CHAPTER 3

MODELS OF SUCCESSFUL PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP: VICTORIAN CASE STUDIES

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Abstract: This article provides an Australian perspective on successful school leadership that focuses on nine case studies from the state of Victoria. The study shows the significant contributions principals make to schools, particularly in the areas of capacity building, and teaching and learning. Characteristics and qualities of the principals identified showed a common and consistent set of personal traits, behaviours, values and beliefs such as honesty, openness, flexibility, commitment, passion, empathy with others, belief that all children are important and can succeed, belief that schools can make a difference, high expectations of all, and highly developed communication skills. An intervention based model of successful school leadership is outlined that describes interventions that can impact upon student outcomes in the areas of teaching and learning, school capacity building and other influences

INTRODUCTION

As part of the International Successful School Principalship Project (ISSPP) we conducted multiple-perspective case studies in nine schools in Victoria; a related project involved five case studies of Tasmanian schools and is reported in another chapter in this book. The focus was on the leadership of principals that were acknowledged by their peers as being successful, and who led schools that could demonstrate success through improved student learning outcomes and through positive school review reports. Findings from these case studies have been reported in Gurr, Drysdale, Di Natale, Ford, Hardy & Swann (2003) for three of the Victorian case studies, with a comparison across Victorian and Tasmanian case studies described in Gurr, Drysdale & Mulford (2005). In the next section we provide contextual information on school education in Victoria before discussing the methodology and findings.

The Victorian Context

Australia has a Commonwealth Government that oversees six State and two Territory Governments. Education in Australia is a complex interplay between these different levels of government, and between government and non-government schools. The responsibility for the provision of government schooling constitutionally rests with the State and Territory governments, but increasingly there has been Commonwealth Government influence especially in terms of grants to both government and non-government schools.

The State of Victoria in Australia has a population of over 4.6 million people, with approximately 3.2 million people living in the large metropolitan city of Melbourne. The school education system consists of primary schools from preparatory year to year six (ages five to twelve) and secondary schools from year seven to twelve (ages twelve to eighteen). Most students (approximately three-quarters) complete 13 years of school and attain a Year 12 certificate. As in most states and territories in Australia, approximately 66% of students are in government schools. The non-government school sector is dominated by a system of Catholic schools that serves approximately 20% of all school age children, with the remaining children attending various independent schools that include a range of religious (e.g. Anglican, Coptic Orthodox, Greek Orthodox, Islamic, Jewish, Lutheran and Seventh Day Adventist) and non-religious schools (e.g. Montessori and Steiner). In recent years, the proportion of students attending non-government schools has increased. The government school system has approximately 1600 schools, with 1232 primary schools and 262 secondary schools serving over 500,000 students.

Since the mid-seventies reform of education in Victoria has been relentless, with a consistent trend to devolution to the school level of authority, responsibility and accountability. The most recent major education reform, *Blueprint for Government Schools*, is aimed at improving literacy and numeracy, retention rates and successful school completion. The reform program includes (Department of Education & Training, 2003):

- enhancing student learning through new curriculum frameworks, improved assessment and reporting, and improved sharing of best practice in teaching and learning;
- developing a new resource allocation model;
- building leadership capacity through improved principal selection, mentoring and coaching programs, and leadership development programs for new and experienced school leaders;
- creating and supporting a performance and development culture;
- supporting teachers through focused professional leave and induction and mentoring programs;
- school improvement through differential school reviews, and enhanced school performance data; and
- enhancing school networks.

Methodology

School characteristics   The Victorian schools included two government primary schools, one government secondary school, one government special school, four Catholic primary schools, and one independent school covering the primary and secondary years. The average student enrolment at the schools was 511 with a range from 120 to 1330. There were six female and three male principals (see Appendix 1).

Selection criteria   The focus of the investigations was on the leadership of principals, with selection criteria based on the reputation of the schools, the acknowl-edged success of the principals by peers, and evidence of improved student outcomes over time. These outcomes were measured (where data were available), on the basis of comparative state-wide test and examination results, through positive school review reports, and other data such as: staff and parent opinion; student participation, engagement and satisfaction; rates of student attendance, retention and suspension; and, student pathways as indicated by data on the transition from school to work. The selected schools were able to demonstrate success on a wider scale than that of the selection criteria and typically included aspects such as achieving individual potential, student engagement, self-confidence and self-direction, sense of identity, sense of community and belonging, as well as the more typical academic outcomes. Schools were also selected to represent school diversity in terms of type, location, size, and socioeconomic status of the families.

Data collection and analysis   As with the other countries involved in the ISSPP, data were collected at each school using multiple sources including documents illustrating school achievements and student attainment, and individual and group interviews with a variety of people typically including the principal, school council chairperson, assistant principal, curriculum coordinator, teachers, parents and students. The focus of the interviews was the exploration of perceptions of the success of the school, and particularly the principal's contribution to the success. The study, while modelling interview questions on those developed by Day, Harris, Hadfield, Tolley & Beresford (2000), adopted a grounded approach in that there were no pre-conceived views of successful school leadership. Questions were open-ended and interviews semi-structured to allow participants the opportunity for deep reflection. The data generated from the interviews were analysed utilising a cross-case, inductive analysis approach (Patton, 1990). Participant perceptions were grouped on common questions, whilst thematic meaning units were drawn from across all interviews, thus allowing for the development of grounded theory. Each case study was analysed separately using this methodology, with this paper reporting an overall analysis of all nine case studies. Several researchers have been involved, with different researchers taking the lead role in individual school analysis: School A (Hardy, 2006), School B (Di Natale, 2006), School D (Drysdale & Goode, 2004), School E (Karvouni, 2005), Schools C, F, G and H (Ford, undated), School I (Doherty, undated). Gurr had overall responsibility for the project, and supervised all case study analyses, and one of Gurr, Drysdale or Swann was involved in data

collection at each of the school sites. The findings and models described in this paper derive from a cross case analysis conducted by Gurr and Drysdale, with the veracity of the findings verified by the other researchers involved. Hence, this paper describes a collective understanding of successful school leadership derived from the nine Victorian case studies.

Findings

Themes identified were:

- the principal's contribution to success;
- values and beliefs;
- personal characteristics;
- styles of leadership;
- understanding the context and the situation; and
- leadership interventions in the areas of teaching and learning, student outcomes, school capacity building, and other factors.

The Principal's Contribution to Success

An important finding was that each principal made a positive difference to the quality of education. Positive contributions included: engendering a sense of confidence; providing a positive direction through their vision and enthusiasm; holding high expectations of staff and students; focusing on students and families; empowering staff; aligning the community, staff and school goals; promoting change in teaching and learning; and building school capacity. All the principals were recognised for their contributions to the success of their school and were regarded as the "engine rooms" of this success.

The school communities were able to clearly articulate the positive impact of the principal. For Principal A these included: establishing a "high expectation" culture; developing a school-wide pedagogy, raising student achievement levels; increasing enrolments; and, gaining the support of parents and the wider community. Principal A commented:

Continuous improvement is emphasised – we will continually set goals to improve. It is now part of the culture of the school. Teachers now come with new goals, because we have changed our view of students and believe that they have the capacity to learn. We will need to continually "up the bar" [aim higher]. It also comes with a philosophy that kids are giant sponges and a school can continually improve the way it delivers its curriculum.

For Principal B these included: establishing the first "Full Service" school for special students (a school that included additional services such as dentistry and physiotherapy on-site); developing the school's reputation as being one of Australia's leading special schools; and gaining sponsorship that resulted in extensive new resources and facilities. Principal B described her vision and success:

I embarked on a plan to protect the rights of students to have a quality specialist education. First by ensuring the school's viability as an educational option in the eyes of policy makers and then by harnessing support from the corporate world both financially and philosophically. Eight years later we now have an enrolment of 105 students and 50 staff, as well as a new school.

Values and Beliefs

Each principal in the study was able to articulate a set of educational values and beliefs that guided their vision and actions. A strong personal philosophy of education was evident. Values were both local and universal, with Gospel values strongly evident in the Catholic schools. The principals clearly wanted the best for their school, and held strong beliefs about the importance of a sound education for all children. Common values and beliefs across the principals included:

- every child is important;
- every child can succeed;
- every child has unrealised potential;
- teachers needs to feel happy and valued to give their best;
- all members of the school community need to be supported;
- schools should focus on what is in the best interests of the children; and,
- principals can and should make a difference.

Principal D noted:

I have had a long and enduring commitment to all children receiving the best possible range of educational experiences, opportunities to succeed and to reaching their full potential. Within the educational context, I believe children grow and develop best in an environment that is supportive and caring and where attitudes of respecting the rights and differences of others are appreciated and fostered.

In regard to supporting teachers Principal H commented:

The main issue is to keep the teachers happy and contented and valued within the school. As a leader this is the main challenge. To enable the children to reach their full potential in all the areas I spoke about before, I have to give the teachers the right atmosphere and environment for that to take place.

In describing school priorities, Principal G noted aspects that reflected many of the values and beliefs noted previously, but which also highlighted strong Catholic values:

Our priorities are to do with welfare and the well being of the teachers and children, and to ensure that we have structures and programs in place to facilitate this. That children and teachers feel good about themselves, and that the teaching and learning is focussed and children fully engaged. That parents have trust in the school and can talk openly about their children, and that children can be problem-solvers and risk takers. As a Catholic school that we help the children to grow so that they will be positive – Catholic schools need to change to meet the changing world – and that we can help students to make a difference and contribute to the Church in the future.

Personal Characteristics and Qualities

All the principals were recognised for their distinctive personal characteristics and qualities. Common traits identified included being passionate, enthusiastic and highly motivated towards helping children achieve their best. They were described as being persistent, determined and assertive, with high energy levels. They had excellent interpersonal and communication skills and were able to build trust and enhance individual motivation through the integrity, care and respect they demonstrated. Principal I commented:

what you have to do is continue to be the model for the other person, and the other person will take on the model and then will go to other people. It is the modelling of being genuine people, of one being one person to another, respecting skills, respecting achievements, respecting everything. It is the modelling that is the powerful thing.

They were achievement oriented, not only personally, but also for the whole school community. High standards and expectations were set for themselves and the community. None were content with the status quo as they continually "raised the bar", seeing "barriers" as "challenges" rather impediments.

For example, a teacher at School C observed:

I think she has changed the culture of the school (by) having an understanding of what a school is meant to achieve, and having high expectations of students and staff. Also having lots of compassion for students and staff so that when there are problems they are dealt with very professionally … Her leadership, her openness to listen, her sense of humour I think contributes a lot. You can be frank with her.

Leadership Style

The majority of the principals were seen as "strong" leaders. They used a combination of influence and support strategies to achieve school goals. These could be both top-down and bottom-up. The principals were characteristically "hands-on", and acted as role models. Their leadership style was inclusive in the way they were able to bring people along. They cleared a pathway for people to be involved and achieve by removing blockages and providing a clear vision serviced by adequate resources. Staff felt empowered within a structured yet supportive environment. A teacher at School C described how the principal had helped them to enhance their professionalism:

For me personally, she has given me a "kick up the bum" to start doing things. I could have just coasted along, but not investing too much, but now I feel that I do invest more. She inspired me to take my job and the responsibility for it, for what it is. She makes you feel as though what you are doing is important, and always lets people know that what they are doing is important.

The principals were excellent at remaining focused on enhancing the quality of education for students and families. They established good relationships with a range of stakeholders that allowed them to develop strong support networks and alliances. In regard to working with teachers, Principal H noted:

You catch more flies with honey than with vinegar. The strategy that I use that works really well is relationships with people. You develop the relationship and with that relationship, you can always go to people and say, "Gee you're doing a fantastic job, BUT you need to do this", and get them to do it.

Understanding the Context

The school and community context in which all principals operated was clearly understood. The principals were able to successfully analyse situations and contexts, and plan and act accordingly. For example, Principal E understood that the school was coasting and not in accord with the high community expectations:

I sought to change the culture by setting high expectations and encouraging academic rigour ... I set about recruitment of new staff as a priority and attempted to create a culture of continuous learning through professional learning teams.

Principal C found that the community was less than supportive of the school as evidenced by poor attendance, late arrival at school and general tardiness. She quickly acted to raise expectations, clarify appropriate behaviour and encourage adoption of new school rules. When Principal C began at the school she noted:

In the first couple of years I had to forget about curriculum. I mean literally I had to get kids sitting in classrooms ... I would look out into the yard at 25 past nine in the morning and there were kids wandering around outside thinking about whether they would go to the library or whether perhaps they might go to their classroom. I was just appalled.

Interventions

The principals acted purposefully and strategically. They engaged in a series of interventions that reflected the contexts and needs of their schools. These interventions were sometimes focussed on specific areas, while others had a whole-school focus. We have categorised the interventions as: student outcomes; teaching and learning; school capacity building; and, other influences.

Student outcomes All principals were concerned to improve student learning outcomes in traditional areas such as literacy and numeracy. They did this by setting specific goals and continuously raising standards and expectations. For example, even though School A is located in a low socio-economic area, the principal set an expectation that every child would achieve above the state average in literacy. Others principals focused on achieving other educational and social outcomes. For example, Principal D developed a values education policy program that targeted social competencies as a school priority and which was built into the curriculum at every year level.

Teaching and learning This intervention often targeted classroom teaching practices and school curriculum. Principal A noted that he was the "curriculum leader" and purposefully aligned teachers to a particular teaching pedagogy. A teacher at School A described the principal's success:

Principal A had a reputation as an excellent teacher and this helps in his leadership. He is the curriculum coordinator of the school – he maintains his interest and knowledge whilst many principals let this go. He doesn't see his job as a lot of principals do – it is not only running a school, but also the kids and the curriculum. He talks to every teacher every day, he is in classrooms, he is aware of what is going on and speaks about curriculum with passion. His knowledge of curriculum and how education works has been a key to teachers taking on-board change so well. He has real credibility because he practices what he preaches.

Principal E set about getting behind the often closed classroom doors of the secondary school in order to challenge current teaching practices. Principal C focused on restructuring the curriculum to maximise time on task.

School capacity   School capacity included many interventions that could be clustered into the areas of personal, professional, organisational and community capacity. All principals encouraged individual teacher growth and provided opportunities for professional development. Principals B and D set about building community support and acquiring resources and facilities. Principals A, C, D, E and I took steps to make the school environment psychologically and physically safe. A student at School A described the school environment:

It is definitely a safe school, and I don't think there are many people who don't like coming to school. From my personal experiences I have never felt unsafe or unhappy here. All staff and students are friendly here.

Other areas of influence   Principals were aware of the many other influences that could impact on their schools. Many of the principals were actively involved outside their school to ensure that knowledge and ideas were brought into the school, and to promote and protect their schools within the wider community. Many principals were on government or systemic committees in areas such as curriculum, facilities, resource allocation, or special projects. Most of the principals were influential in professional and community networks. Principal B described how she used external networks to enhance her school:

I embarked on a plan to protect the rights of students to have a quality specialist education. First by ensuring the school's viability as an educational option in the eyes of policy makers and then by harnessing support from the corporate world both financially and philosophically. Eight years later we now have an enrolment of 105 students and 50 staff, as well as a new school.

Towards a Contemporary Model of Educational Leadership

From our case studies it was clear that each principal contributed significantly to their school's success. The level of success was determined to a large extent by a combination of factors: what kind of person the principal was, including their personal qualities, values, beliefs, attitudes, skills, and what type of interventions they made within a particular environment. In order to make more sense of the leadership exhibited by the principals, we propose a model that incorporates the range of interventions used by the principal. The model of successful school leadership (Figure 3.1) was developed to achieve three objectives:
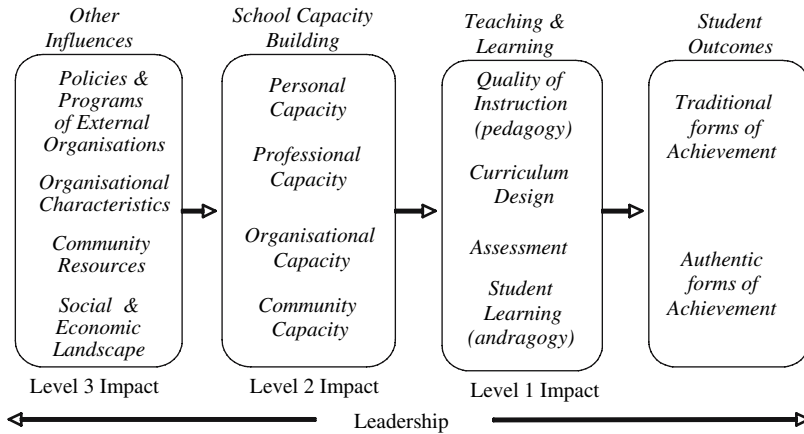
Other Influences	School Capacity Building	Teaching & Learning	Student Outcomes
Policies & Programs of External Organisations Organisational Characteristics Community Resources Social & Economic Landscape	Personal Capacity Professional Capacity Organisational Capacity Community Capacity	Quality of Instruction (pedagogy) Curriculum Design Assessment Student Learning (andragogy)	Traditional forms of Achievement Authentic forms of Achievement
Level 3 Impact	Level 2 Impact	Level 1 Impact	

Leadership

Figure 3.1. Successful School Leadership: An Intervention Based Model

1. To describe, explain and categorise the various kinds of leadership interventions and outline their relationship and impact on student outcomes.
2. To provide a conceptual map of the interventions used by the principals.
3. To provide a framework for other practitioners to use as a guide to future action.

The model is based on the findings of the Victorian case studies as well as previous models that have identified key influences on student achievement. For example, King & Newmann (2001) showed that student achievement is influenced by the quality of instruction (curriculum, instruction and assessment), which is influenced by school capacity (teacher knowledge, professional community, and program coherence). In turn these factors are influenced by other internal and external factors (policy and programs developed by other agencies). Hopkins (2001, p. 183) provided a similar framework based on concentric circles that places pupil learning in the inner circle. Each circle shows a sphere of influence on pupil learning. In order of impact (from the inner circles to the outer) these include: curriculum and instructional programs; creating the conditions and capacity for school improvement; and policy context and external support networks.

The model moves away from the traditional, narrow notion of instructional leadership that focused on teacher supervision (Hill, 2002), and suggests that principals can make interventions in a range of areas that contribute to student outcomes. Explanation of the different elements of the model follows.

Student outcomes   The model identifies student outcomes as the key focus of schools. The forms of student achievement noted in the model can vary from traditional forms of achievement, such as performance on national tests, standardised tests and the league tables often generated from these data, to more authentic forms of outcomes (Newmann, 1996) such a social competencies, community values, and

citizenship. This category is not focussed on interventions *per se*, but there is an intervention aspect to it in so far as principals and schools determine which student outcomes will be prioritised. By doing this, aspects of teaching and learning, school capacity building and external influences can be impacted upon, rather than the more typical pathway of interventions occurring which lead to student outcomes. For example, in School I, there was a focus on values-based student outcomes associated with leadership and service. This meant, for example, that by adopting these outcomes new teaching programs were developed (level 1 – student leadership program), there was modelling of appropriate behaviours by staff (level 2 – most notably through the behaviours of the principal), and the school reached out to support external agencies (level 3 – links with indigenous communities).

Teaching and Learning (Level 1 Impact)

The teaching and learning category is identified as Level 1 impact. It is labelled Level 1 because the factors identified in this category have a direct impact on student outcomes. The model identifies four factors in this classification – quality of instruction (pedagogy), curriculum design, assessment, and student learning (andragogy).

Quality of instruction (pedagogy)   Pedagogy is the science of teaching children (Knowles, 1986). More commonly it refers to the knowledge that teachers have about teaching and learning, and the strategies they use to support learning. It is a learning process where the teacher assumes responsibility for making decisions about what will be learned, how it will be learned, and when it will be learned.

Student learning (andragogy)   Andragogy is the science of teaching adults (Knowles, 1986). It is a process where the learner assumes much more responsibility for their learning. Students learn to organise, structure, and use information autonomously. They are encouraged to take more responsibility for designing their own learning elements, such as planning, formation of objectives, determining content, accessing information, monitoring progress and evaluating outcomes.

Curriculum design   This includes system-wide and school based curriculum development. Curriculum can be defined as a blueprint for learning that defines what students need to know, understand, do and value. (Wiggins & McTighe, 1998). While most school systems provide curriculum frameworks or guidelines, the school is responsible for delivering the curriculum. In school based curriculum development schools make choices about developing a curriculum profile that most suits their need.

Assessment   Assessment helps to improve student outcomes by providing formative and/or summative information to students and the school concerning student progress. It is the systematic collection, analysis and interpretation of evidence used to measure and monitor performance, motivate students, and determine whether

the goals of education have been met. Assessment affects decisions about performance levels, placement, advancement, teaching strategies, future learning needs, curriculum, and, in some cases, resourcing.

School Capacity Building

A school's ability to build capacity is identified as a Level 2 impact because of its potential to affect teaching and learning. Several writers identify capacity building as a significant factor in influencing school improvement (Hopkins, 2001; Hopkins & Harris, 2000; King & Newmann, 2001; Mitchell & Sackney, 2001; Stoll, Fink & Earl, 2003). The proposed model identifies four areas of capacity building: personal, professional, organisational, and community and within each of these, four elements. These are shown in Figure 3.2. We have termed this a 4 by 4 approach (4X4). In Australian culture, 4X4 is associated with a piece of wood that has a four inch by four inch cross section, and is used as a key structural member for timber framing. We view these capacities as key structural elements of successful schools. Leaders help build capacity in each area.
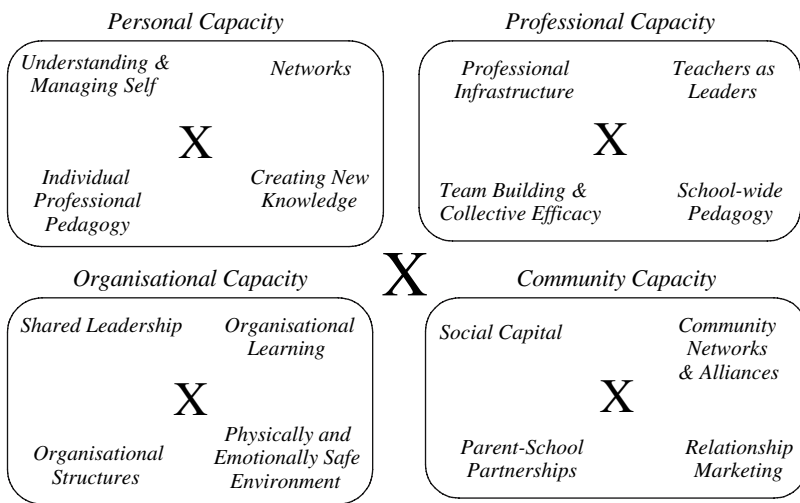

Figure 3.2. 4X4 Approach to School Capacity Building

Personal capacity   Personal capacity is the ability of an individual to do what is demanded of them. This includes values, assumptions, competencies, and practices that individuals hold (Mitchell and Sackney, 2001). Building capacity means providing opportunities and experiences that enhance that ability. Senge (1990) uses the term "personal mastery", that is, a set of practices that support individuals to clarify and deepen their personal vision while developing an awareness of seeing reality objectively. Four elements can be identified to help strengthen personal capacity.

- Understanding and managing self – This is the ability of a person to better understand themselves in order to maintain and improve their own effectiveness and overall performance. It is being able to reflect, monitor and improve one's own cognition and behaviour. This requires personal motivation, self direction and emotional maturity.
- Individual professional pedagogy – This capacity refers to the need to grow and learn in a professional sense. Teachers need to confront and challenge and search for their own theory of practice. Being able to understand and articulate one's own teaching philosophy, methodology and learning assumptions are important ingredients to change and improvement.
- Networks – Building personal and professional networks provides the capacity for personal growth and resilience. Different networks provide different opportunities. Some provide new ideas and allow for experimentation, while others provide stability, support, trust and security.
- Creating new knowledge – Knowledge creation requires a search for new ideas and practices and seeking ways of embedding them into new practices.

Professional capacity   Professional capacity is the potential for a range of professionals, based inside and outside the school, to mutually enhance each other's and pupil's learning as well as school development (Bolam, McMahon, Stoll, Thomas, & Wallace, 2005). More specifically it refers to groups of professionals (teachers) who share and critically interrogate their practice in an ongoing, reflective, collaborative, inclusive, learning-oriented, growth- promoting way (Toole & Louis, 2002). There are four elements that can contribute to building professional capacity.

- Professional infrastructure – Professional infrastructure refers to the time, space, resources, environment and culture that allow professionals to engage in professional learning. Harris & Muijs (2005) suggest that infrastructure involves the philosophy and mission of the school, selection of personnel, resources (time, money and talent), teacher training, work structures, policies and available outside networks.
- Teachers as leaders – Teacher leadership derives from the distinctive power of teaching to shape meaning for children, youth and adults. Teachers are leaders *in* learning as well as leaders *of* learning. Leadership is not necessarily aligned to a formal leadership role or function. Leadership is located between and among individuals within a school (Harris & Muijs, 2005). It reflects the need for teachers to increase their influence beyond the classroom and into school-wide leadership activities (Crowther, Kaagan, Ferguson, & Hann, 2002). Teacher leaders can plan and implement changes that make a difference to learning and learners.
- Team building and collective efficacy – This capacity is related to concepts such as team performance (Katzenbach & Smith, 2005), professional learning communities (Hord, 1997), and communities of practice (Wenger, 1998). A team may consist of small groups of teachers, departmental groups, subject or discipline groups, cross-grade groups and even whole school groupings. Teachers

work collaboratively, develop a shared vision for student learning, and take collective responsibility for student learning (Newmann, King, & Youngs, 2000; Newmann & Wehlage, 1995). As a team, teachers build the capacity to learn professionally to enhance their effectiveness for the benefit of students.

- School-wide pedagogy – School-wide pedagogy (Crowther, 2001) is synonymous with the concept of program coherence (King & Newmann, 2001). It refers to a whole school approach to teaching and learning. Teachers share their pedagogical practices and together construct a common approach which reflects a collaboration of best practice teaching and learning in the school, an evaluation of current authoritative approaches, and desire to develop an approach that represents a common set of community values.

Organisational capacity Organisational capacity is concerned with building appropriate structures, processes and organisational culture to enhance organisational effectiveness (Leithwood & Riehl, 2005; Mitchell and Sackney, 2001).

- Shared leadership – This element is similar to concepts such as distributed, dispersed and democratic leadership (Yep, 2005). At its core, shared leadership provides a pool of expertise that contributes to a school's effectiveness. To work it must be accompanied by social cohesion and trust.
- Organisational learning – A learning organisation is an organisation in which people at all levels are, collectively, continually enhancing their capacity to create things they really want to create. There is a sense in which organisations as a whole can learn. It is skilled at creating, acquiring and transferring knowledge, and at modifying its behaviour to reflect new knowledge and insights.
- Organisational structures – Organisational structures can either enhance or hinder performance (Hoy, 2003). Structures include formal and informal arrangements, organisational processes which help govern and control work and relationships, distribution of authority, procedures, rules, regulations, policies, communication channels and processes.
- Safe environment – An important capacity building activity is developing a physically and emotionally safe environment for students and staff. Attending to this capacity is particularly important in schools in challenging circumstances.

Community capacity The school is part of a larger community which includes a range of constituencies; that is, organisations, groups and individuals who have a direct or indirect interest in the school. The participation and engagement by these constituencies can provide mutual benefits for those involved including: (1) a sense of community whereby members see themselves as stakeholders; (2) a willingness to participate; (3) a range of leadership skills that can be employed; and (4) resources that can be accessed (Chaskin, 2001).

- Social capital – This is the value of relationships (Baker, 1992; Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1988). Putman (2000) describes it as the dense networks of connections between individuals, including norms of reciprocity and trust which arise from community involvement. It is the assets that one accrues from these relationships (Leithwood & Riehl, 2005).

- Community networks & alliances – Establishing alliances and networks with organisations and agencies within the broader community can provide resources, expertise, new insights, and support. Building partnership and alliances requires a strategic and purposeful approach (Watson & Fullan, 1992).
- Parent-school partnerships – Parent-school partnerships can help families and schools to construct environments that lead to enhanced student learning, especially in challenging contexts (Leithwood & Riehl, 2005; Leithwood & Steinbach, 2003)
- Relationship marketing – Relationship marketing (Drysdale, 2001, 2002; Grönroos, 1994) attempts to establish, develop, enhance and maintain, and in some circumstances terminate, relationships with distinctive groups and members that make up the school community. Schools need to be customer focused and transform the way they relate to their consistencies, for example, changing clients into supporters, who can become advocates, and eventually partners with the school as relationships develop.

Other Influences

The final impact on student achievement (Level 3) is labelled "Other Influences" (King & Newmann, 2001). These might vary across schools, but could include several internal and external aspects such as: policies and programs of governments (system or district level), employers and other organisations; school organisational characteristics such as size, facilities and resources; community resources such as public libraries, sporting facilities, and transportation; and, social and economic landscape such as population demographics, employment opportunities, and community wealth. For Day et al. (2000), their successful headteachers were expert at managing competing tensions and dilemmas, including adapting external demands to fit with school directions and influencing the external demands through participation in key decision making groups. Day et al. (2000) also found that school organisational features mattered, with, for example, leadership of small schools being more challenging due to the often high teaching load of the principals, and the capacity of a small staff to provide the breath of knowledge and experience needed to cover increasingly diverse curriculum.

Giles, Johnson, Brooks, & Jacobson (2005) illustrated how a principal can work with and influence the context surrounding a school; the school they describe is Fraser Academy, one of the seven case study schools included in the chapter from Jacobson and colleagues in this book. The principal took over a school in very challenging circumstances, and not only improved the school but also improved the local neighbourhood so that both became safe environments for children and adults. Over a period of eight years, teachers no longer felt threatened, drug trafficking in the neighbourhood diminished, housing improved, the school had a waiting list for student entry, parent participation improved, and, most importantly, students wanted to come to school and learn. One of the attributes of this principal was her ability to use aspects of the external environment to help transform the school. For example, the principal used system accountability requirements to focus staff and parents on improving student learning. This behaviour is supported by the review of Leithwood &

Riehl (2005) who have, as their fifth claim about successful school leadership, that these leaders act in ways that acknowledge the accountability-oriented policy context.

Generalisations from the Case Studies that Illustrate the Model

This section provides an indication of typical actions used by principals that illustrate how the model reflects practice. The educational leadership demonstrated by the principals showed interventions in each of the areas of the model, especially in teaching and learning, and school capacity. What helped to make the interventions successful were the beliefs, values, vision, personal characteristics and leadership style of the principal. In terms of student outcomes, the principals set high academic achievement goals, but added and negotiated other outcomes that were felt desirable by the school community. In the teaching and learning area, interventions included student leadership programs, redesigning key elements of the curriculum, questioning existing teaching strategies, and adopting alternative assessment measures. Interventions aimed at building personal capacity included challenging individual teachers to think about their future development, offering professional learning activities directed towards enhancing skills and knowledge, as well as strategies to improve self awareness thorough reflective practice and networking with other schools and agencies. At the professional capacity level, teachers were often encouraged to work in teams and develop as teacher leaders. Teachers were encouraged to examine their own teaching pedagogy and develop a school-wide approach. In terms of organisational capacity, principals often altered existing hierarchical structures and put into place more collaborative decision making structures and processes. In addition there was often a significant focus on building community support by developing networks and alliances with community and business groups, improving parent-school relationships, and actively encouraging greater community participation and ownership. It was clear that the principals worked closely with many others in the school and wider community. Whilst the leadership of the principals was important, it was evident that the success of these schools also involved considerable leadership from others, especially from teachers, but also from those involved in school governance, and, in some cases, students. In respect to "other influences", the principals were knowledgeable about current government policies and how these were likely to impact on their school, and had a sophisticated appreciation of the context and external challenges impacting on the school.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the importance of the principal to the quality of education in a school. From a Victorian perspective, the principal remains an important and significant figure in determining the success of a school. The case studies showed the significant contribution of the principal to the school's educational program. The characteristics and qualities of the principal identified in the case studies showed a common and consistent set of personal traits and behaviours. Principals' values and beliefs and the contribution of principals in the areas of capacity building, and teaching and learning were important features of these successful principals.

APPENDIX 1: SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

Schools (Pseudonym)	School Type	School Context	School Size	Principal Male/Female	Leadership team (size)
School A	5–11 Government Primary School	Inner suburban Low wealth	218 students Mainly Anglo Saxon. 20% of families have a background other than English. 15 teachers	Male	4 (Principal, assistant principal and two leading teachers)
School B	5–18 Government Special School	Inner suburban Low to high wealth	120 students Diverse cultural mix although predominantly Anglo Saxon background. 50 teachers	Female	5 (Principal, assistant principal and three leading teachers)
School C	5–11 Catholic Primary School	Outer suburban Low wealth	146 students Anglo Saxon. Only 2% from a language background other than English. 11 teachers	Female	5 (Principal, Deputy Principal, Religious Education Coordinator, Literacy Coordinator, Curriculum Coordinator)
School D	5–11 Government Primary School	Outer suburban Medium wealth	580 students Mainly Anglo Saxon. Less than 5% come from a language background other than English. 52 teachers	Female	5 (Principal, assistant principal and three leading teachers)
School E	12–18 Government Secondary School	Suburban Medium wealth	1000 students Mainly Anglo Saxon. Less than 25% from language backgrounds other than English. 70 teachers	Female	13 (Principal, 2 assistant principals and 10 leading teachers)

School	Type	Location/Wealth	Students	Gender	Leadership
School F	5–11 Catholic Primary School	Suburban Low wealth	388 students 73% Italian 8% Asian 7% Arabic 4% Anglo/Celt 4% Greek 3% European 1% South American. 20 teachers	Female	8 (Principal, Deputy Principal, Coordinators of Religious Education, Learning and Teaching, Literacy, Mathematics, Information Technology)
School G	5–11 Catholic Primary School	Suburban Medium wealth	385 students Diverse cultural mix 51% Anglo (35% 3rd generation Italian). 11% parents born in Italy, 14% China, 8% other Asian Countries, and small numbers from 22 other countries. 18 teachers	Female	6 (Principal, Deputy Principal, Coordinators of Religious Education, Curriculum, Information Technology, Student Welfare)
School H	5–11 Catholic Primary School	Suburban Medium to high wealth	435 students Majority English speaking backgrounds. The rest from 20 different cultures with Italian being the major one 22 teachers	Male	5 (Principal, Deputy Principal, Coordinators of Religious Education, Curriculum, Information and Communication)
School I	3–18 Independent Boys' School Kinder-year 12	Suburban High wealth	1330 Students Mainly Anglo Saxon. 30 full-fee overseas students. 128 teachers	Male	9 (Headmaster, Deputy Headmaster (School Management), Deputy Headmaster (School Liaison), Head of Junior School, Director of Curriculum, Director of Daily Administration, Assistant to HM (Head of Computing), Assistant to HM (Student Leadership), Business Manager).

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