This tool provides a set of actions that networks perform at increasing levels of maturity, as they evolve into effective Communities of Practice. Use the tool to inform the ongoing development of your network. Bring the key members of your network together (including your SEIL) to critically examine where your network is currently placed, and what you can do to develop it as an effective Community of Practice. The tool is drawn from recent research into effective collaboration between schools, but is not exhaustive or conclusive – it should be used to guide thinking, rather than be regarded as a recipe for success.

**Emerging**

- We meet regularly as a network.
- We are primarily task driven.
- We have a schedule of activities planned.
- We have a core of members who do most of the work to establish and run the network.

**Evolving**

- We agree, document and provide protocols for how we work as a network.
- Our membership includes the primary, secondary and specialist schools in our area.
- We regularly share knowledge, data and resources.
- We are all active members in our network, with over 80% attendance at most meetings.
- We welcome new members and have induction protocols to help them join.
- We conduct school visits in each other’s schools and provide feedback.

**Embedding**

- We have, and use, agreed protocols on how we operate as a community.
- We review them and challenge each other to comply with them.
- We are guided by a network plan that is regularly reviewed.
- We have agreed systems for peer review that involve sharing data and resources.
- Our rules and accountabilities are well-defined and agreed.
- We have agreed protocols and metrics by which members hold each other to account.
- We share resources regularly according to needs across our network, including human and financial resources.
- Membership of our network extends to Assistant Principals and Leading Teachers for priority projects.
- It’s easy for new members to join and feel like they belong.
- We induct new members carefully using our protocols.
- We celebrate achievements within our network.
- We regularly participate in classroom visits and provide feedback.

**Excelling**

- We have a high level of social capital among the schools in our network that is a foundation for great professional collaboration.
- Leadership is distributed, not centralised.
- We are capable practitioners of system leadership.
- We actively collaborate with other networks and external agencies such as health and human services, community organisations, tertiary institutions and private enterprise to improve our professional practice.
- Our network helps foster and maintain strong relationships between the different institutions through which students’ progress, from preschool to tertiary study.
- We interact with all relevant resources available within the Department of Education and Training.
- Membership of our network extends to all members of staff.
- Students have a voice in our decision-making.
- We do not rest on our laurels or get comfortable. We continually challenge ourselves to improve.
- We have a strong culture of transparency of results and practice across our network.
- It’s easy for new members to join and feel like they belong.
- We induct new members carefully using our protocols.
- We celebrate achievements within our network.
- We regularly participate in classroom visits and provide feedback.

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**Community: How we work together**

- We share experiences about teaching practices during network meetings.
- We occasionally reference data.
- We provide collegial support.

**Professional practice: How we learn together**

- We have agreed on the FISO priorities for our network.
- We discuss and share good practice, and sometimes arrange expert speakers to present at meetings.
- We have clear learning goals for our network that support agreed FISO priorities and a schedule of activities that aims to support them.
- Most of our activities address needs shared by all members.
- Our activities explicitly address improving teaching practices.
- We give some attention to identifying and nurturing leadership talent.

**Professional knowledge: What we learn together**

- We value getting together and sharing experiences and ideas for our individual schools.
- Our network has a shared collective moral purpose.
- We personally benefit by participating in the network.
- The network contributes to our development.

**Professional ethics: Why we learn together**

- Our regional and area support teams show an interest in and commitment to our network.
- Participation in the network is supported by our schools.
- The network has sufficient access to resources to function well.
- Results and achievements of our network are officially recognised.

- We have a clear and shared focus for improvement in student outcomes.
- We scheduled activities support joint practice development, not just transfer of professional knowledge.
- We cultivate multiple dynamic, interlinked relationships across our schools at all levels.
- We have sufficient data literacy to make the most of our shared data.
- We have a clear strategic plan that supports the achievement of our agreed FISO priorities, which is regularly reviewed.
- Leadership development is inherent in all professional development.
- We do not focus on operational matters.

**Endorsed and enabled: What helps us learn together**

- We have a clear and shared focus for improvement in student outcomes.
- We have a shared collective moral purpose.
- We focus our work on fostering genuine, mutual partnerships and work hard to overcome competitiveness between individual schools that detracts from collective educational outcomes and wellbeing.

- We are guided by a long-term vision for improving student outcomes that extends for five or more years.
- We have collaborative partnerships that are shared with our wider networks in our communities, including external agencies such as community organisations and tertiary institutions.
- We have common, collective data structures enabling us to share data on all our schools across our network and is embedded in all of our development activities.
- We have a profound sense of collective moral purpose and responsibility for the educational outcomes and wellbeing of all children in our network informs everything we do – in our individual schools and across the network.
- We are self-improving school systems; a product of our joint practice development, high social capital between members, collective moral purpose and ongoing evaluation and challenge practised within and between schools.
- We support teachers to experience other school settings as part of their career development.
- We are resilient and self-sustaining – our network continues to operate successfully, regardless of changes to resourcing.

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