

Date of Issue: February 12, 2010**Effective:** Until revoked or modified**Subject:** TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT OF PRINCIPALS
AND VICE-PRINCIPALS**Application:** Directors of Education
Secretary-Treasurers and Supervisory Officers of School Authorities

INTRODUCTION

Ontario's publicly funded education system supports and reflects the democratic values of fairness, equity, and respect for all. Recognizing the importance of education, the Ontario government has established the following three core priorities:

- high levels of student achievement
- reduced gaps in student achievement
- increased public confidence in publicly funded education

In *Reach Every Student: Energizing Ontario Education, 2008*, the government reaffirmed its support for the role of the principal with a commitment to develop a more comprehensive leadership strategy. In September 2008, the Premier launched the Ontario Leadership Strategy, the goals of which are to attract the right people to become principals and to help them develop into the best possible instructional leaders. Key components of the Ontario Leadership Strategy include mentoring for all newly appointed principals and vice-principals in their first two years of practice, performance appraisal of principals and vice-principals, and promotion of the Leadership Framework, as well as succession planning and talent development to ensure the best possible leadership in the years ahead.

The Ontario Leadership Strategy also focuses on establishing terms and conditions of employment for principals and vice-principals that are consistent across the province. In 2005, the government first introduced the idea of consistent terms and conditions in the discussion paper entitled *Leading Education: New Supports for Principals and Vice-principals in Ontario Publicly Funded Schools*. To support the government's commitment to establishing province-wide terms and conditions and to determine effective practices, the ministry facilitated joint meetings of associations of principals, supervisory officers, and directors of education from November 2008 to April 2009. As a result, in April 2009, the document entitled *Effective Practices Guide for Principal/Vice-principal Terms and Conditions of Employment* was released.

School culture is a significant determining factor in student learning, and the principal, as instructional leader, is critical to establishing this culture. Leadership and its impact on student achievement and well-being in a school board¹ is the shared responsibility of the management team, and each member of that

1. In this memorandum, *school board(s)* and *board(s)* refer to district school boards and school authorities.

team plays a significant role. As part of the management team, principals² and vice-principals are the link at the school level between the board, teachers, support staff, students, and parents,³ all of whom are focused on student achievement and well-being. The development of clear terms and conditions of employment is an integral component of good succession planning and is seen as a factor to help attract potential school leaders.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this memorandum is to set out provincial standards of practice to assist school boards in establishing terms and conditions of employment of principals and vice-principals that are consistent province-wide.

REQUIREMENTS FOR BOARDS

All boards will implement this memorandum by March 31, 2011. School boards with existing terms and conditions for the employment of principals and vice-principals will review their document to ensure that it is in accordance with the requirements outlined in this memorandum. School boards without existing terms and conditions will develop a document that is in accordance with these requirements.

STANDARDS OF PRACTICE FOR ESTABLISHING TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The Negotiation Process

When negotiating terms and conditions of employment, the local parties shall use the following process:

- The board of trustees may set the negotiation parameters for school board management.
- The director of education or his or her designate(s) shall be responsible for the development, negotiation, and implementation of the terms and conditions on behalf of the board.
- Principals and vice-principals shall have the right to representation by their local principal and vice-principal association.
- Prior to negotiations, all parties must agree on a process for resolving impasses in negotiations and disputes in the development of the terms and conditions.
- The parties must negotiate in good faith. Such negotiation requires the following:
 - meaningful dialogue with the purpose of reaching agreement
 - presentation of views and objectives in the context of a negotiation process that respects the interests of both parties and is aimed at finding resolutions to differences
 - recognition of the right of the employee to choose his or her spokesperson (e.g., a representative of the local principal and vice-principal association)

2. See section 11, “Duties of Principals”, of Regulation 298, made under the Education Act.

3. In this memorandum, *parent(s)* refers to parent(s) and guardian(s).

- sharing of relevant information
- a process free from reprisals and intimidation
- Upon agreeing to the terms and conditions, the director of education, or his or her designate(s), and the representative(s) of the local principal and vice-principal association shall sign the resulting document.
- The signed terms-and-conditions document shall be the terms and conditions for all principals and vice-principals in the board.
- The signed terms-and-conditions document shall be made available to all principals and vice-principals in the board and to all principal and vice-principal applicants.
- The parties shall meet as needed to discuss material issues related to the terms-and-conditions document.

Negotiated Provisions

All terms and conditions of employment for principals and vice-principals shall contain the following locally negotiated provisions:

- the specific roles of the board and of the local principal and vice-principal association
- a dispute-resolution process regarding the negotiations process and the interpretation and application of the contents of the document
- procedures for discipline, demotion, suspension, and termination for just cause, including procedures for representation, appeals, and third-party assistance
- a consultative process regarding assignments, which would include a consideration of section B1, “Transfer Provisions”, of *Effective Practices Guide for Principal/Vice-principal Terms and Conditions of Employment*
- redundancy procedures, which would include a consideration of section B2, “Redundancy and Reassignment”, of *Effective Practices Guide for Principal/Vice-principal Terms and Conditions of Employment*
- indemnification
- the term of the agreement

The documents *Effective Practices Guide for Principal/Vice-principal Terms and Conditions of Employment* and “Questions and Answers: Terms and Conditions of Employment of Principals and Vice-principals, 2010” are provided with this memorandum to assist boards in the development of the provisions of their terms and conditions.