

NWT Model of Trustee Leadership For the Health and Social Services System

NWT MODEL OF TRUSTEE LEADERSHIP FOR THE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES SYSTEM

Introduction

The NWT Model of Trustee Leadership defines and describes the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of Authority Boards of Trustees,¹ and their relationship within the health and social services system. The model reflects NWT priorities, fosters Trustee cohesion and collaboration, will help to improve board functioning, and provides for essential training.

The model also supports the goals of the *NWT Health and Social Services System Action Plan 2002-2005* towards operating as one system. To achieve the goals, it is essential that the NWT Model of Trustee Leadership for the health and social services authorities be established and implemented immediately.

Responsibility for Wellness – *Is Everyone’s Job*

NWT residents are responsible for their own and their family's health and wellness. They do this by maintaining healthy behaviours and lifestyles, and by keeping informed on environmental, social and economic factors that may affect health. Residents have the right to make their own decisions in consultation with a variety of health and social services providers. They also have a right to health information to help them make the best decisions.

Health and social services are essential to the well being of all NWT residents. The management and delivery of programs and services offered throughout the system is a complex undertaking.

Delivery of NWT health and social services involves many different partners. While responsibility for the wellness of residents first rests with individuals, it is also shared by many others, including Health and Social Services Authority Trustees and staff, the Minister and Department of Health and Social Services, other government departments, Aboriginal organizations, regional and community governments, territorial, regional and community non-government organizations (NGOs), and professional associations.

¹ Authority refers to the Health and Social Services Authority as the organization, management and staff, whereas Board only refers to the Board of Trustees of the Health and Social Services Authority

System Accountability – Rests With The Minister

The Minister of Health and Social Services has ultimate responsibility for the overall quality of the health and social services system. The Minister is accountable to the Legislative Assembly and the public for the provision of services, and for ensuring that the social and health needs of NWT residents are met.

The Minister is also responsible for establishing priorities and setting strategic direction for the system; developing policy, legislation, standards and guidelines; and planning and allocating resources. Refer to the *Health and Social Services Establishment Policy and Accountability Framework for the NWT Health and Social Services System* for more information.

The Department of Health and Social Services

The Minister is supported in this role by the Department of Health and Social Services. The Cabinet-approved mandate, roles and responsibilities of the Minister, Deputy Minister and the Department of Health and Social Services are outlined in the Department's Establishment Policy.

The Deputy Minister of Health and Social Services is accountable to the Minister and responsible for the management of the Department including the planning, administration and other functions necessary to further the Department's mandate. The Deputy Minister is also accountable to the Minister for the proper conduct of the business of the Department.

The Department develops and supports the health and social services system, monitors the operations and results of the Authorities, and administers some territorial programs. The Department is administered in a manner to ensure that government requirements and the requirements stated in legislation, regulations, agreements, policies and directives are satisfied.

Health and Social Services Authorities

The Minister has authority to create Health and Social Services Authorities under the *Hospital Insurance and Health and Social Services Administration Act*.

Health and Social Services Authorities Boards of Trustees are accountable to the Minister, responsible for the programs and services they have been delegated, and answerable to the residents of their service area to whom they provide programs and services. While accountable to the Minister, Authority Trustees have an obligation to keep the people of their regions informed, advised and consulted on the delivery of health and social services.

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the proper management of the Authority's facilities, programs, services and funds. The Board is also responsible for the proper conduct of their Board of Trustees, both collectively as a Board and for each Trustee individually. If the Board of Trustees does not conduct themselves properly, it is the Minister's responsibility to intervene.

Under the direction of the Minister, the Board of Trustees and the Authority have critical roles in service delivery. Boards of Trustees assess needs, set priorities, plan and allocate resources, and oversee the Authority's management and provision of programs and services to children, families and other people in the communities, within financial and human resources approved by the Minister.

Authorities Boards of Trustees also ensure that people have reasonable access to quality services, that relevant federal and territorial legislation, regulations, policies, directives, agreements and standards are followed in the service area, that the provision of services is monitored and assessed, and that services are coordinated for NWT residents.

The *Hospital Insurance and Health and Social Services Administration Act* refers to the Authorities Boards of Trustees as "boards of management", but the legislation does not clearly define or distinguish the Board's roles and responsibilities. Further to this, the Board's Contribution Agreements and the Ministerial Directive on Board Roles and Responsibilities only generally describe the roles and responsibilities.

This NWT Model of Trustee Leadership includes more specific information as to *how* the Boards of Trustees should carry out their roles and responsibilities. The Model also distinguishes between the important roles and responsibilities of the Authorities, the Minister of Health and Social Services, the Department, and other system partners.

An NWT Model of Trustee Leadership — *The Joint Leadership Council*

As a result of the complex nature of the health and social services system, effective coordination of activities and collaboration to resolve issues is essential for the health and well being of NWT residents served by the system.

To support a proactive and collaborative approach to system leadership the Minister has formed the Joint Leadership Council. The Joint Leadership Council is comprised of the Minister, all Chairpersons of the health and social services authorities, and the Deputy Minister of the Department. Its mandate is to:

- Describe a vision for the development and operation of a sustainable health and social services system
- Oversee the implementation of any major reforms to the HSS system
- Set direction for planning of system-wide initiatives and issues

- Review and recommend approval of system-wide plans, activity reports and results information
 - Provide advice to the Minister on matters related to health and social services
 - Direct the development and implementation of cooperative initiatives
 - Share information on health and social services issues, concerns and best practices
 - Provide direction to the Joint Senior Management Committee (JSMC)
 - Direct the development, review and recommended approval of reports made by the JSMC

The Joint Leadership Council provides system-wide leadership, and ensures that all system partners work collaboratively towards common goals, so that the health and social services system operates as one, providing the best possible services to NWT residents.

All Authority Trustees have opportunity to provide input on the issues before the Joint Leadership Council. It is the responsibility of the Authority's Chairpersons, who are JLC members, to brief their Board of Trustees on the items for discussion and to work collaboratively and consultatively with their respective Board, so that the JLC operates from a system perspective.

Ultimately, the Minister is responsible for making the final decisions and is held accountable for those decisions by the people of the NWT, through the Legislative Assembly. For more detail, refer to the *Accountability Framework for the NWT Health and Social Services System*.

JLC and JSMC – A System Approach to Planning

As explained above, the Joint Leadership Council (JLC) is responsible for leading the health and social services system and does this by setting goals, strategic direction and planning and reporting objectives for the system.

The Joint Senior Management Committee (JSMC), comprised of the system's senior managers, is responsible for directing the implementation of the plans approved by the JLC, and for monitoring and reporting on results. The JLC relies on the information from the JSMC in order to make informed decisions on any planning directions.

All health and social services authorities are represented at these two levels of planning. The JLC and JSMC support the NWT Model of Trustee Leadership by fostering an integrated system-wide approach to planning and leadership. For more specific information on planning and reporting functions refer to the *Integrated Planning and Reporting Model for the Health and Social Services System*.

Trustee Accountability, Roles and Responsibilities

With leadership of the system established, individual health and social services authorities and their Trustees need to understand how they operate in order to contribute within the system.

Authority Boards of Trustees have a legislated responsibility and authority to plan, manage, deliver, monitor and evaluate health and social services within their region or community. This also includes compliance with the Contribution Agreement and any Ministerial Directives.

All authorities are led by a Board of Trustees that is accountable to the Minister of Health and Social Services. The only exception to this is the Dogrib Community Services Board, whose Board of Trustees is also accountable to the people who elected them to the Board.

While accountable to the Minister for its delegated responsibilities, the Board of Trustees is answerable to the clients they serve, as well as authority staff, community members, and other NWT health and social services authorities. The Board of Trustees establish strategic priorities and goals consistent with the overall system priorities and GNWT fiscal realities, and they also establish priorities relative to their specific health and social services authority needs.

The Board of Trustees is expected to take an active role in the governance of the Authority including the decision making process and not devolve these responsibilities to management.

The job of a Trustee is challenging and complex. Individual Trustees work as a collective Board of Trustees to fulfill their roles and responsibilities.

The role of the Chairperson includes additional responsibilities such as acting as the main representative of the Board of Trustees, chairing all board meetings, ensuring compliance with legislation, directives, bylaws, policies and guidelines, and providing direction to the Chief Executive Officer, within the limits established by the Board of Trustees.

The Minister holds the Chairperson accountable for the responsibilities conferred to the Board of Trustees, and in doing so, conducts annual performance reviews of the Board Chairpersons, in consultation with their respective Boards of Trustees. This performance review process demonstrates the commitment to accountability, and is key to the continuous improvement of the NWT Health and Social Services System.

There are many activities that the Board of Trustees undertakes and they work collaboratively to guide and direct the Health and Social Services Authority, through the Chief Executive Officer. The Chief Executive Officer works for the Board of Trustees and also has distinct roles and responsibilities.

The Board of Trustees and the Chief Executive Officer must have a common understanding of each other's roles and responsibilities. They must also develop a good working relationship that consists of trust, respect, open communication and a commitment to serve in the best interests of the Authority and its employees, clients and service area.

A professional working relationship should also exist between the Authority and its many partners that provide direct program and service delivery. The Chief Executive Officer has expectations of the service delivery partners and holds them accountable for the programs and services they deliver on behalf of the Authority.

The roles and responsibilities of the Board of Trustees and the Chief Executive Officer are broadly described in the following chart that also includes a brief description as to how Trustees shall carry out their responsibilities.

Area of Responsibility	Board of Trustees Role	How Trustees Meet Their Responsibilities	Chief Executive Officer Role
Operating Bylaws	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Directs the development of and approves the operating bylaws to reflect how the business of the Board will be conducted in accordance with relevant federal and territorial legislation and regulations, GNWT policies, directives and agreements, and with HSS Ministerial Directives and Departmental policies, standards, guidelines and procedures Reviews bylaws annually and directs and approves any required amendments Provides input into development of standardized system bylaws 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trustees will read and provide comments on proposed bylaws and amendments including standardized system bylaws Trustees will monitor the Board's actions to ensure they are in compliance with approved bylaws Trustees will assess the bylaws annually with respect to their adequacy and suggest changes where necessary Trustees may be required to serve on a Board committee to provide oversight and direction regarding the development and assessment of the bylaws 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops, provides for review and approval to Board Annually assesses the adequacy of the approved bylaws and presents recommendations for change Undertakes needed amendments and presents for approval Monitors for compliance Advises when proposed actions are in conflict with the bylaws
Board Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Directs the development of and approves Board policies to provide guidance to the Authority on particular matters, consistent with Board values, priorities and strategic direction, and in accordance with relevant federal and territorial legislation and regulations, GNWT policies, directives and agreements, and with HSS Ministerial Directives and Departmental policies, standards, guidelines and procedures Annually reviews and approves assessments on the effectiveness of its policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trustees will read and provide comments on all Board policies presented for approval Trustees will read and provide comments on all reports of non-compliance with Board policies and approve recommendations as deemed appropriate Trustees will read and provide comments on assessments of the effectiveness of Board policies and approve recommendations as deemed necessary Trustees will read and provide comments on any proposed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops, provides for review and approval to Board Reports on the effectiveness of Board policies and presents recommendations for change Monitors compliance with all policies, and reports any instances of non-compliance including rationale and recommendations Undertakes needed amendments and presents to Board for

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receives timely reports on all instances of non-compliance accompanied by appropriate recommendations • Reviews and approves all Board policy amendments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • amendments to Board policies • Trustees may be required to serve on a Board committee to evaluate Board policies and direct the development of amendments and new policies 	approval
Long-term Strategic Planning (> 5 years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorities must adhere to the HSS System Strategic Plan and will develop an Authority-specific plan • Directs the development of the Authority's strategic plan to support achievement of stated goals and objectives and move the Authority closer to realizing its vision that is consistent and integrated with the HSS System • Reviews needs assessments, environmental scan and SWOT analysis as it relates specifically to the Authority and the overall HSS System • Reviews and approves strategic goals and objectives for the Authority consistent with the HSS System • Reviews and approves any changes to the Authority's Vision, Mission, Values, Goals, and Strategic Objectives consistent with the HSS System • Approves the Authority's strategic plan, submits to HSS Minister for final approval, and communicates to public once approved by Minister • Receives confirmation of adherence to the strategic plan in all of the Authority's business or operational plans • Revise as necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trustees will read, provide comments, and approve goals, objectives and strategic directions for the Authority • Trustees will read, provide comments and approve changes to the Vision and Mission statements as deemed necessary • Trustees may be required to review, provide comments and approve value statements • Trustees will review and approve the Authority's strategic plan • Trustees may be required to serve on a Trustee strategic planning committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertakes the research necessary to identify strategic goals, priorities and directions for the Authority and presents to the Board for review and approval • Undertakes review and amendments of Vision, Mission and Value statements as directed by the Board • Drafts the strategic plan based on Board direction and submits to Board for approval • Adheres to the strategic plan in all of the Authority's business or operational plans • Monitors and reports information to Board • Communicates to staff, once approved by the HSS Minister • Participates with JSMC to prepare system-wide recommendations for JLC
Business Planning (3years) Operational Planning (annually)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directs the development of and approves the business and operational plans to support achievement of strategic plan's goals and objectives in accordance with community needs and the HSS Department's planning requirements, including approval of any new or enhanced programs and services • Submits to HSS Minister for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trustees review, provide comments and approve the Authority's business and operational plans • Trustees review, provide comments and approve progress reports on implementation • Trustees may be required to serve on a Board committee to provide Trustee oversight on the operational business planning process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drafts the business and operational plans based on Board direction and in accordance with the strategic plan and Department planning requirements (includes recommendations, substantiation and required resources for any new or enhanced programs and services) • Submits to Board for

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	<p>final approval and communicates to public once approved by Minister</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receives, reviews and approves progress reports on implementation • Reports major variances and mitigating actions to the Minister 		<p>approval</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicates to staff, once approved by the HSS Minister • Implements, monitors and reports progress to the Board • Reports major variances and mitigating actions to the Board • Participates with JSMC to prepare system-wide recommendations for JLC
Annual Budgeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviews and approves the annual operating and capital budgets, based on funding received from Department to support plans • Submits to HSS Minister for final approval 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trustees will ensure the budget is consistent with Department's budget development instructions and targets • Trustees will ensure that any new or enhanced programs or services are consistent with both the Board's strategic direction and business plan, and the Department's system-wide strategic direction • Trustees will ensure that the major goals in the budget are consistent with the goals in the business plan • Trustees will ensure that changes in financial and human resources from the previous year's annual budget are clearly identified and justified • Trustees will ensure that the capital requirements are consistent with the strategic direction and business plan and that the Board approved the priority rating for the capital needs • Trustees will ensure that the operating and capital budget being recommended to the Minister for approval is consistent with the Department's guidelines and targets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops and recommends approval • Prepares the budget development framework for the Board's review and approval • Ensures the annual budget is prepared and presented to the Board for review and approval consistent with the Board's and the Department's direction and guidelines • Identifies all proposed new or enhanced program and services and establishes their consistency with the Board's and the Department's strategic direction • Explains proposed changes in financial resources and human resources from the previous year's budget • Explains major changes in expenditures and revenue from the previous year's budget • Recommends and prioritizes capital requirements that are consistent with the strategic direction and business plan
Financial Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains the Authority's financial stability and accountability • Regularly reviews the Authority's financial position • Reviews and approves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trustees review expenditure and revenue reports on a regular basis and direct and approve any necessary actions needed to address significant variances from the approved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for operating within the Board approved budget • Regularly prepares year-to-date and year-end financial projections

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> quarterly variances and directs appropriate action Approves responses to any surplus or deficit Accounts to the Minister on an annual basis for the funds expended Reviews and approves the audited financial statements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> budget Trustees review and approve the year end statement of expenditures and revenue for submission to the Minister Trustees direct the development of any deficit recovery plans required to address accumulated deficits and submit to the Minister for review and approval Trustees ensure the annual audit and the auditor's management letter is reviewed and approved by the Board Trustees approve any actions needed to address significant issues identified in the audit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides recommendations to the Board to address significant variances Provides year-end statements of expenditure and revenue with recommendations Develops deficit recovery plans for Board and Ministerial approval Ensures the annual audit and auditor's letter is provided to the Board along with any recommendations for action Ensures management of the Authority's finances, including the choice of financial institution and appointment of appropriate signing officers
Human Resource Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selects and appoints the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with GNWT Public Service acts, regulations, policies, procedures, terms of employment and remuneration Appoints CEO as Authority's agent responsible for daily management Provides CEO with clear direction on the CEO's areas of responsibility and accountability Evaluates the CEO's performance on an annual basis Undertakes disciplinary action with only the CEO when necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trustees select and appoint the CEO Trustees ensure that the CEO's responsibilities and accountabilities are included in the CEO's job description and contract agreement between the Board of Trustees and the CEO Trustees undertake an annual review of the CEO's performance based on the CEO's responsibility and accountability and the goals, objectives and expectations established by the Board Trustees direct that all Authority staff be evaluated on an annual basis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommends to the Board personal goals and objectives for the upcoming year as part of CEO annual evaluation process Ensures recruitment and staffing of all Authority personnel Supervises and assesses the performance of the senior managers on an annual basis Ensures all Authority staff are evaluated on an annual basis Responsible for all other staff under the authority delegated from the Minister responsible for the Public Service, including taking disciplinary action with staff when necessary Abides by GNWT Human Resources acts, regulations, policies, and procedures
Performance Measurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensures the Authority delivers programs and services that meet standards for accessibility, safety, cost, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trustees will review, provide comments and approve annual performance measurement and evaluation reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports the Board's performance measurement activities and ensures

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> quality, timeliness, effectiveness, and efficiency within the overall parameters, directions and standards set by the HSS system-wide Performance Measurement Framework Directs the preparation of annual performance measurement and evaluation reports for Board review and approval, including explanations and recommendations for all instances where performance failed to meet the standards and where the standards or measurement techniques are in need of adjustment Undertakes an annual review of the Board's performance to determine its effectiveness in providing leadership and governance to the Authority Minister conducts annual performance review of Chairpersons in consultation with the respective Boards of Trustees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trustees will participate actively in the annual Board self assessment process, provide comments and opinions on past performance, and make suggestions for improving Board and individual Trustee performance Trustees may be asked to serve on a Board committee to provide oversight to the Authority on performance measurement activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> implementation of the HSS system-wide Performance Measurement Framework
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensures the implementation of a program measurement and evaluation component for each of the Authority's programs and services within the parameters of the Framework
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops an annual performance measurement and evaluation report and presents to the Board for review and approval
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides information and other support needed for the Board's self evaluation process
Progress Reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensures the Minister is advised of significant political, legislative, policy, service standard and major operational matters Provides annual financial statements to the Minister Approves and submits to the Minister an annual report on operations and results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chairperson ensures the Minister is advised on a timely basis of potential issues to ensure appropriate action can be initiated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies significant political, legislative, policy, service standard and major operational matters to the Board along with recommended actions
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops reports as required by the Board, the Department, or by legislation
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops the annual report for Board approval
Day-to-day Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No role in day-to-day operations but responsible for ensuring operations are proceeding as planned Trustees ensure major operational trends and issues are effectively monitored and action taken as required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trustees are kept informed of significant operational trends and issues that may require action by the Board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Makes all management decisions within spending limits and authority
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advises the Board of any significant or political issues arising from day-to-day operations
Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicates with the HSS Minister, other elected officials and the public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trustees provide appropriate briefings as required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Researches and communicates with clients, partners and

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeps community informed of the Authority's programs and services and major issues and trends • Approves press releases • Responsible for media relations relating to policy and political issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • issues and client needs • Trustees ensure public concerns are addressed by working with the CEO • Trustees, through the Chairperson, approve press releases and address media matters related to Board policy and political issues • Trustees, through the Chairperson, ensure the Minister is informed of any politically sensitive issue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • stakeholders for thorough knowledge of issues • Prepares draft press releases for Board approval • Ensures appropriate briefing material is prepared for the Chairperson for media relations on policy and political matters • Addresses media matters related to the day-to-day operations of the Authority

In carrying out their responsibilities, Trustees may be required to serve on a Board committee. Trustees should ensure that the committee has Board-approved terms of reference that mandates the committee's work.

It is important to note that there are some areas where Trustee involvement is strictly prohibited. This includes involvement in the Authority's personnel issues (other than the CEO), staffing, labour relations, compensation, payroll, contracting, and confidential patient issues and records. These are the Chief Executive Officer's responsibility.

The Board of Trustees is the employer of *only* the Chief Executive Officer, whereas the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) is the employer of all other Authority staff, with the exception of the Hay River Community Health Authority. The CEO must abide by all GNWT policies, procedures and protocols and it is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees to hold the CEO accountable for doing so.

Ongoing Trustee Training and Development

Every Health and Social Services Authority relies on the leadership contributions of its Trustees. In order to improve support to Trustees and to build upon and advance their leadership qualities and contributions, the Department has undertaken the following:

The Department is a contributing partner to the *Good Governance Workshops – A Workshop Series for Decision Makers* – which includes 12 generic workshops designed to help community councillors and board members further develop their skills and knowledge so that local governance and decision making in the NWT continues to improve. Partners to this work include the Departments of Municipal and Community Affairs, Health and Social Services, and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.

Collaboration and cooperation at the leadership level is vital to ensuring an efficient system-wide approach to health and social service delivery. Designing specific training for health and social services Trustees will help them develop the skills and understanding needed to advance the quality of their leadership and participation within the system. A Trustee Focus Group, with Trustee representatives from the authorities, has been established and is guiding the development of a 13th training workshop for health and social services Trustees.

The health and social services-specific workshops, combined with those from the *Good Governance* series, will provide ongoing training on roles, responsibilities and duties of Authority Trustees.

Conclusion

Trustees, while ultimately accountable to the Minister, are delegated responsibilities for, and play the principle role in the leadership of health and social service delivery. To provide this leadership ability they must be fully aware of their responsibilities, roles and accountabilities.

The NWT Model of Trustee Leadership provides clarity to the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of Authority Trustees. Given the complexity of the system and the need for collaborative action within and across Authorities, Trustees are supported to develop a common understanding of their role within the system. The training and orientation designed for Trustees will foster a common understanding and system-wide approach to leadership.