



ONTARIO

The Institute for Education Leadership
L'Institut de leadership en éducation

SELF ASSESSMENT TOOL

for
SCHOOL
LEADERS

revised 2014



The Institute for
Education Leadership

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en éducation

www.education-leadership-ontario.ca

The Institute for Education Leadership (IEL) brings together representatives from the principals' associations, the supervisory officers' associations, councils of directors of education and the Ministry of Education in a unique collaborative partnership. It advances and advocates for tri-level leadership (school, district and system). Its main objective is to assist school and system leaders in maximizing the achievement of all students.

The IEL has articulated four key goals: development, research, practice and communication. Development includes defining leadership, identifying the necessary leadership practices and personal leadership resources (see the Ontario Leadership Framework) and staying on the leading edge of leadership knowledge and practice. The IEL supports research on effective leadership practices both in the Ontario context and internationally. It connects leadership practice to initiatives that support student achievement and well being.

To learn more about the work of the IEL and to access resources including the Leadership Self-Assessment Tools, go to <http://www.education-leadership-ontario.ca/home.shtml>.

As part of its work on research into practice the IEL has adopted the Ontario Leadership Framework (OLF) and continues to support and promote it as a powerful vehicle for strengthening school and system-level leadership in the province. This Leadership Self-Assessment Tool is another resource school and system leaders may choose to use to inform their professional practice.

Self Assessment Tool for School Leaders

Purpose

The purpose of the Self Assessment Tool for School Leaders is to enable practicing school leaders to assess their practices with reference to those identified in the research that are required to lead schools in the province of Ontario. Using the practices identified in the Ontario Leadership Framework (OLF), the approach is evidence-based, giving school leaders the opportunity to reflect upon and cite evidence of the experiences that have contributed to their leadership development. Using this self-assessment as a starting point, school leaders can identify areas for growth as leaders and can give further thought and planning to the development of their Annual Growth Plan. The purpose of this tool is to help to develop reflective practitioners who can lead schools towards achieving the three provincial education priorities of: high levels of student achievement; reduced gaps in student achievement; and increased public confidence in publicly funded education.

Context

The Board Leadership Development Strategy (BLDS) requires that boards develop a plan to assist leaders in continuing their professional growth. Supports such as mentoring for newly appointed school leaders, principal and vice principal performance appraisal, and opportunities for professional learning need to be developed as part of this plan. School leaders need a clear understanding of their present level of leadership development as well as direction in ongoing leadership growth efforts. The revised Self Assessment Tool for School Leaders was developed to give school leaders the opportunity to reflect upon their leadership practices and personal leadership resources in relation to the impact these have on the learning conditions in their school.

Development

The Self Assessment Tool for School Leaders is based on The Ontario Leadership Framework. The self assessment of personal leadership resources is based on research by Ken Leithwood and is designed to assist leaders in recognizing the personal characteristics associated with cognitive, social and psychological resources. These resources have been found to help enact the leadership practices more successfully.

Implementation Tips

Growth and Development

The self assessment tool can be used:

- To highlight a leadership practice and reflect on how you as a leader implement that practice.
- For personal self-reflection to help identify areas of growth for inclusion in the Annual Growth Plan (AGP).
- To work with a critical friend or mentor to help identify and/or analyse the:
 - ✓ Quality of the evidence.
 - ✓ Areas of growth in the Annual Growth Plan.
 - ✓ Impact the evidence had on achieving the school's vision and improvement goals.
 - ✓ Next levels of learning for personal growth and development – i.e., the identification of leadership practices and personal leadership resources to develop.

Professional Development

Use the self assessment tool:

- To assist families of schools determine strengths and needs.
- To guide conversations between mentors and mentees and to collaboratively determine areas for further development.
- To help analyse case studies and to determine steps required to address issues and concerns.
- To assist those who have used the tool to network with others who have used it.

Leadership Development

The tool was purposely designed to reflect the current reality of the school leader's varied leadership roles and responsibilities.

The practices identified in the OLF are based on research by leading experts and consultation with educators across Ontario.

The framework includes key practices of successful leaders. As such, the self assessment tool could be used to:

- Develop leadership programs.
- Prepare for the promotion process and related interviews or activities.
- Assist supervisory officers with the development of authentic and relevant interview questions as part of recruitment and selection processes

Setting Direction

Leadership Practices	Reflection on my leadership practices: <i>What strategies do I use to implement these practices?</i> <i>What is the evidence of my influence on my school's learning conditions?</i> <i>What do I need to change/improve/adapt?</i> <i>What Personal Leadership Resources might help with improving my practice?</i>
<p>Building a shared vision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I establish, in collaboration with staff, students, and other stakeholders, an overall sense of purpose or vision for work in their school to which they are all strongly committed. ▪ I build understanding of the specific implications of the school's vision for its programs and the nature of classroom instruction. ▪ I encourage the development of organizational norms that support openness to change in the direction of the school's vision. ▪ I help staff and diverse stakeholders understand the relationship between the school's vision and board and provincial policy initiatives and priorities. 	
<p>Identifying specific, shared short-term goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I facilitate stakeholder engagement in processes for identifying specific school goals. ▪ I build consensus among students, staff, and diverse stakeholders about the school's goals. ▪ I ensure the goals are clearly communicated to all stakeholders. ▪ I regularly encourage staff to evaluate their progress toward achieving the school's goals. ▪ I encourage staff to develop and periodically review individual goals for professional growth, as well as the relationship between their individual goals and the school's goals. ▪ I refer frequently to the school's goals when engaged in decisions about school programs and directions. 	
<p>Creating high expectations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I have high expectations for teachers, students and myself ▪ I devote additional effort to creating high expectations among staff for the achievement of students who have traditionally struggled to be successful at school ▪ I encourage staff to be innovative in helping students meet those expectations ▪ I encourage staff to assume responsibility for achieving the school's vision and goals for all students ▪ I make my expectations known through words and actions 	

<p>Leadership Practices</p>	<p>Reflection on my leadership practices: <i>What strategies do I use to implement these practices?</i> <i>What is the evidence of my influence on my school's learning conditions?</i> <i>What do I need to change/improve/adapt?</i> <i>What Personal Leadership Resources might help with improving my practice?</i></p>
<p>Communicating the vision and goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I use many different formal and informal opportunities to explain to stakeholders the overall vision and goals established for the school. ▪ I demonstrate to all stakeholders the use of the school's vision and goals in day-to-day actions and decision making. ▪ I regularly invite different stakeholder groups to discuss how their work furthers the school's vision and goals. 	

Building Relationships and Developing People

<p>Leadership Practices</p>	<p>Reflection on my leadership practices: <i>What strategies do I use to implement these practices?</i> <i>What is the evidence of my influence on my school's learning conditions?</i> <i>What do I need to change/improve/adapt?</i> <i>What Personal Leadership Resources might help with improving my practice?</i></p>
<p>Providing support and demonstrating consideration for individual staff members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I recognize the accomplishments of individual staff members. ▪ I consider staff members' opinions when initiating actions that affect their work. ▪ I build upon and respond to individual staff members' unique needs and expertise. ▪ I treat individuals and groups among staff equitably. 	
<p>Stimulating growth in the professional capacities of staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I encourage staff to reflect on what they are trying to achieve with students and how they are doing it. ▪ I lead discussions about the relative merits of current and alternative practices. ▪ I challenge staff to continually re-examine the extent to which their practices support the learning of all their students. ▪ I facilitate opportunities for staff to learn from each other. 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I suggest new ideas for staff learning. ▪ I encourage staff to develop and review their own goals for professional growth and the relationship of those goals to school goals and priorities. ▪ I encourage staff to try new practices that are consistent with both their interests and school goals. 	
<p>Modelling the school's values and practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I am highly visible in my school. ▪ I am easily accessible to staff, parents and students. ▪ I have frequent, meaningful interactions with teachers, students and parents in order to further the school goals. ▪ I demonstrate the importance of continuous learning through visible engagement in my own professional learning. ▪ I exemplify, through my actions, the school's core values and its desired practices. 	
<p>Building trusting relationships with and among staff, students and parents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I model responsibility, integrity and thoroughness in carrying out tasks. ▪ I act in ways that consistently reflect the school's core values and priorities in order to establish trust. ▪ I demonstrate respect for staff, students and parents by listening to their ideas, being open to those ideas, and genuinely considering their value. ▪ I encourage staff, students and parents to listen to one another's ideas and genuinely consider their value. ▪ I establish norms in the school that demonstrate appreciation for constructive debate about best practices. ▪ I demonstrate respect, care and personal regard for students, staff and parents. ▪ I encourage staff, students and parents to demonstrate respect, care and personal regard for one another. 	
<p>Establishing productive working relationships with teacher federation representatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I include federation representatives in processes for establishing goals for school improvement. ▪ I encourage federation representatives to keep their members well informed about their work with school leaders. ▪ I encourage federation representatives to collaborate in determining how to implement labour contract provisions in ways that support school improvement work. 	

Developing the Organization to Support Desired Practice

Leadership Practices	Reflection on my leadership practices: <i>What strategies do I use to implement these practices?</i> <i>What is the evidence of my influence on my school's learning conditions?</i> <i>What do I need to change/improve/adapt?</i> <i>What Personal Leadership Resources might help with improving my practice?</i>
<p>Building collaborative cultures and distributing leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I model collaboration in my own work. ▪ I foster mutual respect and trust among those involved in collaboration. ▪ I encourage the collaborative development of group processes and outcomes. ▪ I help develop clarity about goals and roles related to collaborative work. ▪ I encourage a willingness to compromise among collaborators. ▪ I foster open and fluent communication toward building and sustaining professional communities. ▪ I provide adequate and consistently available resources to support collaborative work. ▪ I involve staff in the design and implementation of important school decisions and policies. ▪ I provide staff with leadership opportunities and support them as they take on these opportunities. 	
<p>Structuring the organization to facilitate collaboration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I create timetables for teaching that maximize time on task for students. ▪ I provide regular opportunities and structures that support teachers in working together on instructional improvement, and establish a system for monitoring their collaborative work. ▪ I establish a structure of teams and groups that work together on problem solving. ▪ I distribute leadership on selected tasks. ▪ I engage teachers in making decisions that affect their instructional work. 	

Leadership Practices	Reflection on my leadership practices: <i>What strategies do I use to implement these practices?</i> <i>What is the evidence of my influence on my school's learning conditions?</i> <i>What do I need to change/improve/adapt?</i> <i>What Personal Leadership Resources might help with improving my practice?</i>
<p>Building productive relationships with families and the community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I create a school environment in which parents are welcomed, respected and valued as partners in their children's learning. ▪ I demonstrate the type of leadership that parents can trust – confident, systematic and attentive. ▪ I help develop staff commitment to engaging parents in the school. ▪ I work, with staff, directly with families of diverse backgrounds to help them provide their children with support in the home that will contribute to their success at school. ▪ I encourage staff to reach out to students with diverse viewpoints and experiences and help all students feel included. ▪ I encourage staff to adopt a broad view of parental engagement and encourage more parents to be involved. ▪ I help connect families to the wider network of services as needed. 	
<p>Connecting the school to the wider environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I develop and maintain connections with other expert school and district leaders, policy experts, outreach groups, organizations and members of the educational research community. 	
<p>Maintaining a safe and healthy environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I take measures to secure the school's physical facilities against intruders. ▪ I ensure that the physical facility is maintained in a safe, healthy and attractive condition. ▪ I communicate standards for non-violent behaviour and uphold those standards in an equitable manner. ▪ I empower staff in the school to play a leadership role in promoting a positive school climate and modeling appropriate behaviour. ▪ I implement and monitor the use of appropriate disciplinary practices in classrooms throughout the school. ▪ I develop, with the input of staff and students, processes to identify and resolve conflicts quickly and effectively. ▪ I provide opportunities for staff and students to learn about effective conflict resolution strategies. 	

<p>Leadership Practices</p>	<p>Reflection on my leadership practices: <i>What strategies do I use to implement these practices?</i> <i>What is the evidence of my influence on my school's learning conditions?</i> <i>What do I need to change/improve/adapt?</i> <i>What Personal Leadership Resources might help with improving my practice?</i></p>
<p>Allocating resources in support of the school's vision and goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I manage efficient budgetary processes. ▪ I distribute resources in ways that are closely aligned with the school's improvement priorities. ▪ I ensure that sustained funding is directed to the school's improvement priorities. ▪ I secure resources as needed to support the instructional work of the school. ▪ I revisit and adjust as needed the nature, amount and alignment of resources as priorities for school improvement change. ▪ I ensure effective oversight and accountability of resources to support priorities. 	

Improving the Instructional Program

<p>Leadership Practices</p>	<p>Reflection on my leadership practices: <i>What strategies do I use to implement these practices?</i> <i>What is the evidence of my influence on my school's learning conditions?</i> <i>What do I need to change/improve/adapt?</i> <i>What Personal Leadership Resources might help with improving my practice?</i></p>
<p>Staffing the instructional program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I recruit and select teachers who have the interest and capacity to further the school's vision and goals. ▪ I retain skilled teachers by providing support and time for collaboration, sharing leadership, creating a shared vision and building trusting relationships. 	
<p>Providing instructional support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I actively oversee the instructional program. ▪ I coordinate what is taught across subjects and grades to avoid unnecessary overlap while providing needed reinforcement and extension of learning goals. ▪ I observe classroom instruction and provide constructive feedback to teachers. 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I provide adequate preparation time for teachers. ▪ I provide advice to teachers about how to solve classroom problems. ▪ I provide teachers with the opportunity to observe effective instructional practices among colleagues in their own school as well as in other schools. ▪ I participate with staff in their instructional improvement work. 	
<p>Monitoring progress in student learning and school improvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I assist staff in understanding the importance of student assessment for, of, and as learning. ▪ I collaborate with staff during the process of data interpretation. ▪ I use multiple sources of evidence when analyzing student progress. ▪ I give priority to identifying those students most in need of additional support. ▪ I incorporate the explicit use of data when making decisions that relate to student learning and school improvement. ▪ I examine trends in student achievement over time (one or more years), rather than just at one point in time, when analyzing student learning. 	
<p>Monitoring progress in student learning and school improvement (continued)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I collect and use data about the status of those classroom and school conditions that are the focus of the school improvement efforts. ▪ I provide conditions for teachers to use data effectively (time, support, partnerships with experts, a culture in which the use of data is valued). 	
<p>Buffering staff from distractions to their work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I create and enforce consistent, school-wide discipline policies. ▪ I minimize daily disruptions to classroom instructional time. ▪ I implement a systematic procedure for deciding how best to respond to initiatives from outside the school. ▪ I develop, with staff, guidelines to govern the amount of time teachers spend on non-instructional and out-of-school activities. ▪ I regularly assess the contribution of all out-of-classroom activities to the learning priorities of students. 	

Securing Accountability

Leadership Practices	Reflection on my leadership practices: <i>What strategies do I use to implement these practices?</i> <i>What is the evidence of my influence on my school's learning conditions?</i> <i>What do I need to change/improve/adapt?</i> <i>What Personal Leadership Resources might help with improving my practice?</i>
<p>Building staff members' sense of internal accountability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I regularly engage staff in analyzing data on the learning progress of all students. ▪ I insist on the use of data that is of high quality (reliable, valid, collected using systematic collection processes, available in its original form, and has been subjected to collaborative interpretation. ▪ I promote collective responsibility and accountability for student achievement and well-being. ▪ I help staff make connections between school goals and ministry goals in order to strengthen commitment to school improvement efforts. ▪ I assess my own contributions to school achievements and take into account feedback from others on my performance. ▪ I participate actively in my own performance appraisal and make adjustments to better meet expectations and goals. 	
<p>Meeting the demands for external accountability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I clearly define accountability for individual staff in terms that are mutually understood and agreed to and that can be rigorously reviewed and evaluated ▪ I measure and monitor teacher and leader effectiveness using data about changes in student achievement. ▪ I align school targets with board and provincial targets. ▪ I provide an accurate and transparent account of the school's performance to all school stakeholders (e.g., ministry, board, parents, community). ▪ I create an organizational structure that reflects the school's values and enables management systems, structures and processes to work effectively within legal requirements. 	

Personal Leadership Resources

The OLF describes the characteristics of effective leaders such as optimism, emotional intelligence and problem solving abilities, which the research indicates create the variation among leaders in how well they are able to enact the leadership practices. Personal self assessment of the characteristics associated with cognitive, social and psychological resources is a critical component of leadership growth and development. The purpose of this tool is to assist leaders in identifying those characteristics that are contributing to or detracting from effective leadership practices.

Cognitive Resources: Problem-solving expertise and knowledge about conditions which have direct effects on student learning and which can be influenced by schools.	Reflect upon your own experiences. <i>When did you feel confident in these situations?</i> <i>When did you not feel confident?</i>
Problem-solving	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I spend time analyzing the nature of a problem, before seeking a solution. • I prioritize problem-solving efforts based on impact on student learning. • My values and principles are central to how I respond to problems. • I remain calm and confident during the problem-solving process. 	
Knowledge about School and Classroom Conditions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am knowledgeable about powerful learning conditions in the school and classroom. • I am aware of my colleagues' emotions from their behavior. • I optimize the organizational conditions (teachers' working conditions) in determining school structures. • I understand the influence of family conditions on student learning and implement policies to improve parental involvement. 	
Systems Thinking	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am able to understand the dense, complex, and reciprocal connections 	

<p>among different elements of the organization.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have foresight to engage the organization in likely futures and consequences for action. 	
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<p>Social Resources: The ability to understand the feelings, thoughts and behaviours of persons, including oneself, in interpersonal situations and to act appropriately on that understanding.</p>	<p>Reflect upon your own experiences. <i>When did you feel confident in these situations?</i> <i>When did you not feel confident?</i></p>
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<p>Perceiving Emotions</p>	
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am able to recognize my own emotional responses and how those emotional responses influence my actions. • I am able to recognize the emotions of others. 	
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<p>Managing Emotions</p>	
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am able to understand my own emotional responses and reflect on the potential consequences of those responses. • I am able to help others to be more reflective about their own emotional responses and to reflect on the potential consequences of those responses. • I am usually able to calm my school colleagues when they are feeling agitated. 	
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<p>Acting in Emotionally Appropriate Ways</p>	
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am able to control my own emotions. • I am able to control my temper and handle difficulties rationally. • I can usually persuade my school colleagues to act in emotionally appropriate ways in our school. • My school colleagues can usually rely on me to help calm them down when 	
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they get upset.	
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Psychological Resources: The characteristics that enable leaders to be productive and effective in the highly complex environment of school leadership.	Reflect upon your own experiences. <i>When did you feel confident in these situations?</i> <i>When did you not feel confident?</i>
Optimism	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am usually able to see many ways around a problem. • I see the positive elements of most situations. • I approach school leadership with an optimistic point of view. 	
Self-efficacy	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel confident analyzing long-term problems to find solutions for my school. • I have confidence in my ability to achieve the goals I set in my job. • I will persist in a task regardless of the obstacles. 	
Resilience	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I usually take stressful things at work in stride. • I thrive in challenging situations and am able to rise to the occasion. • When things are uncertain for me at work, I usually expect the best. 	
Proactivity	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am able to stimulate and effectively manage change on a large scale under complex circumstances. • I demonstrate initiative and perseverance in bringing about meaningful change. 	

Next Steps for Leadership Development:

As you consider each domain described in the self-assessment tool, ask yourself to what extent you demonstrate each leadership practice. Select the most suitable response.

Setting Directions

Building a shared vision

1	2	3	4
Not at all evident	Somewhat evident	Evident	Very evident

Identifying specific, shared short-term goals

1	2	3	4
Not at all evident	Somewhat evident	Evident	Very evident

Creating high expectations

1	2	3	4
Not at all evident	Somewhat evident	Evident	Very evident

Communicating the vision and goals

1	2	3	4
Not at all evident	Somewhat evident	Evident	Very evident

Building Relationships and Developing People

Providing support and demonstrating consideration for individual staff members

1	2	3	4
Not at all evident	Somewhat evident	Evident	Very evident

Stimulating growth in the professional capacities of staff

1	2	3	4
Not at all evident	Somewhat evident	Evident	Very evident

Modelling the school's values and practices

1	2	3	4
Not at all evident	Somewhat evident	Evident	Very evident

Building trusting relationships with and among staff, students and parents

1	2	3	4
Not at all evident	Somewhat evident	Evident	Very evident

Establishing productive working relationships with teacher federation representatives

1	2	3	4
Not at all evident	Somewhat evident	Evident	Very evident

Developing the Organization to Support Desired Practices

Building collaborative cultures and distributing leadership

1	2	3	4
Not at all evident	Somewhat evident	Evident	Very evident

Structuring the organization to facilitate collaboration

1	2	3	4
Not at all evident	Somewhat evident	Evident	Very evident

Building productive relationships with families and the community

1	2	3	4
Not at all evident	Somewhat evident	Evident	Very evident

Connecting the school to the wider environment

1	2	3	4
Not at all evident	Somewhat evident	Evident	Very evident

Maintaining a safe and healthy environment

1	2	3	4
Not at all evident	Somewhat evident	Evident	Very evident

Allocating resources in support of the school's vision and goals

1	2	3	4
Not at all evident	Somewhat evident	Evident	Very evident

Improving the Instructional Program

Staffing the instructional program

1	2	3	4
Not at all evident	Somewhat evident	Evident	Very evident

Providing instructional support

1	2	3	4
Not at all evident	Somewhat evident	Evident	Very evident

Monitoring progress in student learning and school improvement

1	2	3	4
Not at all evident	Somewhat evident	Evident	Very evident

Buffering staff from distractions to their work

1	2	3	4
Not at all evident	Somewhat evident	Evident	Very evident

Securing Accountability

Building staff members' sense of internal accountability

1	2	3	4
Not at all evident	Somewhat evident	Evident	Very evident

Meeting the demands for external accountability

1	2	3	4
Not at all evident	Somewhat evident	Evident	Very evident

Next Steps for Leadership Development:

- 1. What leadership practices do I need to develop?*
- 2. How will I know that I've developed the leadership practices that I've chosen? What evidence and results will inform me?*
- 3. What personal leadership resources do I need to develop?*
- 4. How will I know that I've developed the personal leadership resources that I've chosen? What evidence and results will inform me?*
- 5. What available resources support the development of my leadership practices?*
- 6. What specific commitments will I make?*
- 7. Who can support me?*

The principals professional association would like to support you in your professional growth. In order to do so, they require data on provincial needs. Would you be interested in sharing your results with the Ontario Principals Council (OPC)? Respondents will not be identified.

Yes _____ No _____