School Leadership System Redefined

Covid has pushed the boundaries of school systems requiring them to reorganise themselves to meet online teaching-learning requirements. It has placed extraordinary demands on school leadership in terms of dealing with a high degree of uncertainty, potential causes for disorientation and emotional disturbance for all the stakeholders involved in the school system.

While the attention and efforts of the school leaders are diverted towards dealing with this very difficult situation, redefining the blocks of the leadership systems will help build the overall organisational resilience and robustness for the future. Demonstration of key attributes continue to be the bedrock for effective leadership response.

Tata ClassEdge undertook a study with 191 progressive schools across the country. This survey was conducted in June 2020. The ORE II Study was undertaken with an objective to understand and identify the elements of a school system that are actively reviewed and measured by school principals.

Five key Leadership System elements have been redefined:

1. **Academic Administration**: More than 80% of the principals responded that they were very closely involved in the decision-making processes related to academic matters, including shortlisting of books, which can have a bearing on student performance. High involvement was observed in the teacher recruitment process as well as dealing with non-performing team members.**Empowering and involved approaches are very clearly** demonstrated while dealing with matters related to academic administration.

2. **Performance Management**: 94% of the principals consider student learning outcomes as an important marker for Performance Management System discussions with teachers. **Rather than having isolated performance conversations, appraisal discussions are undertaken with interlinkages to student learning outcomes.**

Leadership System Converging Towards Student Learning Outcomes

Key Elements

Performance Management	• Effective PMS Discussions
Academic Administration	• Empowerment & Involvement
Instructional Management	• Hands 'on Approach
External Relations	• Multiple channels of communication
Internal Relations	• Various methods to connect with team

Student Learning Outcome

Progressive principals dedicate most of their time, skill levels and efforts in leading and reviewing the above-listed critical elements. These elements encompass varied processes including Teacher Instructional Practices, Teacher Recruitment & Retention, enabling Staff Empowerment, communication with various key stakeholders, while focusing on the overall organisational health. These elements are unified and directed towards enhancing student outcomes.

3. **External Relations**: 92% of the principals are actively involved in parent-teacher meetings. 77% of the principals have designated meeting hours with parents. 81% of the principals use a dedicated website for networking and majority of the school leaders leverage app-based communication with a mix of different channels including school newsletters, websites, etc.

4. **Internal Relations**: 97% of the principals have created a vibrant, approachable and enabling environment. Their teams and teachers can reach out to them anytime to discuss any problems or issues. 88% of the principals praise and recognise their teachers in public. There is an articulated and established reward and recognition program for teachers. **Progressive schools leaders find various methods to continuously connect and engage with their teams.**

5. Instructions Management: 97% of the principals provide guidance to their teaching staff in varied matters related to the process of academic planning and even discussions related to handling classroom challenges. The school leaders motivate their teams and encourage them to take up skill upgradation courses. **A hands-on leadership approach is clearly demonstrated to enhance the quality of teaching and learning.**

This kind of a systemic and integrated approach to leadership will strengthen organisational robustness, define, and measure aspects which will impact the goals of pedagogical excellence and take larger strides towards achieving students learning and outcomes.

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