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Professional Supervision For New Zealand Principals: Analysis Of Current Issues And Options
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Research and Evaluation Final Report

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PART 1:   EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The recently concluded collective agreements for primary and secondary school principals in New Zealand allude to a project on professional supervision that will be undertaken in order to provide information about current practice and future options related to provision of 'professional supervision'.

The Literature

In this study, commissioned by the Ministry of Education, literature on professional supervision that could have some comparability with school principalship was reviewed with the aim of examining research findings that could be transferred to an educational leadership context. The theory base encompasses a range of terminology (clinical supervision, administrative supervision, educative supervision, professional supervision) and reveals considerable confusion in the meanings attached to the concepts. The use of the term professional supervision has been specifically associated with a requirement for work overview and support within the counselling profession. From this origin, it has been transferred to other 'helping professions', health services in particular, where its purposes are often unclear as they span both managerial and supportive forms of supervision.

In terms of the professional supervision of school principals, there is no literature that reports this practice exactly. In relation to supportive forms of supervisory activity in general, the literature associated with principals' moves into the realms of mentoring and coaching which are often defined in terms that match the broad notion of supportive supervision. The literature cautions that the term 'supervision' may not be appropriate when the focus is on the welfare of the professional rather than their work performance per se. In addition, models of supervision from the counselling and health sector are not easily transferable to the context of educational leadership. In other professions, traditional forms of professional supervision are regulated by professional associations and provided by contracted consultants. A key issue is the quality of supervision, counselling, mentoring and coaching, and in other professions this is attended to by establishing specialist qualifications and standards of practice for providers.

The Methodology

Data collection for this study involved a two-phase mixed method research design. A focus group interview phase was used to a) inform a questionnaire phase and b) to provide rich qualitative data in its own right. Six focus group interviews were held (three with primary and three with secondary principals) in Auckland, Waikato and Christchurch (N=31). An electronic

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questionnaire was sent to a randomly selected (15%) sample of all New Zealand primary and secondary principals (N=387). A 30% response rate was achieved. In addition, three key informant interviews were employed to elicit specific specialist viewpoints from three professional and industrial organisations representing principals or boards: the New Zealand Educational Institute (NZEI), Post Primary Teachers Association (PPTA) and New Zealand School Trustees Association (NZSTA), referred to as 'nominated representatives of the three organisations' in this report.

The Findings and Conclusions

Overall, the findings for primary and secondary principals are remarkably consistent.

Current professional supervision experiences

Approximately two thirds of New Zealand's school principals have no current or recent experience of professional supervision of any type, other than coaching or mentoring for a few. Those who did participate indicated that the activity was self-initiated and took an individual (mainly mentoring or coaching) or group form with groups being either internally or externally facilitated. Purposes and arrangements for professional supervision varied greatly overall with a very small number reporting having a professional supervision experience with a professional counsellor or psychotherapist. Very little professional supervision was received from the three professional and industrial organisations (NZEI, PPTA, NZSTA), which is consistent with the core role and function of these organisations who do not see themselves as key providers of professional supervision for principals.

Beliefs about professional supervision and why it is needed

The term 'professional supervision' is a broad and elusive concept for most principals. Not all principals were comfortable with the working definition provided by the Ministry of Education. Some saw it as patronising – particularly the reference to pastoral care. Others were concerned about issues of trust and confidentiality. Many principals questioned the appropriateness of the term as it had negative connotations of "having an overseer" and being "checked-up on". Two of the nominated representatives of the three organisations emphasised the need for professional supervision when principals were experiencing traumatic and serious situations where there was concern for health and safety. In contrast, very few principals specifically mentioned pastoral care or emotional support as needs for professional supervision but the theme of the isolated and lonely nature of the principal's job was evident.

In the electronic questionnaire responses a small percentage of principals indicated that there was no current need for professional supervision (3.1%) or very little need (4.1%). In contrast, 33.7% of the questionnaire respondents indicated a very high need and 17.3% a high need, an aggregated response of 51%. It should however be noted that a consistently strong and conclusive need for professional supervision per se across all informant groups is hard to establish from the findings because of the variance of views about the actual needs for professional supervision and the evident confusion about the meaning of the phenomenon itself.

The current impact of professional supervision for principals

Among those principals who had experienced professional supervision, nearly half indicated that the highest level of satisfaction was associated with their experience of mentoring and coaching. Asked about the relationship between professional supervision and performance appraisal, the majority view was that these are and should continue to be two different performance related experiences. Principals believe that they (not the Board) should be responsible for any professional supervision arrangements and that outcomes remain confidential between the supervisor and themselves. In their view professional supervision should be conducted in response to on-the-job problems or issues a principal is experiencing in their school and context, and requires a high trust and confidential relationship. In relation to how professional supervision links to their leadership of learning and teaching, most participants in the focus groups agreed that this link was more tangential than planned. They believe this leadership should be the focus of professional development.

The quality of professional supervision for principals

There is a preference by principals for professional supervisors who have successful experience as principals and who are trained for the supervisory role. A few principals wish to have counsellors, business and corporate mentors and coaches as supervisors. There is a strongly held view that the principal should self select their supervisor to best meet their needs and context. Multiple challenges related to the provision of quality assured professional supervision were identified.

Desired arrangements for the future provision of professional supervision for principals

The majority of principals clearly want professional supervision to be an entitlement but not a mandated requirement. They believe it should be available to every principal each year as of right at their discretion. A risk associated with not mandating for this provision was a view expressed that the very principals who most need professional supervision may choose not to

participate in it. It is noted that there is a minority group of principals who do not support the idea of professional supervision, its provision or inclusion in their collective agreement.

The Recommendations

The recommendations are that:

1. The parties involved should act with due consideration of the findings of this study and with caution regarding the introduction of any initiative to promote or provide for the "professional supervision of New Zealand principals" as this could be premature (based on the lack of pertinent international research evidence); and
2. The profession itself needs to take the lead in determining the naming, nature and form of professional supervision/mentoring needed as no international models that have comparability with school principalship were located in the literature search; and
3. Requirements (and models of professional supervision) appropriate in other professions such as school counselling are not appropriate in an educational leadership context; and
4. The mandating of professional supervision for principals as a requirement should be avoided; and
5. The relationship between professional supervision/mentoring activity and principal performance appraisal and professional development be clarified as confusion as to purpose exists in both the literature and current practice; and
6. The parties involved should view the following options in the light of the above recommendations.

The options are:

1) Maintenance of the status quo;
2) Minor change (provision of information and support);
3) Major change (formalising entitlement and quality control).

PART 2:   INTRODUCTION

This report is an analysis of professional supervision for New Zealand primary and secondary principals arising from an agreement reached in settlement between the Ministry of Education and each of the PPTA and NZEI in the recently concluded primary and secondary principals' collective agreements (2007). The Secondary Principals' Collective Agreement states that:

A project on professional supervision will be undertaken in the first half of 2008. The purpose of this project is to inform the parties on current practice and identify options for consideration by the Secretary for Education. If possible a trial or trials will be run in this period.

A similar clause is included in the Primary Principals' Collective Agreement, except that the last sentence is omitted.

The Ministry of Education requested that six key elements would inform the report for this project. These elements are:

1. An in-depth analysis of the issues creating the current need for professional supervision for New Zealand primary and secondary principals; and

2. Analysis of professional supervision structures utilized by New Zealand primary and secondary principals at present, and their links to the types of issues (both common and different) faced by principals within each sector; and

3. An analysis of the professional supervision structures and processes in other New Zealand professions that may have some comparability with school principalship; and

4. A summary of the evidence about outcomes from the variety of types of professional supervision on the primary and secondary principals' role as leader of learning; and

5. An outline of options for improving the provision and quality of professional supervision tailored for primary and secondary principals; and

6. Recommendations about the optimal levels and mix of professional supervision provision for primary and secondary principals, and the identification of the potential resourcing implications.

To fulfil this request, the researchers undertook a literature review and document search; gathered data through an electronic survey questionnaire and focus group interviews with principals; took into account the two target groups of primary and secondary school principals; gathered data through interviews with the representatives of the three organisations most closely involved in the collective agreements negotiations; took into account the board of trustees interest as the employer of principals; where possible analysed and reported the findings as they relate to primary and secondary principals separately.

The report is structured and presented in seven main parts:

Part 1   Executive Summary (a summary of the complete report)

Part 2   Introduction (the background to this research project)

Part 3   Literature review (a description and analysis of the relevant literature)

Part 4   Methodology (how the research was conducted)

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Part 5   Findings (patterns and trends from the research findings)

Part 6   Conclusions (summary of results of the research findings)

Part 7   Recommendations and options (research informed future possibilities)

Part 8   References (the literature consulted to inform this project)

Part 9   Appendices (survey instruments)

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PART 3 A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Professional Supervision: concept and contrary definitions

There is a considerable body of literature drawing mainly on practice in the health and social services that deals with the notion of professional supervision. However, the literature itself identifies the existence of a plethora of related terms that have created a great deal of confusion and even contradiction in the way they are employed. These terms include: supervision, clinical supervision, administrative supervision, educational supervision, supportive supervision and mentoring (Clark, Jamieson, Launer, Trompetas, Whiteman & Williamson, 2006; Yegdich, 1999). In the health services there is concern about the terminology confusion because of the growing trend for different primary care professions to work together in multidisciplinary teamwork situations. As a consequence, and because of a high level of concern about professional performance of these professionals (such as health administrators, general practitioners, nurses, psychologists, for example) several authors assert that there is a need to clarify terms (Clark, et al, 2006: Cooper, 2006; Yegdich, 1999). One of the imperatives of achieving clarity regarding terminology is associated with being able to distinguish between assessment and policing activities and assisting and supportive activities. A survey of the functions assigned to the various notions is one way of trying to understand the similarities and differences that this literature highlights.

Supervision

In some of the literature that deals with supervision in the health services, the terms supervision, clinical supervision and professional supervision are used interchangeably to mean one and the same thing (Billington, Hallinan & Robinson, 2005; Cooper. 2006). More prevalent, however, is the tendency to distinguish terms according to their function. Smith (2005, p. 1) points out that supervision means to *oversee* (from the Latin – *super* meaning 'over', and *vidêre,* meaning 'to watch or see'). It implies that supervision is a mutual undertaking: the practice of one is overseen by another who understands that this is an expectation in a professional context. Thus in literature related to a number of professions there is reference to the practice of supervision. For example, as part of the New Zealand process of induction of novices in the teaching profession "a supervising/tutor teacher" is assigned (Cameron, 2007, p. 17). In the human services arena the process of moving from novice to expert involves supervision in a variety of apprenticeship situations (Smith, 2005) and supervision is identified as a coping strategy in the case of mental health professionals (Sommer & Cox, 2005).

A broad definition of supervision is contributed to the literature from the field of social work in the form of a model provided by Kadushin (1992) which draws on the earlier functional definition of Dawson (1926). The functions of supervision are threefold: administrative, educational and supportive. Kadushin (1992) elaborates on Dawson's description in the following terms:

- *Administrative supervision* is concerned with the appropriate implementation of policies and procedures. The primary goal is to ensure adherence to policy and procedure to provide a first class service. The supervisor is given authority to oversee the work of the supervisee.

- *Educational supervision* is concerned with ensuring that the worker has the required knowledge, attitude and skills to do the job. The goal is to dispel ignorance and upgrade skill. Through supervision the employee is encouraged to reflect on practice and improve practice.

- *Supportive supervision* focuses on worker morale and job satisfaction. Workers are seen as facing a number of job-related stresses which, unless they have help to deal with them, could seriously affect their work and lead to a less than satisfactory service to clients. For the worker there is ultimately the problem of burnout. This focus on support (a restorative dimension) has the virtue of making explicit the need to have a concern for the emotions of supervisees – but it is here that there could be slippage into a counselling framework.

Kadushin asserts that the first two aspects of supervision serve instrumental needs, whereas supportive supervision is concerned with expressive/emotional needs. He also cautions that it is hard to make distinct separations because there are overlaps between all three aspects. This blurring of functions is captured in an ongoing debate about whether distinctions can be drawn between supervision that is part of the administrative work of managing performance (appraisal) and what is termed 'clinical supervision' (of professional practice) (Yegdich, 1999).

Clinical Supervision

There is rich literature that traverses the notion of clinical supervision in a variety of professional settings. 'Clinical supervision' features as the dominant term in relation to the supervision of professional practice in such professions as social work, nursing, psychology and counselling where it is part of the tradition that ensures quality practice (Cooper, 2006). However, there is also a tradition of confusion surrounding this notion when the term is used

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interchangeably with other terms such as supervision and administrative clinical supervision (Sirola-Karvinen & Hyrkäs, 2006).

One conventional definition provided by Butterworth and Faugier (1992) stating that clinical supervision is "an exchange between practising professionals to enable the development of professional skills" (p. 12) confirms a view that this form of supervision is related to both professional and personal development. However, the literature also describes clinical supervision as a means of administration – a form of hierarchical supervision of performance – concerned with overseeing activities from a management perspective.

The term clinical supervision was popularised in North America in relation to teacher training. Smith (2005) alludes to the pioneering work of Cogan (1973) in introducing the term and the concept to education. Fundamental to clinical supervision is the activity of observation – the trainee teacher observes teaching and their own teaching practice is observed by experts who can help them to improve performance. This notion of clinical supervision was also applied to the on-going evaluation of the performance of experienced teachers and in literature pre-dating mandated performance appraisal in New Zealand was also known as in-class supervision which involves direct classroom observations and conferencing to provide feedback about practice (Prebble & Stewart, 1984). In current New Zealand literature on managing the performance of teachers it is noticeable that whilst the term supervision has almost completely disappeared from the discourse, classroom observation and feedback which is the backbone of supervisory activity remains a central feature in the appraisal of teachers (Cameron, 2007; Cardno & Piggot-Irvine, 1997; Ministry of Education, 1999).

A persistent and compelling theme in the literature is the confusion that exists around disparate definitions of clinical supervision. For example, the question of whether clinical supervision is the whole (meaning that is encompasses clinical management, clinical education and clinical support and counselling) or whether it is part of this whole is not definitively answered. This confusion is not a recent phenomenon. Yegdich (1999, citing Perrodin, 1954) draws attention to the fact that the confusion has been around for an incredibly long time and that the term "clinical supervision" was not considered an entity in itself. It was usually regarded as either administration or clinical teaching or a combination of both". Yegdich (p. 1197) goes on to say:

> Clinical supervisory activities were considered advisory service functions and staff services, concerned with the immediate and direct purpose of developing and

maintaining good nursing staff, rather than line functions which were delineated by their ultimate purpose of providing good nursing care.

Her contribution to the debate is that effective clinical supervision "can only function on a foundation of managerial supervision, staff welfare and support, and education. It is achieved by the fact that managerial supervision already occurs, a fact nurses should take for granted" (Yegdich, 1999, p. 1201). For nursing then, clinical supervision may be considered as a particular form of clinical teaching that occurs within a framework of supervisory activity that serves both organisational and professional purposes. In the legal profession, supervision is mandated and enshrined in standards of professional responsibility that require a "duty to supervise" new members of the profession to be undertaken by supervising attorneys and partners (Reiland, 2001).

Professional Supervision

In the literature confusion surrounds the employment of the term 'professional supervision. For example, in one instance, identical definitions have been offered for the activities of clinical supervision and professional supervision to the extent that Rose and Best (2005) assert that "Professional supervision is another term used to denote the functions of clinical supervision" (p. 6). Furthermore, these authors use both terms in tandem to describe the roles of the clinical supervisor (professional supervisor) and conjecture that the term professional supervision is used by many health professionals to minimise confusion with the clinical education role associated with teaching. Professional supervision, then, according to Rose and Best, "occurs between a more knowledgeable and experienced practitioner and a less knowledgeable and experienced practitioner and does not involve the assessment and ensuring functions contained in clinical education or managerial or workplace line supervision" (p. 6).

Smith (2005) also draws a clear distinction between supervision that is 'non-managerial' and assigns the terms 'consultant or professional supervision' to this notion. Implicit in this notion is the separation of the manager's function in terms of supervision in the interest of the organisation and the consultant's function in terms of the personal development and support of the individual. A contrasting view is that posed by Kadushin (1992) who argues that management supervision involves all categories of supervision: administrative, educational and supportive. Or, as Cooper (2006) asserts, "Implicit in Kadushin's model is that one person – the supervisor – undertakes the multiple administrative, educational and supportive roles simultaneously" (p. 22).

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In one case, professional supervision is referred to as synonymous with practice review (Waikato District Health Board, 2007). The process is defined as follows:

> Professional supervision or practice review is a formal process of professional support and learning that enables the supervisee to develop knowledge and competence, assume responsibility for his/her own practice and enhance safe practice in the assessment and treatment of service users. Professional supervision or practice review is central to the process of learning the expansion of practice skills, and is a means of encouraging self-assessment and the exercise of analytic and reflective skills. (p. 6 of 8)

Contrary to views that would separate the functions of supervision, this meaning for professional supervision is directly connected to the management of performance by the expectation that the professional supervisor will furnish reports that will be shared with the manager. Here the expectation is that the manager and supervisor jointly achieve supervision that is administrative, educative and supportive. The inclusion of an external supervisor/consultant is a common feature in supervision within the health and human services.

Smith (2005) provides a historical perspective on the growth of consultant supervision coinciding with the substantial growth of the counselling profession around the 1950's. He suggests that the notion of supervision in counselling could be the cause of a slippage from the notion and terminology of supervision into that of therapy which he describes as 'working with'. So, for counselling professionals at least, the notion of professional supervision takes on a connotation that is more akin to counselling itself. However, Smith draws a clear distinction between supervision that has a 'work focus' and supervision that has a 'well-being focus' and states:

> …where our primary concern is no longer the work, but the well-being of the supervisee, this is a different situation. When the worker becomes the primary focus (rather than the work), I think there is a significant shift – we move into the realm of counselling or 'working with' proper. We should not make the mistake of describing this as supervision. (Smith, 2005, p. 7)

The question then arises as to how supportive (restorative) supervision should then be described. Is it, as Smith proposes, actually a form of counselling when the worker rather than the work itself is the focus? In the literature there are other terms such as mentoring and

coaching for example, that also have strongly supportive connotations. Within the broader concepts of clinical and professional supervision, mentoring is an aspect that is now widely accepted as being beneficial to all involved (Okereke & Naim, 2001).

Mentoring and Coaching

Like clinical and professional supervision, mentoring has many connotations but there is some agreement that it is less formal than supervision, almost always confidential and initiated by the individual although arrangements for it may be made by the organisation (Clark, et al., 2006; Freeman, 1997; Rose & Best, 2005). Okereke and Naim (2001) cite a classic study by Roche (1979) which reported that 75% of the top 1250 executives in the United States revealed that they had been mentored. Their study of the mentoring experiences of middle grade doctors confirms the need for mentoring programmes to be formalised and for mentors to be trained.

The use of the term 'mentoring' is now common in relation to activity that provides advice and guidance to novice teachers. It is interesting to note that the term 'supervision' (meaning the over-viewing and development of professional practice skills) which dominated the literature in the 1980s (see for example, Acheson & Gall, 1987) has now given way to mentoring (Cameron, 2007). Moir and Bloom (2003) talk about mentoring in the following way, which mirrors to a large extent what supervisors of teaching novices were expected to do.

> Mentors work with individual novices for one or two hours every week and offer a seminar to their group of approximately 15 novices once a month. Mentors observe instruction, provide feedback, demonstrate teaching methods, assist with lesson plans, and help analyse student work and achievement data. This intensive support is possible only because participating school districts release veteran teachers to serve as full-time mentors for two or three years each. (p.58)

Mentoring programmes for beginning teachers are well recorded (see for example, Carter & Francis, 2001; Darling-Hammond, 2003; Feiman-Nemsen & Parker, 2002). Mentoring is also proposed as an essential rather than optional form of professional development for principals. Daresh (2004) asserts that:

> No longer has support for principals been described as a mere frill. Rather, assisting leaders is now viewed as an important part of ensuring that schools can be made more effective. A strategy frequently proposed for supporting principals and other

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educational leaders has been the initiation of mentoring and peer coaching programs (p. 495).

It must be noted, however, that although the possibility of mentoring is extended to principals at all stages of their career, Daresh's review of literature highlights the value of mentoring a way to socialise new principals to the leadership role, "a way to guide individuals in their assumption of new roles, new job identities, and organizational expectations (socialization) (2004, p. 497). Whilst asserting that mentoring could provide valuable developmental experience for veteran principals, Daresh confirms that all of the mandated administrator mentoring programmes he researched were aimed at beginning principals.

Coaching and other forms of support have also been searched for in the literature. For example, the Australian Education Union of Victoria offers a programme of 'professional support' for principals within which is an option of individualised support, one element of which is provision of a critical friend to support the leadership team. This type of support is also referred to as coaching in some literature. For example, Bloom, et al., (2003) suggest that in addition to mentors, "novice (and perhaps all) principals need an external coach as a source of confidential and expert support around the wide-ranging, problematic and often deeply personal issues that they must deal with from their first days on the job" (p. 3). These authors caution, however, that coaching should not be confused with therapy. In their view, "Coaching focuses upon goal accomplishment, while therapy deals with psychological function, personal history and the resolution of pathology" (p. 5).

An extremely helpful definition of coaching is provided by Bloom, Castagna, Moir and Warren (2005). This clarifies the particular nature of support provided in such relationships which are a) confidential and nurturing, and b) outside the formal management structures of the organisation. These authors say that coaching,

> …provides continuing support that is safe and confidential and has as its goal the nurturing of significant personal, professional and institutional growth through a process that unfolds over time. A coach brings an outside perspective and has no stake in the status quo in an organisation. (p. 10).

This definition of coaching is resonant of some of the principles associated with supportive supervision in that its focus is nurturing / wellbeing; its subject is primarily the worker and their safety; and it is not done with management intent. As Mertz (2004) points out, however, there is no agreement in the literature about definitions of mentoring, coaching or counselling.

Brockbank and McGill (2006) indicate that even within the terms 'mentoring' and 'coaching' there are a variety of foci and purposes. These authors refer to different kinds of mentoring and coaching such as functionalist, engagement and evolutionary mentoring and coaching, and further different types of coaching such as executive and life coaching. So it is not safe to say that the purposes of mentoring and coaching are predominantly related to support for the individual, because there are forms of mentoring and coaching that are contracted by an organisation to meet organisational purposes such as monitoring and improving performance.

Issues in Supervision

Arrangements for Supervision

Whilst some form of supervision of (clinical) practice by experienced practitioners is an expectation in the professions, initially in relation to learning the knowledge and skills of the profession and, later when practising these skills, there are differences in the arrangements for clinical/professional supervision within each profession and at different career stages within these professions.

Educational supervision or what is also known as clinical education is provided through the supervision of practice (practicum and internship supervision) whilst the professional is in training. This is highly structured supervision that is carried out by clinical educators located in universities (Rose & Best, 2005). For those new to the profession, arrangements for clinical/professional supervision of credentialed professionals are often related to a probationary pre-registration process. In the teaching profession, satisfactory teacher dimensions establish criteria to be met and the supervisory process contributes evidence for assessment against these criteria (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2006). For registered practitioners in most professions there is an expectation of on-going formal professional supervision (Waikato District Health Board, 2005) provided by external supervisors, by external consultants in liaison with line mangers or provided internally within the context of staff appraisal.

In many professions, clinical or professional supervision is a requirement. This is now the case in relation to clinical psychologists, occupational therapists and social workers in New Zealand (Cooper, 2006). The arrangements made for professional supervision differ in terms of being either privately arranged between two individuals and thus not structurally embedded in the management of performance by a line manager or arranged by the organisation. In some of the health related services, the organisation or agency pays for the professional supervision with the expectation that this practice will be of both personal and professional benefit (Smith, 2005). In many organisational arrangements, it is normally the line manager

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who makes supervision arrangements for the supervisee and some form of reporting by the supervisor to the line manager is an expectation. Hence, this arrangement is viewed as triadic – the organisation (management); the external professional supervisor or mentor; and the supervisee or mentee forming a triangle to achieve effective supervision practice (Morrell, 2001). In other cases, the supervisor *is* the line manager who is concerned with on-the-job performance (Cooper, 2006). Clark et al., (2006) comment on the confusion that arises when the term mentoring is used alongside the expectation that there will be some form of reporting back to management as this contradicts the ethic of confidentiality in such arrangements.

In the health services the clinical/professional supervisor is usually someone external to the organisation or agency (Waikato District Health Board, 2005) although they may also be 'in-house' professionals (Rose & Best, 2005). In the teaching profession most supervising/tutor teachers are drawn from within schools or early childhood centres although in some cases they may be external to the educational institution (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2006). External supervision has become increasingly accepted in social work with the intent of countering the impact of occupational stress and burnout. In this context the difficulty that arises when trying to reconcile the confidential relationship between an external supervisor and the organisation's need for information about an individual's performance (Morrell, 2001).

Individual and Group Supervision
Wheeler & King (2000) allude to the history of supervision for counsellors and therapists dating back to Freud's informal group meetings for discussing and reviewing analytic work in the early days of psychoanalysis. Hence, in the psychotherapy specialism of the health services, supervision is an embedded adjunct to practice and group supervision is as common as one-on-one individual supervision. Group supervision is a also a feature of supervision by and with peers in the context of the supervision of nursing managers (Hyrkas, et al., 2005). It is generally assumed, that unless otherwise specified, professional supervision and mentoring activity is more commonly individual, especially where confidentiality is an underpinning value (Morell, 2001; Smith, 2005).

Frequency of Supervision
The time allocated for clinical or professional supervision is very varied in the different professions. At the high end of the continuum, counsellors dealing with sexual violence trauma reported spending from 0-2 hours per week in individual supervision and from 0-1.5 hours per week in group supervision (Sommer & Cox, 2005). The Australian Psychological Society's standards for school psychologists recommend that probationary psychologists receive at least one hour per week of supervision. Yet a study of school psychologists practice (Thielking, Moore, & Jimerson, 2006) reveals that experienced school psychologists

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did not continue that practice consistently and participation in supervision ranged from not at all (50 percent approximately) to weekly group and individual supervision (again approximately 50 percent of those participating). Common to several schemes in the health services was an arrangement for the practitioner to receive at least one hour of supervision per month (Hyrkas, et al., 2005; Waikato District Health Board, 2005). Doctors who participated in a study of mentoring practice averaged three two hour meetings per year (Freeman, 1997).

Payment Arrangements

A theme in the literature relates to 'who pays' for clinical or professional supervision or mentoring. Rose & Best (2005) assert that changing contexts and pressures of practice in the health services are responsible for a renewal of interest in supervision, especially when it is seen to counter rising attrition rates. In these professions, practitioners are actively seeking professional supervision opportunities for which they are willing to pay personally if the organisation or agency is not. In arrangements where the agency or organisation is prepared to pay for supervision, one view is that it "makes sense for external supervisor's input to be valued as contributing to overall assessment and goal setting for workers. Combining the review meetings […] in some way with performance appraisal can be extremely useful for supervisees" (Morrell, 2001). However, this issue still remains hotly debated in the literature.

Arrangements for Mentoring and Coaching

Most studies about mentoring and coaching within the context of educational leadership focus on formal programmes with an emphasis on mentoring partnerships being set up to assist the induction of beginning principals (Daresh, 2004). These partnerships are mostly arranged for the mentee by programme organisers. A recent study of a coaching programme for experienced Australian principals in Victoria, which was established to support the implementation of a school improvement initiative (O"Mahony & Barnett, 2008), provides insights into some of the advantages and disadvantages of an arranged coaching partnership. These coaching relationships were set up between trained coaches and principals who opted to join the programme. Matching of mentee and mentor was pre-arranged although principals were able to make changes in some cases. Whilst the study concludes that the principals can benefit from coaching, it also cautions that programme organisers need to be attentive to recruiting and selecting qualified coaches who need to be trained and the programme needs to be constantly monitored and adjusted.

Brockbank and McGill (2006) writing from a generic perspective remind us that, "For true classical mentoring, the relationship happens organically as mentors 'take a shine' to a junior

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colleague' (p. 257). Overall, these authors suggest that both mentor and mentee should have a say about their match and hence need to be able to select from a pool. In relation to arrangement for assigning coaches, these authors refer to the guidelines provided from the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (www.cipd.co.uk). These guidelines specify what a client would look for regarding the capability of an external coach.

- coaching experience;
- relevant business experience;
- references;
- background;
- supervision;
- breadth of tools and techniques;
- understanding of boundaries;
- relevant qualifications and training;
- membership of professional bodies;
- professional indemnity insurance. (Brockbank and McGill, 2006, p. 258)

In addition, Brockbank and McGill assert the necessity for a mentoring or coaching contract to be drawn up as part of any formal arrangement.

For a practitioner, going in search of a mentor or coach and the arranging of such a partnership is no easy matter, especially when there is a constant theme in the literature that suggests the need for supervisors, mentors and coaches to be well qualified and trained.

Supervisor / Mentor Expertise and Training

One of the barriers to effective professional supervision is the capability of the supervisor or mentor. In relation to traditional clinical supervision practices, especially those related to the clinical supervision of counselling professionals, (Bernard & Goodyear, 1998) stringent training and adherence to standards of practice are expected and counselling supervisors are themselves supervised. Several research studies indicate that supervisors and mentors are not satisfied with their own preparation and training (Thielking, et al., 2006). These authors comment on recent studies of supervision practice in the Queensland school psychology services where those who delivered supervision indicated they were too often expected to deal with 'multi-specialist' issues beyond their brief and felt inadequately trained and/or supervised themselves. This question of whether the supervisors need supervision is raised in a study by Wheeler & King (2000). This was in regard to the counselling profession which has rigorous standards for the accreditation of supervisors. Overall the results supported the view that the supervision of supervisors was an important activity and represents a first step

towards the evaluation of the practice of supervision of supervision. It raises further questions in relation to other professions that are embracing supervision as an activity that demonstrates responsible self-monitoring that will foster public trust (Wheeler & King, 2000).

Concerns about training and preparation for the role also apply in relation to the research on mentoring programmes (Daresh, 2004; Okereke & Naim, 2001). This raises important concerns about the skills, experience and qualifications of people who are appointed to or assigned roles as supervisors and mentors, especially when such terms are now used interchangeably (Clark, et al., 2006). In relation to the mentoring of principals, not all mentoring experiences are positive for mentees and this may have something to do with informal mentors who may not possess the tools and skills that it takes to provide effective support (Bloom, Castagna, & Warren, 2003).

Professions that value professional supervision have created a demand for specialist qualifications such as the Postgraduate Diploma in Professional Supervision offered by the University of Auckland. This qualification is advertised as an opportunity for practitioners from a broad range of health and allied health services, social work, counselling and human services to develop clinical and professional supervision skills. This review of literature has not revealed a qualification in supervision that is tailored for educational professionals.

Establishing Need for Supervision and Mentoring

The literature identifies a particular need for supervision sensitive to the extreme crisis and trauma needs of professionals such as mental health workers who are themselves engaged in trauma counselling and therefore need supervision to engage in self-care and cope with the demands of their work (Sommer & Cox, 2005). It also confirms that in most professions (medicine, nursing, counselling, social work, teaching, and psychology, for example) some form of supervision is a requirement. Similarly, with a focus on alleviating the impact of work pressure, the practice of professional supervision or practice review is deemed by the Waikato District Health board to be "instrumental in the reduction of burnout, staff turnover and sick leave" (p. 1 of 6).

In the legal profession, standards of professional responsibility point to a specific rule that delineates the 'duty to supervise' expected of a partner or supervisory lawyer (Reiland, 2001) in relation to newly qualified practitioners. Most of the literature focuses on supervision of trainees and supervision of experienced practitioners. There is a very small literature based around nursing practice in Findland that identifies the need for specialised forms of leader, administrator and manager supervision (Hyrkäs, et al., 2005; Sirola-Karvinen & Hyrkäs,

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2006). Demands of the job and associated stress were identified by nursing managers as reasons for developing a form of clinical supervision called 'administrative clinical supervision' that would support and develop leadership (Hyrkäs, et al., 2005).

Professional Supervision of Principals

Supervision located within a framework of the appraisal of performance, is considered to be similar to what is termed administrative supervision (Kadushin, 1992) or managerial supervision (Yegdich, 1999). This aspect of supervision is well documented in relation to the appraisal of school leader's performance although in the early years of this decade the term 'supervision' itself, although implied, has virtually disappeared from the literature. When supervision is construed as one of the central functions of the appraisal of principals, there is a considerable literature that deals with the appraisal of principals and the purpose of supervision or the monitoring of performance within this context. For example, the Mississippi Principal Appraisal System (2003) alludes to the evaluation of principals against a set of standards with the key supervision tool being observation of management practice. In the New Zealand context, the appraisal of a principal is managed by the Board of Trustees who usually contract appropriate consultants to undertake data gathering and monitoring activity. These external observations provide evidence that enables them to supervise and support the principal's work for the purposes of both accountability and development (Cardno & Piggot-Irvine, 1997). In the United Kingdom, the performance management scheme for head teachers includes the involvement of an external advisor to the school's governing body. The role of these advisors, who were commonly retired school heads, was to "give support to the governors in their role of managing the head's performance" and to help "the head and governors to establish a common language for discussing performance management" (Crawford & Earley, 2004, p. 380). Whilst the primary role of the external advisor is their accountability to the governors in terms of providing them with support, they also put considerable emphasis on the support they provide for head teachers in the process of undertaking supervision on behalf of the school governing body.

There is, however, a distinct gap in the literature in relation to the use of the term 'professional supervision' in association with the development of leaders in educational settings – especially when the connotation of this term aligns with what Kadushin (1992) termed 'supportive supervision' – with a focus on the emotional well-being of the individual. The literature that does deal with support for principals slips beyond supervision into the realms of 'mentoring' and 'coaching'.

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Casavant and Cherkowski (2001) define a mentor (in the context of developing and supporting principals) as "a more experienced person who is in a position to lead, help and guide a less experienced person in his or her professional development" (p. 75). These authors are also critical of school districts "quickly buying into the practice without giving it much thought" (p. 77) because issues of establishing a clear focus, inadequate preparation and training of mentors, incompatibility between mentor and protégé and funding for sustainable formal programmes need attention at the outset. Nevertheless, mentoring partnerships according to several authors provide powerful learning opportunities and forge strong, supportive relationships (Casavant & Cherkowski, 2001; Crow & Matthews, 1998; Daresh, 2001, 2004).

These assertions about the benefits of mentoring appear to be consistent with what the literature says in relation to supervision that has a supportive aim in terms of focusing on the needs of the individual in stressful situations (Kadushin, 1992). The same claim can also be made for coaching when it is intended to provide support to enhance skills, resources and inherent creativity. Evolutionary life coaching, for example, allows clients to define their own goals and also offers possibilities for challenge and learning (Brockbank & McGill, 2006). Thus, it is possible to discern similarities between notions of mentoring, coaching, supportive supervision, and a definition of professional supervision proposed for New Zealand principals.

The Ministry of Education (2008, p. 3), for the purposes of a Request for Proposal for a research project on the topic of professional supervision for New Zealand principals, provides a working definition as follows:

> Professional supervision is a particular process of support that is used to help individuals review, reflect upon and resolve the issues or problems that they face in carrying out their work. It has a focus on pastoral care and emotional support of the individual, as well as on support for professional learning. It involves a trusting relationship with another person, or sometimes a small group. Confidentiality is central to the discussion associated with the support. Its outcomes are personal support, growth and on-the-job learning as a professional.

Nowhere in the literature we have sourced for review is there any reference to a notion of professional supervision that matches the intent expressed in the definition above. In the literature on the appraisal of the principal there is reference to the activities of review and reflection and a key responsibility of the Board of Trustees is to support the principal in his or her role (Cardno & Piggot-Irvine, 1997). However, the Ministry of Education definition moves

into the realms of emotional support that Kadushin (1992) identifies as the central feature of supportive (restorative) supervision. Furthermore, there is a close affiliation with values associated with mentoring, such as the establishment of a trusting relationship and the confidential nature of discussion (Rose & Best, 2005).

Need for Principal Support

In literature that examines issues of support for principals, there are several conditions that have been identified that give rise to the need for support. One is related to the decreasing pool of applicants for the principalship because potential applicants are deterred by the heavy workload and inadequacy of remuneration and support (Brooking, Collins, Court, & O'Neill, 2003; Pont, Nusche & Moorman, 2008). A second condition is the reality of principals experiencing increased workloads as a result of decentralisation of decision-making and accountability to the local level. Claims regarding their suffering overburdened roles and inadequate support are cited by many authors as trends that have contributed to principals experiencing work-related stress (Pont, Nusche & Moorman, 2008; Rodriguez & Hovde, 2002). A third condition, and one that predates the waves of school self-management reforms that swept many countries in the late 1980s, is the very nature of the job. Galloway. Panckhurst, Boswell, Boswell and Green (1986) for example, identified stressors in the work lives of New Zealand primary school principals that centred on factors of time management, administrative tasks and interpersonal relationships.

A study of stress among New Zealand principals in state and state-integrated schools (Hogden & Wylie, 2005) concluded that, "Notwithstanding long hours and stress from their role, the majority of principals do get great satisfaction form their work" (p. v). Whilst the survey sample was over-representative of primary principals and under-representative of secondary and kura kaupapa Maori principals, the main stressors identified were role-related pressures that were felt most keenly by principals in small or rural schools. The study also identified the key contributing factors to principals' wellbeing as achieving workload balance, accessing support from education sector organisations and government agencies and participation in principal networks. Whilst pointing to a need to support principals by reducing workload (Hogden & Wylie, 2005) and creating support systems by buying in administrative support (Rodriguez & Hovde, 2002) nothing in the literature indicates that practitioners or researchers have identified a particular form of 'professional supervision' as defined above by the New Zealand Ministry of Education as a way of supporting principals who are stressed. Both of the studies cited above do however refer to the value that principals place on both formal and informal networking with other principals, professional development providers and professional and government agencies as an important form of support.

In considering appropriate forms of support for principals it is important to factor in the expressive/emotional concerns that Kadushin (1992) draws attention to as needs that are served by 'supportive supervision'. These emotional needs are linked to forms of supervision that attend to burnout possibilities related to both physical and cognitive stress. The study of

principal stress and wellbeing in New Zealand (Hogden and Wylie, 2005) identifies feelings of tiredness, tension, frustration, anger, impatience and depression among principals. Ackerman and Maslin-Ostrowski (2002) in their book entitled: *The Wounded Leader*, acknowledge the critical role that emotion plays in the practice of leadership. These authors assert that all leaders get wounded and that, "A wounding experience, inextricably linked to the leader's role can serve as a painful reminder that the very role itself can put a person at odds with his own needs and identity" (p. 8). They also relate stories showing that in a leadership relationship the leader can be "overly influenced and defined by the desires of significant others" (p. 8). Dealing with the ambivalence that is created when one knows what is expected of one as a leader and feeling that there is a need to act out of the wishes of others can become a daily struggle. Ackerman and Maslin-Ostrowski warn that,

> If a leader goes too far in acting the leadership part, he may begin to lose himself in the process. That is the wound. It is a daily struggle to allow all sides of oneself to be acknowledged; to be whole is especially difficult during a crisis. (2002, p. 9)

Whilst wounding is viewed as an inevitable part of leadership, Ackerman and Maslin-Ostrowski (2002) suggest that the conditions captured in leaders' stories about being wounded are especially messy in schools where time and space are organised in such ways that a leader can be extremely isolated and "has virtually no time for reflection or talk with trusted colleagues about concerns and fears" (p. 11). In relation to healing wounds, these authors advocate the building of emotional intelligence skills. Telling the story to someone else is also suggested as a way forward. In the words of these authors "A story by itself is not a remedy for all that ails; nevertheless, story may represent the simplest and most elegant form of healing" (p.105). This is because:

> The simple, everyday act of telling a story can be a profound experience. When leaders share a story of crisis, they potentially gain insight into their leadership practice, enhanced self-awareness, empathy for other, and affirmation of self. If the storytelling and listening conditions are right, the experience can be powerful; there is promise of learning, growth, and healing. (p. 105)

The small literature that illuminates the very varied stance taken in relation to providing support for principals is actually not at all helpful in providing consistent definitions. In fact, what is revealed in this literature as well as the larger literature on clinical and professional supervision and mentoring is a further conflation of an existing confusion.

Ultimately, it can be concluded that the literature is not helpful in providing a universal definition of professional supervision. What it does provide is several similar and several contradictory definitions. It also suggests that the profession itself should establish its own definition of what it wants as and what it wants to achieve from a particular form of supervision, mentoring or coaching for a particular section of that profession.

Key Messages from the Literature

1. Supervision is about overseeing the work of a practitioner in a professional context. It may be carried out for administrative, educational or supportive purposes.

2. Clinical supervision is the term associated with the observation of professionals in training to improve practice. It may have both educational and/or administrative purposes. It is also associated with the notion of managing the performance of professionals at both the beginning and experienced stages of their careers.

3. Professional supervision is a term used variously. Some connotations associate with the management of performance – thus having an administrative purpose. Other connotations associate with a form of counselling thus having a supportive purpose.

4. Use of the term 'professional supervision' is problematic. The literature cautions that when the purpose of supervision is supportive (and akin to what is understood by counselling – that is a focus on the worker's welfare rather than the work performance per se) the term 'supervision' is not appropriate.

5. It is not possible to lift definitions and practice examples from one professional context to fit an educational leadership context. The profession needs to establish the nature and purpose of the supportive activity required and then decide on a term for the activity that is most appropriate for context.

6. Provided it is understood that mentoring and coaching (like supervision) can have many functions, some definitions of mentoring and coaching, as does the notion of supportive supervision, come close to matching the Ministry of Education working definition of professional supervision compiled for the purpose of this contract.

7. If the activity is to be in the nature of mentoring and coaching that is evolutionary and individually oriented rather than functionalist and organisationally oriented, then issues of mentor/coach selection need to be addressed with care.

8. Traditional forms of professional supervision for support are provided by consultants. The development of contracts is highly recommended as is the establishment of a pool of qualified consultants.

9. The quality and qualifications of supervisors, counsellors, mentors and coaches is attended to in other professions by establishing specialist qualifications and standards that guide practice with attention paid to the supervision of those who provide support.

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PART 4:   METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted using sound ethical principles of informed participant consent and has met all of the standards of The University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee.

Data collection for this study primarily involved a two-phase mixed method research design. A focus group interview phase was used to a) inform a questionnaire development phase and b) to provide rich qualitative data in its own right. In addition, three key informant interviews were employed to elicit specific specialist viewpoints. In research designs where the researchers "mix" the data, the nature of the integration of data determines the labelling of the design. This research design is aligned with what Cresswell (2003) calls the Sequential Exploratory Strategy (p. 215) in which "the primary focus of this model is to explore a phenomenon" and to do this in a phased sequence. The initial phase of qualitative data collection and analysis is followed by a phase of quantitative data collection and analysis. Whilst data is collected to accommodate both qualitative and quantitative analysis, the priority is given to the qualitative aspect of the study but the findings of both are integrated at the point of interpretation.

Focus Group Phase

The focus group phase drew upon a sample that was initially randomly selected from the Ministry of Education's national data base of New Zealand schools to represent primary and secondary principals in three different and diverse locations. On the Ministry's advice, the primary principals' random selection process included intermediate and composite school principals. In each location the primary principals' focus groups were held separately from the secondary principals' focus groups. This procedure was adopted to assist the identification of possible different experiences of and opinions about professional supervision by each of these two sectors. In Auckland, seven primary and four secondary school principals attended the focus group meetings. In the central west Waikato district, six primary and five secondary principals attended and in Christchurch, six primary and three secondary principals attended. Because randomly selected participants were very slow to respond to the electronic invitation to participate, a degree of "opportunity sampling" (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007, p. 113) also occurred as it was necessary to contact principals individually to increase the size of focus groups to a viable average of six participants per group.

Table 1: Focus Groups Primary and Secondary Principals: Personal Characteristics

Personal characteristics		Primary	Secondary
		n	*n*
Sex	Male	9	9
	Female	10	3
Ethnicity	NZ European	16	11
	Maori	1	-
	Samoan	1	-
	Other	1	1
Age	21 - 30 yrs		
	31 - 40 yrs	2	-
	41 - 50 yrs	11	5
	51 - 60 yrs	6	7
	61+ yrs		
Years of experience as a principal			
	1 - 5 yrs	4	7
	6 - 10 yrs	2	1
	11 - 15 yrs	3	2
	16 - 20 yrs	8	2
	21+ yrs	2	-

As shown in Table 1, the overall composition of the focus group sample (n=31) when broken down into primary (n=19) and secondary (n=12) groups revealed the following demographic profile. The primary principals included one Maori and one Samoan participant, nine participants were male and 10 were female. The secondary group included nine male and three female principals representing schools that mostly had low to mid decile groupings. One independent and one integrated school were also represented. Almost all of the focus group participants were over 40 years of age, with the majority of the primary principals aged between 41 and 50 years and the majority of the secondary principals aged between 51 and 60 years. Their years of experience as a principal ranged from less than five years to more than 21 years. The most numerous group of primary principals had between 16 and 20 years experience, while the most numerous group of secondary principals had less than five years experience.

As shown in Figure 1, almost all of the secondary principals had as their highest qualification either a Postgraduate Diploma or Master's degree while the majority of the primary principals had as their highest qualification either an Undergraduate Certificate or a Bachelor's degree.

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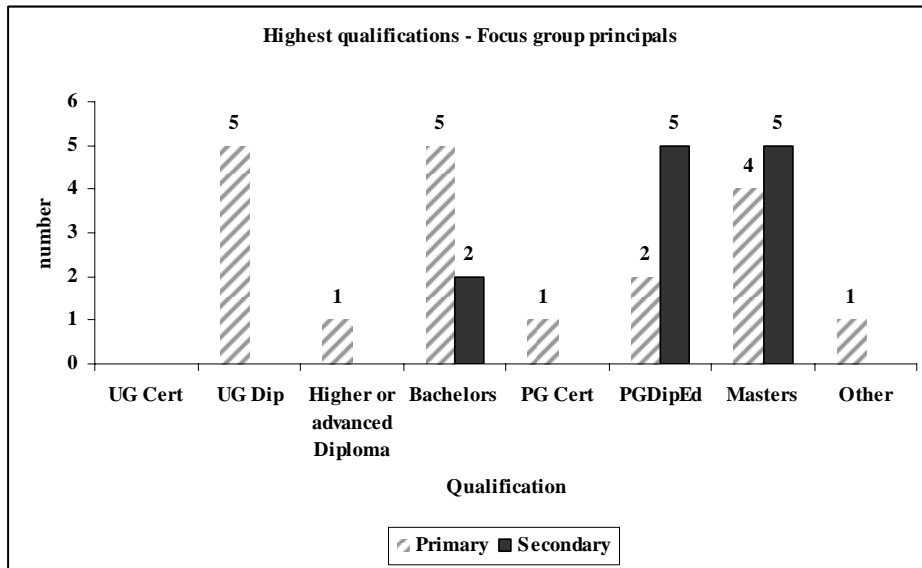
Figure 1: Highest qualifications of primary and secondary principals in the Focus Groups

As shown in Table 2, the principals in each of the sector focus groups came from the complete spectrum of decile groups of schools, with the majority in each sector representing schools in the one to three decile group. In the subsequent administration of the phase two questionnaire, these thirty-one focus group participants were screened out of the random sample selection.

Table 2: Number of primary and secondary principals in the Focus Groups by school decile

School Decile	Primary	Secondary
	n	*n*
1	3	1
2	2	4
3	2	1
4	1	1
5	2	1
6	3	1
7	-	1
8	1	1
9	-	1
10	4	-

At the time of the electronic invitation being sent, each invited Focus group participant received in addition to the covering invitational email an attached Participant Information Sheet explaining the research project and the focus group activity. As well, they received a Focus Group Consent Form to complete and confirm their consent to participate and which they were asked to bring to their focus group. The invited participants were informed in the Participant Information Sheet that they could contact the Principal Investigator for additional information if they wished and contact details were provided.

All six focus group interviews were held between 23rd and 26th June 2008, mostly due to the pending end of term two in schools and the time constraint of the project. On their arrival each group participant was requested to complete a brief demographic survey, their completed consent forms were collected, the facilitator outlined how the discussion would be conducted, and explained the roles of the facilitator and the recorder. All focus groups were asked the same questions by the same facilitator and at the start of the activity a copy of the questions was distributed to each participant for their reference during the discussion. The questions were grouped into three broad categories: the meaning of professional supervision; the principals' experiences of professional supervision; the principals' wants and needs in relation to professional supervision. The facilitator ensured that each person had an opportunity to respond to each question if they wished and checked for clarification if a response seemed unclear or required further discussion for understanding.

In each setting the focus group interviews involved participants in approximately one and a half hours of structured discussion in which both the voices (in the form of digital audiotape) and the summary of discussion (in the form of electronic white board notes by the recorder) were recorded. Analysis of the data was undertaken in two stages. The initial analysis involved the identification of key issues that emerged from the focus groups discussions. These issues were then compared with the scope of the questions in a draft questionnaire in order to refine the latter and to ensure it included the critical areas about professional supervision for principals that had emerged during the focus group discussions. This checking process informed the questionnaire development phase of the research and contributed to the quality of the questionnaire. Prior to a second stage of analysis of the focus groups responses, all recorded focus group interviews were transcribed to provide links from summary notes to rich verbatim data making it possible to triangulate these findings with the results of the questionnaire (Bryman, 2004).

Questionnaire Phase

The questionnaire was developed as an electronic survey instrument to examine the phenomenon of 'professional supervision' (in a framework that allowed us to meet the aims of this research) from the perspective of a representative sample of primary and secondary school principals in all New Zealand schools (N=2585). A 15% random sample of the total schools population was selected (n=387) using a national database provided by the Ministry of Education that allowed selection of a 15% sample of primary principals and a 15% sample of secondary principals.

Tools available on SurveyMonkey.com were employed to create and electronically administer the survey instrument. The survey was conducted from 1st July to 23rd July 2008 (a longer than normal period because a school term break unavoidably occurred from 7th to 18th July). A major advantage of using a form of electronic survey is speed of response and SurveyMonkey.com provided as well a means of achieving anonymity for respondents: a critical ethical criterion of surveys conducted confidentially. A 30% response rate from the random sample was achieved, calculating the response rate of usable questionnaires (that is, those questionnaires that were completed rather than returned incomplete).

Each principal in the representative sample received in addition to the covering email inviting their participation an attached Participant Information Sheet explaining the research project and their participation, including an invitation to contact the Principal Investigator should they require additional information. As it was not practicable for them to complete and return a separate consent form, consent to participate was included for completion in the first section of the questionnaire if they agreed to participate. At the bottom of the covering email inviting their participation was a direct link to SurveyMonkey.com and the electronic questionnaire to complete. On their completion of the questionnaire the participant selected 'Send Now' which sent the completed questionnaire to the desktop computer of the researcher engaged in this project.

The electronic questionnaire (see Appendices) required approximately fifteen to twenty minutes to complete. It requested from the participant either their selecting a preferred response from a range of possible options in a question or recording comments in relation to some of their question responses. The questionnaire was structured into three sections: Section A Participant and School Information followed the consent to participate question and was designed to obtain key demographic data about the participant and their school; Section B Your Experience of Professional Supervision was designed to identify the characteristics of their actual experience(s) of professional supervision, as well as the reason(s) for it; Section

C Your Views about Professional Supervision focussed on their needs and wants, and the challenges for the provision of the professional supervision they had in mind.

Sample of questionnaire respondents

The respondent sample had the following key demographic characteristics (see Table 3). Of the total number of respondents (N=115), there were 85 primary principals, 26 secondary principals and 4 principals of Maori medium schools. On the Ministry of Education's advice, the primary principals category included integrated (n=8), area/composite (n=5), intermediate (n=5) and special (n=1) school principals.

The predominant age group of the respondents in the three sector groups was between 51 and 60 years of age, with the next predominant age group being between 41 and 50 years. All of the Maori medium school respondents were female, as were the majority of the primary principals (56%), while the majority of the secondary principals were male (79%). The years of principal experience in the three sector groups was predominantly less than 10 years for the Maori medium (100%) and secondary principals (71%), while the primary principals represented a more diverse clustering of years of principal experience. The highest qualification of the Maori medium respondents was a Bachelor's degree (50%), of the primary principals a Postgraduate Diploma or Master's degree (28%), and the secondary principals a Postgraduate Diploma or Master's degree (58%). While the primary and secondary principals represented all of the decile groups, and predominantly from the decile 4-7 group of schools (primary 46%, secondary 67%), all of the Maori medium principals were from decile 1-3 schools.

Table 3: Questionnaire respondents by school sector and personal characteristics

Personal characteristics		Primary		Secondary		Maori medium	
		n	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*
Ethnicity	Pakeha	80	94.12	23	95.83		
	Maori	3	3.53	1	4.17	3	75.00
	Pasifika	2	2.35	-	-	1	25.00
Age Bracket	31 - 40 yrs	4	4.71	1	4.17	-	-
	41 - 50 yrs	28	32.94	5	20.83	2	50.00
	51 - 60 yrs	44	51.76	17	70.83	2	50.00
	61+ yrs	9	10.59	1	4.167	-	-
Years of Experience	1 - 5	30	35.29	8	33.33	3	75.00

	6 - 10	12	14.12	9	37.50	1	25.00
	11 - 15	18	21.18	3	12.50	-	-
	16 - 20	8	9.41	2	8.33	-	-
	21+	17	20.00	2	8.33	-	-
Sex	Female	48	56.47	5	20.83	4	100.00
	Male	37	43.53	19	79.17	-	-
Qualification	UG Cert	2	2.35				
	DipTchg	14	16.47	1	4.17	1	25.00
	Higher or Advanced Diploma	9	10.59	1	4.17	1	25.00
	Bachelors	28	32.94	4	16.67	2	50.00
	GDipTchg	6	7.06	2	8.33		
	PGCert	2	2.35	1	4.17		
	PGDipEd	9	10.59	6	25.00		
	Masters	15	17.65	8	33.33		
Decile group	1 - 3.	23	27.06	6	25.00	4	100.00
	4 - 7.	39	45.88	16	66.67		
	8 - 10.	23	27.06	4	16.67		

Key Informant Interviews

Structured interviews were conducted with nominated representatives of the three organisations involved in the negotiation of the Secondary and Primary School Principals' Collective Agreements (2007 to 2010) pertinent to the English and Maori medium state primary and secondary school sectors. The three organisations were the New Zealand Educational Institute (NZEI) that represents primary principal members, the Post Primary Teachers Association (PPTA) that represents secondary principal members, and the New Zealand School Trustees Association (NZSTA) representing the employer and thereby its member school boards of trustees . The NZSTA and NZEI interviews were conducted in Wellington and the PPTA interview in Auckland between the 24th July and 4th August by the same interviewer who facilitated the focus group interviews. The purpose of these interviews was to obtain a specific and specialist perspective on the rationale that underpinned a reference to this research project in the respective Collective Agreements for primary and secondary principals.

Prior to each interview, the representative of each of the three organisations was sent a Participant Information Sheet (Industrial Relations Representative) which outlined the research project and the purpose of their involvement in it, as well as an invitation to contact the Principal Investigator for further information if required. A Consent Form was included for consideration and the completed form handed to the interview facilitator at the time of the

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interview. The questions for discussion at the interview were sent to each representative prior to the interview as some questions asked for quite specific information about the organisation and its current provision of professional supervision for principals, allowing time for the interviewee to gather information prior to the interview if they wished. At the opening of each interview the interviewer checked that the representative had received the prior information, collected the completed consent form, and explained the interview format and the role of the interviewer.   During the interview, which lasted for approximately forty-five minutes, the interviewer recorded the voice (in the form of a digital audiotape) and a brief summary of key responses (in the form of notes on a copy of the questionnaire).

The interview questions were grouped into four thematic sections: Section 1 What is Professional Supervision, with questions exploring its meaning, purposes, benefits and importance; Section 2 Current Provision of Professional Supervision for Principals by the Organisation, with questions exploring current provision, reasons, access, barriers, resources, evaluation of service delivery and organisational challenges; Section 3 Collective Agreement and Professional Supervision, with questions exploring why professional supervision is a current industrial issue and the background to this; Section 4 Wants and Needs, with questions exploring what the organisation is seeking for professional supervision for principals, its provision and anticipated challenges.

Limitations of an electronic questionnaire
The low response rate was affected by the following factors. First, the principals focus group interviews, when told about the next phase of the study, pointed out that a questionnaire even in an electronic format might not be well responded to in view of the many requests principals received to respond to such invitations. Second, while the SurveyMonkey.com tool met the anonymity requirement there was no record as to which of the 387 principals responded and this made follow-up with the non-responders difficult. Third, possible aggressive firewalls on the recipient's end prevented ease of access or other technical problems for some of them and which in turn meant a nil attempt at responding to the questionnaire. As well, the administration of an online survey has considerations which require brief user-friendly instructions and that may not be sufficient for some potential respondents; ease of survey construction and labelling of categories which limits the freedom of responses; efficient data collection and downloading; and ease of data filtering for purposes of analyses.

Other limitations to the response rate included the random selection of the sample meant the inclusion of principals from independent schools, some of whom replied to decline participation as they were not members of the principals' collective agreement. The Ministry's

data base of schools' email addresses were not all current, which meant that the delivery of emails to those schools were not followed through after several attempts by the mail systems administrator. Most school email addresses are not directly linked to the principal, which meant our invitation to participate went through one or two channels (the school office, then possibly redirected to the principal's Personal Assistant in larger schools) before the principal received the invitation.   During this procedure the 'high importance' indicated in the initial email might have been lost in transference. Some principals replied to indicate that they were only acting principals for a term and so did not wish to participate.

PART 5:   FINDINGS

The form of the data analysis design was to establish key themes as a way to categorise patterns or trends emerging from the completed data gathering and the literature review. The data gathered came from the responses to the participant questionnaire, the interviews conducted with the focus groups and the representatives of the three organisations involved in the negotiations of the collective agreements.   Five broad categories were found for displaying the findings and for structuring the detailed analysis of the data gathered. These five categories are: current professional supervision experiences of the principals; beliefs about professional supervision for principals and why it is needed; the current impact of professional supervision for principals; the quality of current professional supervision for principals; and the desired arrangements for the future provision of professional supervision for principals. Each of these five categories and the related findings from the research will now be explained.

Current professional supervision experiences

This category is about the current and recent experiences that principals have of professional supervision. To identify and understand these experiences, questions were asked about the professional supervision that is currently available for principals, where this supervision is found and who provides it, how accessible it is, their actual experiences of participating in professional supervision, who gets it and who does not, and pragmatic considerations such as who initiates this professional supervision, its cost and who pays. This category captures what is out there now for principals and how this is experienced by them from their point of view.

Initiating professional supervision

The majority of the principals in both their questionnaire responses (87.9%) and the focus group discussions confirmed that they self initiate their professional supervision experiences. Questionnaire respondents could select more than one item to respond to about initiating their supervision. Some selected their enrolment in the First-time Principals Programme (25.8%), which might have been self initiated or in response to receiving the programme's information. The other predominant initiating response is the board of trustees (19.7%). Qualitative data from the questionnaire responses and the focus groups provided examples of how an understanding board chair concerned for the principal's well-being encouraged the principal to receive professional supervision, and of how a principal confided in the board chair about feeling under extreme pressure and the board responded by encouraging and funding professional supervision.

Experience of professional supervision

The majority of the principals who participated in the focus groups (n=31) or responded to the questionnaire (n=115) had no experience of professional supervision in almost all of the types of professional supervision currently available for principals. For example, in the questionnaire ten types of professional supervision were given for the participants to respond to. As Table 4 shows, for each of these 10 types the majority of the questionnaire respondents selected 'none' for their experience, with the exception of the mentor or coach option where 50% selected 'none'. All of the other types of professional supervision attracted a 'none' rating of at least 61%, suggesting that approximately two thirds of New Zealand's school principals have no current or recent experience of professional supervision of any type, other than mentoring or coaching for some of them. The focus groups confirmed this situation, both the primary (n=19) and secondary (n=12) principals, with almost all of the focus group participants saying that they would have liked to experience professional supervision but for a variety of reasons were unable to. This inability to experience supervision will later be explained in the desired arrangements for the future provision of professional supervision category.

Table 4: Experiences of professional supervision (questionnaire respondents)

	None	Once	Twice	Thrice	Four times	More than 5 times	*n*
NZEI	92.00%	5.30%	1.30%	-	-	1.30%	75
PPTA	98.60%	-	1.40%	-	-	-	72
NZSTA	82.90%	3.90%	6.60%	-	3.90%	2.60%	76
Regional advisor/facilitator	65.00%	8.80%	12.50%	5.00%	3.80%	5.00%	80
Professional counsellor/ Psychotherapist	89.30%	1.30%	1.30%	2.70%	1.30%	4.00%	75
Self-facilitated small group	62.00%	5.10%	10.10%	5.10%	7.60%	10.10%	79
Externally facilitated small group	61.30%	8.80%	7.50%	7.50%	6.30%	8.80%	80

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Mentor or coach	50.00%	3.40%	10.20%	8.00%	10.20%	18.20%	88
Other Professional organisation	74.30%	5.40%	4.10%	2.70%	5.40%	8.10%	74
Other individual	68.40%	5.30%	10.50%	2.60%	1.30%	11.80%	76

The relatively high experience (50%) of mentoring or coaching appears to have been mostly influenced by participation in the First-time Principals Programme. In both the questionnaire and focus groups qualitative data, several mentions are made of this and especially the mentoring programme activities. Less frequently, there was also mention of the Principals Development Planning Centre (PDPC) and the role of its trained facilitators. Apart from the mentoring and coaching provision in these two national principal development programmes, other principals mentioned a variety of people who they regarded as mentors or coaches that provide professional supervision experiences for them. These included consultants, church elders and Te Runanganui o Aotearoa.

According to the focus groups, the hourly rate for a mentor or coach ranges from no cost to the principal/school (for a Ministry of Education provided programme or service), to $50 for a retired principal mentor/coach, to $200 for a professional expert. A similar cost seems to apply to external facilitators of small groups. Some schools are unable to afford any funding for their principal to access professional supervision of any type, some boards approve up to $1000 per year, and some large schools above that amount. Some consultants are priced above what most schools can afford, for example $500 per session for a mentor/coach was quoted by one principal.

Externally facilitated small groups and self facilitated small groups were the next most likely professional supervision experiences after mentoring or coaching, with approximately 38% of the questionnaire respondents having experience of these types of supervision. This experience rating was similar for both primary and secondary principals in their questionnaire responses. However, in the secondary principals focus groups the participants predominantly talked about their experiences in self facilitated small groups rather than in externally facilitated ones. The primary principals reported in their questionnaire responses a greater likelihood of meeting in these small groups more than twice, compared to the secondary principals who met less frequently in these groups.

The actual experiences of principals in these small groups varied considerably and were shared in the focus group discussions. The self facilitated small group examples included an all women primary principals' group, a group of former first-time principals who desired to continue networking, several groups that had initially met as a cluster to design and deliver a Ministry of Education project in the area and who wanted to continue a relationship, and groups of colleagues from neighbouring schools. These groups predominantly meet in their own time and at one of their schools, although some spoke of breakfast meetings, and group size is mostly between four and six principals. They tend to be informal meetings where they come together to share good practice on a wide range of matters and discuss issues of common interest. In these groups the common interests tend to be about day-to-day matters rather than the leadership of teaching and learning, and visiting each other's schools is an accepted practice. Outside of their group meetings the principals frequently contact each other by telephone and email to share problems and exchange information.

The facilitated small group experiences as described by the focus group participants tend to be more common in the primary sector than the secondary sector, more structured than the self facilitated groups, more focussed on leading teaching and learning, and with an emphasis on each participant bringing a current issue or dilemma to the group for sharing and making progress. The facilitator's fee is usually shared between the schools and tends to be in the vicinity of $1000 per year for the whole group for four to six sessions of two to three hours each. While the school mostly meets this cost, there are cases where the principal meets the cost because the school is unable to afford it. There is no fee for Ministry of Education provided programmes or services. Several of the principals who have participated in the First-time Principals Programme shared their positive experiences of participating in a mentor facilitated Professional Learning Group. The purpose of many of these small facilitated groups is explained by a primary principal:

We are a mixed gender group of U1 to U4 principals facilitated by a Leadership and Management Advisor; we look at current research and reflect on our own practice in relation to that research. We share current school and personal issues and offer collective solutions.

In addition to these groups being self formed by like-minded colleagues and usually facilitated by a consultant or former principal, some groups are initiated and facilitated by a Leadership and Management Advisor. In other cases the facilitator was identified through the recommendation of another colleague or found through the telephone directory or the web. Some of these groups meet monthly or once a term during school hours and with prior board approval, while others meet out of school hours. Several principals in the focus group

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interviews expressed their desire for more frequent facilitated group meetings but they saw time and cost as the main factors preventing this, and especially if travel from a small or isolated town was involved. Due to the nature of what can be discussed and shared in the small facilitated groups, issues of group composition are important in the experience of some principals and as explained by a primary principal:

I found that working with a group of people that you didn't know and weren't within your community or area, you were taking yourself away from sort of similar types of principals and moving to somewhere you are gaining a lot of knowledge and information that I couldn't have really got from local people.

The next most likely types of experiences by the questionnaire respondents were with a regional advisor/facilitator (35%) or another individual (21.6%), with similar ratings of experience by both primary and secondary principals. The frequency of experiences with a regional advisor/facilitator was similar as well, mostly between one and three experiences. Some principals in the focus groups expressed their frustration about the service of their regional advisors/facilitators. The quality of service depends on the individual advisor and this varied widely in their view, and it is not uncommon to be informed that no advisor can help as they may be fully booked for several weeks ahead. On the other hand, there were positive opinions expressed about advisors/facilitators in some of the regions where they are accessible, provide high quality support and are excellent group facilitators. Rural advisors were as well mentioned for their positive supervision, especially as a mentor/coach.

The primary principals reported a greater frequency of professional supervision experiences with another individual than did the secondary principals. As reported in the focus groups, these other individuals are mostly to be either a principal colleague or a retired principal. The purpose and arrangements for these experiences varied widely, ranging from having a deliberate professional focus to just having a trusted colleague to talk with. For example:

I meet a friend who's a secondary school principal once a month and over breakfast. We don't have a set agenda but most of it's around the area of personnel and how to approach them. So we spend breakfast talking about the best way.
And:
I'm set up with another local principal with the PDPC to meet once a month looking at readings and what it actually means to us as leadership. Although it's not really supervision we find that we are challenging each other through that role of a critical friend that we've developed.

A very small number of principals reported having a professional supervision experience with a professional counsellor or psychotherapist and the frequency of contact varied widely. In the focus groups this type of supervision raised several interesting comments about whether it was desirable or not for principals. A secondary principal who has professional supervision from such a person explained:

I was looking for someone quite, quite different and then I did some asking around and I came across a woman in a counselling role where I thought she might be able to help me with some of the staffing issues that I found weren't ones that I wanted to talk about or couldn't talk about with my senior management team because often it was other senior managers that I was talking about and I didn't think it was appropriate to deal with it like that. And so I ended up having a couple of sessions to see if I was going to feel comfortable to be working things through and being honest and open with a person like that, and it was.

In the focus groups some of the principals expressed how they had been unable to find another individual within the profession to talk with about their pressing school issues and so they relied on their partner as a trusted confidante. Examples of this need to share problematic work experiences with their partner because there seemed to be nobody else to talk to came from both primary and secondary principals. A secondary principal said:

For me my professional supervisor is my wife I guess. She bears the brunt of a lot of what I'm experiencing at the time, and that's unfair but it's just how it is at the moment.

A questionnaire finding was that both the primary and the secondary principals had in their view received very little professional supervision from the three organisations (NZEI, PPTA and NZSTA) included in this research project. Of the types of professional supervision experienced, these organisations were the least experienced (with the exception of a professional counsellor or psychotherapist) by the principals. The NZSTA response rate is higher in comparison to the other two organisations possibly because the principal is a board member and may have contacted NZSTA in that capacity and on behalf of the board, rather than for a professional supervision purpose. Overall, it appears that principals do not currently regard these three organisations as providers of their professional supervision. This point was substantiated in the focus groups where several principals commented that they saw these organisations as sources of helpful information rather than as providers of principals' professional supervision.

This perception by the principals that the three organisations do not currently have a significant role in their professional supervision was confirmed in the interviews with the nominated representatives of those organisations. They each said that the service their organisation provides to principals is not currently designed for the delivery of professional supervision and is for a broad range of assistance and support. For example, the NZSTA provides a Help Desk and Industrial Advisors as a free service to its members, it is widely used by principals and the focus groups spoke highly of this service. NZEI provides a low level support service for its principals via members of the national executive who are principals themselves and who can be contacted for advice and advocacy. This is a voluntary service and is not designed to support a principal through a long term situation. Its Field Officers offer support as well but again not in a long term situation or professional supervision relationship. Similarly, PPTA does not currently provide professional supervision services for principals, other than its members may contact Principals Council members for advice and support. Its Field Officers are available to support principals and mostly on board relationship issues. There is ambiguity for PPTA when there is a dispute between a principal and a staff member in a school and they are both PPTA members. Although there are procedures to manage this situation, some secondary principals in the focus group discussions voiced their opinion that PPTA supports teachers rather than principals in such disputes.

Beliefs about professional supervision and why it is needed

The term 'professional supervision' is a broad and elusive concept for most principals. While there was not an opportunity in the participant questionnaire to discuss the meaning of the term as an electronic survey instrument is unsuited to this, there was an opportunity in the focus group discussions. There is a great deal of confusion about its meaning, debate about whether it is an appropriate term, agreement and disagreement with the Ministry of Education's working definition of the term, how and if it is different to professional development and appraisal, and what its core purpose is. What now follows is a drawing together of the themes of these beliefs held by the principals about professional supervision and why or if it is needed.

What professional supervision means

All informants who participated in the data gathering were provided in their Participant Information Sheet with the Ministry of Education's working definition of professional supervision for principals for this research project, which is:

Professional supervision is a particular process of support that is used to help individuals review, reflect upon and resolve the issues and problems that they face in carrying out their work. It has a focus on pastoral care and emotional support of the individual, as well as on professional learning. It involves a trusting relationship with another person, or sometimes a small group. Confidentiality is central to the discussion associated with the support. Its outcomes are personal support, growth and on-the-job learning as a professional.

In the survey questionnaire the definition was restated on the front page and respondents were asked to have it in mind when they responded to each question. In the focus group and nominated representatives of the three organisations interviews the participants were invited in the early stage of the interview to give their views about what professional supervision meant to them. In the focus groups a particularly wide range of beliefs emerged and were discussed between the participants. A similar array and pattern of beliefs arose in both the primary and secondary principal groups and there were no major differences between the two sectors. The differences were located at an individual level rather than a school sector level, as well as some differences between what the principals in the focus groups thought and at least one of the industrial representatives.

Some of the principals were comfortable with and supported the Ministry's working definition, others were not. Those who supported it spoke of their particular appreciation of the Ministry recognising that the health, safety, well-being and personal/pastoral care of principals is

fundamental to their effectiveness. One principal spoke of feeling "easier" on reading the definition after an initial disquiet about what it could mean. Several principals said that it must be a confidential relationship with another person and spoke of the importance of having a trusted person to share difficult issues with. They believed that the Ministry's definition is consistent with these 'must be' qualities of supervision. Those principals who disliked the Ministry's definition found the reference to pastoral care "patronizing" and even "intrusive", they were suspicious of possible "hidden agendas", "more accountability", and they found the long definition difficult to grasp. As two secondary principals stated:

The whole concept of supervision is really a very elusive kind of concept. I don't think I like the Ministry's working definition. There's something that's a little bit patronizing in there. I can't put my finger on what it is and that's why I think the whole thing is such an elusive issue.
And:
I find it patronizing about a mandated or a written process which talks about pastoral care that's something that would be a requirement or an expectation. I think that's personal, that's my business and it's not something I want going into my contract. I find it patronizing.

Whether they liked or disliked the Ministry's working definition, many principals questioned the appropriateness of the term 'professional supervision'. They expressed their concern that the term had negative connotations of being supervised by another person, of being "checked-up on", "having an overseer", "big brother is watching" or even having someone "like a prison guard". Many of them found the term at odds with what the Ministry had written in its working definition, which seems to be more about professional collegiality and support. A primary principal was concerned about the community's reaction and likely misunderstanding of the need for the principal to be "supervised". Alternative suggested terminology was "professional support" or "leadership mentoring", there was however no consensus about this.

Purpose and qualities of professional supervision
There were multiple beliefs that the principals held about the purpose and qualities of professional supervision. There was general confusion expressed in the focus groups as to whether it is similar or different to professional development or professional learning, and they found the inclusion of professional learning in the Ministry's working definition confusing. They wondered how professional learning is or is not different to professional supervision.

Beyond this confusion about terminology, there was widespread consensus by both the primary and secondary principals in the focus groups that its primary purposes includes having a person or a group to "bounce ideas off" (this expression was frequently used), to

"challenge your thinking" about an issue, helping you to "work through tough issues", to provide "feedback on ways you are either intending to act or actions you have already taken", identifying and "exploring options to help you make the right decisions", providing you with "a reality check", and holding "professional conversations to help clarify your thinking". It is interesting, even surprising, that very few principals specifically mentioned pastoral care or emotional support as being a purpose of their professional supervision. A secondary principal captured well what many principals believe the purpose of professional supervision is:

When things that I feel are not progressing, to whether I'm not asking the right questions or challenging people in the right way in doing those sorts of things (to improve what's happening in the classroom*), or I've seen no movement and I question that, then I think take those issues to my supervisor to get feedback on.*

By way of contrast to these views held by many principals, two of the nominated representatives of the three organisations interviewed emphasised that professional supervision is of prime importance to principals experiencing traumatic and serious situations. Their related concern is for the health and safety of these principals and the current lack of adequate support for them. Professional supervision is in their view about both the personal and the professional life of the principal. As well, there is an emphasis by them on principalship being a lonely and isolated job and which results in too many principals "bottling up" their difficult issues. Principals therefore need a trusted other person to talk with to reduce their experiences of loneliness and isolation, and currently the best person to do this is another principal as they understand these experiences most. However, the other nominated representative emphasised that the primary purpose of professional supervision for principals is to ensure that the board and principal are in unison about their relationship and the goals of the school, and that the principal may require professional supervision to achieve the school's educational targets.
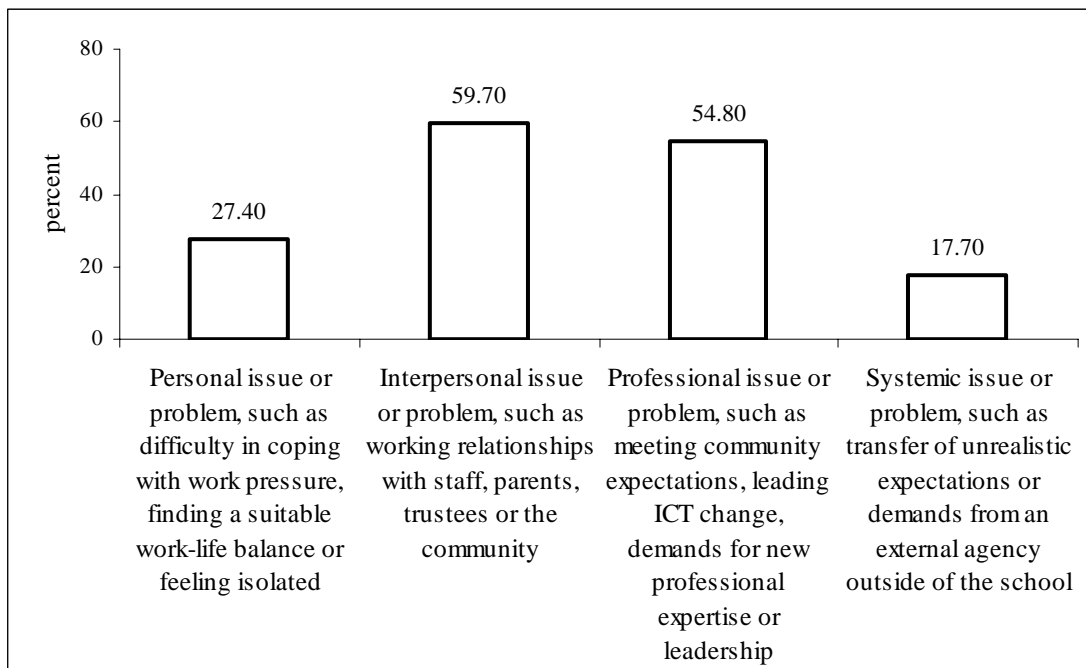
Types of issues or problems causing a need for professional supervision

The type of problem or issue which created a current need for professional supervision in the past twelve months, if there was an experience of supervision, was asked in the survey questionnaire as well as in the focus group interviews. The questionnaire respondents could select more than one of the four types of problems or issues given as they might have experienced more than one type. For each type examples were given to mitigate the possibility of respondents misunderstanding the type meant. The results of the survey questionnaire shown in Figure 2 clearly indicate that of the four types of problems or issues that could be responded to, 'interpersonal' (59.7%) and 'professional' (54.8%) needs are the

predominant ones causing a need for professional supervision, although the secondary principals rated to a small degree professional above interpersonal needs. The response rate was considerably lower for 'personal' (27.4%) and 'systemic' (17.7%) problems or issues for both the primary and secondary principals. Those focus group participants who had experienced professional supervision in the past twelve months confirmed a similar trend of needs in their discussions.

People problems predominantly characterise the interpersonal need for supervision and several examples of these were given in the questionnaire responses and focus group discussions. There were a wide range of people problems given, such as a challenging staff member, a difficult parent, an under performing senior leader, a dysfunctional board-principal relationship, an intractable group in the staff, and conflict with the parents group. Some questionnaire respondents commented though that their professional supervision experience in this type of issue was not in response to a particular problem but rather that they wanted to increase their interpersonal knowledge and skills to deal more effectively with people related matters.

**Figure 2: Type of issue or problem causing need for professional supervision
(questionnaire respondents)**

The professional issue findings from the questionnaire reveal the pressure felt by principals of leading and managing multiple changes which are complex and frequently occur

simultaneously. Several principals expressed a concern that they often feel unsupported and overwhelmed with change demands, particularly in small primary schools where there is less administrative support available, and frustration with what they see as uncoordinated change requirements of them and their staff. The personal issue findings show a sense of isolation and difficulty coping with the pressures of the job, and the desire to have a private life outside of school. A primary school principal wrote:

I found the loneliness hard. I have burdened my long suffering husband long enough and needed another wise ear.

Systemic problems and issues that caused principals to seek professional supervision mostly relate to their workload and their sense that so much of it is externally caused and imposed on them by the Ministry of Education. Several respondents voiced their frustration at the multiple administration demands and the high compliance requirements that they experience, the belief that these are increasing, and how these prevent their desired leadership of teaching and learning. For example, a secondary principal wrote:

The main issue in administration is the sheer volume of requirements – storage and retention of school documents, pandemic planning, challenges to the rights of schools to suspend, increased demands on the attendance systems etc.

The findings in relation to the question in the survey questionnaire which asked the principals to prioritise the issues or problems that are creating a current need for professional supervision are consistent with the above findings. In other words, there is a strong correlation between the findings for what types of issues or problems caused them to engage in professional supervision during the past twelve months and the current priority needs of principals for professional supervision. The current issue or problem rated as their top priority was people problems; the next was professional problems, followed by and in order administration problems and personal problems.

Several principals commented in their questionnaire responses and in the focus group interviews that the principal's job in recent years has become more complex and demanding. Related issues of stress, long hours of work and even "sanity" were expressed and their fear of burn out. Some principals talked about feeling "overwhelmed" and "isolated". There was considerable discussion in the focus groups of how the "competitive environment" between schools encouraged they believed in the 1990's by Tomorrows Schools had left many principals feeling unsupported and alone, suspicious of their neighbouring principals and

unwilling to share issues and problems through fear of being branded incompetent. These concerns they further related to their perception that fewer of their colleagues are interested in aspiring to principalship and that there is an alarming decline in the pool of principal aspirants. The nominated representatives of the three organisations interviewed shared these concerns of the principals. One of them commented with concern on the apparent growing trend of teachers without appropriate leadership and management experience being appointed to principal positions and the urgent need for these principals to have professional supervision.

The theme of isolation was very apparent in the principals' responses in both the questionnaire and the focus groups. They attached multiple meanings to these feelings and experiences of isolation. The most obvious one is of geographic isolation, such as a principal in a remote rural school. Some of the secondary principals however spoke of "professional isolation" in their sector, with a corresponding desire for stronger networks, improved collegial relationships with principal colleagues in neighbouring secondary schools, and enhanced opportunities to participate in small professional groups. Other principals spoke of their experience of isolation when they moved into a different location or community, and how unsupported they felt. Isolation for principals is therefore more than a geographic phenomenon, it exists in both urban and rural settings for both primary and secondary principals and it troubles many of them. In the words of a primary principal in a focus group:

Moving to this city was one of the most isolating experiences I have ever had. I found it difficult to make connections with colleagues in the area of the city that I'm working in. I felt extremely isolated, so I'm listening with great interest about how you are working and developing supervision type activities.

To arrest the escalation of these negative experiences and deeply held professional concerns, they see professional supervision as a necessary response towards improving their current situation. There is a strong desire by them to overcome these perceived barriers of professional isolation, loneliness and competitiveness and to rebuild professional trust, collegiality and support. The majority of the principals who participated in this research project believe that professional supervision has the potential to make a significant contribution towards this desired relationship shift. As shown in Figure 3, in their responses to the degree of current need for professional supervision only 3.1% of the questionnaire respondents felt that there is 'no need', while 33.7% felt there is a 'very high need'. These response rates are very similar for both primary and secondary principals.

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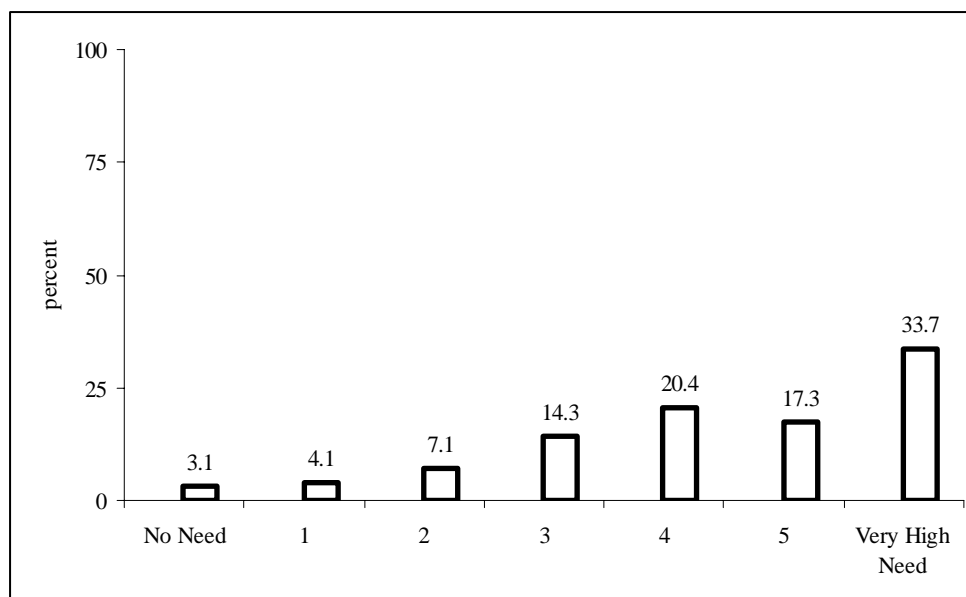
Figure 3: Need for professional supervision (questionnaire respondents)

The type of professional supervision principals' want

What is the type of professional supervision that principals therefore want? The responses to this question were captured in the qualitative data from the questionnaire responses and the focus group interviews. There is primarily a desire to have available and flexible access to both individual supervision and small facilitated group supervision. Some principals prefer individual supervision so that they can focus on their own issues and not get side tracked by the issues of other principals or "sucked into" issues that are of no interest to them. As well, there will be occasions when the issue is of a completely confidential personal or professional nature and therefore inappropriate for sharing in a group setting. Those principals who have experienced either mentoring in the First-time Principals Programme, facilitation in the PDPC or have participated in a New Zealand Council for Educational Research school-based project, referred to these as being the type of support and challenge they would expect from a professional supervisor. The individual professional supervision they have in mind in both the questionnaire responses and the focus groups was frequently referred to as "mentoring" or "coaching".

The principals see small facilitated groups for their professional supervision as a way to overcome the barriers they identified (above). As well as being there to for them share and make progress on their difficult issues, there is a perception that the groups could as well serve to strengthen professional trust, strengthen collegial and collaborative learning networks, and help to overcome feelings of isolation and loneliness. A trained facilitator to

focus and facilitate the discussions and learning of the group is seen as desirable, and in addition could provide a valuable external viewpoint to individuals and the group. One principal described the experience of participating in a small facilitated group as "working at the head and heart" of the job by resolving difficult work issues in a high trust relationship with other principals while simultaneously taking care of self and caring for one's colleagues.

The key point is that most of the principals want to access both individual and small facilitated group supervision, depending on their individual needs and issues during the year. Not all principals agree however. Some prefer to have self facilitated groups, believing these to be more professionally empowering and able to achieve similar outcomes to the facilitated groups. Other principals are apprehensive about professional supervision in any form. Although a minority, the views of these principals are interesting. In the focus groups some of these principals expressed a suspicion that professional supervision could have an undisclosed agenda of further increasing their accountability to their board or to the Ministry of Education.

Finally and with another view, a secondary school principal at a focus group interview had this to say about the need for professional supervision for principals and perhaps it deserves the last word about needs and wants:

It's about hopes and dreams, and it's about taking the organization from where it is to a different place. As soon as you start talking about this to a colleague within the organization, the timetabler gets really worried. I've found that mentoring was actually best, to have somebody who you could talk to about hopes and dreams. When you get it wrong you get burned very badly and you never forget that. The problem is that if you're not careful you never go back to the hopes and dreams because the burn was so bad.

The current impact of professional supervision for principals

This section is about the third category identified from the research findings, the impact of professional supervision as experienced by the principals on their personal and professional problems and issues. Here we look into their degree of satisfaction with their recent professional supervision experiences and the usefulness of these experiences in helping them to make progress on their issues and problems. We also wanted to know how they saw performance appraisal in relation to professional supervision and whether or not the two phenomena were connected in their view. In addition, was there a relationship or not between their professional supervision experiences and their core responsibility – the leadership of teaching and learning in their school?

Degree of satisfaction with professional supervision experienced

The research findings indicate no significant differences between the primary and secondary principals about how satisfied the respondents to the electronic questionnaire were with the usefulness of the professional supervision they received from a provider. As shown in Figure 4, the highest satisfaction levels of usefulness experienced by the questionnaire respondents is 'mentor or coach' (47.5%) and 'other professional organisations' (46.7%). The related qualitative data does not provided sufficient information to identify who the 'other professional organisations' are. 'Self facilitated small group' received a higher rating (42.3%) than 'externally facilitated small group' (32%) and there is no available data to explain this result. The regional advisors/facilitators received a very useful rating of 22.7% and the three organisations NZSTA 40%, NZEI 18.2% and PPTA 0%. The latter two ratings, and as already explained, could be attributed to these organisations not regarding themselves as current providers of professional supervision for principals.
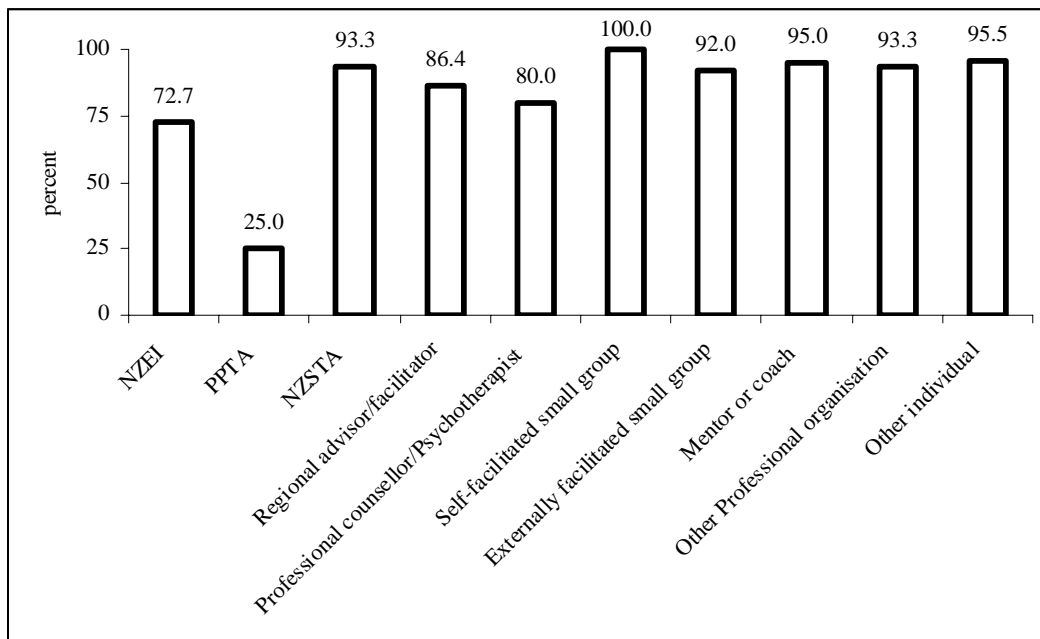
Figure 4. Degree of satisfaction with professional supervision (questionnaire respondents)

Appraisal and professional supervision

In the focus group interviews a wide range of opinions were expressed by both the primary and secondary principals about whether or not there is a relationship between professional supervision and performance appraisal. The majority view is that there is not and these should continue to be two different performance related experiences. A key reason for this

difference and was expressed by several principals is that appraisal is an annual mandated requirement whereas supervision should be self initiated and on an as maybe required basis. The board of trustees is responsible for the principal's appraisal, it oversees the process, must agree to who the appraiser will be and receives the appraiser's report about the principal's performance. Most of the focus group principals see professional supervision as being quite different. They believe it is a professional rather than a performance matter and as such should be entrusted to them, they are responsible for the supervision process, they select the provider and both the process and the outcomes of supervision should remain confidential to the principal. The essence of this widely held view by principals is captured in the words of a primary principal:

If they (appraisal and supervision) *become too close you're actually at risk of losing that whole confidentiality, and I would start holding back on what I was prepared to share with that person if I thought supervision was going to head into that tangent* (appraisal) *and be delivered to my board of trustees in a report.*

Further, most principals see appraisal as a judgement on their performance and which relates to specific annual appraisal goals and the professional standards for principals. In contrast, they believe that professional supervision is non judgemental, it is in response to a range of issues and problems that the principal is experiencing, it requires a high trust and confidential relationship to speak freely about complex on-the-job professional and personal needs, and it is not standards based. Above all, they see appraisal as a mandatory and formal process with high accountability to measure their current performance capability. In contrast, they see professional supervision as being highly responsive to their personal and professional current needs, it has low accountability to the board and external agencies, it does not measure performance, and it is there to nurture their effectiveness.

Two secondary principals in the focus groups expressed this difference between professional supervision and appraisal as follows:

Appraisal I see as a measurement of how I'm performing in the job. Whether or not I have professional supervision, and if this is the collegial discussion and opportunity to work through issues, and if I choose to engage in it I don't see that as performance appraisal.

And:
An appraisal is more goal specific for a particular target or an objective you're getting to. So it's more action planned whereas professional supervision could be that quick phone call,

more outreaching in all sorts of different areas, whereas appraisal is specific to one or two key target areas.

There is however a widely held belief that the appraisal process and its outcomes could inform professional supervision needs. Where appraisal finishes supervision starts, in that the appraisal recommendations may require a supervision experience to help the principal to tackle and make progress with what has been recommended. Some principals shared their experiences of the same person being their appraiser and supervisor, especially where the relationship was characterised by exceptionally high trust and confidence. In these experiences, the supervision either ran parallel with the appraisal process or it followed appraisal as a new and different relationship. The appraiser held a deep knowledge and understanding of the principal's needs and context and was therefore able to provide expert advice and guidance to the principal. These principals spoke about how an expert appraiser can provide high quality feedback and promote reflection on practice, the same attributes they believe to be necessary for a skilful professional supervisor.

Linkage between professional supervision and the leadership of teaching and learning
The research findings from the questionnaire respondents show that the strongest link to professional supervision experiences and the principals' leadership of teaching and learning currently resides in 'other professional organisation' (46.2%) and 'externally facilitated small group' (45.8%), as shown in Figure 5. The identity of 'other professional organisation' is however unknown as most questionnaire respondents did not state the organisation although the question invited them to do so. The next strongest link experiences were 'mentor or coach' (41.5%) and 'self facilitated small group' (36%), followed by and in order NZEI (27.3%), 'other individual' (25%) and regional advisor/facilitator (25%), NZSTA (13.3%), 'professional counsellor/psychotherapist' (9.1%) and PPTA (0%). There were no significant differences in the questionnaire findings between the primary and secondary principals about the linkage.

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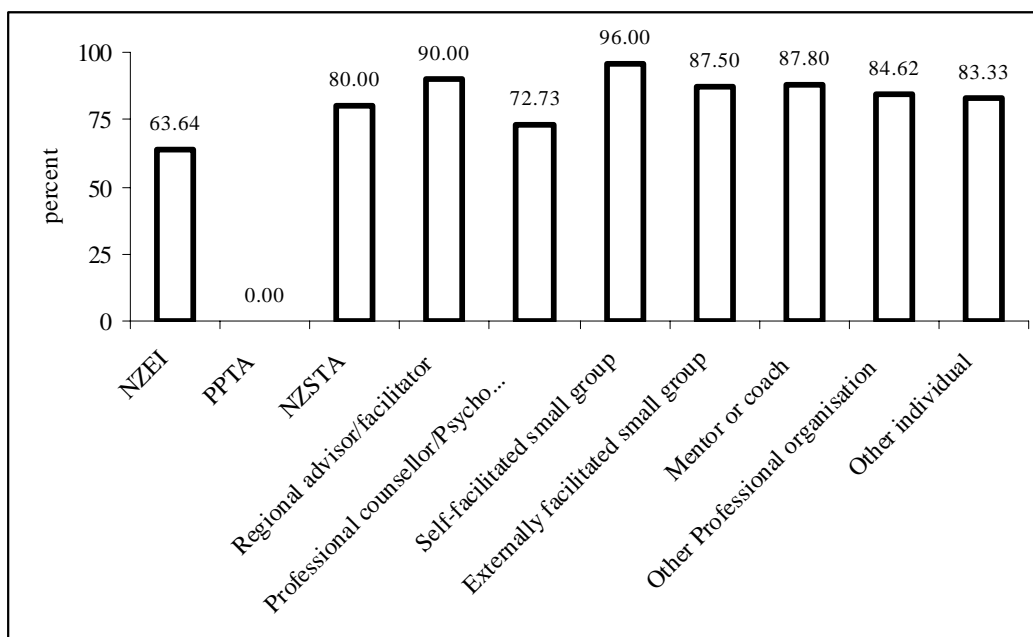
Figure 5: Degree of linkage between professional supervision and leadership of teaching and learning (questionnaire respondents)

In the qualitative data provided by the questionnaire respondents and from the focus group participants there were some specific examples given of supervision experiences that promoted this linkage to the principal's leadership of teaching and learning. These examples have not been quantified but they include mentoring in the First-time Principals Programme, facilitation in the PDPC, regional Leadership and Management Advisors, Group Special Education, cluster groups and NZCER school-based research projects. In the focus groups most of the principals who had experienced supervision stated that the link to their leadership of teaching and learning was more inclined to be tangential rather than deliberate or planned. In the focus groups there was only one clearly explained example of a specific and planned strong link, where a secondary principal participates in a small facilitated group focussing on Maori student achievement. Some other focus group participants briefly indicated a possible linkage in their shared examples but these were not explained sufficiently enough to conclude that there was a very strong link.

There was considerable discussion in the focus groups as to whether the principal's leadership of teaching and learning was more of a professional development matter rather than one for professional supervision. It was common during the focus group discussions when a participant spoke about an experience that may have illustrated the link others in the group responded that this was professional development and not professional supervision. Their overall perception is that professional development increases their knowledge and skills

for effectively leading teaching and learning, whereas professional supervision supports and challenges their implementation of this leadership in their school context and on-the-job work. This shared desire to link professional supervision with their leadership of teaching and learning was reiterated by a secondary principal:

I'd feel a bit disappointed if the feel good factor was more important than the educational purpose quite frankly. Yes, I'd be very disappointed. I don't need the feel good factor. I think that the professional and educational purpose needs to really come through.
And a questionnaire respondent wrote:
The nature of the questions seems to be coming at the issue of 'let's sort out the principals', the focus has been on 'problems'. I prefer to take the view of how can we empower principals to be more effective in their role as professional leaders of teaching and learning.

Two of the three nominated representatives of the three organisations interviewed expressed views that supported the need for a strong link between professional supervision and the principal's leadership of teaching and learning. One of these representatives' spoke in detail about the ultimate goal of professional supervision being the improvement of student achievement and to achieve the educational goals of the school. In this person's view, there are several current principals who are insufficiently experienced or prepared for the type of pedagogical and strategic leadership that is now required for improving student outcomes in schools. There are some experienced principals who think they "know it all but they don't", they have been in the school for many years and act as "gate keepers" to school improvement. Professional supervision, in this same person's view, should target these inexperienced and unprepared principals to ensure that they can deliver better outcomes for students in their schools and meet the expectations of the school's community.

The other (third) representative in support of the linkage related this more specifically to the need for principals to receive in-depth and on-the-job assistance to implement mandated major teaching and learning changes, such as the new curriculum, and especially in cases where the principal is struggling in their effective educational leadership of the school. This third representative did not believe that educational leadership was the purpose of professional supervision for principals, it is more about supporting their health and safety and feelings of isolation.

The quality of professional supervision for principals
This section introduces the views of principals and the representatives of the three organisations about the future provision of professional supervision for principals. In

particular, it focuses on the possible providers of supervision, the quality assurance considerations that may need to be considered in relation to providers and service delivery, and the role of the board of trustees in the principal's professional supervision. As well, some of the challenges to this quality assured delivery of professional supervision are identified. The research findings for this category are based on the qualitative data gathered from the questionnaire responses and the focus group interviews.

Providers of professional supervision

The main research finding about providers is that the principals' preference is for professional supervisors who have experience in the profession and who are trained for the supervisory role. Recently retired principals were frequently mentioned as being potentially most suited to this role. These people are seen as having the best understanding of the realities of schools, the principal's job and the particular context of a school. However, experience in principalship is on its own regarded by the principals as insufficient. A former principal in addition to their experience should have a demonstrated and credible record as a highly successful educational leader; have appropriate interpersonal skills; a high level of professional knowledge and current research knowledge about pedagogical leadership. The qualities and skills desired of supervisors that were mentioned include high trust, confidentiality, empathy, active listening, challenging conversations and giving honest feedback. The principals' believe these are learned skills that may require new learning and practice through an appropriate preparatory course for a potential supervisor.

Other main findings about providers included a strong desire to self select the supervisor of choice. Most of the principals felt it was important for them to achieve the best supervisor match possible for their school context and issues, and the person who they would feel most comfortable with in relation to openness and receiving challenging feedback. They suggested that a national register be provided of all quality assured providers of professional supervision for principals and which would be available to principals for their selection of a provider. In addition, this register could be coordinated by either the Ministry of Education or the principals' professional organisations and on the basis of agreed national quality assurance criteria for a provider to be listed. A respondent to the questionnaire wrote:

The challenge is to match like minded people and providing those with sufficient skill to make learning rigorous and challenging. Not all professional supervisors have the skill to ask the tough reflective questions that help principals move forward in their leadership practice.

Some principals believe that in addition to former principals there is benefit in having a supervisor from another profession or even from a non educational background. Principals spoke about their actual experiences of such supervision and which they regarded highly, or they hypothesised about the attraction of getting a wider perspective on their role and responsibilities. Examples of these supervisors included counsellors, psychotherapists, business and corporate consultants. Opinion was divided as to whether the current Leadership and Management advisors were right for this role, with reservations including their actual and/or successful principal experience, suitable match of advisor to issue or problem, the diverse quality of advisors in and across the regions, and the need for up skilling for some of them. The three industrial organisations were not widely considered by the principals as being the most likely future providers of professional supervision. The very small amount of data collected from four Maori medium principals who completed the questionnaire mentions the importance to them for a professional supervisor to hold knowledge and experience in their sector due to its often unique issues and problems.

Multiple challenges were identified by the principals for the provision of this quality assured professional supervision that most of them would like to have. Two of these challenges are time and cost, which will be discussed in the next category. The other major challenge is the perceived shortage of professional supervisors now and in the future, especially in rural areas. There is widespread concern that professional supervision for principals may be encouraged and some provision made for this in the future when already it is difficult for many principals to find a suitable supervisor, especially outside of the main cities. A principal commented that:

The who is the problem? My board is prepared to pay for my supervision but there is no-one that I know of who can do this. It is a major concern for me personally with each year I stay in this job. How long can I go on without this professional support?

Role of boards of trustees in professional supervision

A further challenge that emerged in the focus group discussions was the role of the board of trustees in the selection of the supervisor and in the process of the principal's supervision. There was a division of opinion as to whether the board should or should not be involved in the selection of the supervisor. Those who supported the board's role in the selection of the supervisor regarded this as a further quality assurance measure and that the board as the employer has a right to have input, especially in situations where the school is experiencing significant risks or it has received an unsatisfactory ERO report. Those who did not support the board's involvement in the selection of the supervisor expressed their concern that the

board might impose their preferred supervisor on and against the will of the principal. The consequence, they believe, would be to undermine the principal-supervisor relationship at the outset and thereby jeopardise both the intent and the outcomes of supervision.

There is however overwhelming consensus that it is inappropriate for the board to be involved in the principal's supervision experience and process. This would seriously affect the confidential nature of the principal-supervisor relationship and the freedom of the principal to share and discuss problematic personal and professional issues. Given that one such issue could be the board-principal relationship, the risks to professional supervision are seen as too high for board involvement. It was suggested by some principals that the board could receive an annual statement from the principal in their usual board report confirming that professional supervision is occurring, who the supervisor is, and at the end of the supervision to inform the board of its completion. Overall, there is a strong view held by principals that they must own and control the process and outcomes of their professional supervision.

Concern about professional supervision

A further and final significant challenge identified in the findings is that there is a small group of principals who are concerned about the possible intent and implications of their professional supervision. They express a concern that this will only add to their already extreme workload and will be a further compliance imposed on them by the Ministry of Education. Two examples illustrative of this concern expressed in the questionnaire responses are:

Don't try to force this sort of stuff on any principal, most of who are over worked with other compliance issues. This is not helpful nor is it supportive. It is just PC nonsense.
And:
Is this another requirement because a few are not meeting the mark and the remainder of principals have yet another requirement placed upon them? Why not just supervision for those with an identified need?

One of the nominated representatives of the three organisations also expressed the view that not all principals need professional supervision and it should be there for those who want it or need it. Priority should be given to those principals with a significant issue in their school.

Desired arrangements for the future provision of professional supervision for principals

This fifth and final category reports on the research findings related to the future provision of professional supervision, specifically what principals and the representatives of the three organisations said they would like to see in the collective agreements for primary and secondary principals. As the views of the primary and secondary principals are similar, in that no significant differences were identified in the qualitative data from the questionnaire responses and the focus group interviews, the principals' views about the desired arrangements can be regarded as representative of both sectors. The questions in the questionnaire that asked about the preferred future arrangements received the most responses.

Funding and time

It is not surprising that funding and time are principals' key concerns for the future provision of professional supervision. Principals in support of professional supervision strongly voiced their view that separate and "tagged" funding should be provided directly to the school, otherwise it would be unaffordable for schools and boards. The funding should reflect market rates for professional supervisors; otherwise this will impact on the quality of service available to principals. There is a shared belief that the principal should have discretionary access and use of the fund for their professional supervision needs. Several of them spoke of the existing extreme pressure on the school's operational funds and believe it is unrealistic and unacceptable that the cost of their professional supervision should be met from already pressured funds. In short, they said they would not support professional supervision if it is not appropriately funded to meet actual and reasonable costs. They included in these costs the professional fee of the supervisor, principal release time and travel. Principals of rural schools emphasised the importance to them and their schools the inclusion of time and travel costs. Some of the rural primary principals explained that they currently pay the professional fee and travel cost for their professional supervision as the operational grant for the school is already over stretched and there is no money available to the board "extras".

The nominated representatives of the three organisations interviewed expressed views that are closely aligned to the majority view of the principals about funding and as outlined above. Two of these representatives however felt it should be between the board and the principal as to how this funding is used for professional supervision. The principal should in their view consult with the board about the proposed provider, the estimated cost and likely school hours which may be required for their professional supervision and have the board's approval in these matters, but not approval to participate in professional supervision per se.

The principals' other predominant request was that boards and through resourcing from the Ministry of Education provide a time allowance for their professional supervision. This view was as well expressed by the representatives of the three organisations. Several principals spoke of their current very high workload and felt that professional supervision needed to be regarded by their board as a legitimate part of their job and during school hours. They recommended that a guideline from the Ministry is desirable as to the total hours for professional supervision that a principal is entitled to in a year and within school hours. A suggestion made in one of the focus groups was that the equivalent of one day per term be provided for the principal's professional supervision. There was however no consensus on the amount of time that would be desirable and uncertainty about what would be reasonable characterised these discussions.

Professional supervision as an entitlement or a requirement

The other key finding from both the focus groups and the questionnaire's qualitative data is the principals' clear preference that professional supervision should be an entitlement and not a requirement nor mandatory. This entitlement, they believe, will require a clear, agreed, well understood and widely communicated definition and explanation of professional supervision. It is essential to them that this professional supervision is sufficiently flexible in its design and delivery, so that their very diverse school contexts and needs can be sufficiently and flexibly responded to. It should be available to every principal each year and as of right. It is ultimately at the discretion of the principal whether they wish to participate in professional supervision each year or not. If they did not participate then the school would not receive the related funding for that year.

Two of the nominated representatives of the three organisations stated their preference for the entitlement provision while the preference of the third representative is unclear. These same two representatives as well supported the overall view of the principals' that it should be a high quality service delivered by trained supervisors, on an as required basis and if a principal needs it. One of these representatives elaborated that a referral process is desirable to enable professional supervision for a principal to happen where there is a high need or the principal is at risk. Should such a principal not self refer to access professional supervision for them self then either a colleague or the board as the employer, and with its responsibility for the health and safety of the principal, should be able to make a referral for the principal to receive professional supervision. Further, two of the representatives believe the Ministry of Education should develop a system overview and response to the role of boards in the professional supervision of principals and not leave this to individual boards to decide as not all boards are or will be good employers.

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Some principals identified an inherent tension in the provision of an entitlement yet which is optional to participate in. There is a risk that the very principals who most need professional supervision may choose not to participate in it year after year, while those who are successful and open-to-learning principals do participate. This tension between entitlement and voluntary participation was expressed by a primary principal in a focus group as follows:

I wonder about, when I look around schools and look at some principals who have been in schools a long time, whether that school is operating as effectively as it could be and whether the principal is…..still up skilling and developing themselves professionally. I mean, do they know, would they take up the offer if it was there and if it was an offer and wasn't compulsory, would it happen?

A small but vocal group of principals do not support professional supervision, its provision or inclusion in their collective agreement. Their words are self explanatory in highlighting their reasoning for resisting professional supervision for principals:

I don't need or want a professional supervisor. That in itself is time consuming and wasteful. Let me get on with my job. (Questionnaire respondent)
And:
I don't want this in a collective agreement….I find it patronizing to be able to hear a discussion about a mandated process or a process written in which talks about something that would be a requirement or an expectation….it is not something I want PPTA discussing going into my contract. (Secondary principal focus group participant)
And:
I don't believe we are entitled to any professional supervision and I would refuse to accept any mandated supply (Questionnaire respondent)

PART 6:   CONCLUSIONS

The following section summarises the results of the research findings from the survey questionnaire, the focus group interviews and the representatives of the three organisations interviews. Conclusions are given for each of the five categories described in the research findings section of the report.

Current professional supervision experiences

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Approximately two thirds of the New Zealand school principals who participated in the questionnaire survey had no current or recent experience of professional supervision of any type, other than coaching or mentoring for a few. Of those who had at least one experience of professional supervision, the most common was with a 'mentor or coach' (50%), followed by an 'externally facilitated small group' or a 'self facilitated small group' (38%). A further finding was that the principals had received very little professional supervision from the three professional and industrial organisations (NZSTA, NZEI and PPTA). This finding was consistent with the views of the interviewed representatives of each of these organisations who did not see their organisations as having a current predisposition to provide professional supervision for principals. Most principals who had experienced current or recent professional supervision had initiated it themselves (87.9%).

These and most other findings are remarkably consistent for both primary and secondary school principals. In addition, both groups had similar experiences of cost for their professional supervision. Most common was either board approved funding or the principal paying in part or in full for their supervision because the school could not afford it. Some supervision experiences were cost neutral, such as Ministry of Education provided and funded programmes, meetings with a trusted colleague or a self facilitated small group.

Beliefs about professional supervision and why it is needed

There is confusion about the meaning of professional supervision and its purpose. While the principals and nominated representatives of the three organisations found the working definition provided by the Ministry of Education as being helpful, several of them found this definition confusing and too broad. A vocal minority of principals rejected it outright, saying that they did not want or need professional supervision and/or they found the definition "patronizing". For some, there is genuine confusion about the distinction and the relationship between professional supervision, professional development and performance appraisal. In addition, there is concern by most principals of the term 'professional supervision'. They identified several negative connotations of the term and are concerned that it implies professional distrust in that principals need to be 'supervised'.

Most of the principals who participated in this research project believe that professional supervision should be to support and challenge their professional practice, particularly their tackling of tough issues and problems that they have difficulty making progress on or resolving. This support and challenge they have in mind is needs-based, it is about real on-the-job demands and dilemmas, and relates to the context of the school. They want professional supervision to be flexible and provided as both an individual and small group

service so that a principal can select the kind of supervision most suited to their needs and context. By way of contrast, two of the nominated representatives of the three organisations emphasised that professional supervision is primarily for principals experiencing serious difficulties and it is important for the health and safety of all principals. The third representative emphasised that professional supervision is to ensure a positive board-principal relationship and to support the achievement of the school's educational goals and targets.

The type of problem or issue which created the most need for professional supervision in the past twelve months for the questionnaire respondents is 'interpersonal' (59.7%), closely followed by 'professional' (54.8%). People problems predominantly characterise 'interpersonal need', either an actual problem or a desire to increase their knowledge and skills in managing people. Leading and managing complex change characterised their 'professional need', and this often led to feelings of isolation and inadequacy. Most principals believe that their job in recent years has become increasingly complex and they want to see more supportive, open and trusting relationships between principals in many communities.

It is therefore not surprising that 51% of the questionnaire respondents said there is a 'very high need' or 'high need' for professional supervision, while only 7.2% said there is either 'no need' or 'very little need'. However, as this questionnaire finding about 'very high need' and 'high need' is not sufficiently close to being unanimous or a clear majority view it cannot be concluded that there is a universally agreed need for professional supervision.

The current impact of professional supervision

From the questionnaire responses, those principals who had experienced professional supervision in the past twelve months believed their highest satisfaction was with a 'mentor or coach' (47.5%), followed by 'other professional organisations' (46.7%), 'self facilitated small group' (42.3%) and 'externally facilitated small group' (32%). The high rating for 'mentor or coach' could in part be attributed to their mentoring experiences in the First-time Principals Programme and facilitated experiences in the PDPC. The rating for 'other professional organisations' is unable to be qualified as almost all of the questionnaire respondents for this item did not respond to the corresponding question asking which organisation(s).

The majority view of the principals is that currently there is no direct relationship between professional supervision and performance appraisal and these should continue as two separate experiences. Appraisal is seen as a mandated process managed by the board of trustees to make a standards-based judgement about the current performance of the

principal. Professional supervision is the antithesis of this, as it is regarded as a formative process controlled by the principal, it is non judgemental, needs-based and a confidential relationship between the principal and their professional supervisor.

The other linkage explored was between professional supervision and the leadership of teaching and learning. The questionnaire findings show that currently the most likely link resides in 'other organisations' (46.2%), followed by 'externally facilitated small group' (45.8%) and 'mentor or coach' (41.5%). In the focus group interviews most of the principals agreed that the link was more inclined to be tangential rather than planned. While most principals share a desire to link professional supervision with their leadership of teaching and learning, they believe this leadership is the focus of their professional development. They are therefore confused about the role of professional supervision in relation to their leadership of teaching and learning. Two of the nominated representatives of the three organisations confirmed the need for linkage; the other representative did not see this as a purpose of professional supervision.

The quality of professional supervision for principals

There is a preference by principals for professional supervisors who have successful experience as principals and who are trained for the supervisory role. While credible former principals are mentioned most, this on its own is insufficient for being a supervisor. Principals are seeking a quality assured national register of providers who have been trained for this role. Some principals wish to see others as providers as well, such as counsellors, business and corporate mentors and coaches. There is a strongly held view that the principal should self select their supervisor to best meet their needs and context, and who they would feel comfortable with in terms of openness and trust. Multiple challenges were identified by the principals for this provision of quality assured professional supervision.

One challenge of particular interest to the principals was the role of the board of trustees in the principal's professional supervision. While there is consensus that the board should not participate in the actual experience, opinion widely differed about what role and function the board should have as the employer. Overall, there is a strong view held by the principals that they must own and control the process and outcomes of their professional supervision experience.

Desired arrangements for the future provision of professional supervision for principals

The majority of principals clearly want professional supervision to be an entitlement and not a requirement. They believe it should be available to every principal each year as of right and it is at the discretion of the principal whether they wish to have professional supervision each year or not. There is strong consensus that professional supervision should be separately and additionally funded with an annual amount that reflects market rates for supervision and other related costs. As well, they believe that principals should be given a time allowance per year for their professional supervision to occur during school hours and that it should be a legitimate part of their job.

Risks were identified should professional supervision be an entitlement and not mandatory. Of concern was that the very principals who most need professional supervision may choose not to participate in it and this would undermine a key purpose for its provision. Further, there is a minority group of principals who do not support professional supervision, its provision or inclusion in their collective agreement.

PART 7:   RECOMMENDATIONS

The key purpose of this project is to inform the contractor on current practice and identify options for consideration by the Secretary for Education. This section outlines three options that are generated from both the literature and the data collected in this study. The options are framed by general recommendations that apply to all options. Specific option-related recommendations are contained within the option statements.

The recommendations are that:

1. The parties involved should act with due consideration of the findings of this study and with caution regarding the introduction of any initiative to promote or provide for the "professional supervision of New Zealand principals" as this could be premature (based on the lack of pertinent international research evidence referred to in the literature review); and

2. The profession itself needs to take the lead in determining the naming, nature and form of professional supervision/mentoring needed as no international models that have comparability with school principalship were located in the literature search; and

3. Requirements (and models of professional supervision) appropriate in other professions such as school counselling are not appropriate in an educational leadership context; and

4. The mandating of professional supervision for principals as a requirement should be avoided; and

5. The relationship between professional supervision/mentoring activity and principal performance appraisal and professional development be clarified as confusion as to purpose exists in both the literature and current practice; and

6. The parties involved should view the following options in the light of the above recommendations.

The following options are provided as a continuum from no change to large scale change:

1) Maintenance of the status quo

    Currently, one third of the New Zealand primary and secondary principals surveyed in this study indicated that they participated in some form of professional supervision. The majority of those principals (88%) confirmed that this was self initiated and mostly involved individual or small group supervision/mentoring. If the choice is to maintain the status quo, then it could be assumed that the relatively small number of principals who currently seek this kind of support will do so.

2) Minor change (provision of information and support)

To support those principals who are prepared to act on their self-perceived need for professional mentoring or supervision, and increase the incidence of principals seeking this form of support several things could be done:

i) A working party should define the purpose, nature and process of the conceived support activity (and name it appropriately) in relation to its intended purpose;

ii) Collective agreements could define what the concept means once the profession has reached consensus;

iii) Collective agreements could indicate the extent to which principals will be supported (time and finance) and the related role of the board of trustees as the employer.

3) Major change (formalising entitlement and quality control)

The literature gap that exists in relation to the practice of professional supervision amongst principals is revealing in pointing out that this is not a common or researched phenomenon in educational leadership. This fact, together with the evidence that there is little clarity about the activity itself (with a variety of definitions and purposes) challenges perceptions that exist of the need for professional supervision for principals being of a compelling nature. Therefore, any consideration of intervening to formalise the currently informal and self-initiated practices around what is loosely termed professional supervision should be entered into with caution.

If the parties choose to intervene to change the status quo to a major extent then several things could be done in addition to the actions suggested in relation to option two.

i) Professional supervision should be viewed as an entitlement and made available to all principals;

ii) The quality of professional supervision should become a central responsibility through the vetting of providers who are recommended to principals as professional supervisors;

iii) The quality of professional supervision should be enhanced through the training and development of a pool of accredited professional supervision providers.

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PART 9 APPENDICES