

## **Standards are not just for kids**

By Bambi Betts

It is no surprise that leadership gurus from every perspective and area of human endeavor recommend some universal approaches to working with and leading people. They strongly reinforce the impact of an effective leader in organizations who achieve their desired results.

Principals in international schools are clearly in a position to have that impact. This is an important posture to assume as principals, that you CAN make a difference to student learning and that it is an OBLIGATION to make that difference.

Just as with student learning, an excellent starting point for defining what that impact may look like is to establish the standards that define it. All professions of worth insist on these. Although individual members of the profession may fail to maintain them, and the profession itself fails to adequately monitor them, they are, nonetheless, central to any profession.

So what are our standards as international school principals? After seeking the input from a wide range of professionals and organizations, the PTC established these a few years ago:

A principal in an international school:

1. Inspires teachers to achieve maximum student learning.
2. Models the skills and attitudes of a global citizen.
3. Develops, leads and manages all aspects of the processes which will ensure that there is an outstanding teacher in every classroom, everyday.
4. Leads and interacts in ways which demonstrate a knowledge of and sensitivity to the culture of transition and mobility characteristic of international schools.
5. Leads a curricular system based on the most recent understanding about learning, including processes which address developing, implementing and monitoring curriculum and learner progress.
6. Is a 'leader of learning' who fosters a vision and practical culture of maximum achievement and development of potential for the full range of diverse learners.
7. Strengthens and connects teaching and learning by promoting professional growth focused on improved student achievement.
8. Leads and manages the organization, operations, and resources of the learning community to provide a productive environment for learning.
9. Develops and mobilizes resources for active parent-community involvement to improve student achievement.
10. Is an advocate every day for every learner.

The PTC 'curriculum' of courses is grounded in these standards. Schools are strongly urged to consider using them as the basis for both creating the vision of the profession as well as for evaluating the progress of principals.