

LEADING BY DESIGN in Surrey Schools

The lens for *Leading by Design* in Surrey is student learning and student ownership of their learning. Whether you are a school vice principal, district principal, teacher, support staff member, or principal - as a leader, you make an impact on school culture and influence learning for all. Working together, we improve the outcomes and long-term success rates for our students. Strong leadership in schools, classrooms and across the district is essential to the success of our schools and our students. This document, outlining our vision for *Leading by Design*, was developed collaboratively by the Surrey Schools' Senior Leadership Team, drawing on international sources and academic critical friends, to create and promote a shared vision, clarity of understanding and a common language for effective and high-impact school leadership. *Leading by Design* is organized using three *Orientations* and five *Competencies* and makes use of the metaphor of weaving to connect our work to the unceded territories of the Coast Salish Peoples, the land on which our schools are located. In weaving, the warp is the longitudinal yarn that provides the stationary tension through which the transversal weaving (the weft) rests. The orientations are the warp (the column headings). These focus on leaders who are motivated by moral purpose and vision, are curious and bring an inquiry mindset, and are committed to diversity, equity and inclusion. Through these orientations, leaders take ownership of and lead the five competency areas, which are the rows (weft). The intersection of the competencies and the orientations (the green weave in the centre) describe the fabric of leadership in action in Surrey Schools. *Leading by Design* is intended to provide a framework for your own leadership learning and are also an integral part of our hiring process and learning offerings across the district.

LEADING BY DESIGN ORIENTATIONS

The *Orientations of Moral Purpose and Vision, Curiosity and Inquiry, and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion* offer both a lens for viewing actions and a mirror for reflecting on our actions in relation to the five *Leading by Design Competencies*.

Moral Purpose and Vision - Leaders who understand and are explicit about their moral purpose and vision provide colleagues with clarity about the why behind their actions. However, it's not enough for a leader to hold a clear vision for learning. That leader also needs to co-create a common vision for learning in a department or school. A co-developed vision creates opportunities for dialogue about core values, providing direction for the work of the department, team or school, that guide actions and cultivates trust where everyone's growth is valued.

Curiosity and Inquiry - Leaders who are open and curious value and develop conditions where challenge and critical thinking are welcomed and encouraged. This enables them to create and maintain safe and trusting environments where assumptions are checked and planned actions are evidence-informed. This orientation focusses on a leader's way of being as an engaged and collaborative learner who uses a range of evidence to guide actions.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion – Leaders who know themselves well are better able to understand their role in fostering inclusive schools or departments. For this orientation, the first work of the leader is to understand their own identity and how that impacts leadership. Through this, the leader is better able to engage all voices by creating safer environments that value the contributions and needs of all.

LEADING BY DESIGN COMPETENCIES

The five *Leading by Design* Competencies demonstrate the values of the Senior Leadership Team. Our intention is that leaders will take ownership of their own learning using these competencies as guideposts. All five are central to the work of leaders and while we don't expect that any leader will be a master of all of these competencies, they are meant to be aspirational while providing direction for growth.

Leads, Promotes and Develops Learning by Design – *Learning by Design* is the vision for Surrey Schools: "We prepare our learners for a world in which they think creatively and critically, communicate skillfully, and demonstrate care for self and others." Our intention is that leaders understand and engage others in a relentless pursuit for all students to achieve the district vision of *Learning by Design*. In focussing on this competency, leaders are fully engaged as learners alongside others and create conditions that promote mutual understanding and help others to work towards achieving the district vision.

Leads, Promotes and Develops Community Connections, Collaboration and Networks – To work with others in achieving the district vision requires understanding of context as well as the ability to collaborate. Leaders do this by actively engaging with others and deepening their learning relationships by creating networks where trust, support, and challenge are valued and nurtured. This competency focusses on leaders as connected and reflective learners who know that others can contribute to their learning and that we all have a responsibility to share our learning and contribute to the learning of others and our larger system, including our district and beyond.

Leads, Promotes and Develops Innovation, Transformation and Improvement – Leaders are agents of change and innovation who understand and model a creative and adaptive approach. They collaboratively create a vision and simultaneously see the broader district vision and the details needed to understand and communicate their context. In this competency, our focus is on both systems thinking and risk-taking that ensure the focus is on learning and improvement of all. Leaders innovate, transform and improve learning and use a range of evidence to inform their next steps.

Attends to Own and Others' Learning, Growth and Well-Being – Learning, growth and well-being are intertwined. In focussing on this competency, leaders model resiliency and reflection and develop and nurture inclusive structures that build trust, support learning and foster growth. Leaders are in positions that enable them to develop communities of belonging where all are learning and flourishing.

Leads the Management of the School – Management skills and abilities are important to keep people feeling safe and well-resourced. They are also avenues through which leaders can communicate their vision and collaborate with colleagues to ensure resource use is consistent with a co-developed vision and policies. Attending to this competency, a leader can focus on processes and structures that demonstrate inclusivity and accountability.

LEADING BY DESIGN IN ACTION

The intersection of the *Learning by Design Orientations* and *Competencies*, the *green weave* in the centre, is leadership in action. For example, when considering the competency of *Leading Learning by Design* viewed through the orientation of *Diversity, Equity and Inclusion*, a leader may focus on how the classroom and school creates equitable and inclusive access to all learning opportunities for students. Following an inquiry approach, the leader collaborates with others to learn more about the learners and context and then collectively takes evidence-informed action and reflects on the results of those actions throughout the inquiry cycle. When considering the competency of *Leads, Promotes and Develops Innovation, Transformation and Continuous Improvement* through the orientation of *Curiosity and Inquiry*, the leader will intentionally focus on creating spaces and structures where risk-taking for professional learning is valued and supported.

HOW TO USE LEADING BY DESIGN

Our hope is that *Leading by Design* will serve as a source of reflection and impetus for growth in leaders across our system. One possibility is to select several points from the *green weave* in the centre as areas of strength you have identified in your leadership and cite examples. Seeking feedback by checking in with colleagues or your supervisor will help you challenge yourself to see your leadership through others' eyes, thereby identifying areas of both strength and growth. Additionally, consider creating questions to guide your own learning or to help you understand what growth and learning in a selected competency area might look like. Connect your work by taking a wholistic approach to the orientations and competencies while intentionally focussing on one or two areas of growth. Developing your own clear leadership vision that is centred on the core purpose of your work may be a starting point to help you recognize your most important next steps as a lead learner. For example, you may consider what leading learning looks like in your context; how you would know you were doing that; what do you need to develop in yourself to do that work; and what are your next steps? Connect *Leading by Design* to your work and consider the orientations and competencies that will help you keep your focus on the core purposes and vision of Surrey Schools while continuing to grow as a leader.

For generations, Coast Salish weavers have transformed the splendor of the land into powerful and beautiful woven pieces. Weaving is one way to connect our learning to the land and territories upon which we work and learn in Surrey. Leadership is action, but it is also reflection, collaboration and learning. Leading by Design is intended to create and promote a shared vision, clarity of understanding and a common language around effective and high-impact school leadership. In weaving, the warp is the longitudinal yarn that provides the stationary tension through which the transversal weaving (the weft) rests. The orientations are the warp in *Leading by Design* (the column headings), Surrey leaders who are motivated by moral purpose and vision, are curious and bring an inquiry mindset, and are committed to diversity, equity and inclusion. Through these orientations, leaders take ownership of and lead the five competency areas, which are the rows (weft) in the chart below. The intersection of the competencies and the orientations (the green weave in the centre) describe the fabric of leadership in action in Surrey Schools. A woven piece, like the photo of the weaving by Paula James, a member of the Surrey Schools Aboriginal Department, is held together by both the warp and the weft. Unlike the beautiful Coast Salish blanket used as our background, our leadership work will never be done. However, our intentional focus on improvement and transformation will help us to work together towards our District vision.

	Moral Purpose and Vision	Curiosity and Inquiry	Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
Leads, Promotes and Develops Learning by Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops, communicates and acts upon a clear vision centred on learning for a flourishing, thriving and future-ready learning community • Models a passionate commitment to making a difference in the lives of all learners • Embraces, promotes and leads an evidence-enriched and expansive view of learning and teaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understands learning as inquiry • Engages in inquiries side-by-side with other educators • Models, promotes and leads learning through an inquiry mindset • Understands contextual literacy and embeds in leading learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infuses and embeds Indigenous practices, First Peoples' Principles of Learning, and culturally responsive practices • Collaboratively creates a culture of both challenge and support for every learner • Promotes and develops inclusive structures, processes and school policies
Leads, Promotes and Develops Community Connections, Collaboration and Networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultivates trust within the school and the wider community • Collaborates with transparency in co-creating a vision for the school • Connects with and contributes to the local, provincial, national and global ecosystem • Creates and sustains opportunities for dialogue to deepen relationships and exchange learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Models community inclusion in school-based inquiries • Enables a coaching culture for collaborative practices • Actively seeks feedback from within and outside the school • Engages and supports student voice, agency and choice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Models inclusive and collaborative leadership • Fosters understanding and reconciliation and embeds equity and inclusion in team learning • Takes responsibility to nurture effective relationships with local and urban First Peoples • Works to understand power relations in society and school community
Leads, Promotes and Develops Innovation, Transformation and Continuous Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures the vision for transformation and continuous improvement is focussed on core values • Is a systems thinker • Thinks and acts creatively, adaptively, and strategically • Creates structures and processes for sharing knowledge and innovation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishes and nurtures conditions where all learners are safe to challenge each other • Encourages risk-taking for professional learning • Develops and checks theories of change to guide collective action • Embeds use of external, classroom and experiential evidence and research to inform decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeks leadership potential in diverse leaders • Draws on strengths and interests of others • Nurtures a safe and trusting environment • Creates structures and processes to engage staff with diverse views
Attends to Own and Others' Learning, Growth and Well-Being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brings to life a school vision of a learning and caring culture where everyone's growth and well-being is valued and ensured • Infuses evidence-informed SEL practices • Intentionally fosters and grows leadership in others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops and nurtures a culture of coaching, mentoring and critical friendship • Embraces evidence-enriched practices that promote well-being • Models resiliency and self-reflection in sustaining professional learning and positive relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embraces and models continuous learning about others' ways of knowing and evidence-informed inclusive practices • Takes responsibility for developing a culture of inclusion • Attends to and embeds structures that build trust and develop a sense of belonging
Leads the Management of the School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acts with accountability, responsibility and transparency in the use of public funds • Aligns management of resources with the vision and values of the school and district • Communicates resource management vision with school community and seeks input from parents, students, staff and district 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly examines processes, structures, and use of resources • Understands and works through ambiguity • Employs inquiry to review alignment between resource use and the vision, values, and experiences of learners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considers the unique needs of Indigenous families • Ensures a safe and caring school environment for all • Looks for ways to create and embed systems and processes that equitably distribute resources • Attends to supervision, class organization and other management duties with a lens of equity and inclusion