states.

Overarching Goal

To enable the school heads to transform schools with a focus on enhancing student learning and development.
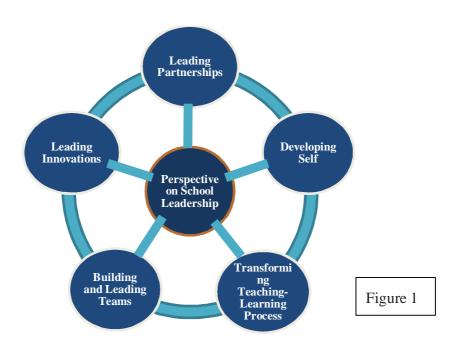
Guiding Principles

The curriculum framework is formulated with a belief that all school leaders have the desire to grow and excel in their profession. Adults learn differently and, given the right kind of material and in a language that is both simple and easily translated into different Indian languages, school leaders can use the material as per their own learning style and rhythm. While the curriculum draws on established theoretical principles, the contents and processes are envisaged to be firmly rooted in practice of school leadership. This framework is formulated on the understanding that interaction of school heads with school administrators, the community and teachers is dynamic and continuously evolving.

Curriculum Implementation

The framework adopts a participatory approach for the capacity building of school leaders. The methods and approaches for implementing the curriculum would entail experiential learning, mentoring, critical reflection and field-level engagement. The framework seeks to continuously refine, update and bring one closer to the lived experiences of school leaders and facilitators.

Components

The curriculum framework outlines six key areas based on different components required for achieving the goal of developing school leadership in elementary schools. The key areas have clearly defined objectives and content areas that are necessary for bringing school transformation and professional growth of school leaders (Figure 1).

Figure 1

All the six key areas are closely knit with a view to building a holistic perspective on school transformation and the critical role of the school leader in achieving this goal. The framework considers the school as a learning organization that proactively nurtures children and facilitates all-round growth and development. The curriculum centres on its ability to develop a positive self-concept (self-image) among school heads and encourage them to become reflective practitioners guided by the values of equality and non-discrimination.

School transformation is not only about changing attitudes and practices. It is also about creating a conducive physical environment and an academic climate necessary for learning. Equally, a school does not stand alone–it is embedded in the community of parents, teachers and educational administrators. The school leader is the pivot who can energize the environment and involve the team of teachers and other stakeholders to engage with the school in a creative and

supportive manner. An important aspect of leadership is to create conditions, structures and processes that encourage creativity and innovation among teachers, students and parents. This would not be possible without forging partnerships with parents, the local community and educational administrators.

Given the diversity of schooling contexts in India, this framework provides space to explore and understand *Special Focus Areas* – so that the specific challenges in mountainous, desert and tribal areas, the regions experiencing heavy rainfall leading to annual floods, or areas exposed to social conflict or frequented by natural or man-made disasters are understood and addressed. Equally, the specific challenges faced by small and multi-grade schools also merit special attention.

KEY AREA 1: PERSPECTIVE ON SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

This seeks to develop an understanding of leadership and its impact on school transformation. It builds a conceptual understanding of school as a learning organization, as a place for promoting growth and development of children and as ground for continuous experimentation and change. It focuses on building a vision for change and transformation of school.

Objective	Understanding school leadership and building a vision for change and improvement

Unit 1: School as a Learning Organization

- School as a social institution
- Dynamic nature of the school as an organization
- Interactive processes in school
- School as a ground for learning and development

Unit 2: School Leadership

- School leadership: multiple roles and identities
- Leader as a visionary
- Leader as an initiator of change
- Leader as a person who inspires and who is resolute, people centric and a lifelong learner

- Leader as a reflective practitioner
- Significance of leadership for enhancing school effectiveness

Unit 3: Developing a Vision for School

- Vision for school transformation
- Assessing and understanding the context and constraints
- Translating vision through school development plan
- Tracking change through periodic review and revision

Unit 4: Understanding Transformation

- Guiding principles for school transformation: Inclusion, Equity and Quality
- School as collective: Ideas, capabilities and goals for school change
- Dynamics of transforming oneself: Attitude and actions; thinking and reflecting and engaging with parents, Teachers, community members;
- Dealing with change: Resistance faced and opportunities created

Unit 5: Child First

- Understanding childhood
- Holistic development of child
- The rights of a child in school
- Practicing equality, non-discrimination and respect for all
- School as a safe and secure place

Unit 6: Transforming the Work Ethos

- Keeping the goal in view and moving towards it
- Accepting and accommodating multiple perspectives
- Creating processes for meaningful interaction
- Being open to change and correction
- Fostering sense of shared commitment

KEY AREA 2: DEVELOPING SELF

The focus of this area is to develop a positive self-concept with respect to capabilities, attitudes and values; areas for self-improvement through reflective interaction and critical role of a leader in creating scope and opportunities for continuous learning and development of self and others.

Objective　　　　Understanding self, its relation with others and the school and developing self.

Unit 1: Understanding Self

- Understand oneself: as an individual and as a professional in school
- Understanding meaning and purpose in work life
- Developing positive self concept and self esteem

Unit 2: Self in Relation to Others

- Locating oneself in the social context of school
- Dealing with conflicting expectations and multiple role perception
- Circle of influence and circle of concern

Unit 3: Self in the Context of School

- Convergence between goals of self-development and institutional goals
- Multiple roles in relation to school functioning
- Reflections on aligning professional goals and practices

Unit 4: Developing Professional Self

- Working and relating with people
- School as a place for social learning and growing together
- Creating a sense of collective responsibility: Social, moral and ethical

KEY AREA 3: TRANSFORMING TEACHING-LEARNING PROCESS

This deals with developing capabilities in the leader to transform the teaching-learning setting by understanding the school as a place for exploration and creativity and making classroom processes more creative and child-centric. To this end, it intends to build capabilities in school heads to transform the teaching-learning processes in their schools.

Objective	Transforming teaching- learning process into child-centered creative engagement

Unit 1: School and Purpose of Education

- Nurturing spirit of inquiry
- Education for critical thinking
- Education for empowerment
- Developing responsible citizens

Unit 2: Understanding Child - Centred Pedagogy

- Learning and Developmental needs of the growing child
- Child as an active learner and constructor of knowledge
- Making learning a joyful and creative experience for teacher and learner.
- Teaching-learning as a joint exploration by teachers and learner
- Learning in an inclusive socio-culturally diverse setting.

Unit 3: Creating Conducive Teaching-Learning Conditions

- Attractive and lively school and classroom environment
- Creative organization of classroom spaces and materials
- Strengthening opportunities for active learning
- Inclusive environment: mutual respect, acceptance and a sense of common identity
- Warm, safe and caring environment in classrooms

Unit-4: Enhancing the Effectiveness of Classroom Processes

- Observation, Feedback and Supervision
- Direct engagement with children and keeping track of individual child progress
- Collaborative practices for improving classroom activities
- Coaching and mentoring
- Technology in teaching-learning process
- Encouraging freedom to explore and experiment

Unit 5: Developing Teacher as a Professional

- Teacher: the key to school transformation
- Promoting Teacher leadership
- Teacher as a reflective practitioner
- Facilitating Teacher-Student interaction inside and outside the classroom
- Addressing teacher issues and concerns
- Promoting professional growth of teachers

Unit-6: Enriching Teaching-Learning Process: looking beyond the classroom

- Understanding the child through the eyes of the parent
- Home support for child's learning
- Enriching school experience through community knowledge and creativity
- Strengthening feedback cycle between parents and teachers: Schooling experience and learning.
- Neighbourhood as learning space.

KEY AREA 4: BUILDING AND LEADING TEAMS

This addresses the skills required to build and sustain effective teams. It focuses on understanding group dynamics, processes of collaboration, teamwork, conflict resolution and creating opportunities for the professional development of team members.

Objective	Facilitating collaborations and working in teams

Unit 1: Building Teams

- Understanding strengths and capabilities of the team members

- Studying group dynamics

- Creating processes for collaboration and cooperation

- Matching responsibilities and abilities

Unit 2: Promoting Team Work

- Planning together

- Fostering professional discussions and dialogue

- Acting together

- Staff meetings as a platform for deep engagement in productive ideas

- Establishing review and feedback mechanisms

Unit 3: Being a Team Leader

- Creating opportunities for effective team work

- Establishing effective communication processes for team

- Decision making in team work

- Executing work through teams

- Conflict resolution

KEY AREA 5: LEADING INNOVATIONS

This seeks to transform structures and programmes of the school through continuous change and innovation. The focus is on creating conditions, systems, structures and processes that support new ideas and actions through collective effort and building a culture of innovation.

Objective	Facilitating transformation through innovative actions

Innovations – Heart of a Learning Organization

- School head: a key driving force for innovations

- In search of new ideas: Dialogue and brain storming

- Innovations: Significant to school improvement

- Looking beyond the normative framework

Unit 2: Building a Culture of Innovation in the School

- Nurturing Innovations: Creating spaces for experimentation and research

- Ensuring adequate resources and academic support

- Respecting individuality and accommodating diverse perspectives

- Understanding and addressing resistance to change

- Rewards and recognition for new ideas and actions

- Identifying and documenting innovations in school

Unit 3: Reimagining the school through innovations

- Innovations at the Macro level: Changing the organization of curriculum, annual calendar, work distribution, budgets, Mid-day Meals, managing finances and raising funds, optimal utilization of existing resources, conducting annual functions

- Innovations at Micro level: Improvising the teaching-learning process, the classroom organization, time-table preparation, classroom management, organizing community meetings and staff meetings

- Students as innovators, teachers as innovators, community as innovators

KEY AREA 6: LEADING PARTNERSHIPS

Leading school transformation involves building partnerships with people both inside and outside the school. This key area focuses on the need for developing meaningful relationships between school and parents, community members, officials in education departments and other schools in the neighbourhood. The purpose is to enable school leaders to skilfully create opportunities for establishing partnerships with multiple stakeholders.

Objective	Facilitating partnerships with parents, community and education functionaries for school transformation

Unit 1 – Home- School Partnership

- Creating spaces for home-school interactions

- Learning and development as joint responsibility of teachers and parents

- Dealing with differing perceptions and expectations of parents and teachers

- Encouraging parent involvement in school management

- School as a platform for parent learning.

Unit 2: Working with Community

- Understanding school-community relationship

- Creating spaces for community involvement in the school

- Institutionalising community participation through School Management Committee

- Role of community in School Development Plan

- School as a social learning space for the community

- Working with mutual understanding and respect with local leadership

Unit 3: Working with the System

- School as part of the education system

- Interfacing effectively with educational administrators

- Balancing demands of school development with system level requirement

- Linking with local resource support institutions

- Sharing, adapting, participating and exchanging best practices amongst community of schools

Special Focus Areas

The section on special focus areas deals with issues in school education unique to specific states and contexts. The curriculum offered under the special focus area has been developed with reference to social, economic, geographical and/or educational challenges prevailing in those states. The curriculum attempts to support the school heads in problem - solving and decision making processes, while addressing specific issues and challenges in such special contexts.

Special Focus Area 1: Leading Schools in Tribal Areas

The focus is on schools located in tribal areas which are culturally, socially and economically distinct from other places. In order to create a relevant and meaningful schooling experience for the children residing in tribal areas, school leaders have to develop a full understanding of prevailing conditions, needs and expectations of the children and the community in the tribal areas. Keeping this in view, some of the topics to be dealt with are as follows:

- Understanding the socio - cultural context in which the school functions.

- Understanding and acknowledging stereotypes that teachers and administrators carry into the school

- Understanding the needs of the tribal children with special reference to linguistic diversity.

- Understanding school, community and family - related issues that lead to student absenteeism, migration and teacher absenteeism.

- Contextualising curriculum, textbooks and pedagogy to address learning needs of tribal children.

- School community relationship in tribal areas.

- Management and administration of residential schools in tribal areas.

Special Focus Area 2: Leading Teaching Learning in Small, Multi-Grade Schools

The focus of this special area is on multiple roles performed by the school heads in multi - grade teaching in single - teacher, two - teacher and small schools. These schools are characterized by teachers' limited understanding of their role, context, resources and time utilisation. This area, therefore, focuses on empowering and guiding teachers to deal effectively with teaching and learning in multi - grade contexts.

- Understanding the unique challenges in local and education system context.
- Creating an inclusive environment sensitive to socio-economic and cultural diversities.
- Adapting curriculum, improvising grade appropriate and level appropriate TLMs, modality for learner assessment.
- Student Management: interaction between students, seating arrangement, student care and support.
- Learning in Groups: across grade levels, peer tutoring and cross- age tutoring.
- Effective utilization of time by teacher and students in multi - grade settings.

Special Focus Area 3: Leading Schools in Conflict Areas

The daily life of people is disturbed in several areas of India due to conflicts and disasters. Schools located in such regions face many challenges: uncertainty of school functioning as well as emotional trauma and fear among children and staff. In such situations, the school head is faced with the challenge of managing day-to-day affairs of the school, enabling children to attend, establishing community relationship and ensuring their participation in schooling process. This special focus area addresses such challenges.

- Creating a support system to enable children to come to terms with trauma and fear
- Creating a stress-free child centred environment in the classroom
- Developing a protective shield around the school, with the support of parents, to guard against any untoward incident.
- Garnering support from community and police to safe guard the interest and safety of the

children and the school

- Encouraging, supporting and preparing students, teachers and staff to develop a positive attitude and also give each other courage to face the situation.
- Drawing upon the existing realities of life, discussing it in the school and weaving it into the teaching-learning process.

Special Focus Area 4: Difficult Geographical Conditions

Schools functioning in difficult geographical conditions such as heavy rainfall zones, deserts, hilly and coastal areas require special care and attention during specific seasons of the year. This would involve provision of physical infrastructure facilities and dealing with weather variations affecting normal life of the school. The objective is to prepare school heads to effectively address such challenging situations.

- Creating and implementing season specific time-table as per geographical and climatic variations.
- Ensuring continuation of schooling and prevention of dropout, absenteeism of children through interactions and discussions with community leaders and parents.
- Constructing suitable infrastructure and storing educational and MDM materials in schools to cater to the specific location and climatic challenges faced.
- Preparing the teachers and children to face extreme climatic variations.
- Establishing partnership with community to prepare the school to face challenges.