

The Ontario Leadership Framework: A Tool for Equitable & Inclusive Schools

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In December 2005, the Ontario Ministry of Education issued a mini discussion paper outlining a series of new supports for principals and vice-principals in Ontario publicly funded schools. One of the five goals outlined in the discussion paper was to better define the role, powers, responsibilities and obligations of principals and vice-principals to ensure coherent and consistent expectations. Following this, the Ministry of Education introduced The Ontario Leadership Strategy in 2006, which included the Ontario Leadership Framework. The Framework outlines the specific competencies and practices of school leaders.

It is the intent of this paper to examine and analyze the direction provided in the Ontario Leadership Framework in terms of whether or not the Framework can be used as a vehicle by educational administrators who wish to further an agenda for equitable and inclusive schools. The Framework is a detailed and thorough presentation of what the province believes educational leadership should look like in Ontario schools. Through an examination of social justice literature, this paper will present a collection of perspectives that outline the themes of a social justice agenda. With a clarification of the perspectives and the broad themes, one can examine the Framework to determine if it is a helpful vehicle or a hindrance in addressing the greater good of the students in Ontario schools.

Educational administration traditionally has a strong managerial orientation (Cuban cited in Lugg & Shoho, 2006, Ryan 2006). If educational leaders truly wish to educate all children, a socially just orientation needs to inform their practices (Karpinski & Lugg, 2006). Because of this a tension exists for educational administrators between the demands of managerialism and the demands of an agenda for equitable and inclusive schools. In light of this tension, can the Ontario Leadership Framework be used as a vehicle for socially just educational administration?

In social justice literature, authors present a wide variety of perspectives. These perspectives reflect the personal beliefs of each author as well as the intent each author had in writing their particular article. While the perspectives of the authors vary widely, broad themes emerge in their work. One can see these broad themes as elements of an agenda for social justice leadership. It is possible to use these broad themes to analyze the Ontario Leadership Framework. In so doing, one can conclude that the Framework does indeed provide school leaders opportunities to move forward an agenda for equitable and inclusive schools that reflects the broad themes articulated within social justice literature.

Social justice literature highlights a variety of perspectives and arguments. From the literature, the broad stroke perspectives of an agenda for social justice and equitable and inclusive schools can be clarified. Within these broad stroke perspectives one can identify specific recurring themes. Through an analysis of social justice literature as it applies to school leadership, I will argue that the Framework is positioned to be accessible to educational administrators who wish to move forward an agenda for equitable and inclusive schools.

At this point it is important to understand what is meant by a social justice agenda through consideration of what the broad stroke perspectives are. Perspectives vary depending on the authors to whom one refers and the arguments they present in their articles. Ryan (2006) presents the concept of social justice through the lens of inclusive leadership. He describes this as leadership...not in terms of positions or individuals who perform certain tasks but as a collective process in which everyone is included or fairly represented. It is leadership that implies some sort of influence, is a process, an array of practices, procedures, understandings, and values that persist over time, and is organized to achieve particular ends.

Andersons (1998) work supports the inclusive aspect of Ryan's work in his call for authentic participation by teachers, students, parents, communities, business, and numerous other stakeholders. The social justice perspective brought forward by Woods (2004) aligns well with Anderson in his call for democratic leadership as opposed to distributed leadership.

Gewirtz (2002) describes a social justice agenda as one, which addresses both relational and distributional justice. Connell (1993) sees an agenda for social justice as encompassing the justices relative to a hegemonic curriculum, the organization of knowledge, and issues of poverty. Bates (2006) argues that, Social justice in education, as elsewhere, demands both distributive justice (which remedies undeserved inequalities) and recognitional justice (which treats cultural differences with understanding and respect).

Lugg and Shoho (2006) consider the broader society when they advocate for an agenda for social justice that can build a new social order. Brown (2004) echoes these sentiments for the school level when she calls for transformative leaders who address social inequities through critically reflective practice. Capper, Theorharis, and Sebastian (2006) see social justice as critical consciousness relative to power relations and social construction including white privilege, heterosexism, poverty, misogyny, and ethnocentrism.

But it is Ryan (2006), Theorharis (2007), and Karpinski and Lugg (2006) who bring the school and student perspective to social justice. Ryan (2006) addresses issues of inclusion and exclusion within the school and community. Theorharis (2007) adds to these concepts of social justice when he states that his definition of social justice...centers on addressing and eliminating marginalization in schools. However, it is Karpinski and Lugg (2006) who articulate their perspective specifically in terms of students when they state, social justice...means pursuing policies, practices, and politics (educational, social, and economic...) that enhance the lifetime opportunities for all children, particularly those children who have been historically marginalized.

From this brief consideration of the literature, it is apparent that there is no single perspective in the literature of social justice. The perspectives presented range from the macro - broad societal restructuring - to the micro - the individual classroom and the individual student. Inasmuch as this may seem problematic, there are a number of broad themes that can be found in the body of social justice literature that speak to issues of social justice for school leaders. I have identified these themes as:

1. Participation (including community involvement).
2. The education of all students.
3. Inclusion and exclusion.
4. On-going professional learning.
5. Accountability.
6. Equity.
7. Diversity.

It is within these broad themes where ones see alignment with the Ontario Leadership Framework. It is valuable at this point to examine the Framework prior to considering alignments with an agenda for equitable and inclusive schools.

As identified in the brief overview of the literature, broad themes of social justice emerged. These themes include: participation (including community involvement), education of all students, inclusion and exclusion, on-going professional learning, accountability, equity, and diversity. In the analysis presented here, the criteria used will be the seven broad themes as identified in the literature.

Participation

One of the most common leadership themes addressed by the authors in social justice literature was that of participation. It is Anderson (1998) who speaks most powerfully about authentic participation. He states,

There is a wealth of literature that argues for structures of participation in schools that guarantee not only the inclusion of diverse stakeholders but also the conditions that allow those stakeholders, once they are at the table, to have a significant impact on decision making. There is general agreement that authentic participatory structures should provide participants with broad jurisdiction, policymaking authority (i.e. not limited to an advisory function), equal representation of relevant stakeholders, and training provisions. (p.590).

This is a conception of participation that focuses not just on inclusion but also on the processes and structures related to broad-based participation. It aligns with Connell's (1993) belief in collective decision-making on major issues in which all citizens have, in principle, an equal voice. This is not likely a level of participation that could be found in many, if any, schools in Ontario. It is, however, Anderson himself who states that...the notion of authentic participation is perhaps more of an ideal to work toward than a reality that can be socially engineered. But it is not just Anderson who maintains the ideal of authentic participation. Woods (2004) presents participation through democratic leadership in a tight-loose structure dynamic. McKenzie and Scheurich (2004) consider participation as a collaborative process while Gewirtz (2002) advocates for participation so that people can participate in decisions that affect the conditions of their lives. Ryan's (2006) concept of inclusive leadership is founded on participation through inclusion. He states that he sees participation as...a collective process in which everyone is included or fairly represented with...a variety of people working together in many different ways and roles.

Within the body of literature a number of interconnected conditions emerge that are related to participation. These conditions include the need for structures of participation, decision-making, collaboration, and the inclusion of a variety of people. The Ontario Leadership Framework addresses participation in all five of the Leader Competencies and Practices. Specific references can be found within the Practices, Skills, Knowledge, and Attitudes.

The Framework calls for the inclusion of a variety of people within both the school and community to build a shared vision, a shared culture and mutually-agreed-upon objectives so that everyone is working in the best interests of all students. Collaborative cultures are identified as necessary in order to connect the school to its wider community so that effective partnerships can be built. Authentic participation and inclusion are explicitly stated in the Framework as significant with the intent to engage the school council and the broader school community, as well as encouraging broader parent involvement with the school. (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007).

The Education of All Students

It may be assumed that the ultimate goal behind socially just school leadership would be to deliver the best education to each and every student in the school. One could anticipate that the literature of social justice relative to school leadership would emphasize each child's educational success as paramount. Curiously, this is not the case. In most cases, the literature speaks of social justice without specifically identifying the goal of educating all students. It is possible that many authors have made the assumption that the education of every child is a given. Nevertheless, some authors have made particular note of the most significant of all goals of a school - that is, educating each and every student in the school.

Lugg and Shoho (2006) make passing reference to the need to insure that all children can learn. Furman and Gruenewald (2004) do not address children's learning as such. They speak of the welfare of children in schools and communities. Capper, Theoharis, and Sebastian (2006) refer obliquely to student learning in stating that raising student achievement can be used as an indicator of success for leadership preparation programs that focus on social justice. Theoharis (2007) cites the example of a school leader who is enacting an agenda for equitable and inclusive schools in a range of ways, one of which is by hiring teachers who can reach every student. McKenzie and Scheurich (2004) also speak about teacher hiring and the significance of ensuring that the new teachers who are hired need to be firmly grounded in the belief that all students can learn at high levels.

Ryan refers directly to school leadership by presenting the idea that those interested in putting inclusive leadership into practice need to consider how to...emphasize student learning and classroom practice. Anderson makes only passing reference to student learning in stating that authentic participation is important as a means to increase learning outcomes.

Karpinski and Lugg (2006) are the most explicit about social justice leadership and its link to the education of all students. They define social justice for schools as pursuing policies, practices, and politics (educational, social, and economic – see Anyon, 2005) that enhance the lifetime

opportunities for all children, particularly those children who have been historically marginalized. They go on to state clearly and explicitly,

Social justice-minded educational administrators will need to implement and enforce policies that support the learning of all children – not merely those in the majority. (p.287)

...and...

...social justice educators must remain committed to the central purpose of their profession: the well-being and education of all children. (p.288).

The Ontario Leadership Framework addresses the importance of educating all students in all five of the Leader Competencies and Practices. The Practices, Skills, Knowledge, and Attitudes of the Framework identify as paramount the importance of believing that all students can learn. It highlights the significance of setting high expectations for all students, not just those who traditionally have achieved well. School leaders are seen as ensuring a consistent and continuous school-wide focus on student achievement that empowers all participants to work in the best interests of all students. Furthermore, school leaders and partners are expected to demonstrate a commitment to closing the achievement gap for all students through meeting the needs of all students in diverse ways. Indeed, school leaders are identified as needing to promote collective responsibility for student learning within the whole school community. (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007).

The theme of the education of all students is threaded throughout the literature of social justice but generally not explicitly-stated. The authors cited above have, to one degree or another, presented the fundamental goal of socially-just school leadership as the education of all of the students in the school. The Practices, Skills, Knowledge, and Attitudes in the Ontario Leadership Framework align the Framework and the theme of the education of all students as it is articulated in social justice literature.

Inclusion and Exclusion

While it is probably relatively safe to assume that social justice literature confronts issues of inclusion, exclusion, and marginalization, it is surprising that these themes are not more explicitly addressed as fundamental to the discourse. For the purposes of this paper, inclusion focuses on inclusion in the sense of being included and less on the structures and processes of inclusion and participation as found in Ryan's (2006) work. However, there are numerous intersections with the theme of participation addressed above so these two themes can be seen as complementary.

Theoharis (2007) speaks to the issue of the exclusion of students within school. He identifies school leaders as successful in social justice leadership when they take steps to pretty much fully include special education students into the curriculum. In fact, he states that, leadership that is not focused on and successful at creating more just and equitable schools for marginalized students is indeed not good leadership. McKenzie and Scheurich (2004) state that strong, focused, insightful, skilled leadership must, among other things, confront what practices include and exclude students.

Woods (2004) considers issues of inclusion from a structural perspective in his work on democratic leadership. He identifies democratic leadership as inclusive when based on human status with open boundaries of participation. Anderson as well considers inclusion from a structural perspective in his argument for authentic participation. He argues for structures of participation in schools that guarantee not only the inclusion of diverse stakeholders but also the conditions that allow those stakeholders, once they are at the table, to have significant impact on decision making.

It is Ryan (2006) however who speaks explicitly to the issues of inclusion and exclusion both from the level of students to the organization and structure of the school. He advocates not only for each student to feel fully included in every classroom but also for all families to feel fully included in the organizations and structures of the school. The following quotation captures eloquently and concisely the breadth of inclusion,

Inclusive leadership, however, promotes a very definitive end: inclusion. It is not just the process of leadership that is inclusive; the ends of the process are also geared toward inclusion. Inclusive leadership aims to achieve inclusion in all aspects of schooling and beyond the school to the local and global community, and it does so through a process that is itself inclusive. (Pp.17-18).

The Ontario Leadership Framework addresses inclusion and exclusion in all five of the Leader Competencies and Practices. The introductory comments in the Framework make explicit the intention for it to serve as a tool for inclusion. This is made clear in the following statement:

The competencies and practices in the Framework describe leadership broadly in a way that is intended to be inclusive of the diversity found in school communities across the province.

More specifically, the Framework addresses inclusion through the process of building collaborative cultures. This is accomplished by using strategies that ensure inclusion, diversity, and access so that participation in school and school life can be both active and authentic. School leaders are expected to create a shared and collaborative culture where a common vision is set and common goals determined so that all participants are working for the same purposes. The Framework sees these processes as nested within genuine and trusting relationships that are guided by the inclusion of a diversity of voices and a sense of mutual respect. (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007).

The theme of inclusion and exclusion is threaded throughout the literature of social justice. The authors cited above consider inclusion and exclusion from perspectives ranging from individual students through to school organization and structures. Indeed, Ryan (2006) extends the concept to the global level. One sees many complementary and intersecting points in the theme of participation and the theme of inclusion and exclusion. It is evident that the Practices, Skills, Knowledge, and Attitudes relative to inclusion and exclusion bring many points of alignment between the Ontario Leadership Framework and the theme of inclusion and

exclusion found in social justice literature. Even though the language may be different in the Framework and social justice literature, the fundamental intent of inclusion is readily apparent.

On-going Professional Learning

As much as the literature of social justice advocates for educators to advance a social justice agenda, it also advocates for on-going professional learning in order to learn how to do so. Capper, Theoharis, and Sebastian (2006) address urgency for more effective preparatory training of school administrators for social justice. They present a framework that sees professional learning as building critical consciousness, knowledge, and skills through the lenses of curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment.

McKenzie and Scheurich (2004) address on-going professional learning needs as provided by the principal once he or she is in the role. They believe that school leaders need to help teachers reframe their thinking about students, families, and communities and, thus, move their thinking from a deficit orientation to an assets-based one.... In fact, they argue that the best route to influence current teachers is through the principal, who, research repeatedly shows, is the key to school change. Karpinski and Lugg (2006) echo these sentiments when they state that there is a need to provide consistent, rigorous, and on-going professional development for teachers, administrators, and support staff around issues of race, class, gender, language, dis/ability, and sexual orientation.

Brown (2007) approaches on-going professional learning from the perspective of the development of critical reflection. She captures the significance of the need for such learning in the following quotation,

Developing as a critically reflective administrator encompasses the capacity for both critical inquiry and self-reflection (Larrivee, 2000; Schon, 1987). Critical inquiry involves the conscious consideration of the moral and ethical implications and consequences of schooling practices on students. Self-reflection adds the dimension of deep examination of personal assumptions, values, and beliefs. Critical reflection merges the two terms and involves the examination of personal and professional belief systems, as well as the deliberate consideration of the ethical implications and effect of practices. (p.89).

It is Theoharis (2007) who captures in simple and accessible language the importance of on-going professional learning. He states,

The third strategy these principals used to improve student achievement and create more just schools involved strengthening their schools staff. In other words, the principals resisted the assumptions that typical teacher education or staff development programs were adequate preparation in substantiating a social justice orientation and practices for educators. They sought to increase staff capacity by addressing issues of race, providing ongoing staff development focused on building equity, developing staff investment in social justice, hiring and supervising for justice, and empowering staff. (p.235).

The Ontario Leadership Framework addresses on-going professional learning in four of the five Leader Competencies and Practices. Leaders are expected to build collaborative learning communities within their schools that challenge the thinking of the staff in their professional learning. Within a school culture that promotes collaborative learning communities, a clear link can be made between this structure for professional learning and the content of the learning for the community. This link is that on-going professional learning can be focused on equity, diversity, inclusion, and broad participation within the collaborative learning community. (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007).

The theme of on-going professional learning is found throughout social justice literature. The Practices, Skills, Knowledge, and Attitudes of the Framework emphasize the need for on-going professional learning. When the need for professional learning is connected to the other broad themes found in both the social justice literature and the Framework, it becomes apparent that this learning needs to include the themes of social justice as identified here.

Accountability

The term accountability is used with alarming frequency in current educational discourse. The term has developed connotations that seem to be positive for some and negative for others. Webster's Dictionary defines accountability as Responsibility to someone or for some activity. The Framework of the Ontario Leadership Strategy refers to accountability in the following way,

The principal is accountable to students, parents, the community, supervisors and to the board for ensuring that students benefit from a high quality education and for promoting collective responsibility for student outcomes within the whole school community.

In the leadership and accountability discussion presented by DeAngelis, Griffiths, Joshee, Portelli, Ryan, and Zaretsky (In Press), Lindy Zaretsky sees accountability much as the Framework presents it. She states,

I continue to argue that there is an increasing amount of data that show that when accountability systems are well thought out, they can serve to keep the focus on creating more equity in improvement of instruction and fair assessment practices for all students. (p.20).

In developing a theory of social justice leadership, Theoharis (2007) presents seven principals whom he believes embody a commitment to justice and equity. In their practice he states that these principals discussed a need for developing increased accountability for the achievement of all students. Karpinski and Lugg (2006) echo this concept when they state that the proponents of social justice and equity should examine how to utilize accountability for their own purposes.

McKenzie and Scheurich (2004) are critical of teachers who actively seek to avoid accountability and responsibility by teaching in a low-income school in which the parents and administrators rarely questioned them. Similarly, in his search for more authentic participation, Anderson (1998) supports the need for accountability but wishes to see it within a framework of authentic participation. He states that many advocates of poor and disenfranchised groups claim that participation of any form holds out the possibility of greater accountability from educational institutions.

The Ontario Leadership Framework addresses accountability in all of the Leader Competencies and Practices. Accountability is seen as promoting collective responsibility for student outcomes within the whole school community. It is presented not as a focus on testing scores but a focus on high expectations for all students and a commitment to closing the achievement gap, not the testing gap. Accountability is identified as working within the school community to set mutually-agreed-upon objectives which promote and sustain school improvement and from there, collectively developing a school ethos which promotes shared knowledge and shared responsibility for outcomes. Significantly, these processes are seen to be facilitated by leaders through affirming and empowering others to work in the best interest of all students and through listening to and acting upon community feedback. (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007).

The theme of accountability is presented throughout the literature of social justice in both positive and negative ways. The authors cited above consider accountability from the perspective of responsibility. The Practices, Skills, Knowledge, and Attitudes for school leaders as presented in the Framework are clearly aligned with the perspectives of the social justice literature through a common focus on collective responsibility.

Equity

As much as it may seem curious, the term equity rarely surfaces in social justice literature. Karpinski and Lugg (2006) make passing reference to it in their article abstract by attaching it to the broader term of social justice. Brown (2004) includes it in the title of her article, again, attached to the broader term of social justice. It is quite possible that the authors included in the readings for this course implicitly include equity as an aspect of a social justice perspective. However, with great variation in the definition of social justice, readers run the risk of making assumptions that equity is a component of each author's perspective.

Theoharis (2007) is specific about equity in his statement that leadership that is not focused on and successful at creating more just and equitable schools for marginalized students is indeed not good leadership. However, it is Ryan and Rottmann (In Press) who are most explicit about equity. One of their eight key assumptions of a critical approach to social justice is that Social justice favours equity over particular versions of equality.

The Ontario Leadership Framework addresses participation in all of the Leader Competencies and Practices. The Practices, Skills, Knowledge, and Attitudes from the Framework are clear and comprehensive about equity. School leaders are seen to be effective if they demonstrate that they hold the fundamental belief that all students are capable of learning. Beyond this belief

though, leaders are also expected to demonstrate a commitment to an inclusive, respectful, and equitable school culture. There is an expectation that everyone – students, families, staff, and community – are treated fairly, equitably, and with dignity and respect. Furthermore, leaders are required to foster anti-discriminatory principles and practices as well as upholding fundamental human rights.

School leaders are expected to provide equity of access to both opportunity and achievement for all students in their schools. In order to do so, there is a need to demonstrate a commitment to closing the achievement gap through strategies that encourage inclusion, diversity, and access for all.

Both holding and acting on beliefs is seen as fundamental. School leaders need to demonstrate their belief in meeting the needs of all students in diverse ways as well as the belief that education develops, promotes, and sustains a fair and equitable society. But beyond simply holding these beliefs, the Framework indicates that leaders are expected to take action on their beliefs. (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007).

Equity is a broad theme that may well be embedded within the literature of social justice without being explicitly stated. The authors cited above make either casual reference to equity, or in the case of Ryan and Rottmann, make an explicit statement about the significance of equity in a broader social justice context. It is abundantly clear that equity is a fundamental component of the Practices, Skills, Knowledge, and Attitudes of the Ontario Leadership Framework.

Diversity

Much as with equity, the word diversity is disturbingly absent from social justice literature. Perhaps some of the authors assume that their advocacy of a social justice agenda includes diversity, however without explicit reference to the range of social diversities, this cannot be assumed. Perhaps the literature addressing participation and inclusion, as presented above, implicitly includes diversity. It is significant to note, as stated by Ryan and Rottmann (In Press), that a critical social justice perspective explicitly values diversity.

Ryan (2006) highlights and addresses a broad range of social diversities through the lens of exclusion and the concomitant damage done to individuals in his writings on inclusive leadership. Anderson (1998) also speaks directly to the issue of diversity. In his desire for authentic participation he advocates for structures of participation in schools that guarantee not only the inclusion of diverse stakeholders but also the conditions that allow those stakeholders, once they are at the table, to have a significant effect on decision making. (p.590) Furman and Gruenewald (2004) challenge us to consider an even broader understanding of diversity when they state that we need to expand our narrow notions of diversity to include biological diversity and the global cultural diversity.

The Ontario Leadership Framework is more explicit than this overview of social justice literature in addressing diversity. It is identified in all five of the Leader Competencies and Practices both in the sense of fostering diversity within schools and valuing the richness that diversity brings to the school community. The introductory comments for the Framework

identify diversity as a key principle. This is made clear in the following statement,

The competencies and practices in the Framework describe leadership broadly in a way that is intended to be inclusive of the diversity found in school communities across the province. (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007).

Fortunately, the Framework does not limit diversity simply to racial or ethnic diversities. With no qualifying limits placed on the term, it is likely safe to use the term to include the full range of social diversities as addressed by Ryan (2006) in his writings on inclusion.

Within the Practices, Skills, Knowledge, and Attitudes of the Framework, school leaders are expected to demonstrate their recognition and valuing of the richness of the diversity within their school community. This happens by ensuring that planning in the school takes into account the full diversity, values, and experiences of the members of the school and school community. Beyond recognizing and valuing diversity, leaders are expected to know about and act on strategies that ensure the inclusion of the range of diversities within their schools and school communities. This takes place through ensuring that full inclusion, authentic participation, and ready access are available to all both within the school and the broader community. (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007).

The theme of diversity is curiously absent from social justice literature save for a few authors. Those cited above consider diversity as significant and they state this explicitly. It is clear that diversity is a fundamental principle of the Practices, Skills, Knowledge, and Attitudes for leaders in the Common Provincial Framework.

Conclusion

It was the intent of this paper to examine and analyze the leadership direction provided in the Ontario Leadership Strategy: Ontario Leadership Framework. It is important to do such an analysis because the Ministry of Education has provided clear and specific direction for school leadership for years to come. Does the Ministry's direction sustain a traditional managerial focus for school leaders or does it provide opportunities for these leaders to enact a social justice agenda? In this paper, I argue that the Framework does indeed provide opportunities for school administrators to use the Framework as a tool to enact a social justice agenda in the interest of building equitable and inclusive schools.

The Framework can be seen as a tool for social justice when it is analyzed through social justice literature. Within the literature seven broad themes emerged. These are: participation (including community involvement), the education of all students, inclusion and exclusion, on-going professional learning, accountability, equity, and diversity. The Framework clearly and specifically addresses each of the themes in the Practices, Skills, Knowledge, and Attitudes of the five Leader Competencies and Practices. From this analysis it is clear that the Ontario Leadership Framework is embedded with the key themes of social justice as found in the literature.

Does this mean that the Ontario Leadership Framework was intended to serve as a tool for social justice? Such an explicit statement is not made within the Framework so it is impossible to say. Is the Framework potentially a tool for school leaders who wish to further an agenda for equitable and inclusive schools? Absolutely. As demonstrated in the analysis of the Framework, school leaders can – and indeed are expected to – demonstrate practices, skills, knowledge, and attitudes that move forward the themes of participation (including community involvement), the education of all students, inclusion and exclusion, on-going professional learning, accountability, equity, and diversity.

Knowing that the themes of social justice are embedded in the Framework, the following quotation from the introductory comments reveals how school leaders can use it as a tool for the greater good of Ontario students:

The Framework could be used in a variety of ways including stimulating discussion among leaders about what good leadership looks like, guiding the design of leadership development training for leaders in boards and in the ministry, and assisting leaders to identify areas of growth and development they would like to pursue. (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007). The Framework is not intended to be a job description for the role of leader, nor a checklist against which to measure performance. Instead it provides a framework for growth, a framework which is sufficiently detailed to make clear what good leadership looks like, but general enough to allow for its application in different contexts. (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007). The competencies and practices in the Framework describe leadership broadly in a way that is intended to be inclusive of the diversity found in school communities across the province. (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007).

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from the Ontario leadership framework for school leaders and supervisory officers (The Institute for Education Leadership, 2008) to identify and implement goals related to equity and inclusive education in their school and board improvement plans. “We are building a culture of diversity. Respect, inclusiveness, and fairness must be part of everything we do – how we treat the public and how we treat each other.”