

# OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE



## Context

Worldwide, school principals play a critical role in the leadership and management of schools by being visionary leaders, efficient managers and communicators who are able to balance the academic and professional needs of learners and teachers, respectively, with the operational and organizational demands of their schools.

Embedded in the principals' leadership and management role are core societal, educational and professional values which ought to be reflected in the manner in which they deal with all matters pertaining to the curriculum and human resources in their schools. Overall, their duties and responsibilities encompass a wide range of actions, including, albeit not limited to: (a) instructional leadership – overseeing the implementation of the school curriculum to improve learning outcomes, ensuring its alignment with educational standards and promoting learner performance and achievement; setting high expectations for learner performance, analysing learner performance data, and implementing strategies and closing achievement gaps; and fostering an environment that supports teaching and learning – where learners and teachers feel safe, motivated, and engaged. Furthermore, the school principal must also act as the primary liaison between the school and the community, including parents, local businesses, and community organizations. Working with the School Governing Body, the South African school principal is also expected to manage the school's budget, allocate resources efficiently, and ensure fiscal responsibility; and, see to the maintenance of the school's physical infrastructure to ensure that the school is safe, and conducive for teaching, learning and recreation.

Further, in South Africa, school principals are expected to perform their duties and responsibilities in line with the prescripts of the South African Standards for Principalship, namely (a) leading teaching and learning in the school, bearing in mind (i) strategic leadership, (ii) executive leadership, (iii) instructional leadership, (iv) cultural leadership, and (v) organisational leadership; (b) shaping the direction and development of the school; (c) working with and for the community; (d) developing and empowering self and others; (e) managing the school as an organisation; (f) managing the quality of teaching and learning, as well as ensuring accountability; (g) managing the staff in the school; and (h) managing and advocating extramural activities. Through their adherence to these standards, school principals are expected to strive to uphold a positive professional image of the teaching profession, at all times.

## Theme and Sub-Themes

Drawing from the above 'standards', this Seminar has been organised around the theme: 'Enhancing Quality Education through Strategic Resourcing that Prioritises Adequate Staffing, School Safety and Effective School Management'. From this Theme, the operational terms are (a) strategic resourcing, (b) adequate staffing, (c) school safety, and (d) effective school management, as core aspects of quality education. Thus, this Seminar is organised around these operational terms, both with respect to plenary session expert presentations and breakaway group discussion streams. Accordingly, the four sub-themes of the Seminar – also serving as the topics for the breakaway group discussion streams, are:

- Enhancing the quality of learning and teaching by exploring innovative and sustainable funding strategies to improve current staffing levels in schools:
  - a) Role of Government
  - b) Role of Private Sector
  - c) Role of Other Stakeholders

- Achieving quality school experience by cultivating a sustainable and conducive (safe) work environment for teachers to foster their well-being and ensure productivity.
- Searching for ways to achieve effective school leadership by promoting and nurturing vision and policy-driven school leaders, with high emotional intelligence (EI).
- Exploring ways to navigate the nexus of e-Education, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Ethics in the delivery of the school curriculum.

**Purpose**

The purpose of this Seminar is to give effect to some of the core aspects of the Standards for Principalship enunciated above by (a) exposing participants to important information delivered by area experts and resource persons, and (b) providing participants with an opportunity to reflect on their practice and experiences in light of the information shared by the area experts and resource persons to come up with actionable recommendations.

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