Developing smart school leaders for schools

Victoria’s reform of education is built on a commitment to a culture of effective leadership and professional learning for education professionals. Research shows that strong school leadership is vital for achieving high-quality educational outcomes for students.

The OECD has praised Victoria for its innovative approach to school leadership development:

‘… the Victorian approach to school leadership development is at the cutting edge. The Department has created professional learning opportunities for leaders at all levels of the system to seize, and the increasing numbers who have done so inject further knowledge and vitality into the system. This results in building human as well as knowledge capital on a large scale’ (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development 2007).

Developmental Learning Framework for School Leaders

The Leadership Framework identifies the knowledge, skills and characteristics school leaders need to develop schools so that high-quality learning and teaching can take place. Its purpose is to assist teachers and school leaders to participate in professional learning that is relevant to their developmental needs.

It identifies five key characteristics and areas of leadership that need to be developed – Technical, Human, Educational, Symbolic and Cultural – to become a good leader.

• **Technical Leadership** – the ability to think and plan strategically, to align resources and desired outcomes, and hold self and others to account.

• **Human Leadership** – the ability to advocate for all students, to develop relationships and the capacity of individuals and the group.

• **Educational Leadership** – the ability to shape pedagogy, focus on achievement, and promote inquiry and reflection.

• **Symbolic Leadership** – the ability to develop and mange themselves, to align action with shared values and to create and share knowledge.

• **Cultural Leadership** – the ability to shape the future, develop a unique school culture, and sustain partnerships and networks.

The framework is available for teachers and school leaders to self-assess their leadership capabilities, for performance and development reviews, and to assist in designing professional learning materials.

DEVELOPING SMART LEADERS FOR SCHOOLS: THE BASTOW INSTITUTE

The Bastow Institute is a world-class learning centre designed to develop and expand the leadership and learning capacities of today’s education workforce.

It delivers a suite of 22 programs to develop literacy and numeracy teaching skills, as well as instructional coach training programs to build the capability of school-based teachers.

Leading experts and organisations have been engaged to write and design the course materials, in collaboration with the Bastow Institute team, to ensure the highest-quality learning opportunities.

In 2010, a suite of 16 leadership modules are available to teachers and school leaders who are interested in further developing their leadership capabilities. This provides a range of programs, including mentoring, professional coaching and Masters level qualifications.

The modules are grouped under four leadership themes: leading people, leading organisations, leading instruction and leading futures.

An important part of the Bastow Institute’s work is to provide a more deliberate and systematic approach to preparing principals for their first appointment.

Modules are currently being developed for teachers who have demonstrated achievements in a leadership role and are aspiring to become a school principal.

The Institute provides a mentoring program to guide first-time principals in their transition into the principal role, and to develop their leadership capabilities with the support and guidance of experienced mentor principals.

For more information, visit http://www.education.vic.gov.au/proflearning/bastowinstitute/default.htm