

DEVELOPING A MODEL OF
CURRICULUM LEADERSHIP FOR
EFFECTIVE LEARNING AND TEACHING
FROM TEACHERS' NARRATIVES

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Paper Title: Developing a model of curriculum leadership for effective learning and teaching from teachers' narratives.

Abstract:

This paper presents a view of curriculum leadership which recognises that all teachers can exercise curriculum leadership by proposing ideas, assisting in the interpretation of broad policy documents and developing materials or local policy initiatives. Indeed, any initiative which leads to more effective learning and teaching may be regarded as curriculum leadership.

This view of curriculum leadership developed from a 1994 study which led to a number of propositions about curriculum leadership in such areas as the way in which teachers think about effective learning and teaching; the social climate within a school or learning setting; and the organisational structure of that school/setting.

As a means of developing these propositions into a model of curriculum leadership for effective learning and teaching, a number of teachers at a small number of school sites were invited during 1995 to produce narratives about their experiences in relation to curriculum leadership.

The model of curriculum leadership for effective learning and teaching is presented as a means of celebrating the centrality of teachers as curriculum leaders both now and in the future. In addition, the research approach and methodology used to develop the model during 1995 are outlined.

The research reported in this paper used a critical collaborative action research approach and, in particular, a narrative methodology for the collection of data.

Descriptors:

Curriculum leadership for effective learning and teaching

Critical collaborative action research

Narrative methodology

INTRODUCTION

This paper presents a view of curriculum leadership which recognises that all teachers can exercise curriculum leadership by proposing ideas, assisting in the interpretation of broad policy documents and developing materials or local policy initiatives. Indeed, any initiative which leads to more effective learning and teaching may be regarded as curriculum leadership. The context for this paper is set within the State Education Departments statement re principles for effective learning and teaching.

This view of curriculum leadership developed from a 1994 study which led to a number of propositions about curriculum leadership in such areas as the ways in which teachers think about effective learning and teaching; the social climate within a school or learning setting; and the organisational structure of that school/setting. The 1994 study and the emerging propositions are outlined.

As a means of developing these propositions into a model of curriculum leadership for effective learning and teaching, a number of teachers at

four school sites were invited during 1995 to produce narratives about their experiences in relation to curriculum leadership. The 1995 study is reported and plans for further study in 1996 and 1997 are identified.

The model of curriculum leadership for effective learning and teaching is presented as a means of celebrating the centrality of teachers as curriculum leaders both now and in the future.

The overall research approach (Action Research that is both critical and collaborative); for the 1994 and 1995 studies and the narrative methodology used in the 1995 study are defined.

CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND FOR THE STUDIES

The Queensland Department of Education has identified the notion of effective learning and teaching as central to its mission. The establishment of an Effective Learning and Teaching Unit within its Studies Directorate demonstrates the significance of the issue. This significance is further illustrated by the inclusion of the concept in the Department's Corporate Plan 1995-99, its Social Justice Strategy statement 1994-98, and in the draft Inclusive Curriculum Standard.

A series of Principles of Effective Learning and Teaching, which articulated the Department's position regarding effectiveness, was developed in 1993. These principles were derived from a review of exemplary practices in years P-12 across the state, and from an extensive literature review. The Principles were developed collaboratively with approximately 200 teachers, and drafts were circulated to all State Schools for comment during the developmental stage.

The five Principles are as follows:

.Effective learning and teaching is founded on an understanding of the learner.

.Effective learning and teaching requires active construction of meaning.

.Effective learning and teaching enhances and is enhanced by a supportive and challenging environment.

.Effective learning and teaching is enhanced through worthwhile learning partnerships.

.Effective learning and teaching shapes and responds to social and cultural contexts.

The rationale in developing the Principles was to formulate a corporate position on learning and teaching which would draw attention to exemplary practices that would enhance learning and assist individual school communities in this task. They were designed to focus on the fact that effective learning and teaching is not a final state to be achieved but, rather, a way of thinking about learning and teaching so that continual improvement occurs. Similarly, they were designed to highlight the fact that the school is a learning community and learning refers to all members in the community. Thus, the Principles were seen as underpinning teacher learning as much as student learning.

In 1994 a statement of the Principles was distributed to all State Schools together with a set of possible awareness raising activities. In a letter to School Principals, the Director General of Education

indicated that every Principal should take up these suggestions in order to introduce the Principles into the school communities for which they were responsible.

THE 1994 STUDY

With this as background, a collaborative project involving members of the Department's Effective Learning and Teaching Unit and members of

the QUT Research Concentration in Curriculum Decision Making was undertaken to focus on the impact of these initiatives. The funding for this research was provided by both the University and the Department of Education. The aim of the project was to identify the extent to which teachers felt that their existing practices were in harmony with the Principles, the extent to which the Principles influenced their practice, and particular conditions that were conducive to changing practice to be more in harmony with the Principles.

Two parallel studies were conducted as part of that project. One study involved 528 teachers from five educational regions in a quantitative study of levels of awareness and use of the Principles. The other study was a more intensive examination of the practices within eight schools associated with the introduction of the Principles.

Some important findings emerged from this project. In the sample of teachers investigated, 13% felt that they fully understood the Principles' wider implications, and 25% claimed that they understood the underlying educational approach embodied in the Principles, and 27% reported that they were "just aware" of the statement. There were also some significant differences across educational Regions, with at least one Region containing a significantly higher proportion of the teachers unaware of the existence of the Principles. These data clearly highlight the importance of dissemination if the Principles are to have the impact that the Department of Education is seeking.

Of those who were aware of the Principles, only 1% thought that the Principles were irrelevant to their teaching, whereas 21% thought that they were a realistic basis for learning and teaching. In addition, it was found that 28% of the sample investigated stated that they desired further information about the Principles.

In general the study concluded that while the initiative and its documents had been useful in assisting a number of teachers to improve practice, the impact was uneven across schools and even within schools.

In this sense, the fact that both projects highlighted the importance of leadership in schools is significant. The broad conclusions are based around five integrated themes.

A. The language of the documents.

Concern was expressed that the documentation was couched in language which encouraged teachers to think of the Principles in a competency framework, compared to a developmental framework. As a consequence they felt that each principle was to be mastered and, once mastered, could be put aside. Instead, the intention of the initiative was to encourage development of learning and teaching at all levels within the school.

A more "user friendly" document would have been appreciated.

B.Schools as learning communities.

A general conclusion from both Project A and Project B was that schools

did not see themselves as learning communities. In broad terms it may be concluded that strategies are needed which assist schools to adopt a more critical and developmental approach to their work and address the view that learning is applicable to all members of a school community - not just students.

C.Leadership in schools.

These projects point to the need for leadership to be developed at all levels in the school. There is a need to move away from the view of leadership as management. What is required is a view of curriculum leadership which includes an holistic view of planning; strategies of assessment and reporting in terms of a well constructed learning and development framework and a pedagogy which is continually being addressed.

D.Prioritising Initiatives.

Many schools reported that they were often inundated with a range of initiative and found it difficult to integrate such initiatives into a coherent plan. Again this points to the need for leadership skills so that school staff can develop comprehensive and inclusive views of curriculum. At the same time, principals need to know the relative importance of different system initiatives.

E.Conditions of development.

With all initiatives, time is a crucial factor and this is no exception. From this study it is clear that time is essential if perceptions and values are to be addressed. All studies on curriculum change point to the importance of available time in introducing change. In this sense, change must be conceived in terms of altering perceptions, values and attitudes and not about doing things.

A number of propositions about curriculum leadership were developed as a means of reflecting on the 1994 study and preparing a research agenda for 1995, 1996 and 1997.

These propositions are as follows are contained in Appendix A.

THE 1995 STUDY
Overview

The Study in 1995 developed from the 1994 study and continued within an overall Action Research approach that is both critical and collaborative.

The strength of the action research methodology for these studies is its capacity to inform and empower the practitioners. This results in teaching staff who can identify, implement and monitor the changes necessary to achieve effective learning and teaching in schools (Kemmis, 1990). The principles for conducting such research are framed by both theoretical considerations (see Kemmis and McTaggart, 1988; Aspland, Macpherson, Proudford, and Whitemore, 1996) and outcomes of other ARC collaborative Projects using similar methodologies (see Arcodia, Gorman, Macpherson, Shepherd, and Trost, 1994; Macpherson, Trost, Gorman, Shepherd, & Arcodia, 1994). Such an approach allows for:

- .developing understandings of the complex nature of curriculum leadership noted above;
- .the development of a grounded theory about such leadership;
- .the ongoing reflection upon and reconstruction of this theory, and
- .appropriate actions focussed towards empowerment of teachers as curriculum leaders to transform curriculum practice within the context of policy initiatives about effective learning and teaching.

This Collaborative Action Research methodology (Kemmis and McTaggart, 1988) of plan, act, observe and reflect (Kemmis, 1987) underpins work done in 1994, being done in 1995, and projected for 1996 and 1997.

The purpose of the 1995 study was to develop the above propositions into a model of curriculum leadership for effective learning and teaching. The study was seen as a pilot study for further work in 1996 and 1997. The study proceeded within the Action Research approach described above.

It was decided to develop a model of curriculum leadership, based on both the teachers' narratives about curriculum leadership for effective learning and teaching and a critical reflection on them.

Four schools (two primary and two secondary) agreed to participate in the 1995 pilot study and each school was initially visited by members of the Research Team in order to explain the study and to meet participating teachers. The schools were also visited on later occasions during the study.

Methodology Used

The 1995 study sits comfortably within a narrative framework (Clandinin

and Connelly, 1990). There exists a growing literature in this field that argues this to be the most appropriate research framework for research set in school contexts. A range of authors have successfully incorporated narratives as a central feature in the analysis of teachers' professional knowledge (Clandinin and Connelly, 1988, 1990, 1992; Connelly and Clandinin, 1988; Johnston, M., 1990; Johnston, S., 1988, 1990; Miller, 1992; Paley, 1990). Carter (1993) argues that narratives are the most successful way to access teachers' thinking about their practice. Teachers best know their teaching practice, for as Connelly and Clandinin argue, the teaching episodes, such as the ones under investigation here, are "narratives in action", expressions of themselves and their thinking in a particular situation. They put the case that teachers know their teaching experientially through "images, rituals, habits, cycles, routines and rhythms" (Clandinin and Connelly, 1985:195).

Gough (1994) argues that a way of interpreting narrative as "fiction", maybe more useful in research enquires of this nature, for it offers to the research community greater opportunity to generate links between existing practices or "present reality" and "past or future possibilities" that have emerged or are likely to emerge in teachers' work. (Gough, 1994:47). Such opportunities, it is contended here, are likely to be more enriching than the simple interpretation of narrative which traditionally has been arrived at through processes reflection and reflexivity that often times fall short of the proactive thinking that is essential to the success of projects such as these. Moreover the specific development of the narrative advocated by Gough (1994) proposes that the use of fiction brings to the research context a "diffracting lens" - a phenomena that is useful in the reconstruction of teachers' curriculum thinking.

The study proceeded in four phases.

Phase One

Writing Narratives

Each teacher in the study was asked to write a narrative about their practice. Such writing focused on a significant teaching episode/s that teachers identified as having meaning in light of the research propositions that initiated the development of this study. The outcomes of such writing which were to be completed individually, became the basis for discussion in Phase Two. (See Appendix B for materials used in generating the narratives).

The rationale underpinning this activity can be found in the work of Burgess (1981) who argues that writing of this nature is useful as an aid to recalling events and enriching the content of conversations. Further, the value of writing as a vehicle for self discovery and a way of personal learning (Patterson, Stansell and Lee, 1990) will encourage

all participants to gain insights into their existing practices with a view to better understanding why they do things the way they do at this point in time. A narrative that is written and interpreted as a form of fiction is seen to be invaluable in this context based on the argument offered by Gough (1994) for, not only does it offer teachers an opportunity to reflect on their practice and engage in critical analysis of their curriculum work but it brings to this research forum a focus on possibilities for future action. "Writing in fictional form enables familiar ideas and experiences to be brought into new relationships and new ideas to be set along side the familiar" (Gough, 1994:59). This is achieved through the research strategy that Gough entitles "diffraction", a process central to shaping the dialogue inherent in Phase Two.

Phase Two

Narratives - The Focus of Conversations

In Phase Two of the study teachers were called together in small groups of two or three and together with the researchers "told their stories" using their written narratives as the basis of interactions. While the researchers were catalysts in generating conversation (rather than conducting an interview) their role was mainly that of active listener and prompter. The key shaping factor of this process was the notion of "diffraction" juxtaposed with the process of reflection. It became the responsibility of the researchers to prompt the discussion beyond reflection towards the generation of future possibilities through the process of diffractive dialogue, a process that not only recognises the significance of past or present actions but also opens up and disperses the conceptualisation of future possibilities that are dialectically situated within the complex processes of transformative curriculum decision making. The teachers engaged in conversations that were not simply idle chatter; but that incorporated a complex exchange of key concepts emerging from the written narratives.

Phase Three

Preliminary Data Analysis

Based on the recorded conversations, together with the written narratives, members of the Research Team (for each of the four schools) completed an initial analysis of the data and generated first round propositions for consideration by the entire Research Team in Phase Four.

Phase Four

Collective Conversation

The research community of each school were called together on site to discuss the propositions generated by the Researchers on their behalf. During this meeting a process of clarification and future diffraction

occurred as the text of the preliminary analysis was considered and redeveloped, reshaped or rejected according to the wishes of the group.

The group also added propositions that may have been overlooked by the Researchers.

This phase clarified and elucidated the nature of teachers' curriculum work as it has emerged within the social and material relations within differing school communities. In so doing it addressed the historical, cultural and political constructs of such relations and offered opportunities for the Research Team to examine how things got to be the way they were in specific contexts. More importantly, through the process of further diffraction, in support of the process of reflection on action, this phase generated the collective consideration of possibilities that must be addressed if teachers' curriculum work is to be reshaped in positive ways that enhance learning and teaching in this era of tremendous upheaval. It was at this stage that a model of curriculum leadership emerged.

CURRICULUM LEADERSHIP FOR EFFECTIVE LEARNING AND TEACHING

What is the Literature Saying?

Leadership is well recognised as a key phenomenon in considering how organisational priorities can be realised in a diverse range of settings, including education and curriculum (Sergiovanni, 1984). Recent curriculum research has indicated that there is much to be gained by viewing a curriculum leader as anyone interested in improving the current situation, and monitoring, improving, and implementing curriculum changes (Alberta Department of Education, 1992; Hannay and Seller, 1991). However, real processes of curriculum leadership in schools are complex, subtle, incorporate many different power forces, and can be exclusive to the educator who wishes to be a curriculum leader (Cairns, 1981; Kee, 1993; McIntyre, 1984). This is due, in part, to the limited voice teachers have at present (Hannay and Seller, 1991). Although the research and theory in the field of curriculum has long had a rich conceptual dialogue (see for example, Schwab, 1969), there remains little evidence that this dialogue has affected school practices (Harris, 1986). Teachers seeking to exercise curriculum leadership in the classroom often have an understanding of professional phenomena in limited terms framed by inadequate discourses and inappropriate theories (Elliott and Claderhead, 1993; Hannay and Seller, 1991). When this occurs, it is likely that participants in the processes have views of curriculum leadership framed by technologies of management, administration and power rather than framed by the human context of their work. This is the way leadership has been defined in school contexts, and this is the view which is supported by the literature which addresses curriculum leadership as an issue for Principals and administrators (see for example, Bailey, 1990).

Our work assumes that abstracted theories of curriculum, leadership or current curriculum leadership per se, will not shape curriculum leadership practice. To date, literature within curriculum as a field of inquiry has centred on curriculum, leadership and curriculum leadership from an organisational perspective (e.g., Havelock, 1973;

Huberman, 1973; Morrish, 1978; Huberman and Miles, 1984; Glatthorn, 1987; Owens, 1987; Marsh, 1988a, 1988b; Chapman, 1990; Brady, 1992). It has only been in more recent times that there has been a discernible shift to a focus on the personal - the teacher as an individual in the pursuit of professional practice as a curriculum practitioner (Connelly and Clandinin, 1988; Johnston, Macpherson, and Spooner, 1991; Rudduck, 1991; Clandinin and Connelly, 1992; Fullan, 1992a, 1992b, 1993; Fullan and Hargreaves, 1992; Gitlin, 1992; Goodson, 1992; Hargreaves and Fullan, 1992; Ross, Cornett, and McCutcheon, 1992; Simon, 1992; Elliott et. al, 1993). It is a more

person-oriented and inside-out perspective of curriculum and of the teacher as a curriculum practitioner which theoretically informs the developing understanding and living educational theory of curriculum leadership in our work.

Thus, our efforts are seeking to understand curriculum leadership within curriculum studies as a field of inquiry, and to guide a system's support of its teachers as curriculum leaders from an inside-out rather than from a top-down perspective of policy shaping, interpretation and implementation. We are taking a critical, yet constructive perspective of policy formulation (see Pinar, 1992; Smith, 1993).

More broadly, these notions of curriculum leadership for effective learning and teaching that are emerging through our work may be presented as a model of curriculum leadership which, in turn, may be used as a framework for incorporating national initiatives into curriculum practice within the particular system being investigated. In particular, the current initiatives involved in introducing key competencies into curriculum frameworks will require teachers throughout schools to develop and use theories of curriculum leadership.

We are seeking, then, to articulate a living educational theory about curriculum leadership (Whitehead, 1989) which will lead to the development of a model of curriculum leadership that will facilitate effective learning and teaching in schools. Generating a living educational theory involves the participants producing descriptions and explanations of their own development in their professional work in education (McNiff, 1993; McNiff, Whitehead, and Laidlaw, 1992; Whitehead, 1993). In the present instance, the living educational theory have been the participants' personal theories of curriculum leadership. These personal models, or living educational theories, have been converted to a model of curriculum leadership. Such a model, we believe, extends curriculum theory and professional knowledge about curriculum leadership. It will, therefore, be of value to both partners - to the university, in terms of curriculum studies as a field of inquiry in higher education programs; and to the State Department

of Education, in terms of improving curriculum practice as it relates to effective learning and teaching. In addition, our work will be of value to teachers and, most importantly, to students. It will provide the basis for the empowerment of teachers as curriculum leaders who see their role in terms of leaders leading learning. This focus on learning is a national priority in terms of improving the effectiveness of Australian schools, which in turn, benefits students by providing them the education they deserve.

It is the emphasis on living educational theory that provides a basis for using a narrative methodology.

What are the Narratives in the 1995 Study Telling?

The narratives from the teachers at the four schools were used as the basis for Phases Two, Three and Four of the narrative methodology. Interpretive accounts of the narratives were developed for each of the sites, and used by members of the Research Team to propose the elements of a model of curriculum leadership. Broadly, the propositions for each of the three dimensions of curriculum leadership emanating from the 1994 study, were reflected in the narratives.

The narratives are not directly presented and reported in this paper. They are currently being analysed and documented to highlight both the uniqueness of each narrative and the rich insights which collectively

they bring to our evolving understanding and living educational theory of curriculum leadership. In particular, they will assist in developing insights to the numerous and often complex interplays among the various elements of the emerging model of curriculum leadership.

What is the Emerging Model of Curriculum Leadership?

The model which is emerging focuses very much on the school curriculum environment, mediating factors and curriculum leadership practices. Within the school curriculum environment, we are identifying such elements as school curriculum frameworks, social contexts and organisational structures. These elements give rise to a number of mediating factors in the psychologies of individual teachers which predispose them to engage in curriculum leadership roles and practices (relating to the enactment of curriculum policies and individual curriculum projects) which will have outcomes associated with the ongoing transformation of curriculum policy and practice. As the model develops further, it will, hopefully, have the capacity to describe and explain these curriculum leadership elements in terms of both the "today" and the "tomorrow".

It is important to note that while the model emerges primarily from the narratives, it does not ignore either the literature briefly reviewed above or the earlier identification of propositions coming out of the 1994 study (See Appendix A). As such, the model focuses very much on

the centrality of teachers in curriculum decision-making and on their role as curriculum leaders (i.e. leaders of learning).

Within the dimension of the school curriculum environment, the three elements elaborated at this stage are as follows:

School Curriculum Frameworks

strong coherent vision statement

emphasis on learners and learning

teachers' being part of a learning environment (and being learners themselves)

the existence of a holistic view of curriculum

an understanding of students' cultural and social backgrounds

an awareness of policy initiatives at the school and departmental level

Social Contexts

collaborative environments

participative decision-making

focussing on the positive

friendship groups

partnership groups

recognition of initiatives by others

Organisational Structures

decentralised committee structure

administrative support for initiatives

well-known curriculum decision-making processes

opportunities for curriculum exploration and debate

explicit decision-making processes

assistance for removal of constraints

opportunities to participate in curriculum decision-making

open communication networks

budget support for leadership initiatives.

It is considered that each school will have a unique blend of these elements and that there will be varying interplays among them. A particular combination of such elements will give rise to psychological and interpersonal factors which we are calling mediating factors. Mediating factors encourage the teacher to take particular curriculum leadership initiatives. In this sense, they enable teachers to step out from existing practice into new realms of curriculum leadership practice. These factors include:

confidencefeelings of empowerment

freedomencouragement

participationresponsibility

opennesscommitment to reconstruction

value of selftrust

personal subjectivitieswillingness to take risks

Through the existence and application of these factors, individual teachers are able to engage in curriculum leadership activities, and the narratives suggest that there are two broad categories of such initiatives which are associated with cyclical and ongoing change. These are shown below.

projects which are identified by individual teachers on the basis of needs identification; and

projects which are necessary as a result of school and departmental policies which need to be enacted.

These initiatives lead to curriculum change or the ongoing transformation of curriculum policy and practice. Such change, obviously and ultimately, influences the elements which comprise the school curriculum environment; and so the model is cyclical and ongoing. Curriculum leadership, itself, will be an ever-evolving concept.

The shaded sections above, then, are the very basic ingredients of the model of curriculum leadership which we are proposing. We are now faced with the challenge of bringing these ingredients together in ways which describe and explain the complexities associated with curriculum leadership and which take account of the dynamics of the present and the ongoingness of the future. In no sense, would we want to suggest that there will be a linearity in bringing these shaded sections together. Avoiding such an over-simplification is, of course, a significant part of the challenge!

As we proceed, we are firstly grappling with the notion of a tool which will capture broad-brush notions of curriculum leadership via survey-type strategies across the Queensland Education Department. Secondly, we are exploring ways of using this tool as a lens for individual schools and/or curriculum leaders to reflect upon current curriculum leadership roles and practices as a platform for engaging in curriculum change. It is hoped that here, we will draw on ethnographic-type strategies. Together, both sets of strategies will contribute to our ongoing theorising about curriculum leadership.

CONCLUSION

The emerging model, we believe, celebrates the centrality of teachers in curriculum decision-making; it recognises the complexities of school curriculum environments where the mix of elements and factors is ever-changing; and it acknowledges that all teachers can exercise curriculum leadership for effective learning and teaching. The use of the narrative methodology (within an Action Research approach) to elicit ideas upon which the model for curriculum leadership has developed to this point was useful, and has laid the foundation for further work which we propose over the next two years.

This further work will proceed in an ARC-funded Collaborative Research Project, involving QUT and the Effective Learning and Teaching Unit of the Queensland Education Department, and using an Action Research approach which is both critical and collaborative. The focus in 1996, then, will be on the further development and use of the model, using

multi-method methodologies and strategies (Brewer and Hunter, 1992); while in 1997, we expect that the model will be used as the basis for curriculum leaders to engage in critically-informed curriculum change at various levels within the Queensland Education Department.

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APPENDIX A

Propositions about curriculum leadership emanating from 1994 study

PROPOSITIONS RE HOW TEACHERS THINK ABOUT EFFECTIVE LEARNING AND TEACHING

Transmissive images of curriculum leadership policy seem to be seen as prescriptive which in turn lead to specific roles for leadership.

A range of filters (including curricular experiences, attitudes, and aspirations) influence how initiatives are interpreted and enacted through leadership. A dimension of curriculum leadership is essential to promoting understandings and capacities whereby teachers can problematise and reconstruct their practice.

When teachers perceive a need for a particular form of change, they are more receptive to change. The initial perception of change correlates with the role of curriculum leadership at the moment when change is first experienced.

A shared vision of curriculum leadership - albeit different visions in different contexts - creates a sound platform for curriculum change stimulated by the introduction of the principles.

Teachers perceive a degree of congruence or incongruence between the principles and their practice. Effective curriculum leadership addresses the degree of congruence and incongruence and follows on with

appropriate strategic action.

Teachers uphold images about the nature and source/s of curriculum change. Curriculum leadership must be responsive to these images particularly if they are incongruous with the model being adopted in practice. (cent v decent models).

Teachers respond to curriculum change and leadership according to the images they uphold. This will result in the affirmation of practice, a critique of practice, the reconstruction of practice, little change to practice and/or no change in practice. Curriculum leadership can enhance or refine such responses.

PROPOSITIONS RE THE SOCIAL CLIMATE WITHIN A SCHOOL OR LEARNING SETTING

The incorporation of the principles more fully into the professional relations within school communities is dependent on different factors in each site. The level and type of support necessary to address these factors is not generalisable but should be responsive to the social, political and material relations that characterise each site.

The role of parents and the broader community in supporting or shaping the enactment of the principles is directly correlated with existing power relations established within the school culture.

Social interaction between school and parents is not reaching its potential because of:

- (i)lack of shared expectations;
- (ii)language barriers;
- (iii)insufficient resourcing;

(iv)asymmetrical power relations.

The discourse that underpins the development of the principles is considered disempowering for a number of school groups including parents and NESB groups, and at times teachers.

Curriculum change that is well received at the grass roots level has a positive impact on social relations: promoting trust, enhancing a shared view of learning and teaching, increasing commitment to collaboration and furthering the quality of teaching and learning experiences for students.

Positive interactions focussing on the principles strengthens social relations across various subgroups and as a result leads to greater confidence in the community when confronting change.

Localising/personalising the principles is essential to establishing

ownership within school communities.

PROPOSITIONS RE ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES OF SCHOOLS

While there is some discussion in committees, and individuals are actively promoting the principles in their classrooms, there appears to be a lack of focussed activity and understanding. Consequently, there appears to be little strategic planning that instigates cohesive change.

Presently committees are seen not to have a significant impact on bringing about change in schools but there is a belief that the committees have the potential to play a more effective role.

Professional development is seen as having the potential to bring about significant change in schools. A model that is needs based, locally initiated and is developed as a series of workshops across school clusters is seen to be most suitable.

A teacher support group as a form of curriculum leadership is useful in addressing evolving problems and issues. Lack of support of this nature can leave struggles unaddressed and a lack of collegiality can generate mistrust and suspicion.

The modes of disseminating the principles within school communities are idiosyncratic and thus generally valued by stakeholders. However no one mode of dissemination can claim successful transmission to all staff, nor can any one mode ensure development of a comprehensive understanding of the principles across the whole staff, nor a positive impact on teachers' evolving practice.

APPENDIX B

Materials used in generating the narratives.

CURRICULUM LEADERSHIP FOR EFFECTIVE LEARNING AND TEACHING

Phase 1: Eliciting Narratives on Curriculum Leadership

The following stimulus page is provided to all teachers in the school who are participating in the project.

We are interested in developing a better understanding of curriculum leadership and would like to consider this issue with you. We believe that leadership in the field of curriculum is not simply restricted to those teachers holding administrative position. Rather, all teachers can exercise curriculum leadership by proposing ideas, assisting in the interpretation of broad policy documents, developing materials or local policy initiatives. In fact, any initiative which leads to more effective learning and teaching beyond the individual classroom can be regarded as curriculum leadership.

We are particularly concerned with the relationship between this view of curriculum leadership and:

- (i) the social climate within the school;
- (ii) the organisational structure of the school; and
- (iii) the ways in which teachers think about effective learning and teaching.

We would like to share your ideas of curriculum leadership with us and, as a way of beginning the process, we would like you to describe an episode (or episodes) of curriculum leadership or one with which you are familiar in your current context. This could be an episode in which you actually exercised leadership or one where you found difficulty exercising leadership. In other words, we are interested to hear about what might have happened as well as what did actually happen. Alternatively, the episode you relate could describe a situation where someone else was exercising curriculum leadership and you were responding to that situation. Thus, the episode you relate

does not have to be restricted to yourself. You may choose to write about an episode involving others. Again, we are interested in your ideas about what could have happened as well as what did happen.

It would be helpful if you could think about how the episode you are describing relates to the three points noted above viz the social settings, the organisational structure and thoughts about effective learning and teaching. For example, you may think that the initiative

that you or others were taking was either possible or not possible because of factors related to these points.

The episode that you write need not be long. However, you should describe what you think happened, or what you think should have happened. In doing so you should check how it relates to the three points above.

The next stage in the process will involve you in a group discussion in your school setting talking about your episode and those of your colleagues. For this reason, these initial narrative ideas should be your own. There will be an opportunity to discuss with others later.

These narratives are to read by the team members working with the school and used for material for Phase Two. All narratives will be treated with strict confidence.

School:

In this space provide any biographical details that you feel may be relevant as background to your narrative.

In this space (and feel free to attach extra pages if needed) write your narrative about curriculum leadership keeping in mind the information on the sheet headed "Eliciting Narratives".

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