

SECONDARY PRINCIPAL'S SABBATICAL REPORT

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Term 2 2008

To examine the current research and practice into what works in schools and the role of leadership in successful schools.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Executive Summary	
Purpose	The reason for undertaking this project. “What works in schools” and the role of leadership in successful schools.
Background	My background as a principal
Activities Undertaken	The activities I undertook on the sabbatical; Attending 3 conferences, visiting 3 schools in England, reading and following educational issues while I was away.
Findings	The key features relevant to the purpose of this study from each of the conferences and reading.
Implications	How these findings could effect education in New Zealand
Conclusions	Some of the main findings.
Reference	Readings during the sabbatical

During term 2 of 2008 I had the opportunity to attend three conferences, two of which were overseas, to visit three schools in England, do some professional reading and have a complete break from my job.

I would like to thank the Board and staff of Lynfield College for giving me this opportunity. During my absence the school functioned extremely well and I returned to a learning organisation that had moved on and I had to adapt to the developments. Having minimal contact with the school during this time enabled me to have a complete break. This was important as it enabled me to return refreshed and ready to face the challenges of being a principal in a New Zealand high school.

I would also like to congratulate the Ministry of Education for having the foresight to run such a programme. It was certainly the envy of principals in England and the USA.

Although I focused on Leadership I have also commented later in this report on one aspect of education in both the USA and England that I felt was impacting on the ability of school leaders to do their job – High stake testing. This was a recurring theme with all the school leaders I met in both countries.

At all three conferences there was concurrence in the belief that the most important factor in influencing student achievement is the teacher, followed by the leadership of the school. The teacher impacts directly on the student while the leadership provide the resources and the atmosphere in which the teacher is able to do their job i.e. an indirect influence.

In both conferences in the USA and England there is equal emphasis on student achievement. However the means of measuring student achievement appears arbitrary and appears to be undertaken to provide data on school improvement. It is the aggregation of individual test scores which determines the worth

of the individual school. The pressure on schools and in particular school principals is enormous and very public.

To help counter this I believe schools need to develop robust systems of self evaluation. This should come from the school itself rather than be imposed as it is in the USA (AYP adequate yearly progress, reporting)

ICT developments are so dramatic that all staff need to have a better understanding of what is happening and how this impacts on students lives. We need to review our attitude and policy on student devices.

A recurring theme at each conference was the use of Blooms taxonomy. It was seen as the ideal mechanism for promoting more robust classroom interactions. At Lynfield we have worked with both Blooms and Solo in our EHSAS project with local contributing schools.

We need to ensure that the purpose of the qualifications system is fully understood by all and that it remains as a means of assessing student achievement. In both the USA and England it is now used for “high stakes” accountability of the schooling system. This has created enormous problems within the education system of both countries but especially England lately where the level of assessment is enormous and this has created many practical problems, particularly with accurate marking and the timeliness of getting information back to schools.

School leaders need to ensure that NZQA remains true to its strategic objectives as set out below.

The New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) seeks to ensure that New Zealand qualifications are accepted as credible and robust nationally and internationally.

NZQA will achieve this through our role as the independent, impartial expert organisation, which can be relied upon to administer robust National Qualifications Framework assessment systems and provide reliable quality assurance systems that deliver on our statutory accountabilities.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this project was to better understand what works in schools and the role of school leaders in successful schools. This was my main focus when selecting conference work shops to attend.

The reason for selecting this topic was to give me an opportunity to explore much of the current research that is available through the BES work and the Kiwi leadership project. The resources provided by NCSL and ASCD are also extensive on this subject. As a major study by the Wallace Foundation states; “Effective leadership makes a difference in improving learning” and when talking about school reform, states, “they all depend for their success on the motivations and capacities of local leadership”.

The pressures that principals in both the USA and England are under in terms of meeting targets imposed on them by external agencies was a real surprise to me. There were great similarities between the two countries as political forces attempted to improve the level of achievement in both countries. This was frequently played out in the media. There are some important considerations for New Zealand schools if we are to avoid going down a similar path. I shall elaborate on this later in the report.

BACKGROUND

I have been the principal of Lynfield College, a large multi-cultural co-educational state high school in central Auckland for the past 6 years. During that time I have been refining my skills as a principal. Much of my time was initially spent on management (especially property) issues although this has gradually declined as I have developed more confidence in delegating responsibility to others. My training for principalship included; 26 years of classroom teaching of which 15 years were as an HOD, 5 years as an associate principal, a Diploma in school management from UNITEC and attendance at the First principals training course in 2002.

I have been active in seeking professional development opportunities both in New Zealand and overseas. For the past eight years I have attended the ICP conferences.

In 2007 I attended the SPANZ seminar dinner and listened to Todd Whitaker talking about “What great principals do differently”. I found myself in agreement with much that he said and then read some of the books he has written on the subject.

In 2007 - 08 there has been an upsurge in interest in publications related to school leadership. See the reference section at the end of this report.

ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN.

1. Visiting schools in the UK.

Each of the three schools I visited were high performing schools that were achieving well academically and were under pressure with regards to enrolments.

They are based in Shropshire and included the following;

Thomas Telford School,

Old Park

Telford

Shropshire

TF3 4NW

Pupils

Gender	Mixed
Age range	11-18
Number of pupils on roll	1177

Special thanks to the Headmaster, Sir Kevin Satchwell for the time he gave me and the hospitality he showed. This was the first school I had ever visited in the UK. It was very different to what I expected as it is a state school. I soon found out that it was outside the normal arrangements for secondary schools in England and had special status as a Trust school (see below)

Deputy Head, Mark Hudson showed me around the school and introduced me to the online learning which is a key feature of the school. It is used by students at the school in much the same way as Moodle at Lynfield, but is far more extensive
It also provides the school with considerable income.

Thomas Telford School is one of fifteen City Technology Colleges to be established in Britain. As with all other such colleges, Thomas Telford School is sponsored. The two major sponsors are The Mercers' Company, the premier Livery Company in the City of London and Tarmac PLC, the Wolverhampton based quarrying, building and construction group.

It is part of the Specialists Schools Programme supported by successive Governments.
The general aim of Thomas Telford School, a City Technology College, is to maximise student performance in all its forms.

In the post 16 phase, they aim to provide a wide range of vocational and academic opportunities for the students of all abilities, emphasising opportunities in Mathematics, Science and Technology.

School Objectives

- To admit students of all abilities.
- To improve attendance to that above local and national average.
- To develop qualities of enterprise, self-reliance and responsibility.
- To involve, as fully as possible, the wider community, including industry, business, commerce and parents in the education and training of the students.
- To operate a longer School day and year.
- To share research with the neighbouring schools and the educational community.
- To remove the artificial barrier that exists between vocational and 'A' level courses.

- To improve post 16 staying on rates to that comparable with France, Germany, USA and Japan.
- To deliver the National Curriculum with extra Science, Mathematics and Technology.
- To ensure that all students obtain their educational entitlement, irrespective of gender, religion, ethnicity or special needs.

The City Technology Colleges Trust was founded in 1987. The 15 City Technology Colleges were set up between 1989 and 1993, most of them in deprived inner city areas.

The City Technology Trust is a registered charity which acts as a central body for the CTC programme. It works closely with the Department for Education, and is funded through a combination of private sector sponsorship and government grants.

The Priory School, a Business and Enterprise College.

Longden Road
Shrewsbury
Shropshire
SY3 9EE

Pupils

Gender	Mixed
Age range	11-16
Number of pupils on roll	805

Characteristics

Description	Secondary school
Religious character	Non-denominational
Boarding provision	No
Specialist status	Business and Enterprise (Operational)

At the end of Yr11 all students in Shrewsbury go to a 6th form College in the centre of town. This caters for students aged 16 – 19yrs.

The Priory School has a reputation for academic excellence and was listed in the 1999 OFSTED report as being an ‘outstanding school’. In 2001 the school was awarded Beacon School status and in September 2003 received Business & Enterprise College status. In April 2006 the school became an Enterprise Hub and in 2007 was awarded High Performing Specialist School. The School will also become a Leading Edge School in April 2008.

What does being a Business & Enterprise College mean?

- Building partnerships with local businesses to help broaden the school curriculum in business and enterprise for our students
- To develop the business culture within the school to support students to progress into employment, training further and higher education.□
- To work closely with schools, colleges, businesses and the wider community to share good practice, resources and expertise□
- To provide a focus for life long learning through the community using the facilities of the business & enterprise centre and training providers

Special thanks to Candy Garbutt (Head teacher and Mrs Mary Massey for their hospitality and willingness to help me better understand the operations of their school and wider education in England.

Bridgnorth Endowed School, A Specialist Technology College.

Northgate
Bridgnorth
Shropshire
WV16 4ER

Pupils

Gender	Mixed
Age range	11-18
Number of pupils on roll	1027

Characteristics

Description	Secondary school
Religious character	Other
Boarding provision	No
Specialist status	Technology (Operational)

Bridgnorth Endowed school has a very long history and in 2003 celebrated 500 years as an educational institution. The current facilities have been developed over the past 100 years with the oldest building a very well restored teaching block built at the beginning of the 20th century. The latest addition is a community joint venture involving a fitness centre and swimming pool.

The school has a very sound reputation. It is over subscribed and each year selection is restricted by the local authority. The principal –Mrs Pam Chapman was seconded in 2007 for a term to go into a struggling school to help raise standards there.

I was very impressed by the calibre of the staff. Mrs Chapman did identify an issue the school had with their recent Ofsted report. There had been a problem with 2 key staff in English and Maths. As a result the external testing results in those two subjects were not as good as they had been. This meant that the school was only able to gain a satisfactory review despite excellent work in other aspects of the school and that step had been taken to deal with the issues that resulted in the disappointing English and Maths results.

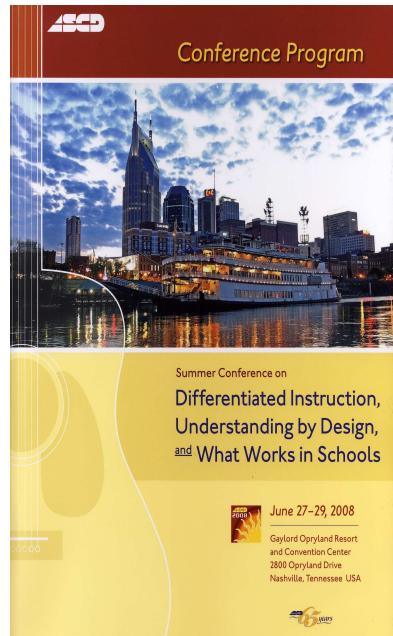
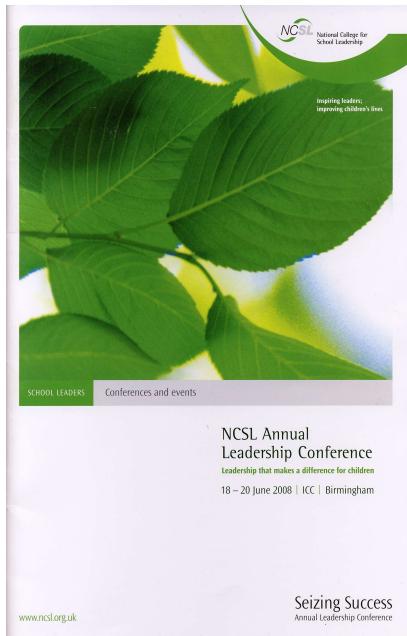
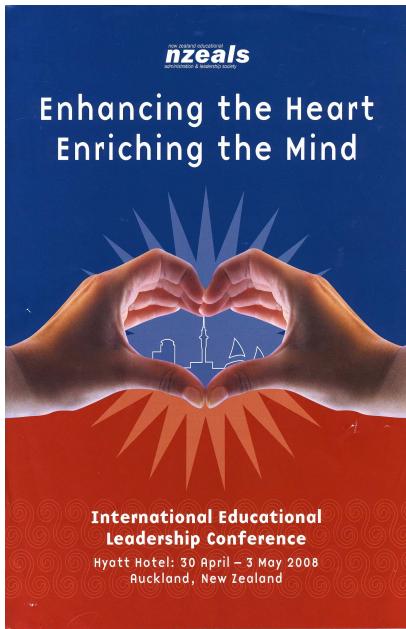
The Ofsted system is highly prescriptive and barriers restrict an overall good grade if English and Maths show any weakness.

Although the Ofsted leaders talk in supportive tones at conferences ie Christine Gilbert, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools, Ofsted, there is a very threatening manner to the reviews. A school only gets 24 hours notice of a review. In that time they are required to send an up to date, electronic self evaluation form to Ofsted.

Bridgnorth became a specialist school in September 2001. They identified Technology as a major strength even though they are also very strong in Physical Education. They therefore became a “Technology College”. As a result considerable funding was made available to build and equip a new computer suite. Their development plan is called a “School improvement plan”, rather than a strategic plan. There is a recurring theme throughout the English education system of a need to improve. The implication being that all schools are failing.

Bridgnorth has a Board of Governors with 22 members. (7 parents, 5 from special organisations, 3 staff, Headmaster and the rest are co-opted. They meet twice a term and have a role very similar to our Boards of Trustees. There is however a local authority level of bureaucracy. This level appears to control a great deal of funding.

Conferences.



1) NZEALS conference, 30 April – 3 May 2008. Auckland.

This was a locally run conference with speakers from throughout NZ and Australia. As my theme was looking at the effectiveness of school leadership in student learning, I found two of the sessions particularly useful;

- Professor Carol Cardno, Head of School of Education, Unitec, Auckland – Educational leadership that matters: Acting on theory to increase indirect effects of organizational learning on student outcomes. (see the Findings section of this report.)
- Dr Kathryn Brennan, Department of Education and Training, NSW, Sydney – Leading learning: Beyond the comfort zone. (see the Findings section of this report.)

A further general interest speaker was Dr Annie Henry. Her session was entitled “Energizing Educational Leaders”.

Other sessions included;

- Peter d’Plesse, Principal Dover District High School.
- Karen Sewell, CEO Ministry of Education.
- Prof. Jill Blackmore, Professor of education, Deakin University, Australia.
- Prof. Mike Bottery, Professor of Education and Director of research degrees at the Institute of Education, Hull University.

2) NCSL Annual Leadership Conference, 18 – 20 June 2008. Birmingham.

During the course of this conference there were many exceptional speakers. Below are listed those that I found particularly interesting and their backgrounds.

Sir Gerry Robinson

Gerry began his career in 1965 in the cost office of Lesney Products (Matchbox Toys) after leaving St Mary's Seminary at Castlehead. During his time at Lesney he progressed through various accounting roles to become chief management accountant in 1974.

Gerry has led a business series for the BBC – I'll Show Them Who's Boss – and written a book of the same title on business leadership. Gerry was awarded a knighthood in the 2003 New Year Honours for services to the arts and business.

Access the [Leadership Library](#) to see short video stories from Gerry Robinson about leadership and management development.

He made some excellent comments about leadership. These are in the Findings section of this report.

Mick Waters

Mick Waters' role at the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) is to 'develop a modern, world-class curriculum that will inspire and challenge all learners and prepare them for the future'. To do this he works with a range of partners to build a curriculum that offers all young people the chance to enjoy success at school and in later adult life. This involves exploring what really matters in learning and supporting new developments, linked to the five outcomes for children.

Previously, Mick was chief education officer for the City of Manchester. In this challenging education environment, schools worked hard to break the cycle of urban deprivation, promoting a wide and rich curriculum and encouraging all learners to achieve as much as possible. Key agendas included the development of joint children's services, the 14–19 strategy, the employment and skills dimension and configuring all this around Building Schools for the Future.

Our goal is to develop a modern, world-class curriculum that will inspire and challenge all learners and prepare them for the future.

“Whatever your role – whether you are a newly qualified primary teacher keen to build an inspiring curriculum for your class, or a senior curriculum leader in a secondary school – you will probably find it helpful to spend time considering the three key questions as the starting point for your curriculum journey”:

- 1. What are we trying to achieve for our young people through the curriculum?*
- 2. How can we best put together a curriculum experience that will enable us to achieve our aims for young people? (organisation)*
- 3. How will we evaluate whether our curriculum is working?*

Make the curriculum wrap around the children. Our children must be successful, confident and responsible.

Richard Olivier

Richard Olivier is artistic director of Olivier Mythodrama – a unique leadership development consultancy.

Richard is the founding voice within Mythodrama – a new form of experiential learning which combines great stories with psychological insights, creative exercises and organisational development techniques to explore issues faced by modern leaders. From 1999–2005 he was the master of Mythodrama at Shakespeare's Globe Theatre.

He is the co-author (with Nicholas Janni) of Peak Performance Presentations – How to Present with Passion and Purpose, and the author of Inspirational Leadership – Henry V and the Muse of Fire.

Jonathan D Jansen

Jonathan Jansen is Honorary Professor of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand and Scholar-in-Residence at the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls in Johannesburg, South Africa. His most recent books are Knowledge in the Blood: How White Students Remember and Enact the Past (2009) and Diversity High: Class, Color, Character and Culture in a South African High School (2008); in these and other works, he examines the ways in which leadership for social justice works against the grain of biography in contexts where reparation and reconciliation both remain as important goals of social transition. He is a recent Fulbright Scholar to Stanford University (2007–2008), former Dean of Education at the University of Pretoria (2001–2007), and Honorary Doctor of Education from the University of Edinburgh. He is a former high school science teacher and achieved his undergraduate education in South Africa (UWC) and his postgraduate education in the USA (MS, Cornell; PhD Stanford).

Baroness Sally Morgan of Huyton

Baroness Sally Morgan of Huyton currently works as adviser to the board of the charity ARK, and is also chair of Future Leaders. Sally also sits on the board of the Olympic Delivery Authority.

As a member of the House of Lords since 2001, her particular interests are public services and, as a former minister for women, equality issues. Sally worked for Tony Blair from 1995 and then in No 10 Downing Street as director of government relations until May 2005. Sally started her career as a secondary school teacher.

Professor Andy Hargreaves

Professor Andy Hargreaves is the Thomas More Brennan chair in education in the Lynch School of Education at Boston College. Its mission is to promote social justice and connect theory and practice in education. Andy has written numerous books on culture, change and leadership in education that are available in many languages. His most recent book, written with Dean Fink, is Sustainable Leadership.

[View the slides from Andy Hargreaves' presentation](#)  (460kb, 25 pages)

David Booth

David Booth is professor emeritus and co-ordinator of the Pre-Service Elementary program at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto.

David is working with principals and school leaders in building literacy communities that support every student's needs as a developing reader and writer in today's society. He is supporting teachers at all levels in their attempts to connect the outside literacies of home and community with the inside literacies of school and education. David sees the importance of recognising the strategies and competencies students bring with them to school from life experiences and from the technological world, and exploring and extending the wide range of communication literacies, including printed texts and images in a variety of formats, to improve and enrich the literacy lives of students.

Stephen M R Covey

Stephen M R Covey is co-founder and chief executive officer (CEO) of CoveyLink Worldwide. A sought-after and compelling keynote speaker and adviser on trust, leadership, ethics and high performance, he speaks to audiences around the world.

He is the former CEO of Covey Leadership Center, which, under his stewardship, became the largest leadership development company in the world. Stephen personally led the strategy that propelled his father's book, Dr. Stephen R. Covey's *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, to become one of the two most influential business books of the 20th Century, according to *CEO Magazine*.

A Harvard MBA, he joined Covey Leadership Center as a client developer and later became national sales manager and then president and CEO. Under Covey's direction, both customer and employee trust reached new highs and the company expanded throughout the world into over 40 countries.

Christine Gilbert

Christine Gilbert CBE was appointed as her majesty's chief inspector at Ofsted in October 2006. She has spent 18 years in teaching, eight of these as headteacher of Whitmore High School in Harrow, before taking up the post of director of education in the same borough. She joined the London Borough of Tower Hamlets in April 1997 as corporate director (education). Before moving to Ofsted, she held the post of chief executive of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets for six years.

[View the slides from Christine Gilbert's presentation](#) (436kb, 15 pages)

Rt Hon Ed Balls MP

Ed Balls was appointed Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families on 28 June 2007. His principal focus is to ensure that every child gets the best possible start in life, that they are safe and healthy, that they secure the highest standards of achievements, that they enjoy their childhood and that they can make a positive contribution to society free from the effects of poverty.

Ed Balls was previously Economic Secretary to the Treasury, taking up appointment on 5 May 2006. He has been a Member of Parliament for Normanton since 2005. He was born in 1967 and educated at Nottingham High School, Keble College, Oxford and the John F Kennedy School of Government, Harvard.

Ed Balls was a teaching fellow for the Department of Economics at Harvard 1989-1990, and an economics leader writer and columnist for the Financial Times 1990-94. He was Economic Adviser to the then Shadow Chancellor Rt Hon Gordon Brown MP 1994-97, Secretary Labour Party Economic Policy Commission 1994-97, Economic Adviser to the Chancellor of the Exchequer 1997-99, Chief Economic Adviser to HM Treasury 1999-2004, and Research Fellow, Smith Institute 2004-05.

Sir Michael Barber

Michael Barber joined McKinsey in September 2005 as the expert partner in its Global Public Sector Practice. He has been working on major challenges of performance, organisation and reform in government and the public services in the USA, UK and other countries.

Between 1997 and 2001, Michael was chief adviser to the secretary of state for education on school standards. He was responsible for the implementation of the government's school reform programme, including successful programmes to improve literacy and numeracy at primary level, tackle school failure at all levels and contract out failing local authorities.

[View the slides from Michael Barber's presentation](#) (208kb, 11 pages)

3) ASCD Conference, June 27 – 29th 2008, Nashville.

At this conference I spent a whole afternoon in the session with Robert Marzano. His session was based on his meta- analysis work on school leadership. Much of his presentation was based on two of his books; School Leadership that works, ASCD 2005 and The Art and Science of teaching, ASCD 2007. – see the findings section of this report.

Other workshops I attended included;

- Technology leadership for improving student learning. – Daniel Cherry.
- Leadership for teaching and learning academic vocabulary – Mary McDonough and Donna Simmons.
- Changing role of the principal in 21st century schools. Vera Blake.
- Using walkthroughs to observe effective classroom assessment practices Ted Haynie.
- Creating a professional learning community: A culture of continuous learning. Deborah Wortham
- Twelve essentials for effective leaders in differentiation.
- Qualities of effective teachers; Hiring the best.

FINDINGS (from conferences and readings)

What works in schools and the role of leadership in successful schools.

Introduction;

One of the keynote speakers at the ASCD conference was Robert Marzano. He ran a number of sessions and relied very much on two of his publications. In his book “The Art and Science of Teaching” he makes the following observation in the introduction.

*“Effective schools can make a substantial difference in the achievement of students. In the last decade of the 20th century, the picture of what constitutes an effective school became much clearer. Among elements such as a well articulated curriculum and a safe and orderly environment, the one factor that surfaced as the single most influential component of an effective school is **the individual teachers** within the school.”. Pg 1.*

This view is repeated over and over again in the literature;

Dr. Todd Whitaker – There are really two ways to improve a school significantly

1. Get better teachers.
2. Improve the teachers you have.

It is never about programs it is about people.

(Dr. Todd Whittaker – “What great principals do differently” P7)

The second most significant factor in student achievement is Leadership. “ *School leadership is second only to classroom teaching as an influence on pupil learning* ”. Leithwood et al, NCSL, 2006.

During my sabbatical I had the chance to hear or read research from some of the top educational researchers in the field of school leadership. While their findings are presented in different forms, they have remarkably similar findings

Below are the findings and comments from some of the top current researchers in the field of Educational Leadership;

- Professor Carol Cardno
- Dr. Kathryn Brennan
- Sir Gerry Robinson.
- NCSL research. (K Leithwood et al.)
- Dr. Todd Whitaker
- Dr Robert Marzano
- Prof Viviane Robinson

➤ Educational Leadership that Matters: Professor Carol Cardno, Unitec. NZEALS 2008

Some of the pertinent comments from Carol included;

- In New Zealand there has been a resurgence of interest around the issue of “educational leadership”.

- In large measure this is attributable to the latest research – BES – School leadership and student outcomes: Identifying what works and Why.
- The general pattern from many research studies supports the idea that **principals exercise a measurable indirect effect on school effectiveness and student achievement**.
- International research confirms this (for example, the New Zealand BES; Leithwood et al, 2004; Mulford, 2007; Robinson, 2007).
- The work of Starratt identifies a focus; “I believe that the core work of school leaders must be involved with **teachers** in seeking to promote quality learning for all children, and that all management tasks serve that core work”. (2003, p11)
- Their activities are directed to the aspect of educational leadership that matters most – people and relationships.

➤ **Leading learning: Beyond the comfort zone, Dr. Kathryn Brennan, Department of Educational and Training, NSW, Sydney, Australia. NZEALS 2008**

Dr Brennan undertook research in Australia into the key capabilities of the role of the principal as identified by Australian principals. She compared the results by gender.

2a. What leadership capabilities play a central role in effective performance as a principal?

Table One shows the 10 highest ranked capability items on importance by gender. For female principals, seven of the top ten come from the Emotional Intelligence Scales.

Respondents’ emphasis on the central role that Emotional Intelligence (Personal and Social) plays in effective practice is consistent with the research that has emerged in other recent professional capability studies (Scott & Yates, 2002; Goleman, 1998). Indeed, Goleman et.al. (2002) identified 18 competencies sorted into four domains (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management) as being essential for emotionally intelligent leaders and organisational success in complex times.

That ‘effective’ principals ascribe such importance to Emotional Intelligence (both personal and social), belies anecdotal commentary that Emotional Intelligence is simply a peripheral set of ‘soft skills’ which reside in the female domain, representing a fundamental gender difference in the enactment of formal leadership roles. What this research reports is a far greater congruence as to the relative importance of these capabilities between male and female ‘effective’ principals than is frequently suggested, and provides evidence that Emotional Intelligence capabilities can be learned whilst they ‘may not be amenable to formal, didactic instruction’ (Scott, 2003, p.46).

These findings align with those of Goleman et.al. (2002), who conclude that ‘without a healthy dose of heart, a supposed “leader” may manage – but he does not lead’ (p.21).

This has implications for the design of school leadership development curriculum, and strengthens the validity of creating a gender inclusive framework for developing and sustaining school leaders. As highlighted by a typical respondent comment:

They (principals) need to understand the importance of emotional intelligence. What matters most for competence and excellence in the workplace is based on effective inter- and intra- personal skills in forming productive relationships. We need leaders to have the skills of resiliency, initiative, optimism and adaptability without getting ‘stressed out’. Empathy, patience, understanding, listening etc are all part of the tool kit.

Items as ranked by females	Items as ranked by males
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having a clear, justified vision for where the school must head 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being able to remain calm under pressure

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being able to remain calm under pressure • Wanting to achieve the best outcome possible • Being able to bounce back from adversity • Having a sense of humour and being able to keep work in perspective • An ability to make a hard decision • Being able to motivate others to achieve great things • Being able to deal effectively with conflict situations • Being able to set and justify priorities • Knowing how to effectively identify and disseminate good practice across the school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having a sense of humour and being able to keep work in perspective • Being able to deal effectively with conflict situations • The ability to empathise with and work productively with people from a wide range of backgrounds • A willingness to listen to different points of view before coming to a decision • Having a clear, justified vision for where the school must head • Being willing to face and learn from my errors and listen openly to feedback • Wanting to achieve the best outcome possible • An ability to make a hard decision • Being able to set and justify priorities
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➤ Sir Gerry Robinson.

“Nothing good happens without good leadership or management”.

Gerry's presentation focused on leadership characteristics from his business experience.

Key features of good leadership –

- Good leaders make things change on the ground.
- Motivate, inspire and excite people is a key role of a leader. Tell people who are doing a good job that they are.
- Common sense. You must know what will work
- Clarity. Be crystal clear as to what you expect of people. What do I want people to do ?, There must be no doubt about what I want.
- Vision. What do I expect to happen? Explain what it is, don't waffle, objectives must be stimulating and doable. Be consistent, don't chop & change.
- Passion. If I don't express it no one else will.
- Risk taking. Be brave, have courage, admit when it is wrong.
- Removed. Don't be one of the lads. Stand aside and make decisions which are good for the organisation. Have social contacts outside of the work place.
- Follow up. Always follow up on requests. Make sure people feel noticed. Hold people accountable.
- Consistent. Be emotionally level. Be consistent in how you deal with people. Never make decisions in the heat of the moment.
- Never try to do too many things. Don't get caught up in issues.
- Look out for talent, nurture it.
- Listen.
- Decisive. Be clear as to who has the last say, know what the decision making process is, set up structures and stick to them
- Have the courage to make the final decision and stick to it.

Your success depends on you. Success is down to us.

➤ NCSL research.

Since the National College for School Leadership (NCSL) was established it has produced a substantial body of evidence about school leadership. The College has commissioned work from many researchers, conducted its own studies and scanned research findings within education and beyond (e.g. business schools, public sector), in the UK and internationally.

NCSL's research aims to capture actionable knowledge, that is, knowledge of what works. From the beginning it was clear there was a need to focus research on **how** leaders make a difference (Hallinger & Heck 1996). Consequently, NCSL looks at how school leaders make a positive difference to pupils' progress and achievements and concentrates on the **practice** of school leadership.

In 2006, after five years of active investigation and knowledge creation, the decision was made to collate the findings that had emerged, summarise them and communicate them in as straightforward a way as possible.

Drawing together commissioned research and evaluations NCSL had undertaken, the outcomes of practitioner enquiries, seminars and think tanks, as well as literature reviews and work outside England and education, this report presents an overview of what we now know about school leadership.

What we know about school leadership?

School leaders in England have much to be proud of. Existing evidence shows that, when compared to other professions, people in the wider society think that headteachers provide particularly good examples of leadership.

Ofsted estimates that around four fifths of school leaders are doing a 'good', 'very good', or 'excellent' job at leading and managing their schools. The quality of school leadership has also been improving consistently since the mid-1990s when, according to Ofsted, only around half of all school leaders were ranked as 'good', 'very good' or 'excellent'. Government has also made considerable investment in developing school leadership through the creation of the NCSL and support for the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH). As the PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) independent study of school leadership said: 'in general terms there is a very positive story to tell around the quality of school leadership in our schools' (PwC 2007, p. v).

Leithwood and his colleagues (2006) set out in a companion report seven strong claims about successful school leadership:

1. School leadership is second only to classroom teaching as an influence on pupil learning.
2. Almost all successful leaders draw on the same repertoire of basic leadership practices.
3. The ways in which leaders apply these basic leadership practices – not the practices themselves – demonstrates responsiveness to, rather than dictation by, the contexts in which they work.
4. School leaders improve teaching and learning indirectly and most powerfully through their influence on staff motivation, commitment and working conditions.
5. School leadership has a greater influence on schools and students when it is widely distributed.
6. Some patterns of distribution are more effective than others.
7. A small handful of personal traits explain a high proportion of the variation in leadership effectiveness.

These claims are similar, but not identical to what NCSL has uncovered. Leithwood's overview is best seen as working in tandem with NCSL's findings and should be read alongside what follows here.

NCSL's research can also be summarised under seven headings:

1. Context matters

- Effective leaders know and analyse their contexts: they are contextually literate
- Leaders should act in ways that meet the needs of their schools
- It is *how* leaders operate that demonstrates responsiveness to their contexts

2. The core tasks of school leaders are clear

- Build vision and set directions
- Understand and develop people
- Redesign the organisation
- Manage teaching and learning
- Leaders should be optimistic, positive and improvement-oriented

3. Learning-centred leadership is critical

- Lead by example
- Monitor pupils' achievements, progress and quality of teaching
- Use data to analyse and evaluate performance
- Generate and sustain discussion about teaching and learning
- Sustain school improvement
- Create school structures, systems and processes to enable all of this

4. Distributing leadership matters

- Distributed leadership makes a difference to school and student performance
- Coordinated patterns of distribution are more effective than others
- Distributing learning-centred leadership matters most
- Heads and senior staff must develop leadership in others

5. School leadership is hard work and rewarding

- Leadership is complex, accountable and relentless
- Leadership needs specialist support (e.g. administrative, bursars, HR)
- Leadership actions can produce multiple outcomes
- Rewards include seeing children achieve, developing others, improving results

6. Leadership in schools is changing

- New models of leadership are emerging
- Many leaders are working beyond their schools, supporting others
- Multi-agency and federated schools, plus system leadership are evident
- New models highlight different skills required now and in near future

7. Leadership development and succession planning have never been more important

- Succession planning is essential, as part of improved talent management
- Identify talent early, fast-track those with potential, mentor and coach individuals
- Opportunities to lead schools should be increased to build self-confidence, increase first-hand awareness of different contexts and knowledge of schools
- Ensure leadership is seen as positive and rewarding
- Prepare next generation of leaders for today and tomorrow's schools

What we know about school leadership. www.ncsl.org.uk.

➤ Robert Marzano , T Walters, B McNulty “School Leadership that Works”.

Robert Marzano was one of the Keynote speakers at the ASCD conference. The central question addressed in his presentation and book is “To what extent does leadership play a role in whether a school is effective or ineffective? That is how much of a school’s impact on student achievement is due to the leadership displayed in the school?

The meta-analysis undertaken by Marzano and his colleagues was designed to determine what 35 years of research tells us about school leadership. The result from the study indicates that school leadership has a substantial effect on student achievement.

Kathleen Cotton (2003) published the findings of her narrative review of the literature in the book *Principals and Student Achievement: What the Research Says*.

We list all 25 categories because they are quite similar to the list we identified in our quantitative synthesis of the research. Given that she performed a narrative review of the literature, Cotton did not quantitatively estimate the effect of principal leadership on student achievement. However, her conclusions were fairly straightforward: She noted that principal leadership does have an effect on student outcomes, albeit an indirect one. Citing the work of others, she explains:

In general, these researchers find that, while a small portion of the effect may be direct—that is, principals' direct interactions with students in or out of the classroom may be motivating, inspiring, instructive, or otherwise influential—most of it is indirect, that is, mediated through teachers and others. (p. 58)

Cotton reviewed 81 reports in all, some of which dealt with more than one topic. She identified 25 categories of principal behavior that positively affect the dependent variables of student achievement, student attitudes, student behavior, teacher attitudes, teacher behaviors, and dropout rates. Here are the 25 categories:

1. Safe and orderly environment
2. Vision and goals focused on high levels of student learning
3. High expectations for student learning
4. Self-confidence, responsibility, and perseverance
5. Visibility and accessibility
6. Positive and supportive climate
7. Communication and interaction
8. Emotional and interpersonal support
9. Parent and community outreach and involvement
10. Rituals, ceremonies, and other symbolic actions
11. Shared leadership, decision making, and staff empowerment
12. Collaboration
13. Instructional leadership
14. Ongoing pursuit of high levels of student learning
15. Norm of continuous improvement
16. Discussion of instructional issues
17. Classroom observation and feedback to teachers
18. Support of teachers' autonomy
19. Support of risk taking
20. Professional development opportunities and resources
21. Protecting instructional time
22. Monitoring student progress and sharing findings
23. Use of student progress for program improvement
24. Recognition of student and staff achievement
25. Role modelling

From the meta-analysis Marzano identified 21 responsibilities of Principals

Responsibility	correlation	The extent to which the principal...
Situational awareness	.33	Is aware of the details and undercurrents in the running of the school and uses the information to address current and

		potential problems
Flexibility	.28	Adapts his or her leadership behaviour to the needs of the current situation and is comfortable with dissent.
Discipline	.27	Protects teachers from issues and influences that would detract from their teaching time or focus.
Outreach	.27	Is an advocate and spokesperson for the school and all stakeholders.
Monitoring/ evaluation	.27	Monitors the effectiveness of school practices and their impact on student learning.
Culture	.25	Fosters shared beliefs and a sense of community and cooperation.
Order	.25	Establishes a set of standard operating procedures and routines.
Resources	.25	Provides teachers with materials and professional development necessary for the successful execution of their jobs
Knowledge of curriculum, instruction & assessment	.25	Is knowledgeable about current curriculum, instruction & assessment practices.
Input	.25	Involves teachers in the design and implementation of important decisions and policies.
Change agent	.25	Is willing to challenge and actively challenges the status quo.
Focus	.24	Establishes clear goals and keeps those goals in the forefront of the school's attention.
Contingent rewards	.24	Recognises and rewards individual accomplishments.
Intellectual stimulation	.24	Ensures faculty and staff are aware of the most current theories and practices and makes the discussion of these a regular aspect of the school culture.
Communication	.23	Establishes strong lines of communication with and among teachers and students.
Ideals/ beliefs	.22	Communicates and operates from strong ideals and beliefs about schooling.
Involvement in curriculum, instruction & assessment	.20	Is directly involved in the design and implementation of curriculum, instruction and assessment practices.
Visibility	.20	Has quality contact and interactions with teachers and students.
Optimiser	.20	Inspires and leads new and challenging innovations.
Affirmation	.19	Recognises and celebrates accomplishments and acknowledges failure.

Relationships	.18	Demonstrates an awareness of the personal aspects of teachers and staff.
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➤ **Todd Whitaker was the guest of SPANZ in 2007.**

His after dinner speech was based on his book, “What Great Principals Do Differently”. 2003, Eye on Education.

This book aims to identify the actions of Great Principals. “Education is extremely complex and so is school leadership. There is no one answer; if there were, surely we’d all have it by now. But we can work toward understanding what the best principals do”. (pg 1)

Great Principals

- Treat people with respect every day.
- When delivering bad news, never do it in writing.
- When dealing with bad teachers; do it when you are ready not them, always do it in their space.
- Use the phrase “I’m telling you because I would want to know...”.
- Differentiate between ignorant and insubordinate. Most are not ignorant.
- Take a positive approach each day
- Constantly model the expectations for how people should be treated.
- Treat everyone with respect and dignity

Great Teachers.

“A good teacher has a love of teaching. A great teacher has a love of learning”. Todd Whitaker

- Never yell
- Never use sarcasm
- Never argue
- Treat everyone with respect and dignity every day
- Take an appositive approach each day

➤ **Prof Viviane Robinson, The University of Auckland.**

Prof Viviane Robinson has produced preliminary results of her BES on School Leadership. She spoke at last years ICP conference in Auckland. Her paper to that conference is available on Leadspace. It identifies five leadership dimensions that have an impact on student learning.

“The research I will be sharing with you today, undertaken as part of the New Zealand Ministry of Education’s Best Evidence Synthesis on School Leadership.

School leaders can make a considerable difference to the achievement and well-being of students.

International research that examines the relationship between qualities of school leadership and student outcomes shows that the leadership of schools where students perform above expected levels looks very different from that, in otherwise similar schools, where students perform below expected levels.

As a result of a detailed analysis of the published research we identified five leadership dimensions that had a particularly powerful impact on students. The five, along with brief descriptions, are listed in Table 1.”

Table 1: Leadership Practices Derived from Studies of Effects of Leadership on Students

Leadership Practice	Meaning of Dimension
1. Establishing Goals and Expectations	Includes the setting, communicating and monitoring of learning goals, standards and expectations, and the involvement of staff and others in the process so that there is clarity and consensus about goals.
2. Strategic Resourcing	Involves aligning resource selection and allocation to priority teaching goals. Includes provision of appropriate expertise through staff recruitment.
3. Planning, Coordinating and Evaluating Teaching and the Curriculum	Direct involvement in the support and evaluation of teaching through regular classroom visits and provision of formative and summative feedback to teachers. Direct oversight of curriculum through school-wide coordination across classes and year levels and alignment to school goals.
4. Promoting and Participating in Teacher Learning and Development	Leadership that not only promotes but directly participates with teachers in formal or informal professional learning.
5. Ensuring an Orderly and Supportive Environment	Protecting time for teaching and learning by reducing external pressures and interruptions and establishing an orderly and supportive environment both inside and outside classrooms.

Relationship skills are embedded in every dimension. In goal setting, for example, effective leadership involves not only determining the goal content (task focus) but doing so in a manner that enables staff to understand and become committed to the goal (relationships). What works, it seems, is careful integration of staff considerations with task requirements. Effective leaders do not get the relationships right and then tackle the educational challenges – they incorporate both sets of constraints into their problem solving.

IMPLICATIONS

The focus on understanding the role of leadership in school success needs to be maintained. The BES project by the Ministry of Education is a very sound method of determining education policy. Good research rather than knee jerk reactions is essential. Discussion with and trust in the professional educationalists (both in school and out) will provide a sound path to move along.

The work of Viviane Robinson and the Best Evidence Synthesis will be fundamental to giving a New Zealand context to this important aspect of schooling. This coupled with many of the other leadership projects such as;

- ❖ First time Principals programme
- ❖ Kiwi Leadership for Principals, Developed in collaboration with the school sector, and underpinned by research evidence contained in the 2008 Educational Leadership BES, KLP presents a model of leadership that reflects the qualities, knowledge and skills required to lead New Zealand schools from the present to the future. KLP will be used as a reference point for developing the Professional Leadership Strategy. This strategy will provide a three to five year plan outlining how the Government intends to work with the sector to achieve the goal of strong professional leadership in every New Zealand school by 2012.

Comments from Mike Bottery at the NZEALS conference.

Mike Bottery looked at the purposes and qualities of educational leaders. He identified the complex interactions that an educational leader is involved with. He went on to look at the “Level of trust”, and questioned the search for simple solutions in accountability systems.

He identified the ambiguity and incompatibility of many of the demands placed on educational leaders. He identified what he called the; **Five ironies of hyper-rationalist management**

1. **The more you try to engineer the creation of a successful workforce, the more likely you are to suppress the creativity upon which success depends;**
2. **The more you try to encourage quality by measuring it, the more you will encourage people to concentrate on the measurable, and thus to ignore real quality;**
3. **The more people are not trusted, they more they will become untrustworthy;**
4. **The more you try to control and engineer success, the more you suppress the local knowledge upon which such success depends;**
5. **The more you define the bottom line, the more that this becomes the only line that people are interested in achieving. .**

At the same time there is a real push for numerical accountability, particularly in the USA (No child left behind) and England.

Publications such as “**Accountability in Education**” by Jo Anne Anderson, which is a strong advocate of High Stakes testing, need to be challenged. This particular article has been produced by the “International Academy of Education” and “The International Institute for Educational Planning” a foundation set up by UNESCO. These two organisations have jointly published the Education Policy Booklet series.

“The third accountability system is based upon results, with results defined in terms of student learning. This system has emerged from increasing political involvement in education. The “No Child Left Behind” requirements in the United States and the Australian National Education Performance Monitoring Task Force are examples of results-based systems. In these systems educators are accountable for student learning and accountable to the general public”. (pg 2)

“Within the United States, the insistence on comprehensive accountability systems was intensified by two events: widespread publication in the popular press of results from the 1995 Third International Math and Science Study (TIMSS) and the 1996 National Governors Association Education Summit.

The TIMSS results suggested that United States students in Grade 3 were slightly behind their peers in other developed countries and, importantly from a policy perspective, this difference increased the longer they remained in school. At the Summit the governors from almost every state committed to introduce strong accountability measures to ensure that public schools performed at the level necessary for economic supremacy. Within two years, United States educators were grappling with the change imposed by the shift in accountability systems from those based on compliance and professional norms to one based on results". (pg 3)

In the USA and England there appeared to be far more emphasis on school improvement rather than student improvement.

New Zealand schools need to ensure that they have procedures in place that make student achievement the highest priority and that they are able to provide evidence of success. As long as New Zealand school students remain at the top of International testing such as PISA and TIMSS, then there will not be the political and social pressure to "improve" schools by external pressure.

We need to be seen to have systems in place whereby we can show achievement levels are high and not have imposed on us the type of High Stakes models so common overseas.

In England the main criteria for evaluating schools are based on Key Stage testing and GSCE results. In "The Times" of June 11th 2008, it was stated in the opinion page that "schools with the lowest results in the country have 50 days to produce an action plan or face closer or merger". The Government had decided that 638 schools faced intervention because they had failed to meet targets in the GCSE exams.

The required target which is arbitrary and keeps changing was; 30% of students must gain A-C grades, including English and Maths in GCSE. It was subsequently reported in the Daily Mail of June 21st that "a quarter of the 638 schools targeted by the government have been graded good by inspectors,. While 16 were "outstanding", only 11% were regarded by Ofsted as needing intervention, according to analysis by the National Union of Teachers.

USA. The main criteria are AYS. A statewide accountability system mandated by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 which requires each state to ensure that all schools and districts make Adequate Yearly Progress.

"This year 60% of Hawaiian public schools failed to meet their progress goals under No child left Behind (AYP) even while test scores across the state are showing steady improvement. Education officials say the high number of schools that did not meet their goals this year reflects the increasingly unrealistic expectations of the federal No Child Left Behind law". The Honolulu Advertiser July 18th 2008.

CONCLUSIONS

The challenge for all school leaders is to ensure that both the leadership and the institution are sustainable. This is a challenge in an environment when so many stakeholders believe that the principal should be available to them. The following paragraph by Douglas B. Reeves in his publication the Learning Leader: How to focus School Improvement for Better Results clarifies the situation.

"The demands of leadership almost invariably exceed the capacity of a single person to meet the needs at hand. Even the most successful and iconic leaders of the past century—Churchill, Roosevelt, Mandela, Thatcher, Gandhi, and King—were not complete leaders. Although Churchill and King may go down in history as two of the 20th century's most successful communicative leaders, their performances as either analytical or relational leaders are undistinguished. Mandela and Gandhi were deeply reflective leaders, seeing their own place in the context of the struggles of millions, but neither showed distinction in systems leadership. In the context of education, many leaders seem less inclined to grasp the architectural vision of leadership that was posited in Chapter 3 and more likely to embrace the faux composite historical models in which the leader is simultaneously the great communicator, analyst, and a master of reflection."

From such mythology are born the unrealistic expectations of communities, colleagues, and leaders themselves. Even the best of the lot frequently think of themselves as a failure because of their inability to attend three events simultaneously.”

Chap 4 The Dimensions of leadership.

“The more leaders focus their relationships, their work and their learning on the core business of teaching and learning, the greater their influence on student outcomes”.

Viviane Robinson, BES

“The difference between more effective principals and their less effective colleagues is not what they know. It is what they do”.

Todd Whitaker, What great principals do differently P 1.

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