

ASK

Leadership Questions

Ten questions for every framework, each closing with one Enduring Principle.

Framework 1 — Creating a Bold Vision for Tomorrow

“What future are we committed to creating together?”

1. Why do we exist?

What is our ultimate purpose, and how does it inspire the work we do every day?

2. What future do we want to create for our students?

If we were designing our school system from scratch, what would success look like?

3. What changes are shaping the future of education?

What emerging trends, opportunities, and challenges must we anticipate rather than react to?

4. What do our students, staff, families, and community hope for?

How can we ensure every voice helps shape our vision?

5. What should never change?

Which core beliefs and values define who we are regardless of how education evolves?

6. What must change?

What practices, assumptions, or systems no longer serve our learners or our mission?

7. What would success look like ten years from now?

If our vision became reality, what would students, staff, and families experience every day?

8. What barriers stand between where we are and where we want to be?

What challenges must we acknowledge and overcome to realize our preferred future?

9. How bold are we willing to be?

Are we creating a vision that inspires innovation and transformation, or simply improving what already exists?

10. How will our vision influence every decision we make?

How will we ensure our vision becomes the foundation for priorities, resource allocation, and daily actions rather than words on a page?

THE ENDURING PRINCIPLE

A bold vision is not a prediction of the future—it is a commitment to create one.

Framework 2 — Shaping Our Preferred Future

“Who are we becoming, and what will it take to get there?”

1. Why do we exist?

What is our fundamental purpose, and how does it guide every decision we make?

2. What future are we committed to creating?

What do we want our district, schools, and learners to become over the next five to ten years?

3. What beliefs and values will define our culture?

What principles will guide our decisions, relationships, and behaviors every day?

4. What knowledge, skills, and mindsets should every graduate possess?

How do we define success for every student beyond academic achievement?

5. What kind of educators and leaders will make this future possible?

What expectations do we have for the adults who serve our students?

6. How will we ensure every learner belongs, grows, and thrives?

What commitments will demonstrate our dedication to equity, opportunity, and success for all?

7. Is our Preferred Future clear enough to inspire action?

Can every student, staff member, family, and community member understand, remember, and embrace it?

8. How will our Preferred Future shape our strategic priorities?

How will it influence our goals, resource allocation, and daily decision-making?

9. What evidence will tell us we are becoming the organization we aspire to be?

How will we recognize progress toward our preferred future?

10. How will we keep our Preferred Future alive?

What leadership practices will ensure it becomes the foundation of our culture rather than simply words in a strategic plan?

THE ENDURING PRINCIPLE

A preferred future becomes reality when a shared vision is translated into shared beliefs, shared expectations, and shared action.

Framework 3 — Defining Our Strategic Priorities

“What matters most, and how will we know we are making a difference?”

1. What are the most important outcomes we must achieve?

If we could accomplish only a few things over the next three to five years, what would make the greatest difference for our students?

2. What evidence tells us these should be our priorities?

What data, research, stakeholder feedback, and current realities support our choices?

3. What challenges or opportunities require our greatest attention?

Where do the greatest gaps, needs, or opportunities for improvement exist?

4. What goals will have the greatest impact?

Which long-range goals will most effectively move us toward our preferred future?

5. How will we know we are making progress?

What indicators, measures, and targets will tell us whether we are succeeding?

6. What strategies will produce the greatest results?

What high-leverage actions and initiatives are most likely to achieve our goals?

7. How will we align our resources with our priorities?

How will our time, people, budget, technology, and professional learning reflect what matters most?

8. How will we maintain focus?

What will we stop doing so we can concentrate our energy on our highest priorities?

9. How will every department and school contribute?

How will individual action plans align with and support the district's strategic priorities?

10. How will we ensure our priorities remain relevant?

How will we review, refine, and adjust our priorities as conditions change?

THE ENDURING PRINCIPLE

Strategic priorities turn a bold vision into focused action by concentrating the organization's energy on what matters most.

Framework 4 — Implementing from Strategy to Results

“How will we transform our strategy into measurable results?”

1. How will we turn our strategic plan into daily action?

What structures, processes, and expectations will move our plan from paper to practice?

2. Who is responsible for achieving each priority?

How will we establish clear ownership, accountability, and support for every goal and strategy?

3. What actions must we take first?

What are our highest-leverage next steps, and how will we sequence the work for success?

4. How will we monitor progress?

What scorecards, dashboards, milestones, and checkpoints will help us know if we are on track?

5. What evidence will guide our decisions?

How will we use leading and lagging indicators to evaluate progress and adjust our actions?

6. How will we build the capacity of our people?

What coaching, professional learning, collaboration, and resources will help staff successfully implement our strategies?

7. How will we remove barriers to success?

What obstacles could prevent implementation, and how will we proactively address them?

8. How will we sustain momentum?

How will we celebrate successes, maintain focus, and keep our strategic priorities visible throughout the year?

9. How will we continuously improve?

How will we use feedback, reflection, and learning to refine our strategies and strengthen results?

10. How will we ensure implementation becomes part of our culture?

How will we create a leadership system where executing, monitoring, learning, and improving become the way we work every day?

THE ENDURING PRINCIPLE

A strategic plan creates the direction; disciplined implementation creates the results.

Framework 5 — Reporting Our Progress

“What difference did our work make, and where do we go from here?”

1. What did we accomplish?

What milestones, initiatives, and commitments did we successfully complete?

2. What impact did our work have?

How did our actions improve student learning, organizational performance, or stakeholder experiences?

3. What evidence demonstrates our progress?

What data, stories, examples, and stakeholder feedback best illustrate our results?

4. Did we achieve the outcomes we intended?

How do our results compare with the goals, indicators, measures, and targets we established?

5. What did we learn?

What successes, challenges, and unexpected insights will help us improve in the future?

6. What should we celebrate?

Which accomplishments and contributions deserve recognition, and how will we acknowledge those who made them possible?

7. What still needs our attention?

Where do performance gaps remain, and what opportunities for improvement have emerged?

8. How will we communicate our results?

How can we tell our story in a way that builds understanding, trust, confidence, and support?

9. What are our next steps?

Based on what we learned, what actions should we continue, modify, begin, or stop?

10. How will our results shape the future?

How will today's learning influence tomorrow's priorities, strategies, and decisions?

THE ENDURING PRINCIPLE

Reporting results is not the end of the journey—it is the beginning of the next cycle of improvement.