

Interview protocol for principals. Leadership practices regarding school support services: characteristics, influential actors and what they mean for practices.

Name:

Place:

Date:

1. Tell me how the municipality's school support services are organized?
 - a. What do they consist of?
 - b. What does the service mean for schoolwork?
 - i. You
 - ii. Teacher
 - iii. Students
 - iv. Parents
 - c. How do you think the municipality's school support services meet the legal requirements to support school activities and staff on the one hand and parents and students on the other?
 - d. What, if any, are the barriers?

Setting directions

2. Who are the representatives of school support services in this municipality (responsibility)?
 - a. Who would you say are the key players in shaping and implementing school support services?
 - i. What is that assessment based on?
 - b. What is included in the municipality's policy on school support services?
 - c. How was the policy formulated?
 - d. How (well) is the policy on school support services and its role communicated to you and other school employees?
 - i. How is what is expected of you and the school work communicated to you?
 - ii. How is it followed up?
 - e. How would you say the school support service deals with a situation in which a key person or persons leaves the services?
 - i. What effect does it have on school support services if e.g., a superintendent, psychologist, or special teaching consultants leave their jobs?
 - ii. What if the principal leaves her/his job?
 - f. How much do you and the superintendent agree on ways to improve the municipality's school support services?
 - g. What is your role in relation to the school support service?
 - h. How would you describe the role of the superintendent, the school board, the local government?
 - i. To what extent do your priorities and your assessment of what the school support service has to deal with coincide with priorities; superintendent, other school support service employees, school board, local government?

Developing people

3. How would you describe your relationship with the superintendent?
 - a. Other professionals of the school support service?
 - i. What do you communicate about?
 - b. How would you describe the understanding within school support services of your needs as a principal for support and advice/counselling?

- i. How would you describe the understanding and involvement of school support services in teachers' needs for support and advice?
- c. How would you describe the support/involvement of school support services in your professional development and that of teachers and other school staff?
 - i. How does the school support service support you as a school principal?
 - ii. How does it support the professional development needs of individual teachers?
 - iii. How does it support new teachers?
 - iv. How does it support action research or other research by administrators and teachers?
 - v. How does it consult about student welfare?
- d. How does the progress of school support services in terms of supporting your and teachers' professional development, affect the learning and well-being of students?

Refining and aligning the organization

- 4. How would you describe the involvement of the school support services in supporting school improvements?
 - a. How would you describe the involvement of school support services in creating a collaborative culture within the school?
 - b. How would you describe the services' actions to promote teamwork and networking, e.g., with other schools?
 - i. How does this involvement of school support services affect the work in the school?
 - ii. How does this approach affect students' learning and well-being?
 - c. How does the service approach relationships between school, parents and society?
 - i. Other institutions, school levels...
 - d. How would you describe the school support service's consultation with and support for you and other school staff and regarding the school field?
 - i. How does this consultation and support affect schoolwork?
 - e. How would you describe the leadership style of the school support service? (superintendent, etc.)
 - i. How does it affect schoolwork?

Improving teaching & learning programmes

- 5. Describe the involvement of school support services in the development and strengthening of teaching
 - a. How does the school support service create a supportive work environment?
 - i. What value does the involvement of the school support service have for the work of teachers?
 - 1. For learning and student welfare?
 - b. How does the school support service support appointing qualified staff?
 - i. How does the school support service support the retention of qualified staff?
 - 1. What does it mean for the work in the school?
 - c. How does the school support service support the pedagogical development of teachers?
 - i. And yours?
 - d. How do actors at the school support services help you to prioritise your work? (e.g., to provide pedagogical leadership)
 - i. How does it support teachers so that they have the space to focus on teaching and the well-being of students?

- ii. How about your own professional development?
- e. How does the school support service measure up to the school's internal assessment?
 - i. How does the school support service approach the school's external assessment?
 - ii. How does the school support service follow up on assessments?

Other questions

6. What meaning do you attach to the term counselling in relation to school support services?
7. Do you/your staff and school administrators understand counselling provided by the school support service in the same way?
8. Has there been any conversation about it between you?
9. What does the counselling provided by the school support service consist of/what does it focus on?
 - a. How does it affect schoolwork?
 - i. Your job
 - ii. The teacher's job (How is counselling done in the field (support for teachers and schools)? Example
 - iii. The student
 - iv. Parent
 - v. The school as a whole?
10. What expertise do those who provide counselling on behalf of the municipality have?
 - a. How do those experts fit the school's needs for expertise?
11. What service would you most like from the school support service?
 - a. How is the school support service responding to those requests?
 - b. What do you think could be different in the municipality's school support? Examples
 - c. What do you think is the general attitude towards school support services in the school community?
 - i. Has it been explored?
12. What kind of initiative do you think the school support service should propose and why?
13. What has the greatest impact on how the municipality fulfils its obligations regarding school support services? (Finances, school office staff, conditions within the school, attitudes towards school support services/school activities, geographical location, small/crowded population...)
14. What is your future vision regarding the municipality's school support services?
15. What conditions must be facilitated for this to happen?