Leadership for Learning

A Review of School Leadership Literature

21st February 2019

Acknowledgement of Country

The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land, sea country and waterways from across Australia. We honour and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

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Contents

Appendices

Figures

Tables

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the light of recent reports on school leadership, AITSL engaged Griffith University to identify the current state of knowledge about principals and leadership for learning with a view to the influence that the review's outcomes might have on the Australian Professional Standard for Principals and their leadership learning.

The review report commenced with a comprehensive search of the body of research and scholarly writing directed towards understanding and explaining the connections between the work of school principals and student learning and achievement, with the period from 2000 to the present as the main focus. A large corpus of work was uncovered, sifted to exclude less than useful publications, leaving the remainder to be classified into empirical, theoretical and conceptual groupings for analysis. That analysis, when undertaken chronologically, led to a narrative to describe the evolution of approaches to the actions of school leaders shown to be linked with improved student outcomes. What has emerged about leadership for learning is conspicuous because of the frequency with which findings have arisen and been confirmed, and for the commonality of the actions or practices found to help leaders make effective links. There is commonality, also, in the cautions offered by many of the researchers about making the assumption that seemingly generic practices can be applied automatically everywhere. This is not so. While the practices themselves may have a ubiquitous reach, they must be applied in ways sensitive to each school's local context.

There are three definitive outcomes from this review. First, the domains and dimensions of effective leadership for learning (as described in the Revised Unified Leadership Framework resulting from Part III of this review) rest on a highly reliable body of research, making a credible case for reference to them in future revisions to the Australian Professional Standard for Principals.

Second, the narrative composed in Part II from the research findings and conclusions taken from Part I seems to be moving inexorably to a reconceptualization of leadership for learning as a collective activity or practice in schools involving principals, leadership position holders, teachers, students, parents and other community members, all with specific interests in the drive to improve learning for all.

Third, the leadership influence of the principal has been clearly reinforced, showing that the bulk of what happens in school improvement occurs because of a principal's commitment to, material support for, and encouragement of collaborations firmly fixed on leadership for student learning.

These three general conclusions find support in the analysis undertaken in each part of the review.

Part I resulted in three outcomes for which there is sufficient evidence to give principals great faith in them.

1. There are now a very clear set of descriptions of the domains of leadership for learning action and the practices or activities which, when implemented, carry the prospect of positive effects on student learning and achievement.

2. Principals remain pivotal in making a reality of shared or collaborative leadership but trusting interpersonal relationships are deeply rooted in how these practices take hold, flourish and become 'everyday'.

3.   While it is readily evident that the concept of leadership for learning covers common dimensions for action no matter the circumstances, how effective these practices are is heavily context dependent, relying on the professional autonomy of the principal and the layering of leadership in networks, if mutual influence is to be encouraged broadly and deeply within and beyond the school.

Part II carries the essential message that the body of research examined has underscored a shift from leadership as position to leadership as collective activity or practice which, in networked combinations of action, also brings together the intentions of instructional and transformational leadership approaches. Leadership for learning is the emergent reconceptualisation.

Part III analyses the level of congruence across six Leadership Frameworks resulting in observable tiers of emphasis on the domains and dimensions of leadership practice. This approach isolated the practices which are most commonly identified as contributing to improvements in learning as a Revised Unified Leadership Framework.

Part IV attends to the question of the possible influence of the review outcomes for the Australian Professional Standard for Principals. Two options are proposed for consideration by AITSL.

Option 1 could be accomplished without downplaying the previous expressions included in the requirements and practices of the present Standard. This could be done incrementally to reflect several of the recurring findings from this review. A number are suggested, such as: (a) making the moral purpose of education explicit, (b) foregrounding a commitment to broadening the work of leaders to encompass leadership as a set of activities or practices which are put into best effect in cooperatives or collectives, and (c) elevating knowledge of research-informed practice about leadership for learning and improved student achievement as the central task of principals.

Option 2 is illustrated in two diagrammatic versions (see Figures 8 and 9) bringing Leadership for Learning onto that centre stage by suggesting that the Requirements of the Australian Professional Standard for Principals be retained with revisions influenced by placing Leadership for Learning as the centrepiece of a revised Table of Practices or Dimensions.

Part V addresses the question of professional leadership learning with the review pointing to the need for balance in the opportunities taken by principals for their leadership learning and development – a balance between (a) programs prepared, required and delivered by system authorities; and (b) leadership learning undertaken based on personal need and choice. Two outcomes are directed towards addressing this issue of balance. The first describes a set of criteria to guide planners and administrators in the design, development and conduct of high-quality leadership learning programs as follows:

Ten criteria for leadership learning design to ensure programs are:

1. **Philosophically and theoretically attuned** to individual needs and system requirements**.**
2. **Goal oriented**, with primacy given to the dual aims of improvement in student learning and achievement, and school improvement.
3. **Research informed** by the weight of credible research evidence.
4. **Time rich**, allowing for learning sequences to be spaced and interspersed with collegial support, in school applications and reflective encounters.
5. **Practice centred**, so that knowledge is taken back into the school in ways that maximise the effects on leadership capability.
6. **Purpose designed** for specific career stages, with ready transfer of theory and knowledge into practice.
7. **Peer supported** within or beyond the school, so that feedback helps to transfer theory and knowledge into improved practice.
8. **Context sensitive** and thus able to build in and make relevant use of school leaders' knowledge of their circumstances.
9. **Partnership powered** with external support through joint ventures involving associations, universities and the wider professional world.
10. **Effects focused**, committed to evaluating the effects on leaders, as well as on school practices to which their learning applies.

The second proposes the use of an expanded heuristic tool, first developed by Clarke and Wildy (2011) to focus principals' attention on the content of a personally created career-long leadership learning and development curriculum, organised around five focal points intimately tied to the knowledge required of principals: pedagogy, people, place, system and self. These focal points, when taken together, encompass leadership content knowledge which reflects the outcomes of this review.

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1   Introduction

School principals and their leadership practices have been the subject of research attention for at least 30 years, with efforts directed especially towards understanding whether or not there are identifiable connections between what leaders do, student learning and the outcomes students achieve. The number of leadership research reviews has picked up considerably in the last 10 years, as the accumulation of findings from comprehensive international studies has been subject to analysis. Significant in raising interest and awareness of the importance of school leadership was the two-volume OECD (2008) report, *Improving School Leadership*, which laid out an influential agenda for consideration by politicians and policymakers. That agenda included addressing four main policy levers: clearly defining school leadership responsibilities, supporting a distributed and inclusive leadership approach, professional development for leadership skills, and an increased focus on drivers of recruitment and retention of school leaders.

In the early 2000s, the Wallace Foundation in the United States published a series of research papers examining the role of leadership on school improvement and effectiveness. Their headline finding was that school leadership, generally but not exclusively exercised by the school principal, is second only to teaching quality in its impact on student learning. Furthermore, they found that effective leadership has the most impact in schools where students have acute learning needs. The implications of their findings for policy objectives aimed at closing the educational achievement gap in Australia, and internationally, are significant. Based on an exhaustive review of the then available quantitative research, the reports synthesised broad findings across the literature. These reports repeatedly highlighted the essential role and impact of leadership, with a particular focus on the principal. The Foundation summarises its extensive work into three over-arching themes by which impact is achieved: setting direction, developing people, and making the organisation work effectively.

In New Zealand in 2006, the government-initiated, Auckland University-led 'Best Evidence Synthesis' study focused on school leadership effects, becoming a valuable forerunner to other related research. That work on school leadership was grounded specifically in the New Zealand context and, reflecting New Zealand's commitment to cultural inclusivity, provides insight into effective school leadership in multi-cultural environments. The Synthesis reports identified a series of leadership domains and practices, which notably included calls for distributed leadership and authentic engagement with families and the community at large. The authors also discussed the importance of data, tools and resources in the leadership context – a theme which has become more prominent in the research over the following decade.

In the United Kingdom, the work of the National College for Teaching and Leadership was instrumental in reporting leadership research and in sponsoring two significant reviews in 2007 and 2010. The 2007 review explored the evidence base for leadership impact in schools, identifying 'seven strong claims' about leadership. These findings subsequently formed the basis for a large-scale empirical research project. Reflecting the additive nature of leadership research, the 2007 report led with the high-level finding from the Wallace Foundation, that leadership is second only to classroom teaching in terms of influencing student achievement. Their findings delved deeper into the nature of effective leadership, identifying a repertoire of common practices and exploring the context-sensitive manner in which leaders apply these practices.

In Canada, the province of Ontario with its strong links with the University of Toronto undertook the development of a comprehensive framework addressing leadership concepts and practices at the school and system level (Leithwood 2012). The framework is action oriented and provides guidance about effective leadership practices, the personal resources that support leadership and consideration about how leadership functions in different socio-economic and cultural contexts. It takes a whole-system perspective, framing how leadership practices at district and system levels interact and influence the school context.

Since its formation in 2010, the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership has worked towards its mission of *promoting excellence so that teachers and leaders have the maximum impact on learning*. Laureate Professor John Hattie, Chair of the AITSL Board, committed to the vision in his foreword to the 2019-22 Strategic Plan: *We will achieve this by improving the level of teacher expertise, building strong leadership in our schools and early childhood settings, and ensuring that all of us involved in education can evaluate our impact and make decisions based on what is proven to work best.*

What has been proven to work best was implicit in the 2018 Gonski Review (Gonski et al. 2018) *Through Growth to Achievement.* This work, in Chapter 4, acknowledged the impact of international leadership research on the influence of principals on school improvement. Also acknowledged was a recognition of the undeniable need for an unwavering leadership focus on learning and what it takes to enhance achievement for every student.

Against this backdrop, AITSL has engaged Griffith University to identify the current state of knowledge about principals and leadership for learning. The Griffith University team was contracted to undertake an international literature review of seminal research on effective leadership for learning, with a particular focus on providing a comparative analysis of prominent leadership frameworks. AITSL is also seeking an overview of the evolution of leadership scholarship to stimulate a consideration of the implications of current research for improving leadership practice.

To address the aims of the review, this report is structured in five parts. In **Part I**, international empirically supported research, colour coded mauve and yellow in Appendix 1**,** is reviewed to identify the movements in leadership research chronologically as well as the major messages from this corpus of work. **Part II** examines international theoretical and scholarly writing (colour coded green in Appendix 1) to ascertain definitive theoretical and conceptual explanations of leadership and learning linkages over the last two decades. In **Part III**, a select group of Leadership for Learning Frameworks is analysed to draw out commonalities, differences and confirmations in the domains, dimensions and practices of leadership for learning articulated by accomplished researchers. In **Part IV**, the existing AITSL Professional Standard for Principals is summarized, followed by a discussion of the possible augmentation or adjustment to the Standard arising from the review. **Part V** draws together research that relates to principals' professional leadership learning with implications for future programs and practice. The report concludes with an abridged account of the review process undertaken and reference to the thrust of the Executive Summary.

Before moving to the presentation of the report, we recount the methods employed to produce the research and scholarly literature base used for the review.

1.1   Search Methods and Outcomes

As an initial step in conducting the literature review, a series of keywords outlined in the project description submitted to AITSL were used to source journal articles and books of varying quality that appeared related to the topic of instructional leadership, leadership for learning and their connections with student outcomes. The keywords guiding the literature search were generated initially from the tender description, for example: leadership for learning, instructional leadership, leading teaching and learning, learning leaders, and school effectiveness. Synonyms of more familiar keywords were used to supplement the search terms. Additional key words, for example, meta-analysis, conceptual and theoretical frameworks, practices, were added as further documents were sourced.

Scholarly electronic databases were searched to identify original research papers published in the English language and peer reviewed, as well as relevant authored and edited books in the field. Databases searched were Scopus, Science Direct, PsychInfo, ProQuest, Web of Knowledge, Sage, Google Scholar and Google. The scope of the search included work published internationally, including in Australia, from 2000 – 2018. This timeframe was especially important in refining the concepts and practices of leadership for learning around the world. Additional information was generated from reference lists and citation records of papers found in database searches.

This search resulted in 595 documents, of which 230 were discarded as irrelevant in topic and/or of low quality. Based on the reference details supplied for the remaining documents, the researchers called for full abstracts to be tabled on an Excel spread sheet. The researchers' independent reading of these abstracts led to an agreement for narrowing down the compilation to 144 documents for closer scrutiny. Of these, 76 documents (see Appendix 2) were subsequently colour-coded as shown in Table 1 to signify a hierarchy of importance to our provision of an in-depth response to AITSL's request for a comprehensive understanding of contemporary and seminal research related to the leadership of learning in the form of a systematic literature review.

Mauve	Most useful – meta-analytical, empirically based indirect and direct leadership linkages with learning and student outcomes
Yellow	Particularly important to the review
Blue	Some possible relevance
Green	Contributes to understanding LfL processes with theoretical and conceptual knowledge

Table 1: Coding of Literature Reviewed for this Report

The review of this literature charts developments that have occurred, emphasising that there has been a steadily accumulating body of knowledge validating specific aspects of the work of principals now seen as imperative in making deliberate connections between leadership, learning and improved student outcomes.

PART I. INTERNATIONAL EMPIRICALLY SUPPORTED RESEARCH

2 Synopsis of Literature 2000 to the present

We commence the review by discussing a select group of empirical studies (colour coded mauve and yellow in Appendix 1) whose purposes were the pursuit of further understanding about the links between leadership, learning and student achievement. This is done chronologically in two-decade clusters (2000 – 2010 and 2011 to the present) so that the development of thinking about this relationship and the way research findings have been accumulating over time and being confirmed can be seen.

2.1 Key Literature 2000 – 2010

> *Witziers, B, Bosker, RJ & Krüger, ML 2003, 'Educational leadership and student achievement: the elusive search for an association', Educational Administration Quarterly, vol. 39, no. 3, pp. 398-425.*

It was the work of Witziers, Bosker and Krüger in 2003, following seminal findings by Hallinger and Heck (1996) into the influence teachers and principals have on student attainment, that opened up a rich leadership research vein which continues to be mined to the present day. Witziers et al. were critical of the idea that school leadership had been and might continue to be seen as a unitary concept residing in one position holder, namely the principal. Notwithstanding this caveat, they were able to point to a positive, though guarded relationship between four generalised behaviours and improved student outcomes: supervision and evaluation, monitoring, visibility, and defining and communicating the mission. The real significance of their work, however, was to expose the limitations of school leadership as a unidimensional construct, opening the way for researchers to dig deeply into the practices of leaders and their effects.

> *Leithwood, K, Seashore, K, Anderson, S & Wahlstrom, K 2004, 'Review of research: how leadership influences student learning', Centre for Applied Research and Educational Improvement, University of Minnesota/Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto/The Wallace Foundation.*

Simultaneously, this challenge was being taken up by a group of researchers in the field of school leadership from Canada and the United States. Ken Leithwood, in partnership with Karen Seashore, Stephen Anderson and Kyla Wahlstrom, undertook the Wallace Foundation's commissioned study probing the role of leadership in improving learning (Leithwood et al. 2004). Since then, Leithwood has been engaged in many collaborative studies aimed at explaining, as fully as possible, from which leadership actions most effect on learning is likely. The Wallace Foundation's sponsorship helped set a series of benchmarks on leadership and learning connections. This large-scale study underscored the multi-dimensionality of school leadership, also signalling its context specificity. Prominent amongst its wide-ranging findings are the two claims referred to in the introduction to this review:

1. Leadership is second only to classroom instruction among all school-related factors that contribute to what students learn at school.
2. Leadership effects are usually largest where and when they are needed most. e.g. the effects of successful leadership are considerably greater in schools that are in more difficult circumstances. (p. 17)

How the effects of leadership actions occur was explained in three basic practices initiated and implemented by successful principals: setting directions, developing people, and redesigning the organisation (pp. 23-4). These practices require leaders to exercise influence on particular people or features of their organisations, thus indirectly contributing to student learning. This finding opened the way for much more fine-grained investigation

into which actions and which elements of the school as an organisation, effective leaders concentrated their attention on. The focus on the organisation did not detract from findings relating to the importance of teachers in improving student learning. They were found to be the key professionals with necessary content and context knowledge, classroom and group organisation approaches, and teaching practices, including monitoring and assessment strategies (Leithwood et al. 2004, p 13). Examining and describing what principals need to do to enhance these high pedagogical priority areas in different contexts was seen as requiring further research. Two additional points are important to mention: (a) the Wallace Foundation study concluded that although the term 'instructional leadership' had widespread currency at the time, there was a lack of descriptive clarity about what it actually meant for the work of the principal. Here was a strong signal for further investigation of the practices that together constitute 'instructional leadership' (Leithwood et al. 2004, p. 10); and (b) the emergence of the term 'distributed leadership' likewise carried confusing messages about distribution and delegation at the expense of authentic shared leadership practices. Again, further research-informed knowledge was seen as essential to a more complete understanding of the connections between leadership and learning.

A final note from this groundbreaking work shows that its findings are in line with the emergence of a distinction between leader and leadership. The former is about an individual position and the authority the role carries, while the latter is about actions carried into effect by groups. This put a new purpose into studies in the leadership field – to document the very practices or actions which principals should know, understand and be able to execute so that collective leadership activity could be fostered.

> *Hallinger, P 2005, 'Instructional leadership and the school principal: a passing fancy that refuses to fade away', Leadership and Policy in Schools, vol. 4, pp. 221-39.*

Phillip Hallinger, another highly accomplished researcher in the school leadership field, picked up the concern about 'instructional leadership' raised by Leithwood et al. (2004). Using a comprehensive review process for which he has become noted, Hallinger (2005) drew on empirical studies and his own work in partnership with Heck (1996) and others (Mulford & Sillins 2003; Marks & Printy 2004) to identify descriptive findings where 'instructional leadership' was the primary research focus. The major outcomes Hallinger derived from his review are summarised to show that the concept of instructional leadership is evident in three dimensions of leadership activity harbouring 10 leadership functions (Hallinger 2005, p. 233):

1. **Defining the School's Mission** includes two leadership functions – Framing the School's Goals and Communicating the School's Goals;
2. **Managing the Instructional Program** includes three leadership functions – Supervising and Evaluating Instruction, Coordinating the Curriculum, and Monitoring Student Progress; and
3. **Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate** includes five leadership functions – Protecting Instructional Time, Promoting Professional Development, Maintaining High Visibility, Providing Incentives for Teachers, and Providing Incentives for Learning.

In empirically supported findings from the review, Hallinger reinforced (a) the albeit small, though 'statistically significant' indirect influence of principals on student learning and achievement through the decisions they make about classroom conditions; and (b) that the most important set of actions through which that influence occurs is the school's mission, its articulation, communication, implementation and modelling (Hallinger 2005, p. 233).

Three cautions were also raised: the first reiterating the need for further research into the constraining or enabling conditions active in a school's context; the second re-emphasising that instructional leadership is a shared practice 'that cannot be the burden of one person alone' (p. 234); the third declaring 'school leadership must be conceptualised as a *mutual influence process,* rather than as a one-way process in which leaders influence others' (p. 234).

Finally, the list of conclusions reached in Hallinger's review is summarised because it describes one of the earliest sets of indicators of how leadership actions affect student learning. In short, he argues that instructional leadership is achieved by:

- Creating a shared sense of purpose in the school, including clear goals focused on student learning;
- Fostering the continuous improvement of the school through cyclical school development planning that involves a wide range of stakeholders;
- Developing a climate of high expectations and a school culture aimed at innovation and improvement of teaching and learning;
- Coordinating the curriculum and monitoring student learning outcomes;
- Shaping the reward structure of the school to reflect the school's mission;
- Organising and monitoring a wide range of activities aimed at the continuous development of staff; and
- Being a visible presence in the school, modelling the desired values of the school's culture. (p. 233)

Hallinger's conclusions, as is apparent later in this report, have been the subject of ongoing research leading to the unpacking of many leadership practices resulting in their subsequent confirmation through steadily accumulating empirical findings.

In 2005, the outcomes from two additional authoritative studies were published, one in Australia by Stephen Dinham, the other in the United States by Robert Marzano, Timothy Waters and Brian McNulty.

> *Dinham, S 2005, 'Principal leadership for outstanding educational outcomes', Journal of Educational Administration, vol. 43, no. 4, pp. 338-56.*

Dinham's (2005) Australian study involved 50 'outstanding' schools across New South Wales with the majority from secondary education in Years 7 to 10. The label 'outstanding' was based on a combination of selection criteria related to educational outcomes including performance data on standardised tests, public examination profiles, and nominations from various stakeholders. As Dinham explained, the purpose of the study was to develop an understanding of what these schools were doing to produce outstanding outcomes. His findings acknowledged the layers of positional leaders in secondary schools supporting principals: deputy principals and heads of departments, also noting the role played by teachers with nominated responsibilities. Dinham (pp. 343-54) recorded seven specific findings focused on the attributes and practices exercised by the principals he studied. In summary, (a) the qualities of principals, particularly their interpersonal skills and trusted internal and external relationships; (b) their vision and expectations; (c) their creation of a climate of success; (d) their persistent emphasis on teaching and learning with staff they trust; (e) their visible support for educational innovation; (f) their unwavering commitment to the welfare of students; and (g) the constancy of their focus on student learning. When taken together, these were the hallmarks of principals leading schools achieving outstanding outcomes.

This Australian study confirmed the importance of the principal's influence on student learning and attainment, but it also underscored that the leadership of learning is carried into action through an array of processes to which many in the school contribute.

> *Marzano, RJ, Waters, T & McNulty, BA 2005, School leadership that works: from research to results, ASCD, Alexandria VA.*

Marzano, Waters and McNulty (2005, pp. 7-12) were amongst the US researchers to engage in early meta-analytical work drawing upon multiple studies over many years. Their search sought correlations between leadership behaviour and student academic achievement leading to what they described as a 'high' average correlation. They made the general projection that when a principal increases particular leadership behaviours, there is a small though related gain in the overall achievement of the school. Different size correlations were also reported from 'very large and positive to low and negative' (p. 12). However, they did not delve into why the variations occurred, leaving the way open for further investigation.

In 2007 Stephen Jacobsen, Sharon Brooks, Corrie Giles, Lauri Johnson and Rose Ylimaki showed the importance that school context plays in how leadership practices may be enacted in the pursuit of learning benefits for schools in high poverty districts. Their research involved case studies of the beliefs and practices of three principals whose elementary schools had recorded improvements in student achievement.

> *Jacobson, SL, Brooks, S, Giles, C, Johnson, L & Ylimaki, R 2007, 'Successful leadership in three high-poverty urban elementary schools', Leadership and Policy in Schools, vol. 6, no. 4, pp. 291-317.*

Building on this work in 2011, Jacobsen added evidence from other leadership studies and from research in schools involved in the longitudinal International Successful Schools Project (ISSP).

> *Jacobsen, S 2011, 'Leadership effects on student achievement and sustained school success', International Journal of Educational Management, vol. 25, no. 1, pp. 33-44.*

Taken together, these two publications show that while the leadership practices identified by Leithwood and Riehl (2003) and Leithwood et al. (2004) have a generic quality readily evident in the leadership practices of principals internationally, in high poverty schools their application is influenced by the very nature of those communities. What makes principals of high poverty schools 'successful' first and foremost, is their belief in learning for all, their drive to create safe learning environments as one of the school's highest priorities and their pursuit of greater parent and community engagement.

Added meta-analytical work was undertaken by Vivianne Robinson and Helen Timperley (2007) addressing the question begged by Marzano et al. (2004) as to the reasons why particular leadership behaviours produced varying effects. Robinson and colleagues, Claire Lloyd and Kenneth Rowe, took this work further in 2008. They also wanted to understand why certain leadership behaviours led to improved student outcomes. The work of these New Zealanders has been highly regarded and widely cited.

> *Robinson, VMJ & Timperley, HS 2007, 'The leadership of the improvement of teaching and learning: lessons from initiatives with positive outcomes for students', Australian Journal of Education, vol. 51, no. 3, pp. 247-62.*

In a 2007 meta-analysis, Robinson and Timperley concentrated on how leaders foster school renewal by facilitating and participating in the types of teacher professional learning and development that improve student academic and non-academic outcomes. Seventeen studies with evidence of such impact were analysed for descriptions of the leadership practices involved in each initiative. By backward mapping, categories of practices were brought together as five leadership dimensions crucial in fostering teacher and student learning: 'providing educational direction; ensuring strategic alignment; creating a community that learns how to improve student success; engaging in constructive problem talk; and selecting and developing smart tools'. This last dimension referred specifically to the linking of teachers' learning with the examination and use of evidence about their teaching and data on their students' performance. Consistent with findings published by Leithwood and Hallinger mentioned above, Robinson and Timperley's analysis reinforces the conclusion that the improvement of teaching and learning is a distributed activity in the hands of positional and non-positional leaders acting routinely on agreed improvement goals.

In their 2008 meta-analysis, Robinson, Lloyd and Rowe added to these findings by examining 27 studies concerning the relationship between leadership and student outcomes.

> *Robinson, VMJ, Lloyd, CA & Rowe, KJ 2008, 'The impact of leadership on student outcomes: an analysis of the differential effects of leadership types', Educational Administration Quarterly, vol. 44, no. 5, pp. 635-74.*

They used 22 of the studies to compare the effects of transformational and instructional leadership on student outcomes and 12 studies to compare the impact (calculating the effect size) of five sets of leadership practices on student outcomes: (a) establishing goals and expectations [ES = 0.42]; (b) resourcing strategically [ES = 0.31]; (c)

planning, coordinating, and evaluating teaching and the curriculum [ES = 0.42]; (d) promoting and participating in teacher learning and development; [ES = 0.84] and (e) ensuring an orderly and supportive environment [ES = 0.27]. While Robinson and her colleagues noted the limitations inherent in the small number of studies available to them, when it is known that effect sizes above 0.4 indicate significant impact, it is understandable why the results have been particularly compelling in focusing later research on the linkage between what principals do and the effects of their work on teacher and student learning. Capping the study was the finding that the mean effect size of 'the impact of instructional leadership on student outcomes was three to four times greater than that for transformational leadership' (p. 657). Instructional leadership focuses relationships on specific pedagogical work and the leadership practices involved, while transformational leadership is more concerned with the fostering of cooperative relationships between leaders and followers so that vision and mission are shared in implementation. Both approaches to leadership, Robinson et al. (2008) grant, are necessary, though it is instructional leadership that clearly affects student learning most.

How cooperative relationships between positional leaders and followers occurs is part of the 'distributive leadership' research agenda emerging at this time. During 2008, Robinson continued her contribution to understanding the connections between leadership, learning and student outcomes with specific attention to theoretical and empirical studies of the extent to which distributed leadership in schools is intrinsic to that connection.

> *Robinson, VMJ 2008, 'Forging the links between distributed leadership and educational outcomes', Journal of Educational Administration, vol. 46, no. 2, pp. 241-56.*

One distinctive contribution is her differentiation between descriptive and normative conceptions of distributive leadership (p. 251):

- **Descriptive** involves studying how leadership is distributed with specific tasks in particular contexts and the antecedents and consequences of such distribution; and
- **Normative** sees distributed leadership used normatively when there is an implicit or explicit implication that it constitutes a desirable or effective form of leadership.

She concluded the research which integrates both concepts of distributed leadership by saying that (a) identifying the practices, relationships and consequences of particular distributions; and (b) verifying their research-informed effects on learning is likely to provide productive information to help pinpoint and forge stronger links between the benefits of distributed leadership and improved student outcomes.

The pursuit of further knowledge about the research-informed effects of collective leadership on learning was the motivation for a comprehensive study of its desirability by Kenneth Leithwood and Blair Mascall in 2008.

> *Leithwood, K & Mascall, B 2008, 'Collective Leadership Effects on Student Achievement', Educational Administration Quarterly, vol. 44, no. 4, pp. 529-61.*

Leithwood and Mascall's study analysed evidence from 2,570 teacher responses from 90 elementary and secondary schools in which four or more teachers completed surveys. To establish student achievement profiles in these schools, website data on language and maths performance averaged over 3 years were gathered. The conclusions they derived from this work showed that collective leadership had 'modest but significant direct and indirect effects on student (language and maths) learning'. Of three variables, teacher motivation, work setting and teacher capacity, the impact of collective leadership on students is primarily through its influence on teacher motivation and work setting. Collective leadership does have a significant effect on teacher capacity, but the researchers concluded that this variable was not significantly linked to student achievement (p. 546). Further support for collective leadership is to be found in a series of their more general conclusions:

- School decisions are influenced by a broad array of groups and people, reflecting a distributed conception of leadership.

- The degree of influence on such decisions by these people and groups very much reflects a traditional hierarchical conception of leadership in organizations; teachers rated the influence of traditional sources of leadership much higher than they did non-traditional sources.
- Among teacher roles, the more formalised the leadership expectation, the greater the perceived influence.
- Nonetheless, the influence of parents and students is significantly related to student achievement, likely reflecting the well-known effects of student SES on achievement.
- Parents and students were perceived to be relatively influential in high-performing schools, as compared with the lower performing schools.
- Influence seems to be an infinite resource in schools. The more those in formal leadership roles give it away, the more they acquire. (p. 550)

This last point about the reciprocity of shared influence seems almost counter-intuitive and yet there is an irresistible logic to it. In other words, as the influence of those in non-formal roles at school grows, their acknowledgement of the part of the principal in fostering that growth adds to his or her influence overall.

By 2009, much had been achieved in defining the leadership for learning terrain, but it was the work of New Zealand researchers Vivianne Robinson, Margie Hohepa and Claire Lloyd which introduced the field to an interesting and potent distillation of findings about the practices connecting leadership, learning and student achievement.

> *Robinson, V, Hohepa, M & Lloyd, C 2009, School leadership and student outcomes: identifying what works and why. Best evidence synthesis iteration, Wellington, New Zealand, Ministry of Education.*

Robinson, Hohepa and Lloyd were charged by the New Zealand Ministry of Education with the task of synthesising research results on the activities which best connect the work of school leaders with student learning. So widely known is this meta-analytical and inductive study that a brief summary only of its findings is provided here.

Five dimensions of leadership were confirmed as having an impact on student outcomes: (1) establishing goals and expectations; (2) resourcing strategically; (3) planning, coordinating, and evaluating teaching and the curriculum; (4) promoting and participating in teacher learning and development; and (5) ensuring an orderly and supportive environment. The effect sizes for each of these dimensions has already been reported, showing that the most significant influence on learning and achievement is through active professional learning fostered and engaged in by the principal. Three additional dimensions were derived during the synthesis from indirect evidence: creating educationally powerful connections; engaging in constructive problem talk; and selecting, developing and using smart tools.

Underlying these eight dimensions lie the types of knowledge, skills and dispositions Robinson et al. (2009) say leaders require to implement action on them: (a) ensuring administrative decisions are informed by knowledge about effective pedagogy, (b) analysing and solving complex problems, (c) building relational trust, and (d) engaging in open-to-learning conversations. This last point picks up the need for professional dialogue as a means of connecting the daily work of positional leaders to the pedagogical demands their teachers face. It also provides a practical route for the reciprocal sharing of influence. This notion of sharing influence suggests, as do Robinson et al. (2009), that it is leadership activity embracing the eight dimensions, rather than leaders, that is needed if principals and teachers' work is to be better connected with learning.

More is said about the results of the New Zealand Best Evidence Synthesis in Part III of the report where Robinson and her colleagues' leadership framework is described and compared with five others.

> *Leithwood, K, Patten, S & Jantzi, D 2010, 'Testing a conception of how school leadership influences student learning', Educational Administration Quarterly, vol. 46, no. 5, pp. 671-706.*

By 2010 the confluence of a number of powerful research findings is apparent in a large-scale study undertaken by Ken Leithwood, Sarah Patten and Dors Jantzi. Their research design involved survey responses from 1,445 teachers from 199 schools. This work aimed to 'test' a conceptualisation of leadership actions which influence student learning by examining activities aligned with four paths. Leithwood et al. (2010) called this a 'Four Paths Framework' arguing that leadership influence 'flows' along Rational, Emotions, Organisational and Family paths towards student learning (p. 671). Nested within each path are multiple factors or variables which are known to affect student learning. Factors in the Rational path focused on academic press and disciplinary climate; in the Emotions path, collective teacher efficacy and trust in colleagues, students and parents; in the Organisational path, instructional time and professional learning communities; and in the Family path, 'alterable' family variables such as having adult help or a computer at home. In its summative finding, the study showed that the Four Paths Framework as a whole explains 43% of the variation in student achievement. School principals had their greatest influence on the Organisational path and least on the Family path, making it 'the most untapped potential for leadership impact on student achievement' (p. 695).

Two articles by Hallinger and Heck published in 2010 return to the effects of collaborative leadership on student learning. Both report on longitudinal research examining the extent to which collaborative leadership affected student reading and maths achievement in 192 elementary schools in the USA over a 4-year period.

> *Hallinger, P & Heck, RH 2010, 'Leadership for learning: does collaborative leadership make a difference in school improvement?', Educational Management Administration & Leadership, vol. 38, no. 6, pp. 654-78.*
>
> *Hallinger, P & Heck, RH 2010, 'Collaborative leadership and school improvement: understanding the impact on school capacity and student learning', School Leadership & Management, vol. 30, no. 2, pp. 95-110.*

Of great interest to the growing international understanding of shared leadership is Hallinger and Heck's finding that collaborative leadership can positively impact student learning in reading and maths because capacity is enhanced through the cooperative professional learning activities of leaders and teachers. Moreover, while this is occurring there is a process of mutual influence underway through which growth in teachers' capacity works in two directions simultaneously, influencing the very practice of collective leadership while this in turn influences continuing growth in the school's capacity.

Researchers from the Universities of Minnesota and Ontario combined again in 2010 to produce the final report for the Wallace Foundation on the links between leadership and learning, reinforcing the shifts evident already in the decade from leader-centric approaches to instructional leadership towards cooperative or collectivist forms of leadership focused on learning.

> *Louis, KS, Leithwood, K, Wahlstrom, KL, Anderson, SE, Michlin, M & Mascall, B 2010, 'Learning from leadership: investigating the links to improved student learning', Centre for Applied Research and Educational Improvement, University of Minnesota/ Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto/The Wallace Foundation.*

Both the Foundation and the authors of this report acknowledged, because of the economic, social and cultural significance attached to educational reform in the United States, that there was an undeniably compelling justification for research leading to a better understanding of how school leadership can improve educational practice and student learning. From such a large body of work, for brevity's sake three sets of selected findings and conclusions are cited, providing evidence of the expanding agenda connecting leadership with learning and the principal's role in deliberately creating the circumstances so that the connections yield results.

Set 1. Collective leadership effects on teachers and students

1. Collective leadership has a stronger influence on student achievement than individual leadership.
2. Almost all people associated with high-performing schools have greater influence on school decisions than is the case with people in low-performing schools.
3. Principals and district leaders have the most influence on decisions in all schools; however, they do not lose influence as others gain influence.
4. Schools leaders have an impact on student achievement primarily through their influence on teachers' motivation and working conditions; their influence on teachers' knowledge and skills produces much less impact on student achievement.
5. Leadership practices targeted directly at improving instruction have significant effects on teachers' working relationships and, indirectly, on student achievement.
6. When principals and teachers share leadership, teachers' working relationships are stronger and student achievement is higher.
7. Leadership effects on student achievement occur largely because effective leadership strengthens the professional community. Professional community, in turn, is a predictor of instructional practices that are strongly associated with student achievement.
8. The factor of trust is less significant than the factors of instructional leadership and shared leadership, although it is associated with both. (p. 37)

Set 2. Sources of and practices in leadership distribution

1. There are many sources of leadership in schools, but principals remain the central source. For example, the individuals or groups identified as providing leadership included a mix of principals, assistant principals, teachers in formal leadership roles (e.g., grade or subject team leaders) and teachers with specialist positions (e.g., literacy specialists and counsellors).
2. How leadership is distributed in schools depends on what is to be accomplished, on the availability of professional expertise, and on principals' preferences regarding the use of that professional expertise. (p. 38)
3. No single pattern of leadership distribution is consistently linked to student learning. (p. 64)
4. Principals are involved in many leadership activities; others who act as leaders in the school ordinarily do so in respect to one or a few initiatives.
5. Leadership is more distributed for practices aimed at 'developing people' and 'managing instruction' than it is for 'setting directions' and 'structuring the workplace'.
6. More complex and coordinated patterns of distributed leadership appear when school improvement initiatives focus directly on student learning goals, as distinct from the implementation of specific programs (p. 54)

Set 3. Leadership practices considered instructionally helpful by principals and teachers

Previous research referred to above identified four leadership dimensions harbouring 15 practices underlying the work of successful school- and district-level leaders. These dimensions and practices are:

1. **Setting Directions**, involving four specific practices: Building a shared vision, Fostering the acceptance of group goals, Creating high performance expectations**,** and Communicating the direction.
2. **Developing People** includes three practices: Providing individualised support and consideration, Offering intellectual stimulation, and Modelling appropriate values and practices.
3. **Redesigning the Organisation** comprises four practices: Building collaborative cultures, Restructuring the organization to support collaboration, Building productive relationships with families and communities, and Connecting the school to the wider community.
4. **Managing the Instructional Program** focuses on teaching and learning and includes four practices: Staffing the program, Providing instructional support, Monitoring school activity, Buffering staff from distractions to their work, and Aligning resources.

Almost all leadership practices considered instructionally helpful by principals and teachers were specific enactments of these four core dimensions. Teachers and principals were in substantial agreement about the leadership practices they considered to be instructionally helpful. A large proportion of both principals and teachers agreed on the importance of three specific practices:

- Focusing the school on goals and expectations for student achievement (100% principals, 66.7% teachers);
- Keeping track of teachers' professional development needs (100% principals, 84% teachers); and
- Creating structures and opportunities for teachers to collaborate (91.7% principals, 66.7% teachers). (p. 71)

Teachers and principals agreed that the most instructionally helpful leadership practices were: Focusing the school on goals and expectations for student achievement; Keeping track of teachers' professional development needs; and Creating structures and opportunities for teachers to collaborate (p. 66).

The Wallace Foundation's 5-year study and its final report brings to the fore the need for clarity about the concept of leadership as a distributed and shared practice facilitated by principals in the first instance, but it also makes transparent the kinds of activities which exemplify leadership as a collection of practices exercised collaboratively by coalitions fixed on the twin goals of student achievement and school improvement. In doing so, the importance of trust in relationships and involvement by teachers in decisions affecting teaching and learning have been shown to be embedded in the leadership practices of successful schools.

The results from three further leadership studies in 2010 show the way in which research consolidation occurs and how conviction in the validity of knowledge about what works and why grows. Susan Printy's (2010) research review on the influence of the principal on instructional quality, Vivianne Robinson's (2010) article 'From instructional leadership to leadership capabilities', and Johnothan Supovitz, Phillip Sirinides and Henry May's (2010) study of 'How principals and peers influence teaching and learning' all help turn assertions or claims about leadership practices into affirmations.

> *Printy, S 2010, 'Principals' influence on instructional quality: insights from US schools', School Leadership & Management, vol. 30, no. 2, pp. 111-26.*

Printy (2010) reviewed qualitative and quantitative research findings on patterns of instructional leadership published in the United States since 2000. She also used network methodology to seek explanations of how patterns of leadership influence operate in schools. A succinct summary of what she found from the review includes: (a) the unsurprising fact that the leadership of the principal is important for student learning, especially when he or she works with or through teachers as well as through other classroom-related factors such as resource selection and allocation, the school's physical conditions, and expectations of children's behaviour (p. 112); (b) a principal's influence is high when teachers are included actively in decision-making; (c) principals are central figures in school efforts to improve instructional quality but even more important in making instructional choices, as are the leadership efforts of teachers; (d) when the energies of principals and teacher leaders coalesce on the same targets through shared decision-making and in trusting environments, the promise for instructional improvement is great (p. 113).

> *Robinson, VMJ 2010, 'From instructional leadership to leadership capabilities: empirical findings and methodological challenges', Leadership and Policy in Schools, vol. 9, no. 1, pp. 1-26.*

Robinson (2010) used available evidence to crystallise three kinds of mediating abilities found to be necessary in enabling principals to engage in the practices that connect leadership with learning. First amongst these is leadership content knowledge. As we show in Part V of this report, leadership content knowledge exhibits some quite different understandings for principals from the knowledge teachers require for the improvement of instruction. Robinson's analysis shows that leadership content knowledge combines pedagogical and curriculum knowledge with administrative decision-making (p. 7). The second capability she has derived concerns the solving

of complex problems, a constant for those holding school principalships, whether novice or expert. Of the latter, she cites clear differences in this capability, readily seen in the expert's open-ness to different approaches to problems, the linkage of problems and their solutions to wider school goals and values and a willingness to engage in unfettered staff discussions (p. 12). The third capability concerns the building of relational trust, a mediating variable identified as essential in several of the studies to which we have already referred. Robinson elaborates, though, that relational trust lies on a foundation of interpersonal respect, personal regard for others, recognised role competence and personal integrity (p. 16). Without these precursors, relational trust is unlikely to develop between leaders and followers.

> *Supovitz, J, Sirinides, P & May, H 2010, 'How principals and peers influence teaching and learning', Educational Administration Quarterly, vol. 46, no. 1, pp. 31-56.*

In their 2010 research paper, Supovitz, Sirinides and May reported on the results of a study of the effects of principal leadership and peer teacher influence on teachers' instructional practice and student learning. They gathered teacher survey and student achievement data in English Language Arts and Maths from a mid-sized urban south-eastern school district in the United States from 2006 – 2007 and employed multilevel structural equation modelling to examine the structural relationships between student learning and theorised dimensions of principal leadership, teacher peer influence, and change in teachers' instructional practice.

To summarise this study is to report that the findings confirm previous empirical work demonstrating a positive association between changes in teaching practices largely because of the influence of principals and peers. This in turn was shown to be linked positively with improved performance, particularly in English Language Arts (pp. 43-4). The thrust of these findings underscores a visible move to leadership partnerships, and the initiation of leadership networks in the pursuit of improved student outcomes.

2.2   Key Literature 2011 – 2018

We turn now to the present decade to examine a dozen studies from different countries published across the period 2011 to 2018, almost all of which add further refinement to the nature and extent of the connections between leadership and learning and which contribute to the further refinement of the descriptive and normative conceptualisations suggested by Robinson (2010). It is confirmations of practice, new findings and definitive nuances that draw our attention as we examine these remaining studies. Leading this group is an article written by Daniel Muijs (2011) which has an obvious cautionary tone.

> *Muijs, D 2011, 'Leadership and organisational performance: from research to prescription?', International Journal of Educational Management, vol. 25, no. 1, pp. 45-60.*

The analysis by Muijs (2011) provides an overview of the research literature on the impact of leadership on student outcomes and the main leadership activities related to these outcomes and identifies strengths and weaknesses in the research base.

Findings from this review of the literature, he suggests, show there is some evidence that transformational and distributed leadership make a difference to organisational effectiveness which in turn has a significant indirect and modest impact on student outcomes. There is also some empirical data to support a reciprocal effects model, where the leader is seen as shaping the organisational culture and environment of the school leading to enhanced outcomes, as well as being influenced and shaped by it (Hallinger, 2008). However, Muijs makes the point that the research base is far weaker than many of the claims made. He points out that there is an over-reliance on dualistic models of practice (e.g., deep versus surface) and change metaphors, an over-reliance on self-report in research methods, and a paucity of international research making it difficult to make strong claims about impact or process.

What is needed are more rigorous quantitative and qualitative research studies that take account of the complexity of schools and measure impact, explore processes, and inform leadership development to determine to what extent leadership development has an impact on organisational performance. Aspects of this last point are

captured by Gonski et al. (2018) in their review to achieve educational excellence in Australian schools, reference to which is made later in this part of the review.

Apparently taking up the methodological challenge laid down by Muijs, a comprehensive study of the impact of school leadership on school improvement was carried out in England by Pam Sammons, Quing Gu, Christopher Day and James Ko in 2011. Their article reports results from the questionnaire analyses and changes in measures of school performance over 3 school years using data from 378 primary and 362 secondary schools, in which a large-scale mixed methods design was implemented (see Appendix 1).

> *Sammons, P, Gu, Q, Day, C & Ko, J 2011, 'Exploring the impact of school leadership on pupil outcomes', International Journal of Educational Management, vol. 25, no. 1, pp. 83-101.*

The findings confirm much of the research carried out in Canada, the United States, New Zealand and Australia. For example: The results confirmed both direct and indirect effects of leadership on a range of school and classroom processes that in turn predicted improvements in a school's academic performance. Three key school improvement measures found to influence improvement were: *changes in disciplinary climate*, *changes in overall school conditions*, and *changes in curriculum, pedagogy and assessment*. These measures are consonant with the dimensions enabling leaders to connect their work with learning as described above by Leithwood et al., Robinson et al. and Hallinger et al.

Both primary and secondary school principals identified seven specific actions or practices important in promoting school improvement (see Appendix 1). These practices are similar to those found to be helpful in connecting leadership with learning by researchers in the previous decade. From the seven practices, primary principals' two topmost frequently cited were: (a) improved assessment procedures, and (b) encouraging the use of data and research. For secondary school principals the two most frequently cited actions were: (a) encouraging the use of data and research, and (b) teaching policies and programmes. In addition to these priorities, all principals gave emphasis to using data and research to inform pedagogy and to developing teachers' capacities in order to raise attainment (p. 93)

In their conclusions, Sammons et al. (2011) remind readers of the significance of a school's socio-economic context in implementing leadership practices for school improvement as well as drawing attention to marked differences between primary and secondary schools. Nevertheless, they affirm the prevailing view that school and leadership effects influence changes in school academic outcomes via their effects on teachers and teaching quality, and on promoting a favourable school climate and culture that emphasises high expectations and academic outcomes (p. 96).

Bruce Sheppard and Jean Dibbon's (2011) study opened up the question of the effects of formal leadership action across organisational tiers in a large Canadian school district. Subjects included provincial, district and school principals and their interactions with teachers, parents and other community stakeholders (see Appendix 1).

> *Sheppard, B & Dibbon, D 2011, 'Improving the capacity of school system leaders and teachers to design productive learning environments', Leadership and Policy in Schools, vol. 10, no. 2, pp. 125-44.*

The overall finding from this distinctive study is that formal leaders at different levels in the education system have observable effects on the practices of those they influence. While this is not an unexpected finding, it draws attention to the work of provincial officials who have been shown to exercise considerable influence on district leaders whose influence on school principals is somewhat diluted. That said, *school-district leadership* has a notable direct effect upon the extent to which principals and vice-principals are perceived to act as *collaborative leaders* which, in turn, has a direct but medium effect upon *teacher professional collaboration, community engagement*, and a somewhat larger effect upon the schools' *focus on student learning*.

> *Sanzo, KL, Sherman, WH & Clayton, J 2011, 'Leadership practices of successful middle school principals', Journal of Educational Administration, vol. 49, no. 1, pp. 31-45.*

An empirical study by Sanzo, Sherman and Clayton (2011) contributes to the leadership for learning literature by identifying the practices of a select group of middle school principals successful in facilitating high student learning outcomes in an accountability driven education environment. This inductive, exploratory US study used interviews with 10 experienced principals (in the third year of principalship or more), to identify common themes within leadership practices. Successful school principals were defined as those whose schools met relevant accreditation standards that included end-of-course subject pass rates, attendance, and graduation rates. The following four themes emerged:

1. Sharing leadership

   Principals identified a collaborative team atmosphere and a well-organised, shared leadership structure as important to empowering staff members and developing and sustaining a community of professionals that share responsibility for the school.

2. Facilitating professional development

   Creating a culture in which professional development is valued, and opportunities are provided for staff as a faculty to share their practices, was seen as another common theme. Principals identified that professional development should be meaningful and purposeful with activities focused on instruction, the effective use of data, and team-building processes.

3. Leading with an instructional orientation

   Whilst all principals indicated that they monitor the instructional environment in terms of academic atmosphere, student achievement, attendance, and support for at-risk students, they attributed success to the hard work of the students and staff as well as themselves.

4. Acting openly and honestly

   Being up front with their faculty about decisions as well as expectations for student performance and teacher quality was seen to promote teacher buy-in and innovation. However, it was made clear that loyalty and buy-in takes time. An investment of time, hard work and one-to-one conversations with teachers on their own terms were identified as needed to build personal capital.

The outcomes of the study, Sanzo et al. (2011) propose, provide a framework on which leaders could model their own practices, as well as informing leadership preparation program areas about the focus of their instructional content.

> *Timperley, H 2011, 'Knowledge and the leadership of learning', Leadership and Policy in Schools, vol. 10, no. 2, pp. 145-70.*

While this study by Timperley (2011) of knowledge and the leadership of learning followed the work of only five principals, it arrives at some interesting conclusions that refine the underpinnings of effective leadership for learning practice. As a basis for the study, Timperley showed that a large percent of teachers (82%) perceived all principals to be very effective on Robinson's (2008) five dimensions of instructional leadership: (a) establishing goals and expectations for students and teachers; (b) allocating resources so they meet the strategic direction of the school; (c) planning, organising and evaluating teaching, learning and the curriculum; (d) promoting and participating in teacher learning and development; and (e) establishing an orderly and supportive environment.

Against this backdrop Timperley found that all five principals promoted mutual respect and mutual learning relationships; they also fostered conversations that were challenging and evaluative (p. 160). She concluded that

these highly effective principals had a deep knowledge of teaching and learning, goals for students and teachers, and high expectations of all – leaders, teachers, parents and students. These principals were not daunted by difficult professional conversations with teachers about student performance nor by unstinting participation in professional development as leaders and learners. To sum up, Timperley argues that 'those with responsibility for promoting teacher learning in particular areas in schools must have deep pedagogical content knowledge. The principals' role may mean establishing systems for identifying and ensuring these people have the opportunities to lead'. Therefore, the distribution of leadership influence must be based on expertise (p. 167).

> *Grissom, JA & Loeb, S 2011, 'Triangulating principal effectiveness: how perspectives of parents, teachers, and assistant principals identify the central importance of managerial skills', American Educational Research Journal, vol. 48, no. 5, pp. 1091-123.*

In the United States, Jason Grissom and Susanna Loeb's (2011) study drew on data combining survey responses from principals, assistant principals, teachers, and parents to determine which principal skills correlate most highly with school outcomes. Factor analysis was conducted on a 42-item task inventory clustered in five leadership dimensions, namely, instruction management, internal relations, organisation management, administration and external relations (p. 1099).

The major finding from this largely self-report study showed that principals felt they were most effective at developing relationships with students, communicating with parents, attending school activities, developing safe school environments, dealing with concerns from staff, managing school schedules, and using data to inform instruction. They felt least effective at fund-raising, planning professional development, releasing or counselling out teachers, utilising district office communications to enhance their goals, and working with local community members and organizations (p. 1118).

Several 'amber lights' are turned on when deeper consideration is given to these outcomes. When there is ample evidence that principals have most effect on learning and student achievement if they are active in professional development, it is a matter of concern if they feel inadequately prepared for this task. When the quality of teachers and their teaching is known to have greatest in-school effect on student learning outcomes, failing to deal with underperformance is troubling. When the influence of provincial policy goals tests the competence of principals as translators of intent into action, important policy influences are downplayed in their local contexts. And when they feel least effective in making connections with wider community members in the face of indisputable evidence of the perennial effect of the child's socio-economic and cultural background on learning, 'red lights' should begin flashing.

> *Ward, L 2011, 'Effecting change: school leaders learning together', Australian Educational Leader, vol. 33, pp. 44-6.*

Lorrae Ward (2011), in the article we include here, placed her emphasis on outcomes from the evaluation of the then newly created Network Learning Communities (NCL) initiative of the New Zealand Ministry of Education. She was examining whether or not they make a difference to leadership practice and its connection with learning and student achievement. This is one example of the kind of study that uses formal approaches to distributive or collaborative forms of leadership as a starting point. This focus enabled her to follow the activities of 10 case study NLCs to examine their effects on professional learning and, possibly ultimately, onto observable effects on student learning and achievement. However, she found that NLCs operated as professional support groups rather than as learning communities, and this she attributed to two cultural norms: (a) professional autonomy – the right of school leaders to behave and act in a way they believe is best for their schools; and (b) the widespread belief that it takes time to develop sufficient trust and collegiality in school settings for challenging professional learning to overtake feelings of staff vulnerability (p. 46).

These findings indicate that there is no necessary guarantee that leadership shared with a formally created professional learning community will produce collaborative learning that is clearly connected to teachers' and students' improvement needs.

We return now to the work of Phillip Hallinger, whose heavily cited review of 40 years of international empirical findings isolated several under-researched areas in the drive to understand the connections between leadership and learning.

> *Hallinger, P 2011, 'Leadership for learning: lessons from 40 years of empirical research', Journal of Educational Administration, vol. 49, no. 2, pp. 125-42.*

Hallinger's (2011) review draws attention to what are known to be reliable findings and conclusions as he constructs a research-based model of leadership for learning in four dimensions: values and beliefs, leadership focus, contexts for leadership, and sharing leadership. These four dimensions reprise much of what has been exposed already in the articles and reports we have examined.

The most significant of the areas requiring further research-informed knowledge, he concludes, is the influence of a school's context on leadership practice and the influence of leadership practice on that very context. Of this he says, that while progress is also beginning to be made, understanding the context remains a limiting factor in interpreting and using the findings from what is now a large body of credible research.

This particular limitation in our knowledge base means that individual school leaders must apply the finding about the dimensions and practices of leadership for learning both with caution and with an understanding of their own particular school contexts. Nevertheless, Hallinger cites Day et al. (2010) to show there is strong research support for linking patterns of leadership behaviour to successful school improvement across different contexts and sound evidence for the use of 'layered leadership' designed to meet the particular needs of a school. The concept of layered leadership is one illustration of the multi-dimensional nature of shared leadership which undoubtedly operates through the behaviours of different individuals and the strategies they use for collective decision-making. Hallinger (2011, p. 136) has concluded that the context influences, in large part, when and how leadership might be shared, and this becomes a matter of judgment for principals. Professional autonomy comes into play in making these kinds of decisions.

In further conclusions, Hallinger's analysis acknowledges that principals are 'values and expectations' leaders but that success can only be achieved by, with and through others. A cooperative or shared approach to leadership activity therefore becomes axiomatic.

In Canada, by 2012, Leithwood was continuing to put practical 'flesh' onto the conceptual 'bones' of his ongoing work on the domains and practices which are known to connect the work of school principals with student learning and achievement. He did this by developing the Ontario Leadership Framework (OLF).

> *Leithwood, K 2012, Ontario Leadership Framework with a discussion of the leadership foundations, Institute for Education Leadership, OISE Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.*

In the OLF, Leithwood (2012) describes five domains in which 21 leadership practices are nested: (a) Setting Directions, (b) Building Relationships and Developing People, (c) Developing the Organization to Support Desired Practices, (d) Improving the Instructional Program, and (e) Securing Accountability.

Because we analyse the Ontario Leadership Framework in detail in Part III of this review, we add here several comments only about the research informing its use. First, Leithwood (p. 9) argues that both the school and the local community context count, warning that differences between elementary and secondary school leadership activity are most likely to be due to organisational size, organisational culture, managerial roles and curriculum complexity. He valorises the view that leadership is not necessarily attached to those in formal positions, arguing that shared leadership creates the conditions essential in democratic organisations and that research findings

show that leadership distribution can contribute to improved student achievement. His conclusions to this article are cited to show the strength of his commitment to the domains and practices of leadership for learning.

1. Integrating leadership and management practices avoids a fundamental misunderstanding of the work leaders need to do in order to focus the commitments, energies and talents of the people in their organizations in service of their shared goals.
2. School leaders not only need to provide fairly direct assistance to the instructional improvement efforts of their staffs, they also need to build organizational contexts which support and enable those efforts. (p. 7)
3. The leadership domains and practices outlined in the OLF are equally suitable and important for effective leadership in both elementary and secondary schools.
4. There are many good reasons for encouraging shared leadership in schools and school systems. But it is important to acknowledge that not all forms of shared leadership are 'successful'. Shared leadership, in sum, makes important contributions to organizational improvement but successful forms of such leadership depend on the active engagement of those in positions of formal authority. (p. 10)

Finally, he summarises that while the domains and practices of the OLF are contingent, their practical value depends on leaders enacting them in ways that are sensitive to the specific circumstances and settings in which they work and the people with whom they are working (p. 13). Therefore, there is a need to bring considerable local (contextual) knowledge to the leaders' tasks.

In another review article, Christine Neumerski (2013) uses three literature sources focused on the principal as instructional leader, the teacher and the coach, to help her rethink instructional leadership in the light of distributive leadership research findings.

> *Neumerski, CM 2013, 'Rethinking instructional leadership, a review: what do we know about principal, teacher, and coach instructional leadership, and where should we go from here?', Educational Administration Quarterly, vol. 49, pp. 310-47.*

The most salient outcome from Neumerski's (2013) work for future researchers is the conclusion that maintaining research separations between the roles of principals, teachers and coaches may well truncate understanding of the multi-dimensional nature of activity that is aimed at improving learning and student achievement. What she suggests emphasises a more wholistic approach than has been taken by many researchers in the past and it points to the importance of mixed methods studies into how leadership materialises as a shared practice bringing different role holders together (pp. 330-1).

Another comprehensive meta-analysis published in the Asia Pacific Education Review by Engin Karadağ, Faith Bektas, Nazim Coğaltay and Mikail Yalcin in 2015 used a data set of 57 research articles and dissertations covering some 28,964 study subjects to investigate the effects of different combinations of leadership styles on student achievement.

> *Karadağ, E, Bektaş, F, Çoğaltay, N & Yalçın, M 2015, 'The effect of educational leadership on students' achievement: a meta-analysis study', Asia Pacific Education Review, vol. 16, no. 1, pp. 79-93.*

Using a random effects model, it is not surprising that Karadağ et al. (2015) concluded overall, that educational leadership has a 'medium effect' on student achievement best seen through distributive and transformational leadership activity. The specific effects of these different 'styles' are included in Appendix 1.

In the United Kingdom, Christopher Day, Quing Gu and Pam Sammons added to their earlier work with another mixed methods study to illustrate how successful leaders combine the practices of transformational and instructional leadership in different ways across different phases of their schools' development in order to progressively shape and 'layer' the culture in improving students' outcomes. Again, this study falls into the large-scale bracket with a 3-year national 'impact study' of 'effective' and 'improving' primary and secondary schools

based on national examination and assessment results (see Appendix 1). Country-wide surveys and in-depth case studies of 20 schools were features of the design.

> *Day, C, Gu, Q & Sammons, P 2016, 'The impact of leadership on student outcomes: how successful school leaders use transformational and instructional strategies to make a difference', Educational Administration Quarterly, vol. 52, no. 2, pp. 221-58.*

Day et al.'s (2016) summary of their findings provides strong confirmation of the thrust and direction of the growing research base in this field. They said:

> *The research provides new empirical evidence of how successful principals directly and indirectly achieve and sustain improvement over time through combining both transformational and instructional leadership strategies. The findings show that schools' abilities to improve and sustain effectiveness over the long term are not primarily the result of the principals' leadership style but of their understanding and diagnosis of the school's needs and their application of clearly articulated, organizationally shared educational values through multiple combinations and accumulations of time and context-sensitive strategies that are 'layered' and progressively embedded in the school's work, culture, and achievements.*

From their specific findings and conclusions, six extracts are used to illustrate the sustained nature of multi-layered leadership activities in tune with the school's mission and values, its context and valued improvement practices.

1. School leadership makes a difference through building and sustaining the right conditions for a sustained focus on the quality of teaching and learning, e.g., improving teaching practices and promoting a stronger academic press or emphasis such as improved assessment procedures, encouraging the use of data and research, and teaching policies and programs (p. 230).
2. School processes directly connected with principals' leadership strategies are the ones that also connect most closely with improvements in aspects of teaching and learning and staff involvement in leadership; these in turn help predict improvement in school conditions, and so, indirectly, improvement in pupil outcomes (p. 234).
3. School and leadership effects would be expected to operate most closely via their influence on developing teachers, improving teaching quality, and promoting a favourable school climate and culture that emphasise high expectations and academic outcomes (p. 239).
4. There are 'synergistic effects' of different dimensions of transformational and instructional leadership strategies on students' academic outcomes achieved in different phases of schools' development over time (p. 239):
   a) *foundational phase* of principals' leadership involved using combined key strategies relating to transformational and instructional leadership. Three strategies were prioritised: (a) Improving the physical environment of the school for staff and pupils to create positive environments conducive for high-quality teaching and learning; (b) Setting standards for pupil behaviour and improving attendance; and (c) Restructuring the senior leadership team and redefining the roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities of its members (pp. 240-2).
   b) *developmental phase*: employing two Transformational Leadership and Instructional Leadership strategies involving wider distribution of leadership and distributing significant decision-making to senior leadership and a larger group of middle leaders, and systematic classroom observations and increasing the use of data-informed decision-making to improve the quality of teaching and learning (p. 243).
   c) *enrichment*, and (d) *renewal* phases focused on personalisation of learning and enriching of the curriculum (pp. 243-4). Thus, principals combined and accumulated both transformational and instructional leadership strategies within, through and across each developmental phase of their schools' long-term improvement (p. 251).
5. Leadership should be viewed as a process of mutual influence whereby instructional leaders influence the quality of school outcomes through shaping the school mission and the alignment of school structures

and culture. This in turn promotes a focus on raising the quality of teaching and learning (instructional leadership). The extent to which influence is perceived, felt, and 'measured' in terms of students' academic gains can only be judged over time; and how influence is exercised positively or negatively over time can in part be seen in the conditions, structures, traditions, relationships, expectations, and 'norms' that make up the cultures of schools. In the effective and improving schools, principals palpably exercised both 'transformational' and 'instructional' leadership (p. 252).

6. Successful leaders are sensitive to context, and do not necessarily use qualitatively different practices in every different context. It rather means they apply contextually sensitive combinations of the basic leadership practices. The ways in which leaders apply these leadership practices – not the practices themselves – demonstrate responsiveness to, rather than dictation by, the contexts in which they work. Success, then, seems to be built through the synergistic effects of the combination and accumulation of a number of strategies that are related to the principals' judgments about what works in their particular school context (p. 253).

> *Hitt, DH & Tucker, PD 2016, 'Systematic review of key leader practices found to influence student achievement: a unified framework', Review of Educational Research, vol. 86, no. 2, pp. 31-69.*

We mention Dallas Hitt and Pamela Tucker's (2016) systematic review of key leadership practices found to influence student achievement only briefly now, because it is included in a comparative analysis of leadership for learning frameworks in Part III. Their work is particularly helpful, not only for its diligent attention to analytical and comparative processes but for the resulting unified leadership for learning framework they produced. This work has provided a sound basis for us to undertake similar analytical processes with a further three frameworks. More is said about our analysis later.

A book reporting research by Neil Dempster, Tony Townsend, Greer Johnson, Anne Bayetto, Susan Lovett and Elizabeth Stevens (2017) confirms many of the findings and conclusions brought to light by Hallinger et al., Leithwood et al., Day et al. and Robinson et al.

> *Dempster, N, Townsend, T, Johnson, G, Bayetto, A, Lovett, S & Stevens, E 2017, Leadership and literacy: principals, partnerships and pathways to improvement, Springer, Cham, Switzerland.*

This Australian work used data from five mixed methods studies to examine the outcomes of a Principals as Literacy Leaders (PALL) program funded initially by the Australian Government in 2009 and continued for a further 7 years in different Australian states. The five studies investigated the implementation of eight (8) dimensions of a Leadership for Learning Framework or Blueprint and the effects of the work of principals and teachers on student learning and achievement in reading. The dimensions were:

1. **A shared moral purpose**: this is central to the school leader's work, which should be motivated by a commitment to improving students' lives through learning;
2. **'Disciplined dialogue'** stimulated by
3. **A strong evidence-base**: these two dimensions are linked in focused professional conversations or disciplined dialogue using evidence of what students can or cannot do so that where they need to go next to improve is well grounded;
4. **Active professional development**: with principals participating in professional learning with teachers;
5. **Shared leadership:** sharing leadership broadly and deeply in the school and organising structures and processes accordingly;
6. **Curriculum and teaching:** planning, coordinating and monitoring the curriculum and teaching across the school;
7. **Supportive conditions for learning:** enhancing the physical, social and emotional environment for learning; and
8. **Parent and community support:** connecting with support from parents and the wider community, including families and other agencies (pp. 8-9).

No more is said here about this work because the dimensions and actions associated with the PALL Leadership for Learning Framework are analysed in detail in Part III of the review. Suffice it to say that there is readily available evidence (Dempster et al., pp. 177-91) that the combination of leadership for learning actions with principals' enhanced knowledge of literacy has transformed their confidence, credibility and connection with their teachers in this priority curriculum area to the ongoing benefit of improved student reading performance. One consistently troubling finding, however, was the difficulty with which primary principals reach out to parents, family and community members especially in schools in minority cultural settings, remote or difficult socio-economic environments. Creating networked partnerships to bring community leadership into the school for literacy improvement continued to be described as taking great effort for limited reward. More is said of this difficulty in Part II of our report.

> *Boyce, J & Bowers, AJ 2018, 'Different levels of leadership for learning: investigating differences between teachers individually and collectively using multilevel factor analysis of the 2011-2012 Schools and Staffing Survey', International Journal of Leadership in Education, vol. 21, no. 2, pp. 197-225.*

The article by Jared Boyce and Alex Bowers (2018) reports on an empirical study that provides an understanding of the practice of school leadership from the perspective of teachers individually and collectively. As teachers are the connection between leadership practices in schools and student achievement, their perspectives were seen as vital. The study draws on a data set of 7,070 schools from the National Center for Education Statistics 2011–12 Schools and Staffing Survey, a large, nationally representative USA teacher survey. Data were analysed using cross-validation multilevel factor analysis.

The study found that there were important differences between how individual teachers perceived leadership for learning in their schools and how it was collectively perceived. Individual teachers viewed leadership for learning as a combination of the following six factors: school influence, classroom control, collegial climate, student attendance, neighbourhood context, and teacher commitment. These findings suggest teachers have a fine-grained awareness of the different areas of influence on student learning but their conceptions of leadership for learning were that it is something enacted above their organisational level – not something they enact. This is consistent with teachers' past views of instructional leadership (Hallinger & Murphy 1985).

In contrast, teachers collectively viewed leadership for learning in terms of three main organisational functions. These related to the instructional program (instructional leadership); tasks that support the teaching of the instructional program (management); and engagement (the broader social context). The findings suggest that collectively teachers view leadership for learning at an interrelated system level.

Correlations between factors, for example individual-level teacher school influence and collegial climate, support earlier findings that teachers' autonomy and influence within schools influences the development of teachers more than instructional factors; and that the nature and quality of interpersonal relationships are important to how individuals feel about their job.

The authors suggest that such results can inform current educational leadership research on the collective action of teachers in professional learning communities, in relation to how leaders should structure the overarching functions and goals of professional learning communities, and the areas in which principals can model leadership behaviour and develop teachers as leaders. There is a strong message in this study that effective school leadership must address the needs of both the individual as well as staff members as a collective and that attention should be paid to the different sense-making processes of each.

The final item in this part of the review refers to a report by David Gonski and his colleagues (2018) in which they acknowledged the role of principals in influencing change in the culture, learning and pedagogical approaches to improve student achievement in Australian schools.

> *Gonski, D, Arcus, T, Boston, K, Gould, V, Johnson, W, O'Brien, L, Perry, L & Roberts, M 2018, Through growth to achievement: the report of the review to achieve educational excellence in Australian schools, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra.*

Gonski et al. (2018) argued that to maximise this achievement, principals need to be supported and empowered in two areas: their leadership of learning, and their professional learning tailored for each stage of their career.

The issue of autonomy, both structural and professional, was also discussed in the report with a clear message that it needs to be managed carefully if it is to lift student outcomes. Structural autonomy was identified as needing to be sensitive to the context of individual schools and focused in areas that add value such as professional capacity building, setting priorities, strategic resourcing, and communication. Where greater structural autonomy is assumed, greater accountability is needed in relation to maximising student learning growth. The development of principals' capability to make decisions to maximise student learning growth (professional autonomy) was seen as an area requiring personal agency. We address this element of professional autonomy in Part V where attention is paid to the question of agency in principals' professional learning.

2.3   Summary of major messages from this part of the review

In this part of the report we trawl back over Parts I to gather up important messages which address three of the five services* asked of the review sought by AITSL, namely:

1. A critical review of Australian and international contemporary and seminal research on effective leadership of learning and the evidence base related to the impact of leadership on student outcomes;
2. Identification and comparative analysis of research that describes elements of leadership of learning such as the five leadership dimensions described by Viviane Robinson or the three dimensions of instructional leadership described by Phillip Hallinger; and
3. Details of what the practice of leadership of learning looks like in various school settings, such as leadership of learning being shared amongst teams and leaders with formal roles and informal leadership responsibilities.

*Note: The remaining two services are addressed in Parts IV and V.

2.4   The evidence base for the impact of leadership on student outcomes

The evidence base for an improved understanding of the connections between the work of principals, student learning and achievement has grown quickly since the millennium, fueled especially by meta-analytical reviews of this growing body of research.

- Most of the large quantitative and mixed methods studies backward-map from schools known to be producing above average or high achievement by students, or they have used a sample of schools known, on the basis of test results, to be on visible improvement trajectories. The search in both quantitative and mixed methods studies has been to isolate and explain what leadership processes are implicated in the levels of performance reached.
- Qualitative studies are usually small-scale, but they have been used to expose more fine-grained descriptions of the processes or practices that influence leaning and student achievement than large-scale quantitative analysis can.

Identification and summation of research describing elements of leadership for learning, leadership in different school settings and shared leadership practices

By 2010, research into the effects of the actions of school leaders on student learning and achievement had:

- Exposed the limitations of school leadership as a unidimensional construct;

- Backed the claim that leadership is second only to classroom instruction among all school-related factors that contribute to what students learn at school;
- Shown that leadership effects are usually largest where and when they are needed most, that is, effects are considerably greater in schools that are in difficult circumstances or on improvement trajectories from a low base;
- Uncovered three basic practices initiated and implemented by successful principals: (a) setting directions, (b) developing people, and (c) redesigning the organization (Leithwood et al. 2004);
- Criticised the lack of descriptive clarity about what instructional leadership actually meant for the work of the principal, sparking further investigation of the practices that together constitute 'instructional leadership';
- Begun to distinguish between leader and leadership – the former being about an individual position and the authority the role carries, the latter about actions carried into effect by groups;
- Extended Leithwood's (2004) three dimensions of leadership activity to include 10 leadership functions (Hallinger 2005): (a) Framing the School's Goals, and Communicating them; (b) Supervising and Evaluating Instruction, Coordinating the Curriculum, and Monitoring Student Progress; and (c) Protecting Instructional Time, Promoting Professional Development, Maintaining High Visibility, Providing Incentives for Teachers, and Providing Incentives for Learning;
- Confirmed the small though undeniable statistically significant indirect influence of principals on student learning outcomes through the decisions they make about classroom conditions;
- Added that the most important set of actions through which the principal's influence occurs is the school's mission, its articulation, communication, implementation and modelling (Hallinger 2005);
- Raised the importance of leadership skills and dispositions so that administrative decisions are informed by pedagogical knowledge, an ability to analyse complex problems, build relational trust and engage in open-to-learning conversations;
- Shown that the leadership of learning is carried into action through an array of processes to which many in the school contribute;
- Revealed that in high poverty schools, leadership activity is influenced by the very nature of those communities;
- Emphasised that what makes principals of high poverty schools 'successful' is their belief in learning for all, their concern to provide safe learning environments and their positive connections with parent and community members;
- Added to the findings on essential leadership dimensions, explaining five found to be crucial in fostering teacher and student learning: providing educational direction; ensuring strategic alignment; creating a community that learns how to improve student success; engaging in constructive problem talk; and selecting and developing smart tools (Robinson 2009);
- Provided information on the improvement of teaching and learning as a distributive activity in the hands of positional and non-positional leaders acting routinely on agreed improvement goals;
- Shown that the mean effect size of the impact of instructional leadership on student outcomes was three to four times greater than that for transformational leadership (Robinson 2008); and
- Acknowledged research indicating that both instructional and transformational leadership are necessary in the improvement of leaning and student achievement.

Near the end of the decade, it was becoming clear that greater detail on the descriptive aspects of leadership for learning practice was essential as was the view that distributive leadership was being portrayed normatively. Attention was then directed towards this and other related issues which:

- Raised the idea of the reciprocity of influence, showing that as influence is distributed, so the influence of the positional leader grows;

- Supported the importance of professional dialogue as a practical route for the reciprocal sharing of influence;
- Added three further dimensions of leadership activity to the five defined earlier, now making eight (Robinson et al. 2009);
- Highlighted that of the 'Four Paths' model, school principals had their greatest influence on the Organisational path and least on the Family path (Leithwood et al. 2010);
- Labelled the Family path as having the most untapped potential for leadership impact on student learning and provided an early indication of the possibilities of networked leadership;
- Underscored the positive impact on learning through the mutual influence of collaborative leadership;
- Identified the strengthening of a school's professional community through shared leadership which in turn is a predictor of instructional practices that are strongly associated with student achievement (Louis et al. 2010);
- Recognised that the principal remains the main source of leadership activity (Louis et al. 2010);
- Warned that how leadership in school is distributed depends on what is to be accomplished with best effects occurring when the focus is directly on student learning goals (Louis et al. 2010);
- Confirmed four leadership for learning dimensions and 15 practices – setting directions, developing people, redesigning the organization and managing the instructional program with all practices acknowledged by principals and teachers as instructionally helpful (Louis et al. 2010);
- Focused attention on the importance of trust in sharing leadership committed to improvement (Printy 2010; Robinson 2010); and
- Noted a visible move to partnerships and leadership networks in the pursuit of improved student outcomes (Supovitz 2010).

From 2011 to the present, research has concentrated on studies which confirm and extend existing findings supplemented by the derivation of practical implications in usable form, such as the Ontario Leadership Framework amongst others. This recent research effort has:

- Opened up the use of data and research to inform improvement practices – with principals giving emphasis to this as a means to help develop teachers' capacity and inform pedagogy;
- Shown that highly effective principals foster challenging, evaluative conversations – but with a deep knowledge of teaching and learning and high expectations of all – teachers, parents, leaders and students;
- Drawn attention to principals' lack of confidence in several matters, particularly counselling underperforming teachers and making productive connections with influential community members;
- Aired the matter of principals' professional autonomy which affords them distributive leadership power but in the light of a widespread belief amongst teachers that considerable time is required to develop sufficient trust and collegiality in schools for shared leadership to thrive;
- Readdressed the influence of the context on leadership actions and vice versa, raising the desirability of mutual effects;
- Acknowledged the concept of layered leadership operating through the behaviours of different individuals, both position or non-position holders;
- Pointed to the normalisation of cooperative or shared leadership;
- Confirmed greater power in the combination of instructional and transformational leadership than in their separation, leading to the recognition of the practical breadth of leadership for learning;
- Articulated clearly the benefit of context-sensitive strategies that are 'layered' in the school's culture, organization and leadership patterns;
- Made explicit the shared moral purpose of improving the lives of students through learning around which school mission and values are clustered; and
- Synthesised extant research into leadership frameworks (Leithwood 2012; Hitt & Tucker 2016).

What stands out from this summation of major findings and conclusions from Part I are three outcomes for which there is sufficient evidence to give principals great faith in them.

4. We now have a very clear set of descriptions of the dimensions of leadership for learning action and the practices or activities which, when implemented, carry the prospect of positive effects on student learning and achievement.

5. We know that principals are pivotal in making a reality of shared or collaborative leadership and that trusting interpersonal relationships are deep rooted in how these practices take hold, flourish and become 'everyday'.

6. While we understand that the concept of leadership for learning covers common dimensions for action no matter the circumstances, how effective these practices are is heavily context dependent, relying on the professional autonomy of the principal and the layering of leadership in networks, if mutual influence is to be encouraged broadly and deeply within and beyond the school. These important qualifiers are taken up and elaborated in extracts from five published Case Studies conducted in Australia (see Appendix 3). These Cases illustrate the way leadership knowledge can be implemented in very different contexts by principals who are alert to their local circumstances.

We turn now to Part II where we construct a narrative explaining how much of the research we have cited has influenced the evolution of theories, concepts and approaches to school leadership.

PART II. LEADERSHIP IN SUPPORT OF IMPROVED STUDENT OUTCOMES

3 Theories and Concepts of Leadership

The following section provides an overview of influential leadership theories and concepts underpinning school leadership practices from the late 1980s to the present. The concepts discussed are limited to those aimed at improving student learning and outcomes. As this body of research has developed over the preceding four decades, it is clear that refinements have reappraised notions of agency and the importance of social and situational contexts in the work of school leaders to improve student outcomes. Hallinger and Heck (1999) argued early on, that it is virtually meaningless to study principal leadership without reference to the part that context plays in principals' actions for student outcomes. More recently, Hallinger (2018) has added that the multifaceted context of a school (including institutional, community, socio-cultural, political, economic, school improvement pressure) is a source of constraints, resources, and opportunities that the principal must understand and address in order to lead effectively.

Beginning with a discussion of the earliest notions of instructional leadership, and then moving onto transformational leadership, into distributive and networked leadership and finally to contemporary notions of leadership for learning, the literature demonstrates throughout, the centrality of the principal in the exercise of power and agency. Our inquiry has found that it is unhelpful to seek out discrete matches between theories and practices of leadership intent on improving student outcomes. There are necessarily overlaps and inter-relatedness of many of the constructs. In concluding that there is no 'one size fits all' theory of leadership or set of practices that assure improvement in student outcomes, Hallinger (2018) also signals the need for attention by principals to the school's context as theory is applied in practice.

3.1 Instructional Leadership

The 'effective schools movement' prompted the development of instructional leadership theories from research conducted from the 1980s to the early nineties. This form of leadership emanated from research in elementary schools that were effective at teaching children in poor urban communities of North America. Murphy, Hallinger and Mitman (1983) conceptualised a model of effective schools and used this model to support an effective schools study described in Hallinger and Murphy (1985). Figure 1 presents these 14 effectiveness factors.
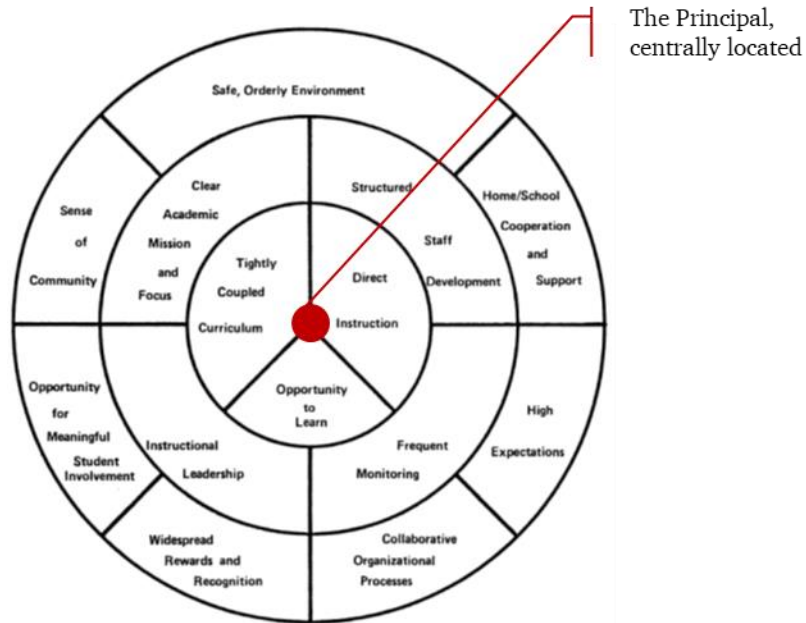
Figure 1: School Effectiveness Framework

Source: Adapted from Hallinger and Murphy (1986, p. 330)

The framework displays the principal as centrally located, in tight control and directing all available resources to improve student outcomes from the top down. Hallinger (2003) and others describe instructional leadership as characterised by a strong principal with a directive leadership style focused on curriculum and instruction. In 2005, Hallinger outlined a foundational three-dimensional model of instructional leadership that maintained a principal should direct focus on:

1. Defining the school's mission which includes the two leadership functions: framing the school's goals and communicating the schools' mission;
2. Managing the instructional program, which includes three leadership functions: supervising and evaluating instruction, coordinating the curriculum and monitoring student progress; and
3. Promoting a positive school-learning climate which includes four leadership functions: protecting instructional time, promoting professional development, maintaining high visibility, providing high incentives for teachers and providing incentives for learning.

This instructional leadership model maintains a focus on teaching and instruction, rather than on learners and learning. The identity of the principal was cast more as curriculum manager through teacher development. Blase and Blase's (2000) study examined teachers' perspectives on principals' everyday instructional leadership and explored what impacts those characteristics had. The authors found that two key themes impacted teachers: talking with teachers to promote reflection and promoting professional growth. From its beginnings, instructional leadership theories acknowledged the importance of principals understanding the school context as a key variable of the kind of actions they take to improve student outcomes (Hallinger & Heck 1996).

Although instructional leadership began with a focus on the principal's direction, it soon became apparent that if the overall aim of improving student outcomes was to be reached, others needed to be included in the vision. The complexity of schools and the divergent contexts within them meant that one administrator could not manage the needs of a whole school (Lambert 2002). This realisation necessitated a reconceptualisation of principal leadership for improving student outcomes.

3.2   Shared Instructional Leadership

As the research understanding evolved from an exclusive focus on the principal, researchers began to explore how other senior staff could assist the principal to carry their increasing management burden (Marshall 1992). Although the focus remained on instructional tasks, authors began to discuss how roles such as the Assistant Principal could be more effectively engaged 'to increase a school's success as a learning organization for students and educators' (Kaplan & Owings 1999, p. 80). This broadening of perspectives on who can lead, and how such leadership can be exercised in schools led to a re-consideration of the role of the teacher body. As Lambert (2002, p. 37) observed, 'The old model of formal, one-person leadership leaves the substantial talents of teachers largely untapped'.

The evolving discussion on shared instructional leadership reflected the recognition that the old principal-dominant mode was not addressing educational challenges. Yet the leadership approach remained focused on instructional and transactional tasks. Discussions of how the teacher body could contribute to leadership remained task oriented, with consideration mainly given to issues of authority, delegation and accountability (Hallinger 2005; Spillane, Halverson & Diamond 2001; Urick 2016). As instructional leadership shifted progressively away from a command and control model, the introduction of transformational leadership theories helped further move leadership conceptualisations beyond the strictly managerial realm.

3.3   Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership was initially conceptualised by Burns (1978) in a business context and further developed by Bass (Bass 1985, 1998; Bass & Avolio 1994) for a wider application of organisational contexts. Rather than focusing specifically on an individual's direct coordination, control, and supervision of curriculum and instruction, transformational leadership seeks to build the organisation's capacity to select its purposes and to support the development of changes to the practices of teaching and learning. In practice, it can be seen as facilitating shared or distributed leadership (Hallinger 2003, pp. 330-1). In so far as transformational leadership 'focuses on developing the organization's capacity to innovate' and share the vision, it can be seen as a significant more away from a top-down approach (Williams & Jones 2009). Some 20 years ago Leithwood and Jantzi (1999, p. 5) made the point that 'Authority and influence associated with this form of leadership are not necessarily allocated to those occupying formal administrative positions, although much of the literature adopts their perspectives'.

Leithwood's (1994) conceptual model of transformational leadership in schools, comprises seven components: identification and articulate of a vision, building shared goals, creating a climate of high expectations, modelling, intellectual stimulation and individualised support.

The transformational leadership agenda relies on establishing a consistently positive affective climate across the organisation, including levels of trust and overall employee productivity (Menges et al. 2011). Barker (2007) reports that even in an exceptionally performing school where the principal is widely recognised as transformational, the consequences for student achievement are unclear and unproven (Barker 2007, p. 22). Although only one case study, it confirms a view that the transformational model is overly simplistic, unsustainable and may not in fact deliver its promised policy objectives.

3.4   Integrated Leadership

Marks and Printy (2003) and Printy, Marks, and Bowers (2010) are key papers that elaborate on how the concepts instructional leadership and transformational leadership work collaboratively in practice. They argue that 'When transformational and shared instructional leadership coexist in an integrated form of leadership, the influence on school performance, measured by the quality of its pedagogy and the achievement of its students, is substantial' (Marks & Printy 2003, p. 370). They propose a theory of action whereby 'the efficacious principal works simultaneously at transformational and instructional tasks' (Marks & Printy 2003, p. 377); that is, integrated leadership.

Hitt and Tucker (2016) provide an insightful comparison of the concepts and practices of Instructional leadership, shared instructional leadership and integrated leadership. The paper does not argue that one form of leadership is better than the other. Rather, it emphasises that the principals' role is crucial in shifting control from the centre through gaining the confidence of others that the practices suit the context at a point in time. Once this occurs, other leaders within the school and outside assist in moving to the more interactive and collaborative practices typified as shared leadership, transformational leadership and the mix comprising integrated leadership.

3.5   Distributed/Networked Leadership

The complex and evolving nature of schooling in the 21st century has also posed a challenge to the more hierarchical and individualistic leadership models (Spillane, Halverson & Diamond 2004). Gronn (2000), Spillane et al. (2004) and Harris and Spillane (2008) have contributed to advancing the theory and concepts of distributed or networked leadership that propose an increase in agency for all stakeholders in the education of children, not just school leaders.

As Harris and Spillane (2008, p. 31) observe, 'There is a growing recognition that the old organisational structures of schooling simply do not fit the requirements of learning in the twenty-first century'. The distributed leadership model seeks to provide a '*how* of leadership, grounded in the day-to-day practice of school leaders' (Spillane et al. 2004, p. 4). The authors make the case that understanding leadership involves three components – the interaction of school leaders, either formal or informal, followers and the situational context of the school itself. These attributes all make up the eco-system and the actors within that eco-system. Each interaction provides an opportunity to shape the direction and functioning of the school eco-system. Harris and Spillane (2008, 32) raise the concern that in the expanded conceptualisations of distributed leadership, 'the chief concern is *how* leadership is distributed, by whom and with what effect'.

Leithwood's (2005) empirical research sought to answer questions about the practices, conditions and variables that give rise to successful leadership by principals. He found three key themes in successful leadership practice - *Setting directions*, *Developing people* and *Redesigning the organization*. These practices support the shift away from purely instructional or transformational leadership, which focuses on the individual, to more distributed leadership practices by teams of people in different positions. The focus is on leadership distributed across positions and teams, collectively achieving organizational change and progress towards shared goals.

Taking an abstract perspective, Hargreaves and Fink (2008) explore the complex networked system perspective that underlies the distributed leadership model. The authors see analogies to the complex, interacting living systems studied in ecological fields and consider how such systems function and how this is relevant in the educational sector. They find that in nature any successful living system is based on communication and growth, both in the physical sense and in the sense of learning and adaptation. Conceiving of a school as a living system provides extensive opportunities to consider where and how leadership practice may influence student success.

There is a growing research body supporting the impact of distributed leadership approaches, yet the continued theoretical ambiguity has led some scholars to wonder if perhaps it is more of an analytical frame than a model per se (Fasso, Knight & Purnell 2016; Harris & Spillane 2008). Notwithstanding these discussions, authors repeatedly find that, ultimately, 'It is the nature and quality of leadership practice that matters' (Harris & Spillane 2008, p. 33).

Additionally, a number of authors have questioned the authenticity of this conception (Harris & Spillane 2008; Hartley 2007). Hargreaves and Fink (2008) query how democractic and decentralised this model really is or whether, given the continued power of government to set policy, establish performance goals and direct the allocation of funds, this model is in fact a sophisticated motivational tool. This critique recalls us to our starting point for this investigation of leadership approaches, and is a timely reminder that all positive leadership practices must be built on a foundation of authenticity (Avolio & Gardner 2005). MacBeath (2005) is alert to the pittfalls in the translation of theory to practice with his findings from a study of distributive leadership in 11 schools across

three districts in England. A questionaire inquiry into what distributed leadership looked like in practice found that it is (MacBeath 2005, p. 352):

> *…when we come to three lowest ranked statements of all that we see how far ideas of distribution extend. The three items receiving the lowest ranking were: parents are encouraged to take on leadership roles; there are processes for involving pupils in decision-making; pupils are encouraged to exercise leadership. The pride of place for the 54th of 54 items is the leadership role of parents. This statement also receives least wholehearted support of any item on the importance scale. Rated almost equally low was the item 'Staff welcome opportunities to learn from parents'.*

In the next section we explore the emergence of Leadership for Learning. This perspective intimately links leadership and learning, clearly establishing the driving purpose of leadership from the outset, and by focussing on learning rather than metrics, moves the model away from a strict performance and assessment orientation to strengthening children's learning inside and outside schools through a democratic approach to leaders and learners.

3.6   Leadership for Learning

Hallinger and Heck (2010) confirm the potential for leadership concepts to be refined over time rather than replaced. They argue that in the twenty first century, instructional leadership has been 'reincarnnated' as leadership for learning. This view is confirmed by Bush (2014) adding that in its former guise it had two fundamental flaws: a focus on principals to the exclusion of teachers and other leaders; and it emphasised teaching rather than learning. That so, leadership for learning is widely defined. A practice-based theory of leadership for learning has been built from the ground up by MacBeath (2006) and colleagues from Cambridge University. According to Dempster et al. (2017, p. 3) it focuses on three concepts, context, purpose and human agency. MacBeath (2006) reports on the Carpe Vitam project, a 3-year action research program conducted in 22 schools across seven countries with researchers generating five principles for the understanding of leadership for learning:

- Leadership has a learning focus;
- Leadership creates conditions favourable for learning;
- Leadership for learning practice requires a sharing of leadership;
- Dialogue is central to Leadership for learning; and
- Leadership for learning means being accountable.

He shows that 'over the course of this project, the participating schools reported experiencing a progressive and deep evolution in their perspectives on, and approaches to, leadership and learning. This broadening perspective was supported by a greatly enhanced appreciation of how effective leadership enhances learning and moved participants further away from individualistic models of instructional or transformational leadership' (MacBeath 2006, p. 46). Based on the work of Dempster and MacBeath (2009, p. 22) and Leithwood and Riehl (2003, p. 7) leadership for learning is defined as: 'School leaders, understanding and harnessing the contexts in which they operate, mobilise and work with others to articulate and achieve shared intentions that enhance learning and the lives of learners' (Dempster et al. 2016, p. 3).

Subsequent work has sought to refine the theory through the application of the concepts in a variety of contexts especially in high poverty and disadvantaged schools and communities. In Australia, Dempster (2009) developed the Leadership for Literacy Learning Blueprint (LLLB) that was used as the leadership basis in the pilot Principals as Literacy Leaders project. These actions are expanded by Dempster (2016) with the term the 'blended power of leadership learning' that he explains has two key ingredients: a shared understanding of generic leadership for learning processes and a shared understanding of curriculum content knowledge about which the actual sharing of curriculum leadership occurs. The recent monograph by MacBeath et al. (2018) adds to understandings about leadership for learning, proposing that current policy at the national and local levels might act as a serious

constraint to those who work at translating theory into practice, within commitments to social justice, children's rights and breadth of student learning.

Leadership for learning adds to prior understandings of distributed leadership by taking seriously the remit for an inclusive approach to leadership and learning (Knapp et al. 2010). The essential contribution is the inclusion of leaders, usually informal, inside and outside the school in contributing to improving student learning, not just achievement and test scores. Further this theory of leadership assumes a strengths-based approach to leading learning. In this approach, principals seek out and support families and community members to lead 'with', as opposed to 'under', school leaders and staff to support children's learning inside and outside schools. Avolio and Gardner's (2005) notion of authentic leadership drawn from positive psychology and focusing on leaders' awareness of their own and others' values/moral perspectives, knowledge and strengths and awareness of the context in which they are working, could be seen as integral to the practices associated with leadership for learning.

4 Evolving Leadership Approaches

The nature of the theories and concepts discussed in this section will continue to evolve, as predicted, about instructional and transformational leadership, 'in response to the changing needs of schools in the context of global educational reforms' (Hallinger 2003, p. 329). There is not conclusive evidence to show that any one form of leadership is necessarily good or bad. What is evident in this review of the literature is that context matters and formal and informal leaders' understanding of the context in which they are situated will determine the benefit of selecting one theoretical explanation rather than another.

The socially mediated nature of leadership can be seen in the evolution of approaches in schools and in academic literature relating to it. Early conceptions of leadership in schools tended to focus on the positional power of the Principal, with leadership being seen through a command lens as acts of direction and supervision. This hierarchical model of command and power has gradually shifted to a collaborative concept of leadership.

As Hitt and Tucker (2016) observe, the understanding of leadership in schools has been an additive process. Figure 2 below depicts this evolution over time. The common theme throughout the various explanations of leadership is a continuing trend away from highly individualistic leadership approaches to collectivist approaches that emphasise distributed *power with* rather than *power over*.

1980s		2000s			2020s
Instructional Leadership	**Shared Instructional Leadership**	**Transformational Leadership**	**Integrated Leadership**	**Networked Leadership**	**Leadership for Learning**
Vested in the principal; Hierarchical and supervisory; Power over.	Interactive & collaborative; Local school control policy; Principal as facilitator of continual teacher growth.	Developing organisational capacity; Steward of culture; Inspire and motivate educators; Mission, performance and culture as focus.	Transformational and instructional tasks co-exist.	Transformational and instructional tasks co-exist; Distributed leadership across and down; Includes parents and children in decision making; Engagement focused.	Learning is the focus of leadership Leadership strives to create conditions favourable to learning as an activity. Constructive and productive dialogue between all stakeholders drives learning. Leadership and accountability is shared.

Shift from individualism in leadership to collectivism.

Whilst this development of leadership approaches proceeded, a similar development was occurring in the ways schools operated and interacted with parents, children and the broader community. The most dominant is Epstein's (2010) 6-stage typology of parental involvement. In this typology, schools seek to involve parents more actively in their child's education, bring the parents into school life through volunteering and participation in school activities and link parents to their broader community. This approach provides a useful yardstick for understanding how parents progress through involvement levels. However, it nonetheless embeds the more traditional understanding of power vested in the school (and therefore the principal) with parental involvement occurring on the terms established by the school.

This movement towards greater engagement of schools in their communities, and the recognition of the unique skills and knowledge parents can contribute is captured in the move towards conceiving of effective school leadership through a network lens. Auerbach (2010) proposes a process of evolution in leadership types that reflects this movement:

Figure 3: Leadership continuum for school-family partnerships

Source: Reproduced from Auerbach (2010, p. 734)

In this continuum, schools move from a fortress mentality with principals exerting power over constituents to a barrier-free mentality in which principals and schools engage with parents and the community as full partners (see Appendix 3, Case Studies 2 and 3 for examples moving in this direction in practice). In this authentic partnership stage, principals, faculty and parents have power with each other to achieve mutually agreed outcomes. Learning for leading articulates this perspective whilst retaining the critical elements of previous approaches including the importance of instructional and transformational skills and tasks. In the next section we explore leadership frameworks that support the implementation of networked leadership and move toward a revised unified leadership framework that embeds authentic networked partnerships in leadership for learning.

PART III. LEADERSHIP FRAMEWORKS

5   A Unified Leadership Framework

This section first provides an overview of the Unified Leadership Framework developed by Hitt and Tucker (2016) and the underlying frameworks from which it is drawn. We then review three other frameworks to add to the three considered by Hitt and Tucker and explore how they may contribute to a Revised Unified Leadership Framework. We extend the original work of Hitt and Tucker (2016) by integrating leadership for learning research from New Zealand, Australia and the United Kingdom.

5.1   The First Unified Leadership Framework

In the face of the breadth and depth of leadership research, Hitt and Tucker (2016) conducted a comprehensive literature review in an effort to develop a unified framework of leadership for school improvement and effectiveness. The authors reflect on the move towards distributed or networked leadership and note that

'Leadership can be enacted by a host of individuals and is not necessarily the province of a school principal who has formal authority' (Hitt & Tucker 2016, p. 533). The authors refer to the domains of leadership practice and the dimensions, or more specific practices, which nest within each domain.

In their 2016 paper, Hitt and Tucker (2016) presented an in-depth review of leadership frameworks and their underlying research basis. Of the original four frameworks identified, three were explicitly analysed while the fourth was used as a reference basis. The Robinson et al. (2008) framework was not incorporated into the final unified framework as it does not contain qualitative descriptions of the practices that contribute to effective leadership, rather it provided a meta-analysis of school effectiveness research to identify the outcome effects of practices.

An overview of the three frameworks and their integration into a unified framework is provided below.

5.1.1   Ontario Leadership Framework

The Ontario Leadership Framework (Leithwood 2012) was developed in 2012 for the Canadian Institute for Education Leadership. It is the most recent of the frameworks included in Hitt and Tucker's (2016) Unified Framework.

In this framework, Leithwood (2012) reviews the literature relating to leadership in schools and more broadly in the field of management research. The author distinguishes between leadership practices and competencies, focusing on the outward practice of leadership rather than the underlying traits of the individual which are encapsulated in a competency. This distinction allows the author to focus on the activities which are clearly specified and can be developed through conscious and coordinated effort (Leithwood 2012). The OLF presents five domains and 21 subordinate dimensions, as shown in Table 2.

Ontario Leadership Framework Domains	Ontario Leadership Framework Dimensions
Setting directions	Building a shared vision
	Identifying specific, shared short-term goals
	Creating high performance expectations
	Communication the vision and goals
Building relationships and developing people	Providing and demonstrating individual considerations for staff members
	Stimulating growth in the professional capacities of staff
	Modeling the school's values and practices
	Building trusting relationships with and among staff, students and parents
	Establishing productive relationships with teacher federation representatives
Developing the organization to support desired practices	Building collaborative cultures and distributing leadership
	Structuring the organization to facilitate collaboration
	Building productive relationships with families and communities
	Connecting the school to its wider environment
	Maintaining a safe and healthy school environment
	Allocating resources in support of the school's vision and goals
Improving the instructional program	Staffing the instructional program
	Providing instructional support (supervising, evaluating teaching, coordinating curriculum)
	Monitoring student learning and school improvement practice
	Buffering staff from distractions to their work
Securing accountability	Building staff members' sense of internal accountability (promoting collective responsibility)
	Meeting the demands for external accountability

Table 2: Domains and Dimensions of the Ontario Leadership Framework

Source: Hitt and Tucker (2016, p. 539)

5.1.2   Learning Centered Leadership Framework

The Learning-Centered Leadership Framework was developed in 2006 (Murphy et al. 2006). It is the earliest of the frameworks included in the Unified Framework. Murphy et al. also note that leadership is conceived of as a process rather than a trait of one or many individuals. They emphasise that leadership is inherently relational as it involves influencing others to achieve a goal, and hence the practices of leadership are embedded within the complex organizational structures and cultures of schools.

As Hitt and Tucker (2016, p. 538) observe, the Learning-Centered Leadership Framework 'emerged from a review of studies that examine the influence of leadership on student achievement'. The eight domains and 31 dimensions of the framework are presented in Table 3 below.

Domains	Dimensions
Vision for learning	Articulating vision
	Implementing vision
	Developing vision
	Stewarding vision
Instructional Program	Knowledge and involvement
	Hiring and allocating staff
	Supporting staff
	Instructional time
Curricular Program	Knowledge and involvement
	Expectations, standards
	Opportunity to learn
	Curriculum alignment
Assessment program	Knowledge and involvement
	Assessment procedures
	Monitoring instruction and curriculum
	Communication and use of data
Communities of Learning	Professional development
	Communities of professional practice
	Community-anchored schools
Resource acquisition and use	Acquiring resources
	Allocating resources
	Using resources
Organizational culture	Production emphasis
	Accountability
	Learning environment
	Personalised environment
	Continuous improvement
Social Advocacy	Stakeholder engagement
	Diversity
	Environmental context
	Ethics

Table 3: Domains and Dimensions of the Learning Centred Leadership Framework

Source: Adapted from Hitt and Tucker (2016, p. 540)

5.1.3   Essential Supports Framework

The Essential Supports Framework was developed from a longitudinal study of student achievement in Chicago Public Schools (Sebring et al. 2006). It is derived from empirical data and seeks to develop a normative, theoretical model of leadership from practice. It is worth noting that the context of the study, highly urbanised schools in a

major American city, may influence the generalisability of results. Table 4 shows the five domains and 16 dimensions of the framework.

Essential Supports Framework Domains	Essential Supports Framework Dimensions
Leadership	Inclusive leadership focused on instruction
	Faculty/parent/community influence
	Strategic orientation
Parent-community ties	Teachers learn about student culture and local community
	Staff engages parents and community in strengthening student learning
Professional capacity	Quality of human resources
	Values and beliefs about teacher responsibility for change
	Quality of professional development
	Professional community
Student centred learning environment	Safety and order
	Press toward academic achievement coupled with personal concerns for students
Ambitious instruction	Curricular alignment
	Intellectual challenge

Table 4: Domains and Dimensions of the Essential Supports Framework

Source: Adapted from Hitt and Tucker (2016, p. 541)

5.2   A Unified Framework Developed from Three Sources

Hitt and Tucker (2016) reviewed each framework and their underlying research base to develop an overarching framework that synthesised each input. This framework seeks to provide a comprehensive, unified perspective on the domains and practices of effective leadership in a school setting. The Unified Framework is presented overleaf in Table 5.

Unified Framework Domains and Dimensions	Essential Supports Framework	Learning-Centred Framework	Ontario Leadership Framework
Establishing and conveying the vision			
Creating, articulating and stewarding shared mission and vision		Developing vision, stewarding vision, articulating vision	Building a shared vision
Implementing vision and setting goals and performance expectations		Implementing vision, expectations, standards	Identifying specific shared short term goals
Modelling aspirational and ethical practices		Ethics (and specifically discussed within multiple dimensions)	Modeling the school's values and practices
Communicating broadly the state of the vision	Inclusive leadership focused on instruction		Communicating the vision and goals
Promoting use of data for continual improvement		Communication and use of data	
Tending to external accountability	Strategic orientation	Environmental context	Meeting the demands for external accountability, establishing productive relationships with teacher federation representatives
Facilitating a high-quality learning experience for students			
Maintaining safety and orderliness	Safety and order	Learning environment	Maintaining a safe and healthy school environment
Personalising the environment to reflect students' backgrounds	Teachers learn about student culture and local community	Personalised environment	
Developing and monitoring curricular program	Curricular alignment	Knowledge and involvement; opportunity to learn; curriculum alignment	Providing instructional support (supervising and evaluating teaching, coordinating curriculum)
Developing and monitoring instructional program	Intellectual challenge	Knowledge and involvement; instructional time	Monitoring student learning and school improvement practice
Developing and monitoring assessment program	Intellectual challenge; press toward academic achievement coupled with personal concern for students	Knowledge and involvement, assessment procedures/expectations, standards; monitoring instruction and curriculum	
Building professional capacity			
Selecting for the right fit	Quality of human resources	Hiring and allocating staff	Staffing the instructional program
Providing individualised consideration		??	Providing and demonstrating individual consideration for staff members
Building trusting relationships	Relational trust		Building trusting relationships with and among staff, students and parents
Providing opportunities to learn for whole faculty including leaders	Quality of professional development	Professional Development	Stimulating growth in the professional capacities of staff

Unified Framework Domains and Dimensions	Essential Supports Framework	Learning-Centred Framework	Ontario Leadership Framework
Supporting, buffering and recognising staff		Supporting staff	Buffering staff from distractions to their work
Engendering responsibility for promoting learning	Values and beliefs about teacher responsibility for change	Accountability	Providing instructional support (supervising and evaluating teaching)
Creating communities of practice	Professional community	Communities of professional practice; learning environment	Structuring the organization to facilitate collaboration
Creating supportive organisations for learning			
Acquiring and allocating resources strategically for mission and vision	Strategic orientation	Acquiring resources, allocating resources, Using resources	Allocating resources in support of the school's vision and goals, staffing the instructional program
Considering context to maximise organizational functioning	Contextual resources	Environmental context	Providing support and demonstrating consideration for individual staff members
Building collaborative processes for decision making	Faculty, parent, community influence		Building collaborative cultures and distributing leadership
Sharing and distributing leadership	Inclusive leadership focused on instruction		Building collaborative cultures and distributing leadership
Tending to and building on diversity	Teachers learn about student culture and local community	Diversity	Building productive relationships with families and communities
Maintaining ambitious and high expectations and standards	Values and beliefs about teacher responsibility	Continuous improvement	Creating high performance expectations
Strengthening and optimising school culture			Building collaborative cultures and distributing leadership
Connecting with external partners			
Building productive relationships with families and external partners in the community		Stakeholder engagement	Building productive relationships with families and communities
Engaging families and community in collaborative processes to strengthen student learning	Staff engaged parents and community in strengthening student learning	Community-anchored schools	Building productive relationships with families and communities
Anchoring schools in the community	Resources of community	Community-anchored schools Environmental context	Connecting the school to its wider environment

Table 5: Domains and Dimensions of the Essential Supports Framework

Source: Adapted from Hitt and Tucker (2016, p. 543)

6 Extending the Unified Leadership Framework

As part of the literature review for this project, the research team identified an additional three frameworks that seek to articulate the domains and dimensions of leadership for learning, school improvement and student achievement. The following sections present an overview of these frameworks, their methodologies and the domains and dimensions identified by each. The three selected are justified on the basis that they have been produced by New Zealand, Australian and United Kingdom scholars drawing upon research findings from their own and other countries, and because each has been widely used in leadership programs beyond the initial studies informing them. These three leadership for learning frameworks complement those examined already from Canada and the United States.

6.1 School Leadership Student Outcomes Framework

The School Leadership Student Outcomes Framework was developed by the New Zealand Ministry of Education as part of the Best Evidence Synthesis Programme (Robinson et al. 2009). The framework was developed through analysis of observational studies in the New Zealand context. Studies were selected on the basis that they reported on initiatives that 'had a demonstrable impact on one or more valued student outcomes' (Robinson et al. 2009, p. 104). The authors then employed a process of backward mapping to identify the leadership dimensions that enabled effective leadership for student outcomes.

The research report was based on 16 published quantitative studies, of which seven were in primary schools, two in middle and upper schools and seven were cross-sectoral studies. It also included 15 published and unpublished quantitative theses and reports with a methodological quality deemed to meet BES standards. Of these 15 studies, eight were in a Maori context and seven in an English context.

Given the New Zealand emphasis on respect and recognition of Maori people and culture, the findings reflect a highly distributed approach to leadership, recognition of cultures and the extensive engagement of families and the broader community.

School Leadership Student Outcomes Domains	School Leadership Student Outcomes Dimensions
Obtaining and allocating resources aligned to pedagogical goals	Leadership uses clear criteria that are aligned to pedagogical and philosophical purposes
	Leadership ensures sustained funding for pedagogical priorities
Creating a community that learns how to improve student success	Leadership focuses on the relationship between teaching and learning
	Leadership promotes collective responsibility and accountability for student achievement and well-being
Creating educationally powerful connections	Leadership establishes continuities between student identities and school practices
	Leadership develops continuities and coherence across teaching programmes
	Leadership ensures effective transitions across educational settings
Engaging in constructive problem talk	Leadership engages teachers' theories of action
Selecting, developing, and using smart tools	Leadership selects tools that are well designed
	Leadership selects tools that incorporate sound theories
Setting Educational Goals	Leadership develops the capacity to set appropriate goals
	Leadership establishes the importance of the selected goals
	Leadership ensures that goals are clear

Table 6: Domains and Dimensions of the School Leadership Student Outcomes Framework

Source: Adapted from Robinson et al. (2009)

6.2   Carpe Vitam Leadership Principles

The Carpe Vitam Leadership Principles were derived from a three-year project that sought to identify connections between leadership and learning in 24 schools across eight countries. By virtue of the research design, the project was able to identify domains and dimensions of practice that transcended the political and cultural context of a particular school. Each school participated with a cohort of 12 – 14-year-olds, making the study more specific to that secondary school age group.

The project identified five key principles of leadership for learning, as follows (Dempster & MacBeath 2009, p. 71):

1. A focus on learning as an activity;
2. Creating conditions favourable to learning as an activity;
3. Creating a dialogue about LfL;
4. The sharing of leadership; and
5. A shared sense of accountability.

Each principle is then discussed in depth. Dempster and MacBeath (2009) do not specifically present the discussion as dimensions against domains, however the discussion of each principle lends itself to characterisation as a practice or action that can be taken to achieve the principle. Given this, we have broken the discussion down into constituent dimensions, as shown in Table 7 below.

Carpe Vitam Leadership Principles Domains	Carpe Vitam Leadership Principles Dimensions
A focus on learning as an activity	A focus on professional learning
	A focus on organisational learning
	Teaching with a focus on learning
A learning dialogue	Tools for disciplined dialogue
	Dialogue purpose and scope
	Scaffolding disciplined dialogue
An environment for learning	Everyone has opportunities to reflect on the nature, skills and processes of learning
	School culture nurtures the learning of everyone
	Physical and social spaces stimulate and celebrate learning
	Tools and strategies are used to enhance thinking about learning and the practice of teaching
Shared accountability	Embedding a systematic approach to self-evaluation at classroom, school and community levels;
	Developing a shared approach to internal accountability as a precondition of accountability to external agencies;
	Reframing policy and practice when they conflict with core values;
	Maintaining a continuing focus on sustainability, succession and leaving a legacy.
	Taking account of political realities and exercising informed choice as to how the school tells its own story;
	Maintaining a focus on evidence and its congruence with the core values of the school
Shared leadership	Collaborative patterns of work and activity across boundaries of subject, role and status are valued and promoted.
	The experience and expertise of staff, students and parents are drawn upon as resources
	Structures support participation in developing the school as a learning community
	Shared leadership is symbolised in the day-to-day flow of activities of the school
	Everyone is encouraged to take the lead as appropriate to task and context

Table 7: Domains and Dimensions of the Carpe Vitam Leadership Principles

Source: Adapted from Dempster and MacBeath (2009)

6.3   Leadership for Learning Framework

The Leadership for Learning Framework was developed to provide the theoretical underpinnings for an Australia-wide project aimed at improving literacy in primary schools (Dempster et al. 2017). The Framework evolved from the Carpe Vitam Principles and represents an extensive effort to contextualise these principles to the Australian educational environment. The Principals as Literary Leaders project was implemented across 60 primary schools spanning three states and one territory. Consequently, the Framework is informed by a robust evidence base in the Australian context.

The Framework draws on the existing literature regarding leadership in schools and then refines this perspective through application in the PALL project. Similar to other Frameworks reviewed in this report, the Leadership for Learning Framework emphasises that building and sustaining a shared moral purpose is foundational to all other leadership practices. The Framework identifies seven domains of practice:

1. Shared Moral Purpose – clearly defining and building a consensus on the moral purpose of the work
2. A Strong Evidence Base – collecting, analysing and applying data to enhance effectiveness
3. Conditions for Learning – enhancing the conditions for literacy learning – the physical, social and emotional environment
4. Curriculum and Teaching – Planning and coordinating the curriculum and teaching across the school
5. Parent and Community Support – Connecting with support from parents and the wider community
6. Shared Leadership – Sharing leadership for literacy and organising accordingly
7. Professional Development – Participating actively in literacy professional development

The following table provides an overview of the eight domains under which 36 practices are grouped.

Leadership for Learning Framework Domains	Leadership for Learning Framework Dimensions
Building a shared moral purpose	Set high expectations
	Build vision and set directions collaboratively
	See that goals are embedded in school and classroom routines
	Ensure consensus on goals
Developing and applying a strong evidence base	Ensure that both school and system data are gathered
	Pursue systematic data gathering across the school's responsibilities
	Plan for student learning based on data
	Monitor student learning based on data
	Share accountability tasks with teachers based on classroom, school and system data
Enhancing the conditions for learning	Manage resources strategically
	Align financial resources to priorities
	Provide a safe and pleasant physical environment
	Ensure social and emotional support for learners
	Celebrate teacher and student successes
	Apply resources to the conditions of learning
Planning and coordinating the curriculum and teaching	Actively oversee the school's curriculum program
	Coordinate and manage the teaching and learning program
	Observe teachers in action directly and provide specific feedback
	Maintain commitment to curriculum priorities
	Display a keen interest in students' classroom work and achievements

Leadership for Learning Framework Domains	Leadership for Learning Framework Dimensions
	Participate actively in curriculum decision-making
Connecting with support from parents and the wider community	Include parents as integral to the school's learning programs
	Be active in the local community and the professional communities
	Seek the input of professionals beyond the school
	Involve wider community support to improve learning
	Network with other schools and teachers on good practice
Sharing leadership and organising accordingly	Encourage team work amongst teachers
	Plan school organization structures to support improved learning
	Support collaborative work cultures
	Share leadership systematically with teachers
Leading and participating in Professional Development	Promote skills in data analysis and interpretation through PD amongst teachers
	Ensure that teachers engage in extended learning about school priority areas
	Seek the input of professionals beyond the school
	Support, evaluate and develop teacher quality
	Concentrate on the development of deep knowledge about key learning areas
	Play an active 'hands on' role in professional development.

Table 8: Domains and Dimensions of the Leadership for Learning Framework

Source: Adapted from Dempster et al. (2017)

The Framework is written in the context of leadership for enhanced literacy development in schools. However, for the purposes of this report it has been generalised to address leadership for learning improvement in the broader sense.

7   A Revised Unified Framework

The three additional frameworks summarised above were then analysed to determine their alignment with the three-source Unified Framework presented by Hitt and Tucker (2016). While the frameworks' domains and dimensions broadly aligned with the Hitt and Tucker's Unified Framework, two trends where they diverged were noted. Reflecting the ongoing movement towards distributed or networked leadership, the frameworks strongly emphasised the role of networked leadership and parental and community engagement. Although this did not necessitate the addition of a new domain or dimension, the shift in emphasis was appreciable throughout discussion in the relevant publications.

The frameworks also paid close attention to the role of data, tools and resources to support instruction and engagement. Perhaps reflecting the increasing role of technology in education, the authors of the School Leadership and Student Outcomes framework devoted serious consideration to the question of what tools benefit schools and how this issue should be approached to support student achievement. Similarly, the Carpe Vitam Principles and the Leaderhsip for Learning Framework noted the importance of effective data and tools to support ongoing organisational development and continual improvement efforts. As these practices do not fall comfortably within the Hitt and Tucker Unified Framework, we have added the additional dimension of ***Identifying and integrating tools and data to support learning*** within the domain of ***Creating supportive organisations for learning***.

The Leadership for Learning Framework paid detailed attention to the questions of data integration and professional development. The role of professional development for data analysis, interpretation and application

was flagged, with further discussion about the importance of aligning professional development to the organisation's mission and goals. As this is not explicitly captured under existing domains or practices and represents an important step forward in the integration of organisational management, staff development and instructional achievement, it has been added as an additional dimension. The dimension, termed ***Strategically align professional development with shared mission*** is located within the domain ***Building professional capacity.***

7.1   Expanding the Unified Framework

Table 9 overleaf presents the alignment of the School Leadership Student Outcomes, Carpe Vitam Principles and Leadership for Learning Frameworks with the Hitt and Tucker Unified Framework. The frameworks map well to the overarching one, noting the addition of two new dimensions relating to tools and data.

In Table 10, we provide a summary of the domains and dimensions of the six leadership frameworks, including the School Leadership Student Outcomes, Carpe Vitam Principles and Leadership for Learning frameworks. Appendix 2 provides the revised unified model and includes descriptions of each dimension from the contributing frameworks against the overarching unified dimension.

Unified Framework Domains and Dimensions	School Leadership Student Outcomes Framework	Carpe Vitam Leadership Principles	Leadership for Learning Framework
Establishing and conveying the vision			
Creating, articulating and stewarding shared mission and vision	Leadership establishes the importance of the selected goals	School culture nurtures the learning of everyone	Build vision and set directions collaboratively Ensure consensus on goals
Implementing vision and setting goals and performance expectations	Leadership ensures that goals are clear		See that goals are embedded in school and classroom routines
Modelling aspirational and ethical practices		Scaffolding disciplined dialogue	
Communicating broadly the state of the vision			
Promoting use of data for continual improvement		Maintaining a focus on evidence and its congruence with the core values of the school	Ensure that both school and system data are gathered Pursue systematic data gathering across the school's responsibilities
Tending to external accountability		Taking account of political realities and exercising informed choice as to how the school tells its own story;	
Facilitating a high quality learning experience for students			
Maintaining safety and orderliness		Physical and social spaces stimulate and celebrate learning	Provide a safe and pleasant physical environment
Personalising the environment to reflect students' backgrounds	Leadership establishes continuities between student identities and school practices		Ensure social and emotional support for learners
Developing and monitoring curricular program	Leadership develops continuities and coherence across teaching programmes		Actively oversee the school's curriculum program Participate actively in curriculum decision-making Maintain commitment to curriculum priorities
Developing and monitoring instructional program			Coordinate and manage the teaching and learning program
Developing and monitoring assessment program			
Building professional capacity			
Selecting for the right fit			
Providing individualised consideration	Leadership engages teachers' theories of action		Support, evaluate and develop teacher quality Observe teachers in action directly and provide specific feedback
Building trusting relationships			
Providing opportunities to learn for whole faculty including leaders		A focus on professional learning	Play an active 'hands on' role in professional development.
Supporting, buffering and recognising staff			
Engendering responsibility for promoting learning	Leadership promotes collective responsibility and accountability for student achievement and well-being	Embedding a systematic approach to self-evaluation at classroom, school and community levels; Developing a shared approach to internal accountability as a precondition of accountability to external agencies;	
Creating communities of practice	Leadership focuses on the relationship between teaching and learning	Everyone has opportunities to reflect on the nature, skills and processes of learning Collaborative patterns of work and activity across	Encourage team work amongst teachers Support collaborative work cultures

43

Unified Framework Domains and Dimensions	School Leadership Student Outcomes Framework	Carpe Vitam Leadership Principles	Leadership for Learning Framework
		boundaries of subject, role and status are valued and promoted.	
Strategically align professional development with shared mission			Concentrate on the development of deep knowledge about key learning areas Ensure that teachers engage in extended learning about school priority areas
Creating supportive organisations for learning			
Acquiring and allocating resources strategically for mission and vision	Leadership uses clear criteria (for obtaining resources) that are aligned to pedagogical and philosophical purposes Leadership ensures sustained funding for pedagogical priorities		Manage resources strategically Align financial resources to priorities Apply resources to the conditions of learning
Considering context to maximise organizational functioning		Reframing policy and practice when they conflict with core values;	Plan school organization structures to support improved learning
Building collaborative processes for decision making	Leadership develops the capacity to set appropriate goals	Everyone is encouraged to take the lead as appropriate to task and context	
Sharing and distributing leadership		Structures support participation in developing the school as a learning community Shared leadership is symbolised in the day-to-day flow of activities of the school	Share leadership systematically with teachers
Tending to and building on diversity			
Maintaining ambitious and high expectations and standards		Maintaining a continuing focus on sustainability, succession and leaving a legacy.	Set high expectations
Strengthening and optimising school culture	Leadership promotes collective responsibility and accountability for student achievement and well-being	A focus on organisational learning	Celebrate teacher and student successes Display a keen interest in students' classroom work and achievements
Identifying and integrating tools and data to support instruction and learning	Leadership selects tools that are well designed Leadership selects tools that incorporate sound theories	Tools and strategies are used to enhance thinking about learning and the practice of teaching;	Plan for student learning based on data Monitor student learning based on data Shared accountability tasks with teachers based on classroom, school and system data Promote skills in data analysis and interpretation through PD amongst teachers
Connecting with external partners			
Building productive relationships with families and external partners in the community	Leadership establishes continuities between student identities and school practices		Network with other schools and teachers on good practice
Engaging families and community in collaborative processes to strengthen student learning	Leadership establishes continuities between student identities and school practices	The experience and expertise of staff, students and parents are drawn upon as resources	Involve wider community support to improve learning Include parents as integral to the school's learning programs Seek the input of professionals beyond the school
Anchoring schools in the community			Be active in the local community and the professional communities

Table 9: Aligning the School Leadership Student Outcomes, Carpe Vitam Principles and Leadership for Learning Frameworks to the Unified Frameworks

Domains and Dimensions	Essential Supports Framework	Learning-Centred Framework	Ontario Leadership Framework	School Leadership Student Outcomes	Carpe Vitam Principles	Leadership for Learning
Establishing and conveying the vision						
Creating, articulating and stewarding shared mission and vision		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Implementing vision and setting goals and performance expectations		Y	Y	Y		Y
Modelling aspirational and ethical practices		Y	Y		Y	
Communicating broadly the state of the vision	Y		Y			
Promoting use of data for continual improvement		Y		Y	Y	Y
Tending to external accountability	Y	Y	Y		Y	
Facilitating a high-quality learning experience for students						
Maintaining safety and orderliness	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y
Personalising the environment to reflect students' backgrounds	Y	Y		Y		Y
Developing and monitoring curricular program	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y
Developing and monitoring instructional program	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y
Developing and monitoring assessment program	Y	Y				
Building professional capacity						
Selecting for the right fit	Y	Y	Y			
Providing individualised consideration		Y	Y	Y		Y
Building trusting relationships	Y		Y			
Providing opportunities to learn for whole faculty including leaders	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y
Supporting, buffering and recognising staff		Y	Y			
Engendering responsibility for promoting learning	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Creating communities of practice	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Strategically align professional development with shared mission	-	-	-			Y
Creating supportive organisations for learning						
Acquiring and allocating resources strategically for mission and vision	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y
Considering context to maximise organizational functioning	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y
Building collaborative processes for decision making	Y		Y	Y	Y	
Sharing and distributing leadership	Y		Y		Y	Y
Tending to and building on diversity	Y	Y	Y			Y
Maintaining ambitious and high expectations and standards	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y
Strengthening and optimising school culture			Y	Y	Y	Y
Identifying and integrating tools and data to support learning	-	-	-	Y	Y	Y
Connecting with external partners						
Building productive relationships with families and external partners in the community		Y	Y	Y		Y
Engaging families and community in collaborative processes to strengthen student learning	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Anchoring schools in the community	Y	Y	Y			Y

Table 10: The Revised and Expanded Unified Leadership Framework

7.2   Analysis of Framework Congruence

Having compiled an updated Unified Framework, the congruence of domains and dimensions across each framework was then considered. While these measures do not have statistical significance per se, they provide insight into the level of agreement across frameworks regarding which dimensions of leadership are frequently identified in practice and theory. The following figure shows the relative emphasis each leadership framework places on a specific domain. The Leadership for Learning and School Leadership Student Outcomes frameworks are highlighted in black and red for ease of reference.
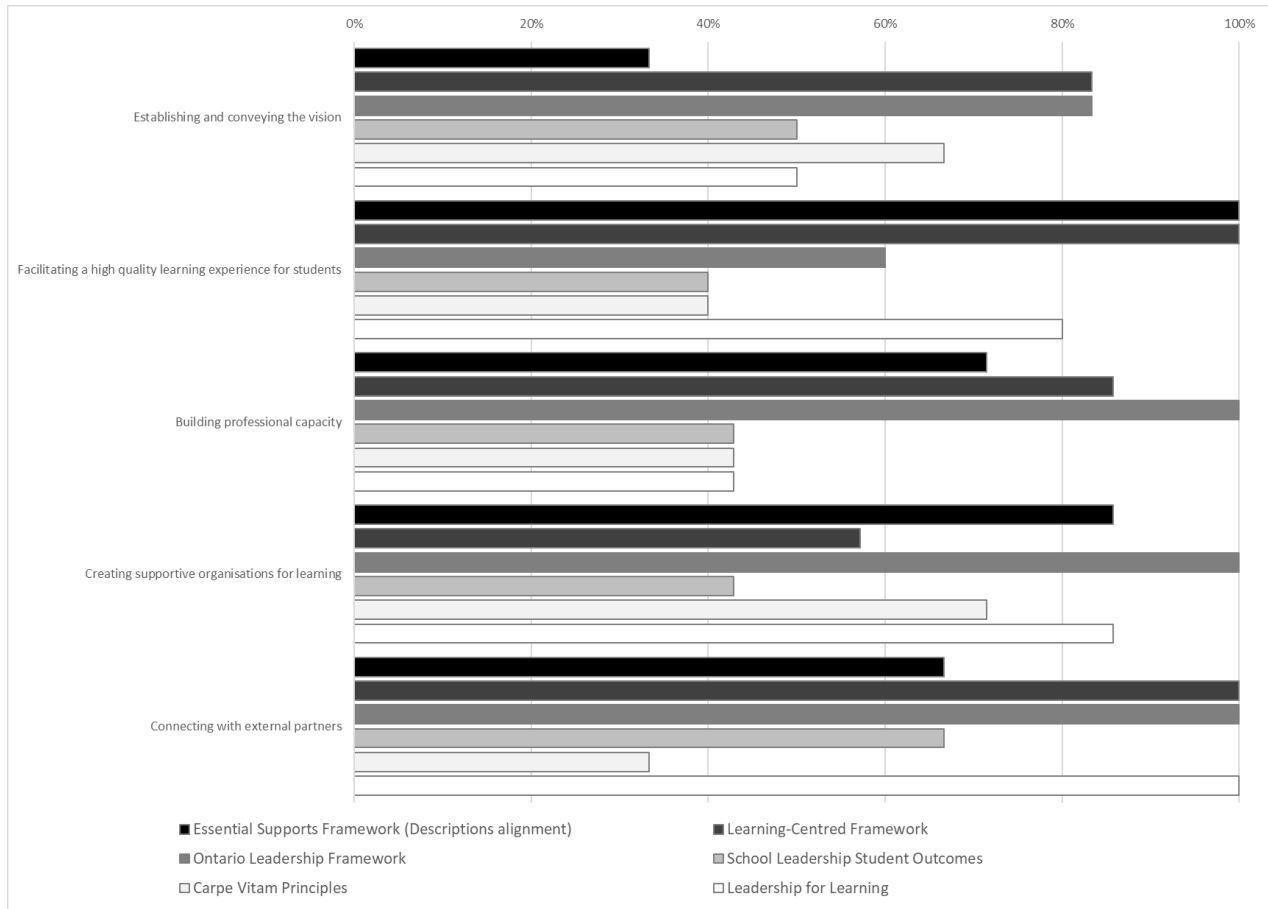
Figure 4: Domain Emphasis by Leadership Framework

Figure 5, overleaf, explores the idea of congruence in more detail by examining the percentage agreement between frameworks for each dimension within the high-level domains.

Four distinct bands can be seen. It is notable that all frameworks identify the attributes of creating communities of learning and engaging families and community in collaborative processes to strengthen student learning. This emphasis may well reflect the shift towards leadership for learning identified earlier in this paper, with all staff and the broader school community involved in creating a learning environment. Furthermore, the emphasis on engagement and collaboration with parents and the community may reflect the shift away from Epstein's model of parental involvement to a broader conception of engagement, the role of parents and the role of the school within the community.

Figure 5: Dimension Congruence Between Leadership Frameworks

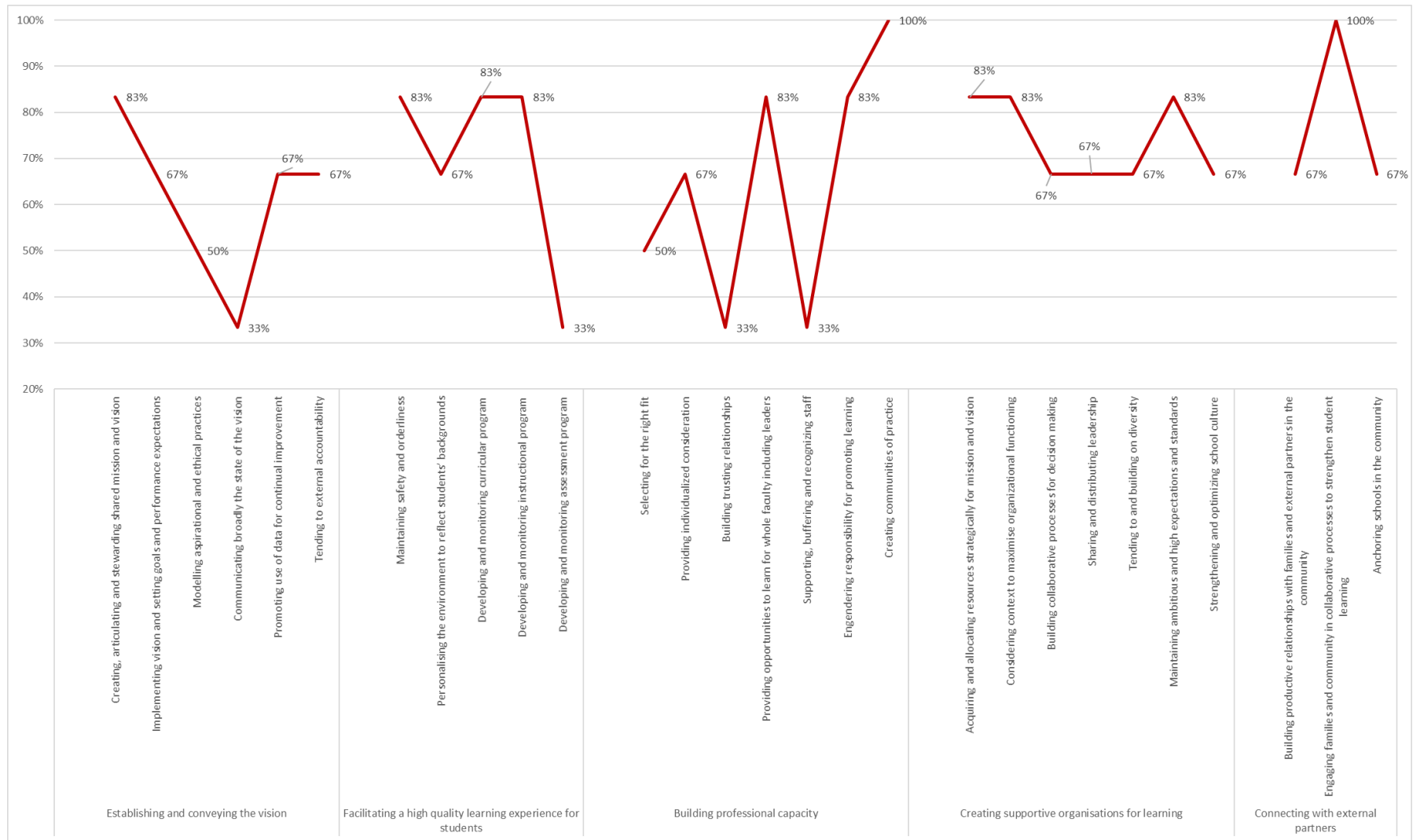The following tables group the dimensions by level of congruence. For accuracy of analysis we have omitted the new dimensions added to the Unified Framework in Tables 9 and 10.

Domain	Dimensions	% Congruence
Building professional capacity	Creating communities of practice	100%
Connecting with external partners	Engaging families and community in collaborative processes to strengthen student learning	100%
Building professional capacity	Engendering responsibility for promoting learning	83%
	Providing opportunities to learn for whole faculty including leaders	83%
Creating supportive organisations for learning	Acquiring and allocating resources strategically for mission and vision	83%
	Considering context to maximise organizational functioning	83%
	Maintaining ambitious and high expectations and standards	83%
Establishing and conveying the vision	Creating, articulating and stewarding shared mission and vision	83%
Facilitating a high quality learning experience for students	Developing and monitoring curricular program	83%
	Developing and monitoring instructional program	83%
	Maintaining safety and orderliness	83%

Table 11: Tier 1 Congruence - 80%+

Domain	Dimensions	% Congruence
Building professional capacity	Providing individualised consideration	67%
Connecting with external partners	Anchoring schools in the community	67%
	Building productive relationships with families and external partners in the community	67%
Creating supportive organisations for learning	Building collaborative processes for decision making	67%
	Sharing and distributing leadership	67%
	Strengthening and optimising school culture	67%
	Tending to and building on diversity	67%
Establishing and conveying the vision	Implementing vision and setting goals and performance expectations	67%
	Promoting use of data for continual improvement	67%
	Tending to external accountability	67%
Facilitating a high quality learning experience for students	Personalising the environment to reflect students' backgrounds	67%
Building professional capacity	Selecting for the right fit	50%
Establishing and conveying the vision	Modelling aspirational and ethical practices	50%

Table 12: Tier 2 Congruence – 50% - 80%

Domain	Dimensions	% Congruence
Building professional capacity	Building trusting relationships	33%
	Supporting, buffering and recognising staff	33%
Establishing and conveying the vision	Communicating broadly the state of the vision	33%
Facilitating a high quality learning experience for students	Developing and monitoring assessment program	33%

Table 13: Tier 3 Congruence – Less than 50%

Tier 1 dimensions are those that are identified in four or more of the frameworks reviewed for this report. These are the domains and dimensions most commonly identified to have a critical influence on effective leadership.

7.3   Summary

In our review of leadership frameworks for improved student learning and achievement, we have identified a number of important themes. Firstly, the movement towards networked leadership continues and is reflected in the language and emphasis of the frameworks we considered in our analysis. This can be seen in the 100% congruence of frameworks on the leadership dimensions of **Creating communities of practice** and **Engaging families and community in collaborative processes to strengthen student learning**.

Secondly, the increased role of technology in education is receiving greater consideration and, accordingly, should be incorporated into the dimensions of a revised Unified Framework. We place this dimension under the domain of **Creating supportive organisations for learning**, terming it **Identifying and integrating tools and data to support learning**. As Robinson et al. (2009, p. 133) observe in the *School Leadership and Student Outcomes* report, 'Tools are not just forms, policies, or software: each incorporates a theory about how the purpose in hand can best be accomplished. A tool is only as good as the theory it incorporates.'

Finally, by analysing the level of congruence across frameworks we have identified the various tiers of emphasis on the dimensions of leadership practice. This approach enables the isolation of practices which are most commonly identified as contributing to improvements in learning and may provide a useful guide to future policy development.

Leadership for learning is a complex and evolving field. By focussing on key leadership practices and recognising the need to pay increasing attention to them, future school leaders will be well placed to develop sustainable and supportive cultures for student achievement.

PART IV. IMPLICATIONS FOR THE AITSL PROFESSIONAL STANDARD FOR PRINCIPALS

8   The Australian Professional Standard for Principals

In 2011 AITSL released the Australian Professional Standard for Principals, and in 2014 issued an updated version that included a series of Leadership Profiles developed in consultation with the sector. The standard embeds learning as a central practice and goal – both personally, as individuals, and professionally as school leaders. As the Standard (2014, p. 3) states, 'The most effective leaders see learning as central to their professional lives.'

The Standard is based on research into leadership, effectiveness and best practice in school education. It builds on overarching policy frameworks in the Australian education sector such as, for example, referencing the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians. The Standard emphasises and embeds the principles of inclusivity, respect and tolerance as fundamental to the role and work of being a school principal.

The purpose of the Standard is to outline the knowledge, understanding and practice of successful principals. Success in this context, while not defined, is considered across student learning, school culture, teacher quality, sustainable schools. It outlines the critical role of principals – as responsible for harnessing and leveraging the power of education. This statement of responsibility is clear and challenging. Principles are responsible for the development of children and preparing them for their future.

The leadership profiles showcase how the Standard can be applied and the progression of practice as professional competency increases. They are intended as tools to promote reflection and inquiry, guiding personal growth. Throughout the standard, as each leadership practice is introduced a leadership profile is provided which charts evolving practice as proficiency develops. To support principles to successfully deliver on this responsibility, the Standard outlines three Leadership Requirements and five areas of Professional Practice.

The discussion of these elements is structured through the perspective of three lenses, shown in Figure 6 overleaf.
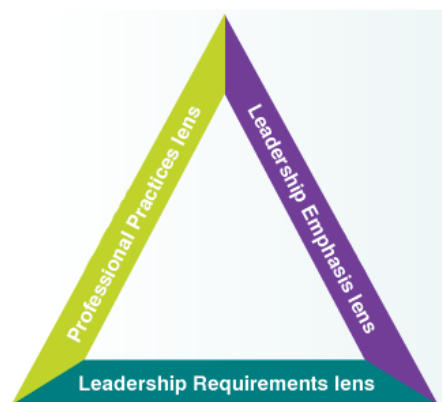
Figure 6: Three Leadership Lenses

Source: AITSL (2014, p. 12)

This shifting perspective allows the Standard to address the multi-faceted nature of the role of the principal as simultaneously being a leader, educator, manager, facilitator and coach. The following tables provide a synopsis of the leadership requirements and professional practices.

| Requirement	Description
Vision and values	• lead the development of the vision of the school • committed to the learning and growth of young people and adults • understand, lead, mediate and serve the community • model 'learning for life' • inspire and motivate • behave with integrity underpinned by moral purpose.
Knowledge and understanding	• understand the practice and theory of contemporary leadership • are well versed in the latest research and relevant national policies • apply knowledge and understanding of developments in education policy, schooling and social trends • apply knowledge and understanding of leadership
Personal qualities, social and interpersonal skills	• regularly review their practice and adapt to suit the situation • define challenges clearly and seek positive solutions, often in collaboration with others • can communicate, negotiate, collaborate and advocate effectively and relate well to all in the school's community • take account of the social, political and local circumstances within which they work

Table 14: Leadership Requirements for Principals

Source: Adapted from AITSL (2014)

Practice	Description
Leading teaching and learning	• create a positive culture of challenge and support • develop a culture of effective teaching • set high expectations for the whole school
Developing self and others	• work with and through others to build a professional learning community • support all staff to achieve high standards and develop their leadership capacity • support others to build capacity and treat people fairly and with respect • model effective leadership and are committed to their own ongoing professional development
Leading improvement, innovation and change	• collaboratively produce and implement clear, evidence-based improvement plans and policies • lead and manage innovation and change
Leading the management of the school	• use a range of data management methods and technologies to ensure that the school's resources and staff are efficiently organised and managed • delegate appropriate tasks to members of the staff • collaborate with school boards, governing bodies, parents and others to build effective management practices • use a range of technologies effectively and efficiently to manage the school
Engaging and working with the community.	• embrace inclusion • develop and maintain positive partnerships with students, families and carers and school community • create an ethos of respect taking account of the spiritual, moral, social and physical health and wellbeing of students • promote sound lifelong learning from preschool through to adult life • recognise the multicultural nature of Australia's people

Practice	Description
	• foster understanding and reconciliation with Indigenous cultures

Table 15: Professional Practices of Principals

Source: Adapted from AITSL (2014)

They are conceived of in a matrix fashion, with each practice interacting with each requirement:
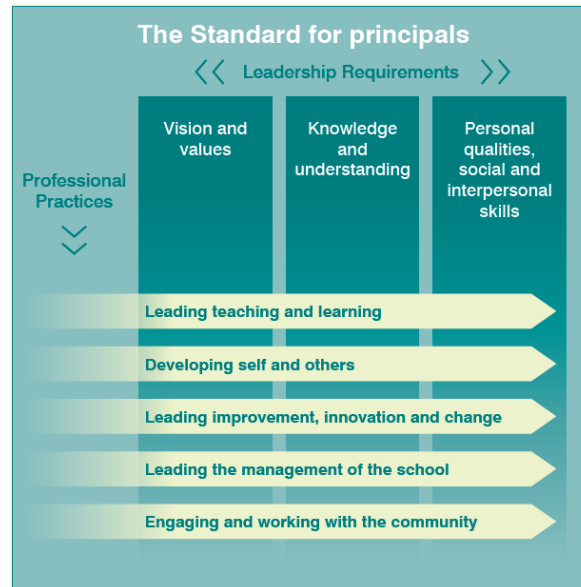
Figure 7: The Standard for Principals as a matrix

Source: AITSL (2014, p. 11)

These are seen as applying to all principals, regardless of their experience. However, the standard recognises that individual principals will focus on different areas of practice based on their experience and level of personal and professional development. This differentiation is supported by the inclusion of a behavior change model that is presented equally for principal's self-application and for application to the development of staff and students in their schools.

The standard is intended to support individual learning, professional growth, selection and recruitment processes, performance review and talent development. Ultimately, the Standard recognises that each school is unique, and the application of these practices happens in context. The craft of being a principal lies in applying the principles and practices of the leadership standard in the unique context of their school.

8.1   Implications for the standard from the review

The summary of the Australian Professional Standard for Principals shows its coverage of many of the domains and dimensions documented in the Revised Unified Leadership Framework (see Part 3). Given this backdrop, and AITSL's desire to bring issues associated with leadership for learning well into the foreground in future leadership practice, we ask the following question:

> Should the Professional Leadership Standard for Principals be recast to show the centrality of the Unified Framework of Leadership for Learning domains and dimensions resulting from this review?

In responding to this question, we offer two options for AITSL to consider. Both recognise that much of the initial work which AITSL used to produce the present Australian Standard reflects authoritative findings from a decade of published research. This suggests to us that a drastic overhaul is not necessary, primarily because what has

resulted from leadership studies undertaken in the decade from 2011 to the present confirms most of the findings from that earlier work, extending and refining but a limited number of aspects, as the Revised Unified Leadership Framework produced as an outcome in Part 3, shows. Hence the first option we suggest argues for minor adjustments only to the existing standard. The Second Option offers a slightly more adventurous approach to bring leadership for learning more visibly into the daily 'line of sight' of school principals.

8.1.1 Option 1. A modification of the Requirements and Practices of the Standard

We suggest that this first option could be accomplished without downplaying the previous expressions included in the requirements and practices of the present standard. Rather, we suggest an incremental adjustment of the standard. We illustrate this by proposing that the requirements and practices be retained largely in their present form but with some modifications justified by the outcomes of this review.

Modified Requirements and Practices

The modifications we present for discussion by AITSL are shaded in Table 16 and Table 17.

Requirement	Description
Vision and values	• behave with integrity underpinned by the moral purpose to improve the lives of students through learning • Lead the shared development of the vision of the school • Commit to the learning and growth of young people and adults • understand, mediate and serve the community through leadership networks • model 'learning for life' • inspire and motivate
Knowledge and understanding	• understand the practice and theory of contemporary leadership • apply knowledge and understanding of leadership for learning research and practice • be well versed in the requirements of relevant national and system policies • apply knowledge and understanding of developments in education policy, schooling and social trends
Personal qualities, social and interpersonal skills	• communicate, negotiate, collaborate and advocate effectively and relate well to all in the school's community. • take account of social, political and local circumstances in mediating leadership decisions • define challenges clearly and seek positive solutions, in collaboration with others • review leadership practices cooperatively and adapt them to suit the school's context

Table 16: Modified Leadership Requirements

Source: Adapted from AITSL (2014)

Practice	Description
Leading teaching and learning	• create a positive culture of challenge and support • develop a culture of effective teaching • set high expectations for the whole school
Engaging and working with the community	• embrace inclusion • develop and maintain positive partnerships in leadership activities with students, families, carers and the wider school community • create an ethos of respect taking account of the spiritual, moral, social and physical health and wellbeing of students and their families • promote sound lifelong learning from preschool through to adult life • recognise and respond inclusively to the multicultural nature of Australia's people • foster understanding and reconciliation with people from Indigenous cultures
Developing self and others	• work with and through others to build a professional learning community • support all staff to achieve high standards and develop their leadership capacity. • support others in the school community to enhance leadership capacity in the interests of student learning • treat people fairly and with respect. • model effective leadership practices and a commitment to personal ongoing professional learning and development
Leading improvement, innovation and change	• collaboratively produce and implement clear, evidence-based improvement plans and policies • lead and manage innovation and change in partnership with others
Leading the management of the school	• use a range of data management methods and technologies to ensure that the school's resources and staff are efficiently engaged • share the leadership of appropriate tasks with members of the staff • collaborate with school boards, governing bodies, parents and others to build effective networked leadership and management practices

Table 17: Modified Professional Practices

Source: Adapted from AITSL (2014)

It can be seen in the minor adjustments suggested, that several of the recurring findings from this review have been merged into the modified version of the Requirements and Practices of the Leadership Standard for Principals. Clearly evident is making the moral purpose of education explicit, a commitment to broadening the work of leaders to encompass leadership as a set of activities or practices which are put into best effect in co-operatives or collectives established through dedication to shared leadership and a call for knowledge of research-informed practice about the central task of school leaders, that is, leadership for learning and improved student achievement.

What we have suggested here is by no means definitive, leaving the way open for AITSL to seek adjustments to the standard by sharing the leadership of discussions to this end with their key constituents – principals and those aspiring to be so.

8.1.2   Option 2. Bringing Leadership for Learning onto Centre-stage
For Option 2, we suggest two versions: Option 2(a) and Option 2(b).

Option 2(a)

In Option 2(a), we suggest retaining the Requirements of the Australian Professional Standard for Principals with revisions influenced by placing Leadership for Learning as the centrepiece of a revised Table of Practices or Dimensions. This option, shown as Figure 8, faithfully retains the domains of the Revised Unified Leadership Framework produced as a result of the review. It illustrates three domains supporting two at the heart of Leadership for Learning – 'Creating the vision for learning' and facilitating 'high quality learning experiences for students'.

There is one addition to the framework domains taken from the Practices described in the Australian Professional Standard for Principals, namely, 'Leading improvement, innovation and change'. This has been included in the black circle of Figure 8 to indicate that both innovation and change have their most important contribution to make to leadership for learning when focused on student learning experiences and their achievements.

Figure 8: Option 2(a) – Illustrating the domains of the Revised Unified Leadership Framework

Option 2(b)

In Option 2(b), we repeat the suggestion of retaining the Requirements of the Australian Professional Standard for Principals with revisions influenced by placing Leadership for Learning as the centre-piece of a revised Table of Practices or Dimensions. The table would be composed of the domains and dimensions of the Revised Unified Leadership Framework produced as an outcome of this report, incorporating 'Leading improvement, innovation and change' and 'Leading the management of the school'. The use of tools and data to support learning and the strategic alignment of resources are notable additions in a visual representation of this option presented as Figure 9.

'Creating the vision for learning' lies at the centre of Figure 9. It is surrounded in the first instance, by a commitment to 'creating high quality learning experiences for students'. As this part of the figure implies, improvement in learning is likely to require the leadership of innovation and change (explicitly described in the present Standard's Practices). The next circle in the figure highlights the use of 'tools to gather data and evidence about learning and achievement' so that dialogue about improvement is soundly based. The four remaining domains pictured in the outer circle, bring sets of supporting practices under the spotlight. 'Building professional capacity' includes the significance of engagement in internal communities of practice intent on pedagogical improvement; 'creating a supportive organisation for learning' requires structures

Figure 9: Option 2(b) - Making domains of Leadership for Learning visible

and practices through which goals are agreed and leadership for learning is authentically distributed and shared; 'aligning resources strategically' raises the question of how best to match people, equipment, materials and funds to professional development plans as well as student needs, interests and abilities; and 'Connecting with external partners' opens up the possibilities of shared leadership for learning with parents, family members and community agencies with expertise to bring to the school's learning improvement priorities.

PART V. PRINCIPALS' PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

9   Trends Influencing School Leadership Learning and Development

This section draws together major trends in the literature related to principals' professional leadership learning. It identifies the types of professional learning and supportive practices and programs shown in the literature to build leadership for learning characteristics among existing and potential school principals and concludes with a series of questions carrying implications for consideration by AITSL.

In a comprehensive review of international research and scholarly literature on leadership development content and strategies undertaken in 2011 for the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL), four significant trends as well as a set of ten criteria essential in the design of effective leadership learning programs were identified (Dempster, Lovett & Fluckiger 2011). Since then, further studies have added to and confirmed these trends and the criteria, as well as emphasising important aspects of the responsibilities faced by system authorities and individuals themselves (AITSL 2015; Gurr & Drysdale 2015; Sugrue 2015).

We summarise six trends influencing school leadership learning and development here before briefly describing the ten design criteria for leadership learning programs.

First, there is a sustained trend in the literature to acknowledge the significance of contextual influences on effective leadership (Hallinger 2003, 2012; MacBeath et al. 2018; Normore & Jean-Marie 2010). It is recognised that learning and the ability to improve learning occurs within contexts of influence, within schools and outside them. Leaders need to know and understand what motivates and shapes student and teacher learning including the multiple influences on the student's school learning experience and utilise all support structures to achieve outcomes including family, community and external partners. The influence of cultural contexts is also picked up by Rhodes and Brundrett (2009) who are sceptical of a leadership focus that excludes recognition of non-school factors. Therefore, those responsible for the professional development of school leaders should reinforce the importance of local socio-cultural understanding at the same time as attention is given to understanding the politics of education, its policy drivers, its system imperatives and its organisational constraints (see Appendix 3, Case Study 5 as an example).

Second, evident also, is the trend for education planners to take more deliberate action than they have in the past, on succession planning and leadership sustainability. This obligation is often undertaken in formal professional development programs provided by system authorities for emerging, newly appointed or experienced leaders. The obvious intention of these efforts is to expand leadership pools, to increase appointment options, and to retain and sustain quality leaders across their careers (Darling-Hammond et al. 2007; Fink 2011; MacBeath 2006). It must be noted however, that there is great variability in this formal provision (Gurr & Drysdale 2015) leading to the view that individuals themselves need to accept a considerable degree of personal responsibility for their ongoing leadership learning.

A **third** observable trend relates to the attention given to the socialisation of leaders of learning and learners of leadership (Boyce & Bowers 2018; Normore & Jean-Marie 2010; Sanzo, Sherman & Clayton 2011). According to Normore and Jean-Marie, socialization refers to the processes by which an individual selectively acquires the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to perform their leadership role effectively. The influence of the principal in establishing and sustaining a positive environment with high expectations for quality teaching and student achievement cannot be under-estimated. In their study of successful middle school leaders, Sanzo et al. (2011) found that principals invested a lot of time, hard work and one-to-one conversations with teachers on their

own terms to build personal capital with staff and students. Acting openly and honestly and being up front about decisions as well as expectations for student performance and teacher quality promoted teacher buy-in and innovation. According to a study by Boyce and Bowers (2018), the nature and quality of interpersonal relationships are important to how teachers feel about their job. Similarly, a study by Orphanos and Orr (2014) found that the more positive the perceptions of their principals' leadership practices, the greater the teachers' job satisfaction and perceived collaboration. These authors conclude that Investment in leadership preparation influences leadership practices that yield more positive teacher work conditions, which are essential for improved student learning.

A **fourth** trend concerns the content of leadership learning. Influential here, are frameworks, sets of standards or lists of competencies. There is no doubt that content frameworks can be useful in organising professional learning (Clarke & Wildy 2011). Individuals can make choices to assist them to achieve a particular standard, or system authorities can require school leaders to undertake formal learning to show evidence that standards have been met. However, the demands of official content frameworks can create an imbalance between system prescription and individual needs. As Gurr and Drysdale (2015) have found:

> *'The dilemma for school leaders is that there is a plethora of frameworks to guide leadership development but little guidance in their use … and individuals need to balance the mandatory (system requirements) with the voluntary (individual responsibility for professional development'. (p. 388)*

Given the significance of 'context' in leadership activity, we suggest that local need rather than an official framework is more likely to motivate individuals to tackle urgent matters in their personal professional learning.

The **fifth** trend picks up the issue of 'balance' by acknowledging the necessity of melding formal leadership learning (e.g., organised program) and informal (e.g., on-the-job experience) across careers, with some options mandated, others voluntarily chosen. That said, while the school should be the prime site for professional learning, it should not be without recourse to compelling research and theory about practice. As Huber (2011) argues, turning theory into knowledge and knowledge into action at school level, is an essential test of the effectiveness of situational leadership learning. Doing so, requires a much more expansive view of leadership as shared activity (Simpson 2016; MacBeath et al. 2018) where people working together, subject knowledge to collective review and evaluation (see Appendix 3, Case Studies 1-5 for examples of context related leadership learning on-the-job).

There is a **sixth** quiescent trend 'lurking in the shadows' of the internet, yet to be widely reported in international research literature. It concerns the use of social media platforms as mechanisms for leadership learning. For example, the work of Jefferis and Bisschoff (2017) on digitally engaged school leaders' use of Twitter raises more questions about the substance of leadership learning through this medium than it provides answers. What is emphasised is the power of social internet platforms to facilitate networking, to subject ideas to immediate criticism and challenges by connected collaborators, no matter their location or circumstances. While there is great benefit possible in the kind of 'short burst' interactions available through Twitter, there is a downside which Jefferis and Bisschoff have noted – the potential for 'Tweeters' to cluster into narrow interest groups which may reinforce prejudice, restrict critique and muffle open debate. These latter limitations suggest that much more work is needed on the e-learning content, processes and outcomes possible in this spontaneously connectable digital age before social media usage can be 'claimed' as an authoritative and beneficial trend in leadership learning.

Having outlined highly visible and well-rehearsed trends in international school leadership learning literature, we now show how these trends are represented in a set of research-informed criteria for the design of leadership learning programs. These were published at the conclusion of the AITSL review (Dempster et al. 2011) and explained more fully in Flückiger et al. (2014).

9.1 Ten criteria essential for leadership learning program design

The 10 criteria have been synthesised from the literature and are presented and explained here. Taken together, the criteria provide a succinct way of making judgments about the quality of school leadership learning programs, especially those designed and delivered by educations systems and other related agencies.

In short, school leadership learning programs should be:

Criteria for Leadership Learning Program Design
1. ***Philosophically and theoretically attuned*** to individual needs and system requirements.
2. ***Goal oriented***, with primacy given to the dual aims of improvement in student learning and achievement, and school improvement.
3. ***Research Informed*** by the weight of credible research evidence.
4. ***Time rich***, allowing for learning sequences to be spaced and interspersed with collegial support, in school applications and reflective encounters.
5. ***Practice centred***, so that knowledge is taken back into the school in ways that maximise the effects on leadership capability.
6. ***Purpose designed*** for specific career stages, with ready transfer of theory and knowledge into practice.
7. ***Peer supported*** within or beyond the school, so that feedback helps to transfer theory and knowledge into improved practice.
8. ***Context sensitive*** and thus able to build in and make relevant use of school leaders' knowledge of their circumstances.
9. ***Partnership powered*** with external support through joint ventures involving associations, universities and the wider professional world.
10. ***Effects focused***, committed to evaluating the effects on leaders, as well as on school practices to which their learning applies.

Table 18: Criteria for Leadership Learning Program Design

Brief explanations of each of the 10 criteria, linking them to recent relevant research findings, follow.

Criterion 1: Philosophically and theoretically-attuned to individual needs and system requirements

Researchers such as Hopkins (2008) and Gurr and Drysdale (2015) suggest that leadership learning should be attuned to meet organisational and individual needs. They acknowledge that philosophically, there will always be tension between organisation and individual, with priority lying in the exercise of organisational power at the expense of individual agency. However, theoretically, when leadership is viewed as agentic action involving position holders working with others to achieve desirable ends, it becomes clear that tensions should be managed so that collective agency may thrive at the school level. This is not to deny the legitimate claim that education systems have, to insist on leadership learning that is directed towards system goals and aspirations. How these often-competing interests are reconciled rests partly on the shoulders of individuals themselves when they willingly and enthusiastically take control of their personal leadership learning agendas.

Criterion 2: Goal-oriented, with primacy given to the dual aims of improvement in student learning and achievement and school improvement

There is no doubt that the weight of research evidence tells us (Bishop 2011; Day et al. 2010; Hallinger 2011; Robinson et al. 2009) that leadership learning programmes need to be goal-oriented. In other words, leadership learning must be about more than process. It must concentrate on particular matters affecting students and their learning in the first instance, and what it takes to do better. It is improvements in student learning and achievement which are the intertwined objectives central to school leadership activity. And it is well known that when these objectives underpin activity, school improvement is a likely consequence (Leithwood et al. 2010). Defining the leadership dimensions which make a difference to student learning has been one of the outcomes of

New Zealand's Best Evidence Synthesis on school leadership (Robinson et al. 2009). These researchers have shown that leaders need a repertoire of goal-oriented strategies to enable them to work collaboratively with teachers to: establish expectations; identify and apply resources strategically; plan, coordinate and evaluate teaching and the curriculum; promote and participate in teacher learning and development; ensure an orderly and supportive environment; create educationally powerful connections; engage in constructive problem talk; and select, develop and use smart tools to inform professional decision-making. This New Zealand work has been confirmed in other jurisdictions by researchers such as Leithwood et al. (2006), Day et al. (2010) and MacBeath et al. (2018).

Criterion 3: Research-Informed by the weight of credible research evidence.

One of the defining features of a profession is its reliance on research-informed practice. There is no doubt that teaching has depended upon experiential and folkloric knowledge in the past but in modern times, commonplace practice has been subject to robust research which now provides a substantial body of knowledge which the profession should apply with confidence. This is no less so in the pursuit of high-quality professional learning (Darling-Hammond et al. 2007; Waters et al. 2003). The real test of effectiveness is the extent to which research and theory are able to be translated into knowledge and action (Huber 2011) by participants undertaking school leadership programs. As Flückiger et al. (2014) say:

> *'The thinking is that school leaders are less likely to disregard knowledge and theory that are research-informed and are more likely to apply these in practice, thus transferring knowledge into action (Huber, 2011). Currently, research evidence suggests that the role of pedagogical leadership, along with the associated relational aspects attributed to distributed and transformative leadership, is central to improving student outcomes (Robinson et al., 2009; Hallinger, 2011; MacBeath et al., 2018) and should therefore be central to professional learning programs for leaders. (p. 568)*

Criterion 4: Time-rich, allowing for learning sequences to be spaced and interspersed with collegial support, in-school applications and reflective encounters.

There has been enough reported in the literature on one-shot, sporadic or brief professional learning encounters to have this type of leadership learning program dismissed as largely fruitless. If programs are to create the conditions where real traction is evident on difficult improvement problems, then the design needs to be time-rich to enable understanding to be followed by implementation, reflection and review (Huber 2011). This is particularly so for people new to leadership positions. The assumption that 'quick fix' didactic approaches to leadership learning will yield desired results is well past its 'use by' date (Darling-Hammond et al. 2011). Finding ways to move beyond off-site leadership program participation to on-site learning application is essential if transfer of knowledge to practice is to occur over time in the rush of everyday school life.

Criterion 5: Practice-centred, so that knowledge is taken back into the school in ways that maximise the effects of leadership capability.

The previous criterion provides a ready segue into the fifth. The literature we have examined reinforces the significance of leaders conscientiously making in-school use of the knowledge gained in out-of-school learning programs (OECD 2008; Bush 2009; Huber 2011; Gurr & Drysdale 2015). Setting up the means to facilitate and ensure knowledge transfer over time, is therefore a critical part of leadership learning program design. Action Research can play a vital role here because the very idea of 'transfer' puts the concept of leadership as a shared activity or practice squarely on the agenda (Gronn 2009; Spillane et al. 2010) and consequently, it becomes an important element in almost every leadership learning program.

Criterion 6: Purpose-designed for specific career stages, with ready transfer of theory and knowledge into practice.

We have formed the view from our reading of the literature, that generic leadership development programs are generally inappropriate though they still figure prominently in the offerings of many agencies. What is clear, is the importance of tailoring programs to participants' career stages and the school conditions they face now or will face

on appointment (Darling-Hammond et al. 2007; OECD 2008; McKinsey & Company, 2010). As we pointed out earlier, education systems seem more inclined to provide early career leadership learning, making far fewer opportunities available for those well into their tenure. The words 'sporadic' and 'variable' appear in discussions of leadership learning for experienced school principals, untimely commitments shunned by McKinsey and Company (2010) who stress the need for learning experiences throughout careers. But counter-intuitively, they also argue for on-the-job experience for people as leaders 'before they are ready' (p. 10) because this tests and challenges them in real time and in authentic circumstances. The encouragement of teacher leadership is a direction advocated by Lovett (2018) and one which McKinsey and Company would endorse.

Criterion 7: Peer-supported within or beyond the school, so that feedback helps to transfer theory and knowledge into improved practice.

Peer support is a phenomenon that has continued to rise in importance for leadership learning despite criticism of its costs. Feedback on performance is one of the most significant factors in learning and it is no less so for those developing as leaders. Questions and feedback which provoke personal reflection rather than ratings of performance are crucial precursors to individualised learning. There is an extensive literature on techniques which create supportive learning relationships covering 'critical friendship' (Swaffield 2004), mentoring (MacBeath 2006), coaching (Robertson 2008) and professional learning communities (Lovett 2018). What these strategies share in common is the desire to assist individuals to improve their practice in collegial relationships with peers who are considered valuable sounding boards on sometimes positive and sometimes troublesome experiences.

Criterion 8: Context-sensitive, and thus able to build in and make relevant use of school leaders' knowledge of their circumstances.

Being knowledgeable about the context in which leadership is to be exercised is a fundamental element of effective leadership practice. Context-literacy is the term often used for this capacity. While some appointees may be daunted by the conditions in communities in which they will work, Leithwood et al. (2006) and Day et al. (2010) urge that leadership practice should not be so influenced by a school's context that capitulation to difficult situations occurs. Understanding the context and being able to harness its resources in the interests of students is the goal (Leithwood et al. 2006; Hallinger 2011; Huber 2011; Johnson et al. 2016). In addition to micro-contextual knowledge of the school and its community, school leaders have a further obligation to understand the macro-context in which they operate – the political, social and economic drivers of the educational enterprise (MacBeath et al. 2018). We argue that the challenge for planners responsible for leadership learning is to design and deliver programs linking macro and micro-contextual learning with participants' realities.

Criterion 9: Partnership-powered, with external support through joint ventures involving associations, universities and the wider professional world.

Teachers thinking about a move into leadership would be well-advised to look for programs with partnerships beyond the limited boundaries of their own schools for leadership learning opportunities (Brundrett & Crawford 2008; OECD 2008). In education settings, partnerships are most likely between universities and schools or local educational agencies (Brundrett & Crawford 2008) whose interests build on those entrenched in the curriculum. They caution us however, about a possible overreliance on partnerships based on leadership within business and industry because of the decidedly different perspectives and purposes of these kinds of leaders from those of educators.

Criterion 10: Effects-focused, committed to evaluating the effects on leaders, as well as on school practices to which their learning applies

Evaluation of the effects of leadership learning programs has dogged the profession for years. There is ready evidence of a 'call to arms' on this weakness, with much more attention given to it in recent years (Bush 2009; Dempster et al. 2017; MacBeath et al. 2018). Again, action research projects are helpful here – projects through

which school leaders can implement some of what they have taken away from their leadership programs, with the help of their teachers. Notwithstanding this kind of effects' monitoring potential, we continue to hold the view that the evaluation of leadership development programs should be of the highest priority. Good money should not be spent on programs with undocumented outcomes. Investigating how leaders apply what they have learnt, how teachers and students respond to what is done and ultimately what indisputable evidence there is of improvement in student learning and achievement should be the decisive test of program effectiveness.

We have discussed five well-founded trends in international literature on leadership learning and described a set of criteria that responds to those trends helping to define what constitutes high quality leadership learning programs. We acknowledge that the power over program development and delivery lies with education system authorities or other connected institutions and we may give the impression that responses to the localised learning needs of individual leaders are considered less important. In the next section of the report we explain the stand we take on bringing these two apparent competing positions into balance. Before doing so, however, we put our focus on leadership learning content.

10 Locus of professional leadership learning

As already mentioned, it is an education system's senior personnel who have great control over leadership learning agendas. This is not surprising, nor is it unreasonable, because those who are accountable for the expenditure of public funds have a right to require employees to work within the parameters set by policymakers. System officers exercise this control by stipulating the kinds of knowledge and skills they want their school leaders to have and to apply. We have ample evidence of this fact. There are many examples globally of system-initiated standards, capabilities or competencies frameworks. In the AITSL review to which we have referred (Dempster et al. 2011), we consulted what we came to call 'content and process' frameworks from New Zealand, England, Wales, Scotland, Canada, Australia and the OECD (2008). Content and process frameworks define the knowledge and skills expected of those moving into, or occupying leadership positions. As well as their possible use in appointment and promotion decisions, their purpose is to spell out subject matter for inclusion in leadership learning programs. Different content and process emphases are apparent in programs for aspirant leaders, newly appointed principals or those with years of experience, with mandatory leadership learning programs more evident in the early stages of leadership than they are in the later years. This inclination towards compulsory early career leaders' learning may unwittingly reduce the sense of independence that professionals should have about their own growth and development. At worst, it may produce compliant employees, mendicant to those with appointment authority.

The need to find the right balance between what systems of education provide and what knowledge and skills individuals themselves pursue, is acknowledged by AITSL (2015) in their report, *Leadership on the edge: Big Ideas for change and innovation*:

> *Teachers and school leaders are progressively taking greater ownership of their professional growth, and schools and education systems are reviewing the development opportunities they offer to find the balance between flexibility and personalisation, and organisational and system goals. (p. 9)*

A study of principals' professional learning by Sugrue (2015) emphasised this need for balance, concluding that system initiated and conducted professional learning for school leaders must be complemented by the informal and freely chosen agenda that individuals decide is important for themselves.

> *This dual carriageway of learning becomes even more evident in more recent cohorts, and another important element that needs to be planned for in the making of comprehensive provision. The rush to formalise learning through 'professional development communities' … should not be myopic regarding the significance of informal opportunities to learn while not relying on them exclusively either. However, formalising them may also dilute their significance and contribution'; all of this serves to 'reinforce the professional sense of growing through learning (mostly more informal*

than formal) into leadership while there is an emerging sense too, that informal alone is inadequate for the increasing complexity of the role and its responsibilities no matter how powerful. (p. 100)

Similarly, Gurr and Drysdale (2015) reinforced, amongst other things, the importance of individual responsibility for leadership learning:

In non-education sectors there is some evidence that perhaps the reliance on a self-identified and self-managed process is more appropriate for a time of considerable change. For example, Petrie (2014) lists four future trends in leadership development: more focus on vertical development (developmental stages) rather than horizontal development (competencies); greater individual ownership of development; greater focus on collective rather than individual leadership; much greater focus on innovation in leadership development methods. Using these points we would want to reinforce greater individual responsibility for leadership development, encourage people to think more carefully about career progress (vertical development), encourage schools and systems to focus less on individual leadership and more on collective leadership, and for those providing leadership development programmes to consider more innovative ways to providing these programmes... (p. 389)

In an endeavour to promote balance between system and individual agendas and responsibilities, a leadership learning heuristic (Lovett et al. 2014), an augmented version of the heuristic originally developed by Clarke and Wildy (2011) is outlined. The focal points in the heuristic serve to inform school principals as they contemplate the scope of their professional learning at different career points.

11 An heuristic approach to the dimensions of leadership learning content

Clarke and Wildy (2011) developed an heuristic approach to enable individuals to think about the scope of school leadership for themselves. Usually applied to teaching situations, heuristics provide a way of approaching solutions to problems. They offer 'shorthand' methods reminding learners of systematic ways to observe, investigate, experiment and discover knowledge in relation to issues they experience. In the matters we are discussing, Clarke and Wildy's heuristic is applied to leaders' personal learning by spelling out four focal points defining broad fields of leadership endeavour – *People*, *Place*, *System* and *Self*. To this we added a fifth, *Pedagogy*, in 2014 (Lovett et al. 2014). Each of these five focal points is now described to outline the nature of leadership learning content knowledge. We do this using extracts from that 2014 published work.

Focal Point 1: Pedagogy—learning about teaching and learning

It goes without saying that school leaders should be continuous students of pedagogy. Having fulfilled the role of teacher before appointment partly ensures a pedagogical focus in an aspirant leader's cache of knowledge about teaching and learning. However, in the literature we examined, we found a nervous concern over the management distractions experienced by school leaders which takes their focus off teaching and learning. As a counter to this concern, *Leadership for Learning* has been a well-researched topic for more than a decade (Darling-Hammond et al. 2007; Robinson et al 2009; MacBeath & Dempster. 2009; O'Donoghue & Clarke 2009; Hallinger, 2011; Day et al. 2016; Hitt & Tucker 2016; MacBeath et al. 2018) bringing the emphasis back to the core business of school leadership, that of improving student learning and achievement.

How to establish and maintain the moral purpose of improving student learning and achievement, set agreed goals and sustain high expectations are all important matters in a principal's leadership learning curriculum. More than this, it is argued (Lovett et al. 2014, 6):

because the quality of teaching and the factors known to support or undermine it have a strong bearing on successful student learning, leaders should also focus on gaining a good practice-based understanding of teachers' professional development.

Robinson et al. (2009) are strongly of this view, with their findings reinforcing the fact that professional learning opportunities experienced simultaneously by leaders and teachers are critical to improved pedagogy. Preparing confident leaders who know how to structure professional learning into school routines so that the theory and practice of planning, coordinating and monitoring the school curriculum occurs as a matter of course, should be the leadership learning goal. Furthermore, Day et al. (2009) have shown that a rich variety of professional learning opportunities for teachers is a strong predictor of improved student achievement. The leadership strategies they have found most helpful include informal conversations, shadowing, modelling, mentoring, peer observation, coaching and collaborative action research.

> *Robinson et al. (2009) add a very strong codicil to the conduct of professional learning—leaders must be knowledgeable about professional development and adult learning and actively participate in learning areas of high priority for the school. These researchers concluded, on the basis of their meta-analysis, that direct involvement of school leaders in implementing the school curriculum, monitoring teaching and learning and observing and understanding what teachers and students are doing in classrooms produces an effect size second only to that of professional learning on practice. (Lovett et al. 2014, p. 6)*

A further pedagogical issue is found in the need for school leaders to be able to gather and analyse systematically, useful data on effective teaching and learning with their teachers. If achievement data are to be augmented by qualitative evidence derived from classroom observation (Darling-Hammond et al. 2007; Hattie 2009) then leaders should be able to reach an appropriate rapport with their teachers so that discussions about pedagogical problem-solving and decision-making are invariably productive. Using data to monitor and improve learning and teaching is therefore another integral feature of this first pedagogical focal point. Doing so in professional conversations, problem encounters or through 'disciplined dialogue' (Swaffield & Dempster 2009; Dempster et al. 2017) enables leaders to connect their work with that of their teachers.

Focal Point 2: People—learning about those with whom leaders work

This focal point in Clarke and Wildy's (2011) heuristic approach to content definition highlights the kind of professional learning that school leaders need if they are to gain the knowledge, skills and dispositions to maximise other people's motivation, commitment and capacity to pursue common purposes. It is a truism that leadership is always relational, though relationships with autocratic leaders are always fraught with hierarchical power rather than shared expressions of this most influential of organisational resources (Bishop 2011; Robinson et al. 2009). Leaders need to understand that their work depends on the agency of those around them, and that leader-centric behaviour is, more often than not, counter-productive in the achievement of preferred outcomes.

In a very real sense, leadership is always by, with and through others. Therefore, understanding human agency should be an automatic inclusion in leadership learning curricula. Furthermore, our analysis of the literature confirms the importance of including concentrated efforts on strategies and practices which open up opportunities for distributed leadership and collective agency (OECD 2008; MacBeath et al. 2018). Sharing leadership widely and deeply in schools does not come automatically with an individual's appointment. But it can be learned both in theory and through on-the-job applications such as available in the mentoring, coaching or critical friendship techniques we have mentioned already. When distributed leadership is accepted as an integral part of the job, positional leadership is encouraged to take a 'back seat' allowing cooperative leadership activity to flourish but not to replace it.

Focal Point 3: Place—learning about the educational context

Having leaders who are able to 'read' educational contexts is the subject of focal point number three. We have referred to this above in the essential criteria indicative of quality leadership learning programs, so it is no surprise

that it appears again as a critical component of the content of a leadership learning curriculum. We use an extended extract from previous work (Lovett et al. 2014) to show the range of matters across which leaders' context literacy knowledge should extend.

This ability ('reading' the context) allows leaders to gain a strong understanding of environmental influences so that they can make decisions for action that are well grounded in the realities of the 'here and now'. Leaders also need to understand macro and micro contexts: learning about the national and international factors which shape educational provision is just as important as knowing and understanding the internal and external local influences on school communities. Both sets of factors limit or enable leaders to make particular educational responses. For individual school leaders contemplating their knowledge of *place*, the desirable goal is 'contextual literacy', which means understanding the demographic, cultural, economic, legal, regulatory and policy conditions which surround them.

School leaders need to know about education at the *macro* level because they are the people who most need to understand the bigger arena in which their schools operate. Knowledge of international educational trends and issues and their manifestation in particular national and local jurisdictions is vital if leaders are to be well prepared to explain and justify changes in policy, curriculum and practice locally. This requirement has become even more necessary with the increasing emphasis on international comparisons of student performance and countries endeavouring to position their systems of education so that their citizens can gain economic advantage on the global stage.

School leaders also need, with regard to the macro purview, to have a good grasp of the national and/or state-wide system mandates (policies and programs) for their schools. The need to keep abreast of government and administrative expectations becomes even more relevant when leaders are cast in the role of 'branch managers' charged with responsibility for implementing these mandates in their schools.

One approach to gaining knowledge of the conditions influencing education at the micro level is known as a cultural audit (Hopkins et al. 1994). This process has leaders gathering information relating to 'context fields'. These include a school's general community and family demography, its mission and values, its goals and its leadership positions and its committees and other organisational structures. Context fields also include the age, experience and gender profiles of staff, the characteristics of the student population and the school's celebrations and milestone events (Dempster et al. 2017). This micro-level (local) knowledge enables leaders to tailor decisions to the everyday realities of school life and to intentionally shape a school's culture in collaboration with their teachers and members of the wider school community' (pp. 8-9).

Focal Point 4: System—learning about the education system

The fourth focal point recognises that all school leaders must work in harmony with the systems that employ them. This is not to say that they should become unthinking automatons, but rather people who understand the political and policy realities which govern what they do and about which they may be constructively critical when circumstances warrant it. Our reading of the literature suggests that compliance with policy priorities and regulatory requirements is likely to be a key demand faced by leaders early in their careers, while for those later in their positions, influencing the system's policies about what is fair and what isn't comes into the foreground (Hopkins 2008). The major point to be made about 'system' knowledge is that school leadership learning should be system-aligned. To this end, there is a seeming unending number of topics about which learning cannot be sidestepped. Most of these topics have either a legal or regulatory backdrop, asking leaders to gain at least a working understanding of the legal concepts of rights and negligence. We list a sample to show the breadth of knowledge necessary; for example: student enrolment and exclusion procedures; child safety and child abuse; staff industrial relations and working conditions; sexual harassment; anti-discrimination; risk management; financial accountability; facilities management; and so on. All of these matters may require school leaders to exercise

discretion in their decision-making from time to time. A second extract from Lovett et al. (2014) provides some illustrations.

> *For example, even though compliance standards define a school's income and expenditure, leaders must know how much control they have over both sides of the ledger. Likewise, even though specified conditions govern system enrolment procedures, leaders still have a number of options available enabling them to respond to local situations. A third example applies to school staffing. While systems may stipulate certain staff numbers, school leaders can deploy their staff in different ways to meet school-based priorities. All this is additional to the central purpose of a school leader's job—leadership for learning. Leaders will need to consider the unique context of their respective schools so that they can use their discretion to tailor particular curriculum offerings, teaching practices and assessment procedures to local needs. This kind of discretionary knowledge is never fully available to newly appointed principals. Much of it is gained through experience in different settings across time. (p. 10)*

This last point is a very important one as many issues concerning children, staff members or parents require solutions or management processes for which there is no definitive guidebook. Gaining the knowledge and understanding to find ways to deal with troublesome matters is more likely to occur through trial and error than a prescribed leadership program. On-demand support from a mentor or trusted colleague has been found to be helpful as leaders encounter the circumstances in which their discretionary decision-making capacity is tested. Coaching can also be an important aid to reflection after decisions have been made and hind-sight presents leaders with a helpful forensic lens on outcomes. Acquiring the strategies or tactics to create the necessary undistracted time for good quality decision-making also takes time and coaches can open up this agenda in shared experience discussions.

Focal Point 5: Self–learning about 'me'

The final focal point should really be the first in order of priority, because it concerns the acquisition of measured and realistic knowledge and understanding about the self, an individual's personal and professional values, moral or ethical positions, strengths, weaknesses, motivations and aspirations. All of these most subjective of the knowledge domains may change, as individuals make the transitions from teacher to aspirant leader to new appointee and to experienced 'elder'. A final extract from Lovett et al. (2014) lays out the footprint of this aspect of a leadership learning curriculum.

Knowledge of personal shortcomings - 'warts and all' - and knowing what to do to overcome them is a particularly desirable self-related learning goal for leaders because it helps them guard against arrogance, complacency, pretentiousness and narcissism.

Because, as we have emphasised above, education is a profession with a core moral purpose—that is, enabling each student to fulfil his or her potential through learning—school leaders have the clear responsibility, throughout their careers, to work towards this purpose (MacBeath et al. 2018). Failure to acknowledge this moral purpose can reduce leadership in education to the uncritical management of agendas defined by others whose interests are not necessarily those of students. Taking and holding on to a moral purpose carries with it potential difficulties for leaders because there will be times when a strongly held moral position is challenged. Knowing that this can happen gives leaders opportunity to consider how they might counter this challenge, especially if it relates to troublesome human circumstances.

Professional ethics are closely related to the moral purpose of education. Knowing and understanding that personal values are contestable, that some can be subject to compromise, and that others will be held no matter the challenge, helps leaders chart a justifiable course through this terrain (Duignan, 2006). Knowledge and use of

these processes can sustain leaders when faced with stress created by criticism from people whom particular decisions do not favour (Duignan 2006).

Leaders' theoretical knowledge of ethics and values must, of course, be consonant with—yet responsive to—the practicalities of a school's individual social and cultural context. Understanding this relationship is likely to vary according to a leader's career stage. The needs of an aspiring or novice leader will differ from those of an experienced school leader who is called upon to provide systemic advice or who has assumed the role of mentor to those less experienced. What we have seen, though, in the literature, is tacit agreement that school leaders need high levels of self-efficacy, resilience, self-awareness and judgement in order to cope with the emotional demands and complexities inherent in school-based ethical decision-making (Cranston & Ehrich 2009; Duignan 2006; Starratt 2011; MacBeath et al. 2018, pp. 15, 16).

There are obvious synergies between the program quality criteria defined in the first part of this section and the focal points of the heuristic, which serves to emphasise key components of school leadership such as (a) the management of the possible intrusive or enriching influence of context, (b) the creation of productive interpersonal relationships to maximise collective human agency, and (c) the importance of a concentration on pedagogy or leadership for learning. That said, such is the complexity of the school leader's role that we have felt it necessary to further unravel the kinds of knowledge domains that are intrinsic to each of the focal points. To some extent, we have signalled many of these in our discussion so far. We turn therefore, to a practical and operational example of how the heuristic approach adopted by Clarke and Wildy (2011) may be turned into a tool or self-assessment instrument for individual use.

12 An heuristic to identify personal leadership learning needs

In earlier work, the substance of the discussion of each of the five focal points was used to develop a tool for use by educators thinking about their personal leadership learning needs and existing knowledge profile. That version appears in Lovett et al. (2014) but we illustrate its potential with a proposed form in Table 19, drawing on some of the outcomes from this review to include several selections from the dimensions of the Revised Unified Framework concluding Part III. Four items only for each focal point illustrate this version of the heuristic, enough we believe, to show a sample of the kind of knowledge we have distilled from the literature as intrinsic to leadership learning. We call these knowledge domains collectively, a 'content inventory' and like most inventories it is incomplete, allowing room for any user to add new elements, whether from this review report or elsewhere. Breadth of learning is clearly signaled in the tool as is the key question about the particular professional learning an individual has undertaken up to now. A simple Yes/No response provides a tangible visual rendition of an individual's knowledge profile and food for thought on where to go next. We have had many teachers considering leadership roles and leaders already in post complete the original version of this heuristic tool and invariably, they find it a helpful device for personal reflection and an appreciable point of departure for itemising new inventory elements.

		Leadership focal point and content inventory	Leadership learning I have already undertaken Yes/No
Pedagogy	1.	Knowledge of growth, learning and development across the lifespan	
	2.	Knowledge of the rationale for and how to plan, coordinate, implement, monitor and evaluate teaching and learning	
	3.	Knowledge of effective strategies for teacher professional development	
	4.	Knowledge of how to gather and promote the use of data in professional conversations for continual improvement	
Pe opl	5.	Knowledge of how to create, articulate and steward a shared mission and vision	

	6.	Knowledge of how to structure a school so that teachers, support personnel and others share leadership and operate as learning communities	
	7.	Knowledge of how and when to distribute tasks to engage others in leadership	
	8.	Knowledge of how to identify leadership talent and how to assist others to develop	
Place	9.	Knowledge of national reforms, policies and programs and their school effects	
	10.	Knowledge of the school context and knowing how to create and maintain safety and orderliness	
	11.	Knowledge of strategies to build productive partnerships with families and external partners	
	12.	Knowledge of key conditions for inclusive student learning and how to optimise them	
System	13.	Knowledge of policy and procedures and matters where personal professional autonomy can be exercised	
	14.	Knowledge of the specific accountability requirements of the system	
	15.	Knowledge of a range of tactics to aid a leader's discretionary decision-making	
	16.	Knowledge of networks to facilitate peer and supervisor relationships	
Self	17.	Knowledge of my personal professional moral position	
	18.	Knowledge of professional ethics and my related personal and interpersonal values	
	19.	Knowledge of how to deal with tensions between system compliance and personal autonomy in my leadership decisions	
	20.	Knowledge of personal strengths and weaknesses in my educational leadership	

Table 19: An heuristic to aid reflection on leadership learning

In the original version of the tool, leaders identified where they had undertaken their professional learning. Was it in system initiated and formally delivered programs or was it encountered informally on-the-job, locally? When the responses to these questions are examined, it does not take long for individuals to note whether their experiences have been dominated by programs led by their organisation or whether they have been left to rely on their own efforts. Whatever the case, we have found the heuristic helpful for aspirant leaders contemplating applications for leadership positions as well as for experienced leaders wanting to reflect on the learning they have accumulated during their tenure. We also ask additional questions based on their responses: *Are you comfortable with the balance between what your system has required of you and what you have arranged and participated in yourself*? This is followed by: *What does this tell you about where the responsibility currently lies for your leadership learning*?

We emphasise that while the focal points of the heuristic cover a broad range of matters implicated in school leadership generally and leadership for learning in particular, those included as examples of the content related to each focal point are indicative only. They provide a starting point to which other areas of knowledge may be added when they are encountered by individuals in context specific settings. In this way, we envisage the personalisation of the heuristic by school leaders, no matter the diversity of the educational contexts in which they are working.

12.1 Questions with implications for consideration by AITSL

We conclude this part of our report with a number of questions carrying implications for aspirant leaders, for leaders already there and for AITSL as it seeks to influence the design and delivery of leadership learning programs for principals.

Questions about leadership learning for teachers thinking about leadership

- What do I need to know about school leadership? What is its scope? What knowledge and skills will I need?
- If I want to enroll in a leadership development program, how will I know that it will meet my needs?

Questions about leadership learning for existing school leaders

- At this stage in my career what leadership learning do I now need?

- When considering any opportunity to undertake further professional learning, how will I know that the program on offer is of high quality?
- When my system authorities require me to attend a professional learning experience, on what should I base my feedback to them?

Questions about leadership learning for AITSL

- On what knowledge and skills should professional development concentrate for aspirant school leaders?
- To what knowledge and skills should we direct our attention in programs for experienced school leaders?
- What benchmarks will we use to check on the design quality of the leadership learning programs we sponsor?

Answers to many of these questions are to be found in the explanations we have provided on the heuristic's content and process focal points and the list of criteria helpful in making judgments about the quality of leadership learning programs. Both distillations from the literature carry the weight of extensive research giving us every confidence that they will be useful to AITSL when it makes decisions about leadership learning.

13 Conclusion

This review report commenced with a comprehensive search of the body of research and scholarly writing directed towards understanding and explaining the connections between the work of school principals and student learning and achievement, with the period from 2000 to the present as the main focus. A large corpus of work was uncovered, sifted to exclude less than useful publications, leaving the remainder to be classified into empirical, theoretical and conceptual groupings for analysis. That analysis when undertaken chronologically, led to a narrative to describe the evolution of approaches to the actions of school leaders shown to be linked with improved student outcomes. What has emerged about leadership for learning is conspicuous because of the frequency with which findings have arisen and been confirmed, and for the commonality of the actions or practices found to help leaders make effective links. There is commonality also in the cautions offered by many of the researchers about making the assumption that seemingly generic practices can be applied everywhere. This is not so. While the practices themselves may have a ubiquitous reach, they must be applied in ways sensitive to each school's local context.

In education as in other fields of endeavor, it is a well-known fact that outcomes can only be improved with changes to processes, hence the continuing efforts to understand the leadership practices or processes which feed forward to improved learning and achievement. The old adage: 'You can't fatten a pig by weighing it more often' acts as a spur to researchers, motivating them to better understand the power of particular processes in making improvements to the lives of students through learning. *Ipso facto,* the implementation of effective leadership for learning processes should be in the spotlight in principals' daily work.

We conclude with three definitive outcomes from this review. First, the domains and dimensions of effective leadership for learning (as described in the Unified Leadership Framework resulting from this review) rest on a highly reliable body of research, making a credible case for reference to them in future revisions to the Australian Professional Standard for Principals (options for which have been proposed in Part IV).

Second, the narrative we composed in Part II from the research findings and conclusions taken from Part I, seems to be moving inexorably to a reconceptualization of leadership for learning as a collective activity or practice in schools involving principals, other position holders, teachers, students, parents and other community members all with specific interests in the drive to improve learning for all.

Third, the leadership influence of the principal has been clearly reinforced showing that the bulk of what happens in school improvement occurs because of a principal's commitment to, material support for and encouragement of collaborations firmly fixed on leadership for student learning.

Finally, we thank officers of the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership for the opportunity to undertake such an important and timely review of the research literature.

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Appendix 1: Collated Literature

Legend	
Mauve	Most useful – meta-analytical, empirically based indirect and direct leadership linkages with learning and student outcomes.
Yellow	Particularly important to the review
Blue	Some possible relevance
Green	Contributes to understanding LfL processes with theoretical and conceptual knowledge

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Appendix 2: Revised Unified Leadership Framework with Domains and Dimensions Descriptions

Domains and Dimensions	Essential Supports Framework	Learning-Centred Framework	Ontario Leadership Framework	School Leadership Student Outcomes	Carpe Vitam Principles	Leadership for Learning Framework
Establishing and conveying the vision						
Creating, articulating and stewarding shared mission and vision		Developing vision, stewarding vision, articulating vision	Building a shared vision	Leadership establishes the importance of the selected goals	School culture nurtures the learning of everyone	Build vision and set directions collaboratively Ensure consensus on goals
Implementing vision and setting goals and performance expectations		Implementing vision, expectations, standards	Identifying specific shared short term goals	Leadership ensures that goals are clear		See that goals are embedded in school and classroom routines
Modelling aspirational and ethical practices		Ethics (and specifically discussed within multiple dimensions)	Modeling the school's values and practices		Scaffolding disciplined dialogue	
Communicating broadly the state of the vision	Inclusive leadership focused on instruction		Communicating the vision and goals			
Promoting use of data for continual improvement		Communication and use of data		Leadership selects tools that are well designed	Maintaining a focus on evidence and its congruence with the core values of the school	Ensure that both school and system data are gathered Pusue systematic data gathering across the schoool's responsibilities
Tending to external accountability	Strategic orientation	Environmental context	Meeting the demands for external accountability, establishing productive relationships with teacher federation representatives		Taking account of political realities and exercising informed choice as to how the school tells its own story;	
Facilitating a high quality learning experience for students						
Maintaining safety and orderliness	Safety and order	Learning environment	Maintaining a safe and healthy school environment		Physical and social spaces stimulate and celebrate learning	Provide a safe and pleasant physical environment
Personalising the environment to reflect students' backgrounds	Teachers learn about student culture and local community	Personalised environment		Leadership establishes continuities between student identities and school practices		Ensure social and emotional support for learners
Developing and monitoring curricular program	Curricular alignment	Knowledge and involvement; opportunity to learn; curriculum alignment	Providing instructional support (supervising and evaluating teaching, coordinating curriculum)	Leadership develops continuities and coherence across teaching programmes		Actively oversee the school's curriculum program Participate actively in curriculum decision-making Maintain commitment to curriculum priorities
Developing and monitoring instructional program	Intellectual challenge	Knowledge and involvement; instructional time	Monitoring student learning and school improvement practice		Tools and strategies are used to enhance thinking about	Coordinate and manage the teaching and learning program

Domains and Dimensions	Essential Supports Framework	Learning-Centred Framework	Ontario Leadership Framework	School Leadership Student Outcomes	Carpe Vitam Principles	Leadership for Learning Framework
					learning and the practice of teaching	
Developing and monitoring assessment program	Intellectual challenge; press toward academic achievement coupled with personal concern for students	Knowledge and involvement, assessment procedures/expectations, standards; monitoring instruction and curriculum				
Building professional capacity						
Selecting for the right fit	Quality of human resources	Hiring and allocating staff	Staffing the instructional program			
Providing individualised consideration		??	Providing and demonstrating individual consideration for staff members	Leadership engages teachers' theories of action		Support, evaluate and develop teacher quality Observe teachers in action directly and provide specific feedback
Building trusting relationships	Relational trust		Building trusting relationships with and among staff, students and parents			
Providing opportunities to learn for whole faculty including leaders	Quality of professional development	Professional Development	Stimulating growth in the professional capacities of staff		A focus on professional learning	Play an active 'hands on' role in professional development.
Supporting, buffering and recognising staff		Supporting staff	Buffering staff from distractions to their work			
Engendering responsibility for promoting learning	Values and beliefs about teacher responsibility for change	Accountability	Providing instructional support (supervising and evaluating teaching)	Leadership promotes collective responsibility and accountability for student achievement and well-being	Embedding a systematic approach to self-evaluation at classroom, school and community levels; Developing a shared approach to internal accountability as a precondition of accountability to external agencies;	
Creating communities of practice	Professional community	Communities of professional practice; learning environment	Structuring the organization to facilitate collaboration	Leadership focuses on the relationship between teaching and learning	Everyone has opportunities to reflect on the nature, skills and processes of learning Collaborative patterns of work and activity across boundaries of subject, role and status are valued and promoted.	Encourage team work amongst teachers Support collaborative work cultures
Strategically align professional	-	-	-			Concentrate on the development of deep knowledge about key learning areas

Domains and Dimensions	Essential Supports Framework	Learning-Centred Framework	Ontario Leadership Framework	School Leadership Student Outcomes	Carpe Vitam Principles	Leadership for Learning Framework
development with shared mission						Ensure that teachers engage in extended learning about school priority areas
Creating supportive organisations for learning						
Acquiring and allocating resources strategically for mission and vision	Strategic orientation	Acquiring resources, allocating resources, Using resources	Allocating resources in support of the school's vision and goals, staffing the instructional program	Leadership uses clear criteria (for obtaining resources) that are aligned to pedagogical and philosophical purposes Leadership ensures sustained funding for pedagogical priorities		Manage resources strategically Align financial resources to priorities Apply resources to the conditions of learning
Considering context to maximise organizational functioning	Contextual resources	Environmental context	Providing support and demonstrating consideration for individual staff members		Reframing policy and practice when they conflict with core values;	Plan school organization structures to support improved learning
Building collaborative processes for decision making	Faculty, parent, community influence		Building collaborative cultures and distributing leadership	Leadership develops the capacity to set appropriate goals	Everyone is encouraged to take the lead as appropriate to task and context	
Sharing and distributing leadership	Inclusive leadership focused on instruction		Building collaborative cultures and distributing leadership		Structures support participation in developing the school as a learning community Shared leadership is symbolised in the day-to-day flow of activities of the school	Share leadership systematically with teachers
Tending to and building on diversity	Teachers learn about student culture and local community	Diversity	Building productive relationships with families and communities			
Maintaining ambitious and high expectations and standards	Values and beliefs about teacher responsibility	Continuous improvement	Creating high performance expectations		Maintaining a continuing focus on sustainability, succession and leaving a legacy.	Set high expectations
Strengthening and optimising school culture			Building collaborative cultures and distributing leadership	Leadership promotes collective responsibility and accountability for student achievement and well-being	A focus on organisational learning	Celebrate teacher and student successes Display a keen interest in students' classroom work and achievements
Identifying and integrating tools and data to support instruction and learning	-	-	-	Leadership selects tools that are well designed Leadership selects tools that incorporate sound theories	Tools and strategies are used to enhance thinking about learning and the practice of teaching;	Plan for student learning based on data Monitor student learning based on data Shared accountability tasks with teachers based on classroom, school and system data

Domains and Dimensions	Essential Supports Framework	Learning-Centred Framework	Ontario Leadership Framework	School Leadership Student Outcomes	Carpe Vitam Principles	Leadership for Learning Framework
						Promote skills in data analysis and interpretation through PD amongst teachers
Connecting with external partners						
Building productive relationships with families and external partners in the community		Stakeholder engagement	Building productive relationships with families and communities	Leadership establishes continuities between student identities and school practices		Network with other schools and teachers on good practice
Engaging families and community in collaborative processes to strengthen student learning	Staff engaged parents and community in strengthening student learning	Community-anchored schools	Building productive relationships with families and communities	Leadership establishes continuities between student identities and school practices	The experience and expertise of staff, students and parents are drawn upon as resources	Involve wider community support to improve learning Include parents as integral to the school's learning programs Seek the input of professionals beyond the school
Anchoring schools in the community	Resources of community	Environmental context	Connecting the school to its wider environment			Be active in the local community and the professional communities

Appendix 3: Leadership for Learning Case Studies

Case Study 1: Leadership for Literacy Learning in a low socio-economic school environment

An extract from Dempster, N., Johnson, G., Bayetto, A., Lovett, S. & Stevens, E. (2017), *Leadership and Literacy: Principals, Partnerships and Pathways to Improvement.* **Springer, Cham, Switzerland (pp 172, 173).**

Context

Valley View Primary School was located in a very low socioeconomic catchment area with high levels of inter-generational unemployment, welfare dependency, and social housing. At the time of the study, 8% of students were from Indigenous backgrounds but none were from other non-English speaking backgrounds. Responding to preschool teachers' concerns about low levels of oral language, the speech pathologist used screening assessments and identified that 69% of transition-to-school students had mild to severe language difficulties.

James, the Principal, with a secondary school background, was in his third year of appointment when he participated in the PALL (*Principals as Literacy Leaders Program*) program.

Account of the actions taken

From James's involvement in Module 2 he recognised that oral language was a foundation for learning to read, and being conscious of the needs of the 69% of students, he and the Deputy Principal, Janet, met with two early year teachers to discuss what to do. Together, the team agreed on a strategy aimed at bringing oral language experiences back onto centre stage for all Kinder and Year 1 students. This was the beginning of a partnership that was to grow and strengthen over the ensuing year.

This strategy required James's positional authority because time, opportunity, and financial resources were necessary to support a series of fortnightly oral language excursions designed to enhance students' general knowledge, vocabularies, and confidence in speaking and listening about their shared experiences. The teachers, Marie and Melanie, thoroughly planned what would happen on these excursions and prior to departure developed students' background knowledge about the venues. In support of this planning a discussion paper about oral language, outlining the research and practical approaches, was shared with them (http://www.appa.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Oral-Language-article.pdf). After returning from the oral language excursions the teachers had students talking, writing, and reporting about what had occurred and their responses.

Teachers being given the reins

By the third excursion, James acknowledged that the two teachers had assumed the lead in the oral language project and he, like the Deputy Principal, saw himself as providing active support to them. James visited classrooms after each excursion and engaged with individual students as they wrote and spoke about what they had seen and experienced. He described himself as a learner heavily reliant on Marie and Melanie's knowledge. The Deputy Principal created connections with parents by posting photographs of the students on excursion and recounting their excursion when back at school. With a number of parents known to be reluctant about involvement with the school, the use of social media provided an immediate connection. Indeed, this was a welcome addition to their repertoire, spoken of with relish by the partnership. Such was the impact of the oral language excursions on teachers' planning, students' learning, and willingness to talk about their travels that the partnership took the decision to move with an oral language program progressively up the school, starting the following year. The evidence they had collected from samples of students' writing, but more importantly, in the video capture of improvements in oral presentations to their peers, acted as convincing evidence about the value of their strategy. Moreover, others in the school took up advocacy for the oral language program. No better

example of this was the role played by the school janitor, Henry, who doubled as bus driver for the excursions. His understanding of the need for all adults to model effective speaking was translated into practice through use of the microphone on bus trips when he pointed out places of interest and landmarks. Interestingly, many of the words he used were often reproduced in students' conversations and writing.

What Case Study 1 tells us about leadership in context, shared leadership, professional learning on-the-job and children's learning and achievement.

An extract from MacBeath et al (2018; pp 104, 105).

Dewey and Bentley's (1949) three forms of action and the three perspectives of leadership Simpson (2016) has derived from them, are all evident in the Oral Language vignette, though the first two are the more apparent. Leadership as self-action shows up in the initiative taken by James, the *leader-practitioner*, to find a way of addressing the less than desirable oral language capability of a significant proportion of his young pupils. But from that point on, inter-action and *a set of distributive leadership practices* takes over quite fluidly. This is definitely aided by James' apparent willingness to put his power as principal on the 'back burner'. A four person team is formed to discuss and agree on a strategy or strategies to improve the scope and depth of children's oral language. Gronn's 'hybridity' (2009) is evident in the combination of positional leaders (James and Janet) with grassroots teachers (Marie and Melanie) but hierarchy is not prominent in their exchanges other than in the authorization by James for the use of school resources such as the school's bus, dedicated timetable slots and the school's Face Book page.

That the strategy adopted was suggested by Melanie is further evidence of the non-hierarchical nature of the team, at least while the four were engaged in developing and implementing the program of excursions. The temporary shedding of the principal's power is also noticeable in the 'learner' role James adopted, as he followed up the outcomes of each excursion in classroom visits with children so that he might show support for his students and learn more about their oral language experiences.

This role of learner applies to all four in the team as Melanie and Marie drew on information from research papers and online searches to add to their growing bank of knowledge about oral language capacity. The learning of Deputy Principal, Janet, centers on understanding the feasibility and significance of social media in making better connections with parents in the lead up to and following excursions. The welcome of the Janitor to the team is added confirmation that hierarchy was not on overt display from the earliest engagement in the project. More than this, it is an example of how *leadership in the flow of practice* arises. Trans-action in the everyday circumstances faced by those at *Valley View* Primary opened up members of staff to the possibility and power of collective action. This ultimately resulted in wider interest in oral language and the initiative led by Marie and Melanie to engage others in making oral language experiences for all children in the school a part of each teacher's pedagogical repertoire.

Dialogue about the children's development was undertaken mostly in informal staffroom conversations as teachers discussed the problems they faced in improving children's reading in particular, and literacy in general. Marie and Melanie were instrumental in bringing their new-found knowledge to these conversations and to the growing collaboration with their fellow teachers. Self-action by the *leader-practitioner* comes into view a second time when James' authority is required to confirm the teachers' desire for curriculum change to include oral language experiences explicitly at every grade level.

It is clear from the vignette, that leadership action by Marie and Melanie would not have arisen without the initiative and backing of their principal. This confirms the authority embedded in the role, even when leadership is being shared. However, James, who seems to want to reduce the power distance between himself and his teachers, leads a school to believe that in future, spontaneous leadership action in the face of persisting problems

may well come from the ground up. It is speculation only, but James may well believe that teacher leadership for learning would be the outcome.

Case Study 2: Leadership for learning in secondary school contexts

Context

In 2013, South Australian secondary school principals undertook to carry out Stage 1 of an Action Research Project designed to focus on assessment tasks and the literacy demands of those tasks as a route into the improvement of literacy pedagogy in the secondary curriculum. This appendix summarises the steps taken by 46 principals as they went about implementing professional learning from the SPALL (Secondary Principals as Literacy Leaders) Project in their local school contexts… As a minimum, principals were asked to work with a small number of teachers in two curriculum areas, one of which was from the Australian Curriculum. The task was framed around the examination of assessment tasks for the quality of their design, the literacy demands embedded in them and therefore, the teaching practices required to make those demands explicit for students.

Given the importance of the principal's knowledge of his or her local context, it was understood that there would be a range of variations from the set of expectations for Stage 1 of the anticipated Action Research Project. The summary (*which follows*) describes 14 broad categories of actions (*of which 7 are included here*), many of which have been undertaken by most principals, but some of which have been responsive to unique circumstances. The findings that follow are arranged so that the actions most frequently reported appear first.

Action Research Working party or groups of staff established

The information in the reports showed that some 27 principals reported having established distinct Working Parties to carry out the expected tasks under their leadership. The curriculum areas covered are shown in the list below with … (*twenty*) of the combinations across year levels in different schools.

Grade and Subject Area	Participants
Year 8 humanities	Two English/History teachers with Literacy Coordinator
Year 9 science	Principal plus Head Science and 3 teachers from Year 8 and Senior Leader with 3 year 8 teachers of English)
Years 7 to 12 numeracy team	Four teachers from each of English, Humanities, Maths, Science, PE, Home Economics
Science teachers only	Regional network focus
Home Economics, English and History	HPD and Science
Literacy Reference Group	One teacher from Science, English and HASS
A Working Party across two schools	One Science teacher, one SOSE
All Middle school teachers	Learning Communities of combined faculty groups
Year 8 English and Science	Year 9 English and Science
Year 8 Arts and Science teams	Science, Design and Tech with control and trial groups of students

The clear message in this list is that principals have made judgments about the people and structures they believe are necessary to carry out nominated tasks in their schools. Some have created new groupings, others have utilised existing structures and provided their members with new directions, yet others have determined to try out the approach to literacy through assessment task design with quite small groups of teachers. Indeed, one principal is working with three teachers only from three different curriculum areas – Science, English and HASS. At the other end of the spectrum, the Action Research Project has been made a Principals' Network focus across one region.

These differences show up the importance of principals' context knowledge in leading changes in learning that have the potential to be implemented eventually across their schools.

Staff meetings conducted

Nineteen reports (19) made reference to principals' leadership of staff meetings on aspects of assessment and literacy drawn from the SPALL Professional Learning Modules. These meetings addressed matters such as the use of different genre in different disciplines; a genre audit; subject related comprehension strategies; assessment <u>as</u> learning, assessment <u>of</u> learning and assessment <u>for</u> learning; assessment rubrics and the inclusion of literacy criteria in these rubrics; the concept of 'salience'; deconstructing 'persuasive language'; paragraph writing; assessment task design, individualised assessment, common genres in secondary education and unit planning.

One principal was moved to note that at staff meetings, *"Conversations were intense and fearless",* as people from different disciplines addressed assessment design issues. The analysis of the reports shows that staff meetings in many schools were conducted in addition to the discussions being undertaken by Working Parties. Furthermore, Principals reported their active involvement in staff meetings thus taking into practice one of the essential research-informed dimensions of the Leadership for Learning Blueprint which provides a leadership framework for the SPALL Project. When used in the way described here, staff meetings become useful avenues for professional development.

Principals leading Professional Development

The third most frequently reported action taken by principals concerns their personal leadership of formal professional development in their schools. Seventeen (17) reports contained direct reference to this. *A selection of examples includes:*

- Principal and Head of Senior School leading literacy discussions
- Principal speaking to whole staff
- Principal using SPALL documents at Professional learning sessions
- Leading Professional Development (e.g., aligning the Australian Curriculum and SPALL to help Join the policy Dots, training for staff members in Literacy for Learning etc)
- *Implementing* a Staff Training audit, staff sharing sessions on changed pedagogy, whole staff 'Language and literacy in teaching and learning'
- Principal attending Literacy for Learning, providing professional reading, arranging an Australian Curriculum Training Day

Specific Attention given to the literacy capabilities of the AC

The literacy capabilities of the Australian Curriculum have been used by at least 17 principals as motivation to use the planning template presented at the first SPALL workshop. This template was designed to enable teachers to consider and identify the literacy components in their assessment tasks. In their personal reflections on their leadership action so far, the significance of the Australian Curriculum's position that every teacher is a literacy teacher has been seen as a powerful professional incentive to undertake the action research project across a number of subject areas.

Plans to support changed pedagogy made

Fifteen (15) principals reported making plans for changed pedagogy during action research stage one. These plans referred to practices such as explicit literacy teaching sessions within regular 80 minute classroom periods; planned literacy units of work; use of students' work in classroom practice; moderation of students' written work between teachers; and the explicit teaching of paragraph writing to name a few.

Assessment tasks critiqued and redesigned

There were 12 reports saying that working parties had critiqued teachers' assessment tasks leading to their redesign. This approach was confirmed in Principals' reflections as a helpful way to support the teaching and learning of literacy with teachers in secondary schools.

Resources identified to support explicit teaching of literacy demands and task design

A small number of principals (6) reported that work during stage one of their action research projects resulted in the production or identification of useful resources to help teachers in teaching particular literacy demands. Two of the schools assembled training packages for staff drawing on SPALL Project materials and other sources. One school developed a school focused application of the Leadership for Literacy Learning Blueprint for all teachers while another concentrated on strategies for assessment task design.

Case Study 3: Leadership for Learning in an Indigenous pre-school

Extracts from Flückiger B., Klieve H. (2016) Conceptions of Learning Leadership in Remote Indigenous Communities: A Distributed Approach. In: Johnson G., Dempster N. (eds) Leadership in Diverse Learning Contexts. Studies in Educational Leadership, vol 22. Springer, Cham, pp 347-363

Context

This case study describes the distributive approach to leadership and the nature of the partnership which underpinned the development of the Parents and Learning (PaL) early literacy program in Napranum preschool. Situated on the remote western side of Cape York in far north Queensland, Napranum is a dry (alcohol-free) Aboriginal community. The preschool in Napranum was initially chosen for the case study because of its reported success in engaging and sustaining parents' participation in literacy activities with their children (Desert Knowledge Cooperative Research Centre, 2009).

The PaL program was designed in 2001 to support parents in Napranum to engage in literacy with their children. It consists of a series of kits that contain a book and accompanying literacy activities for parents to undertake with their children. Tutors are trained to visit homes to deliver the kits, and to liaise with parents to explain the literacy activities and their connection to school learning. The children commence with Level 1 of PaL in kindergarten and move on to Level 2 in prep (first year of school). Until recently, funds to run the PaL program were gained by soliciting grants from the international mining company Rio Tinto, a company that mines bauxite nearby. Now it relies on philanthropic and government funding to implement the program.

The distributive approach at Napranum

In 2001 the teacher/director of Napranum preschool, like leaders in schools and centres in many indigenous communities, struggled to get parents involved in their children's learning. Regular meetings and organized activities for parents at the preschool were not well attended. Despite what could be perceived as disinterest on the part of the parents, the teacher/director had a strong belief that the parents cared about their children and wanted them to do well at school.

The first and most important thing that the teacher/director felt she needed to do was establish trust. Establishing trust meant taking the time to build relationships with parents through personal connections and links to the community. She engaged initially with the indigenous staff at the preschool and through them made connections with parents and the wider community. The current teacher/director agrees: "*so long as you know someone, or so long as you make that connection, that personal connection, everything's going to work out fine*." To establish trust "*you need to become aware of the community, about cultural things, about language differences ... You've got to have respect for their culture and their community in the first place, and then you've got to be able to demonstrate that you've got respect for their culture and community*."

A parent explained that respect goes beyond the school fence. If teachers and leaders walk past parents or children in the street and don't acknowledge or recognise them, then those teachers will have a problem gaining respect. Leaders need to go around the community so that people can see they are doing things that everybody else does, and that "*they're not sitting back being, you know, the big boss*". For example, the teachers take turns to drive the school bus. This provides opportunity for them to give a wave, make a gesture, talk to people and share something really positive or funny that the children did that day. If teachers are not driving, then they take turns at accompanying the driver to get parents to sign children in and out of the bus. In this way they maintain the connection with parents.

A second aspect of establishing a relationship and developing mutual trust with families and the community was referred to as building stability. This meant the teacher/director made a commitment to stay in their role for a period of time and ensured, as much as possible, that staff and their roles in the preschool were stable and enduring. Frequent turnover of staff was seen as undermining the willingness of parents and community members to invest in relationships and to trust the genuineness of espoused commitment to their children and their community.

As trust developed, the teachers and teacher/directors found that parents came for support in meeting the demands placed on them by a literate society. A current teacher explained this aspect of her work:

> *I help them with their blue card… help them with their resume, doing stat decs [statutory declarations], taking them to the court house to fill in birth certificates. – ain't my job. I don't get paid to do that but you just do it.*

The teacher/director undertakes this service role because it is an opportunity to further strengthen relationships and is a demonstration of the trust that parents have in her.

Established trust meant that parents feel welcome and more comfortable in the preschool. A current teacher suggested that initial interviews with parents were an ideal opportunity to start developing that "comfort zone". Within interviews she encourages parents to share information about their child so she gets to know them better; and she shares her own background and experiences so that parents get to know her better. The teacher/director explained:

> *Like all parents, they actually want to know that the teacher really cares about their child. That they [teachers] value them as much as they do, that they will look after their most precious thing the way you would want them to. They want their children to have friendships, they want their children to learn and they want their children to have fun and be happy.*

In the words of a parent: "They're [the staff] friendly towards the parents and the kids. The way I see it is that I can trust them because they're really good with kids. They're not angry and they don't talk rough or down with them." This respect between parents and staff is mutual. A teacher aide remarked: "When we need the parents, they will come."

The genuine respect the preschool teacher/director had for parents and the community influenced her leadership approach. Taking an identified influential local community member with her, she knocked on doors and engaged parents in conversations about early literacy learning. She described her approach to leadership as:

> *It's not about telling somebody how to do something. It's about saying how we're going to do this together. So from my point of view, I think in terms of leadership in communities and probably leadership in general, it should always be from the approach of, okay, you know this is where we are, these are some of things we'd like to do, how are we going to get there as a team, you know.*

When several mothers expressed interest in assisting their children's literacy development, the Director seized the opportunity to investigate existing early literacy programs with them. She gained funding from the local Rio Tinto mine to fly with several mothers to Melbourne (first time for some) to investigate the Home Interaction Program

for Parents and Youngsters (Hippy). The mothers found this, and other existing early literacy programs, unsuitable for their children.

Consequently, the teacher/director set about to engage the parents to work side by side with her to develop their own program (PaL) using carefully selected literature that supported community beliefs and values. One of the parents who was instrumental in developing PaL explained: "*PaL is a success because we knew the Hippy Program wouldn't work… I said our children are not going to understand that… we need to do our own. And we did it our way you know*." Another remarked,

> *We made the game. We took it, tested [it] with our kids. We're sitting there and writing things down and saying, 'Oh, we should change it this way, this way and that.' And then we went back [to the preschool] and said, 'Okay. This is the game. This is how you're going to play the game because this is how the kids played it.'*

The program is overseen by a board that consists of local parents, an Aboriginal community council member and the current preschool teacher/director. The board employs a program manager (past teacher/director); coordinators; and local community tutors. Members of the board make decisions and provide strategic advice on the running of the program. The local coordinators assist with the training of the tutors, payment of wages and bills, management of rosters, and the organization and maintenance of the resources. All of the people employed in PaL, in the past and present, are parents who chose to engage with their children in the program. From their experience as a parent in PaL they have been encouraged and supported to train as tutors to help others get involved in the program. Some tutors have taken up coordinator roles and/or positions on the board. Others have moved on to take up paid jobs in the wider community.

The partnership model at Napranum, characterised by shared responsibility and leadership, appears to have had an empowering effect resulting in "power to" rather than "power over" these parents.

Parent participation affects

Participation in PaL appears to have been instrumental in building parents' self-esteem. The teacher/director reported that when many parents first become involved in the program they are often reticent, "*they hardly say two words to you*". Then after participation in the program, and support and training to become a tutor, they appear to have the courage to go out and look for other jobs. Some parents have gone on to fulltime jobs, for example, driving trucks in the local mine. Many parents spoke of the empowering affect their involvement in PaL had on them. Here is one example:

> *Yeah, it started, because I was a parent and after my daughter finished her two years and someone asked me if I wanted to be a tutor so it just went from then, like we became a tutor from a parent and took on six families, went out into the community once or twice a week and then moved onto being a coordinator … and it's just like a stepping stone for the parents I suppose.*

> *All of the parents that have come through as tutors have moved on to bigger and better things. We can't sort of hold the parents back for maybe not even a year because they just moved on to other things.*

The perceived success of PaL also seemed to inspire others. The story of one of the founding parents who is now a coordinator of PaL was described by community member in the following way:

> *From doing PaL she's more confident in speaking, like, she goes and addresses all these people. I went with them to Melbourne. We went with (sic) a big conference they had, from all over the world. She's got her driver's licence. She's got a steady income. Now, she's flying halfway around Australia, all these places that I've never been… She's planning to start a business with her partner.*

Findings and discussion

The distributive leadership approach outlined in this study provides a picture of home-school partnerships that are more inclusive and interactive than are generally seen in most remote indigenous schools. Typically, leadership is one way: the cultural knowledge, mainstream views, and social practices of the educated professionals are

communicated to parents and the community; whilst the cultural knowledge and strengths of parents are overlooked or undervalued (Daniel, 2005; Priest et al., 2008; Shepherd & Walker, 2008). The model presented here, however, facilitates the acquisition of relevant social and cultural capital both ways (Priest et al, 2008). Both ways means that equal value and respect are afforded to indigenous and non-indigenous cultures - the knowledge, beliefs, opinions, ideas, skills and motivations of community members are actively sought, encouraged, and utilized: something that a one-way approach does not do. It is seen as just as important for teachers and school leaders to acquire relevant indigenous social and cultural capital as it is for indigenous parents and community members to acquire non-indigenous social and cultural capital. When relationships are established on mutual trust and respect, social and cultural capital are valued and embraced both ways. It starts with a relationship (Priest et al., 2008), and only then can issues related to disadvantage and power be understood and ameliorated.

This study illustrates how teacher leaders might be opportunistic and strategic in developing a relationship with parents and other community members, flexible and responsive to their ideas, and able to tailor practices to be context specific for each community. The teacher/director in this case study capitalised on the interest of parents in preparing their children for school by promoting the idea of a home literacy program, and together with parents examined current programs in use in other contexts. When these were found to be inappropriate she drew on their cultural knowledge and values to create the resources needed to refine a program that addressed their specific needs. When facilitating the development and implementation of the program she provided clear direction on its purpose, and appropriate ongoing structure and support for the training of parents, tutors and coordinators and governance to ensure its sustainability for their children.

The partnership between parents, teachers and community members appears to operate in a space (not a physical space) where everyone listens to each other respectfully and the cultural knowledge and experiences of the parents and community, along with the knowledge and experiences of the teachers and teacher/directors, are given equal importance. The space has no defined boundaries and therefore membership and participation is fluid with the inherent processes and interactions often spilling into the wider community. Within the space, all stakeholders are regarded as potential agents in establishing and sustaining home-school partnerships and acknowledge the rights of each stakeholder to decide when, if, and how to exercise agency. Thus leadership and the responsibility for PaL have the potential to be assumed by any, or all of the participants. Power and control do not reside with the school and remain unchallenged. Instead it is a co-constructed space in which both school and community contribute.

Case Study 4: Leadership for Literacy Learning in Practice: A Remote Indigenous School Case Study

An extract from Lovett, S. & Flückiger, B. The impact and effects of attempts to implement leadership for reading 'both ways': A case study in an Indigenous school. International Journal of Educational Leadership, Policy and Practice. Vol 29, No 2 (pp 18 - 31).

Context

The case study is of a remote Indigenous community school with a high staff turnover. It is one of eight schools in the PALLIC project which agreed to a site visit by two researchers. Data for this discussion are drawn from interviews with the principal, teachers and Indigenous Leadership Partners detailing the practical actions they had taken to improve children's reading abilities at home and school. For the purposes of the project Indigenous Leadership Partners were defined as community members who worked with the school to enhance students' learning and achievement. Each group of participants had a tailored set of interview questions aligned with the project's three research questions, namely:

- What are the necessary leadership capabilities and practices to link the work of leadership teams to Indigenous student literacy learning and achievement? What works and why?
- What actions do principals and leadership teams need to take to form productive partnerships with Indigenous school-community leaders, parents and families over the teaching of reading? What works and why?
- What are the overall effects of the actions of leadership teams, parent and family partnerships on Indigenous children's learning and achievement in reading?

The interview data are presented and discussed in relation to five of the dimensions of the blueprint (see Figure 1) beginning with parent and community support for learning.

Linking the interview data to the leadership blueprint (framework) dimensions (three of eight are included here)

Dimension: 'Parent and Community Support'

The blueprint's dimension 'Parent and Community Support' for learning was a focus area for this case study school. The school's principal was deliberate in her work to foster relationships with the community and gain their support. As a result, connections with parents and the wider community were reported as strengthening.

The creation of a formal Indigenous Leadership Partner position, advocated in the PALLIC project, emphasised the importance of Indigenous leaders working with the school to raise literacy achievement and supplemented the principal's ongoing work. The designated Indigenous Leadership Partner worked at the school and in the community on matters related to children's learning. She chaired the school's Governing Council and was engaged in shared decision making with the principal. The value of this partnership for both the principal and the Indigenous Leadership Partners was evident in the interviews and was demonstrated in practice when we sat in the principal's office noticing there were two desks – one for the principal and the other for Indigenous Leadership Partners. Similarly, Aboriginal Education Workers (AEWs) worked alongside teachers in the classrooms demonstrating parent and community support for their children and the work of the school.

The principal described the strength of the home, school and community partnership by saying:

> *People come to us constantly for support on matters of importance. I might have 30 community people coming in to see me about something in a day.*

Likewise parents went to the principal with their ideas. The principal revealed in her interview they often said things like "oh you should try this... or you should do this...or how about?"

The parents and community members appeared comfortable and confident coming and going in the school which was a positive indicator of the principal's flexibility and welcoming attitude. The principal told us her mission was to ensure the school was 'a family-friendly place' and it was. For example, a cot was set up near the administrative assistant's desk to support this young mother to continue working after her baby was born. Further evidence of parents and families coming into the school was the informal presence of mothers and pre-school age children reading the captions accompanying photographs of children on the walls in the school office and outside classrooms. Similarly, mothers could be found sitting in the staffroom reading picture books to their pre-schoolers. These examples show the strong connection that exists between home and school and the value that parents place on the school's program. That the mothers came to the school of their own accord was a healthy indicator that they felt welcome at any time and did not have to wait for formal invitations.

To promote the family-friendly environment, the principal told us she had cautioned the teachers to be flexible and give parents time saying:

> *…things don't always happen to schedule here... you take opportunities as they arise and moreover, until there's a really good relationship, a trusting relationship between parents and a teacher, things may not happen. People have*

> *to get to know you… People have to know that you are really interested in their kids and their families. They have to see you out there.*

This strong relationship was apparent beyond the school's gates. For example, the principal said that when staff go to the shop, "a lot of people who are sitting out the front of the shop, walk up and say 'hello' to the staff'. Greeting one another was seen as an important part of relationship building. Another example was the principal's insistence that teachers walk rather than drive to school in order to maximise opportunities for informal talks with parents and children beyond the school. The following advice was offered to new staff by the principal:

> *If you are going to come out here you might as well get to know everyone. Don't hide in your house. You don't just have to hang out with whitefellas. Get out there. Get known. Be part of the community, learn the language, interact with people, learn how to communicate with them. Make it the best experience you possibly can because you've left your family somewhere else and the community will take you on.*

Such empathy meant the parents and the children regarded the school as an integral part of their community. One illustration of this was when the children and their parents noticed the principal painting the administration block at the weekend and volunteered their help. Involvement of families in the painting created a strong sense of pride which extended into further enhancement projects (eg traditional art panels for the walls outside the classrooms). Similarly, major landscaping projects added to the community's pride in the school with the addition of rainwater tanks, paving, grass and gardens and security lighting. In fact, the school had the only patch of green grass in the community which was an added reason for everyone to see the school as a special place in the community. These changes created excitement in the community and the staff believed they had a positive impact on student attendance. The principal informed us that some local women had organised an evening celebration with singing and dancing to mark the completion of the painting project signaling their appreciation of the principal's initiative to improve the school's facilities.

The weekly assembly was held outside the shop where parents congregated. Items were displayed to show parents the progress children were making. Following assemblies, a cup of tea was provided and parents were encouraged to move to the school for an Open Reading session on the grass or in classrooms. Community members showed their support of the children's learning by sharing in celebrations of success. One initiative to bring parents to the school's library for the library open night had not been deemed a success due to limited attendance but it was hoped that the refurbishment of the library would work to attract more interest from the community.

In summary, the dimension 'school and community partnership' was realised at the school through the principal making time to value community connections. Getting parents into the school to talk with the principal and celebrate learning were first steps in the development of deeper and stronger connections between home and school to promote children's learning.

Dimension: 'Leadership'

The second of the blueprint's dimensions, *'leadership',* was evident in the way leadership was shared with the Indigenous Leadership Partner. Leadership was not just the preserve of the school's principal. The Governing Council provided a 'sounding board' as well as advice around school improvement initiatives. The principal, along with the Council, was working hard to build relationships to connect the school with the community. We were told the council was 'a little bit disturbed that their kids were so far behind' and wanted all children reading at age-appropriate levels. That the Council members were concerned about the children's reading levels was evidence of the shared vision between the school and community and a positive indicator of the growing strength of the home-school and community connection.

It was clear from our interview with the principal that she saw the value of working with and through an Indigenous community member who was respected by the community. That role was described by the principal as:

> *She's the Aboriginal version of me. She line manages all the AEWs in our school, runs meetings between parents and teachers, listens to what parents are saying and lets the teacher know.*

In matters of behaviour support, the Indigenous Leadership Partners typically work with the principal and parent to resolve issues. One mother, on being asked, had sat in the classroom to encourage her child to support positive behaviour. The teacher recalled asking the parent 'can you sit in this class for a while please and just, help out?'

In the interview with teachers, mention was made of the value of the Aboriginal Education Workers (AEWs) in classrooms. The AEW's knowledge of the children's first language was a particular asset. The teachers explained that they often missed occurrences of subtle teasing amongst the children due to their lack of knowledge of children's first language. The AEWs were also valued for their contribution to the classroom culture and in scaffolding children's learning. The sporadic attendance of the AEWs, however, meant that some classrooms either did not receive consistent help from their allocated AEW or did not have an AEW.

In summary it was apparent that the community was responding favourably to strategies which created leadership opportunities for Indigenous people albeit involvement of a small number. Opportunities for shared leadership served as signals that Indigenous People's expertise mattered to the school.

Dimension: 'Curriculum and Teaching'

The importance of school-wide documentation to provide an anchor for class program design, teaching, and assessment was particularly important for a school with a constant staff turnover. A strategic plan had been developed that made reading a priority and a literacy plan instigated, framed around The Big 6 reading components. The literacy plan had clarified teacher expectations and was a first step in ensuring consistency in teaching approaches. A curriculum scope and sequence was being developed with established clear standards and targets for children's achievement.

We asked teachers about the impact of the literacy plan on work in classrooms. They said:

> *We're planning to improve peer benchmarking by at least one level next year... we have a set goal for sight words the kids have learnt at each stage... we're trying to model reading more within the community and in the classroom... So change the culture so the kids don't see reading as an intrusion. It's just something we do to develop our general skills, our English and communication skills'... 'We're working on material that we can put out there, into the community, on a regular basis as something that is valued'... 'The plan sets minimum targets to support learning'.*

The Big 6 was mentioned as a focus by the teachers who commented "it reminds us to focus on these particular aspects and constitutes a well-rounded literacy program". Another said, "it includes such things as oral language that in the past have not been a focus".

In relation to assessment, the teachers said:

> *We are now testing the same thing... The same style of tests, rather than being a hotch-potch, all over the place kind of testing. I think this gives us a bigger insight.*

Teachers used the results of tests to 'inform programs and find the learning gaps'. One teacher explained:

> *We're doing a literacy profile on each student so that, as the kids progress through the school, records will be added to and available to the next year's teacher.*

When asked how they taught reading, the teachers said, "role modelling was important". They sought opportunities for reading to be modelled beyond the classroom that included families. Reading was fostered in the community through the *Books in Homes* programme, sponsored by the local mining company. The programme provided books for children to take home and share with family members. To encourage the use of English by everyone in the community, large panels with lists of words were displayed in the school and outside the shop.

Next to each English word, the phonetic spelling of a spoken word from the community's oral first language was displayed.

Teachers admitted to a difficulty in providing appropriate texts to match children's interests. The difficulty, they pointed out, was because "some of the students are fifteen years old and just beginning to read and there is nothing appropriate for them to read". The problem of shame for these mature-aged students attempting to read material designed for the early years of schooling perpetuated avoidance behaviours which the teachers indicated was problematic.

The community and the school acknowledged the need to privilege traditional ways of learning in the school's program. Therefore, the staff were encouraged to accommodate traditional ways of learning in their pedagogical approaches. These included opportunities for children to watch, listen and talk with adults from the community who modelled cultural ways of doing things. Teachers identified that there was a cultural pattern of reluctance to answer direct questions amongst children and had learnt to look for and interpret non-verbal cues and responses (head nods and eyebrow lifts) when they interacted with them. Likewise, they observed that Indigenous children were physical risk takers in their community and in their outdoor play at school but not within the classrooms. For example, children were reluctant to provide answers verbally or in written form in case the answer was wrong. If wrong, they would "lose face" amongst their peers. Teachers were employing strategies to encourage risk taking. These included allowing children to use an eraser to "fix up mistakes".

Cultural traditions, planned cooperatively with community members, were a central feature of the school program. Examples of these included a dance competition, bush trips, damper making, roo tail cooking and painting. Recognition of the Indigenous setting was also noted when we encountered one teacher who was creating personalised reading material in the children's first language based on the children's community experiences.

All of the teachers were very aware that the language of school was not the children's first language. In one classroom we noted the teacher had created a programme to enter the 'pidgin sound system' on the electronic whiteboard. We observed children working independently with this program mimicking the sounds of their first language. Thus, the importance of maintaining both languages was being made explicit in one classroom programme and was another indicator of the growing links between home and school.

An extremely powerful message about language difference was the principal's view that the teachers had a language deficit, not the children. She said:

> *We don't have the language to bring children's knowledge out...we always talk about what kids bring to school but when we don't have the language, it's really hard to acknowledge what they bring to school and it just gets lost... so unfortunate.*

The importance of speaking the language of the community was realised by the principal who spoke their language. We could see clear gains from her ability to communicate in terms of the community's willingness to participate in the life of the school evidenced with her presence, reassurance and translation assistance whilst we conducted the research interviews.

Public recognition of success was a key feature of the classroom programs. The weekly assemblies were occasions for the children to demonstrate their reading and writing abilities. Inside the classroom, children's successes were further acknowledged on charts with stickers attached to their desks or the classroom walls to recognise achievement gains.

In summarising the impact of attention to the dimension 'curriculum and teaching', it can be said that efforts to create clarity of intent through planning and assessment documents matter. Also important are ways to invite Indigenous input into what is taught and utilising cultural ways of learning. A focus on each of these dimensions

has the potential to make a 'both ways' leadership approach an appealing mode of leading in Indigenous school communities.

Overall effects

The overall effect of the "both ways" approach to leading literacy learning in the case study school, although still in its early development, is that the approach itself is affirming for the school's community. The case study principal's open door to the school's community has helped to make the school a focal point in the community, a place for their children to learn and for parents and community members to contribute and celebrate achievements. Time spent 'yarning' with parents about how to improve their children's literacy learning is, according to Flűckiger, Diamond and Jones (2012), crucial:

> [Indigenous]Children and their parents have for too long been given the 'story line' that 'they' must remain unheard and suppressed at the margins of school, unable to voice their 'we' (p.54).

Instead the "both ways" leadership intent is to signal that the community voice is important and to build intercultural spaces that allow dialogue to occur. Hernandez and Kose (2012) say intercultural sensitivity needs to be included in principal preparation, practice and research. The "both ways" leadership approach is one way that doors can be opened to share expertise and engage in meaningful decision making about how best to help children learn at school. Schools need to work 'with' not 'on' parents if they are to satisfy their goal of helping children learn and achieve.

Case Study 5: Leadership for Learning in Practice: A Regional/Urban School Case Study

An extract from Johnson, G., Dempster, N., McKenzie, L., Klieve, H., Flückiger, B., Lovett, S., Riley, T., & Webster, A. (2014). *Principals as literacy leaders with Indigenous communities: Leadership for learning to read – 'Both ways'*. **Canberra: The Australian Primary Principals Association (pp 100 – 105).**

Context

This case study describes the leadership actions in a rural school located on the outskirts of an urban city as it seeks to improve children's literacy outcomes before, throughout and after its involvement in the PALLIC project. The school cohort is comprised of 573 children, 30% of whom identify as Indigenous, accommodated in 24 classes. The school exists in an area with an increasingly lower socio-economic index. The school is experiencing expanding enrolment and has a master plan to extend its facilities to accommodate the new arrivals.

This account documents the combined results of three focus group interviews conducted on the primary school campus over four hours in September, 2012. The commentary is based on thematic analysis of handwritten notes by the interviewers, and transcriptions from the audio-recorded data, cross checked against the school's self-evaluation report. The focus group interviews represent one of the many research and professional development activities of the PALLIC project which provided an opportunity for all participants to contribute. The focus groups were divided as follows: the school's leadership team, Prep to Year 3 classroom teachers, and the Indigenous Leadership Partners/ILPs.

At this school, their NAPLAN data has continued a downward trend in the face of the growth over the past few years. The explicit teaching of the Big Six in reading is targeted as the key way to uplift literacy performance. Resources have been channelled into professional development for teachers and teachers' aides so as to build a consistent and knowledgeable framework for teaching reading across the school in the longer term.

Leadership

The formal leadership team, which meets weekly, includes the principal, the deputy, the business services manager, the head of curriculum, the support teacher – literacy and numeracy, and the head of special education. The female principal sees herself as ultimately accountable to the system for all the school's decisions. She line manages all of the teachers who work across 24 classrooms. She is also responsible for the management for about seven people attached to the school inside and outside the classrooms. Teachers credited the principal with not only finding resources to support development of a reading curriculum, but also for initiating and implementing the "book bag" curriculum support resource project for teachers and teachers' aides, across the school.

It is apparent that leadership for learning is shared albeit informally, with the two ILPs and the Indigenous teachers' aides at the school. Only one of the two designated PALLIC Indigenous leaders, is employed part-time at the school. The other works off-site in a non-school educational centre and is not paid by the school. Both are parents of children at the school. They communicate informally (and when necessary) with the principal while communicating by e-mail with the teachers, usually as initiated by the non-Indigenous teachers. Nevertheless, teachers reported that the Indigenous partners *make the in-between really comfortable*. That is, the Indigenous school partners engage, support, and work with parents (especially with parents of chronic absentees), which is helpful to the teachers.

It is apparent from the analysis of the focus group data generated from the principal, the teachers and the ILPs that the work of the ILPs (also parents of children at the school) is central to school improvement in reading in four ways. Their leadership, although not recognised at a formal level is apparent in four areas:

1. introducing teachers to Indigenous parents;
2. lessening the divide between hard to reach Indigenous parents and the school by facilitating home visits, "knocking on doors," independently, or with the school principal;
3. updating curricular resources for teachers and for children' home study; and
4. participating in small group teaching of reading/spelling, etc., with children in classrooms under the direction of teachers.

Yet, although the two ILPs were included in the leadership team focus group, it became apparent that they do not have regularly scheduled meetings with either the principal, or as part of the curriculum meetings with teachers.

Key messages

- The ILPs are not seen as members of the formal leadership team: yet they do share leadership roles with the team; Leadership for learning is still mainly seen as the role of the formal leadership team and the teachers.
- There are school wide systems in place.

Partnerships

Partnerships at this school include:

1. In school: Indigenous Teaching Assistants are working alongside teachers. As one ILP commented, PALLIC has given me the confidence just to really sort of say well I'm in partnership with the principal.
2. Some parents are involved in the school but the harsh realities of life (alcohol abuse, no food in the house, physical abuse, children in care) for many of the Indigenous families are seen as constraints on their consistent involvement.
3. Across school and community partnerships with Indigenous parents are brokered by the ILPs in that they are seen as 'able to get in the front door' to assure parents that there is support available for them through the school. The principal is trying to implement parental playgroups into the school, together with 'Ready Readers' to try to get as many parents into the school as early as possible, with the acknowledgement that it is difficult to engage most parents in the school's learning activities. The ILPs see their roles as:

- Building relationships between the school and families (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) and outside agencies (e.g., health services).
- Building supportive relationships between non-reading families and their children who are learning to read.
- Allocating literacy resources to families (the 'books in homes' program).

Key messages

- The principal, the teachers and the ILPs report consistently that they are making a difference to the way Indigenous families and children engage with schooling.
- The school is crucial in brokering partnerships between Indigenous families and outside agencies (e.g., health and social services).
- Although there is not yet a great deal of evidence that families are supporting reading, word is getting out across the whole school-community, via the ILPs, that there is a need for all parents to support the school's effort to teach children to read (to get their child ready for prep)… but the challenge is to give each parent, as an individual, the skills that they can work from…. Teaching parents that they can code switch.

Language

There was some evidence of the importance of the first language for Indigenous children, reported by the ILPs only. For example, one of the ILPs took 5-10 minutes of class-time to teach all of the children to read and sing 'Twinkle Twinkle Little Star' in her mother tongue to demonstrate to Indigenous children that they too could learn another language, English. However, there is no evidence that Indigenous children are taught in English and Indigenous language when learning to read.

Key message

- Little evidence of the inclusion of Indigenous language in the school's literacy curriculum. (Note that this school has just over a quarter of its cohort identified as Indigenous). This was the only mention of code-switching at the school.

Literacy learning

The school employs a literacy coach. The staff reported that PALLIC just slotted perfectly into the school's approach to the literacy learning curriculum, which already was focused on reading improvement for all children. They considered they were already doing the Big Five, and therefore refocused their literacy program on *oral language* to build the Big Six. The newly instituted plan for playgroups is assisting in building oral language capability between parents and children. School wide professional development in explicit teaching of literacy using the John Fleming method: '*I do, we do, you do*' and capacity building for teaching aspects of the Big Six, for example, the *Jolly Phonics* program, were outsourced to national providers. Mostly the professional development program is conducted 'in-house' with teachers learning from each other and sharing materials. The overall aim of all professional development in literacy is consistency and sustainability.

As a result of the explicit teaching focus, across the school, reading lessons are scripted so that children receive a consistent message as they progress. Designating the library as a reading zone within the school has had a 'huge spinoff' in terms of children and teacher motivation. All children are placed into streamed reading groups and are well resourced with reading materials. The ILPs see literacy as the key to change for a better life for Indigenous children and feel that PALLIC has given them the opportunity for the encouragement of more Indigenous families to support reading at home.

The school is mindful of seeking evidence of the impact of the school literacy plan in the community. One ILP observed that parents are using word games while shopping at the supermarket. This is an example of environmental literacy and language at work in the community to support reading.

The school wide literacy plan is discussed and decided on by the principal and the teachers. There is no evidence that the ILPs are integral to the formal planning and goal setting for literacy improvement, at this stage. This year has been a year of consolidation whereby literacy benchmarks were retained and efforts were made to develop a staff mindset that *a higher target is achievable*. The principal is leading the staff to read and discuss the NAPLAN data as a mirror of their success, rather than as evidence of children's failure to meet national benchmarks.

Key messages

- Professional development is important for the principal and the teachers.
- Since the introduction of the "Big Six" teachers have a common language around the components of a reading program.
- There is no evidence of literacy professional development for the ILPs.
- Consistency is important for sustainability and improved literacy targets for the school.

Traditional ways of learning

Key message

- There was little evidence that the school encouraged traditional ways of learning beyond isolated incidents initiated by the ILPs.

Environment

All participants in the focus groups displayed an intense pride in their school. One participant reported, The tide's turning green because I've had a couple of emails from parents who want to make sure their children can get into the prep class in 2014.

The principal reiterated that the leadership team was focused on all children having the potential to be high achievers and part of that aspiration included creating a calm, controlled environment where kids can reach great heights. It can't of course do that if the classrooms are chaotic and systems aren't in place for following through. Therefore, the principal has put in place a positive behaviour support committee. Parents are welcomed into the school. For example, there is a consistent system in place to include parents in the planning for their child's success.

> *..our first parent teacher interview at about half way through term one, has become a goal setting interview … here is what we are doing at school and here is how you can help at home.*

Key messages

- All parents are welcomed into the school, and a very high proportion of parents are attending meetings and interviews with teachers to learn more about supporting their child's learning at home.
- Good behaviour is seen as integral to the school's learning environment, not as a negative form of constraint.
- There is an overall belief by all staff that all children can and will achieve in the longer term.

School attendance

Attendance currently stands at 95%. The ILPs are crucial in keeping up the attendance of Indigenous children. The home liaison officer (also an ILP) visits families of chronic absentees and tells them about the school's 'every day counts' program. Parental play groups and Ready Readers are two ways that the school is trying to communicate the benefits of regular attendance. Breakfast, other food and clean clothes are provided for children in need. The opening hours of the school shop are aligned to school opening time so that children arrive in classrooms fed and ready for the school day.

Key messages

- A consistent approach to the maintenance of high levels of school attendance is considered important by the principal, the teachers and the ILPs.
- The leadership team acknowledged the many social and cultural factors involved in getting Indigenous children to attend school regularly in planning strategies and current initiatives.

Conclusion

In considering the research questions we note that the principal is very focused on leading the school to greater achievement in children's outcomes. She recalls, *When I first came I said, "I'm going to be here until [school name] is a high performing school, or it kills me, whatever comes first*". All staff interviewed shared the school vision and had a very energetic approach to assisting the principal in strategizing for improved outcomes. At the same time, the principal is fostering a high level of teacher leadership in 'in-school' professional development by staff as a means of building a highly qualified cohort of staff.

There is the distinct belief evident in the focus group data that there is a great deal of work to be done before the school reaches its goal. A key concern is that, as the school expands, so too do the numbers of children enrolling from families who live below the poverty line. These children are fed and clothed by the school on a needs basis. This is an example of the school's moral purpose in providing a quality education for all children.

A move to a distributed leadership model is in transition. As mentioned, earlier, the ILPs are not part of the formal leadership team and they are not always included in professional development. However, their involvement in PALLIC has acted as a form of professional development that has been most appreciated and used as a means, not only to create good relationships between the ILPs and the principal and the teachers, but also to expand knowledge about the teaching of reading. PALLIC has also enabled the ILP who is not employed at the school to create bonds between the

The school is not performing at a high level in literacy (as evidenced in the NAPLAN scores) yet the leadership strategies in place are realistic and seek sustainable improvement. Overall the ILPs are integral to setting the scene for leadership for learning initiatives by the principal and the teachers. The next step is clearly the integration of the skills of the ILPs with the school's model of instructional leadership.