INVESTIGATING CHANGING PATTERNS OF STUDENT LEADERSHIP IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Report for 2016

Secondary Senior Managers' Sabbatical

'Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other.'

J.F. Kennedy

Robert Anderson

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Student Leadership in Secondary Schools

Personal Perspective

My personal interest in student leadership began in 2004 when I was invited by the Association of Boys' Schools of New Zealand (ABSNZ) to facilitate a conference for the Head Prefects of boys' Schools. This conference was to run parallel with the annual ABSNZ conference for Principals. An obvious theme for the Head Prefects' Conference has been leadership, enabling these students to reflect on the unique leadership role they have in their respective schools. Apart from a couple of occasions when the conference was held outside of Wellington I have continued to have responsibility for this conference. The theme of the conference has remained constant but I have incorporated a variety of activities and different speakers associated with this theme.

For the past three years I have also assisted in organising and facilitating leadership training for students at my own school who have been selected to be school prefects.

In 2013 I decided to spend time in professional reading on student leadership. I read and reflected on a number of articles and theses from New Zealand, Australia and the United States on student leadership. I found them both interesting and informative (See Appendix 3).

Thus, when I made the decision to apply for a TeachNZ Scholarship in 2015 I did so with the aim of, if successful, visiting a number of schools enquiring about their student leadership programmes and checking out the theory that schools are re-evaluating their student leadership programmes to better meet the needs of their schools.

National Perspective

It is a safe assumption that student leadership is an integral part of every secondary school in New Zealand. From talking to colleagues in other schools, and reading school publications such as the year books I am aware that there are changes to the models of student leadership in our secondary schools.

The traditional model of a prefect team or school council as well as seniors captaining top sports teams is seen to be outdated. The model worked well when there was a pyramidal shape to the school year cohort structure on account of relatively few students remaining for a fifth year. However, due to changes in assessment practices and perhaps also changes in economic conditions there is currently a much higher retention rate of students. It is now the norm for students to remain for their fifth and final year of secondary education. According to the *Student Roll by Student Funding Year Level as at I July 1996 -2015* from the Ministry of Education website (see Appendix 2), between 1996 and 2015 there was an increase of 4 172 students in Year 9, an increase of 7.8%. Over the same period there was an increase of 18 524 students in Year 13, an increase of 61%. This trend is reflected in the New Zealand schools that I visited. At Wellington High School in 2003 their Year 13 roll was 162. The number today is 230. At Sacred Heart College (Auckland), in 2007 their Year 13 roll was 140. In 2016 it is 200.

The increase in retention rates in Year 13 has necessitated a rethinking and rebranding of student leadership. Increasingly schools are looking to utilize the leadership potential of greater numbers of students in their final year of secondary education.

It is widely perceived that there are many benefits of involving more students in leadership. It is suggested that relationships between students and staff are strengthened, students develop new skills, and assist with the smooth running of the school. Positive attitudes towards the school are strengthened, along with a greater sense of belonging and pride in their school, which in turn enhances a positive school culture.

In my study I hope to see what (if any) changes to student leadership my case study schools have implemented and if these perceptions of wide ranging benefits are indeed a result.

Introduction

It has been the norm that in New Zealand secondary schools senior students are given prescribed leadership roles. Typically, in New Zealand schools the leadership template has been a select group of students exercising leadership responsibilities in their final year of secondary education as prefects, members of the school council or captains of sports teams. This historic model of student leadership was available to just a few. "Traditional approaches to student leadership for example through prefect systems, (present in 67% of the schools surveyed), pupil librarians and conventional school councils were shown to involve only a small number of young people……overall, all schools had sports teams but only 14% of respondents had played a leading role in them" (McGregor, 2007).

In expanding the number of leadership opportunities to match the expanding numbers of Year 13 students, schools have had to rethink how to make more student leadership opportunities available. As well, students need to embrace leadership as something that they are capable of achieving, rather than just seeing it as the preserve of the elite. Lavey (2006) cites research from the United States where not many adolescents consider themselves as leaders. 'Student leadership is seen as formal and distant, something only for the popular' (Lavey 2006, p. 27).

In recent years, probably as a result of the aforementioned increase in student numbers there does appear to be a change in the patterns of student leadership. A study of three Australian Catholic Colleges asked 368 students in their final year if they had exercised leadership: '322 of these students considered that they were exercising leadership. How did they lead? Students pointed to being responsible role models, giving service to their school communities and being involved with younger students' (Lavey, 2006, p.27). If expanded, Year 13 leadership is not only beneficial to those who are exercising leadership. They benefit the whole school community, in practical ways and enhancing the 'tone' of the school. Schools with positive cultures function well.

Leadership positions require training programmes. In her study of what constitutes effective training for student leaders in New Zealand schools Davies (2011) concluded that the most effective training programmes for equipping student leaders are school based programmes that utilise the

resources of staff and former students to teach leadership skills, complemented by ample opportunities to practise these newly acquired skills.

My starting point is my own school, Wellington College. We have a large number of leadership positions available for Year 13 students and are continually looking to expand leadership roles, training programmes to assist students in these roles, and ways of recognising these students. We have built on the traditional role of prefect leaders, to have leadership roles in peer support programmes, organising school-wide fund raising events for charity and designing leadership positions that match students' interests and expertise. These include sports coaching and academic coaching. We have strong examples of leadership among Māori and Pasifika students. Our aim is to maximise leadership opportunities for Year 13 students and in doing so foster a wide participation in school life. The opportunity offered to me by way of the TeachNZ Scholarship has enabled me to examine the effectiveness of student leadership pathways in a variety of schools that I visited in New Zealand, the United States and the United Kingdom.

By formulating Focusing Questions as talking points and interviewing staff involved in student leadership and student leaders themselves I aimed to identify the salient features of student leadership in secondary schools.

Methodology

This is a qualitative study. I collected my data by way of interviewing staff involved in their school's student leadership programmes and student leaders.

I formulated and asked the following focus questions.

1. *What forms of student leadership exist in your school?*
2. *How are students selected for these roles?*
3. *Do students value these roles?*
4. *How is student leadership recognised and rewarded?*
5. *How inclusive are the leadership opportunities provided? How is leadership among priority students recognised and developed to support participation of these groups in the academic and wider life of the school?*

I selected eight schools altogether. Of these schools four were overseas and four in New Zealand. Four of the schools were private and four state funded. Three were co-educational and five single sex (see Appendix 1). I accept that the schools do not cover the spectrum in terms of decile rating or geographical spread and that all of the single sex schools were all boys' schools. I selected these schools on pragmatic grounds on the basis of contacts that I have in these schools, schools that were similar to my own, those I wanted to make comparisons with, and schools that I was curious about.

As well as visiting schools I had 'off-line' conversations with teachers and others about student leadership.

Findings

Focusing Question 1

What forms of student leadership exist in your school?

PREFECTS

With the exception of the two schools in the United States that I visited, all the schools had a prefect system. This involves a small group of Head Prefects and a larger body of prefects. Some schools saw the prefects as the 'front line, showcasing the ethos of the school or promoting the school.' Among the schools the duties of the prefects were many and varied. The Head Prefects were frequently used to show visitors (mostly parents of prospective students) around the school, act as ushers or front of house at school events or represent the school at public occasions. In some schools prefects develop and run a school project such as a charity event or organise a collection for a charitable organisation.

In some schools prefects also lead, sometimes alongside a staff member, specific councils. For example, at Westlake Boys' High School (Auckland) there are three councils all led by prefects; sports, cultural and academic. For instance, the Academic Council organises school wide events such as a school quiz and a study breakfast. At Reigate Grammar School (Surrey) prefects run charity events. In order to do this they must present to senior management two project plans. The first is the proposed plan for the running of the event including responsibilities for each student involved and the second a communications plan explaining how the school is going to be effectively informed about the event.

Prefects in all the schools visited are required to do rostered duty, such as supervising students in the canteen, grounds and computer room. Some schools stated that they were trying to raise the profile of the prefects. The lustre of rostered duty can wear thin to the point that some prefects abdicate their role. Others are reluctant to confront someone from their peer group who are flagrantly breaking school rules. For some, the attraction of being a prefect is the status associated with it, not necessarily the ideal that they are 'serving the school' by undertaking prescribed duties.

STUDENT COUNCIL

Neither of the schools I visited in the United States had a prefect system. Instead they operated Student Councils. These councils have representatives from each year level and are chaired by a senior student. The responsibilities of the councils are determined by the first meeting of the year when the council decides on the initiatives they want to focus on for the year that will 'effect change'. Consequently, they then design and run programmes unique for that year. At St Christopher's School (Richmond, VA) the Council decided that they wanted to focus on the Arts for the year. Therefore, they organised and ran an Arts Expo showcasing the variety of students' work in the arts. At Haverford School (Philadelphia) the student council theme for the year was leadership. They facilitated a Middle School leadership conference that was attended by students from 10 schools.

One of the reasons for selecting these two schools to visit was my curiosity regarding the Honor (sic.) Code that they both have as core values at their schools to promote a 'strong sense of community based on respect, honesty and courage.' The major student leadership group in these schools is the Honor Council. If a student violates the Honor Code, e.g., by cheating in an exam, an act of vandalism, or theft of student property, they appear before the Honor Council. The Honor Council comprises elected student representatives under the leadership of a chairman who is a senior student. Hearing procedures are closely followed. If allegations against a student are made, they are investigated by a staff member. If the Honor Council determines by vote that an Honor Council Hearing is warranted a witness list is compiled and a jury of students randomly selected to act alongside the Honor Council. At the hearing the Dean of Students presents the background information and answers questions. Witnesses are called and then the person in question and nominated staff advocate make statements. Following deliberations and voting on the actions to be taken, the Honor Council Chairman presents their recommendations to the Head of the Upper School. If found guilty these could be punitive or rehabilitative. They are then presented to the student in question and all senior students. The student in question has the right of appeal.

HOUSES

Five of the schools that I visited incorporated the House System. This system worked alongside the prefect system. At Reigate Grammar School (Surrey) students could either be a House Captain or a prefect, but could not be both.

MENTORING/ PEER ADVISORS

Each school that I visited offered some type of mentoring system. These take various forms. Sometimes it is one on one mentoring, or it could be peer tutoring or peer support of a group of students. The common element across schools was that senior students took on a mentoring role, providing advice and guidance to younger students. This appeared to work with varying degrees of success.

The system seemed to work most effectively in schools where mentors and mentees were matched according to mutual interests. In schools where a house system was operating both mentors and mentees came from the same house, establishing another point of commonality. It also worked where students have a specific set of activities and tasks to work on together during the times when they meet. This could vary from answering quizzes together to thought provoking discussion on relevant topics such as bullying, racism and tolerance.

As well as having seniors mentoring juniors, Reigate Grammar School (Surrey) ran another mentoring programme called 'Track Mate'. In this mentoring programme students from the Upper Sixth (Year 13) act as mentors for Lower Sixth (Year 12) students and Lower Sixth students mentor Fifth Years (Year 11). These students have a dedicated 25 minute time slot to meet each week to talk through academic concerns. The rationale is that the mentors have just concluded the academic programme and exams that the mentees are now doing. Students' familiarity with the programmes and the associated pitfalls and stresses by stint of their recent experience means that they are well placed to offer advice and guidance.

In schools where the mentoring system was successful, I believe it was because of the following factors:

1. The school administration believe in its value and support the system.

2. It is a voluntary position. At Reigate Grammar School (Surrey), Upper Sixth Form students are invited to apply for a mentoring position. It is seen as a privilege and rite of passage for students as they embark on their final year at school.
3. Careful vetting takes place by staff.
4. Comprehensive training is seen as essential. Fundamental to the training programme are learning listening skills and confidentiality protocols. Mentors are often the first to pick up problems of a sensitive or personal nature. Therefore, training is essential so that mentors know when the mentee should be referred to a member of staff or the school councillor.

When these factors are adhered to mentoring is seen and positively proclaimed as a worthwhile part of school life.

CLUBS AND SOCIETIES

All schools visited had a proliferation of student clubs and societies, everything from Social Justice Groups, Twitter Clubs, School Newspaper and Politics Societies to School Ball Organisation clubs. These clubs all have staff input and overview but are essentially student led. The clubs and societies are seen by staff as important for providing leadership opportunities and developing leadership skills. Indeed, some teaching staff whom I interviewed observed that the most effective leadership from students takes place in these co-curricular clubs and societies. As one teacher who oversees the student editorial team of the school newspaper reflected:

"You can't impose leadership artificially. But you can create leadership opportunities for students through clubs, which allow leadership skills to emerge and flourish."

SPORT

All sports' teams require leaders in the form of captains and vice-captains. These positions are frequently perceived as prestigious and are sought after positions. One aspect of sports leadership present in New Zealand schools but noticeably absent in the overseas schools that I visited was senior students involved in coaching and managing sports' teams in their schools. For example at Westlake Boys' High School (Auckland), 60 senior students under the

direction of the Director of Sport , often in pairs, are exercising leadership by coaching and managing mostly junior sports' teams.

STUDENTS ON SCHOOL COMMITTEES

One of the provisions of Tomorrow's Schools (1988) was the introduction of Boards of Trustees. The mandated composition of these boards included for the first time a student representative in a school governance role. In some New Zealand schools this has expanded to student representation on Board of Trustee sub-committees.

Some schools have student representatives on appointment boards. At Reigate Grammar School (Surrey), this is taken a step further with every staff member from Headmaster to assistant caretaker, undergoing two appointment interviews, one of them with a panel of students.

Students on school committees and undertaking roles usually seen as the preserve of adults, provide them with a 'mantle of responsibility.' These roles are often perceived by the students and their peers as a leadership role.

OTHER

At a school like Sacred Heart College (Auckland) which is a catholic school, the special character of the school determines the leadership model. Leadership is underpinned by Marist values. Therefore, all students, regardless of title are encouraged to be a leader, with the emphasis on 'servant leadership'. This extends to 'effecting change beyond the school gate.' Students are actively involved in serving the community by working with charitable organisations such as Caritas, St Vincent de Paul Society and World Vision.

Focusing Question 2

How are students selected for leadership positions?

In the schools that I visited some leadership positions are decided by election, some by appointment or 'shoulder-tapped' for a specific leadership task, and some self-selected by students who volunteer for them.

For the selection of school prefects all schools follow the same general process, with subtle variations. Firstly, students allow their names to go forward for selection. Then there is a vote undertaken by senior students and staff. In one of my case study schools only the staff voted. In others the vote is weighted in favour of the staff. The students who poll highest are vetted by the Senior Management Team and Deans. In particular, their discipline and attendance records are considered.

There are of course variations to this model. At Wellington High School (Wellington) a new model of leadership is being trialled. The leadership model is called WERO, standing for Whanau, Excellence, Respect and Ora (well - being). Students apply in writing to the Year 13 Dean for a position in one of these leadership portfolios. Their application must be endorsed by a staff member. Each applicant is then interviewed by the Senior Management Team. All applicants are asked: "What initiatives do you propose to take the following year."

At The Haverford School a student wishing to be on the Honor Council must submit a letter of intent. Once the letters are submitted, The Honor Council (i.e., students) reviews them and selects candidates to be interviewed. After the interview process, finalists from each year group (Years 11 to 13 equivalent) give speeches to their year group. These candidates are then voted on by the respective year groups to determine the representatives. Faculty staff check the discipline history of all candidates and also vet their speeches prior to delivery.

Selection of student mentors or peer support leaders follows a different pattern. These students volunteer for these roles. However, this form of leadership give staff the opportunity to 'shoulder-tap' a student inviting them to take on this role. This is seen as beneficial as it offers a leadership role to someone not considered to be an obvious leader or someone reluctant to

volunteer for such a role. This affirmation can only be good for the student's esteem.

Each school has a proliferation of clubs. Typically, these clubs have a teacher in charge, but have a student leader. By definition membership of these clubs is based on interest. Therefore, the most enthusiastic senior students are easily identified by the teacher in charge who are usually more than happy to bestow leadership and its associated responsibilities upon them. These students sometimes would not receive a lot of votes in a school wide leadership contest (e.g., for prefects). However, frequently their leadership skills in the context of a club or society can be exceptional and a surprise to others.

FOCUSING QUESTION 3

Do students value these roles?

From my discussions with both staff and students the consensus is that students value leadership roles, although for some students the reason that they value them are not always altruistic.

My case study schools' Senior Management Teams value the leadership roles of students when they enhance a strong sense of community based on respect and pride of their school. They also value them as students display personal and institutional leadership. These roles can ease the burden of organising school based events from already over committed staff. They can give students a sense of responsibility which they value. Students also value these roles because they provide them with a sense of responsibility that they take with them into the future. Student leadership also gives younger students something to aspire to which sustains a positive school culture.

I was curious, and perhaps a little cynical as to whether students valued the Honor Council in my two United States case study schools. After all the Honor Council performs a disciplinary role with a wide range of punitive measures to use at its discretion. I thought this may cause resentment among the student body and erode its value in the eyes those students. I was however, left in little doubt that students highly value the leadership roles of Honor Council members. The Chairman of the Honor Council is held in particularly high regard. As one student at St. Christopher's School (Richmond, VA) put it to me: 'I value the Honor Council because of this. For the past five years I have been able to put my satchel down with my laptop and other valuables in it for any period of time and in any part of the school and it has never been interfered with.'

On a more pragmatic note some students value leadership roles for the benefits they provide. As students prepare for their applications for places at universities, university hostels, lucrative tertiary scholarships and employment they prepare a Curriculum Vitae. Positions of leadership held at secondary school look good on CVs. Therefore, some students value leadership roles on face value only. With the title doesn't come responsibility but prestige,

prestige that may give them a competitive edge when it comes to entry to a particular hostel or receiving a scholarship for tertiary study. In other schools with Duke of Edinburgh programmes, leadership roles such as academic mentoring are a requirement for attaining awards. Some students do not value leadership roles as they see them as little more than a popularity contest, stoking the egos of those that are appointed to them. ‘School badge wearers are often genetic celebrities who are popular, intelligent, often good looking and articulate’ (Mitchell, 2015). However, the value of student leadership is diminished when these ‘silver spooners’ neglect their duties or worse, are unable to make a principled stance lest it causes them to lose popularity among their peers.

Focusing Question 4

How is student leadership recognised and rewarded?

Prior to visiting my selected case study schools I had preconceived ideas as to how leadership was recognised and rewarded. This is the focusing question that most led me to rethink this aspect of leadership. How leadership is recognised and rewarded varies from school to school depending on the traditional ways of recognising leadership that have evolved in each school. It was notable that in the New Zealand schools that I visited student leadership is more tangibly recognised by way of badges or uniform than in the overseas schools, particularly those in the United States. For example, at Westlake Boys' High School (Auckland) prefects wear a 'badge of office' and also a prefects' blazer and different coloured collar to the school polo shirt to denote their leadership status. At the City of London School (London), prefects are only distinguished by a prefects' tie. At Reigate Grammar School only the four head prefects get to wear a badge, although all mentors receive a badge in recognition of their leadership role within the school.

In both United States Schools that I visited, The Haverford School (Philadelphia) and St. Christopher's School (Richmond VA), there were no badges or any other tangible signs of leadership. The exceptions were the captains of the varsity (i.e., top) sports teams. They wore a special jacket denoting their status. When I enquired as to why there were no 'badges of office', the Dean of Students at St. Christopher's School (Richmond VA) explained to me: 'Leadership doesn't require a title.' At the school recognition is given in a chapel service that starts the school year. Students in leadership positions stand as their name is called, but every senior students' name is called. It is symbolic, indicating that all are leaders.

All schools recognise and reward student leadership at the end of the school year. It could be at a special leadership function such as a dinner, an awards assembly or prizegiving. Paraparaumu College (Wellington) has an innovative way of recognising the Head Prefects, as they are the ones who hand out the prizes at the Junior Prizegiving.

Many of the schools have honours boards, displayed in prominent positions which recognise the top academic students and school leaders. I was curious as to why in the City of London School (London) the name of the chair of the Charity Committee (a student leadership position) was recorded on an

Honours' Board, but not the name of the Head Prefect. This is indicative of the charitable foundation of the school in 1442, resulting from the will of one John Carpenter who left money for: 'the finding and bringing up of poore men's children with meate, drink, apparel and learning at the school.' Therefore, generosity towards others is historically embedded in the school and reflected in the status bestowed upon the student chair of the charity committee.

As well as the end of the year, on-going rewards for student leaders are provided by way of breakfasts or dinners and addresses by eminent public figures. It is a way that schools can reward those are in leadership positions. At Westlake Boys' High School (Auckland), the Deputy Principal always takes those prefects who volunteer to represent the school at the local ANZAC Day dawn service out for breakfast following the service.

Focusing Question Number 5

How inclusive are the leadership opportunities provided? How is leadership among priority students recognised and developed to support participation of these groups in the academic and wider life of the school?

All the schools that I visited had ethnically mixed rolls. From my observations and discussions I was able to establish that to varying degrees students from different ethnicities are represented in various leadership roles.

I was particularly gratified to learn that in all the New Zealand schools I visited there is a conscious effort to ensure that priority students, particularly Māori and Pasifika students are proportionately represented in the leadership positions previously described. Their roles are not confined to leadership within their own communities such as Kapa haka or Pasifika groups, but are represented across the board in leadership roles.

Some schools specifically recognise the top Māori and top Pasifika student at their schools in prize giving. Others recognise and celebrate Māori and Pasifika student leaders at end of year Whanau and Fiafia nights. Priority student leadership is sometimes seen to be aspirational, giving younger students leadership goals to aspire to in their final year of school.

Conclusion

Why student leadership?

Sometimes the obvious questions are the ones left unanswered. All the schools that I visited, and I am sure this applies to all secondary schools, provide opportunities for student leadership. Schools include student leadership as part of their strategic plan. In The Haverford School's Strategic Vision 2010-2020, 'Progress and the Path Forward, one of the stated 'essential qualities of a Haverford School Graduate', is to 'Be a positive leader and understand the importance of serving others.' In The City of London School 'Strategy Statement 2015-2020' one of the aims is: 'We encourage boys to develop their skills in leadership.' Offering leadership is not just on account of 'tradition,' i.e., 'that's the way that we have always done it,' but because of the numerous and diverse benefits that result from it.

What are these benefits?

1. There are obvious mutual benefits for school and students. Students involved in leadership are by implication also involved in the day to day running of the school. While this may assist to lighten the load of staff, a greater benefit is that by working together on school or wider community projects relationships between students and staff are strengthened. Students in leadership positions begin to take responsibility for their school. This in turn builds a positive school culture.
2. Jim Dale (Headmaster, Sacred Heart College) believes that it is important to have a powerful student voice. He refers to it as the 'last word'. Whether it be students leading school assemblies, the student representative on the Board of Trustees articulating student needs to the Board of Trustees, prefects meeting to discuss student issues with the Senior Management Team or student representation on Board sub-committees it is important that students' perspectives are listened to and considered. Otherwise these are just token positions. Good student leaders should be able to 'share student opinions with adults even when adults don't want to her them' (Mitchell, 2015)
3. Schools believe that by providing students with leadership opportunities complemented with training programmes that equip them with the

requisite skills, they are preparing 'tomorrow's leaders.' When St Christopher's School (Richmond, VA) published its strategic priorities as part of their Vision for the Second Century,' (The school was founded in 1911) they stated; "Our educational philosophy will continue to evolve and grow as we position boys for future leadership." Shaun Fenton, Headmaster of Reigate Grammar School (Surrey) has a different spin on 'preparing tomorrow's leaders.' He says that; 'in reality relatively few school leaders become team leaders, for quite some time.' They do however, become team members. A position of leadership in a school prepares you well in being a team member, as one who appreciates the benefit of being a good listener and one who is focused on supporting your team leader.

4. All schools aim to create independent thinkers and learners. This can be achieved through leadership. If opportunities are created and a school culture developed for students to practise personal and institutional leadership this can translate into learning practice as well. Students who learn to show initiative through leadership practices can also learn to show initiative in their learning and become more successful independent learners.

SOME PITFALLS TO AVOID

As mentioned previously, student leadership can become a popularity contest. Students can also believe that there is a 'hierarchy of leadership' with some leadership roles perceived as being of higher value than others. It is important to give a profile for all leadership positions so that librarians and music monitors are seen to be just as much valued as prefects and premier team sports captains.

Students need to appreciate that 'receiving a badge' or being appointed to a leadership position is not the pinnacle of their achievement, it is the start. The 'honour' comes at the end of the year when they can reflect on the positive impact they have made in the lives of others in their school and wider communities through celebrations that highlight actual accomplishments.

Alongside leadership there needs to be training. The schools I visited had training for prefects and peer mentors. This sometimes took the form of a 'Leadership Camp' just prior to the start of the year. One of the schools had three training sessions for the captains and vice captains of all sports teams.

Two of these sessions were on people management and one was on ‘your mantle of responsibility’ towards the players in your team.

My original question was that whether, with higher retention rates of year 13 students, there was a commensurate increase in the number of leadership opportunities. I am happy to report that there appears to have been an expansion of leadership opportunities for Year 13 students in particular; along with this there has also occurred a rebranding of student leadership so that it is no longer seen as elitist. The prevailing thought among schools is that student leadership enhances a positive school-wide culture and should be available to as many who want to avail themselves of the opportunity to accept and exercise leadership in their school.

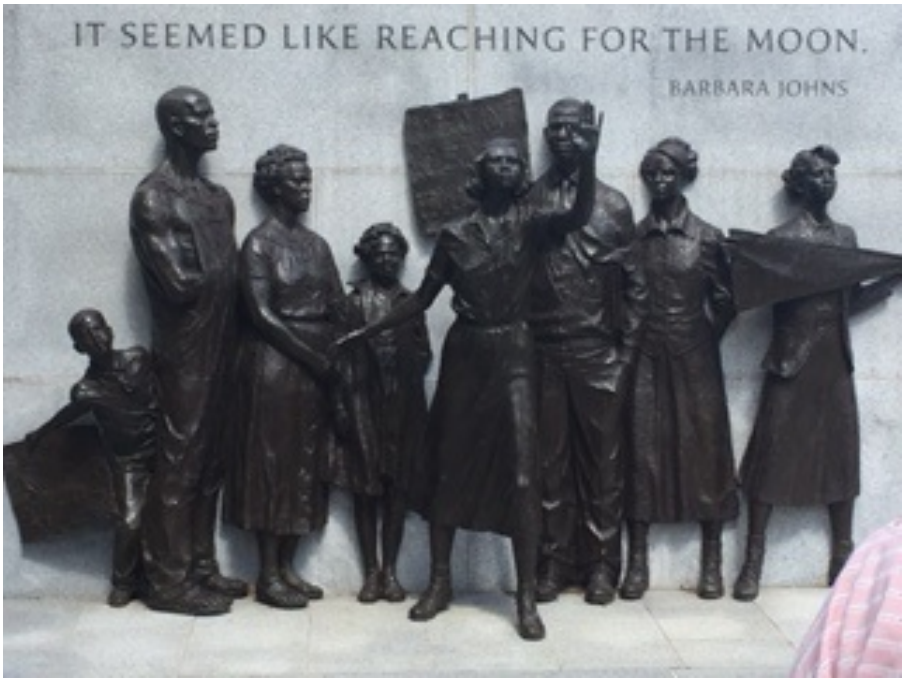
FINAL THOUGHTS

On a classroom wall at St. Christopher's School (Richmond, VA) was a sign that read:

LEADERSHIP: 'USING ONE'S CHARACTER, WISDOM AND LIFE SKILLS TO MAKE A POSITIVE DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF OTHERS.'

The day after I read this sign, I discovered startling, retrospective evidence of this quote in action. In Richmond's Capitol Square I came across a statue which commemorates the 'the character, wisdom and life skills', of 16 year old Barbara Rose Johns (see photo below.) On 23 April 1951 Barbara Johns delivered an impassioned speech at a school assembly and urged her fellow students to join her in a strike to protest the deplorable conditions and inequality at their racially segregated schools in Prince Edward County, Virginia. The students joined her in the walkout. Under the guidance of the Rev. L. Francis Griffin, the students' parents supported the strike. The Rev. Griffin encouraged the students to contact lawyers from the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (NAACP). The lawsuit that followed went all the way to the Supreme Court. In 1954 the Supreme Court ruled that a racially separate educational system is 'inherently unequal and unconstitutional,' paving the way for an integrated educational system.

Barbara Johns was not a prefect, nor a peer tutor, sports captain or leader of a club or society. However, the courageous leadership that she displayed should act as a model and inspiration for all aspiring student leaders.



Appendix 1
Schools Visited and Key Staff Interviewed

Date	School/Type	Roll	Staff/students interviewed
3 May	Wellington High School, Wellington Co-ed, Years 9-13	1200	Andrew Savage (DP) Megan Southwell (DP)
10 May	The Haverford School Philadelphia Boys, Years 1-13	1100	John Nagl (Headmaster) Bill Brady (TIC leadership)
13 May	St Christopher's School Richmond, Virginia) Boys, Year 1-13	1005	Charlie Stillwell (Headmaster) Tony Szymendera (Head of Upper School) Billy Abbot (Dean of Students) John Green (Associate Dean) Sarah Mansfield (Assistant Head of School)
23-24 May	Reigate Grammar School Surrey Co-ed, Years 7-13	950	Shaun Fenton (Headmaster) Rhodri James (Head of Upper 6th) Gayle Dexter (TIC Mentors) Miranda ? (Head Prefect)
6 June	City of London School London Boys, 7-13	940	Richard Brookes (Senior DP)
17 June	Paraparaumu College Wellington Co-ed, Years 9-13	1200	Gregor Fountain (Principal)
23 June	Sacred Heart College Auckland Boys, Years 9-13	1340	Jim Dale (Headmaster)
24 June	Westlake Boys HS Auckland Boys, Year 9-13	2300	David Ferguson (Headmaster) Joe Cachopa (DP) Antoine Ellis (Head Prefect)

Note: For ease of comparison I have 'converted' the US and UK schools' year groupings to the New Zealand system, ie Years 1 to 13.

Appendix 2

Student Roll by Student Funding Year Level as at 1 July 1996-2015 (Summary)

	1996	2000	2004	2008	2012	2015
Yr 9	53362	56404	66072	61221	57978	57534
Yr 13	30140	32605	34682	40367	47754	48644

Year 9, % increase 1996-2015, 7.8%
Year 13, % increase 1996-2015, 61%

Appendix 3
My background readings on Student Leadership

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