

Building Capacity for Sustainable School Leadership

A Secondary Principal's Sabbatical Inquiry

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"It is a common defect in men not to consider, in good weather, the possibility of a tempest"
Machiavelli, "The Prince", 1452

Contents

- 1 Executive summary
- 2 Acknowledgements
- 3 Introduction
- 4 Methodology
- 5 Section One: Demographic Context
- 6 Section Two: Literature Review
- 7 Section Three: Primary Research: Staff Survey results
- 8 Section Four: Other Organisations (ie beyond schools)
- 9 Section Five: Practice at James Hargest College (Evaluation)
- 10 Conclusions
- 11 References
- 12 Appendix: Full Staff Survey Results

Executive Summary

This study considers the impact of an ageing teacher workforce on school leadership, and investigates what strategies might be useful in achieving sustainable and stable leadership during periods of accelerated staff turnover. Key findings are:

- 1 Ageing populations and their implications are almost universal internationally and apply across many sectors of employment
- 2 Attracting quality applicants for leadership positions in NZ secondary schools is emerging as a growing problem
- 3 The loss of experienced personnel (including leaders) represents the very knowledge that gives any organisation its current competitive edge
- 4 Succession planning thinking should occur in a context of developing and evolving the organisation, not simply maintaining it at the status quo
- 5 Deliberate succession plan strategies, no matter how imprecise, are likely to improve organisational awareness of personnel change – and therefore preparedness
- 6 Succession planning can usefully be contextualised within a wider paradigm of “sustainable leadership”. Factors which can enhance this include; effective leadership distribution; wide commitment to shared values; careful nurturing of emerging potential; building staff self-belief in their own efficacy; and identification of strategic succession risks
- 7 Middle leadership workload, and role complexity are significant issues in schools, and act as a disincentive for aspiring HODs, in particular
- 8 Other factors regarded by teachers as pertinent to motivation for leadership include support structures, fair recompense mechanisms, and clearer pathways for building personal capacity
- 9 There was no evidence of generational differences in attitudes toward leadership involvement (contrary to popular stereotypes)
- 10 An increase in older employees seeking to work part-time is highly likely
- 11 Over the next 5-8 years the author’s school is likely to experience accelerated staff turnover, including a number of leadership positions
- 12 The author recommends that his school implement a framework and Action Plan for succession planning, as part of its Personnel Policy and practice, informed by the findings of this research.

Acknowledgements

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I would like to thank my administrative assistant for her patience and skills in formatting my survey, and producing graphs of various data sets. I particularly acknowledge my old friend and e-administrative wizard, who set up the bespoke software programme for the analysis of my survey data. This was extremely helpful.

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Finally, I want to thank those from the wider educational community who willingly discussed their ideas with me, including researchers, senior leaders, and fellow principals. My inquiry was enriched by the work of others who had spent time researching similar or related themes.

Introduction

(Note: The author's school is a state, co-educational, Decile 8, Year 7-13 in a provincial NZ city, located on two campuses – Junior (Yrs 7-8) and Senior (Yrs 9-13), with a combined roll of 1850.)

The triggers for this sabbatical inquiry were twofold; firstly, I had on occasions experienced a puzzling lack of interest in leadership opportunities, some advertised internally, and some externally. Secondly, I was aware that we had, in our school, enjoyed a long period of highly stable middle and senior leadership, but that we would inevitably face a period of accelerated leadership change. The combination of these factors is obviously an issue for the smooth succession of leadership in the school in the future. The importance of effective leadership in schools has been widely documented over recent years.

I raised the general issue with the Senior Campus staff mid-2014, and was surprised at the eagerness and interest with which it was taken up and discussed. A number of ideas came to the surface from that exercise, two of which I actioned forthwith. (Firstly, to take advantage of staff movement to re-classify two leadership situations as fixed term rather than permanent, and secondly, to make HOD meetings open to anyone who wished to attend.) In the following months, I sensed a widespread appreciation of those changes, and in fact, have been pleasantly surprised by the level of interest in those (and other) opportunities since.

It was clear that this was an important and strategic issue facing the school. In particular, I wanted to learn how, as school leader, I could more effectively build both interest and capacity for leadership at junior and middle levels, so that the school would be better prepared for leadership change, regardless of whether those changes involved external appointees or not.

The main question then, was this: what organisational practices would best prepare us for sustaining our very high quality performance as a school, through a period of accelerated leadership change?

I was interested in a number of possible contributing factors. For example, what exactly was the demographic spread of my staff? Were there any relevant generational differences in attitude across the ages? What were the perceived incentives and disincentives regarding leadership? What models of succession planning did other organisations utilise? What in fact was the spread of leadership in my school, and the pathways into it, and were these well understood?

For the purpose of this inquiry, I am defining leadership in the school setting as any responsibility carrying remuneration, whether it be MMA's or MU's. (Salary supplements.) This working definition in no way implies that leadership in schools is only exercised by staff with specific remuneration. (Quite the contrary) However, the definition creates a satisfactory focus for the purpose of this inquiry.

Methodology

My methodology was as follows:

- 1 To gather data around the demographics of the NZ teaching force, (and the population at large), to give a sense of context to the issue. Furthermore, to develop a descriptive analysis of my own school staff demographic, and the current spread of leadership.
- 2 To study relevant research around succession planning.
- 3 To devise, administer and analyse a comprehensive staff survey, in order to understand the perceptions of my staff on a wide range of issues related to their participation in, and aspirations toward leadership.
- 4 To learn from Best Practice both in the private sector and in other schools
- 5 Finally, to hold up current practice at our school in the light of all the above, identify what we were already doing well, what we could improve on, and what we needed to challenge, change, or start doing.

Section One: Clarifying a Demographic Context for Succession Planning

An International Issue

The issues around the demographic bulge of post-war baby boomers are almost universal internationally. Improved health care in most countries, declining fertility rates, changing economic patterns relating to employment, and other political issues combine to ensure an ageing workforce is the reality for many, if not most economies of the world. Very few countries are replacing their own population, with a significant proportion of population “growth” currently created by migration rather than birthrate. By the year 2031, the world’s over- 65 population will have doubled. (Pearman, 2015)

Implications

Everywhere one looks, there are dire warnings being sounded regarding the lack of economic readiness for this state of affairs. Newcastle University is advocating for the UK government to establish a new cross-department taskforce specifically to tackle the implications. (Robinson, 2015) Another commentator suggests a skills crisis is looming unless companies do not focus on it, and that “companies in the health, social work, education and public sectors are likely to see the worst shortages.” (Handley, 2015) In the USA, recruitment of managers is already an emerging issue. (Pearman, 2015) Price Waterhouse, in a recent analysis of “World Megatrends”, identifies demographic change as one of five dominant challenges facing the world. Here in NZ, the NZ Research Institute claim to have found that issues around ageing are the 3rd highest concern of NZ workers. (NZ Diversity Survey, 2015)

Lack of Planning

In spite of all these readily available facts, it is estimated that 68% of companies worldwide have never analysed their staff demographics. (Pearman, 2015) Here in NZ, 45% of companies have no policy or strategy for dealing with the issue, with a much lower percentage for smaller companies. (NZ Diversity Survey, 2015) That report also goes on to suggest very few firms are facing these issues in a strategic, targeted manner. Another recent survey carried out by AUT concluded that less than 40% of NZ companies had policies or programmes in place to address their ageing workforce. (O’Connor, 2015) All these investigations identify the main risk as “*the loss of the very knowledge and skills that currently give an organisation its competitive advantage*”, along with compromised Health and Safety, declining productivity, and reputational damage. (Pearman, 2015)

Southland Demographics

In Southland, the picture is no different. In fact it is exacerbated by the common provincial phenomenon of having a hollowed out population as young adults move away for tertiary education and employment experience. Here, our over-65 population will increase from 15% (currently) to 25% by 2031. (Pearman, 2015)

As Pearman points out, “Longevity is changing everything”. Along with the population bulge, people may be working longer and their health may be better, but older workers, if they are to be retained in order to “smooth over” the succession drought, want different things. (Pearman, 2015)

The NZ Teacher Workforce

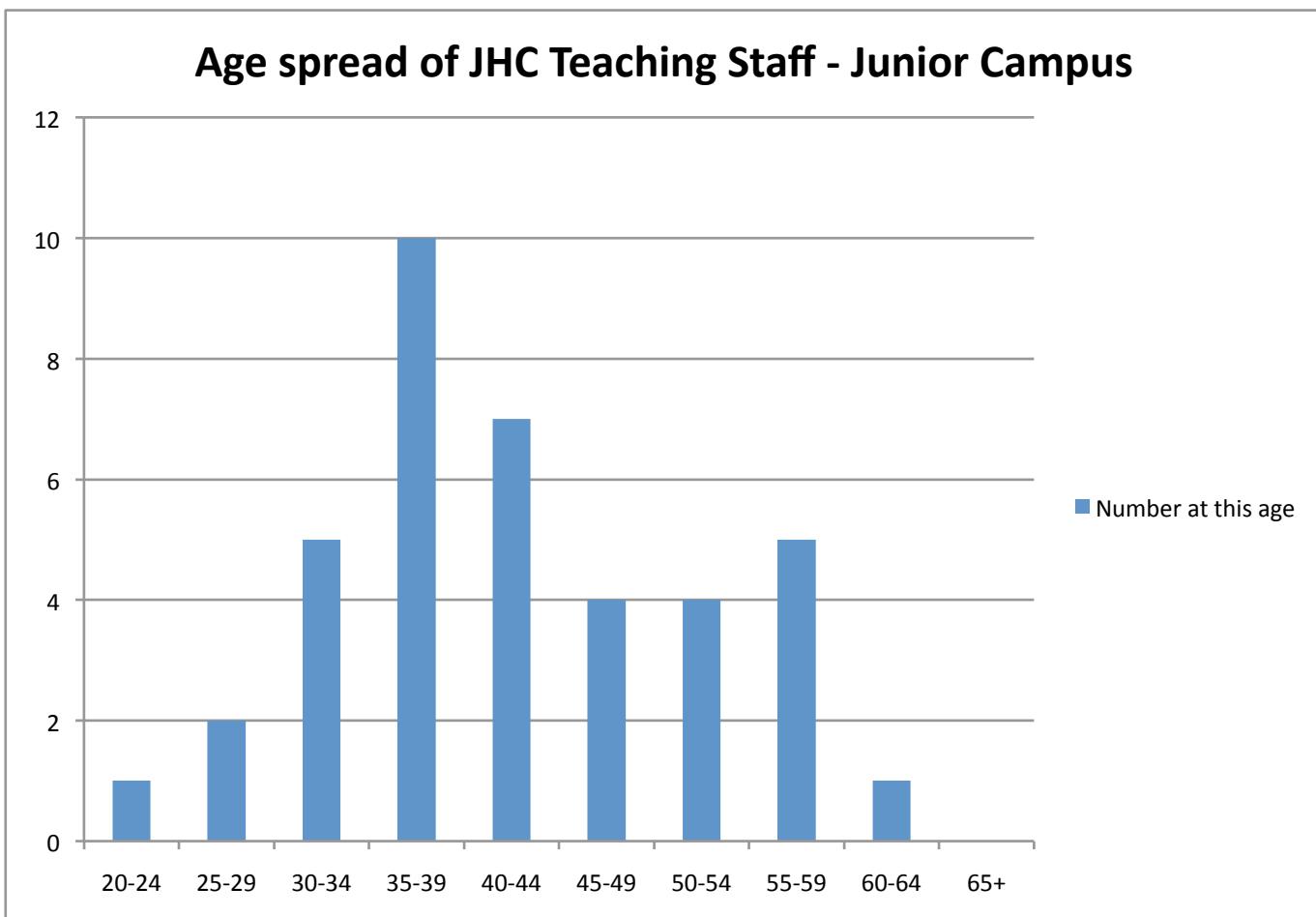
According to the latest TALIS survey, NZ has the highest proportion of over-50 Year 7-10 teachers out of 34 countries in the OECD. (Cockerill, Taylor and Marshall, 2015) Of these, 62% are women. (Lower than the OECD average, but a steadily rising proportion.) This pattern is consistent with the secondary school teacher workforce overall, as corroborated by the NZPPTA, which carries out annual monitoring of the workforce. (Secondary Staffing Report 2015) When we combine this data with national student roll projections, the picture becomes somewhat alarming. The demand for secondary teachers is predicted to rise significantly between 2019 and 2025, after which demand will ease back again. This period of time coincides precisely with a predicted peak of retirements from the teaching force. The Report, which tracks recruitment and retention trends over time, identifies that “we are now firmly on the downward curve of the supply cycle”. (Secondary Staffing Report, 2015)

The NZPPTA Report also monitors recruitment patterns for leadership positions in schools – precisely the focus we are interested in here. It reports that for Middle Management positions in schools for 2015, “One in four positions attracted either no applicants or only one applicant”. (SSR, 2015) This data corroborates my own experience as a principal.

It is clear from the preceding discussion that part of the issue around building leadership succession (though not all of it) is a matter of numbers; so many jobs are being held down by baby boomers that there are, by necessity, fewer younger people coming through. When we translate this to leadership patterns, the more senior positions are naturally being held by the most experienced (and older) staff, creating a distortion in the number of opportunities available for younger staff.

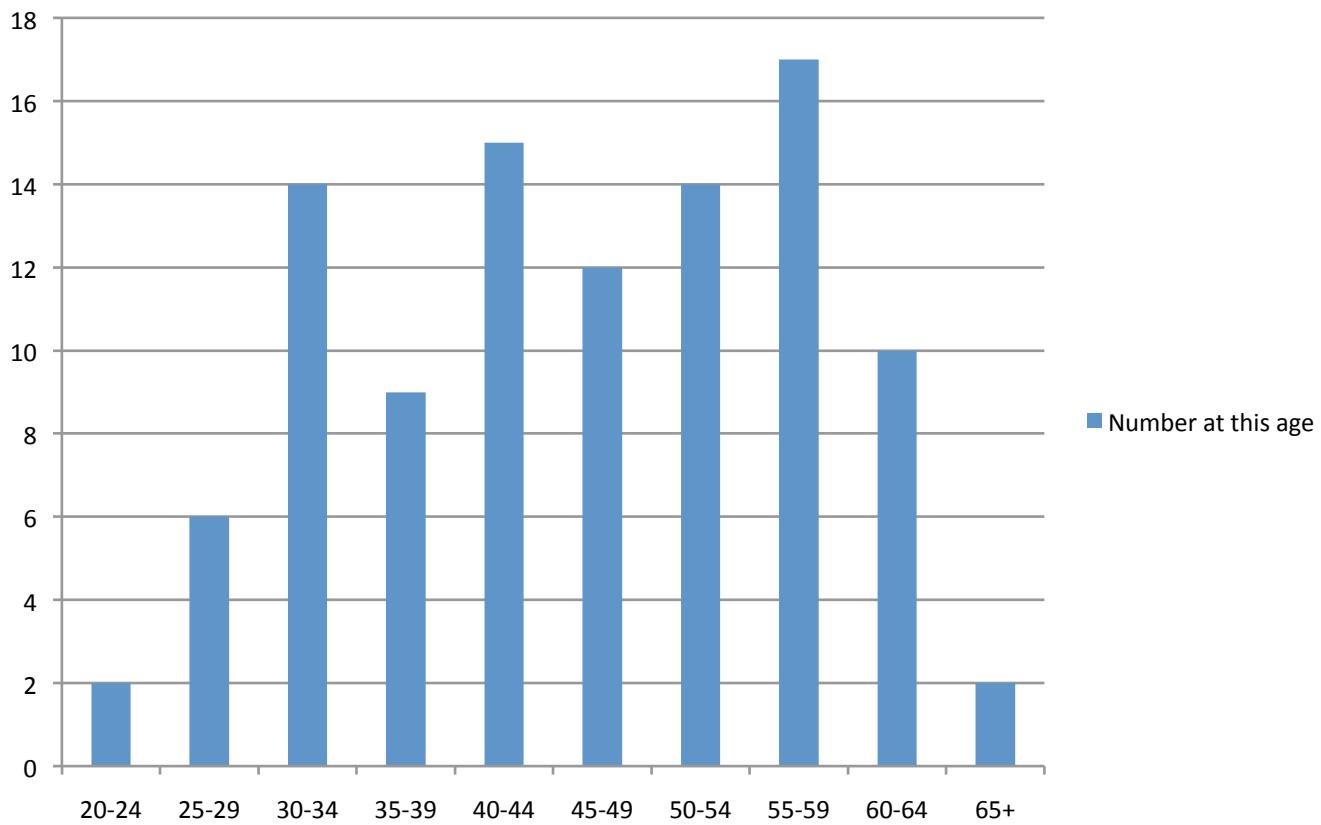
The Author’s School

Like many other employers, I had never examined the age spread of my staff until embarking on this inquiry. In fact, we did not even possess the raw data for all staff on which to carry out the exercise. It reveals an interesting picture.



Contrary to the national picture, this data indicates the Junior Campus age spread is more “youthful”, with a significant cluster of around 35-45 years of age.

Age spread of JHC Teaching Staff - Senior Campus



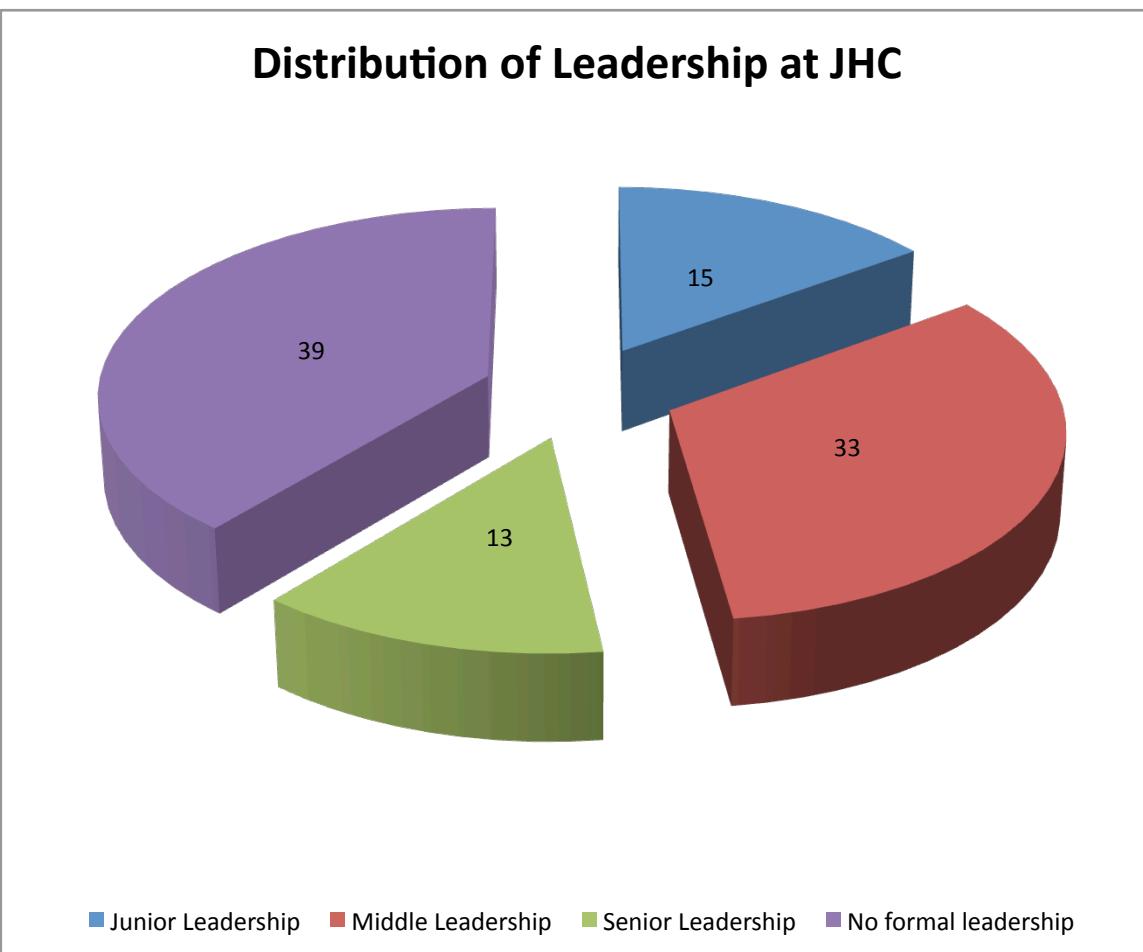
On the other hand, the Senior Campus staff has a significant cluster aged 55-65, with a variable spread across the earlier years. It is clear that regardless of the issue of leadership succession, there will be a period of accelerated staff change and need for recruitment, over the next five to ten years.

It is all very well having such data on one's own employees, but Pearman argues that employers need to have far richer data than simply figures. Factors such as better health, improved longevity, (more active later years) and sometimes financial necessity have resulted in many people remaining in the workforce longer than before. What employers need to do is find out each person's aspirations, desires and intentions, so their organisations have a much more precise projection of staff turnover. Only then, he argues, can they begin to usefully plan how to manage succession.

In a school context, it is obvious that the thinking around teaching staff succession also needs to be applied just as much to non-teaching staff.

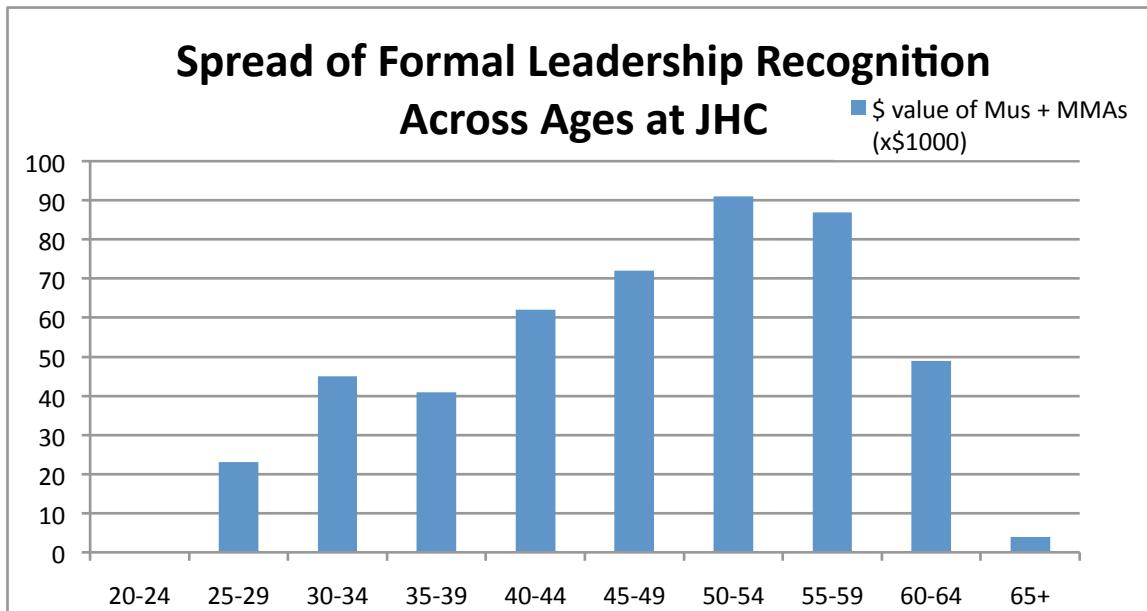
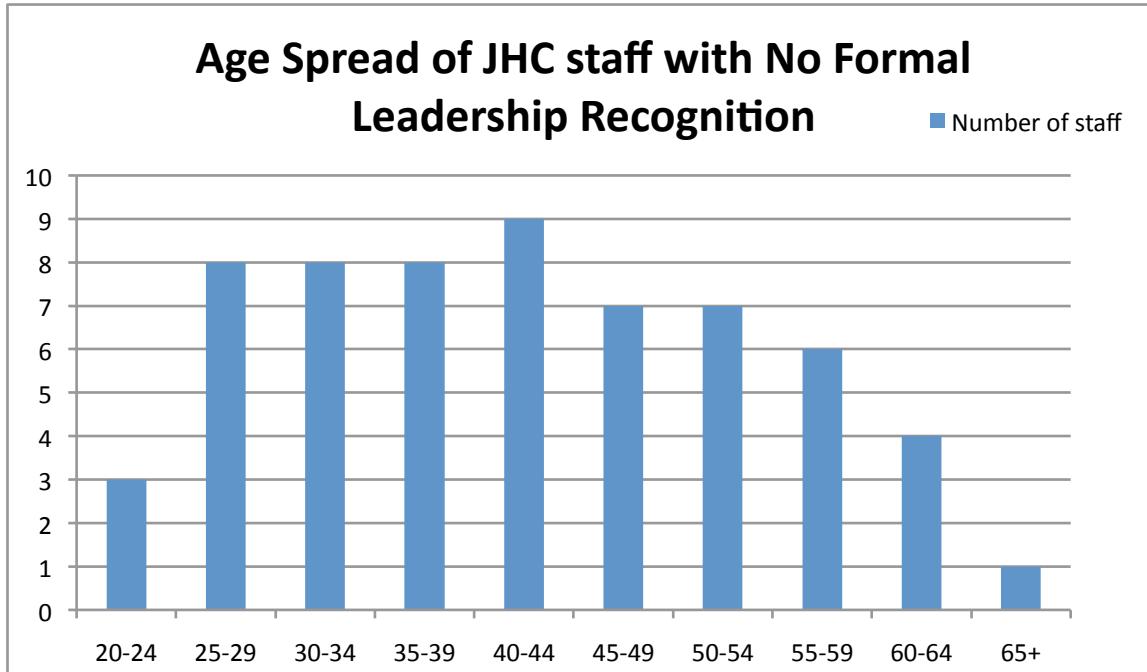
Finally, I analysed the current spread of formal leadership across the staff – again, an exercise not carried out previously. (Scrutiny had always been focussed on the distribution of Management Units and Allowances across the range of leadership activities.) The graphs below show the proportion (%) of staff engaged in formal leadership at various levels, and the spread of the associated financial salary supplements across age brackets.

Distribution of Leadership at JHC



- Junior Leadership – those with up to and including 2 MMAs
- Middle Leadership – those with more than 2 MMAs, up to and including 2 MUs + 2MMAs
- Senior Leadership – those with 3 MUs or more
- Note: MMA – Middle Management Allowance, of value \$1000 p.a
MU - Management Unit, of value \$4000 p.a.

Finally, the following graphs show the age spread of staff with, and without formal leadership recognition.



Note: The Senior Leadership Team has been omitted from this data set for the purpose of this analysis

Summary: Observations and Reflections from the data in this section.

1. The demographic realities of an ageing population are universal and have implications for all endeavours and employers.
2. The age spread of the teaching staff at JHC, specifically at the Senior Campus, conforms to the pattern evident in other data sets for both teachers nationally and the population at large. The next 5-10 years will see an acceleration of staff turnover. This emphasises the importance of this inquiry at this time.
3. I was in that proportion of employers who had never properly analysed their staff demographic. However, more personalised investigation is needed to discover the aspirations of those in the older age brackets, in order to achieve a useful projection of staff turnover timing.
4. Formal leadership is very widely distributed at JHC (61%) and is also widely distributed across age brackets. The spread of staff without formal leadership is surprisingly even across the ages. As one might have expected, leadership peaks in the 50-60 year old bracket, even excluding the most senior leaders.

Section Two: Literature Search

Hargreaves and Fink in their substantial work “Sustainable Leadership” (2006), argue the case for an ecological theory of organisations, one in which the health of each of its parts necessary for the health of the whole. Their work is based on school leadership research in several countries, over three decades. They argue that leadership succession management is far more than simply finding replacements for staff when necessary; rather, they propose an approach based on ensuring sustained performance in a way that transcends specific leaders. “Sustainable leadership lasts” they argue. “It preserves and advances the most valuable aspects of learning and life over time, year upon year, from one leader to the next” (Hargreaves & Fink, p55) Furthermore, “The quest for enduring improvement can and must be significantly advanced through better succession management.” (p71) The question therefore is how?

Distributed Leadership

A common theme (for these and other authors) is the importance of well distributed leadership. Not, they warn, simply more delegation, but authentic distribution, in which staff at all levels know that their contribution is valued and needed. “The most important contribution that senior leaders can make ...is to create an inclusive, purposeful and optimistic culture.” (p123) Rachel Peak argues a similar theme in her thesis on Middle Management issues in NZ secondary Schools. (Peak, 2010) So does “The International Successful School Principalship Project”, which finds that “individual capability is best built through distributed leadership practices.” (quoted by Notman, 2014) Louise Moore focussed on the benefits and strategies of distributing leadership effectively in her Principal’s sabbatical inquiry, drawing heavily on the work of the NZ Best Evidence Synthesis, Fullan, and others. (Moore, 2014) She focussed particularly on the coaching of middle leaders to develop their capacity. This is relevant because it emphasises that succession management (for sustainable performance) is about a lot more than just grooming successors for specific positions.

Middle Management Workload

The idea of distributed leadership however, is problematic. It implies that influence, responsibility and accountability be shared, authentically, with a wider group of staff. The fact remains that workload and role complexity is already a significant issue for middle leaders. The NZPPTA, in response to the fall in applicant numbers for middle leader positions, has commissioned a Taskforce to consider workload matters at this level. To date, it has identified a number of concerns, first among them the ever increasing load of NCEA and its associated moderation processes. A number of other tensions and dilemmas contribute to what (they argue) is increasingly becoming an “unmanageable” role. (NZPPTA, 2015) A number of studies quoted by Peak confirm that these are issues of real substance. For example, “management tasks and activities dominate the work of middle leaders and there is consequently little or no time for leadership.” (Fitzgerald, 2009) Peak suggests that principals are often unrealistic about their expectations of middle leaders. In another study, Fitzgerald argues that the persistent pressure by principals to improve student achievement inevitably falls on middle leaders, together with other activities such as more sophisticated staff appraisal processes. (Fitzgerald, 2000) Cardno points out that middle leaders are also subject to role ambiguity, with the expectations that they tackle tasks such as difficult conversations with colleagues – and all the time, perform as role models with their own classes. (Cardno, 2007) According to Bush and Middlewood, “The ability to sustain middle leadership is imperative for schools. Constant pressure, changing roles, lack of time and the preoccupation with administration is leaving little time for middle leaders to effectively lead their teams and lead learning.” (Bush & Middlewood, 2005) Peak puts it bluntly: “Principals ..need to consider this if they want to avoid their middle leaders becoming disillusioned with their role and (not) reaching their potential as leaders.” (Peak, 2010) Hargreaves & Fink warn against the approach of “leadership plus” – simply thinking that giving people extra tasks represents distributed leadership. The NZ Herald recently ran a feature on this issue, throwing up a (presumably typical) bright young teacher, who explained that he wouldn’t be applying for any middle management positions because, in his words, “it’s an incredible amount of work for a very small compensation.” (NZ Herald, 2015) Clearly, the expectations of, and support for middle leaders’ roles must be tackled more effectively, if distributed leadership is going to contribute to better succession planning.

Strong Sense of Shared Purpose

The second approach Hargreaves & Fink propose, in managing succession, is to develop a strong culture of widely, firmly held commitment to the moral purpose or mission of the organisation. Staff loyalty and “buy-in” cannot be taken for granted. The more cohesively it is nurtured and achieved, the more conducive an environment it is for staff to want to be part of the leadership effort, and for those in leadership to be supported by teams whose

members are pulling in the same direction. Viviane Robinson makes the point that developing the human resource capacity, to achieve one's goals, is usually the part most seriously underestimated. (Robinson, 2011) Developing, articulating, and maintaining a clear sense of purpose, is obviously a senior leadership task, but one which should be regarded as an essential part of "sustainable leadership".

A Pool of leadership Talent

Thirdly, Hargreaves & Fink and many others emphasise the importance of using a wide variety of opportunities to identify, nurture and develop latent leadership talent. The range of approaches available includes shoulder tapping, responsibility sharing within a team, observing and shadowing, various forms of both formal and informal professional development input, guided reading and reflection, short or fixed term leadership opportunities, being mentored, being coached in specific skills, and the list goes on. The question is whether this is done anecdotally and in an ad hoc way, or in a planned, targeted manner. Peak's research found that there were often specific issues of confidence and capability amongst middle leaders, leading to her conclusion that pre-role PLD, and in-role PLD was often patchy and inadequate. However it is done, the more carefully a capacity pool is nurtured, the more capable the school will be, and the more potential leader-successors there are likely to be.

Staff Self-Belief

Hargreaves & Finks' fourth leg of effective succession planning is the idea that sustained performance (including the transitions of key leaders within the school) is enhanced when teachers have a high level of self-belief and confidence, as contrasted to a high level of belief and confidence in their leader(s). We know that the most highly functioning students are those who believe that their own efforts *will* make a difference; this is the same psychology applied to our staff. When they believe that *they* are responsible for improved achievements (for example), the capacity of the school for sustained performance is much higher than if they believe that the improved performance is due to their leader's efforts.

Planning for Succession Needs

Much of what has been argued so far is focussed on building capacity of the whole organisation to sustain performance, over time. However, Hargreaves & Fink also advocate the deliberate, methodical planning of staff turnover projections, and areas of particular risk. They suggest that these should be evident in school strategic planning documentation. Pearman suggests that the aspirations and intentions of all staff should be individually known, but also cautions that the gathering of this data can very easily be clouded by employee mistrust of employers' use of that information, and needs to be gathered sensitively. Butler and Roche-Tarry (2015) reinforce this idea in their article, pointing out that "there is no simple template", that it "must focus heavily on organisational culture", and that succession planning "is a complex task that requires constant attention and ongoing resources."

Are Generational Differences Authentic and Relevant?

Like most workplaces, school staffrooms are peopled with those from their young 20's, through to their late 60's, and sometimes beyond. Anecdotal experience and conventional wisdom often suggest that there are significant generational differences in staff attitudes. I briefly explored the research base for this. On the one hand, there is a wealth of material such as the following: "The key to building a successful multi-generational workplace is to understand the differences between each generation. Each of the four generations – traditionalist, baby boomer, Gen X and Gen Y, (Gen Z is still in school) – has had particular experiences that have shaped their choices, outlook, values and work style." (Boom, 2015) Such articles then proceed to categorise the characteristics of each generation into a range of (sometimes conflicting) stereotypes. It was equally easy however to discover research debunking the authenticity of such stereotypes; for example, Deal, who after researching 3000 corporate leaders, concluded that "when you hold up the stereotypes to the light, they don't cast much of a shadow." (Deal, 2014) She found that workers of all ages had far more in common than not, including: similar values, the desire for respect, the desire for trustworthy leaders, dislike of change, loyalty level depending completely on the context, a universal desire to learn, and the desire for feedback . Slightly to my surprise, this did not appear to be a fruitful area for further exploration.

The Bulge of Baby Boomers

However, there is a significant body of research looking at the implications of an ageing workforce. Geoff Pearman argues that our current longevity changes everything, and that people are conceptualising their "extra" years of health, not as being "added to the end", but as years to enjoy whilst still healthy and active. He argues that workplaces, if they wish to retain their experience and knowledge, and soften the impact of accelerated staff

turnover, need to become a lot more flexible in meeting the desires of older workers. We should challenge our own stereotypes about retirement, he argues, avoid making assumptions about what staff will want to do (ask them instead), and deliberately develop policies and practices which are “age-friendly”. This may, for example, mean being more flexible about part time staff than before. In the school context, there are many implications of an ageing staff and these ideas.

Summary: Observations and Reflections from the Literature

1. Succession planning can usefully be conceptualised as “sustainable leadership” in a wider sense. It can be part of something much more profound than simply replacing people when they leave.
2. Succession planning requires time and resources to do properly. The approach needs to be deliberate and planned
3. Hargreaves & Finks provide a useful framework which is steeped in extensive research in school contexts, and includes:
 - Developing a culture of effective distributed leadership
 - Developing staff commitment to the moral purpose and shared values
 - Deliberately identifying, developing and nurturing leadership potential
 - Building strong staff self-belief in their capacity to make the difference
 - Strategically planning by projecting staff change, identifying key risks
4. We need to challenge our attitude toward older employees if we wish to retain them. (ie be more sympathetic to desires for reduced job size, etc)
5. The Middle Management workload and role in schools is a significant issue which must be tackled, if we want good, younger teachers to apply for such positions.
6. Distributed leadership is a complex concept and requires careful judgement

Section Three: Primary Research

“Staff Perceptions of the Incentives and Disincentives of Leadership Involvement”

I was particularly interested in the “affective domain” of teachers’ perceptions, thoughts and feelings around leadership; why they might, or might not be interested or motivated to become involved in leadership. I wanted to better understand, from the voices of my own staff, how our leadership practices and assumptions were helping or hindering their desire to contribute in this way. I thought this data might provide a helpful cross reference to the other aspects of my inquiry – as well as keeping me well grounded!

The survey itself (see Appendix) was paper-based, anonymous, and all 140 teaching staff were invited to take part. I felt the fact there were 90 responses indicated the high level of interest in the subject. There were about 38 items, and responses were analysed across age brackets, leadership level brackets, and by which of our two campuses the respondents worked in.

For the majority of items, respondents were asked to respond on a continuum of “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree”. These results were allocated a numerical value of 1-5 for the purpose of statistical analysis. Optional comments were invited for each section. These have been rearranged for clarity according to themes, and closely similar responses aggregated with an indication of how many voices they represent. A small number of comments were edited down in the interests of staff anonymity.

The sections of the survey were:

- Perceptions of Teaching as a Career
- Perceptions of the Nature of Leadership
- Aspirations toward Leadership
- Perceptions of Opportunity
- Perceptions of Workload
- Perceptions of Complexity/Difficulty
- Perceptions of Reward
- Perceptions of a Range of ideas raised at a previous staff discussion

Perceptions of Teaching as a Career

Staff satisfaction with teaching as a career was extremely high, with the majority planning to stay in teaching. The predominant perception was that there are good opportunities in teaching for career development. There were no significant differences in this section across age, campus, or leadership level. Whilst the question asked about satisfaction with their career in general rather than at this school in particular, the response nevertheless reflects a highly engaged workforce, committed to the mission, experiencing a high level of satisfaction with it, and optimistic about its opportunities. Most comments centred around the highly individual nature of peoples’ career interests and the range of opportunity. This created a context in which to interpret the following sections.

Perceptions of the Nature of Leadership

The concepts of “teacher leadership” and “distributed leadership” are prominent in the literature of school effectiveness. Most staff believe that all teachers should demonstrate leadership in one way or another, whether holding a formal position or not. They believe leadership skills can be developed (ie are not pre-determined, a point supported by research), but that it is dominated by administration. Several respondents’ comments reinforce this point. This is consistent with the research of Fitzgerald, (2009), Peak (2010), and the NZPPTA Middle Management Taskforce interim analysis. It is clearly the cause of frustration with respect to the expectations on middle leaders to lead improvements and innovation in teaching and learning, as well as attend to the extensive demands of NCEA moderation and departmental organisation. On the other hand, others were philosophical about administration being part of everything. There were no significant differences in this section across age, campus or leadership level.

Aspirations

Staff were widely and very evenly spread in terms of their aspirations toward leadership. (ie from very interested to definitely not interested) At least a third have little or no interest in formal leadership, or in advancing from

where they currently are. (That means that two thirds are, or may be.) Interest in moving into leadership (or higher leadership) is significantly higher in the under-40 age group, than for those in their 40's or 50's. I felt this was encouraging, and debunks any perception that younger staff are less interested in stepping up into leadership roles. Most feel that being in a good school or department is more important than career advancement. About a third of the staff would seriously consider moving schools for a good opportunity. Comments revealed a range of attitudes on the question of whether teachers can necessarily expect career advancement without moving schools. There were no significant campus or leadership level differences in this section.

Perceptions of Opportunity

This section attracted significantly more optional comments than any other, reflecting the keen interest of staff in grappling with the issue of our particular staff demographic. The comments were wide-ranging and perceptive. A majority felt there were adequate opportunities to apply for formal leadership at the school, although the spread of staff views on this approximated a normal curve, skewed toward the positive end. Furthermore, most supported the accumulation of multiple leadership roles as being important for career pathways (although the response pattern also indicated some reservations). The number of comments (positive, negative and qualified) indicated that this was an area that a number of people felt strongly about. Several expressed concerns about some staff being given too many opportunities, to the detriment of both themselves and others. A slight majority felt that leadership should be more widely distributed, and there were some appreciative comments about the recent shift from permanent to fixed term appointments. Most understand how career progression works, although Junior Campus staff, and those without leadership currently, were slightly less clear about this. It is clear from the above that there is room for building a better understanding for staff of the way career advancement and leadership capacity is built through the accumulation of capabilities, skills and experience. A greater degree of transparency around our pattern of leadership spread may also allay some concerns.

Perceptions of Workload

This is a topic about which many feel strongly. Most teachers perceive that leadership workloads are unrealistic or too high, with no significant differences across age, campus or leadership level. Workload clearly acts as a disincentive for many. Most feel the release time does not compensate for the time the jobs require, and perceive that work/life issues become progressively more difficult, the more involved in leadership one becomes. Those currently in senior leadership (3MUs or more) feel the most strongly about workload issues, except for the question about work/life balance however. (They are less likely to consider that this becomes harder, the higher up one goes.) Again, staff offered plenty of additional insights through their comments, many of which provide texture and perspective to researchers' assertions that middle leaders in secondary schools hit a ceiling of leadership effectiveness by the sheer weight of workload, particularly administration. There were however a range of qualifying comments which also bring different perspectives around workload issues.

Perceptions of Complexity

This was also an area explored extensively by both Peak and Fitzgerald. Our results indicate that a significant minority are indeed put off leadership because of its complexity or difficulty, though for a larger number, this is not a critical factor. Junior Campus staff see "complexity" as less of an issue (than the Senior Campus staff), and those already in senior leadership (3MUs or more) rate it as a bigger issue than the staff overall. The majority feel that those in formal leadership are adequately supported, with those in senior leadership slightly less positive about this. There were no significant age differences in this section. Teachers' comments offered a number of suggestions for more effective PLD or support for those promoted to leadership.

Perceptions of Reward

Most staff feel that intrinsic factors are a very important part of the "reward" of leadership. Nevertheless, about 60% feel that neither pay nor release time levels are fair recognition, with a number of supporting comments. Several suggested that release time is a more important "reward" than salary. Junior Campus staff are more likely to feel that release time given is fair recognition than SC staff, whereas those currently in senior leadership are even less likely to agree (than average). Respondents are quite evenly spread on the question of how much the "rewards" influence their aspirations. There were no significant age differences in this section. Some comments suggest that a higher level of transparency about the spread of non-contact time and MU/MMAs might make views on these questions more well informed. Staff were asked to rank order the most influential "reward factors"; by far, the most predominant were job satisfaction, variety and challenge. Salary supplements and release time, interestingly, ranked only 5th and 6th. One could conjecture on this apparent contradiction. It could be argued that in spite of deep concerns with workload and the widespread view that neither pay nor release time are fair recognition for the extra

work and responsibility, teachers are primarily motivated by the task itself – the challenge, the moral purpose, and the satisfaction of seeing kids achieve.

Specific Strategies to Encourage Leadership Involvement

Finally, respondents were asked their views on a list of ideas which emerged from (Senior campus) staff discussion a year ago, when this issue was first raised. There was very strong staff support generally for a range of strategies to create more opportunities for leadership. There was also strong support for the school to try to fund enhanced recompense for leadership work. There were some differences in responses to the various ideas however.

Regarding the balance of fixed term/permanent positions, there is a steady and direct correlation with age; the younger the staff, the more in favour of more fixed term appointments, sliding steadily to a negative view of this from older staff. Middle leaders (those with 1-2 MUs) were also less positive than average. This item also generated many comments, ranging from positive to qualified. The JC staff were more positive about the idea of secondments, along with staff of either campus with no current leadership. The idea of more open attendance at leadership meetings is most positively regarded by those currently with 1-2 MUs. (Note: since this was actioned a year ago, very few teachers have actually taken up the offer to attend HOD meetings voluntarily)

Summary: Observations and Reflections

The staff survey has contributed “teacher voice” very directly to our own context, here in our own school. There is plenty of material in the Collated Survey document for discussion in the staffroom! More importantly, the responses contribute a very comprehensive, “rich” picture of how we perceive the whole issue of leadership involvement in our school. Many of the response patterns correlate with, and give texture to issues raised in the literature. Some of the responses *might* have been influenced by having had access to analyses of leadership spread at the school beforehand: that in itself has caused learning, as it is only for this inquiry that these patterns have been analysed so closely.

The emergent themes seem to be:

- Most teachers at this school enjoy a very high level of job/career satisfaction
- It is widely understood that a degree of leadership can be expected of all staff
- Many younger staff (under 40s) aspire to formal leadership
- Whilst younger staff are more open to the possibility of other careers, there was no evidence whatsoever that younger teachers are less committed to their career, less satisfied, or less interested in advancing into leadership
- At least a third of the staff are not interested in formal or more senior leadership
- There are good opportunities at the school, but many would like to see these improved with wider distribution, judicious use of fixed terms, understudying, short term projects, or other similar strategies
- There is a range of views regarding the right balance of fixed term/permanent positions, and the accumulation of multiple roles
- There is widespread understanding of the senior staff numbers “bulge” and its implications for both opportunities and succession
- Administration demands constrain other aspects of effective leadership
- Workload levels are a significant concern.
- PLD and support/mentoring for leaders managing the complexities of their roles could be improved. However, role complexity in itself is not a significant disincentive for those interested in leadership
- Whilst release time and pay are widely considered inadequate, satisfaction, challenge and variety are more profound “reward” factors for many
- Release time is regarded as more meaningful/useful than more pay by many
- Notwithstanding the above, pay and release time levels are disincentives for some, and many would like to see the school supplement remuneration with other incentives within its control.
- Except where specifically reported, there were no significant differences in attitudes toward leadership issues across ages and stages of career.

Section Four: How do other Organisations approach Succession Planning?

That succession planning and managing the ageing workforce is high on the industry agenda is evident from a continual stream of media reports of projected shortages of everyone from plumbers to doctors. As an example, a spokesman for the NZ Institute of Directors commented recently that, in light of the trend of private company directors staying in their roles to much greater ages, the more astute boards were starting to very deliberately diversify their membership with the appointment of much younger members. (RNZ Morning Report, 11 Aug 2015) I sought to find out what practices were in place both in the Private Sector and in other similar schools. This section reports on those findings.

A The Private Sector

Interviews with two consultants, and the HR managers of three organisations outside the education sector gave me a window of understanding into Best Practice in industry. Of the three organisations, one was a local government organisation, one a private service provider, and one a large private manufacturer. All emphasised an impression that the quality of HR management in general and succession planning in particular was highly variable in NZ, with many companies (particularly smaller ones, the majority of NZ firms) yet to face the issue of the ageing workforce and its implications in any strategic sense. One of the consultancies in particular, was marketing its services in a focussed way specifically toward the implications of ageing workers. There were some very clear themes evident from these five interviews.

- All regard the ageing workforce and its implications as a significant, critical area of concern, with respect to the sustainability of their organisation
- There was a very clear understanding that the loss of experience and institutional memory represents *the very knowledge that gives each organisation its competitive edge, right now.*
- All have a planned, methodical approach to analysing the ages of their workforce, and projecting future HR needs
- Identifying particular areas of risk or exposure is essential, as part of that
- All pointed out that this exercise is necessarily imprecise and often does not lead to nice, neat succession solutions. However, the thinking and awareness invested in this planning was regarded as critical in managing staff turnover effectively.
- All have a process of interviews with staff (not necessarily all the staff, and not necessarily annually), with the agenda of establishing their aspirations. These are completely separate to performance appraisal processes. These interviews include the discussion of possible career pathways. In most cases, they are run by “Management Once Removed” – in other words, by a level of management above the employees’ immediate supervisor. They are also part of a process of identifying the potential of each employee for future promotion and leadership.
- Aspirational data (as above) can be correlated with performance data to identify potential leadership, and all those interviewed had a deliberate approach to developing such latent ability in a wide range of ways. This included specific shoulder tapping in some cases, even where the employee had not been explicitly aspirational.
- Most had a planned, “baseline” PLD programme for those promoted into leadership, covering a number of generic management skills. (In one case this was 2 days per month for 4 months) The purpose was to help new leaders think much more broadly about the organisation than just their own department.
- Orientation into the shared values and purpose of the organisation varied. This was much stronger in some cases than others. In the case of the strongest, it was emphasised that employees were appointed just as much on attitude and orientation to the company’s values, as on technical skills. This priority was not always shared by immediate supervisors. Several emphasised that succession planning was part of building organisational culture, not merely a mechanism to fill leadership vacancies.
- In one case, aspirational interviews were being planned specifically for employees when they turned 60, in order to match their plans and wishes with organisational needs as much as possible. Retention planning of older employees was regarded as part of the transition involved in losing experience.
- Some emphasised that succession management was not just about maintaining the status quo, but about the evolution of the organisation, about projecting its needs into the future and planning ahead for that. (ie aligned with “Blue Sky”, long term strategic thinking)

- By contrast, some issues emerged that I felt were probably already well-established in our school context, possibly more so than in industry. These were:
 1. The concept of leadership as contrasted with management
 2. The idea that all employees can be expected to demonstrate leadership in some way
 3. Authentic leadership – leaders walking the talk, being expected to role model
 4. Strong, clear, explicit organisational values and sense of purpose
 5. Employee engagement (commitment to the purpose of the enterprise)
 6. The idea that *all* employees are entitled to PLD investment
 7. We certainly have much “flatter” leadership structures in schools

B The Secondary School Sector

I made contact with a number of schools which had characteristics similar to ours, or from which senior leaders had published material pertinent to this inquiry, for the purpose of finding out how they thought about succession planning. Ultimately, I only had useful personal contact with about six other schools. I wanted to find out how strategically other schools thought, planned and put in place practices that deliberately built capacity for succession. From this part of my investigation, it was impossible to establish any sense of where schools in general are situated in this respect. Some of those I had contact with, had a range of practices which were relevant but not methodical or deliberate. These included “some” informal mentoring, some informal career advisory discussions, committees with wide membership, ad hoc identification of staff with potential, of staff aspirations, and so on. I did however learn of some very promising approaches:

- One or two were practising a structured system of coaching for all middle leaders, based on a theoretical base for effective leadership. (eg Westlake Boys’ H S, Education Gazette 19 June 2004 “Building Leadership from the Middle”)
- Another principal researched coaching methodology. She began by being coached herself by an external coach, before bringing the approach into the SLT, preparatory to them coaching middle leaders.
- One or two insisted that their senior leadership team role model ongoing leadership learning by being actively involved in study or development, combined with fortnightly 1-1 mentoring conversations
- One principal carries out aspirational conversations with all staff (other than PRTs) annually
- Several deliberately allocate some MUs for short term recognition of leadership in specific areas (different areas, to deliberately build opportunities)
- One school emphasised buy-in to the school’s moral purpose and values, right from the point of appointment. This school has them clearly articulated in a document for the purpose
- One school was considering funding its own RRR Units (= MUs) specifically for excellent teachers who wished to stay full time teaching as “Master teachers” rather than as leaders. (Note: this mechanism is specifically allowed for in the STCA)

I also consulted Ministry of Education senior personnel, the Otago University Centre for Leadership and Administration Centre, and an ex-principal consultant. I was encouraged by the Ministry to consider engaging in the new “Communities of Schools” project, specifically as another way of giving mid-career teachers release time and financial reward, as well as collaboration opportunities with other schools.

In general, I gleaned the impression that schools with deliberate, planned, and well researched approaches to thinking about the building of middle leadership capacity, or to thinking about deliberate succession management, were possibly far and few between.

Summary: Observations and Reflections on the Private Sector and other Schools

What became clear very quickly was the *deliberateness* of Best Practice; the best examples are thoughtful, considered, deliberate and well planned. The key learnings from this section are:

1. Combine blue sky, future-focussed strategic thinking with the evaluation of current staff sustainability
2. Map out current staff ages, aspirations and intentions, combine them with projected organisational needs, and identify key areas of risk
3. Recognise that this process is imprecise, but that the process itself will raise awareness, which should then translate into proactive strategies to build capacity and mitigate risk
4. Carefully consider how middle leaders are supported and developed, with particular reference to coaching and mentoring models.

5. Carefully consider orientation into, and maintenance of, a sense of shared moral purpose amongst all employees
6. Consider how best to recognise and retain older, highly experienced staff who do not wish to be involved in leadership in the traditional sense.

Section Five:

Practice at James Hargest College: How does it Measure Up?

In this section I tentatively identify areas of good practice, areas where good practice could be improved, and areas requiring action: (Note – the author’s perspectives here may be different from those of staff and Board, and it is hoped these ideas will be critiqued by those groups.)

A. What are we already doing well at our school?

- Staff commitment to the moral purpose and a high level of shared values
- High staff satisfaction with their careers reflecting a high morale, which in turn reflects well on the school
- Staff self-belief; staff believe in their capacity to make a difference
- Staff widely accept that everyone contributes or should contribute leadership
- Middle and senior leaders have a good understanding of leadership as influence, not simply as managers/administrators of processes. They also generally demonstrate authentic leadership by role modelling highly professional attributes
- Our middle leaders are highly respected by the staff, and in many cases, demonstrate leadership in the local community of schools as well. They are highly influential in high stakes decisions made within the school
- Leading and offering PLD, through the “Cross Campus PLD” programme in particular, is strongly encouraged from staff of all ages and stages
- Attempt is made to develop the capabilities of ALL staff, not just potential high-fliers, through the equitable distribution of PLD resources as far as practicable
- Actual appointment processes for vacancies are careful and robust. Internal applicants are always considered closely

B. What are we doing quite well, but could improve on?

- Distributed leadership. Leadership is already widely distributed at JHC. However there may be ways this could be deepened and broadened *in the interests of building capacity*. Distributed leadership is a complex area
- More methodically identifying potential leadership talent and shoulder tapping where appropriate
- Deliberately identifying strategies for creating more opportunities for leadership experience (eg understudying/shadowing) and the more active promotion of external leadership study/sabbatical options
- A considerable number of MU/MMAs are currently being used as fixed term in recognition of leadership being undertaken regardless of reward: make the number of these more transparent so staff can see how this is being done. Also allocate some each year specifically for “leadership development”
- We are highly likely to see an increase in the number of teachers moving to part time status. Whilst conditions for them have been recently changed to be financially equitable, there may be other implications for the school of a higher proportion of part-timers. We need to regard PT staff in a positive light, as we will need them
- Orientation of new staff into the school’s purpose, mission, values and philosophies: this is done by the use of an iterative document called “Preferred Practice at JHC”, by the SCT. This document should continue to be developed and updated, and its use with new staff continued
- As part of the on-going “Cross Campus PLD” programme offered by staff, for staff I have occasionally led a session on “Navigating a Satisfying Career.” Picking up on some uncertainty from younger staff about how career progression works, this session, when re-offered, should perhaps be adjusted to cover the more specific skills that are required at various levels of leadership, and how they can be built up.
- There have been efforts to build capacity in some areas of key strategic importance: Eg. ICT Network Management, Timetabling, Property Management, Financial Management.

C. What do we need to challenge, change or start doing?

- Formulate a policy and framework for succession management. (BOT personnel policies currently have no mention of succession)
- Analyse staff age data further, by leadership role and by curriculum area, to gain an even better picture of our likely needs in the short/medium term.
- Start a process of finding out staff aspirations, desires and especially in the case of those over 55, intentions. (This needs to be actioned sensitively)
- These processes need to include non-teaching as well as teaching staff.
- Initiate medium/long term future-focussed thinking about the school, in order to put succession planning into a context of “where we want to be”, not just maintaining status quo. (Note: strategic thinking and planning currently is almost exclusively focussed on student achievement outcomes only)
- Middle and Senior management workload (particularly HODs) needs to be critically evaluated with a “lean management” lens. (ie applying a framework of thinking in an attempt to find time efficiencies to reduce workload)
- Consider a structured supervision or mentoring process for all HODs (or all who wish to engage). Also, evaluate coaching models for consideration of ongoing support and development
- Define for ourselves the set of competencies middle leaders need to have, and put in place a series of PLD opportunities to ensure all have access to them (oriented at new HODs and those who wish to build confidence in specific areas)
- Consider whether (and if so, how) the school should and could enhance existing financial recognitions for leadership
- Possibly investigate and critically evaluate possible involvement in the new government programme “Investing in Success”, which involves becoming part of a cluster of secondary and primary schools, and which attracts considerable funding of release time and additional MU’s.

Conclusions

It is abundantly clear that our thinking and practice around succession planning need to become much more deliberate and planned. The question begged is, whose job is this? Clearly, the principal’s. The official government policy on where such responsibilities lie is cheerfully unequivocal: “In every NZ school the principal is ultimately responsible for the effectiveness of the multiple and inter-connected dimensions of educational leadership and management” (Kiwi Leadership For Principals – MoE)

Most organisations the size of James Hargest College would have a fulltime HR manager, quite separate from the CEO or General Manager. Schools are not funded for such luxuries, but are expected to fulfil these functions within the conceptual framework of the principal as the specialist leader of everything. In our case, some HR functions are delegated around a small group of senior staff, but are substantively the responsibility of the principal.

Clearly, it is the principal’s role to lead the thinking and subsequent actions required, to create sustainable leadership. This will involve building a pool of leadership capacity, and managing smooth succession, so that the quality of education the school is known for not only survives, but thrives, through an era of accelerated teacher and leader turnover.

That is the challenge. It is quite possibly the biggest challenge facing James Hargest College at present. We are fortunate in that we have a very highly functioning, high quality HR foundation from which to work, but we cannot rest on our laurels. We need to take calm but considered steps, forthwith.

APW
20 Aug 2015

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Building Leadership Capacity at James Hargest College “Leadership as Inquiry” - June 2015

Collation of Responses (All staff)

The purpose of this survey was to contribute to reflection around effective ways to build leadership capacity for future succession needs at James Hargest College. It formed part of the principal’s sabbatical inquiry. It was an anonymous survey. Data was further analysed by unpacking the responses of various sub-groups of the staff. There were 90 respondents, 20 from the Junior Campus (JC) and 70 from the Senior Campus (SC). This was a very substantial proportion of the total of 138 teaching staff.

Thank you to all staff who engaged in this survey! I appreciate your investment of time.

Special thanks to Stuart Elder for extensive assistance with analytical software, Kristi Olphert for graphing and other support, and the group of six staff who helped refine this survey through two draft iterations, before it was circulated.

*Andy Wood
Principal
James Hargest College*

Perceptions of Teaching as a Career

1. In my experience, education is a satisfying career

Strongly disagree (1)	0	1	7	35	47	Strongly Agree (5)
Average response 4.42						

2. I expect/plan to move into a different career when the opportunity arises

36	28	12	8	2
Average response 1.98				

3. I think that education has good opportunities for career development

3	17	25	34	11
Average response 3.37				

Summary

JHC staff satisfaction with teaching as a career is very high indeed, with the majority planning to stay in teaching. The predominant perception is that there are good opportunities in teaching for career development. There were no significant differences in this section across age, campus, or leadership level.

Optional Respondents’ comments

Highly individual and varied

- 1 All depends on the individual (eg some prefer to stay in the classroom), your circle of friends, depends where your satisfaction comes from (eg meeting ex pupils) x5
- 2 Lots of varied opportunities; career development in teaching doesn’t necessarily imply school leadership, can include other things like RTLBNZQA, MOE, advisors, options to move and work in different types of schools, the fact people have varying skill sets, etc etc x5

General Observations

- 3 There are opportunities but also constraints due to fact we are a government service
- 4 Teaching is a fantastic career, adaptable to personal/family circumstances
- 5 Career development for teachers is not really promoted, unless you want to work as an administrator
- 6 Might be interested in another career in semi-retirement
- 7 My teaching career has been very enjoyable and satisfying but wouldn’t recommend it as a career to young people because of the take-home component/work-life balance issues. X2 (“You have to be prepared to forego any life outside of school and home for yourself”)
- 8 If you can do this job well, you can do any job in the world
- 9 Once you are a teacher you are kind of **stuck** and it is difficult to move into other careers.

Perceptions of the nature of leadership

Strongly
disagree (1)

Strongly
Agree (5)

4. Every teacher should demonstrate leadership to some degree

0	4	6	33	47
Average response 4.37				

5. Leadership can only be expected of those who are formally recognised/paid extra

39	29	14	8	0
Average response 1.90				

6. You're either "cut out" for formally recognised leadership or you're not

15	22	27	21	2
Average response 2.69				

7. Leadership in schools is perceived to be dominated by administration tasks

0	6	27	34	23
Average response 3.82				

Summary

Most staff believe that all teachers should demonstrate leadership in one way or another. They believe leadership can be developed (isn't pre-determined), but that it is dominated by administration. There were no significant differences in this section across age, campus or leadership level.

Respondents' Optional Comments

Who should show leadership?

- 1 All teachers should be showing leadership – part of the nature of teaching x6 (several similar comments)
- 2 Leadership can be demonstrated in many forms, often unrecognised/informal, and suit different people x3
- 3 Some teachers either can't, or won't contribute leadership. Everyone should be sharing the load
- 4 I have no formal leadership, but see myself as a leader through a genuine concern to strengthen what we have, and not take our success for granted
- 5 Some staff who didn't appear interested in leadership at JHC have gone on to do very well at other schools
- 6 Those who push themselves forward are not always those most suitable (for leadership)

Administration

- 7 It *looks like* there is more admin/organisation, as you progress further up x2
- 8 Admin is an integral part of everything including leadership x2
- 9 Admin is the tedious, off-putting aspect of leadership x2
- 10 As an HOD, leadership is admin.. That's how I perceive it.

General Comments

- 11 I've seen teachers grow into roles – can take up to 5 yrs for some to develop into a strong confident leader
- 12 You can learn and develop leadership skills; depends on your ambition and drive
- 13 Some aspects of leadership reflects *who you are*, your belief system etc, cannot easily be taught
- 14 The real work of leadership is getting the troops behind you, ie supporting
- 15 In any leadership role, you never know what (issue) is going to come through the door each day

Perceptions of Aspirations

Strongly
disagree (1)

Strongly
Agree (5)

8. I am definitely interested in advancing into formally recognised leadership/ more senior leadership

23	18	18	8	20
Average response 2.82				

9. I **might** be interested in advancing into leadership/ more senior leadership in the future

16	15	14	19	17
Average response 3.07				

10. Being settled in a good school/department is more important to me than 'progressing up the career ladder'

1	10	20	27	28
Average response 3.83				

11. Teachers who want to advance in leadership need to be prepared to move schools

4	6	25	33	21
Average response 3.69				

12. I would seriously consider moving school within Invercargill if a good opportunity came up

26	17	14	21	9
Average response 2.66				

13. I would seriously consider moving school to another place beyond Invercargill if a good opportunity came up

33	18	9	12	15
Average response 2.52				

Summary

Staff are widely spread in terms of their aspirations toward leadership. At least a third have little or no interest in formal leadership, or in advancing from where they currently are. Interest in moving into leadership (or higher leadership) is significantly higher in the Under 40 age group, than for those in their 40's or 50's. Most feel that being in a good school or department is more important than career advancement per se. About a third of the staff would seriously consider moving schools for a good opportunity. There were no significant campus or leadership level differences in this section.

Respondents' Optional Comments

Ages/stages/personal circumstances

- 1 Formal leadership very dependent on age/stage of life (eg young families)
- 2 Depends on family circumstances and timing
- 3 Not interested in formal leadership (late in career) but would be happy to do so temporarily to help out
- 4 "Been there done that", good to be able to focus back on teaching
- 5 I have young children, so am not currently willing to add more to my plate.
- 6 I think younger staff have a (stronger) desire for a better work/life balance

Moving Schools

- 7 I don't think you should have to change schools to advance in leadership
- 8 Being happy in a school/department is more important than getting leadership advancement x2
- 9 There's an element of luck in whether you get opportunities in your current school (ie without having to move)
- 10 As much as you like a school, if the opportunities aren't there, you have to consider moving on
- 11 I would consider changing schools for a good opportunity but it would have to be a really unique one to give up being part of such an amazing team. Would be a dilemma
- 12 Moving schools (several times) has helped me, have appreciated seeing different leadership styles and systems
- 13 Being prepared to change schools is mostly a matter of age/stage. Not appealing as you get older.
- 14 I think all teachers should HAVE to work in different schools during their career, whether moving into leadership or not
- 15 Teachers moving schools is healthy

Making a Difference in different ways

- 16 I believe I'm "making a difference" by being a specialist teacher in a hard-to-staff area
17 My interest in leadership would be because I thought my skills would help/ make a difference/fill a need that would help the school – not from general ambition for leadership in itself

General Comments

- Being in a good school encourages leadership aspiration, being in a poorly run school is a disincentive; so quality of current leadership is more important than what kind of school it is
18 A significant turn-off is the increasing expectations of the roles in quest for continual improvement – always new initiatives are added on, seldom is anything ever taken off
19 Wonder why those in the corporate world so readily seek promotion, but would appear that less people are in teaching
20 If current leaders are open and approachable, it encourages potential new leaders

Perceptions of Opportunity

Strongly
disagree (1)

Strongly
Agree (5)

14. At JHC there are adequate opportunities to apply for formal leadership situations

4	14	34	26	11
Average response 3.29				

15. Leadership should be more widely distributed at JHC

3	18	32	18	17
Average response 3.32				

16. Allowing accumulation of multiple leadership roles is important in building breadth/depth of experience for more senior leadership

5	8	27	38	8
Average response 3.42				

17. Allowing accumulation of multiple roles is important in building attractive career pathways for retaining good, experienced staff

4	9	20	42	6
Average response 3.43				

18. It is unclear to me how career pathways/progressions in the teaching profession work

34	21	18	7	4
Average response 2.12				

Summary

A strong majority feel there are adequate opportunities at JHC. Furthermore, most also support the accumulation of multiple leadership roles as being important for career pathways. A slight majority feel leadership should be more widely distributed. Most understand how career progression works, although Junior Campus staff, and those without leadership currently, were slightly less clear about how career pathways work.

Respondents' Optional Comments

Multiple Roles - positive

- 1 Multiple roles at varied levels creates effective leadership teams with the depth to support up and coming leaders
 2 There have to be viable/credible career pathways that build in seniority
 3 Accumulation results in retaining staff

Multiple Roles – negative

- 4 Allowing multiple roles reduces distribution (of leadership), specially when permanent. X2
 5 Experiencing different leadership roles is imperative to enable progression into senior leadership/ build depth etc, but shouldn't be simultaneous. X3
 6 Allowing role accumulation doesn't necessarily succeed in retaining snr staff
 7 Splitting deaning and curriculum or year level leadership would allow more people opportunity
 8 For some, accumulating roles is for the purpose of increasing pay and reducing teaching hours
 9 Should be a cap to accumulation of roles to assist spread
 10 More proactive management of who becomes involved in what sort of activities is needed to avoid too much accumulation or inappropriate people putting their hand up for things. (Context – not necessarily appointments but also volunteers for time-consuming activities)

Multiple Roles – Qualified Comments

- 11 Re multiple roles – should be best person for the job x2
 12 Allowing accumulation in order to building career depth etc needs to be balanced with ensuring realistic workloads
 13 Too many roles have been held by some, at times
 14 Accumulation (of roles) needs to be monitored more closely – some junior staff are given too much (or allowed to do too much) and will burn out

Clarity around pathways

- 15 As a young teacher, am unsure how to take the first steps toward leadership
16 Lack of knowledge about systems at JHC, means I'm not sure about opportunities
Recent Attempts to Distribute Leadership More
17 Good to see recognition lately of need for more leadership opportunities x2
18 The recent moves to more distributed leadership/more fixed term roles is good, except that there needs to be a plan for those involved so they don't get to the end of their experience and have to go backwards
19 Have seen more distributed leadership/opportunities occurring over the past year x2
20 Definitely room to improve systems. But has been great seeing people put their hand up for leadership opportunities and doing well in their roles
21 Having lots of small opportunities for leadership is good, (eg TIC a year level within your dept) because it gives people a chance to find out what their leadership skills are like (from a person appreciative of this)

Permanency and Stability

- 22 Opportunities slim because management personnel at JHC so stable x5
23 Having a number of people in permanent positions is not a bad thing, unless the result is several moving on at once, resulting in a "big gap in institutional knowledge"
24 Some of us older ones need to move on to let younger staff through, otherwise it will all happen in a rush
25 Permanent appointments mean no opportunity for anyone else
26 Opportunities at JHC limited due to senior staff stability
27 Feel opportunity for progression at JHC blocked by age/stage of HOD, but accept this as consequence of decision to stay put at JHC (because good school)
28 (There is) a rigidity of attitude/lack of openness to new ways of doing things due to most positions being permanent

General Comments

- 29 There are many/ plenty opportunities for leadership in a wide variety of areas (at JHC) x3
30 Unlike other schools, there is open/honest distribution of opportunities at JHC. Staff engagement in policy/practice debate etc encouraged. Feel I have been given opportunities to "find my feet" through mentoring from a SLT person
31 There are clear leadership opportunities (at JHC). I can see that SLT support those in leadership positively Good capable teachers are often not given recognition of (informal) leadership
32 There are a variety of opportunities, an effort made to distribute leadership, some opportunities are modest
33 JHC is more transparent than the other school I have worked in
34 Career progression happens in different ways for different people
35 How do we retain good experienced staff who are NOT interested in formal leadership !?
36 Secondment/short term opportunities great, but disincentive there is impact on my classes. (ie negative impact on teaching)
37 More opportunities opening up than in past, but not a huge variety
38 Limited opportunities in (my particular specialty) unless you shift into SLT
39 Still find challenges in my (current leadership) role, but feel I've "hit a ceiling"
40 Opportunities are way behind the private sector
38 Favoured few get opportunities, others overlooked/ a "privileged few" x2
39 Need to think about potential leaders – some "low key" people have huge potential but won't push themselves forward.
40 Opportunity barriers can be at level of teaching/responsibility within departments – some HODs are better than others at giving younger staff a chance to work at different levels.
41 Would like to see a larger SLT – 2 more staff, to spread the work (SC)

Perceptions of Workload

Strongly
disagree (1)

Strongly
Agree (5)

19. The workload required of many leadership situations is unrealistic/ too high

0	10	20	35	25
Average response 3.83				

20. The sheer workload of leadership/more senior leadership puts me right off the idea

8	17	21	22	19
Average response 3.31				

21. The release time given (for formal leadership) means less classes, so workload for leaders seems to be similar to (or less than) fulltime classroom teachers

15	38	17	15	2
Average response 2.44				

22. My observation is that maintaining work/life balance gets harder the more you get into leadership

1	4	12	39	34
Average response 4.12				

23. The workload associated with classroom teaching is a disincentive to move into leadership, than the workload associated with the leadership itself

5	17	30	19	11
Average response 3.17				

Summary

Most teachers perceive that leadership workloads are unrealistic or too high, with no significant differences across age, campus or leadership level. This acts as a disincentive for many. Most feel the release time does not compensate for the time the jobs require, and that work/life issues become more difficult, the more involved in leadership one becomes. Those currently in senior leadership (3MUs or more) feel the most strongly about the workload issues, except for the question about work/life balance however. (They are less likely to consider that this becomes harder, the higher up one goes)

Respondents' Optional Comments

Workload as a disincentive to leadership

- 1 I believe that workload is the reason less people are interested in leadership now than in the past
2 Leadership positions don't get enough release time = overload, poor balance. Puts me off. x4
3 How some individuals make leadership look can be off-putting (But not always as it looks!)
4 Some current SLT are not good role models in work/life balance (the **only** thing they are not good at!) x4
5 Comment from a leader to effect that "you don't see your own kids during term time" makes me feel put off
stepping into leadership at JHC with a young family
6 It's teaching workload that's the turn-off, rather than the leadership workload

Workload not necessarily a disincentive but...

- 7 Workload is only a disincentive if you don't get a **time** allowance/ time is the essential issue x2
8 Issue is not the workload of the role itself, but the constant pressure to be more involved in **extra-curric**
activities
9 The disincentive is not so much that actual job/tasks, but rather the **responsibility**, worry, reduced ability to
"switch off"
10 I don't think leadership workload is unrealistic but **pay/benefits** aren't worth the workload
11 Workload/ time constraints cause frustration because you feel like you can't do the best job you could be doing
(and you want to)

Where is Workload the hardest!?

- 12 Teacher workload is huge and extra demands are placed on us
13 Biggest workload worry should be for 5x class teachers (no flexibility for them in how they use their time!)
14 Small leadership roles (eg TIC) are hard because teaching load still high
15 Middle management level is tough (managing classes AND leadership)
16 Leadership workload gets a bigger issue the more senior you go x2
17 Workload is unrealistic for all teachers, leadership or not x3

It's very Much about the Person

- 18 Work/life balance issues are very much personality-based/individual issue. (How individuals approach the role) X2
- 19 Some people in danger of burnout have extremely high standards
- 20** Got to be very careful forming judgements about how hard people work – some do long hrs at school and nothing at home, others leave early but work every night at home. Some are more time effective than others x2
- 21 Some are very vocal about what they do (eg announcing things that are actually the result of other peoples' work) while others just quietly get on with it. (By implication - perceptions of leadership profile/effectiveness can be misleading.)

General Comments

- 22 Workload seems worse than usual this year
- 23 Just a matter of age/stage – family commitments/ outside work priorities x2
- 24 Pay/workload rewards seem to be better in secondary than primary (eg SC get to drop a class, JC still retain responsibility for their homeroom)
- 25 Workload a definite issue – “who wants to work 7 days a week?” x2
- 26 Work/life balance is a big issue for me – I need to learn to work smarter (in leadership)
- 27 Use of time – leadership positions appear to have more flexibility but in reality don’t, as most are “open door” and available for responding to others’ issues continually
- 28 Teaching workload (as a disincentive) is variable across subjects – some have a far higher assessment workload than others
- 29 You’ve just got to be prepared for the reality that a role (eg Deaning) will take your time allowance AND all your non-contact time as well.
- 30 Depends to an extent on how stable the Department is – if high staff turnover, there’s a lot more work for leadership
- 31 Frustrations all hang around the structure of NCEA, its fairness, and manageability of workload (ie of assessment)

Perceptions of Complexity (or difficulty)

Strongly
disagree (1)

Strongly
Agree (2)

24. The complexity of leadership responsibilities are a significant factor in influencing my personal aspirations (toward leadership or more senior leadership)

17	12	21	31	6
Average response 2.97				

25. I feel somewhat daunted by leadership/more senior leadership possibilities because of the complexities or nature of the issues I think I would have to handle

16	29	19	13	10
Average response 2.68				

26. My personal level of formal leadership aspirations have little to do with the complexity of leadership responsibilities

4	15	21	30	14
Average response 3.42				

27. There seems to be adequate support/PLD for those who do get appointed to formal leadership

1	16	30	32	8
Average response 3.34				

Summary

A significant minority are put off leadership because of its complexity/difficulty, though for a larger number, this is not a critical factor. Junior Campus staff see “complexity” as less of an issue, whereas those already in senior leadership (3MUS or more) rate it as a bigger issue. The majority feel that those in formal leadership are adequately supported, with those in senior leadership slightly less positive about this. There were no significant age differences in this section.

Respondents’ Optional Comments

Views of Complexity

- 1 The complexity (of leadership) is what challenges me and I enjoy that
- 2 Yes, difficulty of some situations definitely a turn-off
- 3 Yes, complexity daunting, but only at very senior level (eg principal)
- 4 The demands of leadership today are more complex, I think as many admin roles as possible should be delegated so senior leaders can focus on “big picture” issues
- 5 Staff have little idea because so much of leadership happens “behind the scene”, so clear role descriptions would be helpful
- 6 I have no desire to become involved in any leadership that includes behavioural issues
- 7 Not sure what “leadership” really means. Some suited to management, others to pastoral. (Want more clarity what we are referring to here)

Support for Leaders

- 8 I think new appointees to formal leadership should have a mentor from outside the school for their first yr, to help them develop their generic skills (new leaders will always make mistakes, but you can’t afford to make too many or credibility is lost fast)
- 9 It was “learn as you go” for me when I started as HOD/Dean. No courses
- 10 People need more support when moving into new roles (eg buddy)
- 11 Potential middle management people need to have training in “people management” – difficult conversations, creating a team out of diverse personalities, etc
- 12 Would like to see formal mentorship or supervision for HODs – can sometimes be left feeling unsupported (not deliberately)

Perceptions of Reward

28. The pay differentials (MUs and MMAs) are generally fair recognition for leadership responsibility

Strongly disagree (1)	23	25	22	4
Average response 2.74				

29. The release time differentials are generally fair recognition for leadership responsibility

15	18	24	30	2
Average response 2.84				

30. Other factors,(for example, variety, and fresh challenges) are an important part of the ‘reward’ of leadership

4	1	15	45	22
Average response 3.92				

31. The rewards of leadership (pay, release time, fresh challenges, etc etc) have little or no influence on the level of my personal leadership aspirations

8	19	19	23	19
Average response 3.30				

Summary

The majority of staff feel that intrinsic factors are an important part of the “reward” of leadership. However, about 60% feel that neither pay nor release time levels are fair recognition. Junior Campus staff are more likely to feel that release time given is fair recognition than SC staff (than average), whereas those in senior leadership are less likely to agree (than average). Respondents are quite evenly spread on the question of how much the “rewards” influence their aspirations. There were no significant age differences in this section.

Respondents’ Optional Comments

Extrinsic rewards

- 1 Pay differentials are not fair recognition, compared to the private sector x2 (but out of the school’s control to a large extent)
- 2 Pay is important
- 3 Release time is a lot more meaningful than \$. X3
- 4 Neither pay nor release time add up for amount of extra work x4
- 5 Release time is unrealistic, the biggest issue, and should be increased x2
- 6 (External) rewards mean less as you (get older and) wind down
- 7 My perception is that younger teachers want to be rewarded sooner than the baby-boomer generation did; my perception is a lot less willingness to do anything out of school hours. Some reluctant to do any extra-c, and even then moan about it
- 8 Small roles without recompense are appropriate (as long as reasonable), but significant roles should be rewarded

Intrinsic Rewards

- 1 Personal satisfaction/ making a difference/ seeing improved outcomes is the biggest reward x3
- 2 Fresh challenges, changes to tasks etc are definitely part of the reward x2
- 3 “Rewards” are different things to different people

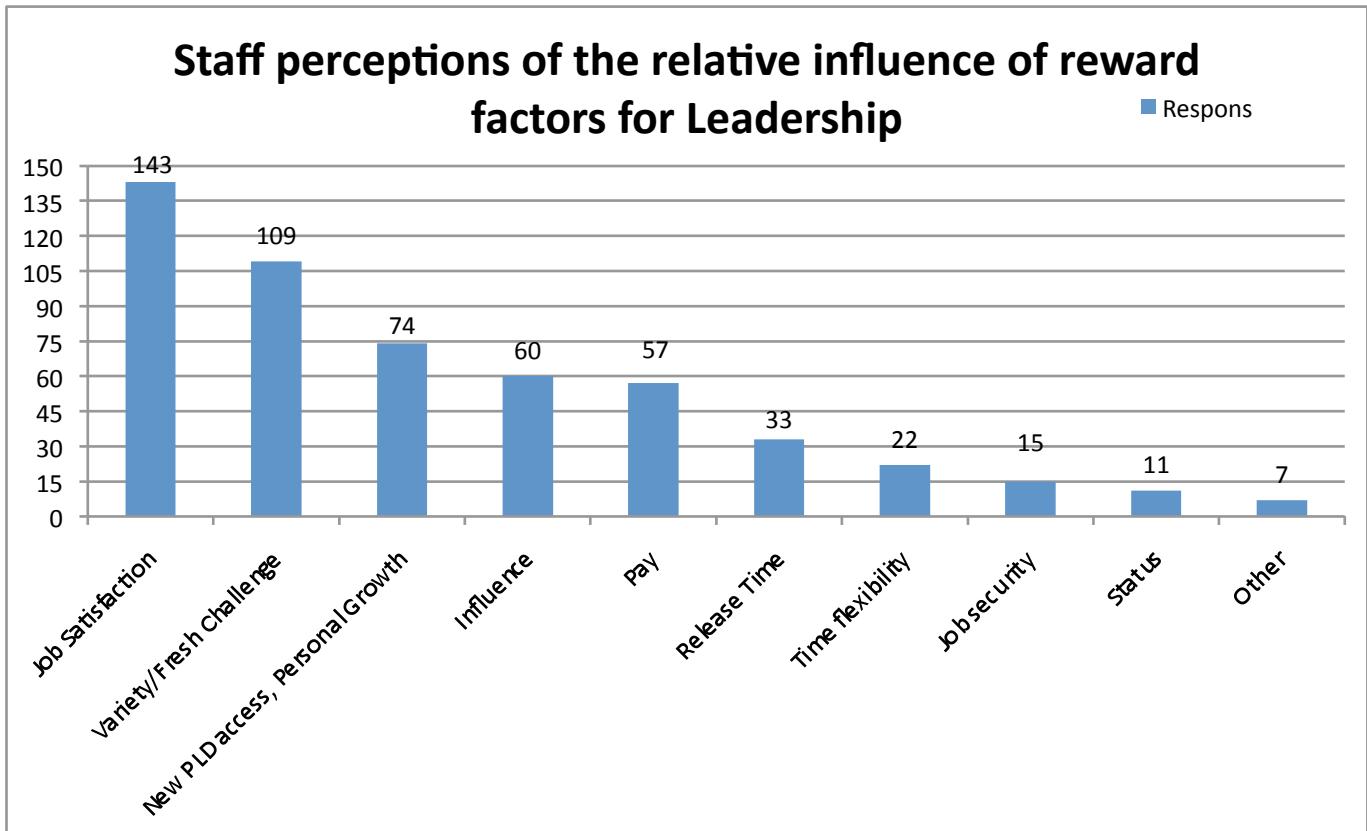
Transparency, Process

- 1 There is insufficient transparency with MUs/MMAs/release time – everyone should know where they are all allocated. (Don’t know if fair or not) x2
- 2 Young teacher – I don’t actually know what the rewards are (\$ or time)
- 3 Additional “perks” (eg flexidays) should only be used if they are fairly and openly distributed
- 4 Re the practice of being able to self-nominate for fixed term MMAs: feel self-conscious about putting myself forward and would prefer it was HOD nominations. Some may get more because they are good at pushing themselves forward. Not sure, as process not transparent.

General Observations

- 1 Increased flexidays are not the answer (to improved release time) as they involve relief/lost progress etc
- 2 Sport is under-recognised, especially given its getting harder and harder to find people
- 3 Have to be careful giving jobs to staff without time or \$ - getting more work done on the cheap
- 4 Cultural contributions get more “airtime” in the staffroom than hard slog with sport

- Notes:
 5 (A). Respondents asked to rank their top three items: scored as 3 points for 1st priority, 2 points for 2nd, 1 point for 3rd priority (B). This data does not discriminate between categories of respondents (ie whether they were currently in leadership or not)



Responses to ideas raised at a previous staff discussion (April 2014, SC)

32. There should be more fixed term leadership roles, less permanent ones

Strongly disagree (1)	1	13	19	32	24
Average response 3.73					

33. There should be more short term “secondments” for staff to “dip their toes”

2	4	11	45	27
Average response 4.02				

34. There should be “mentored”, or “junior” opportunities to work with current leaders

0	2	7	39	41
Average response 4.34				

35. The school should provide additional “perks” or recompense to provide better differentials for the work involved (eg flexidays)

3	11	18	39	18
Average response 3.65				

36. MMAs should be used as stepping stone opportunities for building leadership skills

0	8	9	54	18
Average response 3.92				

37. Leadership meetings at all levels should be open to anyone, where practicable

1	12	19	25	31
Average response 3.83				

Summary

There is very strong staff support generally for a range of strategies to create more opportunities for leadership. There is also strong support for the school to try to fund enhanced recompense for leadership work. There are some differences in responses to the various ideas however. Regarding the balance of fixed term/permanent positions, there is a steady and direct correlation with age; the younger the staff, the more in favour of more fixed term appointments, sliding steadily to a negative view of this from older staff. Middle leaders (those with 1-2 MUs) were also less positive than average. The JC staff is more positive about the idea of secondments, along with staff of either campus with no current leadership. The idea of more open attendance at leadership meetings is most positively regarded by those currently with 1-2 MUs.

Respondents' Optional Comments

Idea of increasing Fixed Term appointments

- 1 Support more fixed term roles in some areas (eg Deans) to enable more movement x3
- 2 If Fixed Term, needs to be long enough to become established/ deep understanding of role
- 3 Don't support fixed term roles where there is financial reward – no-one likes a drop in salary
- 4 Don't like the idea of increasing Fixed term roles because the roles require so much personal investment/sacrifice for them to be carried out effectively. Takes a long time to get comfortable/efficient in the role x2
- 5 Unsure about more fixed term roles – people need several years to develop. Overall, we have reasonable opportunities and support at present
- 6 Supportive of the efforts to allow younger teachers to “dabble”, in order to mitigate future turnover of senior staff. The reasons we have such a stable staff are (a) we're happy, (b) other personal aspects such as spouse with permanent job, and (c) job security
- 7 Needs to be a (careful) balance, in order to maintain consistency in the operation

Splitting, Sharing, or Shadowing current Roles

- 1 Suggest more “joint HOD roles” – would give more people the opportunity and also share the workload x2
- 2 Leaders working **with** others has the effect of (a) making their role more transparent, and (b) introducing others to a role they could see they might like to do. Believe this could be done more at JHC
- 3 Do support the “shadow”, or “understudy” idea x2
- 4 Suggest more “joint HOD (or other) roles” – would give more people the opportunity and also share the workload

Open Meetings of HODs

- 5 I like the idea that all meetings (except SLT) are open, anyone could sit in for their own personal growth/PLD
- 6 Not keen on HOD meetings being open forum – some discussions are sensitive, and sometimes “in committee”/ wouldn't then be “leadership” meetings! X2

Mentoring

- 7 Mentoring is very important in developing leaders who will promote the values and “DNA” of the school
- 8 Like the idea of mentors at all levels (not just new people) – would be positive x2
- 9 Not sure that those appointed to leadership are supported/mentored as well as we do for beginning teachers (which we do very well) Cross Campus “Career” session was thought provoking – keen to discuss personal aspirations with

Open Question: Respondents' Optional Comments

(Note: many end-of-survey comments were moved to the relevant section/theme)

General Observations

- 1 Very influential/encouraging if SLTs/HODs explains openly the how/why of a decision, not just the what. – when this happens, leadership aspirants can see “leadership at work”. When this doesn't happen, a gulf widens and decisions feel imposed
- 2 I would like to see clearer (definitions) of what some responsibilities are – needs tidied up.
- 3 Teachers need to be aware of their own strengths and weaknesses. Sometimes teachers are promoted beyond their strengths – too late!
- 4 Suggestion that the principal or a SLT member meet with each person say every 4 yrs specifically to discuss their career / aspirations (outside appraisal process)
- 5 Some inequity exists between Depts in terms of units etc
- 6 Sometimes discussion in HOD meetings is allowed to become personalised, as a consequence I (and some others) tend to say little.
- 7 Great to see all the encouragement and opportunities for younger staff, but don't forget those of us more established!
- 8 It appears (perception) that the pathway to senior management is through deaning experience rather than curriculum leadership experience (whether true or not). Hadn't thought about this before. (an HOD)
- 9 A “good school” to me is one that is interested in progressing my career

- 10 Established HODs sometimes overlooked in leadership PLD that is available (eg the one end of 2014) – could have been very beneficial for experienced leaders too
- 11 Re HOD meetings, “he/she who talks loudest gets heard” (from obs 2 meetings) Culture of the HODs needs to change
- 12 “Flatter” structures, eg more HOD-sharing, distributing some SLT roles more to other staff
- 13 Encourage HOD’s to share around a floating MU, or MMAs allocated to their Dept

Bouquets

- 1 We are lucky with experience/depth of some of our leaders, and the opportunities to learn from them via X Campus PLD etc (eg Nadia’s session on communicating with difficult parents).
- 2 I believe the culture of the staffroom and beyond is inclusive and supportive, reflecting healthy management. I value the positive attitudes that current leadership have to staff
- 3 A really tremendous issue to be looking at. Whole teaching force, not just JHC. Appreciative that the issue is being looked at. X2
- 4 I don’t know if our SLT/leaders are praised enough for the work they do? How often are they told they are doing a great job?
- 5 Its great to see younger staff being supported in leadership roles