

Area Schools Principals Study Award

“An investigation into leadership effectiveness within a distributive, collaborative management system in post quake Christchurch”

Introduction

Research indicates effective leadership has a marked effect upon student performance. Leadership can take many forms, from the strong single Principal to empowerment of staff in distributive and collaborative models. The effectiveness of either form and their permutations is the subject of ongoing academic debate. While there is no universal acceptance or single universal model of Distributive Leadership, within Steiner schools there is an historical cultural expectation of collective responsibility which has created many positive outcomes with significant challenges over the last three decades of our Christchurch Steiner school.

A distributive management system requires significant responsibilities from every teacher. However since the February 2011 Christchurch earthquake, the effectiveness of our schools distributive management style has been under pressure. Stress on our teachers continues to be high and for many, exhausting. As a result, the management of the school and the effect on decision making has been tested.

I wished to reflect on whether the present collaborative management model is the most suitable for our school over the next 5 years.

Methodology

During this sabbatical period, I have had the opportunity to visit and speak to Principals from a number of Steiner Schools in New Zealand, three Principals in Area schools around the Canterbury area and interviewed the Steiner International education spokesman on the advantages and issues surrounding collaborative decision making in Europe and America

While Steiner schools operate from a different basis than State schools with a cultural and philosophical imperative towards collegiality, I wished to include local area schools as they work within operating constraints similar to our school, that is, schools with students from kindergarten or year 1 to year 13, operating (mostly) with one class per age group with similar Ministry entitlements and operations grants and are constrained (and benefitted) by the same demographic and therefore share the same structural problems that we encounter. The four high schools are designated Urban Area Schools.

Questions asked of all Principals were under three general headings:

- School & management structures, school size, FTTE distribution to management and teaching
- Leadership effectiveness, Decision making processes,
- Principal influence in school/ Teacher improvement

A narrative reflection of the effect of the Christchurch 2011 earthquake on our teaching staff in light of the common issues of management and leadership is included..

I have brought together a short literature review on distributive leadership as an academic basis for later considerations.

Literature Review on Distributive Leadership

Distributive leadership as a school organisational process has seen a significant number of expositions in academic literature over two decades particularly in New Zealand (Scrivens; Timberley; Robinson), Australia (Gronn and Hamilton; Mulford and Silins), UK (Harris and Allen; Muijs and Harris; Woods; Crawford), USA (Camburn; Spillane et al; Heck and Hallinger; Goldstein; Gronn), Canada (Leithwood et al).

There appears to be three phases within the literature - early conceptual frameworks, middle 'working phase' reviews that focussed on the efficacy of distributed leadership schools and the more recent papers that appear to suggest new permutations of distributive leadership.

This brief literature review will traverse a range of all three 'phases' with the purpose of investigating the effectiveness of distributive leadership (DL).

Conceptual and early frameworks

Early writings were conceptual and investigated the possibilities of leadership organisation beyond the single head teacher. Bass (1990) points to the relationship between leadership and learning becoming the concern of much contemporary education reform and notes that recent academic research is beginning to focus on evidence based efficacy of head teachers and leadership structures.

Hallinger and Heck (1996a, 1996b) for example have developed a synthesis of four dozen studies across all types of schools demonstrating that the combined direct and indirect effects of school (headmaster) leadership on student learning accounts for a quarter of total school effects. Taking into account that school variables account for only 10 – 20% of all student learning, leadership within a school creates a 3-5% total positive variation in student outcomes. They noted that classroom practice accounts for one third of the variation ie up to 6% total effect. It is worth noting that in a New Zealand context Alton Lee (2003) claims that variation of school level effects is between 5 and 20%.

The concept of the head teacher being the panacea of all school issues has been subsequently questioned by academics leading to the evolution of Distributive Leadership.

'The model of a single heroic leader, standing atop a hierarchy, bending the school community to his or her purposes needs to be replaced by a more achievable and sustainable conceptualisation of leadership,' Camburn (2003).

Timberley's (2004) paper on Distributed leadership (DL) leads the reader through a narrative research on teacher involvement with curriculum leadership noting that the heroic leaders of her research were those that engaged in leadership activities. She warns that distributing leadership over more people is a risky business and may result in a greater distribution of incompetence, suggesting that increasing DL is desirable if leadership activities assist teachers to provide more effective student instruction.

Robinson (2004), another New Zealand academic, advocates DL as a means for all staff being aligned to the goals and vision of the school, noting that senior teachers are choosing not to seek promotion to principal in a single leader environment but rather are concerned for a wider consultative environment.

The notion of distributive leadership has been highlighted and conceptually developed by many writers including Bass (1990), Ogawa and Bossert (1995), Leithwood and Janzi (1990 & 2000), Spillane, Halverson and Diamond (2001) with Wiziars et al (2003) suggesting that 'collegiality, empowered teachers, collaborative planning and continuous improvement are characteristic of cultures within schools that transform leading and learning'.

Leithwood et al (2004) in advocating a transformational leadership model developed a significant body of work identifying elements that create sustained and effective change to school cultures, effective diversified leadership and high student engagement and outcomes.

Review and Effectiveness

While educational policy makers in diverse nations have targeted distributive leadership as a means of building a more productive, learning focussed organisational climate in schools (Leithwood, Mascall, Strauss 2009) attention has turned to assessing its efficacy.

Almost all commentators have emphasised the need for a distributive leadership model to place student learning at the centre of research rather than the organisational process alone - Robinson (2008), Leithwood et al (2004), Heck and Hallinger (2005). The common difficulty was how to measure its effectiveness given the different names and meanings of distributive leadership (collegial, contingency, transactional, shared, transformative), the relatively short duration of the concept, the macro and micro politics of implementation.

One study by Camburn, Rowan and Taylor (2003) reviewed the USA Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) in Elementary schools in which USA policy makers have used distributive leadership to increase student learning. While this review could not yet report on long term efficacy of the exploratory policy, they reported an increase in staff capacity, the Principals reporting higher levels of input and priority into curriculum areas alongside increased levels of staff as CRS teacher coaches.

Hallinger and Heck (2010) note that 'only recently has empirical research begun to explore the change in performance outcomes and that despite a thriving literature on leadership effects few large scale empirical studies of leadership *over time* have been carried out'.

Their paper tested a longitudinal, multi level model of distributed leadership, school improvement capacity and student performance over four years.

The results were significant for both reading and maths claiming that 'indirect effects of distributed leadership on student growth rates were substantively larger, thereby suggesting that (distributive) leadership had potentially an important impact on improvement'. They further claim that 'the evidence suggests that distributive leadership can be empirically linked to change in school improvement capacity and subsequent growth in student learning' and suggesting that 'relative size of effects were significantly large.'

Of interest within their conclusion was that 'growth in student learning over time may be a more salient indicator for school accountability than the level of student achievement measured at one point in time'

Robinson (2008), in her paper 'Forging links between distributed leadership and educational outcomes', notes that there are two separate aspects to DL- that of task distribution (managing of

programmes, appraisals etc) and that of influence processes – the processes that cause changes in thoughts and actions of followers (teachers) .

Her evidence, contrary to Hallinger and Heck , suggests that ‘outcomes linked evidence demonstrates a moderate impact on teacher attitudes and satisfaction and a very small impact on student achievement outcomes’. She further claims that a meta analysis of five studies shows an average effect size of less than 0.2, an effect size that is usually interpreted as very small.

She suggests however that a critical research agenda for future distributed leadership is increasing the capacity for teachers, especially those without positional authority, to succeed in influencing their colleagues in ways that benefit students.

Future work

The evolution and future directions of distributed leadership appear to be influenced both by outcome studies and educational authorities ‘ramping up of accountability demands (Crawford 2012). In a review of leadership over 40 years, Crawford notes that ‘enthusiasm for distributed leadership evolved as a kind of post heroic alternative.’ In her contemporary comparison of solo or distributed leadership she suggests that DL could be an ‘emperor’s new clothes’ in that solo leadership often purports to be distributed leadership in another guise. She suggests that ‘the discussions around distributive leadership may be surplus to requirements as school principals try to respond to increasingly high stakes accountability measures and pressure from policy makers’. She suggests that the time is ripe for a form of distributive leadership that ‘moves away from the more one dimensional forms and towards concepts such as hybrid leadership, social relationships in the organisation and balance between individual, collective and situational aspects of leadership’(Crawford, 2008; 618)

Woods (2012) widens this perspective of leadership to include the contested nature of educational achievement – that outcomes of education are more broad than measurements of reading and maths, suggesting that it entails fundamental issues concerning what it is to live and develop as a human being. He claims that the mandatory state wide assessment system acts as a powerful tool that limits leadership agency within schools and suggests that distributive leadership needs to embed itself as democratic leadership in response to these external influences. He proposes that democratic principals of student leadership and active student participation are associated with enhanced deeper learning.

Many new ideas of distributed leadership qualities are emerging from nations such as South Africa where Botha (2013) includes the leadership concept as a community servant, a social organisational architect, a moral educator and as visionary collective leadership.

The maturation of the distributive leadership model in this third phase is challenged by the contrary narrowing focus of curriculum and high stakes reporting. A consequent narrowing of leadership expectation to a narrow band of student learning rather than a widening of educational aspiration, Woods suggests, should be of deep concern to educators.

Discussion on Research Outcomes:

School & management structures

Of the 6 Steiner schools I visited throughout New Zealand, all operated on the basis of a high level of consultation with varying degrees of shared decision making. Since the schools became integrated, the cultural imperative that all decisions be made by all teachers (often called the College of Teachers) has transformed into a variety of distributed or collaborative forms. The College of Teachers mostly takes the role of consultative body on future directions while smaller decision making teams – called the school executive, principal group etc, - make decisions and take responsibility for daily management.

The level of consultation involves a significant amount of increased management time requiring most schools to extend their management FTTE component beyond that designated within their GMFS. This is not surprising when comparing academic literature on distributive leadership, where Camburn, Rowan and Taylor (2003) noted that USA schools within the Comprehensive school reform models required increased teacher allocation to enable a distributive programme of management, namely, a consultative management environment is a costly enterprise and to be effective in a distributed environment in NZ appears to require more funds than that allocated by the Ministry.

A number of NZ Steiner schools used between 0.5 and 1.5 FTTE additional management staffing to ensure a consultative environment, effective management and curriculum accountability. This was made possible through the contribution the schools Trusts (or Proprietor) donated to the running of the school. The smaller schools that worked within their entitlement operated by necessity on a strongly principal focussed decision making process. Successful DL in Steiner schools is strongly linked to the availability of an extra income stream from school Trusts.

The State area schools I spoke with also ran management budgets beyond that of Ministry of Education allocation. All had attempted and /or used a distributive model at some time but found that the time factor involved was not sustainable and replaced it with consultation with senior management decisions alongside effective communication with staff. School size and the wide range of offered subjects appears to be a particular Area School problem.

Area schools are funded and receive entitlement on a similar basis to urban schools. Management allocation through the GMFS is similar to all schools yet the range of management requirements are much broader i.e. year 1 - 13. Additionally high school subject departments are generally one or two teachers carrying all curriculum responsibilities, assessment, moderation and curriculum development for example, recent NCEA alignments. This inevitably reduces the time component for management, requiring many area schools principals to become increasingly involved with micro aspects of management often to the detriment of leading learning.

Our Christchurch Steiner School has operated for a many years within a distributive ethos without additional funding from the school's proprietor and while student outcomes have been effective, post-earthquake exhaustion has highlighted the internal stresses of DL in our school and appears to necessitate a decision to review either our distributive system or find increased funding for this managerial style.

On reflection, the school has been attempting the impossible over the last decade as Ministry accountability has increased both in management (strategic plans, financial reviews) and student outcomes (NCEA league tables, National standards reporting). We are caught between our wider ideals requiring greater levels of staffing without the capacity of extra funding.

Area school principals, who attempted forms of DL, have returned, by necessity, to traditional forms of management. Steiner schools are able to continue as a result of access to extra management and staff funding.

Additionally Steiner schools have been attempting for 90 years what Botha (2013) noted in his future view of DL as a 'social organisational architect'. Steiner conceived of a social organisational model that incorporated a balance of cultural life, human rights and economic freedom. Within Steiner school organisation there is an attempt to create a 'just and moral' working environment that supports an effective teaching and learning environment. The concept of organisational capacity in the form of distributed leadership and consensus decision making arises from Steiner's conception of society organisation called the Threefold social order (TSO).

There is much global debate on Steiner school organisation. Schools throughout the world and within NZ have created hybrids of the TSO model within which the distributive model exist and have created a powerful organisational more. The international spokesperson on education however claims that Steiner's only comment on school organisation was that schools should govern in the best way they can. Steiner himself acted dictatorially in the first Steiner school (also reported by Wagstaff, 2003) with no regard to the notion of the Threefold Social Order. And while this debate regarding the nature of a just society is important to those teaching in Steiner schools, the discourse takes time within discussions on educational issues.

All the academic literature on distributive leadership reminds managers of the need for student learning, successful outcomes and engagement to be central to the education enterprise rather than management per se. For Steiner schools there is a double expectation of success, that of academic acumen within the development of the whole student, often referred to as an holistic development, and an organisational capacity that reflects a wider ethos of human purpose.

The immense difficulty that the increasingly 'high stakes accountability measures' (Crawford 2012) presents for Steiner schools is that the time needed to meet these Ministry requirements becomes so large that the bigger picture of what life, education and learning as a community is becomes increasingly difficult to discuss. Conversely, to do the bigger picture justice means the high stakes reporting, and therefore student outcomes, is compromised. The balance is a constant and difficult swing of ideological demands.

Decision making

Within a DL culture, consultation with wider groups towards decision making is the most pertinent objective. The interpersonal gains are high, as are student outcomes (Halinger and Heck 2010), although Robinson (2008) claims otherwise.

It is rare within a Steiner school that the Principal makes individual decisions, rather decisions are usually made by a senior management team that includes the Principal, following periods of consultation with relevant parties. There were no two schools in my visits however that had exactly similar decision making processes rather there were permutations around a DL theme. Consensus decision making is similarly varied through schools and again has positives and negative aspects to it.

Decision making in a DL environment can lack decisiveness or defined outcomes and yet the opposite of these can also create better conclusions i.e. that a variety of ideas take more time but give a rounded picture to develop a more sound solution.

There was a wide variation of how Principals perceived their role; from a clear single strong leader to uncertainty around personal powers vs group expectations. The concept of servant leadership is a common theme, yet this contains a seminal dilemma of accepting full Ministry responsibility as the Boards CEO, while having limited powers of change implementation.

This is a worldwide problem within Steiner schools and one we experience in our school. My recommendation would be that the school identifies all areas of individual Principal decision capability, the areas of the senior management team and areas are group responsibilities, so there is no confusion of purpose and direction.

It is an also an expensive enterprise, as mentioned above, and a commitment to effective DL necessarily requires a component of gift and service to the school and/ or extra access to funding.

Leadership effectiveness / Principal influence

The Ministry of Education places high value on the literature supported influence of the Principal to create the climate, culture and progress in learning in schools.

Taking into account that leadership accounts for 0.25 of school effects (both direct and indirect) and that classroom teaching is 0.3, there is a much to be gained from leadership development.

The state area schools I spoke with had all tried or attempted distributive leadership and have now withdrawn from it to a consultation process with senior management team. Principals in Canterbury Area Schools make decisions based on consultation with their DPs and APs rather than the single 'heroic' principal concept of past years (Timperley 2004). All felt their influence as change agents in their school was hampered by the micro management demands. The exigencies in area school high schools with a wide range of subjects and often only one or two teachers in each subject level, create unique area school problems requiring principals to become involved in the minutiae of managing. The concept of leading learning was considered a frustrated ambition as there was not enough time to do justice to it There appears to be a case strong case for a Ministry claim for more funding for Area schools than is presently allocated.

Leadership and Principalship in Steiner schools have a dynamic and oft perceived polaric, relationship. Distributive management (and Steiner culture) encourages a leadership in many different people and collective responsibility for school life and culture, facilitating what Robinson (2008) noted as 'increasing the capacity for teachers without positional authority' and has the potential to create a strong staff stakeholding in the school. Leadership effectiveness in our school is dependent on the rigour and energy of teachers once out of their classrooms. Principalship however, is legally responsible to the Board and appraised against all issues that are distributed to teachers as trust tasks. This is an organisational dichotomy that the Principal needs to accommodate in our present model. The Leadership trust model is dependent upon, and assumes that requirements will be achieved. The Principalship accountability (or fear based) model motivates people extrinsically while our school seeks accountability within an intrinsic motivational environment. While we wish to aspire to higher ideals, there are many issues of consumed time and frustration in the process of ensuring a consensus. There can be issues of mistrust of decision making outside the collective or of individuals making decisions on behalf of the school. There is often a strong status quo imperative in consensus as little can change without wide agreement. The often quoted advantage of a speedy embedding of new ideas within consensus can often be undone in our school by individual teachers choosing not to adhere to consensus decisions. Greater staff happiness attributed to distributed models appears at times to achieve the opposite in decision frustration and individual choice to, or not to implement, an agreed

process or policy. It would be inadmissible to claim that strong leadership creates higher levels of work happiness, but often our ideals lead to leadership's ineffectiveness in many areas.

Principals in Steiner schools had a variety of responses to the question of their influence towards change within their school. The separation of Leadership and Principalship widens the influence of change. Compared to State schools, the strong leader imperative is less clear. Many Principals were not sure of the parameters of personal power and were more likely to invest cultural and expectational change in groups or leadership in other individuals. Most were, like their state school colleagues, ambivalent about the amount of influence they had on school change given their middle management workload.

The one school where the Principal made most decisions felt they had the most positive influence on school culture. This principal exercised a strong individual leadership model rather than a distributive one. Another Principal who had the highest amount of management hours achieved a large amount for the national movement. Other principals were ambivalent about their effectiveness for change but saw themselves as enablers for others to exercise change.

While this is an equally effective form of change influence as the single strong Principalship, it is subject to variation of commitment and endeavour, as we found in post Christchurch earthquake energy levels.

Innovation.

Schools which had a strong leader, both in Steiner and State schools were proud about of the innovations that their schools were making. Education is a multi complex enterprise where there is no overriding single answer to issues. Innovation is an attempt to answer the needs of the times and a school's situation. There is often an excitement in trying new things. Innovations were less obvious in schools with stronger collective decision making.

Steiner schools were once a challenge to a societal view of education. Over the last decade we have achieved a status of educational acceptance. We have national programmes that align to the National Curriculum and National Standards by the end of year 8 and demonstrable student success that supports an academic and holistic learning ideal. There has been substantial focus on how we maintain a status quo rather than look at innovations. State schools may be trying more innovative things than us. Two area schools, for example, were trialling full day subject lessons at level 2 & 3 ie 4 hrs of biology on Monday , 4 hours art on Tuesday etc. One area school advertised amongst their staff that three fixed term units are to be allocated to three teachers who proposed learning /school innovations. Other schools are trialling a later starting time for high school students.

A significant concern for me is the difficulty of attempting and developing innovation within a consensus model. The forces of preservation are difficult to alter except under duress, so where our school was a challenge to prevailing ideas, we may now be left behind - particularly within the substantial review and renewal of post quake Christchurch education.

The Effect of the Earthquake

Christchurch is now 3 years on from the devastating earthquake of Feb 22 2011. There have been clear phases in the process coming to terms with ongoing issues. The first year was one of courageous coping. There was a strong community sense that we would manage and if we worked hard together, we would pull through. Student care was a very high priority issue. Family homes were broken, were

in flight mode and leaving town, living in one room of their home either through physical damage to their house or separation anxiety of the family members with the constant aftershocks. Teachers were carers before educators. There was enormous inpouring of sympathy and finance to assist the wellbeing of students. Teachers were being cared for and school, families and children worked hard to find an equilibrium within the devastation and 10 000+ aftershocks. It was exhausting and hard, yet there was a common striving to beat the earthquake blues. Teachers became focussed on student wellbeing and the needs of their families. There was little emotional ability to work beyond the immediate environment of the classroom and home. Student results were surprising good in this year. Our management model worked well with many teachers taking more individual responsibilities, but relying on a strong Principal function to give order, a sense of wellbeing and order.

The second year brought a tired resignation. The slow response by the Earthquake Commission, the bureaucratic difficulties in assessment and repair of homes and increasing about face of many insurance companies to their clients, created a realisation and disillusionment of what had previously been both promised and then not delivered. The sense of community morphed into individual resignation and withdrawal. A sense of frailty replaced the teams of community volunteers. Families continued to live in compromised states, but now there was an expectation that you just got on with things yet, with land classifications and families forced to leave their homes, it became worse for many. Teachers worked hard to maintain the forms of school life, students were very tired and results were significantly lower. Our distributive management process became much stretched. Teacher illness was at a record level. Deep sadness and exhaustion appear to be precursors to sickness and mental health days. The Principal incorporated all areas where distributive leadership could not function.

This third year has brought both a new ordinary and alienation. Many families have been found new accommodation, have had their homes repaired or can see a light at the end of the tunnel. There is an expectation that all is better, a new form of normal. For many this is not the case and the struggle is increasingly a silent personal pain. At the same time the city is almost entirely a waste zone, streets are constantly in state of repair and while Christchurch is the boom town of reconstruction, there is ugliness and brokenness everywhere. There is a loss of faith in bureaucracy and community involvement has become remote. Teacher and student absences are as high as in year two. Commentators note that the third year post trauma is the worst. However, many children appear resilient, many teachers have found their feet and most appear to be able to operate at pre quake levels. It is a fragile equilibrium and one that is unsettled easily. The school has experienced more staff and student shifts than in the previous 20 years.

Discussion

Having seen many schools through the country, spoken to a number of principals and read much literature on leadership, it has become clear that we in Christchurch have been trying to achieve the impossible over the last years which the quake has made more obvious. There is a clear correlation in all the schools between the amount of distributed management and the level of staffing required achieving it. Schools with no, or limited distributive leadership (State Area Schools and Steiner schools) worked almost within their GMFS management entitlement, though no school actually did. Schools with greater degrees and expectations of involvement with decision making had substantial financial investment in management time. This was provided by the Proprietor or Trust

Our school's wide distributed management model with no added allowance for extra management has by necessity required a substantial gift time by teachers and management. The necessary withdrawal of teachers to their core tasks post-quake exposed concerning issues in our distributive system.

We clearly need to develop a management system that honours our history yet allows us to move forward with certainty into the future - what Crawford (2012) suggests is a *hybrid Distributed Leadership*. There appears to be no literature on hybrid models of DL, so my recommendations for our future post quake life come as a reflection of the positive elements of the Area schools, the management structures of other Steiner schools.

Importantly is that in our post-quake life we create a continuity of purpose and expectation rather than wholesale change while developing clear pedagogical attention and separate management decision making meetings. This is a well-documented positive post trauma strategy.

Wiziers et al (2003) suggests that 'collegiality, empowered teachers, collaborative planning and continuous improvement are characteristic of cultures within schools that transform leading and learning'.

We wish to grow a culture of transformational learning while enabling the stress elements of the earthquake to find resolution.

To enable this we should remove all decision making from pedagogical meetings giving teachers increased opportunities to focus on their primary task of student learning and Steiner understanding.

We therefore need to create section area management meeting times that are open to all colleagues who feel able and are willing to gift their time towards management issues. Section meetings would not make decisions but rather develop recommendations to the senior management team. This team is often called the College or Principal group

Decision timelines should be explicit and time limited to the relevant sections meetings. Issues that concern the Primary school, for example, would be outlined by the Principal group to the Primary school coordinator and given a limited time (e.g. three weeks) to provide a recommended action. This recommendation may be confirmed by the Principal group. If the section group is unable to form a recommendation, the Principal group will make a decision.

This form would accommodate all school needs - decision making that is both time limited and consultative and teacher meetings that benefit teachers and ultimately student learning. Importantly for management, a lack of consensus decision making in section meetings does not frustrate the decision making process and allows management, and therefore the Principal, to be accountable for all school decisions.

This would create a winwinwin situation by allowing all teacher meetings to be Steiner focussed and create a strong sense of teacher's collegiality. It would allow section meetings to focus on teaching development (review student results, students needing focus, classroom management techniques, curriculum review and development, meaningful peer appraisal and sharing of enthusiasm and joys). Teachers could experience pedagogical encouragement, refreshment, and less stress within their professional life post-quake. The often expressed exhaustion that management issues bring to teacher meetings would be removed. Management would be done at a different time as a 'service' from those teachers who choose to gift their time in service to the school. The concept of leading learning would

then would be placed, as it should in a DL environment, in the responsibilities of the colleagues, supported by senior management and the Principal.

My purpose was firstly to find a way that teachers could live and teach in a less stressed form. My perception was that post-quake, a level of exhaustion was, and is, creating high stress. The result was an inability for a number of teachers to be their best in the classroom. Associated with this stress was the expectation that everyone should be involved with managing areas of the school.

This reviewed structure may enable teachers energy levels to be directed fully towards student learning (and post-quake welfare) without losing the sense of personal involvement with the philosophy. As a consequence, teachers could be able to work off the "front foot" in professional learning, reflection and pastoral care, which will ultimately benefit student welfare and the learning experience.

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