

School Leadership Institute FASTstream program

Teacher selection process | Feedback



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Overview

The purpose of this document is to share feedback from the selection process for the FASTstream program. It is aimed at supporting aspiring leaders who applied for the program, to reflect on their current practice and core beliefs and how these were evidenced throughout the application process.

We were delighted with the interest in the program. All applicants were assessed by panels of experienced principals against three levels of criteria: distinguished, promising and developing. This document describes the commonalities of attributes of applicants at each of these levels. It is important to note that some applicants demonstrated attributes across more than one level of the marking criteria.

At the heart of our work as educational leaders is a focus on providing every opportunity to enable the best possible learning outcomes for students. Aspiring leaders play a critical role in contributing to student and teacher learning, whilst also further developing their leadership capacity in preparation for principalship.

We encourage all applicants to reflect on this feedback and discuss it with trusted colleagues and mentors.

We trust this document proves useful in supporting your development.

Joanne Jarvis
Director
School Leadership Institute

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Leadership for Learning – Teachers Developing

Growth | Collaboration | Reflection | Improvement

The following are observations about the attributes of applicants who are developing their leadership but did not demonstrate readiness for the FASTstream program.

Developing

Written application – teachers

1. Demonstrating your influence on the learning of teachers and students

Positive influence on the learning of students and teachers

Applicants relied on basic or limited references to their proactive influence/impact on student and teacher learning. The examples of their role in the teaching/learning process were not explained clearly. There were limited references to their influence or impact.

Positive influence on learning beyond your classroom

Some applicants did not mention learning beyond their classroom but focused on their own students without explaining any wider impact on learning in grades, stages, faculty or whole school.

2. Leading effective assessment practices

Impact of assessment practices on student and/or teacher learning

Applicants demonstrated limited understanding of the issues involved in effective assessment practices. They tended to describe the assessment practices rather than explain how they provided evidence of student or teacher learning.

3. Committing to innovation and improvement by acting on feedback

Constructing feedback and responding to feedback to enhance student/teacher learning

Applicants did not explain clearly the links between quality and timely feedback and its relationship to improved learning for students and teachers. Examples tended to be general or descriptive rather than analytical without any indication of what might be improved in future assessment practices. There were some passing references to teacher professional learning.

Seeking and acting on feedback as an aspiring teacher leader

Applicants did not refer explicitly to the significance of professional feedback from colleagues and mentors in their own development. They referred to professional feedback from colleagues or mentors without necessarily linking the feedback to their development as future teacher leaders.

4. Implementing the ‘Walking Together – Working Together’ partnership agreement

Understanding the implications of the partnership agreement

Applicants referred to the document without clear connections to their understanding of the significance of the partnership agreement in relation to Aboriginal peoples, history, languages and culture.

Influencing the implementation of the partnership agreement in a school community

Applicants provided limited reference to the vital role teachers and teacher leaders in NSW public schools play in the implementation of the partnership agreement. They did not anticipate potential opportunities for their own proactive involvement in future implementation strategies in NSW public schools.

Digital story – teachers

1. Ability to link values and core beliefs to their aspiration to be a leader in a NSW public school

Applicants did not demonstrate clear connections between their values and core beliefs about public education or they did so in a tentative way. They did not demonstrate clear links between their values and beliefs and their own leadership aspirations.

2. Ability to provide evidence of building relational trust with students, teachers, parents and the school community

Applicants made only brief reference to relational trust without specific examples of how it is integral to effective leadership. Some referred to building trust with students, with more limited references to how this can be achieved collaboratively with teachers and the wider school community.

3. Ability to communicate a clear coherent, well-paced message

Applicants lacked a logical coherence and development in their story and tended to rely on a series of somewhat disjointed images and slides to speak for them as aspiring teacher leaders. The screen images and background music did not always reflect the narrative voice or distracted from the message. It was difficult for the viewer to engage with the aspiring teacher leader. There were a few applicants whose digital story was well in excess of the two minutes prescribed by the question while others were considerably shorter than the two minutes.

Interview with panel – teachers

An opportunity to share with the panel insights about leadership impact and personal reflections.

In some cases, the leadership conversations were stronger than the written application and/or digital story. While many applicants spoke well about teaching and learning, they were not able to respond clearly to questions about their leadership of learning and/or their ability to influence the learning and leadership development of colleagues. Applicants were able to list what they had done but could not elaborate on their impact.

Referees – teachers

Applicants had not informed referees that they were being listed and many referees were unable to support the application as they had not been given a copy.

Leadership for Learning – Teachers Promising

Growth | Collaboration | Reflection | Improvement

The following are observations about the attributes of applicants who are developing their leadership and have been assessed as promising but not yet ready for the FASTstream program.

Promising

Written application – teachers

1. Demonstrating your influence on the learning of teachers and students

Positive influence on the learning of students and/or teachers

Applicants referred to their proactive influence/impact on student and teacher learning. Examples of their own role in the teaching/learning process could have been more clearly linked to their impact.

Positive influence on learning beyond your classroom

Applicants referred to learning beyond their classroom in both curriculum and student wellbeing in a grade, stage, faculty or whole school without clearly explained examples linked to their leadership role.

2. Leading effective assessment practices

Impact of assessment practices on student and/or teacher learning

Applicants demonstrated a sound understanding of a range of assessment practices. However, the examples lacked explicit detail about how they were implemented and their impact on student and teacher learning. The different learning needs of a range of students and teachers needed a stronger focus.

3. Committing to innovation and improvement by acting on feedback

Constructing feedback and responding to feedback to enhance student/teacher learning

Applicants referred to the links between quality and timely feedback and its relationship to improved learning for students and teachers. The examples included tended to be general or descriptive rather than analytical.

Seeking and acting on feedback as an aspiring teacher leader

Applicants referred to the significance of professional, explicit feedback from colleagues and mentors in their development in general terms. They also acknowledged how they have responded to this professional feedback in their development. However, their reflections on this feedback lacked depth.

4. Implementing the ‘Walking Together - Working Together’ partnership agreement

Understanding the implications of the partnership agreement

Applicants referred to the document with some connections to their understanding of the significance of the partnership agreement in relation to Aboriginal peoples, history, languages and culture.

Influencing the implementation of the partnership agreement in a school community

Applicants referred to the vital role teachers and teacher leaders in NSW public schools play in the implementation of the partnership agreement. They indicated their understanding of potential opportunities for their own proactive involvement in future implementation strategies in NSW public schools. There were some examples of how this might work well in NSW public schools.



Digital story – teachers

1. Ability to link values and core beliefs to their aspiration to be a leader in a NSW public school

Applicants articulated their values and core beliefs and indicated some connections between their values and core beliefs and their aspiration to be a teacher leader in NSW public schools. There were some indications of their desire to have a positive impact on student learning. Some applicants expressed a desire to influence the professional learning of teachers.

2. Ability to provide evidence of building relational trust with students, teachers, parents and the school community

Applicants referred to relational trust with some specific examples of how building relational trust is integral to effective leadership. Some referred to strategies involved in building trust with students with brief references to how this can be achieved collaboratively with teachers and the wider school community.

3. Ability to communicate a clear coherent, well-paced message

Applicants communicated with a clear sense of purpose and viewers gained a sense of the emerging teacher leader. Some applicants relied on a series of images and slides to speak for them as aspiring teacher leaders. The screen images and background music did not always reflect the narrative/ voice or distracted from the key message. Some stories featured a strong narrative/voice. However, it was difficult for the viewer to engage with the aspiring teacher leader if they did not appear on the screen, even if the narrative/voice were convincing.

Interview with panel – teachers

An opportunity to share with the panel insights about leadership impact and personal reflections.

In some cases, the leadership conversations were stronger than the written application and/or digital story. Applicants spoke confidently about teaching and learning and provided examples of their involvement working collaboratively with others. Applicants described their leadership responsibilities and/or emerging leadership opportunities. However, they were not able to articulate clearly what they needed to do to develop their own leadership knowledge and skills and/or influence the development of others.

Leadership for Learning – Teachers Distinguished

Growth | Collaboration | Reflection | Improvement

The following are observations about the attributes of applicants who are teacher leaders or beyond and who have demonstrated with distinction their readiness for the FASTstream program.

Distinguished

Written application – teachers

1. Demonstrating your influence on the learning of teachers and/or students

Positive influence on the learning of students and/or teachers

Applicants referred to their proactive influence/impact on student and teacher learning. Strong examples of their leadership role in the teaching/learning process were clearly linked to their impact on student and teacher learning.

Positive influence on learning beyond your classroom

Applicants made explicit references to learning beyond their classroom with clearly explained examples linked to their leadership role in some or all of the following: grades, stages, teams, faculties, whole school or wider regional networks.

2. Leading assessment teaching practices

Impact of assessment practices on student and teacher learning

Applicants demonstrated a detailed understanding of a range of assessment practices and clearly explained their effectiveness in addressing different learning needs of students and teachers. They demonstrated excellent knowledge of skills in data analysis and evidence-informed assessment practices. Examples of assessment practices were also linked strongly to effective student and teacher learning.

3. Committing to innovation and improvement by acting on feedback

Constructing feedback and responding to feedback to enhance student/teacher learning

Applicants referred explicitly to the links between quality and timely feedback and valued its direct relationship to improved learning outcomes for students and teachers through the use of specific examples.

Seeking and acting on feedback as an aspiring teacher leader

Applicants referred to the significance of professional, explicit feedback from colleagues and mentors in their own leadership development. There were clear references to a practice of collaboratively seeking, reflecting and acting on professional feedback.

4. Implementing the ‘Walking Together – Working Together’ partnership agreement

Understanding the implications of the partnership agreement

Applicants referred to the document with clear connections to their own extensive understanding of the significance of the partnership agreement in relation to Aboriginal peoples, history, languages and culture.

Influencing the implementation of the partnership agreement in a school community

Applicants articulated with conviction the vital role teachers and teacher leaders in NSW public schools play in the implementation of the partnership agreement. They indicated their deep understanding of potential opportunities for their proactive involvement in future implementation strategies. Strong examples were provided outlining how this might work well in NSW public schools.



Digital story – teachers

1. Ability to link values and core beliefs to their aspiration to be a leader in a NSW public school

Applicants articulated their values and core beliefs and indicated very clear connections between their values and core beliefs and their aspiration to be a teacher leader in NSW public schools. They had a detailed knowledge of the wide variety of student learning and wellbeing needs and how these motivate them to make a difference as a future leader. They provided explicit and meaningful statements about their desire to have a positive impact on both student and teacher learning.

2. Ability to provide evidence of building relational trust with students, teachers, parents and the school community

Applicants demonstrated understanding of the importance of relational trust with specific examples of how building relational trust is integral to effective leadership. There were strong links to strategies involved in building trust with students and the importance of collaboration with teachers and the wider school community. Some applicants also emphasised their role in working and sharing their expertise within networks of schools.

3. Ability to communicate a clear coherent, well-paced message

Applicants communicated with a deep sense of purpose and assessors confidently gained a strong sense of the emerging teacher leader. The story was cohesive and transitioned smoothly. Their presentation was authentic and persuasive while some were quite inspirational. The digital story remained within the specified time-frame.

Interview with panel – teachers

An opportunity to share with the panel insights about leadership impact and personal reflections.

Applicants spoke confidently about best practice in teaching, learning, classroom management and supporting student wellbeing. They showed a deep understanding about the differing learning needs of students and how students and teachers best learn. They demonstrated a practice of seeking, reflecting and acting on feedback. It was clear that the applicants were committed to continuous improvement. The most distinguished answers referred to strong collaborative practice and refining their own leadership knowledge and skills with experienced teachers and mentors.

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