



NATIONAL SCHOOL LEADERS' STANDARDS





National School Leaders' Standards
for
Pre-Tertiary Schools in Ghana

September 2025

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Foreword

Effective school leadership is the cornerstone of a learning-focused school and a successful education system. As Ghana seeks to transform her education system for a sustainable future, it is essential that this transformation nurtures the intellectual, social and ethical development of every learner. Central to achieving this goal is the quality of school leadership. School leaders, in the performance of their functions, are not only custodians of agreed standards and ethos, but also agents of change, creativity, innovation and progress in their schools. This document presents the National School Leaders' Standards, which embody the high expectations and trust placed in heads and principals responsible for ensuring that all learners are learning and reaching their full potential. It recognises school leaders as transformative agents whose influence resonates throughout classrooms, staffrooms and the wider community.

The standards can be referred to as both a compass and a mirror for school effectiveness and improvement. They serve as a guiding framework for school leaders to strive for professional excellence and personal growth, while also enabling reflection on the profound impact their leadership has on improving the life chances of all learners. All learners from Ghana's pre-tertiary education system must be adequately prepared for further education, employment and responsible adulthood in a world marked by rapid societal changes. In response to increasingly diverse student needs, these standards aim to ensure consistency, integrity and a shared vision for educational leadership across Ghana's pre-tertiary schools.

Importantly, these standards are not rigid dictates, but flexible guidelines intended to be interpreted within the unique context of each school and its leadership. They are designed to:

- Shape school leaders' ongoing professional practice and development, encouraging reflective and adaptive leadership within and beyond the school walls.
- Support fair and transparent recruitment, appointment, and advancement of school leaders, underpinning job descriptions and person specifications that attract high-calibre individuals to these pivotal roles.
- Form the basis for comprehensive training programmes for both current and aspiring school leaders, ensuring that all are equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to meet future challenges.
- Inform robust and constructive performance management processes that help leaders grow and succeed in their roles.

In the interest of Ghana moving forward in transforming education for a sustainable future, it is the collective responsibility of educators, school governors, policymakers, parents and the wider community to support heads and principals in upholding these standards. Doing so will help achieve each school's mission and clarify the purpose of education for national development. The success of Ghana's schools – and the future of the nation – depends on the vision, integrity and commitment of those in whom the schools are entrusted. When school leaders are empowered and held to these high standards, they can inspire teachers, engage learners and forge lasting partnerships with families and communities, creating schools that are centres of learning excellence and inclusion.

I hope this document – developed through collaboration with teacher unions, agencies of the Ministry of Education and education professional bodies in Ghana – serves as a pacesetter, guiding all who are dedicated to leading our schools with inspiration, creativity, courage, entrepreneurial skills and a steadfast commitment to the holistic development of every learner. The transformation of education for a sustainable future is a shared mission that requires continuous improvement. Together, we can ensure that the main focus of headship and principalship remains: all learners are learning in schools that are truly learning-focused for this generation.

Haruna Iddrisu, MP
Minister for Education

A. Introduction

The role of school leaders (headteachers, headmistresses, and headmasters) in creating an enabling environment that supports the holistic development of learners cannot be underestimated. School leaders are responsible for ensuring that learners are adequately prepared for further studies, the world of work and responsible adulthood. Through the leadership they provide, school leaders are expected to transform their schools into vibrant places of learning. They are not only leaders for learning but also transformative agents who drive positive change in teaching and learning.

School leaders serve as the lead professionals and role models for teachers, learners, and the wider community. Their leadership is a critical enabler of high-quality teaching, attainment and achievement. Moreover, it contributes to creating positive and enriching educational experiences for learners. Together with those responsible for governance (i.e. the school board or the school management committee), they act as custodians of the nation's schools.

Parents and the wider public rightly hold high expectations of school leaders, given their influential role in leading the teaching profession and guiding the learners in their care. The National School Leaders' Standards set out how school leaders can meet these high expectations. These standards serve as an important benchmark not only for school leaders and those who hold them to account but also for those who train and develop school leaders.

The National School Leaders' Standards are non-statutory and intended as guidance to be interpreted in the context of each individual school leader and school. They are crafted to be relevant to all school leaders in Ghana's pre-tertiary level schools.

The standards can be used to:

- shape school leaders' own practice and professional development, within and beyond the school
- support the recruitment and appointment of school leaders, including the development of job descriptions and person specifications
- underpin frameworks for the training of school leaders, including both current and aspiring leaders
- inform the performance management of school leaders

B. The Core Purpose of School Leadership and the Qualification of a School Leader

The ultimate goal of a school leader is to improve the life chances of all learners under their care. Learners are the very reason schools exist – without learners, there is no school. Therefore, the foremost concern of any school leader is to ensure that each learner receives an educational experience that supports the development of their full potential. The qualifications of a school leader are defined within the framework of possessing the necessary skills, competencies, attributes, and behaviours required to achieve this learner-focused goal.

The school leader must be a qualified and professional teacher. This means holding a minimum of a bachelor's degree, a professional teaching qualification and a valid teaching licence, in addition to being of the appropriate professional rank and experience. Whilst being an outstanding classroom practitioner alone does not guarantee effective leadership, it remains both a necessary and valuable foundation for leading teaching and learning in a school – providing credibility, role modelling and practical insight.

An individual occupying, or intending to occupy, the position of school leader must demonstrate the minimum requisite knowledge and competencies expected of the postholder as stipulated by the National Professional Education Leadership Qualification Framework. It is therefore expected that all school leaders undergo training based on the Framework. Such a leader should be able to:

- challenge the status quo to promote school improvement and effectiveness;
- provide strategic direction by articulating their vision, mission and core values for the school;
- influence the actions of learners and staff (both teaching and supporting) towards the achievement of the school's strategic goals.

As a manager, the school head should ensure:

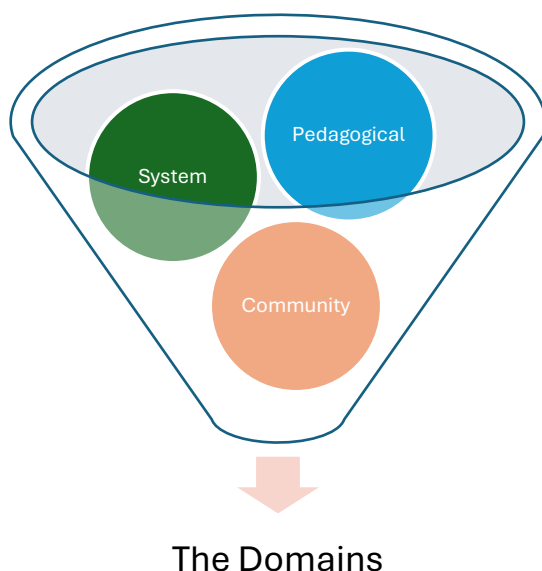
- effective and efficient allocation and utilisation of resources;
- transparency and accountability in day-to-day operations;
- compliance with all relevant operational regulations;
- effective communication and engagement with staff, learners and other stakeholders; and
- the authentic and motivational engagement of staff and learners to promote productivity, improvement and a sense of ownership.

A school leader is a public servant, expected to perform both management and leadership functions in line with government mandates and to improve the performance of learners by preparing them for tertiary education, the world of work and responsible adult life. They must be a leader for learning and a transformative agent for learning in the school.

C. The Domains and Indicators for the National School Leaders' Standards

The national school leaders' standards are framed around three key domains. Each domain encompasses specific qualities, attributes and behavioural expectations, accompanied by related practice areas (specific indicators) that define effective leadership in action.

The Domains



1.0 Pedagogical Leadership

Pedagogical leadership occurs when all levels of school leadership – including school boards and other stakeholders – direct their efforts and resources toward building a school culture that enhances quality learning outcomes for all learners, regardless of their diversity. Two key elements of pedagogical leadership can be identified: the development of a Teacher-Focused School and a Learner-Centred Classroom for the purpose of building a Learning-Focused School.

A Teacher-Focused School

A teacher-focused school is one that has established systems, structures and practices ensuring that teachers possess and apply essential knowledge and skills – such as critical thinking, creativity, problem-solving, collaboration, and leadership – to meet the diverse needs of their learners. In a teacher-focused school, school leaders are intentional about enabling teachers to develop both pedagogical and content knowledge, to engage in professional inquiry and research, and to understand learners' needs, abilities and prior attainment. They synthesise this knowledge into coherent strategies that guide effective teaching and learning. Creating a learning-focused environment depends fundamentally on teachers who have the competence, confidence and commitment to implement effective practice. Therefore, the structures and culture of the school must be teacher-focused, serving as the catalyst for creating a learning-focused school.

A Learner-Centred Classroom

A learner-centred classroom is one in which teachers consider the needs and aspirations of all learners, employing pedagogical strategies that encourage active and consistent participation in the learning process. This approach shifts the emphasis from teaching to learning, with the goal of developing autonomous and independent learners. Responsibility for learning rests primarily with the learners themselves – supported and guided by the teacher – helping them to cultivate critical thinking, problem-solving and lifelong learning skills.

A Learning-Focused School

A learning-focused school demonstrates pedagogical leadership through a clear commitment to investing in teacher development and promoting learner-centred practices. School leaders and managers allocate resources strategically to strengthen teaching and learning and to foster an inclusive and reflective school culture that enhances both quality and equity in outcomes. The defining characteristic of a learning-focused school is its commitment to collective responsibility for learning – where school leaders, teachers and learners all take ownership of continuous improvement. Such schools are both teacher-focused and learner-centred, grounded in the belief that schools perform best when they actively reflect on and refine their own practice.

Leadership Qualities

- Inspirational
- Innovative
- Visionary
- Supportive
- Collaborative

Leadership Attributes

- Teaching excellence
- Curriculum enhancement
- Professional development
- High expectations
- Continuous improvement
- Teacher development

Expected Behavioural Changes

- Promotion of evidence-based teaching practices
- Regular evaluation and improvement of the curriculum
- Ongoing professional development opportunities for teachers
- Increased use of data to inform instruction
- Regular professional development sessions for teachers
- Implementation of innovative teaching practices, including the use of technology and engaging, adaptive and inclusive pedagogies

Standard 1.1 School culture

School leaders:

- establish and sustain the school's ethos and strategic direction in partnership with those responsible for governance and through consultation with the school community
- create a culture where learners experience a positive and enriching school life, and where everyone – including adults – is a learner

- uphold ambitious educational standards which prepare learners from all backgrounds for their next phase of education and life
- promote positive and respectful relationships across the school community and a safe, orderly and inclusive environment
- promote a culture of high professional conduct and shared values among staff

Standard 1.2 Teaching

School leaders:

- establish and sustain high-quality, expert teaching across all subjects and phases, built on an evidence-informed understanding of effective teaching and how learners learn
- ensure teaching is underpinned by high levels of subject expertise and approaches that respect the distinct nature of subject disciplines or specialist domains
- ensure effective use is made of formative assessment and everyone has opportunities to reflect on the nature, skills and process of learning
- create the enabling environment for teachers to use creative, learner-centred approaches in the classroom
- promote a culture of continuing professional development, ensuring that professional learning translates into effective planning and delivery of lessons using technology as a tool

Standard 1.3 Curriculum and assessment

School leaders:

- ensure the implementation of the curriculum for its intended purpose
- ensure the provision of broad and enriching co-curricular activities for the benefit of all learners
- establish effective curricular leadership, developing subject leaders with high levels of relevant expertise with access to professional networks and communities
- ensure that all teachers know, understand and can use the school curriculum and the related assessment approaches to improve learning outcomes for all learners
- ensure valid, reliable and proportionate approaches are used when assessing learners' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum

Standard 1.4 Behaviour modelling

School leaders:

- establish and sustain high expectations of behaviour for all learners, grounded in positive relationships and clearly understood practices among staff and learners
- ensure high standards of conduct and courtesy among both teachers and learners in accordance with the school's behaviour policy and professional code of conduct
- implement consistent, fair and respectful approaches to managing behaviour for both teachers and learners
- ensure that adults within the school model and teach the behaviours expected of a good citizen

- promote a school culture where the study and demonstration of national values are integral to everyday life and practice

Standard 1.5 Gender Equity and Social Inclusion (GESI)

School leaders:

- ensure the school holds ambitious expectations for all teachers and learners with additional and special educational needs and disabilities
- establish and sustain inclusive cultures and practices that enable all learners to access the curriculum and learn effectively
- establish and maintain inclusive practices that enable teachers to access the curriculum, interpret its content accurately and teach effectively
- ensure the school works effectively in partnership with parents, carers and professionals to identify the additional and special educational needs of learners, providing support and adaptation where appropriate
- ensure the school fulfils its statutory duties regarding the rights of all learners

2.0 System Leadership

System leadership is about transforming schools into centres of learning where continuous improvement, inclusivity and high achievement for all learners are at the heart of leadership practice. It refers to the ability of school leaders to work collaboratively with their teams to create and sustain an enabling school environment that supports effective teaching, learning and continuous improvement. A system leader transcends individual responsibilities and embraces the collective goal of improving learning outcomes for all students by aligning school-level practices with national policies and frameworks.

School leaders serve as leaders of learning who build a culture of shared values and beliefs, foster a unified vision, and lead purposeful actions that promote inclusive and equitable education. This includes:

- establishing clear guidelines for implementing national priorities such as teaching, assessment and safe schools
- taking responsibility for creating a positive school climate that supports learner achievement
- tracking learner progress through robust management systems and designing individual learning support plans
- institutionalising gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) as core practices in school operations
- embedding school improvement planning and quality assurance as ongoing, systemic processes
- working with the school governance structures, such as school boards and school management committees, to maintain a consistent focus on learner achievement
- developing and implementing action plans to refine the school's purpose, strategy and values, ensuring they 'live and breathe' in the school's everyday practice

Leadership Qualities

- Organised

- Resourceful
- Efficient
- Strategic
- Proactive
- Adaptive
- Visionary

Leadership Attributes

- Effective resource management
- Policy implementation
- Staff development
- Staff optimisation
- Facility maintenance
- Long-term vision
- Strategic planning
- Change management
- Long-term planning
- Goal setting

Expected Behavioural Changes

- Efficient allocation and utilisation of resources
- Successful implementation of national and local education policies
- Enhanced staff recruitment, retention and development programmes
- Improved budget management and resource allocation
- Enhanced staff retention and satisfaction
- Timely maintenance and upgrading of school facilities
- Development and execution of comprehensive strategic plans
- Proactive identification and mitigation of potential challenges
- Flexible adaptation to changes in the educational landscape
- Successful adaptation to educational policy changes
- Clear articulation and pursuit of long-term goals
- Delegation of responsibilities and establishment of functional committees – with clear mandates – in consultation with the school board.

Standard 2.1 Professional Development

School leaders:

- ensure staff have access to high-quality, sustained professional development opportunities aligned with whole-school improvement priorities, as well as individual and team needs

- prioritise the professional development of staff, ensuring effective planning, delivery and evaluation, consistent with the approaches laid out in the standard for teachers' professional development
- ensure that professional development opportunities draw on expert provision from beyond the school, as well as within it, including nationally recognised professional development frameworks and programmes to build institutional capacity and support succession planning

Standard 2.2 Organisational Management

School leaders:

- ensure the protection and safety of learners and staff through effective approaches to safeguarding as part of the duty of care
- prioritise and allocate financial resources appropriately, ensuring efficiency, effectiveness and probity in the use of public funds
- ensure staff are deployed and managed well, with due attention paid to workload
- establish and oversee systems, processes and policies that enable the school to operate effectively and efficiently
- ensure rigorous approaches to identifying, managing and mitigating risk
- develop and implement clear change management plans to address complex or challenging organisational issues

Standard 2.3 Continuous School Improvement

School leaders:

- make use of effective and collaborative processes of evaluation to identify and analyse complex or persistent problems and barriers that limit school effectiveness, and identify priority areas for improvement
- develop appropriate evidence-informed strategies for improvement as part of well-targeted plans that are realistic, timely, appropriately sequenced and suited to the school's context
- ensure careful and effective implementation of improvement strategies that lead to sustained school improvement over time
- institutionalise effective internal monitoring and quality assurance strategies for the purpose of monitoring progress against school improvement targets and for continuing improvement planning
- confidently apply strategic planning techniques to drive sustainable improvement in educational institutions

Standard 2.4 Governance and Accountability

School leaders:

- understand and uphold the principles of effective governance, demonstrating accountability and a clear sense of responsibility for school performance
- establish and sustain professional working relationships with those responsible for governance

- ensure that staff understand their professional responsibilities and are held accountable for fulfilling them
- ensure the school effectively and efficiently operates within the required regulatory frameworks and meets all statutory duties
- ensure compliance with Education Acts, regulations and policies
- translate the Ministry of Education’s vision and mission into action
- conduct rigorous performance management for the leadership team and all other staff

3.0 Community Leadership

Community leadership in schools refers to the strategic and collaborative role of school leaders, their leadership teams and school boards in actively engaging the broader school community and stakeholders to create a learning-focused environment that supports the holistic development and success of all learners. Community leadership ensures that the school becomes a hub of collaboration and shared progress, where all stakeholders are invested in the quality of education and the future of every learner.

As community leaders, school heads recognise that learning is a shared responsibility: teachers are continually developing (teacher-centred school), and students are meaningfully engaged (learner-centred classroom). This leadership approach emphasises the importance of strong school–community relationships and partnerships as the foundation for sustained school improvement. The key focus areas of community leadership include:

- **Stakeholder Collaboration:** Actively involving parents, community members and local stakeholders in the decision-making, implementation and review of school plans and activities.
- **ICT-Enabled Communication:** Leveraging information and communication technologies to enhance engagement, transparency and collaboration between the school and its wider community.
- **Industry Partner Relationships:** Building and maintaining sustainable, mutually beneficial relationships between schools and industry partners to provide learners with internship and work-based learning opportunities, and staff with professional development through secondments and shadowing.
- **Mobilisation and Accountability:** Leading efforts to mobilise community resources and support for the implementation of key school decisions and ensuring accountability through shared monitoring and reporting tools.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Using structured monitoring, evaluation, learning and reporting (MELR) practices to assess progress on the School Improvement Plan (SIP) and its impact on learner outcomes.
- **Shared Vision for Improvement:** Cultivating a culture of collective responsibility and annual planning aimed at improving learning outcomes and preparing learners for lifelong success – academically, professionally and socially.

Leadership Qualities

- Empathetic

- Collaborative
- Inclusive
- Communicative

Leadership Attributes

- Strong community ties
- Effective communication
- Entrepreneurial orientation
- Cultural responsiveness
- Strong relationships
- Efficient self-management
- Strong social skills
- Community engagement

Expected Behavioural Changes

- Increased collaboration with parents, community members and external partners
- Transparent and consistent communication with all stakeholders
- Promotion of an inclusive and culturally responsive school environment
- Increased parent and community involvement in school activities
- Improved communication channels with stakeholders
- Creation of a positive and inclusive school culture

Standard 3.1 Working in Partnership

School leaders:

- forge constructive relationships beyond the school, working in partnership with parents, carers and the local community
- commit their school to meaningful collaboration with other schools and organisations in a climate of mutual challenge and support
- establish and maintain working relationships with fellow professionals and colleagues across other public services to improve educational outcomes for all learners
- promote the establishment of a functioning alumni association with clear procedures to guide their activities in supporting the school
- collaborate with parent–teacher associations by creating an enabling environment for their activities within the guidelines laid out by the Ministry of Education

Standard 3.2 Industry–School Relationship

School leaders:

- ensure the establishment and operationalisation of internship opportunities for learners
- institutionalise the practice of engaging industry experts to provide career guidance to learners

- integrate work-related learning as an essential part of the curriculum, especially for learners pursuing technical and vocational programmes, to enhance practical and hands-on experience
- adopt a customer-first approach in the management of industry–school relationships
- establish and operationalise mentorship and coaching programmes linking teachers with industry professionals for professional growth and knowledge exchange

Standard 3.3 Regulatory Relationships

School leaders:

- must be familiar with all Education Acts and their specific provisions relating to school leadership, governance and the statutory roles of Boards of Governors
- need to be familiar with other Public Sector Acts (e.g. Financial Management and Procurement) and relevant sections when dealing with stakeholders, including suppliers, industry experts and other public officials
- regularly prepare and submit all required reports through the established administrative and regulatory channels
- comply with guidelines and procedures for the naming of schools and school infrastructure, ensuring that such practices respect traditional or historical interests, celebrate exemplary individuals and acknowledge benefactors appropriately

D. National School Leaders' Standards Guiding Principles

The principles of school leadership serve to translate the National School Leaders' Standards into meaningful action. They ensure that school leaders, in the discharge of their duties and responsibilities, are resolute in improving teaching and learning outcomes through an intentional focus on learning. In addition, effective school leaders create the conditions for learning, the environment for learning conversations and a culture of shared leadership and accountability. They build the capacity of their teams, aligning their actions with national policies, procedures, and systemic expectations.

These guiding principles are designed to create schools where leadership is oriented towards improving teaching and learning outcomes, and where every member of the school community is engaged in the pursuit of educational excellence. In doing so, they are to be guided by the following principles:

1. Focus on Learning

- **Prioritising Student Learning:** Leaders ensure that every decision and action is driven by the goal of enhancing student learning and achievement.
- **Lifelong Learning:** Promoting a culture where both learners and staff engage in continuous learning and professional growth.

2. Conditions for Learning

- **Safe and Supportive Environment:** Creating a safe, inclusive and supportive environment that fosters learning.

- **Adequate Resources:** Ensuring that teachers and learners have access to the necessary resources, including technology, materials and time.

3. Learning Conversations

- **Collaborative Dialogue:** Encouraging open, reflective and constructive conversations among educators, students and stakeholders about teaching and learning practices.
- **Feedback and Reflection:** Providing and seeking feedback to drive improvement and innovation in teaching and learning.

4. Shared Leadership

- **Distributed Leadership:** Empowering teachers, support staff and learners to take on leadership roles and share responsibility for the school's success.
- **Collaboration and Teamwork:** Fostering a collaborative culture where teamwork and mutual support are valued.

5. Internal Accountability

- **Personal Responsibility:** Encouraging all members of the school community to take personal responsibility for their own learning and for the learning of others.
- **Professional Standards:** Upholding high professional standards and ethical practices in all aspects of school leadership.

6. Building Capacity

- **Professional Development:** Investing in the ongoing professional development of teachers and staff to enhance their skills and knowledge.
- **Leadership Development:** Identifying and nurturing potential leaders within the school community.

7. System Alignment

- **Alignment with Educational Goals:** Ensuring that the school's policies, practices, and resources are aligned with its educational goals and objectives.
- **Integration with Wider System:** Connecting the school's efforts with broader educational policies and initiatives at the local, national and global levels.

E. Ethical and Professional Conduct of Heads of Schools as Public Servants

The ethical conduct of school leaders is anchored in the Principles of Public Life as outlined in the Code of Conduct for the Ghana Civil Service (November 2022), specifically under Principle 6. These principles define the standards of behaviour expected of all public officeholders and, by extension, of heads of schools, who serve as both servants of the public and stewards of public resources. In performing their duties and responsibilities, school leaders are expected to exemplify the highest standards of integrity, professionalism, and accountability. They must demonstrate adherence to the following ethical principles:

1. Selflessness

School leaders must make decisions solely in the public interest. They should not seek financial or other material benefits for themselves, their families or their friends.

2. Integrity

School leaders must not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties, including the awarding of contracts. Holders of public office must be truthful and act with honesty in all dealings.

3. Justice and Fairness

In conducting public business – including making public appointments, awarding contracts or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits – school leaders must act impartially, fairly and on merit. Decisions should be based on the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

4. Accountability

School leaders shall be responsible to both the Government (employer) and the public (customer) for their decisions and actions. They must submit themselves to appropriate scrutiny and uphold the trust placed in them as public servants.

5. Transparency

School leaders should act openly and communicate clearly about decisions and actions taken in their official capacity. They must provide reasons for their decisions and restrict access to information only when the wider public interest clearly demands that the information should not be released.

6. Leadership

School leaders should strive for excellence in all their endeavours, serving as role models for others within and beyond their institutions. Holders of public office must actively promote these ethical principles, challenge misconduct, and foster a culture of respect, professionalism and continuous improvement.

7. Impartiality

School leaders must perform their duties with impartiality and neutrality, avoiding favouritism, nepotism, tribalism, cronyism, religious bias or any other form of bias or discrimination. They must reject or act against all corrupt or unethical practices.

8. Professionalism

School leaders must perform their duties in a manner that upholds the integrity of their office and treat members of the public or clients with courtesy and respect.

F. Link between Leaders' Standards (NSLS), Teachers' Standards (NTS) and Standards for TVET Teachers/Facilitators

School leaders are expected to uphold consistently high standards of principled and professional conduct. In doing so, they must meet the expectations outlined in the National Teachers' Standards and provide the enabling conditions in which teachers can fulfil those standards.

1. The National Teachers' Standards

The National Teachers' Standards serve as the benchmark for shaping the conduct, skills and performance of teachers. They are designed to foster a culture of excellence and professionalism within the teaching profession and to guide teachers in enhancing their practice. These practices include gender-responsive and inclusive pedagogies, the integration of digital literacy, and the adoption of innovative, 21st-century teaching strategies.

The Standards set out the expectations for teachers to:

- a. demonstrate extensive knowledge in the relevant subject(s) and curriculum areas
- b. have a sound knowledge of learners' different ways of organising their learning
- c. demonstrate extensive knowledge and understanding of how different learning styles and abilities impact on teaching
- d. reflect thoroughly on the effectiveness of teaching approaches and how these ensure the inclusion of all learners
- e. demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of how to use assessment to support learning
- f. demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of the key policies and regulations that govern the education system
- g. identify their own training needs and take responsibility for addressing them through lifelong learning
- h. demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of the design and use of innovative teaching methods/practices in different teaching and learning contexts both in and outside the classroom
- i. observe in-service and pre-service teachers
- j. set high expectations that challenge learners
- k. provide evidence of attainment of the Standards
- l. develop and use the expected competencies to improve learning outcomes
- m. identify themselves as professional educators who inspire confidence among learners, parents and the broader educational community

The National Teachers' Standards are divided into three main domains, each of which has its own sub-divisions. These are presented below.

Professional Values and Attitudes

Professional Development

The Teacher:

- a. Engages in critical and collective reflective practice to improve teaching and learning
- b. Improves personal and professional practice through lifelong learning and CPD
- c. Demonstrates growing leadership qualities within the classroom and the wider school community

Community of Practice

The Teacher:

- a. Is guided by legal and ethical teacher codes of conduct in his or her development as a professional teacher
- b. Engages positively with colleagues, learners, parents, school management committee, school boards, PTAs and the wider public as a professional practitioner
- c. Develops a positive teacher professional identity and disposition and acts as a good role model for learners
- d. Sees his or her role as an agent of change in the school, community and country

Professional Knowledge

Knowledge of Education Frameworks and Curriculum

The Teacher:

- a. Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of the education system and the key policies guiding it
- b. Has comprehensive knowledge of the approved school curriculum, including learning outcomes
- c. Has relevant content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge (TPACK) appropriate to their school and grade level
- d. At pre-primary and primary levels, knows the curriculum for the various year groups and applies the appropriate pedagogies for teaching multigrade classes; has good knowledge of how to teach beginning reading and numeracy as well as speaking, listening, reading and writing of at least one Ghanaian language for instruction
- e. At the secondary level, possesses relevant knowledge of how to teach the content, skills and competencies specified in their respective curriculums and promotes literacy across the curriculum

Knowledge of Learners

The Teacher:

- a. Understands how learners develop and learn in diverse contexts and applies this in their planning, teaching and assessment
- b. Takes account of and respects learners' socio-cultural, linguistic, economic and educational backgrounds in their planning, teaching and assessment
- c. Has knowledge of the SEL needs of all learners and provides support accordingly

Professional Practice

Managing the Learning Environment

The Teacher:

- a. Plans, prepares and delivers varied and challenging lessons in different teaching and learning contexts, demonstrating a clear grasp of the intended learning outcomes of their teaching
- b. Carries out action research to improve practice
- c. Creates a safe, conducive and encouraging learning environment
- d. Manages behaviour and learning in both small and large classes and groups

Teaching and Learning

The Teacher:

- a. Employs a variety of innovative pedagogical strategies that encourage learners' participation, critical thinking and problem solving
- b. Pays attention to all learners, especially females, learners with SEN, gifted and talented learners and marginalised or vulnerable learners
- c. Employs teaching and learning strategies appropriate for learners with diverse backgrounds and mixed ability, multilingual and multi-aged classes
- d. Sets meaningful and challenging tasks that encourage learner collaboration and purposeful learning
- e. Explains concepts clearly using examples familiar to learners
- f. Identifies, produces and uses a variety of teaching and learning resources, including ICT and digital tools, to enhance learning

Assessment

The Teacher:

- a. Integrates a variety of assessment strategies into his or her teaching to support learning
- b. Observes, listens to learners and gives constructive feedback
- c. Identifies and remediates learners' difficulties or misconceptions, referring learners to specialised staff when their needs lie outside the competency of the teacher
- d. Keeps meaningful records of every learner and communicates progress clearly and regularly to learners, school administration and parents
- e. Demonstrates awareness of national and international learning outcomes and assessments and standards, aligning them to school learning outcomes
- f. Refers to appropriate criteria to assess learners
- g. Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of how to align curriculum outcomes, pedagogy and assessment

2. The Professional Standards for TVET Teachers/Facilitators

The National Professional Standards for TVET Teachers/Facilitators in Ghana are organised into four domains that reflect the unique role of technical and vocational educators. These standards provide a strong framework for developing, assessing and upholding high-quality technical and vocational education nationwide. The framework balances theoretical knowledge with practical skills, individual competence, community participation and alignment with current practices and future innovations.

While Professional Knowledge, Professional Ethics and Attributes are shared with general education teachers, TVET standards specifically link Professional Practice to competency-based training (CBT) pedagogical practice. The fourth domain for the TVET teachers' standard is Industry Competence and Experience.

1. Professional Values and Ethics

This foundational domain establishes the moral and professional framework for TVET educators. It comprises three standards focusing on professional development and industry relevance (Standard 1.1), fostering innovation and an entrepreneurial mindset (Standard 1.2) and maintaining professional ethics alongside community responsibility (Standard 1.3). The domain highlights ongoing learning, adaptability to technological advancements, and ethical practice, while positioning TVET teachers as agents of positive community development.

Professional development and industry currency

The TVET teacher:

- Engages in continuous professional development in both technical and pedagogical domains
- Demonstrates commitment to maintaining up-to-date industry knowledge
- Promotes creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurial thinking
- Demonstrates adaptability to technological and industry change
- Upholds professional ethics and legal standards in technical practice
- Acts as an agent of positive change in community and economic development

2. Professional Knowledge

This domain focuses on the intellectual and theoretical foundations essential for effective TVET instruction. It comprises four standards: technical subject matter expertise (Standard 2.1), TVET pedagogy and learning sciences (Standard 2.2), industry context and labour market needs (Standard 2.3) and digital competence with emerging technologies (Standard 2.4). The domain connects theoretical knowledge with practical application, ensuring teachers have both advanced technical skills and pedagogical understanding.

Technical subject matter expert

The TVET teacher:

- Demonstrates relevant technical competence in their specialised field/trade area
- Holds appropriate industry qualifications and certifications
- Applies competency-based training (CBT) principles to technical training
- Demonstrates how learners develop technical and practical competencies
- Understands current and emerging labour market trends
- Integrates workplace culture and professional expectations
- Demonstrates digital literacy relevant to their technical field
- Adapts to technological change and innovation

3. CBT Pedagogy Practice

This operational domain concentrates on the practical implementation of competency-based training methodologies. Its four standards cover the learning environment and safety management (Standard 3.1), competency-based teaching and assessment (Standard 3.2), work-integrated learning and industry collaboration (Standard 3.3) and technology integration with innovation (Standard 3.4). The domain translates knowledge into effective teaching practices, emphasising authentic workplace learning experiences.

Learning environment and safety management

The TVET teacher:

- Creates safe, inclusive and productive learning environments
- Manages technical resources and equipment effectively
- Implements competency-based instruction and assessment
- Differentiates instruction for diverse learners and skill levels
- Coordinates and supervises workplace learning experiences
- Integrates real-world applications and industry partnerships
- Integrates technology effectively to enhance learning
- Facilitates innovation and creative problem-solving

4. Industry Competence and Experience

This domain directly links TVET education to industry realities and economic growth. It encompasses four standards: industry connections and professional networks (Standard 4.1), career development and employment readiness (Standard 4.2), promotion of innovation and entrepreneurship (Standard 4.3) and economic development through community involvement (Standard 4.4). The domain ensures TVET teachers stay up to date with industry practices and support economic growth.

Industry linkage and professional networks

The TVET teacher:

- Maintains active engagement with industry and professional communities
- Demonstrates up-to-date industry knowledge and engages in best practices
- Prepares learners for successful employment and career advancement
- Coordinates work-integrated learning and industry partnerships
- Fosters innovation, creativity and problem-solving capabilities
- Develops an entrepreneurial mindset and business competencies
- Contributes to local and national economic development
- Promotes sustainable development and responsible innovation

The three domains of the NTS and the four domains of the TVET Standards collectively define what teachers should value, know and do.

These standards thus provide a comprehensive set of guidelines that outline the expectations, competencies and professional behaviours required of teachers across the country. They serve as a benchmark for evaluating teachers' performance, guiding their professional development and ensuring that the education system is consistent in delivering high-quality education to students. Furthermore, the standards help in promoting accountability, fostering continuous improvement and building public confidence in the teaching profession.

School leaders are expected to model and uphold these standards and the associated codes of conduct. They are responsible not only for their own compliance but also for ensuring that the teachers they lead meet the standards, uphold ethical practices and deliver high-quality teaching aligned with national education goals.

Annex – Exemplification

The leadership attributes and behavioural changes across the three main domains of strong school leadership are outlined below. This table sets out the key attributes and expected behavioural changes, along with possible metrics to track progress. Feel free to adjust it to better suit the specific needs and context of your school.

Domain	Leadership Attribute	Behaviour Changes	Exemplars
Pedagogical Leadership	High Expectations (school culture, teaching and behaviour modelling)	- Teachers adopt innovative teaching practices, with measurable improvement in student achievement - Promote evidence-based teaching practices; increase use of data to inform teaching - Share a clear vision and learning priorities with staff and learners - Staff work as a team to promote teaching and learning	- Student assessment scores - Teacher evaluation through lesson observation - Portfolio of learner work demonstrating progress - Lesson observation records - Attendance register – punctuality among teachers and learners
		Uphold a culture of: - a sustained and collaborative school ethos for learning - positive and enriching learning experiences for staff and learners - ambitious educational standards that prepare all learners for further education and adult life - positive and respectful relationships across the school community and a safe, orderly and inclusive environment - high professional conduct and values among staff	

Domain	Leadership Attribute	Behaviour Changes	Exemplars
		– high expectations of behaviour for all learners and staff – high standards of teacher and learner behaviour and courteous conduct in line with school policy and professional code of conduct – consistent, fair and respectful approaches to behaviour management for both staff and learners – adults within the school model and teach the behaviour of a good citizen – demonstration of national values by learners and adults is a culture of the school	
		Supportive / Professional Development	• Increased participation in professional development, leading to enhanced teaching effectiveness • Mentorship of teachers and modelling of good classroom and whole-school practices • Delegation of responsibilities Create a culture that supports: – sustained high-quality, expert teaching across all subjects and phases – teaching underpinned by high levels of subject expertise – an environment for teachers to use creative, learner-centred approaches in the classroom

Domain	Leadership Attribute	Behaviour Changes	Exemplars
			– a culture of continuing professional development that is translated into effective planning and delivery of lessons using technology as a tool – developing subject leaders with high levels of relevant expertise with access to professional networks and communities
		Curriculum Maintenance	• Regular evaluation and improvement • Integrate ICT into teaching and learning • Promote a robust assessment system • Improve internal quality assurance system • Effectively use formative assessment and provide opportunities to reflect on the nature, skills and process of learning • Implement the curriculum for its intended purpose • Provide broad and enriching co-curricular activities for the benefit of all learners • Establish effective curricular leadership, and ensure teachers understand and use the school curriculum and the related assessment approaches • Foster a culture of varied approaches when assessing learners' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum

Domain	Leadership Attribute	Behaviour Changes	Exemplars
		Gender Equity and Social Inclusion (GESI)	- Set ambitious expectations for all teachers and learners with additional and special educational needs and disabilities - Establish and sustain culture and practices that enable learners to access the curriculum inclusively and learn effectively - Establish and sustain culture and practices that enable teachers to access the curriculum inclusively, interpret its content accurately and teach effectively - Institutionalise a collaborative approach to identifying learners in need of additional support to access the curriculum fully - Institutionalise a collaborative approach to working with teachers in need of additional support to access and teach the curriculum fully - Ensure the rights of all learners are consistently fulfilled
System Leadership	Resource Management	- Efficient use of budget and resources to ensure the timely maintenance of school facilities - Provide staff with access to sustained professional development opportunities, aligned to whole-school improvement priorities, team and individual needs - Equip staff with the skills and competencies for effective planning, delivery and evaluation	- Budget adherence - Facility audit results - Build rapport and celebrate success

Domain	Leadership Attribute	Behaviour Changes	Exemplars
		• Build the capacity of staff through internal and external experts • Develop a framework for building the capacity of staff for succession planning	
		Continuous Improvement Planning	• Set clear long-term goals and proactively adjust plans to meet educational needs • Develop and articulate strategic plans • Clearly articulate and pursue long-term goals • Produce a plan for making any required changes to the purpose, strategy and values, or for improving how they 'live and breathe' in the school • Confidently use strategic planning techniques to drive sustainable improvement in educational institutions • Make use of effective and collaborative processes of evaluation to identify limiting barriers to school effectiveness and priority areas for improvement • Develop appropriate evidence-informed strategies for improvement • Ensure careful and effective implementation of improvement strategies • Institutionalise effective internal monitoring and quality assurance strategies for progress checking and continuing improvement planning

Domain	Leadership Attribute	Behaviour Changes	Exemplars
		Change and Institutional Management	• Successfully implement new initiatives; develop a plan to manage change in relation to one or more challenging issues in the school • Adapt to changes in the education landscape • Identify common tools and techniques for effective programme and project management • Apply programme and project management tools to drive improvement in performance • Ensure the protection and safety of learners and staff through effective approaches to safeguarding as part of the duty of care • Prioritise and allocate financial resources appropriately, ensuring efficiency, effectiveness and probity in the use of public funds • Ensure staff are deployed and managed effectively with due attention paid to workload • Establish and oversee systems, processes and policies that enable the school to operate effectively and efficiently • Ensure rigorous approaches to identifying, managing and mitigating risk
		Staffing Optimisation	• Reduce staff turnover through improved staff satisfaction and productivity • Staff retention and attrition rates • Satisfaction surveys • Learners' assessment scores

Domain	Leadership Attribute	Behaviour Changes	Exemplars	
			• Increase staff satisfaction and productivity through supportive supervision and professional growth opportunities • Strengthen recruitment, retention and development programmes	• Lesson observation feedback • Behaviour records – staff and learners • Welfare/motivation packages
		Effective Policy Implementation	• Implement national and local education policies • Adapt to educational policy changes • Establish a robust internal quality assurance process • Establish a framework for monitoring a range of factors relating to improvement • Conduct regular evaluations of improvement measures and action plans	• Records of implementation • Log books • Meeting minutes • School climate survey reports
Community Leadership	Strong Relationships	• Increase parent and community involvement to foster positive school culture • Promote an inclusive and culturally responsive school environment • Promote cordial and respectful relationships among the school community • Actively participate in community activities, festivals, durbars and communal labour	• Attendance at events; community feedback • PTA meetings • Donations • Satisfaction surveys • Documentation of learning and engagement events with parents	
		Effective Communication	• Improve communication channels to develop better stakeholder understanding and engagement	• Communication and stakeholder engagement surveys • Response time to queries and concerns

Domain	Leadership Attribute	Behaviour Changes	Exemplars
			• Ensure transparent and consistent communication with all stakeholders
			• Increased participation in school events • Records of events that make and sustain a good impression and bring in alternative viewpoints