



Private School Principals' (PSP) Courses - Parts I and II

Private school leaders are confronted daily with complex challenges unique to their private school role and environment. Directly accountable to the provincial Ministry of Education, these leaders must skillfully balance individual student educational needs with provincial curriculum standards, must meticulously plan and implement financial budgets, and must capably manage school revenues and expenses, while all the time meeting the needs of the many stakeholders (students, families, staff, governors, and community members) invested in their school's success.

York University is pleased to partner with the Ontario Federation of Independent Schools in providing two highly informative, engaging and motivating courses specifically designed for prospective and current leaders in private school education.

PSP Parts I and II have been developed in accordance with, and to prioritize, both the Ontario Ministry of Education's Leadership Framework for Principals and Vice-Principals and the Core Values of the Ontario Federation of Independent Schools.

The Ontario Ministry of Education's Leadership Framework emphasizes that leadership is second only to teaching in its impact on student outcomes. Principals play an essential role as school and instructional leaders in Ontario's schools to achieve this impact. In *Leading Education: New Supports for Principals and Vice-principals in Ontario Publicly Funded Schools (December 2005)*, the Ontario Ministry of Education committed to develop, support and sustain the highest quality leadership possible in schools across the province. In keeping with this commitment, and to ensure a consistent and effective approach to implementing these initiatives, this Leadership Framework for Principals and Vice-Principals was developed. Central to Ontario's educational Leadership Strategy, it inspires a shared vision of leadership in schools, promotes a common language that fosters an understanding of leadership and what it means to be a school leader, identifies the practices and competencies that describe effective leadership, and guides the design and implementation of professional learning and development for school leaders. This framework describes a set of core leadership competencies and effective practices for principals, and is made up of two parts.

PSP Part I focuses upon the development of the first of these two parts - **Leader Practices and Competencies**, and upon developing the skills of soon-to-be or recently appointed private school leaders. PSP Part I will specifically address the following topics and issues -

- Private Schools: History, Overview, Politics and Public Perception
- The Changing Role of the Principal

- Leadership and Communication Styles/Setting Directions
- Staffing the School/Building Relationships and Developing People
- Creating and Engaging School Communities
- The Principal as Business Manager/Best Business Practices/Developing the Organization
- The Principal as Academic Leader/Leading the Instructional Program
- Promotion, Marketing and Advertising
- Legal Compliance/Securing Accountability

Successful completion of **PSP Part I** is followed by an Action Practicum; a structured leadership and educational experience that involves observation and a practical leadership project. Candidates will identify a specific leadership project with respect to the role of the principal, to which they will apply appropriate legislation, regulation, private school policy and related research and theory. The practicum must apply to the private school setting and must be mentored by a PSP Course instructor or a pre-approved practicing qualified private school principal. It is expected that the practicum will involve a documented minimum of 60 hours of preliminary study, professional research, process analysis and written report.

PSP Part II will focus on the development of the second of the two parts of Ontario's educational Leadership Framework - **System Practices and Procedures**. Part II candidates will explore, in more depth, and with the benefit of their accumulated experiences and wisdoms, the practical aspects of principalship, examined in the light of current research and theories. Contemporary educational issues, applied to and discussed in the context of real case scenarios, will be the focus of Part II. Candidates will be expected to draw from and to share their own experiences, in mutually beneficial small group environments, structured for the professional development of all. Facilitation will be the preferred method of instruction.

Both PSP Parts I and II have been designed and will be presented with the **Core Values** of the **Ontario Federation of Independent Schools** constantly in mind and in spirit. These values ensure integrity through standard-setting leadership in schools:

- (i) the importance of providing transparent vision, mission and values, supported by an educational philosophy and objectives;
- (ii) the importance of hiring proven and qualified instructors and administrators, who agree to uphold and deliver upon the school's stated vision, mission and values promised to families and students;
- (iii) diversity in published and applied policies with respect to race, religion, colour, creed, ethnicity and ability;
- (iv) open disclosure and implementation of clearly developed, published policies and procedures on all school operational issues including admissions, education standards, student assessment, human resources, evaluation and reporting practices, sound financial practices, withdrawal, suspension and expulsion;
- (v) effective classroom management strategies, orderly curricular scope and sequence planning and accurate record keeping, resulting in on-going improvement in student knowledge, ability and achievement;

- (vi) sound administrative and personnel management practices, which include strategic planning, policy development, clearly defined job descriptions, performance-based job reviews and professional development;
- (vii) financial accountability through sound financial practices, prudent financial management, transparent budget preparation and reporting practices and short and long-term financial planning;
- (viii) ethical conduct through fair business practices, clear and published school policies and procedures about expectations of all members of school communities (staff, parents, teachers, students, donors);
- (ix) legal compliance through knowledge of, and adherence to, all applicable municipal, regional, provincial and federal legislation and regulations, and through ensuring an orderly, purposeful, and safe school environment; and
- (x) a cooperative spirit through a demonstrated acceptance of, respect for, and a practiced commitment to fellow independent education providers in OFIS and beyond.

Course readings and other resources will be determined by course module instructors and will represent a broad cross-section of widely divergent theories and practices. Because of the increasingly large and constantly evolving body of professional knowledge regarding effective educational leadership, it is expected that these readings and other resources will continually evolve.