

## Leadership competency framework rubric: K-12

This rubric defines a set of competencies that are characteristically modeled by effective capacity-building leaders in a K-12 education system. There are seven competencies arranged into three broad categories: leads self, leads others, and leads change. The rubric draws on the wealth of thinking on leadership that exists, but doesn't attempt a definitive summary. Pages 8 and 9 provide a worksheet for individual reflection.

Competency	Not very much (1)	To some extent (2)	Mostly (3)	Role model (4)
<b>Leads self</b>				
<p><b>1. Delivers results</b></p> <p>Does the individual:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify which pieces of his/her work are top priorities and focus the majority of his/her time on those?</li> <li>Take ownership of the work?</li> <li>Manage and produce to deadlines and goals?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allows urgency to drive distribution of limited time and resources.</li> <li>Views own efforts as disconnected from system's priorities and blames others or the system for failure.</li> <li>Sacrifices quality to meet deadlines; requires close supervision in order to adhere to established timelines and budgets.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus on priorities is often diverted by crises.</li> <li>Assumes some responsibility for the work but lacks urgency around system goals.</li> <li>Lacks sufficient project management skills to stay on top of work; produces work of varying quality or frequently misses deadlines.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Generally focuses time and resources on priorities, but sometimes allows distractions to interfere.</li> <li>Takes responsibility for achieving system goals, though may not be primary focus.</li> <li>Has strong project management skills; plans ahead, organizes self and others even when under pressure, and keeps work on track and on budget; usually produces high-quality work in a timely fashion.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prioritizes time and resources by asking what will be most likely to contribute to improvements in student outcomes.</li> <li>Takes responsibility for achieving clear objectives that contribute substantially to priority reforms and pursues them with proactivity and persistence.</li> <li>Is a high achiever with a reputation for reliably delivering high quality work products on time.</li> </ul>

Competency	Not very much (1)	To some extent (2)	Mostly (3)	Role model (4)
<p><b>2. Learns continuously</b></p> <p>Does the individual:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Demonstrate a commitment to learning and improving?</li> <li>■ Demonstrate humility and reflect on his/her practice?</li> <li>■ Openly receive and act on feedback?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Approaches work and interactions as “standard protocol” without regard to quality.</li> <li>■ Demands credit for all work and rarely accepts faults in own work or approach.</li> <li>■ Responds negatively or defensively to feedback and does not address opportunities for improvement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Sometimes seeks ways to improve, but can revert to “standard protocol”.</li> <li>■ Reflects, but focuses on justifying own approach at expense of learning insights.</li> <li>■ Open to occasional feedback on performance, though reluctant to act on it to improve.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Generally looking to learn and improve but excellence is not yet a habit.</li> <li>■ More focused on learning and improving than on seeking recognition.</li> <li>■ Receptive to feedback and typically makes necessary adjustments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Seeks to understand and model excellence and attention to detail in every deliverable and interaction; always looking for ways to improve.</li> <li>■ Constantly reflects on own practice; apportions credit fairly but is willing to forgo credit themselves if that helps achieve the outcome or strengthen the team.</li> <li>■ Is willing and eager to receive feedback on all aspects of his/her work, accepts it graciously, and works actively to incorporate it into future work.</li> </ul>

Competency	Not very much (1)	To some extent (2)	Mostly (3)	Role model (4)
<b>Leads others</b>				
<p><b>3. Influences others</b></p> <p>Does the individual:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Lead – not just manage – his/her team?</li> <li>■ Collaborate effectively beyond his/her own team?</li> <li>■ Facilitate clear decision-making?</li> <li>■ Effectively manage contractors outside of system staff?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Struggles to influence behavior of team members, routinely falls back on authority to secure compliance.</li> <li>■ Sticks to own “silo” – engages with colleagues/stakeholders on a reactive or transactional basis.</li> <li>■ Largely makes decisions in isolation – quality of interactions is low.</li> <li>■ Struggles to manage contracts and consultants effectively.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Manages team competently, but relies on formal authority to do so – pays little attention to team culture.</li> <li>■ Has relationships outside own management chain, but does not always use these effectively.</li> <li>■ Consults when making decisions, but interactions/meetings can lack clarity/focus.</li> <li>■ Manages contracts competently, but struggles to ensure outcomes are achieved within time and budget constraints.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Works to build team culture, but still falls back on authority to get things done.</li> <li>■ Uses a network of contacts to achieve tactical gains, but does not leverage relationships in the most strategic way.</li> <li>■ Uses meetings to make decisions efficiently, but does not always facilitate joint ownerships of plans.</li> <li>■ Manages contracts effectively, but does not always achieve sustainable outcomes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Inspires confidence in his/her team and builds a culture of excellence – deploys a range of techniques to influence behavior without relying on authority.</li> <li>■ Builds a strong network of relationships across the system and with stakeholders; aligns efforts and resources outside own control to support priority reforms.</li> <li>■ Brings internal/external colleagues together to make decisions that drive the work forward; for every interaction, defines clear objectives, a plan for achieving them, and demonstrates strong facilitative leadership.</li> <li>■ Negotiates contracts effectively to ensure most efficient use of system resources; utilizes outside contractors to achieve high-quality deliverables and to build capacity within the system, ensuring the work is sustainable.</li> </ul>

Competency	Not very much (1)	To some extent (2)	Mostly (3)	Role model (4)
<p><b>4. Develops others</b></p> <p>Does the individual:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Demonstrate a growth mindset?</li> <li>■ Coach and develop talent?</li> <li>■ Inspire others to excellence?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Sets expectations as if talent is fixed – some people are innately better at certain things and cannot change.</li> <li>■ Takes no responsibility for the development of colleagues.</li> <li>■ Sets a low bar for performance of colleagues and does little to encourage them to take on difficult tasks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Only focuses on growing talent of some individuals; rarely provides feedback and coaching, or only when convenient.</li> <li>■ Provides occasional feedback and coaching, though it may not be in the most effective manner (e.g. lack of specific examples, emotionally charged).</li> <li>■ Inconsistently holds colleagues to a high bar; discourages them from “stretch” assignments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Supports the development of colleagues, though not in a strategic manner (e.g. one-off situations, intermittent feedback).</li> <li>■ Commits to coaching and developing the talent of colleagues, but may not provide feedback in a consistent or evidence-based manner.</li> <li>■ Holds colleagues accountable for high-quality work, but does not encourage others to take on challenging assignments beyond his/her normal work level.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Demonstrates commitment to growing talent and to the continuous professional development and success of all colleagues by actively creating opportunities for them to grow and develop through observed practice and reflection.</li> <li>■ Demonstrates strong skills in observation, feedback, and coaching; gives consistent, evidence-based feedback to supervisees, peers, and managers to build a strong team – the ongoing growth of which is apparent in the quality of its work; follows up on feedback to see if action has been taken.</li> <li>■ Insists on excellence and attention to detail in the work of colleagues, particularly supervisees, and inspires others to take on complex challenges.</li> </ul>

Competency	Not very much (1)	To some extent (2)	Mostly (3)	Role model (4)
<b>Leads change</b>				
<p><b>5. Understands the work</b></p> <p>Does the individual:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Understand the details of the system’s priority reforms?</li> <li>■ Understand and engage with the educational reform context?</li> <li>■ Build the necessary technical skills?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Operates with limited awareness of the system’s priorities, focusing narrowly on individual tasks without considering whether they align with the system’s strategic direction.</li> <li>■ Treats the system’s priority reforms as system-specific and doesn’t leverage national and/or peer expertise.</li> <li>■ Doesn’t seek opportunities to grow technical skills of self or members of his/her team.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Shows awareness of priority reforms, their relationship to one another, and the system’s overarching goals, but does not consistently make decisions with them in mind.</li> <li>■ Focuses on the system’s reform efforts with limited interest in the national context and opportunities for collaboration.</li> <li>■ Shows awareness of necessary technical skills, but does not proactively seek opportunities for professional development of self and/or members of his/her team.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Demonstrates knowledge of relevant laws and policies surrounding the system’s priority reforms and usually uses this to make decisions.</li> <li>■ Uses knowledge of national reform landscape to identify and draw on experts and resources to support priority reforms.</li> <li>■ Ensures his/her team has the necessary technical expertise by periodically seeking growth opportunities when needs arise.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Deeply commits to the priority reforms by continuously building expertise in the relevant laws/policies, connections between them, and implications for implementation; uses this knowledge to anticipate/overcome challenges.</li> <li>■ Understands how the priority reforms are similar to and different from those in other systems and in the national dialogue on reform; draws appropriately on expertise and resources from other systems and nationally.</li> <li>■ Understands what specific technical skills are necessary for his/her role, and does what it takes to develop these skills in his/her team.</li> </ul>

Competency	Not very much (1)	To some extent (2)	Mostly (3)	Role model (4)
<p><b>6. Thinks strategically</b></p> <p>Does the individual:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Set strategic direction?</li> <li>■ Bring logical and analytical rigor to decision-making?</li> <li>■ Synthesize information to solve problems?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Narrowly focuses on day-to-day tasks, prioritizing urgent deliverables without considering their impact on long-term goals; does not set a vision.</li> <li>■ Makes decisions in a vacuum, basing them more often on a hunch rather than on evidence, without consideration of potential implications.</li> <li>■ Relies on too narrow an evidence base, often resulting in flawed conclusions about how to solve the problem at hand.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Occasionally communicates broad vision for the work, but inconsistently grounds the team's efforts in where it fits into the system's priorities and/or individual work.</li> <li>■ Attempts to apply rigor to decision-making, but sometimes struggles to work through the whole process from identifying root causes of the problem to testing various hypotheses.</li> <li>■ Considers all available evidence when trying to solve problems or make a decisions, but frequently does not distill the information into coherent recommendations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Keeps the "long view" front and center in planning and implementation efforts, but occasionally lets urgent "fires" derail focus from broader strategic priorities.</li> <li>■ Applies logic and analytical rigor to most decisions, but, when pressed for time, lets the need for an urgent decision compromise rigor.</li> <li>■ Demonstrates skill and ability to synthesize complex information and make cogent recommendations, but applies these skills inconsistently, occasionally at the expense of fully informed decisions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Creates a clear and compelling vision, connected to the system's priorities; able to express the moral principle behind it.</li> <li>■ Breaks down complex, ambiguous challenges into manageable, coherent problems; generates hypotheses about the nature of each problem and conducts the necessary analyses to test them rigorously; uses best evidence obtainable in the timeframe.</li> <li>■ Quickly assimilates complex information from a variety of sources (e.g. written plans, interactions with colleagues, quantitative/qualitative evidence); sees connections between different types of evidence and distills it to identify core issues and best solutions for addressing challenges; where appropriate, ventures beyond known facts to craft and test innovative solutions.</li> </ul>

Competency	Not very much (1)	To some extent (2)	Mostly (3)	Role model (4)
<p><b>7. Communicates effectively</b></p> <p>Does the individual:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Produce clear, well-structured communications?</li> <li>■ Communicate through well-timed, well-placed and audience-appropriate mechanisms?</li> <li>■ Engage and influence stakeholders on his/her own?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Messages are disjointed, one-sided, have too much/too little detail, are confusing and error-filled; often appears unprepared and fails to connect with audiences when delivering oral presentations.</li> <li>■ Communicates rarely, or at the wrong time; does not choose an appropriate style or medium for the audience.</li> <li>■ Does not engage stakeholders, or has poor relationships with key stakeholders.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Messages are of uneven clarity; gets the main points across, but often not in the most organized fashion; oral presentations are generic, without thought to main takeaways for each specific audience.</li> <li>■ Pays attention to needs of audience, but often lets own preferences drive style, medium, and timing.</li> <li>■ Strength and proactivity of engagement with stakeholders is inconsistent and not driven by strategic priorities; does not establish credibility.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Applies principles of well-structured communication to most, but not all, messages; written and oral communication is generally effective, but final products could be more elegantly presented and better crafted to maximize impact.</li> <li>■ Usually chooses style, timing, and medium to increase impact on audience.</li> <li>■ Relationships with stakeholders are generally good, but has not sufficiently prioritized and developed key relationships.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ All communications are crystal clear, backed by compelling evidence; ensures a tight logical relationship between points made, any supporting points, and supporting evidence; crafts high-quality written communications that reflect attention to detail; delivers engaging oral presentations that achieve the desired impact on audiences.</li> <li>■ Plans use of style, timing, and media strategically to maximize the combined impact of communications on the target audiences.</li> <li>■ Demonstrates trustworthiness and judgment to lead high-stakes interactions with stakeholders; displays sensitivity to the context and needs of each stakeholder; generates constructive dialogue by balancing a clear point of view with listening, empathy, and responsiveness; practices active listening.</li> </ul>

**INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION WORKSHEET**

	<b>Competency</b>	<b>Rating (1-4)</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Changes I want to make</b>
Leads self	<b>1. Delivers results</b>			
	<b>2. Learns continuously</b>			
Leads others	<b>3. Influences others</b>			
	<b>4. Develops others</b>			
Leads change	<b>5. Understands the work</b>			
	<b>6. Thinks strategically</b>			
	<b>7. Communicates effectively</b>			

<b>Top 3 changes I want to make</b> (i.e. specific behaviors, critical moves)	<b>What's holding me back?</b> (Skill factors? Will factors? Structural/environmental factors?)	<b>Action steps/support needed</b> (e.g. formal learning, opportunities for practice, opportunities for reflection)