"Guidance Document"

National Standards for School Heads of

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Pakistan)

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

National Standards for School Heads: Guidance Document

This guidance document has been produced to accompany the National Standards for School Heads to help the school heads and others in using the standards in a consistent, confidential and supportive way. It provides background information, offers examples of how the standards can be used and has a glossary to explain particular terms. The case studies are designed to illustrate how the standards might be used in practice.

The guidance document should be read prior to using the standards and referred to as and when required.

Introduction

International research clearly demonstrates the positive relationship between highly effective leadership and high student outcomes. The quality of leadership has a significant impact on the quality of education students receive. School heads, therefore, are key contributors to improve the life skills of all students across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Pakistan). They are responsible for ensuring the active role of schools in delivering the ambitions of the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, (Pakistan) and upholding the ethical and moral values as well as cultural traditions of their society.

The National Standards for School Heads are designed for school leaders (Heads), providing a road map to support and challenge them to achieve high standards of leadership in their schools.

The standards are for all aspiring and serving school heads across Pakistan irrespective of the type, size and age-range of the schools. The standards are contextualised to reflect the specific circumstances of the school. The framework is based on evidence and is future oriented.

The National Standards for School Heads is an important tool to clarify the role and responsibilities of school heads. They will provide support to school heads in their work, motivate and develop their positive attitude towards all students, teachers and community at large. Effective use of standards will improve the quality of leadership in schools in order to improve teaching and all student learning.

These standards have been co-constructed by a task group of senior education experts and school heads, working with two facilitators and two international consultants. The successful dissemination of the standards will be crucial to their successful use and an implementation plan has been drafted to accompany this document.

1- Core purpose of School Headship

School heads are leading educational professionals in the school who keep the leadership of teaching and learning at the heart of their thinking and actions. Through their leadership and character, they inspire all students, staff and members of the community in order to continuously enhance learning and raise outcomes for all students. They lead and manage their schools in a complex and changing environment. Having impact is important and they seek to continuously improve their schools through the work they undertake.

School heads build capacity, collaborate and work in partnership with a wide range of people to secure the best possible learning outcomes and well-being of all students. Through their effective leadership they establish and maintain professional relationships within the systems to find innovative solutions that support positive outcomes for all.

The Standards

The National Standards for School Heads is a reference document and roadmap used to direct their planning, monitoring, evaluation and review processes to identify professional development needs in order to fulfil Government requirements and their responsibilities as outlined in their job description.

To cover the role of school heads five standards are set and each standard consists of knowledge, understanding and skills required to perform successfully in that area. The key areas refers to the National Standards are:

1. **Leading the school into future**
2. **Leading and managing teaching and learning** (instructional leadership)
3. **Leading, managing and developing staff**

4. Leading and managing the organisation

5. Leading in the community

2- Structure of the Framework

The framework has five key areas and each key area is comprised of:

A) Knowledge and Understanding

B) Skills

C) Demonstration of knowledge and skills in action

3. How will the Framework be used?

a. **Framework can be implemented by School Heads to assess their own practice and professional development, within and beyond the school**

- Self-development is essential for the advancement of a school head. This framework can be used by school heads who focus on developing and achieving a shared vision for the school using the available resources to attain the defined goals. The framework offers an agenda for self-development, allowing them to consider what they have already done and/or want more to do in future to move closer to the framework's ambitions. Based on the framework, they may choose to seek feedback from colleagues and authorities (officers of education departments, leading at federal, provincial and district level).

- School heads can use the framework to have a useful conversation with their authorities about the areas in which school heads feel they need support to develop. School heads should feel empowered and entitled to seek such support.

- School heads can use the framework as part of supporting their staff by appreciating their strengths and defining areas that need improvement and for identifying the talents in their leadership team and other staff across the school.

b. **Framework can be used by authorities, to assess the performance of school heads**

- This framework can be used for the evaluation of school heads by serving not only as a background document to assist governing boards E&SE department, rather as a set of standards against which the school heads' performance can be measured.

- Authorities should set, on an annual basis, specific school-related objectives and targets linked to their school or schools' priorities. Actions for the school head can be agreed with the aspirational framework in mind. These actions must be in the context the school's current situation in a particular area and what is required to move it to the next level within the school based action plan.

- Authorities can use the school heads' standards framework in evaluation to frame a broad overview of leadership in the specific context of the school. The framework may further serve as a starting point for the identification of specific objectives for the next stage of the school's continuous improvement journey, as well as to identify areas for development where the school head requires support .

- Authorities should collaborate with school heads to determine what the school requires to advance. They should consider what needs to be done to assist the school head and staff in implementing the framework of standards.

c. **Framework can be used by authorities, to support the recruitment and appointment of school heads**

- The framework can be used to underpin and shape role descriptions and professional specifications. It is important to focus on the particular context of the individual school, as schools in differing contexts and at different stages of development will require differing blends of skills and experience of school heads. Authorities may want to investigate some of the characteristics set out in the framework in more detail than others with prospective school heads.

- Equally, given the broad and holistic nature of the framework, governing boards can use the framework as a check to ensure that their selection process is sufficiently comprehensive, covering all of the key areas of headship set out in the framework.

d. **Framework can be used by school heads/governing boards/E&SE department to provide support for training senior leaders aspiring to headship.**

- The transition to leadership necessitates mastery of a wide range of skills. The framework is not an extensive or exhaustive list of these skills.

- School heads and authorities may use the framework to help them identify potential future heads. The framework can be used to shape the developmental experiences offered to senior and other heads.

- Aspirant school heads can use the framework to evaluate their own development towards preparation for headship, and to identify and articulate the areas they want to gain more experience in. For example, an in-charge of a particular section within the school may decide that he/she has not as much experience of the fourth key area of the framework "leading and managing the organization" so they may wish to develop skills to broaden their experience.

4.   What are the benefits of the framework?

These standards will benefit:
- o Aspirant school heads to understand the needs of the future job
- o Current school heads to develop leadership skills
- o National/Provincial/ Local district managers for setting performance standards.
- o Private institutes for better management
- o Developmental Partners/ organizations to provide technical support
- o Community welfare organizations and community members to know the needs of institutions
- o Pre-Service and In-service training institutes for designing Continuing Professional Development programs
- o Recruitment Commission and department/selection boards in selection of competent heads.
- o Those who are preparing for promotion to school head position
- o The Higher Education Commission for accreditation/attestation of professional degrees, certificates by BISEs, DPD and DCTE in education and Public Service Commission for recruitment
- o Performance evaluation of all school heads, as well as peer and self-review
- o As a monitoring tool to observe school development, for example, monitoring a school head's participation in classroom observations

5 Challenge of Introducing Standards

a. Acceptance of standards across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Pakistan)

- o Gaining legalization and support from Higher level ministers, secretaries, directors and district education authorities
- o Acceptance of the standards by school heads and others
- o Ensuring the standards have validity
- o Responding to feedback from educationist, policy makers and authorities

b. Accessibility

- o Through orientation sessions
- o Provision of standards in booklet form for reading and understanding of all school heads and schools' official record (hard and soft).
- o Training on professional areas (pre-service, in-service, Continuous Professional Development etc.)
- o Seminars /webinars
- o Workshops
- o Use of official digital platforms and printed materials and media

c. Language

- o The standards are written in international language for international recognition. Standards should be translated into national language for ease of dissemination whenever and where ever required.

d. Adaptability because there is lack of:

- o resilience and growth mind-set
- o Responsiveness to feedback
- o Flexibility
- o Resources

6. Code of conduct: confidentiality

School heads are expected to consistently uphold and exhibit the highest standards of morality and professional conduct. They have a pivotal role in creating an effective learning climate and serve as a role model for uplifting performance of teachers and

Learners. Such standards of professional conduct apply when working with others and using the school heads' standards. A key aspect of professional conduct in this context is confidentiality. Maintaining confidentiality strengthens trust and encourage school heads to be open and honest about their performance.

All discussions involving a school head's performance in relation to the standards must be regarded as confidential to the school head – and should not be disclosed to any third party. This is particularly important when engaged in peer review processes. Any written record (hard and soft) are also confidential and should either be given to the school head or destroyed at the end of the review process.

7. Demonstrating the level of performance

The following indicators with the appropriate evidence (Soft and hard) may be useful when demonstrating performance in some aspects of the National Standards for School Heads. For example, staff and teachers' attendance for the key area leading and managing Staff; Assessment schedules with test outcomes for the key area Leading, Managing, Learning and Teaching.

Type of Performance	Indicators	Evidence
Attendance and punctuality	Students' attendance Teachers' attendance Staff attendance	Daily record (hard and soft) kept in proper files
Cleanliness	Cleanliness of: Student and personal hygiene, Classrooms, buildings, washrooms, offices	Cleanliness at all levels observed and found visible
School Discipline	In-out procedure Morning assembly Rules and principles Plan for all academic activities Plan for physical and recreational activities	All record (hard and soft)s properly maintained and all events held accordingly
Classroom management	Decorating classrooms Maximum student attendance Teachers, attending their classes Homework schedule Classroom look Proper Seating arrangements Students' personal files	All indicators observed and explicitly shown and visible and properly safe and protected

Personnel management	Office record (hard and soft) Files of teachers and non-teaching staff Other record (hard and soft)	All record (hard and soft)s found properly placed , maintained and kept in relevant cupboards
Academic calendar	Academic– daily, weekly and monthly	Properly followed and complied with Scheme of Studies (SoS)/ time table
Assessment schedule	Proper schedule for conduct of: Daily assessment, weekly assessment, monthly tests, quarterly assessment and final examination	Results performed at every level of tests and record (hard and soft)s properly maintained.
Co-curricular activities	Sports and literary events,	Proper and safe conduction of sports and literary events. Participated annual sports events.
Financial Management	Reconciliation of fee funds Income and expenditure Vouchers and cashbook Availability of funds/receipts	All record (hard and soft) kept, observed and properly maintained
Regular Staff Meeting	Daily, Weekly and monthly meeting schedule	Proper minutes of each and every meeting
Meeting of Parents and Teachers	Monthly meeting of school parents' teachers' council (PTC) Monthly meeting of parents and teachers (PTM)	Meeting attendance and record registers and minutes along with decisions maintained
Monthly Review Meeting (MRM)	Review of subject courses as per annual academic calendar	Observations record (hard and soft) and followed up regularly

NOTE: The following Sections 8, 9 and 10 provide information about three important, but different, processes that school heads can use when engaging with the standards. These processes are:

- *Self-review:* school head reflecting on **his / her own** performance as a leader
- *Peer review*: a **trusted colleague** providing feedback to the school head using the standards' framework
- *School self-evaluation* – **school** using evidence to make judgements about the school's performance

8. Self-Review, what is it, how to do it?

Self-review is engaging in an open and honest reflection and analysis of one's own leadership and performance in order to identify strengths and areas that need further development. In the self- review processes a school head should draw on evidence of his / her leadership performance and evidence of the difference his/her leadership has made, particularly to teachers and all students.

Drawing on the National Standards Framework, self-review is an opportunity for a school head consider his/her past performance, review documents, and identify how his her leadership can be developed further. Self review reflections and evidence can be offered for evaluation in a supervision meeting with an assessor.

How to undertake a self- review

It is very important that school heads should know how to write their self-review. The following points may help:

- Use the standards framework and the five key areas to support your reflections

- Be specific and provide examples of your work in order to contextualize your claims.

- Back up your contributions with evidence and metrix.

- Accept weaknesses as opportunities for improvement

- Identify upcoming challenges in futuristic perspectives

- List out your accomplishments and prioritize the list of weakness to address.

- Formulate a strategy to transform weaknesses into strengths by identifying actions to take, timelines and resources.

- Write out a checklist of your initiatives and your challenges

- Don't forget to align your review with your respective authorities.

9. Peer Review, what is it, how to do it?

Peer review in this context means reflecting on the performance of a peer school head using the National Standards for School Heads in Pakistan. A peer reviewer should be familiar with the school head's work and be invited by the school head to undertake a peer review. The peer review is a confidential process and should focus on aspects of the National Standards identified by the school head. The peer reviewer should record (hard and soft) and share reflections in a way agreed with the school head.

Additionally, the school heads can visit each other's institution to develop themselves further. The school heads can also form a forum like Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) where they can sit and discuss their reviews. By sharing their experiences and issues in the forum and by solving those in the context of leadership and standards would help developing skilled leaders for the institution.

10. School Self-Evaluation

School Self-Evaluation is the detailed analysis of what is going on across the school to find out what is working well, what is not working and therefore what actions needs to be

taken to improve the school's performance. School self-evaluation involves the three key questions:.

- How good is our school?
- How do we know?
- What are we going to do to make it better?

Following strategies will help the school head collect the evidence for school self-evaluation:

- Lesson observations in classroom to gather evidence about the quality of teaching and learning.
- Notebook work scrutiny to gather evidence and create a picture of students' learning
- learning walk, planned and targeted walk round the school
- Analysis of school record (hard and soft)s
- Analysis of the data of the students' achievements, behaviour and attendance to evaluate progress
- Minutes of the meetings with the staff and the School Council
- Focus groups and Questionnaires to parents, students and staff

11. School self evaluation (SSE) is an on-going process and linked to the cycle of school development planning, The evidence collected through SSE will contribute to identifying priorities for improvement. For example, if concern is expressed about quality of teaching, evidence can be collected through SSE activities like classroom observations, analysis of student performance data and learning walks. The evidence will enable the school head identify, for example, excellent teaching and teaching that needs to improve. This evidence can then help identify professional development activities to improve quality of teaching.

12. Glossary

All students
To demonstrate inclusion, the expression "all students" is used throughout the document and refers to the wide range of students in all types of schools and madrassas across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Pakistan). This includes differently abled students, for example, those with special learning needs and / or disabilities. When reference is made to parents the word "children" is used.

Authorities
Authorities (From education minister to district education officers all are the authorities working in Elementary and secondary education department and work as authorities with school heads.

Demonstration
Demonstration refers to the work a school head is required to demonstrate or show in the school. Evidence collected from what a school head can demonstrate helps determine his or her level of performance according to standards.

Distributed Leadership
This type of leadership involves assigning or delegating tasks and responsibilities to the teachers and community for the development of the school.

Digital tools
A range of digital tools are available to support teachers' and all students' learning, For example, these can be tools to help create worksheets, record (hard and soft) and manipulate data, accessing research information and manage remote learning.

Emotional Intelligence Leadership
The ability of a school head to perceive, understand, control emotions of self and recognize and respond to others' emotions in order to develop a positive relationship is called emotional leadership. The ability to use it is called emotional intelligence.

Extra Mural Activities/Co-Curricular
These activities are planned in school with the help of community in addition to the formal curriculum. Examples include sporting activities and family events.

Information & Communication Technology (ICT)

Information and Communications Technology refers to hardware and software available to schools to support students' learning and school management systems. ICT also be used to refer to a school subject in which students gain knowledge and skills to use IT facilities.

Key Area
The five key areas refers to the standards. Each key area represents a discrete aspect of a school head's role and responsibilities. Taken together the key areas represent all the responsibilities held by the school head.

Knowledge and understanding
Knowledge and understanding are part of each key area and represent the ability of a school head needs to have to develop the appropriate skills and undertake the role effectively.

Developmental Partners/Organizations

Developmental organizations are non-governmental organizations/development partners that function independently of any government according to the policy. Such organizations are usually non-profit and charitable organizations.

Norms

Norms are informal, mostly unwritten rules that define acceptable and appropriate behavior within a society or group of people. Norms vary across societies according, to historical experiences, values and cultural influences.

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)
Professional learning communities are group of people working together for the purpose to achieve desirable outcomes. In this document PLCs refer the school heads who joined together for peer learning.

School Leaders
School leaders are all staff, other than the school head, who have leadership responsibilities with in the school. These responsibilities could be for a subject, a year group or a whole school aspect, such as organizing scheme of studies,and the student attendance,

Skills
A skill is an ability and capacity to carry out activities or job responsibilities building on acquired knowledge and understanding

STEM

STEM is an acronym for the following subjects – Science, Technogy, Engineering and Mathematics.

STEAM

STEAM is an acronym for the following subjects – Science, Technogy, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics.

Standards
The term standards in this document refer to National Professional Standards for School Heads in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Pakistan). The school heads consist of heads leading in all types of institutions i.e. public, private and special education

Sustainable School Improvement
This term refers to ensuring the improvements made through school development activities are sustained over time and embedded into the school's practice.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
These goals have been introduced by United Nations Organization and are known as SDGs. Only those discussed and made reference to in this document have connections with the school.

Triangulation
Triangulation means to collect data from at least three different sources to test validity and reliability. Triangulation strengthens the power of the evidence.

Values
Values are beliefs and principles that guide people's behaviour. Values are influenced by norms and cultural beliefs and attitudes.

Vision
Vision in this document refers to the vision of the school. Every school has its own vision and this is developed collaboratively with the help of school staff and community.

Development and Review Teams

List of Developers

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List of Reviewers (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa)

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