



Professional Standards for Principals of Hong Kong

Nurture Learners Today and Leaders Tomorrow



Committee on Professional Development of Teachers and Principals

Professional Standards for Principals of Hong Kong



Nurture Learners Today and Leaders Tomorrow

T-standard⁺

Background

The teaching profession is a learning profession. Given the complexity of the teaching profession, active lifelong learning is necessary for developing all members of the teaching profession into effective enablers of students' learning and growth.

Committee on Professional Development of Teachers and Principals (COTAP) aims to build a quality teaching profession in pursuit of continuous improvement and excellence. **T-standard⁺** has been developed as one of the eight areas of focuses under T-excel@hk, an overarching project launched in 2015.

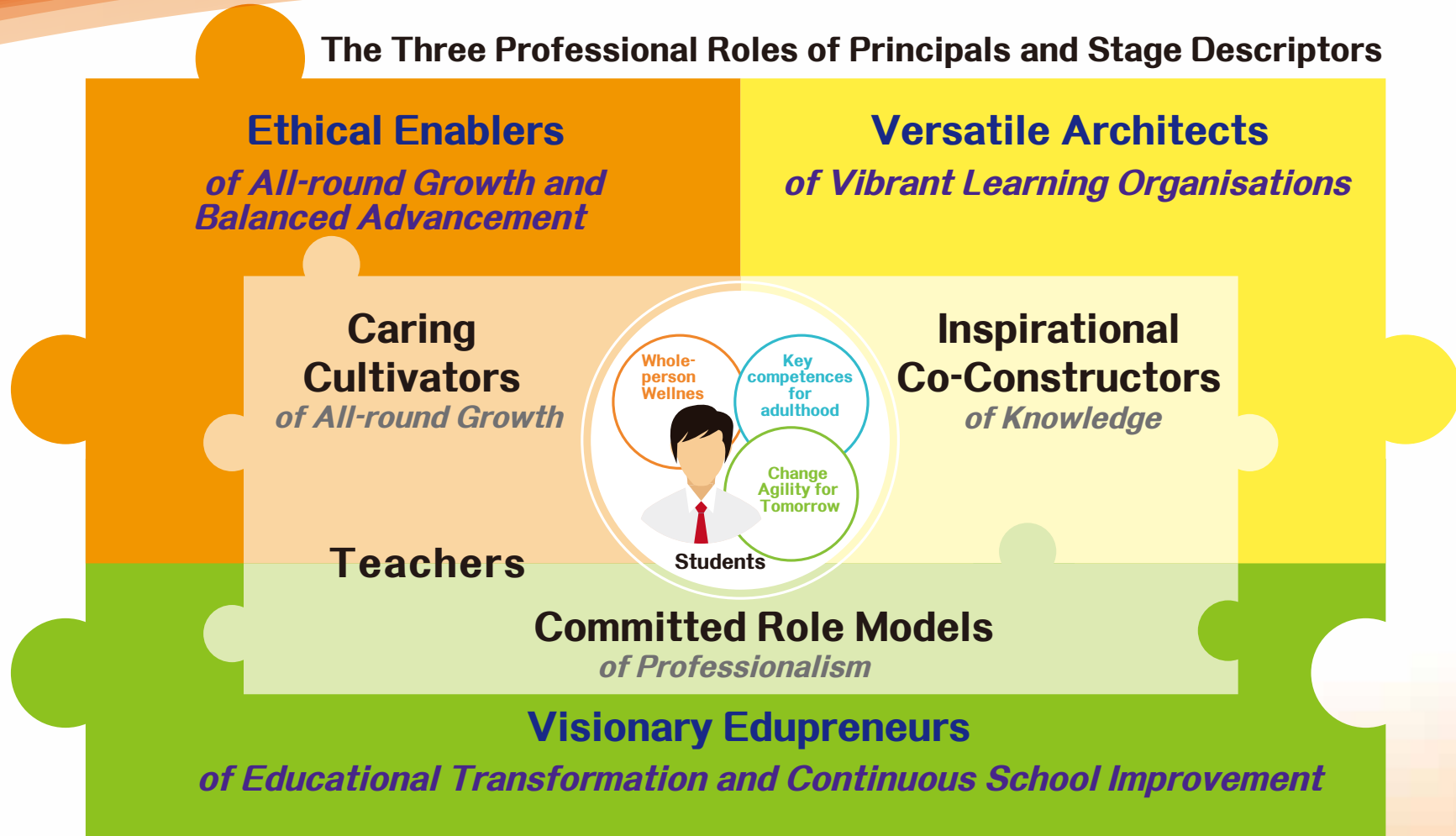
Development

The **T-standard⁺**, which comprises the Professional Standards for Teachers of Hong Kong (PST) and the Professional Standards for Principals of Hong Kong (PSP), is developed with the teaching profession for the growth of the profession. It aims to provide a useful reference for its teacher preparation, continuing professional development and school leadership development.

Comments on the two sets of draft Standards were collected from frontline teachers, school leaders and teacher education universities through a pilot study and focus group discussions conducted from February to November 2017. Feedback from schools and the public sector were also collected in July 2018 before the official launch of the Standards as references for the teaching profession and stakeholders.



The Three Professional Roles of Principals and Stage Descriptors



Each role is supported by statements that define its visions and missions in three stages of growth.

Competent

Accomplished

Distinguished

Guiding Principles

1. Adopting a student-centred approach

Facilitating the professional growth of principals and teachers and equipping them for promoting students' all-round development and life-long learning

2. Moving towards a core competence approach

Describing teachers' and principals' competences, which are a combination of knowledge, skills and values in action.

3. Embedding core values

Manifesting core values and education beliefs teachers and principals affirm through professional/ ethical practices

4. Alignment with local and international educational policies and practices

Making reference to teacher competency frameworks and continuing development policies on teacher professional development of other countries, and aligning with local educational policies and practices

5. Flexibility for professional autonomy

Serving as a reference tool that allows room for interpretation and flexibility in application by the teaching profession and its supporting partners

Core Belief

“Nurture Learners Today and Leaders Tomorrow”



At the very centre of the **T-standard⁺** is students' "all-round development and lifelong learning". We hope to nurture the following three attributes in our students :

- Whole-person wellness
- Key competences for adulthood
- Change agility for tomorrow





“Principals walk with teachers and students”

Professional Standards for Teachers of Hong Kong (PSP)

- is a set of expectations and goals for the principals to pursue on their professional journey;
- describes what principals believe in, understand and are able to do in different stages of their professional growth; and
- is designed as a reference tool for principals to reflect on their professional development needs and to offer a direction for stakeholders offering support to principals' professional growth.



Examples for illustration of the professional roles of principals

Please visit the website of COTAP to view principals' experience sharing and examples of practice.

Enquiries



For details, please visit <https://www.cotap.hk/t-standard>.



For further enquiries, please email COTAP Secretariat at secretariat@cotap.hk.



Exemplify ethical understanding and actualise educational values to foster growth and balanced advancement of teachers and students.

Generate organisational culture and conditions to foster schools as vibrant learning organisations with professional excellence and collegiality that develop teachers as co-constructors of knowledge, proactive agents of change and cultivators of multiple talents and future leaders.

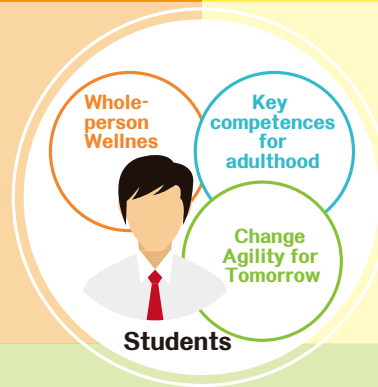
Ethical Enablers
*of All-round Growth and
Balanced Advancement*

Versatile Architects
of Vibrant Learning Organisations

**Caring
Cultivators**
of All-round Growth

**Inspirational
Co-Constructors**
of Knowledge

Teachers



Committed Role Models
of Professionalism

Visionary Edupreneurs
of Educational Transformation and Continuous School Improvement

Embody a global mindset and envision the future when actualising the school vision, mission and values, and embrace transformational changes and adversity with an entrepreneurial spirit when promoting continuous school improvement for the future development of Hong Kong.



Professional Standards for Principals of Hong Kong

How do principals fulfil their professional roles as “Ethical Enablers”, “Versatile Architects” and “Visionary Edupreneurs”? The following are “stage descriptors” of each role, describing what principals believe in, understand and practise in different stages of their professional growth.

Three principals share their views on the professional roles and their practices as examples to illustrate these roles.

Competent

Principals are people of high moral character who are committed to educational values¹ and uphold the professional code of conduct². They aspire to serve for the noble cause of education.

Principals raise teachers' awareness of educational values in relation to school policies and practices. They guide teachers in realising these values in their daily practices and cultivate in students positive values and attitudes³. In face of ethical challenges, they make fair and professional decisions by drawing upon moral principles and demonstrating personal integrity.

Principals give due emphasis to personal and professional growth. Recognising teachers' needs at different stages of development, they care for their well-being, work-life balance and professional development. Aware of the needs of students at different stages of development, they implement a whole-school approach to values education for students' character formation and pastoral care for students' all-around growth. They are responsive to student diversity and equity in education and enable students' fair access to learning opportunities, emotional and social support.

Accomplished

Principals exemplify educational values and professional integrity. They ensure ethical behaviour among staff and students and serve as their role models. The people they lead are inspired by their commitment to education.

Principals align school policies and practices with educational values. They attend to the moral dimension in all school endeavours and successfully foster and sustain a school culture that embodies ethical understanding and values. They confront unethical behaviour and have professional courage to address ethical challenges, collaborating closely with staff to properly handle issues arising from these challenges.

Principals enhance teachers' capacity in facilitating students' holistic and balanced development. They foster whole-person education effectively, integrating it into the school policies and curriculum. Principals also embrace student diversity and equity in education. They successfully establish a supportive school community in which teachers and students are able to experience the joy of whole-person enrichment.

Distinguished

Principals advocate educational values and professional integrity characterised by a deep sense of ethics. Their dedication to education earns the respect of the community towards the teaching profession.

Principals create a school community in which ethical behaviour and values are honoured and celebrated among stakeholders. They work together with the professional community to promote and safeguard the values, and take possible proactive measures in face of ethical challenges.

Principals are strong advocates for the whole-person development of teachers and students. Conscious of different developmental needs in changing times, they sustain a contemporary and coherent system of moral education curriculum, social support and life planning education which builds in students moral qualities that can stand life challenges. They maximise opportunities arising from student diversity and pluralistic culture to bring about positive impact in school and in the community.

Ethical Enablers of All-round Growth and Balanced Advancement

Values Education in Action



[Video Link](#)



"We value each student and teacher, and strive to create learning opportunities for them."

Sharing by Principal Dr. Ho Yuk Fan, Esther



Values education are not only empty talk. How does Dr. Ho live up to educational values and realise them in her daily school practices?

Ethical Enablers

Growth for All



[Video Link](#)



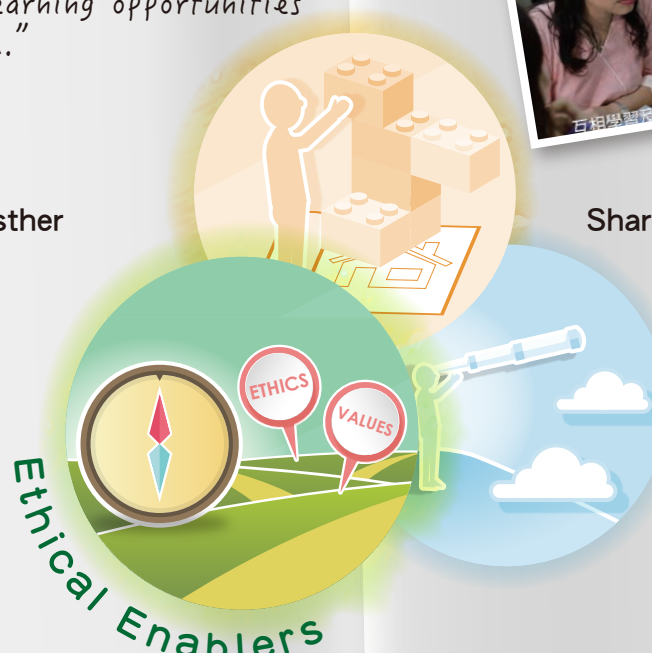
"Whole-person development is our core value in education. Students need whole-person education and their teachers also need balanced growth."

Sharing by Principal Ng Kai Kwan



What are the touching moments of "all-round growth and balanced advancement" for both teachers and students inside and outside the classrooms?

of All-round Growth and Balanced Advancement



Competent

Principals uphold the right, responsibility and capability of all to learn. They have a comprehensive understanding of the school curriculum and are reflective of existing school culture and practices which have an impact on student learning. They work with teachers to develop goals and ethos favourable to the pursuit of quality in learning and teaching. Principals understand the role of schools as learning communities. They themselves are active learners continuously equipped with updated professional knowledge in order to empower teachers in their endeavours to play the role as co-constructors of knowledge. Principals exercise instructional leadership. They provide essential conditions for enhancing teachers' professionalism, including competence in information and media literacy, technological, pedagogical and content knowledge, and effective learning for students. They ensure that organisational structures, school policies, strategies and resources are all anchored in learning. They recognise collegial harmony as a strategic element in school development and build an organisational climate that nourishes a sense of togetherness and a rapport that enables the school to develop as a learning organisation. Realising that education is now in the context of a fast and vigorous changing world, principals broaden teachers' horizons to students' multiple pathways and boost their confidence to nurture students of different potentials to be leaders in various domains of school life.

Accomplished

Principals establish a shared vision on learning and teaching among teachers and students. They have confidence in students' learning and give them the best learning opportunities through a broad and balanced curriculum. Principals foster an open culture of trust, enquiry and reflection. While teachers are encouraged to be autonomous professionals, a collaborative culture is also emphasised. Principals ensure focused and sustainable capacity building of teachers for improving students' learning outcomes. They motivate teachers intellectually and construct work settings which are conducive to the enhancement of their professionalism. As life-long learners themselves, they bring in collaborative and purposeful learning in the school community, building professional learning communities for creation of knowledge. To achieve professional excellence, they nurture leadership capability on curriculum development and enhance teachers' self-efficacy, building collective instructional capacity and influence of the schools. In achieving collegial harmony, principals generate a trusting and enabling climate, encouraging mutual recognition and support among stakeholders. Principals develop teachers to become proactive agents of change. They empower teachers through a range of learning opportunities that enhance teachers' leadership skills and development of multiple talents so that student diversity can be accommodated and developed.

Distinguished

Principals establish close and effective partnership with stakeholders to actualise the school's shared vision on learning and teaching. Together they take complementary roles to boost students' confidence and capacity in learning. Principals sustain an ethos of learning which inspires stakeholders to engage in different forms of enrichment. They shape a unique and motivating school culture of learning. As scholar-practitioners, principals manage organizational knowledge effectively to build up intellectual capital of the school. They engage stakeholders in professional exchanges and diversified learning opportunities, nurturing an intellectual disposition among them. Such co-construction of professional knowledge also extends to other schools and the community when principals engage in the sharing of knowledge and experience. Committed to their passion for professional excellence, principals create innovative environments in which learning flourishes. They contribute to the enhancement of teachers' professionalism not only in school but also in the education sector. They earn the support of the community towards the teaching profession, mobilising and nurturing people with best potential for a career in education to contribute to the forging of a top-notch and widely respected professional team for the community. As people developers, principals capitalise on the opportunities arising from diverse strengths and thinking while emphasising unity of the school. They pursue collegial harmony in which stakeholders accommodate differences and are willing to complement each other in the journey of becoming vibrant learning organisations which are able to nurture learners to become leaders of tomorrow.

Versatile Architects of Vibrant Learning Organisations



Sharing by Principal Ms Ng Kai Kwan



Video Link



Sharing by Principal Mr Tang Chun Keung, Teddy



Video Link

Nurturing an Intellectual Disposition

"We are not focusing on just individual outstanding teachers. It is the collective capacity of all teachers in the school that we aim to pursue." How does Ms Ng build up the school's intellectual capital?

"When the principal and teachers themselves set good examples as learners, it greatly motivates students to learn."

Versatile Architects

Versatile Architects



"Nurturing Learners Today and Leaders Tomorrow"

What do we mean by "leaders"? Each student has leadership qualities to be developed. Each can be leaders in different domains.

"In my eyes, all students are leaders."

of Vibrant Learning Organisations

Competent

Principals have a good grasp of the school context including its strengths, limitations and challenges. They have a retrospective understanding of the education development of Hong Kong and keep abreast of both local and international education trends, reflecting on their relevance and impact on school vision and mission.

Principals recognise the role of schools in relation to the society, taking steps to engage the school with the community. While being resilient in times of adversity, they also set up proper systems and procedures for compliance and management of risks, crises and uncertainties. Being entrepreneurial, they have a positive mindset to change, and are willing to support creative initiatives that are beneficial to the school.

Principals believe in school growth and improvement. They explore ways for school development through data-driven studies and open dialogues with stakeholders. They engage the whole school in planning, implementation and evaluation of school development plans, with a goal to nurture in students the aspiration to become life-long learners and responsible citizens.

Accomplished

Principals plan strategically for the realisation of the school vision and mission based on the changing local and international contexts and in response to emerging education and related policies.

Principals develop an agility of management and organisation which can handle rapid changes, risks and crises.

They inspire teachers with positive thinking and empower them to take adaptive measures that facilitate sustainable school development. They are sensitive to social dynamics and create opportunities for the development of both the school and the community.

Principals cultivate among teachers and students a mindset that embraces growth and development. They build an evidence-based culture to oversee school performance and deploy human and other resources, including staff recruitment and succession plans, for sustainable growth. They are able to cultivate in students qualities of global citizens who value diversities and cultural heritage.

Distinguished

Principals review the school vision and mission in line with latest world trends and developments, adopting a global mindset and systems thinking, and responding professionally to social expectations and dynamics. In this endeavour, they are capable of envisaging the future and its possibilities with stakeholders, bringing contributions that inspire generations to come.

Principals create an entrepreneurial environment for the school, ensuring that management and organisation are constantly evolving and proactive to change. They join hands with stakeholders to prepare for complexities and transformational changes, which are turned into opportunities favourable to sustainable school development.

In pursuit of growth and excellence for the education of Hong Kong, principals engage the professional community in identifying and addressing areas for improvement. They foster a culture of research to evaluate and innovate policies and practices. They form robust partnerships with stakeholders, school networks and other sectors to bring about changes through consensus building. They nurture students to be contributing members of the global society who are committed to serve for the development of Hong Kong.

Visionary Edupreneurs *of Educational Transformation and Continuous School Improvement*



Video Link



Sharing by Principal Mr Tang Chun Keung, Teddy

Creating a School Environment for Promoting Entrepreneurial Spirit

Is cultivating an "entrepreneurial spirit" good for all students? Reforms must be timely and student-oriented.

"Whether to go for an innovation depends on the school situation; benefits to student learning is the most important consideration."

Visionary Edupreneurs



Video Link

Sharing by Principal Dr Ho Yuk Fan, Esther
Evidence-based •
Reflection and Refinement •
Continuous Development

It is very common for schools to share "good practices." But are these practices data-driven? Are these experiences consolidated?

"Good practices will have positive impact on schools' continuous development only through reflection, adaptation and refinement."

of Educational Transformation and Continuous School Improvement



Footnotes

1. 'Educational values' include the values mentioned in the following documents:
 - (1) according to *Guidelines for Principals' Continuing Professional Development (CPD)* (Education Department, 2002): 'Educational Values' include learning-centredness, innovativeness, lifelong learning, education for all, service orientation, empowerment, equity and fairness, and whole-person development; and
 - (2) according to *Towards a Learning Profession: The Teacher Competencies Framework and the Continuing Professional Development of Teachers* (ACTEQ, 2003), the six core values that underpin the whole framework are (i) belief that all students can learn, (ii) love and care for students, (iii) respect for diversity, (iv) commitment and dedication to the profession, (v) collaboration, sharing and team spirit, and (vi) passion for continuous learning and excellence.
2. Please refer to the *Code for the Education Profession of Hong Kong* (Extracted Edition) issued by the Council on Professional Conduct in Education (1995): http://cpc.edb.org.hk/en/code_01.htm
3. According to *Basic Education Curriculum Guide – To Sustain, Deepen and Focus on Learning to Learn (Primary 1 – 6)* (Curriculum Development Council (CDC), 2014) and *Secondary Education Curriculum Guide* (CDC, 2017), the seven priority values and attitudes depicted under The Revised Civic and Moral Education Curriculum Framework (CDC, 2008) are (i) perseverance, (ii) respect for others, (iii) responsibility, (iv) national identity, (v) commitment, (vi) integrity, and (vii) care for others.

