



# GROWING DEEP

Leadership & Formation Framework



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# Introduction

The Growing Deep Leadership and Formation Framework articulates what it means to participate, work and flourish in a Lutheran education community.

## Leadership

Leadership in Lutheran education is a concept that involves every member of the community, from students and teachers to administration and non-teaching staff. Students are empowered to become leaders as they take initiative in their learning, collaborate effectively, and inspire positive change. Teachers engage in leadership as they shape the culture of their classrooms and the wider learning environment, and mentor and guide students towards personal growth and critical thinking. Administrators play a pivotal role in setting a vision for the school and creating an environment where everyone feels valued and heard. Non-teaching staff contribute to the effective organisation and management of the school or early childhood service and demonstrate leadership through their dedication and commitment. In this inclusive view of leadership, Lutheran schools and early childhood services become vibrant ecosystems where everyone's contributions are recognised, fostering a sense of belonging and collective responsibility for success.

## Formation

Formation is about the ongoing journey of being and becoming, of the development of who we are and what we believe in response to the people, things and life experiences of significance. Formation experiences in Lutheran education relate to the personal, communal, professional and spiritual. Christian formation is about being shaped and formed by a God who is most clearly revealed in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. It is an ongoing journey and concerns the whole human life; a life that is lived, in relationship with Jesus, inspired through the power of the Holy Spirit, grounded in Scripture, and experienced with our head, heart and hands (Bartsch 2006). It involves the ongoing journey of exploring and developing our God-given abilities as we reflect the love of God and serve each other. As Christians, this process is not just an individual pursuit but is given its fullest expression in community whereby we can grow and challenge each other to be the people God has created and called us to be.

# Purpose

The Growing Deep Leadership and Formation Framework was developed to:

- provide opportunity for all leaders in Lutheran schools and early childhood services to reflect on and plan for growth in their leadership responsibilities, spiritual journey and ongoing formation
- inspire and enable Lutheran schools and early childhood services to be places of service and transformation and contribute to the ministry of the Lutheran Church of Australia (LCA)
- grow a common and consistent language that builds a shared vision and understanding of how each individual contributes to the school or service in the Lutheran context
- identify the practices and capabilities that contribute to improving student learning outcomes
- clarify and develop an understanding of how God's word, Lutheran theology and spirituality informs leadership across all areas of responsibility
- connect all of our learning communities nationally, through shared visions and goals centred on formation and leadership
- be used for strategic renewal and development at both a personal and school/service level.

# Growing Deep Leadership and Formation Framework



# OUR FOUNDATION



# The Lutheran Lens

The foundation of Lutheran education is the gospel of Jesus Christ (which) informs all learning and teaching, all human relationships, and all activities (The LCA and its schools, 2001).

The Lutheran lens identifies key theological concepts that underpin Lutheran education.

The lens provides a way of seeing and being in Lutheran education.

- Lutheran schools and early childhood services, as part of the mission of the Lutheran church, are communities of worship and service, sharing and living the good news of Jesus Christ.
- Lutheran schools and early childhood services are communities which acknowledge God as creator and join in the ongoing creation and care of the world and all people.
- Lutheran schools and early childhood services are communities that recognise that God has intentionally created each person and that each person is uniquely gifted to live in relationship with God and others.
- Lutheran schools and early childhood services are communities where grace abounds. While recognising the brokenness of humanity, they reflect the unconditional love of the Father, revealed through the saving work of his Son, Jesus.
- Lutheran schools and early childhood services are communities open to the influence of the Holy Spirit, who invites and equips for a life of worship, learning and service.
- Lutheran schools and early childhood services are communities that value learning as God's gift to people for their wonder, growth, and to inspire them to respond to the needs of the world.
- Lutheran schools and early childhood services are communities of hope, nurtured by the promises of God's word, love and forgiveness which empower staff and students to embrace the future with confidence.

# VOCATIONAL PRACTICES





# What leaders do

There are five key areas of work or Vocational Practices that describe what we do in Lutheran education.

We all are engaged in each of these Vocational Practices to varying degrees, at different times, as we live out our service and vocation in Lutheran education.

The Vocational Practices have been developed using the Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) Principal Standards.

## Vocational Practices: What leaders do

### Excellence in learning

Lutheran schools and early childhood services value excellence and creativity in teaching and learning for all community members. A culture of challenge and support nurtures enthusiastic, independent learners, committed to lifelong learning. Excellence in teaching and learning is focused on improving student outcomes which includes spiritual, intellectual, physical, emotional, cultural and social dimensions. All learners should have access to quality learning experiences that ensure they develop their God-given abilities so that they may enrich the world. High expectations are established through reflective practice, collaborative planning, monitoring, providing feedback and reporting on the effectiveness of learning. The learning environment promotes active engagement, risk taking, motivation and a strong learner voice.

### Ongoing improvement and innovation

Improvement in Lutheran schools and early childhood services is guided by its values, vision and mission. Excellence is pursued through a culture of reflection, collaboration, innovation and creativity. Evidence is gathered to develop and implement improvement plans and policies for the continuous development of teaching and learning, the institution and its facilities. Ongoing professional learning encourages all members of the community to achieve high standards and develop their service and leadership capacity.

### Strengthening Lutheran identity

Lutheran schools and early childhood services, as agencies of the Lutheran Church of Australia, share a recognisable Lutheran identity in which the gospel of Jesus Christ informs all learning and teaching, all human relationships, and all activities in the school. The rituals, symbols, visual displays and practices convey its Christ-centred identity. The school/early childhood service community is regularly involved in Christian worship which includes daily devotions. Christian Studies is an essential and distinctive part of the formal curriculum. Lutheran schools and early childhood services deliberately and intentionally share and live the good news of Jesus Christ with students, families, staff and the broader community. Opportunities for faith nurture are actively promoted and maintained.

### Community building

Lutheran schools and early childhood services value the richness and diversity of the wider community and other education sectors. Positive and strategic partnerships are developed and maintained with students, families, local Christian communities, the broader community and Lutheran education. The relationships are built upon support, collaboration, trust and reconciliation. The Lutheran school/early childhood service community lives out the gospel and is active in service of others. The multi-cultural and multi-faith nature of Lutheran education and Australian society fosters understandings of diverse cultures. Lutheran education promotes the understanding of, and respect for, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

### Leading effective organisation and management

In Lutheran schools and early childhood services, roles, responsibilities and procedures are clearly articulated so that staff can participate in its smooth and efficient operation. Data and knowledge management methods and technologies are used to ensure that resources (human, physical, technological and financial) are efficiently organised and managed to provide an effective, safe and caring, growth-oriented learning and working environment. Strategic planning ensures the ongoing improvement and sustainability of the school/early childhood service. Best practice is built upon effective collaboration between the governing body, staff, students, families, church and others.

# How leaders do what they do

## The Capabilities

### Growing Oneself

- Building self-awareness
- Deepening faith
- Learning and adapting
- Living positively

### Engaging the Community

- Modelling integrity
- Listening and understanding
- Building support
- Networking and strategic relationships

### Leading the Team

- Creating purpose and clarity
- Nurturing faith
- Growing capacity
- Inspiring excellence

### Focusing on Outcomes

- Searching for knowledge
- Sharing for improvement
- Thinking strategically
- Making it happen

## What leaders do

### The Vocational Practices

Excellence in learning

Ongoing improvement and innovation

Strengthening Lutheran identity

Community building

Leading effective organisation and management

# CAPABILITIES



# 'How' leaders do what they do

There are four capabilities each with descriptors.

The capabilities describe how we do what we do in Lutheran education.

These leadership capabilities represent an integration of knowledge, skills, personal qualities and understanding.

These capabilities assist leaders to identify areas for personal and professional learning.

## Growing Oneself

- Building self-awareness
- Deepening faith
- Learning and adapting
- Living positively

## Engaging the Community

- Modelling integrity
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## Leading the Team

- Creating purpose and clarity
- Nurturing faith
- Growing capacity
- Inspiring excellence

## Focusing on Outcomes

- Searching for knowledge
- Sharing for improvement
- Thinking strategically
- Making it happen

# Capabilities: Growing Oneself

## Building self-awareness

Involves building an understanding of oneself, being 'in tune' with one's own biases, assumptions, thoughts and feelings.

It is having an awareness of how these impact our decision-making capacity or how one presents to others.

It includes the capacity to control or suspend thoughts, emotions and judgements and be comfortable in ambiguous or stressful situations without making reactive decisions or jumping to irrational or emotive conclusions.

## Deepening faith

Involves a personal faith in Jesus.

It includes witnessing to the Christian faith and recognising God's presence in daily experiences and the importance of faith in both joyous and challenging times.

It expresses itself in service to others and provides a framework for making meaning and developing identity and relationships.

This includes a deep understanding of Lutheran theology and how its application guides everyday actions.

## Learning and adapting

Involves the desire to learn and grow in one's professional vocation.

It includes being open-minded to new information and feedback from others, objectively considering other interpretations and demonstrating a readiness to adapt thinking and practice.

At its strongest, it involves the capacity to transform one's habitual, mental and emotional patterns.

This includes consciously choosing alternate ways of thinking, feeling and acting that enable us to reach our highest potential as leaders in Lutheran education.

## Living positively

Involves the ability to maintain a positive outlook or perspective, even in the face of obstacles or setbacks.

It draws strength from the promises of God and includes being optimistic about the future, and consciously choosing to project warmth, faith and hope in relationships with others.

It involves valuing the gifts and contributions of all and creating a sense of optimism by building a positive and energetic climate of encouragement and support, even during times of difficulty or change.

# Building self-awareness

Involves building an understanding of oneself, being 'in tune' with one's own biases, assumptions, thoughts and feelings.

It is having an awareness of how these impact our decision-making capacity or how one presents to others.

It includes the capacity to control or suspend thoughts, emotions and judgements and be comfortable in ambiguous or stressful situations without making reactive decisions or jumping to irrational or emotive conclusions.

## Descriptors

### Aware of one's own thoughts and feelings

Is conscious of, and pays attention to, one's thoughts and feelings. Is aware of how one is listening, speaking or acting, and is conscious of personal biases and assumptions. Can observe patterns in one's thoughts and feelings and is aware of how to respond as a consequence.

### Aware of impact

Is aware of and recognises how patterns of thinking, feeling and behaving impact on oneself and others. Understands both the positive and potentially damaging impact that emotions and behaviour can have on others, including colleagues, staff, other professionals, students and parents. Understands when one's thoughts or emotions are biasing decision-making capacity.

### Controls and manages emotions

Controls outward expression of emotions and feelings. Projects a calm, controlled and clear-headed demeanour, even under conditions of high stress. Has the capacity to masterfully maintain composure and control.

### Suspends judgement

Is aware of when one is judging rather than observing. Demonstrates the capacity to 'suspend' observations without immediately judging or categorising what one sees or hears. Calmly 'holds' anxiety, risk and ambiguity, rather than jumping to irrational or emotive conclusions, or making reactive decisions as a way to 'move on'.

# Deepening faith

Involves a personal faith in Jesus.

It includes witnessing to the Christian faith and recognising God's presence in daily experiences and the importance of faith in both joyous and challenging times.

It expresses itself in service to others and provides a framework for making meaning and developing identity and relationships.

This includes a deep understanding of Lutheran theology and how its application guides everyday actions.

## Descriptors

### Adopts and practices a 'servant' mentality

Sees one's behaviour and actions as service to others. Supports and participates in the regular practices of spiritual formation such as staff devotion and prayer, worship or service in the community.

### Recognises God's presence in daily life and in the world

Articulates the Christian faith in everyday situations and circumstances. Does this in an open, visible way that shares and communicates to others an example of walking a spiritual path with Jesus. Creates opportunities to practice everyday formation rituals with others in the workplace. Uses these opportunities for ongoing spiritual formation and personal reflection.

### Witnesses to the importance of faith

Demonstrates and relies on a strong Christian faith in both joyous and challenging times. Nurtures personal faith through involvement in a Christian community. Takes solace and gains strength from personal faith. Is seen as a pillar of strength and faith in dealings with others when it would be easy to be highly emotional, judgmental or critical of others.

### Understands and applies Lutheran theology

Models and exemplifies spiritual leadership using Lutheran theology to underpin leadership action. Does this in a way that demonstrates humble strength and inner peace. Has a deep understanding of the brokenness of humanity and God's grace in dealing with everyday and difficult situations.



# Learning and adapting

Involves the desire to learn and grow in one's professional vocation.

It includes being open-minded to new information and feedback from others, objectively considering other interpretations and demonstrating a readiness to adapt thinking and practice.

At its strongest, it involves the capacity to transform one's habitual, mental and emotional patterns.

This includes consciously choosing alternate ways of thinking, feeling and acting that enable us to reach our highest potential as leaders in Lutheran education.

## Descriptors

### Is open to change and improvement

Demonstrates an openness to hearing new information, feedback from others or alternative points of view. This includes the knowledge that our reasoning can be improved with further understanding and involves not irrationally holding on to a particular perspective or opinion.

### Modifies actions and decisions

Modifies short-term actions, decisions, ideas or hypotheses based on new or contrary evidence and findings. Reflects a willingness to adapt or change one's position if convinced of a better alternative.

### Rethinks strategies and plans

Demonstrates a readiness to thoughtfully and substantially set aside or rethink previous efforts or well established plans or strategies based on new evidence, information, feedback or changes to current circumstances. Can adapt quickly and painlessly when needed.

### Transforms one's patterns of thinking, feeling and acting

Understands the basis for established and automatic patterns of thinking, feeling and acting. Is aware when old patterns are habitually operating and consciously chooses to think, feel or perceive things differently, as it helps to understand the truth in difficult, complex and dynamic circumstances.

# Living positively

Involves the ability to maintain a positive outlook or perspective, even in the face of obstacles or setbacks. It draws strength from the promises of God and includes being optimistic about the future, and consciously choosing to project warmth, faith and hope in relationships with others. It involves valuing the gifts and contributions of all and creating a sense of optimism by building a positive and energetic climate of encouragement and support, even during times of difficulty or change.

## Descriptors

### Remains composed

Copes well under pressure. Remains composed and unflustered in stressful situations, such as during heavy workloads, or difficult environmental conditions. Consistently maintains a calm and well-controlled manner.

### Projects positivity

Projects an optimistic attitude that draws strength from personal faith. Is self-assured and positive about the future. Is aware of professional and environmental realities but chooses to operate from a position of faith and hope rather than fear of failure, suspicion or negativity. Consistently maintains a balanced, positive attitude.

### Demonstrates resilience

Demonstrates resilience and emotional and spiritual fortitude by quickly regaining composure after a setback. Has the ability to 'bounce back' and keep going when things get tough. Perseveres during times of hardship and follows through despite obstacles. Is able to maintain one's faith and sense of humour even during intense and stressful times.

### Displays genuine enthusiasm and optimism

Displays genuine enthusiasm and infectious optimism. Is passionate about Lutheran education and takes pride in working in service of students and their families. Demonstrates drive and tenacity and is genuinely invigorated by new challenges and opportunities. Supports and lifts the morale of colleagues. Knows how to constructively deal with cynicism and negativity which can be damaging to the team climate.

# Capabilities: Engaging the Community

## Modelling integrity

Involves being genuine, authentic, open and honest in dealings with others while remaining steadfastly professional in one's behaviour, action, advocacy and decision-making.

It involves being one's true self and acting with integrity.

It includes treating all people in an equally transparent, fair and equitable manner as well as advocating diplomatically and assertively for what we know is right even when under stress or pressure.

## Listening and understanding

Involves the ability to be fully present and engaged in effective dialogue with others in a way that communicates a deep respect and empathy for their circumstances, background, culture and intentions.

At its deepest it includes insightfully reading the unspoken thoughts or feelings of others and underlying assumptions, intentions or reasons for their behaviour.

## Building support

Involves skillfully communicating and negotiating with others (directly or indirectly) in order to build support and develop ownership and shared acceptance for ideas, actions and decisions.

It includes preparing thoroughly, understanding the audience and adjusting communication style and approach to appropriately engage with others and their perspectives.

It may include working over an extended period of time to build long-term support for strategically important decisions and initiatives.

## Networking and strategic relationships

Involves identifying, building and nurturing mutually beneficial relationships with key individuals or groups within, across and beyond the education sector.

It also includes relationships where service to others is the focus.

It includes developing and honouring relationships and networks that are of tactical and strategic importance in the development and growth of Lutheran education.

# Modelling integrity

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It includes treating all people in an equally transparent, fair and equitable manner as well as advocating diplomatically and assertively for what we know is right even when under stress or pressure.

## Descriptors

### Projects honesty and Lutheran values

Behaves in a genuine, honest, and professional manner. Works openly and genuinely promotes Lutheran values, sharing personal views, feelings and insights in the presence of different groups.

### Demonstrates consistency and transparent integrity

Treats people in a fair and equitable manner. Is consistent in one's words, decisions and actions and transparent in motives. Is reliable and consistently delivers on promises. Applies with wisdom Lutheran values in all work to ensure words, decisions and actions are grounded, aligned and predictable.

### Projects a humble self-assurance

Does not pretend to have all the answers. Authentically projects an inner assurance and outward humility by demonstrating vulnerability in difficult or uncertain times. Readily and quickly admits to mistakes. Exudes calmness and has confidence in asking for the help of others when needed.

### Advocates for others and retains integrity under pressure

Confidently upholds a position and takes action based on clear evidence for the best course of action for students, school or early childhood service or other community groups, even if that action is unpopular with colleagues, leaders, or other stakeholders. Is assertive yet diplomatic, even during stressful times or when under pressure.

# Listening and understanding

Involves the ability to be fully present and engaged in effective dialogue with others in a way that communicates a deep respect and empathy for their circumstances, background, culture and intentions.

At its deepest it includes insightfully reading the unspoken thoughts or feelings of others and underlying assumptions, intentions or reasons for their behaviour.

## Descriptors

### Listens attentively

Makes oneself available and provides undivided attention to others, even when stressed and busy. Listens attentively, with an open mind when others are speaking. Others feel they have had the opportunity to speak, be heard and know that their contribution is valued.

### Speaks clearly and sensitively

Presents messages in a clear, logical and respectful manner. Communicates difficult or unpopular information in an honest and diplomatic way that is both sensitive and responsive to the different circumstances, background, beliefs and culture of others.

### Openly engages others

Makes it safe for others to talk truthfully and openly. Makes it clear that their views are genuinely heard and understood. This includes asking clarifying questions and reflecting back to confirm understanding. When unclear, invites others to elaborate so as to gain a full and clear understanding of the situation or perspective.

### Understands deeply

Understands the deeper, underlying reasons for the patterns of behavior, unspoken thoughts and feelings of others. Uses this deep understanding of underlying intentions, concerns or motives to anticipate and interpret behaviours or actions.

# Building support

Involves skillfully communicating and negotiating with others (directly or indirectly) in order to build support and develop ownership and shared acceptance for ideas, actions and decisions.

It includes preparing thoroughly, understanding the audience and adjusting communication style and approach to appropriately engage with others and their perspectives.

It may include working over an extended period of time to build long-term support for strategically important decisions and initiatives.

## Descriptors

### Uses logic and reason

Uses reasoning and facts to construct a logical argument to win support of others. May use concrete facts and logically reasoned arguments in a discussion or presentation as the primary means to gain support.

### Researches and prepares

Prepares thoroughly for presentations, meetings and discussions. Undertakes research and develops several different arguments to support one's viewpoint. Develops ownership by explaining the benefits of an idea or initiative that would specifically appeal to the interests of the audience.

### Shapes communication style

Adapts personal communication style to genuinely engage a diverse range of stakeholders and people from different places and cultures. Gains agreement to initiatives through understanding the position of others and preparing for their reactions. Tailors language and approach taking into account the values, vested interests and motivations of the audience.

### Uses planned strategies for building support

Develops ownership and wins support for significant, strategic initiatives from key stakeholders through planned long-term strategies, while also adjusting to individual situations.

# Networking and strategic relationships

Involves identifying, building and nurturing mutually beneficial relationships with key individuals or groups within, across and beyond the education sector.

It also includes relationships where service to others is the focus.

It includes developing and honouring relationships and networks that are of tactical and strategic importance in the development and growth of Lutheran education.

## Descriptors

### Identifies key individuals and groups

Actively identifies and contacts key individuals and groups within and outside the Lutheran education community, who may be in a position to provide assistance, support or leverage in achieving the objectives of Lutheran education.

### Builds genuine, trusted relationships

Invests time with strategic networks to build genuine, professional relationships based upon mutual trust, respect and common values. Engages with one's network on a regular basis to build community and goodwill.

### Nurtures and utilises networks

Takes action to utilise networks within and outside the Lutheran education community for the purpose of seeking help and support in achieving goals or objectives. Takes time to assist others to achieve their own short-term goals when in need.

### Draws upon relationships for strategic advantage

Develops deep, long-term relationships with key individuals and groups that are influential in supporting the strategic objectives of Lutheran education. Leverages these relationships to help create long-term opportunities for Lutheran education.

# Capabilities: Leading the Team

## Creating purpose and clarity

Involves creating a very clear sense of purpose and clarity for the school, team, or area of responsibility where God and students are at the centre.

It involves establishing compelling vision and describing how each person's role plays a valuable part in achieving the greater purpose.

It includes clearly and intentionally prioritising responsibilities and articulating how the broader Lutheran education vision and purpose are translated into practical day to day actions, tasks, decisions and behaviours.

## Nurturing faith

Involves providing opportunities for spiritual formation of others appropriate to their spiritual journey.

It includes demonstrating a commitment to one's personal faith journey, leading the school community in faith, reaching out to the wider community to build faith and deepen their understanding of Lutheran beliefs and values.

It also includes creating an environment where Christian spiritual reflection and formation are valued and encouraged.

## Growing capacity

Involves growing the knowledge, skill and leadership capacity of others.

It includes providing space for thoughtful reflection and support, as well as presenting effective learning opportunities that stretch the capacity of others.

At its deepest, it involves creating an environment where team members are encouraged to take responsibility for their own self-care and self-development.

It includes fostering both their wellbeing and enthusiasm as they serve students in Lutheran education.

## Inspiring excellence

Involves holding high standards and inspiring and encouraging excellence.

This includes agreeing to clear performance goals, providing autonomy to deliver outcomes, acknowledging positive achievements and taking decisive, yet pastoral action.

Ensures that underperformance is addressed and excellence is upheld in the best interests of students and the community.



# Creating purpose and clarity

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It involves establishing compelling vision and describing how each person's role plays a valuable part in achieving the greater purpose.

It includes clearly and intentionally prioritising responsibilities and articulating how the broader Lutheran education vision and purpose are translated into practical day to day actions, tasks, decisions and behaviours.

## Descriptors

### Communicates individual purpose

Clearly articulates the purpose and expectations of the role for every team member. Takes action to ensure each person clearly understands why their role exists, why it is important to Lutheran education, and what it is designed to deliver or create. This includes describing the expected responsibilities, behaviours, actions and deliverables.

### Translates the broader vision into daily practice

Is clear in describing the specific links between daily activities and tasks and how they support the achievement of the broader vision and direction of the school or early childhood service. Ensures that the expectations of work, behaviour and deliverables are explicitly linked to the greater purpose and vision.

### Provides clarity and priority in a changing world

Intentionally reinforces and provides clear priorities and direction during times of uncertainty, high stress or ongoing change. Is proactive in holding true to Lutheran values while supporting one's team by updating them on potential changes to goals, priorities and actions in a way that provides a broader strategic context to their daily work.

### Establishes a compelling and accessible vision

Articulates a compelling Lutheran education vision that is understandable, accessible and inspiring to all. Uses different methods and media to ensure the purposes are clear and meaningful to people in different roles and places. Communicates in a way that encourages people to be active in service.

# Nurturing faith

Involves providing opportunities for spiritual formation of others appropriate to their spiritual journey.

**It includes demonstrating a commitment to one's personal faith journey, leading the school community in faith, reaching out to the wider community to build faith and deepen their understanding of Lutheran beliefs and values.**

**It also includes creating an environment where Christian spiritual reflection and formation are valued and encouraged.**

## Descriptors

### Reflects on own faith journey

Recognises that everyone is at a different place on their faith journey. Shares in a clear and genuine way, the learning, practices and wisdom gained from one's spiritual journey.

### Invites the school/early childhood service community to faith in daily life

Articulates the Christian faith in everyday situations and rituals. Undertakes daily spiritual practices with others in a climate of openness and invitation. Proactively creates opportunities for Christian spiritual reflection and the ongoing formation of others.

### Facilitates spiritual growth in the community

Is attentive to the individual spiritual paths of others in the community. Respectfully acknowledges each person's own journey, provides individual acknowledgement, support and opportunity to help nurture their faith. Encourages others to engage in reflection and spiritual practices to grow in the Christian faith and live out the gospel. Legitimises this practice as part of daily life.

### Fosters a climate of spiritual faith-building

Consciously builds a self-perpetuating climate of spiritual formation where engaging in spiritual activity is integral to the life of the community. Embeds a love of Jesus, compassion for others and a sense of grace and deeper meaning into daily activities.

# Growing capacity

Involves growing the knowledge, skill and leadership capacity of others.

It includes providing space for thoughtful reflection and support, as well as presenting effective learning opportunities that stretch the capacity of others.

At its deepest, it involves creating an environment where team members are encouraged to take responsibility for their own self-care and self-development.

It includes fostering both their wellbeing and enthusiasm as they serve students in Lutheran education.

## Descriptors

### Provides guidance and instruction

Takes the time to openly draw upon one's experience to share knowledge and wisdom with the intent of building the capacity of others. Draws from personal experience to guide others on how best to tackle problems and find solutions as well as providing instruction and guidance on how to complete specific activities and tasks.

### Helps others to reflect

Provides others with opportunity for supportive reflection both cognitively and emotionally. Works through problem situations and challenges with others to test their thinking, actions and decisions. Uses this approach to enable others to better understand their own practices and reflect on ways to improve and grow their capacity to be of greater service to students and their families.

### Coaches others

Personally coaches others in a way that inspires them to achieve their highest potential as a professional and leader within Lutheran education. Provides others with thoughtful and creative leadership and professional development opportunities designed to uniquely align to their individual career aspirations.

### Fosters a climate of learning, reflection and wellbeing

Creates a climate where professional learning and thoughtful reflective practice is the norm. Team members genuinely take responsibility for their own professional and leadership growth and wellbeing. They take pride in keeping abreast of current research and best educational and leadership practices. Individuals are supported to develop self-care and self-development strategies to enable them to work to be as successful as possible.

# Inspiring excellence

Involves holding high standards and inspiring and encouraging excellence.

This includes agreeing to clear performance goals, providing autonomy to deliver outcomes, acknowledging positive achievements and taking decisive, yet pastoral action.

Ensures that underperformance is addressed and excellence is upheld in the best interests of students and the community.

## Descriptors

### Establishes clear expectations and encourages autonomy

Establishes clear performance expectations and professional standards with each team member including objectives, responsibilities and timelines. Ensures transparency and trust with performance reviews. Allows each person an appropriate blend of autonomy and support to enable them to be as successful as possible.

### Encourages excellence by reviewing outcomes against expectations

With a spirit of encouraging excellence and enabling success, provides objective, specific and timely feedback to individuals on agreed expectations. Uses data and observations to affirm excellence and identify areas for improvement. Remains firm on high expectations.

### Addresses under performance firmly and pastorally

Puts the needs of students and the community first by holding others accountable for their actions and addressing performance issues using due process and pastoral care. Provides a clear, evidence-based and equitable pathway to address underperformance and is proactive in making difficult decisions for the betterment of the whole.

### Creates an inspiring environment of excellence

Creates an ongoing culture of excellence in Lutheran education where team members and peers are encouraged to provide each other with regular, objective feedback and are fully accountable for their own actions. Individual and collective achievements are celebrated. A loving and compassionate manner is used to address underperformance.

# Capabilities: Focusing on Outcomes

## Searching for knowledge

Involves proactively and diligently seeking information, knowledge or understanding.

Researches opinions and facts in order to ensure decisions are evidence-based, rather than relying on unfounded assumptions.

It includes proactively looking beyond the day-to-day context to search for new information and facts from a variety of sources, within and outside Lutheran education to support decisions that create the best possible schools/early childhood services.

## Sharing for improvement

Involves creating opportunities for collaborative exchanges of information that are open and transparent.

The best ideas, practices and knowledge are shared in order to tap into and build our collective wisdom for the betterment of Lutheran education.

This includes inviting others into a safe and generative exchange of ideas and practices.

Sharing occurs with colleagues, students, the church, broader school/early childhood service community and the wider education systems and bodies.

## Thinking strategically

Involves taking a 'big picture' view and seeing situations strategically and coherently within their broader context.

It involves looking for patterns, trends or connections across different situations, timeframes and experiences to comprehend current circumstances, see things in perspective, capitalise on future opportunities and mitigate potential risks.

## Making it happen

Involves proactively doing what needs to be done to meet commitments and deliver on promises to provide the best possible Lutheran education for students and their families.

This occurs with a focus on continual improvement.

It is expressed through intentional creative action, striving for improvement, introducing innovations and consistently working to deliver excellent education outcomes.

# Searching for knowledge

Involves proactively and diligently seeking information, knowledge or understanding.

Researches opinions and facts in order to ensure decisions are evidence-based, rather than relying on unfounded assumptions.

It includes proactively looking beyond the day-to-day context to search for new information and facts from a variety of sources, within and outside Lutheran education to support decisions that create the best possible schools/early childhood services.

## Descriptors

### Gathers information

Proactively gathers pertinent data by asking questions of colleagues and others who can provide useful information. Draws from the usual, routine sources of information to gain an understanding of current and topical issues.

Purposefully works to obtain this information before decisions are made or action taken.

### Personally searches

Personally investigates situations in order to find reliable evidence or to get to the bottom of a situation or problem when routine information is insufficient. Proactively asks the relevant questions of key people in one's local environment to form a more complete picture. Tests information for accuracy and is not distracted by unjustified assumptions, emotions, value judgements and general opinion.

### Searches out and beyond

Looks well beyond the local environment to consistently review and scan for trends in both Lutheran education as well as the national and international education community to remain abreast of education practices and issues. Gathers information from a wide variety of sources, including research, theology and international best practice.

### Searches widely and is knowledgeable

Searches widely for information from sources beyond education and has contemporary knowledge of social, political, economic, technological or environmental issues that impact on the effectiveness of Lutheran education. Taps into professional networks to understand the historical backgrounds as well as current and emerging information to build understanding and perspective. Is regularly consulted by others as a reliable source of knowledge and wisdom.

# Sharing for improvement

Involves creating opportunities for collaborative exchanges of information that are open and transparent.

**The best ideas, practices and knowledge are shared in order to tap into and build our collective wisdom for the betterment of Lutheran education.**

**This includes inviting others into a safe and generative exchange of ideas and practices. Sharing occurs with colleagues, students, the church, broader school/early childhood service community and the wider education systems and bodies.**

## Descriptors

### Shares willingly

Is aware of the need for Lutheran education to be the best it can be and willingly and openly shares ideas, practices and knowledge with others. Is available to others and shares expertise.

### Encourages others to share

Invites and encourages new and different ideas, the sharing of practices and insights, as well as feedback and critique from others. Seeks out and personally invites others to share, especially those who have expertise or counter-cultural and challenging opinions from which learning can occur and new insights emerge.

### Harnesses collective wisdom

Creates and contributes to collaborative learning and problem solving communities within Lutheran education. Does this to enable learning communities to share ideas and best practices as a means of encouraging excellence for Lutheran education.

### Promotes external collaboration and engagement

Proactively and intentionally works beyond Lutheran education for the ongoing improvement and excellence in teaching and learning. Creates and promotes opportunities for the sharing of practice between different education systems locally, nationally and internationally. Openly shares best Lutheran education practices across boundaries and listens openly for new ideas, practices and insights.

# Thinking strategically

Involves taking a 'big picture' view and seeing situations strategically and coherently within their broader context. It involves looking for patterns, trends or connections across different situations, timeframes and experiences to comprehend current circumstances, see things in perspective, capitalise on future opportunities and mitigate potential risks.

## Descriptors

### Understands the broader context

Demonstrates an understanding of the broader context of Lutheran education and how one's area of responsibility fits into the bigger picture. Is aware of the relevant stakeholders in their context, the role they play, how they interact with each other and the impact Lutheran education has on them.

### Anticipates trends

Identifies patterns or trends across different information sources. Uses this information to identify emerging trends or potential scenarios in the external environment and how they could impact Lutheran education. Stays alert to new information or data that helps either substantiate or reduce the likelihood of scenarios being realised.

### Develops strategies

Looks well beyond the short-term, technical issues. Draws upon a deep understanding of the church, Lutheran education, the education sector in general, as well as student, parent and community needs. Considers and articulates how one's school/early childhood service or area of responsibility can capitalise on opportunities or mitigate risks.

Develops appropriate strategies and contingency plans to ensure future success.

### Identifies significant new opportunities

Identifies helpful relationships among complex data from unrelated areas that lead to new and significant opportunities for Lutheran education or highlight paradoxes or patterns that block or hinder strategic aspirations. Presents these observations in a compelling way that leads to a shift in the strategic direction and action of the school/early childhood service or wider area of responsibility.



# Making it happen

Involves proactively doing what needs to be done to meet commitments and deliver on promises to provide the best possible Lutheran education for students and their families.

This occurs with a focus on continual improvement.

It is expressed through intentional creative action, striving for improvement, introducing innovations and consistently working to deliver excellent education outcomes.

## Descriptors

### Meets commitments

Works in a dedicated way to meet commitments and deliver on promises. Puts the students first and provides timely and quality work even within challenging timeframes. Takes action and shows initiative without undue delay or fuss.

### Delivers quality work

Is personally accountable for ensuring one's team is delivering work of a high standard within agreed performance standards and quality measures. Accepts full responsibility for the quality and effectiveness of the work of oneself and the team. Is reliable and can be depended upon to get the job done.

### Tests ideas and introduces creative improvements

Works in a consistent and conscientious way to improve one's work and deliver improved work with new standards of excellence. Tests new ideas and practices and accepts work that extends one's ability. Initiates creative improvements and changes to processes, procedures, programs, relationships or services to better meet Lutheran education's objectives and the educational and pastoral needs of students and families.

### Innovates for sustainably improved outcomes

Takes action to make real improvement to one's school/early childhood service or area of work to deliver better outcomes for Lutheran education. Establishes new and innovative working relationships, policies, practices, agreements, processes and structures to achieve higher levels of efficiency, quality and long-term effectiveness.

# OUR CULTURE



# Workplace culture

Lutheran education workplace culture describes the atmosphere or climate of the work environment.

It is the perception of how it feels to work in Lutheran education, within a particular location, office, school or team.

It is the environment we are aspiring to create – a culture of fostering educational excellence that is immersed in a Christ-centred approach to education – where all we do and say is based on our desire to see every person thrive and flourish in their work and life. Service in response to God’s love is at the heart of all that we do.

## Our Culture

The following graphics summarise the workplace culture or environment we are aspiring to create in Lutheran education.

We ideally want to achieve an even balance from both ends of the spectrum, without tipping too far one way or the other.

### Clarity of direction

#### Vision and Role

People are clear about the vision and direction of Lutheran education

People are clear about what is required of them in their own role and context

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### Loving service

#### Practice and Relationships

People are embracing high expectations and standards of behavior in providing a safe and effective learning environment

People are loving and forgiving in their relationships and service of others

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### Positive recognition

#### Growth and Affirmation

People are encouraged to develop and grow their own spiritual practice and professional expertise

People are acknowledged, personally recognised and celebrated for their contribution

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## Professional ownership

### Empowerment and Accountability

People are empowered and supported to make decisions within their own areas of responsibility

People are accountable for their own behaviours, actions and decisions

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## Creative focus

### Improvement and Focus

People are encouraged to work freely and creatively to deliver the best outcomes possible

People are aware of the boundaries and structures that guide the focus of their work

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## Purpose and meaning

### Purpose and Commitment

People feel a deep sense of purpose and meaning in their vocation

People are openly demonstrating passion and commitment as they serve Lutheran education and work towards excellence in outcomes

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# FREE TO FLOURISH



Imagine the elements of Growing Deep working together in synergy to create an ever-evolving story for all learners in Lutheran education.

How might we describe the outcomes of Lutheran education?

## Everyone has a story

Our story reminds us of who we are and who we are becoming.

Free to Flourish is the story for Lutheran schools and early childhood services, grounded in Christian beliefs and values and a catalyst for ongoing improvement and innovation. Our learning story inspires a deep understanding of who we are, and how we are created for relationship with God and all creation.

We seek to honour the wisdom of our First Nations People as we grow appreciation of the interconnectedness of all.

## Core Statement

Embracing the future with confidence, our learning communities grow learners who are compassionate, purposeful, adventurous and relational.

**We are free to flourish.**

## Free to Flourish

### Adventurous

We believe that we are called into the adventure of exploring the unknown. With hopeful expectancy and a sense of awe-filled wonder, we journey through the mystery of life together.

Learners are innately curious and creative. Delving into big ideas, they co-construct their journey of discovery, creating and reflecting as they make sense of and shape the world around them.

Learning is playful and challenging; it responds to the unique needs and interests of the individual. It fosters the learner's curiosity about the world around them and their place within it.

Our learning communities are transformative and safe places that invite courageous exploration. They are places of collaboration and interconnectedness, where learning is experiential and immersive.

### Compassionate

We believe that learning opens our hearts and minds to the diversity of human perspectives, experiences and wisdom traditions. It develops our capacity for compassion, selflessness and advocacy.

Learners engage in respectful and open dialogue, and are cogently aware of inequity and bias. Their curiosity is grounded in deep understanding of the inherent dignity of all humans, and enacted in service and advocacy.

Learning is underpinned by love and justice, so that learners are supported as they critically reflect on ways of seeing and thinking, and trust their own growing capacity for discernment.

Our learning communities are ethical places of inclusion, understanding, compassion, justice and love.



## Purposeful

We believe that learning is essential to our humanness, and every learner grows as they are nurtured to live and act purposefully.

Learners grow and develop understanding of their abilities, gifted by God. As they learn what matters to them and their communities, they have rich input into their learning.

Learning is about finding purpose and is participative, interactive and dialogic. Purposeful learning shapes and is shaped by identity, intent and action. It empowers learners to contribute to human and ecological flourishing.

Our learning communities are places where learners are reflective agents making unique contributions to enrich the world.

## Relational

We believe in the interconnectedness of everything. Interdependent relationships are vital for the flourishing of all creation.

Learners grow in awareness of who they are, and who they are becoming. Called to many vocations, they serve the needs of the world.

Learning is deeply relational. A focus on holistic learning nurtures discernment and deep connections to God and all creation.

Our learning communities are places of belonging where learners are seen, heard and known. Interdependent relationships empower learners to pursue love, reconciliation and regeneration, so that they embrace the future with hope and confidence.

# Appendix

Lutheran schools and early childhood services are communities that reflect the Christian values of love, justice, compassion, forgiveness, service, humility, courage, hope and gratitude.

The following is an expansion of each value; brackets are purposely open to indicate that the meanings can be added to and further refined as appropriate.

The Bible verses are just some that further define the values, and you may well want to add or substitute other texts. Correlations between the values and Bible verses have been made using the NIV translation of the Bible.

Other translations may vary slightly in their wording and perspective.

## The Lutheran education values

### Love

Adore, worship, care for, devotion to, kindness, resilience, happiness, have esteem for, honour...

For Christians, the expression of love is always a response to God's love. It is a way of being that leads to inner peace. Love flows from the heart and manifests itself in caring, kind and respectful thoughts, words and actions.

*Psalm 136, John 15:12-13, John 3:16, 1 Corinthians 13, Ephesians 5:1-2, 1 John 3:18, Romans 12:9-11*

### Justice

Integrity, honesty, truthfulness, honour, veracity, uprightness, fairness...

Through genuine concern, and the developing of a conscience for the rights and wellbeing of everyone in the human family, justice focuses as much on understanding and responding to the reasons for suffering and injustices as it does on responding to unjust conditions. It requires integrity between beliefs, words, and actions. It may necessitate taking a stand and acting with courage.

*Isaiah 26:7-8, Romans 12, Matthew 5:7, Ephesians 2:1-5, Jeremiah 23:5-6,*

### Compassion

Empathy, sympathy, concern, kindness, consideration, gentleness, care...

Having compassion is being loving and attending to people's innermost needs. It is exercising the ability to reach out, to walk in another's shoes, to be open and responsive to the needs and concerns of others and being active in caring for others.

*Philippians 2:1, Hosea 11:4, Matthew 5:44, John 15:17, Romans 12:9-13, Colossians 3:12-15*

### Forgiveness

Grace, reconciliation, mercy, amnesty, pardon, understanding, absolve, acquit, reprieve...

Forgiveness is breaking the cycle of un-grace, pardoning the wrongs others have done to us and seeking pardon for the wrongs we have done to others. Forgiveness often comes with pain and can involve stepping over our hurt. Forgiveness releases both ourselves and others, enabling new starts and new beginnings, another chance.

*Matthew 18:21-22, Luke 17:3-4, Romans 4, Colossians 3:13, Matthew 5:7, Ephesians 4:32*

## Service

Help, assistance, benefit, good turn, support, faithfulness, aid, good deed, charitable act...

Service involves selfless giving, loving others and making a difference in their lives by identifying and responding to their needs, individually and collectively, and carrying out that service without expecting recognition or reward.

*Luke 12:35-37, Matthew 20:28, John 12:26, John 13:12-17*

## Humility

Humbleness, modesty, unassuming nature, meekness, gentleness...

Acting with humility involves recognizing and valuing one's own gifts/abilities and the gifts/abilities of others as being equally valid but of no lesser or greater importance. It is using those gifts/abilities in service to others with an attitude of selflessness. It is being thankful rather than boastful and willing to respect and learn from the experience of others.

*Proverbs 22:4, Matthew 5:5, Matthew 20:20-28, Mark 9:35, Philippians 2:3-4*

## Courage

Valour, bravery, nerve, pluck, daring, boldness, fearlessness, fortitude, perseverance, intrepid...

Courage is the strength of heart that enables people to stand up for their convictions to do the right thing, even when it is hard or fearful. It involves being firm of spirit despite the ups and downs of life and it means 'having a go' even when success is uncertain.

*Psalm 112:8, Luke 21:19, Acts 20:24, Philippians 1:27-30, 2 Timothy 1:7*

## Hope

Expectation, trust in, faith in, anticipation, look forward to, expect, desire, aspire, optimism...

Hope enables us to look forward with expectation and confidence, placing our trust and faith in God's provision of the things we need to handle all kinds of situations and events that occur. Hope is open-ended, open to all possibilities and not limited by what we might wish for. Hope allows God to define our lives.

*Psalm 31:14-15, John 6:20, Romans 8:38-39, Ephesians 3:11-12, Philippians 4:6-7*

## Gratitude

Appreciation, enjoyment of, thankfulness, value, recognition, wonder and awe, respect...

Appreciation is recognising and valuing highly the gifts and blessings given to us and surrounding us. It is an attitude of thankfulness for learning, loving and being. It is a positive attitude that responds in wonder and awe to, and with respect for, the created world – its fragility and its potential.

*Psalm 148, Habakkuk 2:20, Philippians 4:4-9, 1 Thessalonians 5:18, 1 Pet 2:17*

## Useful links



Visit the Growing Deep website  
[growingdeep.lutheran.edu.au](http://growingdeep.lutheran.edu.au)



All references in this document  
can be sourced from the Lutheran  
Education Australia website.  
[lutheran.edu.au](http://lutheran.edu.au)



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