High stakes principalship - sleepless nights, heart attacks and sudden death accountabilities: Reading media representations of the US principal shortage

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Abstract

The possible shortage of applicants for principal positions is news in both Australia and abroad. We subject a corpus of predominantly US news article to deconstructive narrative analysis and find that the dominant media representation of principals’ work is one of long hours, low salary, high stress and sudden death from high stakes accountabilities. However reported US policy interventions focus predominantly on professional development for aspirants. We note that this will be insufficient to reverse the lack of applications, and suggest that the dominant media picture of completely unattractive principals’ work, meant to leverage a policy solution will perhaps paradoxically perpetuate the problem. This picture is also curiously at odds with research that reports high job satisfaction among principals. We suggest that there is a dominant binary of victim and saviour principal in both media and policy which prevents some strategic re-thinking about how the principalship might be different.

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He had suffered a heart attack. He had lost his hair. He was wearing a hearing aid. At 58 years old, Principal Robert Yeager decided it was time to retire. But he ended up resting for only a year. Committed to helping George Washington Middle School in Alexandria, the city’s most diverse school, he found himself drawn back to the always intense, always wild role of middle school principal.

Washington Post June 18, 2002 p A09

Oh, horrendous paperwork. I don't even think about paperwork until after 4 or 5 o'clock. I don't even think about going home until around 6 or 7 o'clock at night and sometimes I don't even go home at all. Many nights I've spent the night here - there's just so much to do.

PBS Online Newshour with Jim Lehrer May 25, 2001

http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/education/jan-june01/principal_05-22.html

(Accessed 1/6/2001)

Such stories are becoming increasingly common in the United States. The Bush administration recently allocated $10 million per annum and the US Senate a further $50 million per annum to address the shortage of applicants for the principalship, attributed only in part to increasing retirements. Significant shortfalls in supply already exist in parts of Canada. In England there is debate about whether teachers have declining interest in promotion. And in New Zealand and in Australia there is anecdotal and some emerging research evidence to suggest that there are already diminishing numbers of applicants for principal positions in some states, in particular locations and in specific types of schools.

We have received funding from the Australian Research Council for a three year research project (2002-2004) to investigate the situation in Australia: our national study of principal
supply uses surveys, statistical projections and detailed qualitative studies and works with a national reference committee of serving school principals. In this article we report on some early work. One aspect of our literature review has entailed the examination of various representations of the 'supply problem', its causes and explicit and implied 'solutions'. Here we focus on US print media and use our analysis as a way of positioning our research.

We consider firstly how American news articles represent principals' work and then ask why would teachers aspire to the principalship if all we hear is bad news. We draw some implications of this examination of media representations for our research project.

We begin by outlining our theoretical orientations and methodological approach.

Media and our research

There is a pragmatic reason for focussing some of our initial literature review on media. There is often a significant time lag between the emergence of a policy issue and the production of rigorous research findings. But the absence of a substantive body of scholarly literature does not mean there is no data to inform research in progress. Such data may well be in the form of news, current affairs and magazine reportage. But such information is not to be simply taken at face value.

This media-ted data comes from somewhere. A range of policy actors routinely use media to draw attention to their cause(s) and to promote their agendas. Political parties now see media-ted space as a major site for the production and management of their platforms. Indeed, the use of 'spin' to manipulate public opinion has produced arguments that media coverage now favors right wing politics and has caused a backlash amongst journalists that endangers democracy. However, media also continues to be used as a major public pedagogy for a range of 'public good' campaigns. Many organisations, including unions, universities, professional and civic associations, and various social movements use media to inform the public about issues. Therefore the sources from which media workers derive their stories ought not to be assumed to be neutral since they are variously politically and institutionally positioned.

But media workers do not use all stories that are on offer - they are highly selective. The images and discourses which now proliferate as 'information' come via globally interconnected and owned print and electronic media. Editorial decisions about what constitutes news and how it will be shaped are highly significant. Choices are made, some possible stories are excluded. Particular interests are met. Because media texts must meet corporate political agendas and are subject to market-oriented steerage, they conform to in-house styles deemed to satisfy consumer-readers. Already framed, media stories are then produced by journalists working to an ethic of hard-headed neutrality with a commitment to recounting the 'essence' of a story economically and authoritatively. In the so-called quality press this often involves the use of 'experts', statistics and first-hand accounts but even apparently specific stories often imply more generalised comments on the social order.

Researchers who use media reports must therefore not only recognise their 'context of production', but must also critically interrogate the texts, rather than make surface readings. This is our intent in this article.

Methodological considerations

Our work is informed by theorisations of discourse which suggest that media texts are not to be read as mimetic: they do not describe 'truth'. They are loaded and situated constructions that represent one version of reality/ies. As narratives about the world, these texts are also
performative. They do not simply have (cause and) effects. They are not simply available as a resource to be used by free agents. As Hassard and Holliday put it ‘The structures of the text produce the (reader) as subject. The subject is thus effect as well as agent’(p. 3). These texts and narratives can be seen therefore as constitutive of the ways in which readers understand their world and act in it.

In this particular instance we have employed deconstructive narrative analysis. We particularly looked for 'causality narratives', taking from Boje the idea that linear causality is 'a convenient fiction, an oversimplified narrative of complex dynamics'(p. 14). We married this to Bacchi's proposition that every policy contains a particular problematisation which provides the policy solution. We hoped that this theoretical lens would allow us to see and say something about the work accomplished by textual representations of principal shortage(s).

We asked the following questions of our texts:

- What kind of representations of principal supply and principals' work are prevalent?
- What aspects of the work and what aspect of the supply problem are emphasised?
- What kinds of 'truth' about the work and the supply problem does this attempt to tell?
- Why might this be so?
- What work does this do?
- What is not said?
- What might this representation produce?

We now turn to the texts. Our analysis is based on a corpus of forty three items dated 1999-2002: two of these are from the UK, one from New Zealand, and the remainder are from the US, although one is about Serbia and comes via a reprint in an Australian newspaper. These media reports have been collected over a two-year period, some from references in daily and weekly education e-bulletins, some from searches of newspaper databases and some produced by Internet searches using the query 'principal supply' in one major search engine. Most are from newspapers although a few are from on-line news-services.

We do not claim this as a total or representative collection, it is indeed a random sampling.

**The principalship as extreme sport**

The American news reports of principal shortage - both actual and anticipated - are strongly framed as narratives which describe the general supply situation and its causes and sometimes then go onto solutions.

The articles often begin with a cinema verite style picture of the 'real world', perhaps an award-winning principal at work. Through the personification of the 'problem' and the use of direct quotations an 'authentic' picture is created. We stand beside a principal as he directs traffic in the corridor and 'overhear' his comments to students (*PBS online newshour with Jim Lehrer* 24/5/2001). We experience one day in the life of a school principal.

His day started with a parent conference. By 7.30 he was at the front of Wilde Lake High greeting some of the 1,477 students who attend this school in Howard County. Next on the day planner, a quick speech at the madrigal festival, a demonstration English lesson and a meeting with the English Supervisor. At 11.30 he spoke to Loyola College about the state of principals in Maryland, then headed back to school for a 3 pm meeting with a parent. Staff development meeting lasted from 4 30 until 6 30 and then he returned...
phone calls until 8. By 8 30 he was headed home - 13 1/2 hours after he set out.


We are introduced to a parent who worries about the high turnover of principals in his children's school (*Rocky Mountain News*, 12/8/2002), superintendents who are disappointed at the lack of applications for positions (*Great Falls Tribune*, 31/3/2002; *Santa Cruz Sentinel* 22/8/2002), and a principal who speaks to state legislators about his fears for the profession (*The Daily Times* 24/8/2002). We 'listen' as folksy principals 'tell us' how the work is.

Some days you feel like you're on top of the mountain. And when you get there you're going to want to stay there as long as you can, but something is going to knock you down. The challenge is to make sure you always get back up, because not everyday you're on top of the mountain.

*ABC eyewitness news on line* September 4, 2002


Many of these snapshots also carry a partial problematisation for the lack of applications for the principalship- the unattractiveness of the job. Most of the articles we examined accentuate long hours including weekend and at night, high stress, pressure, dealing with conflicting demands and being pulled from one activity to another at a frenetic pace. Presumably in keeping with house-style some reports focus on the (melo)dramatic.

The demands and pressures on principals is (sic) increasing all the time, Ratledge said. "I saw a poll recently that ranks principals as having the highest suicide rate, second to police officers," he said." You're being pulled at from all directions."

*The Daily Times* August 24, 2002


This image, as with the two that began this article, (re)presents the principalship as a combination of extreme sport and martyrdom, but this is simply an extension of the more general scenario. We wonder if any readers could avoid asking when reading these apparently true-life tales of long hours and high stress - why would anyone want to do this job?

Stories about the broader state of the principalship often utilise national or state surveys and an authoritative spokesperson or people, such as a national or state principals' association representative (and very occasionally a researcher), to back up these cinema verite snapshots. There is widespread agreement in the articles that the principal supply problem is caused by a combination of retirements and a growing lack of suitable applicants. Reports suggest that around half of America's school districts already have difficulties filling positions, and nearly all of the articles are able to point to specific localities and sites, viz. inner urban schools, rural areas, regions with high costs of living, and areas with a majority of low income residents whose taxes only afford modest and uncompetitive salaries. Data
produced by the US Department of Labor which estimates 40% vacancies within the new few years due to retirements is almost ubiquitous, but is sometimes contested by the spokesperson who points out that just because principals can retire doesn't mean that they will, and that a policy approach to retain potential retirees is possible and desirable.

Aside from the simple demographic data about an aging, greying principal cohort, the corpus of articles nominate substantive disincentives to take up the principalship. There are legislative disincentives created by mandatory retirement ages and the lack of portability of state licensure requirements. There are contractual-industrial disincentives of which the most consistently nominated is the salary level. Many articles cite studies by the national elementary and secondary principals associations and other data which demonstrates that principals make less per hour than teachers, and significantly less than their equally qualified and experienced counterparts in private enterprise. Some mention the trade off of secure tenure for higher salary and contracts and there is a story of one school district (Cleveland), in which the local collective bargain resulted in the creation of one year contracts in which principals are expected to show that their schools are improving (ABC news online 12/1/2001). It is strongly suggested in several articles that the combination of salary deficiency with the contractualisation of principals' jobs and concomitant lack of security work together to put off the many who hold principal licensure from actually applying for positions.

There are also difficult working conditions. Various spokespeople cited in the articles suggest that principals are subject to increased challenge (sometimes litigious) from parents, children, superintendents, special interest groups, unions and media. All articles report that principals are required to do mountains of paper-work which keeps them out of the classroom. In addition to long hours, multiple tasks and intense pressure, principals are also seen to be 'eaten away' by politics and bureaucracy (Gannett News Service 14/11/2001). They are held accountable for policies such as "leave no child behind" without adequate resources or time to do what is required. In particular, the majority of articles mention state-wide high stakes testing which equates to an ongoing threat of 'sudden death' - particularly in those states where principals can be summarily sacked

In New York City, the principal's union recently agreed to three year contracts. But the system will be setting goals to be reached each year, with the possibility of removal if they're not met.

ABC News online 21/1/2001


(Accessed 3/5/2001)

The causes of the pressure and stress are attributed to the principalship now being a position in which there are more responsibilities than power.

They hold principals accountable for test scores, yet we don't have the power to hire and fire teachers, 'Waples said. "A principal is required to be an instructional leader, the social worker, do administrative tasks - there are just so many things we're responsible for. But the general feeling is that we're not getting the support from central administration."

Washington Post. 25 June, 2000, p A01
Finally there is also said to be *inadequate support* for those wishing to become principals. School districts and state Departments are said to have poor succession plans, complacent attitudes to recruitment and ineffective or nonexistent training and support schemes. Two recent articles mention a report from the National Conference of State Legislatures which argues that university licensure programs are lacking.

It is on training and recruitment where most policy 'solutions' are focused, according to our articles. In addition to short term measures, such as the appointment of recent retirees as interim principals and aggressive recruiting across district and state lines, many states and school districts are now turning to Leadership Academies and talent-spotting schemes that provide paid internships, mentoring for early career principals and more 'hands on' training. New partnerships are being forged, often between universities, school districts and professional associations. In Chicago, a public-private partnership dubbed *New Leaders for New Schools* will pay potential inner-city principals for a one year 'residency' under the tutelage of a master principal, as well as follow up with two years intensive professional development once they are appointed to their own schools (*Time.com* 20/1/2001). A few districts are examining job sharing, others looking to raise salaries (usually by contractualising as noted earlier), 14 states have developed alternative pathways to the principalship, and some, like the Maryland State Legislature, are seeking to establish a new school bursar position to take care of some of the paperwork (*Baltimore Sun* 7/8/2002). Some are just hiring younger and younger principals (*Los Angeles Times* 2/10/2000). But in these reports there is no suggestion that the job itself needs a thorough re-examination.

There is little reporting of policy remediation of one major stressor - high stakes accountabilities. There is just one report of a district changing accountability measures away from high stakes tests - Chicago has moved to teams of external inspectors to assess on more complex measures (*ABC News online* 12/1/2001).

Policymakers and professional associations alike appear to have failed to investigate fully why it is that so many teachers who do have principal licensure have not applied for positions. This task has fallen to journalists who have elicited the view that teachers 'want to stay in the classroom and work with young people directly' (*The Cincinnati Enquirer* 8/3/1999) because the job is too risky and the principal too vulnerable.

Senior English teacher Karen Del Purgatorio has been in the classroom for 10 years, and as a respected teacher she's the type of person which might be sought out to someday lead a school. Yet she watches principals and vice principals at the 3,000 Deer Valley High School in Antioch scurry from parent complaint to district meeting to evening football game, always aware that their job is on the line if they can't raise student test scores. She knows with certainty she wouldn't want their jobs.

*San Francisco Chronicle* September 23, 2001


We ask here what would make teachers such as Del Purgatorio want to do the job? We come back to this question later.

We now move to a discussion of the contexts of production of these articles and we consider how they might be constitutive and of what.
Manufacturing problems and solutions

Importantly, no articles directly connected the shortage of principals to other education policy and broader public policy histories and debates. Due to the duration and volume of ongoing commentary about the parlous state of American education - a 'manufactured crisis' as Berliner and Biddle demonstrate - we think it is not unreasonable to suggest that few readers could fail to read reports of principal shortage without understanding that here is another instance of how the American education school system is failing. Reporting on and policy action about principal supply thus becomes part of an overall education and public policy milieu and agenda. Action on the principal shortage issue must therefore be read together with other policies which address the alleged 'failure' of American schools and previous American governments.

This two-decade long US education crisis agenda has featured as its solution the adoption of a rationalist planning model in which there is measurement of indicative features of the education system, target setting for improvement, testing to see what movements have occurred, the publication of comparative data about schools, districts and states, and the creation of simulated and actual educational markets. There is also attention paid to documenting 'best practice' - the model by which improvement is said to occur - and intervention to jolt those who are not improving at all or quickly enough into the approved action. This is the general policy framework (which has been subject to bitter debate and the production of counter evidence) into which reports of a crisis in principal supply are inserted. Policy about principal supply then must 'fit' into the bigger whole.

National education policy directed towards supply has focussed primarily on incentives and succession planning mainly via schemes for professional development. Variously positioned organisations and persons coalesced around this direction. To exemplify this process, we discuss two kinds of organisations which have been important stimuli to the production of the representations of the harried overworked principal problem in our body of articles, and have also featured in the representations themselves. Before we do this however we want to stress that we are not questioning the 'truth' of the representations of long hours, nearly impossible demands and high stress. What we want to argue is that while this picture does have a strong material basis it is a partial representation. We also argue here that only some aspects of this partial representation are taken up in policy. We now turn to the interested parties.

The US Department of Labor and the US Center for Educational Statistics have both produced statistics to suggest that an alarming number of principals are shortly to retire. These bodies are part of the planning technology of governing. Through the production of data, it is assumed that considered and rational policy intervention can be initiated and directed at the federal level. By having 'hard' national data which speaks of the supply problem as one of retirement, other issues - such as the pressures arising from accountability measures and the disproportionate number of white men in principal positions in the US - can be sidelined. The problem is thus delimited by such data and particular kinds of policy activity are thus supported.

Both peak bodies of school principals produced important reports about principal supply. The fiscal viability of 'professional' organisations is strongly tied to their capacity to advocate that their members are deserving of status and adequate remuneration. In seeking to establish their claims they argue for job specific knowledge and specialised career pathways. In this instance, the two joint reports state very clearly that the principal's job is vitally important, difficult, underpaid and people are not adequately prepared for it. Their policy prescription/ remedy connects salary to recruitment, training to retention, and leadership to educational reform and improved student success. When representatives of
these organisations were asked for comment, they (re)produced this particular framework, including the description of the underpaid, undervalued and overworked principal.

"I've never been in a high-quality school and not seen a very good principal," says Gerald Tirozzi, executive director of the National Association of Secondary School Principals. "You can't really transform a school one classroom at a time. You have to look at the whole school."

*Christian Science Monitor, 21/10/2001*


This proffered problematisation is the one that appears to have the most 'take'. It offers the pot of gold of school reform. It is one that is compatible with the conservative education policy agenda. It is notable that these two reports, while describing mixed mandates, high stakes testing and lack of public regard for educators as the context of principals' work, do not translate these into recommendations. The major contradiction - the degree to which training will convince young teachers that it is worth doing a job bounded by complex and 'sudden death' accountabilities (as described earlier) - is left aside presumably at least in part in the interests of being taken seriously by political policy decision makers. The reasoning, we guess, is that it is better to argue for something that will get funded than be dismissed out of hand.

And what these reports and the data also accomplish is to produce - and then leave unchallenged - a singular and highly unattractive picture of principals' work.

The logic of the national data collection agencies, journalists, principal associations and policy makers alike work a narrative structure of causality - what's the problem, why is this so and what can be done about it? What is assumed is that if the causes/problems are addressed, then the effect will be that teachers will want to apply for principal positions. But we suspect that paradoxically, the problematisation of long hours, pressure, stress and rigid and unreasonable accountabilities that is meant to lead to problem solutions, actually continues to reinforce young teachers' ideas about why the job is not worth doing. We ask again, why would anyone do this job? Is more money and training sufficient to erase this very grim black and white picture - and the material conditions - of the job? And what of the evidence that training has so far failed to convince many that the job is worth applying for?

We suspect that this shortage problematisation may very well work to perpetuate the shortage problem, particularly since policy solutions to the shortage only partially address what we call high-stakes principalship.

**Further reading and implications for our research**

In conclusion, we now turn to our reading of what the articles marginalised, or left unsaid.

Some of the articles in our collection just begin to take up the question of why the job is worth doing. Some journalists asked principals why they did the job. One principal is reported as speaking of a calling.

"I look upon teaching as ministering," he said. "You have to be called to do it and not just consider it a job. If you look at it as just a job, you won't be successful at it."
We are not convinced that thinking of the principalship as a calling will necessarily lead to more applicants for positions! Others said that they wanted to make a difference and at least one was excited not daunted by the challenges.

"I was so excited about teaching and being able to control the educational destiny of 20 kids," Mr Schatz says. "The opportunity to do that with 500 or 1,000 kids - whatever the size of the school - that really started to grow on me."

Christian Science Monitor, 21/10/2001


Our reading of the articles suggests that in addition to the moral commitment to education and the 'good feeling' of working with children, there may be other incentives and rewards. One report concluded with one of those cinema verite accounts of a newly appointed principal involved in one of the new leadership programs.

Despite her long days, Lunardi says she feels very supported. "I feel like I'm home," said Lunardi. "I am supporting teachers, which is what I wanted to do. I'm an instructional leader."

San Francisco Chronicle September 23, 2001


Lunardi speaks of the support she receives from her leadership course and then moves to discuss the rewards of the position. She speaks of supporting teachers. This was not followed up in the article in question and so there is something left hanging for the reader to interpret. What is left unexplored is the fulfilment Lunardi experiences. Our reading is that Lunardi is alluding to the satisfying emotional-intellectual nature of principals' work and the importance of being part of a team working on a common endeavour.

We also get hints in the reports that things outside of the job are important. One article specifically mentions a small town that drew principal applications for its school by advertising the lifestyle and proximity to a popular recreation area (Great Falls Tribune 31/1/2002). Another (Dallas Morning News 22/1/2000) has the local Superintendent explaining the reasons why he calls "grow your own promotion schemes" (rather than recruit from outside the district) worked. His comment that "These people are already invested in our community" allows us to see something other than work. We begin here to glimpse the principalship as not only a job, but as part of a life in which the interconnections of home, social networks and activities other than work are also important. Work and private life are interconnected. A job is always somewhere, and where matters.

We note that none of the articles represent the principalship as:

- a job which involves working with - rather than for or against - parents, Superintendents and teachers
• a role in which it is possible to utilise accrued pedagogical repertoires as well as to acquire new management practices
• part of a school community and school culture which is constructed by the people in it
• an opportunity to not only engage in the pleasurable production of professional knowledge, but also to support others to also be knowledge producers
• a position with some autonomy and flexibility which can be in part directed for both personal and school benefit
• a career which offers varied opportunities to learn, do different jobs, grow in the position, perhaps even travel
• a profession with collective responsibilities to which it is of personal and collegial benefit to contribute
• a system which can be influenced and shaped
• mobilising various constituencies towards common goals
• contributing to a common endeavour

These are things which cannot be probed in surveys - the dominant method of inquiry which produced the research data in our media reports. However even in surveys it may be the case that some of these issues can be at least touched on. In saying this we are not suggesting that what we aim to do in our research is to produce an alternative Pollyanna reading of principals' work. We do however think that a different picture is possible.

We noted that one article (Indiana Star, 18/1/2002) reports Ball State researchers Malone, Sharp and Thompson whose survey shows high levels of job satisfaction among principals. The reporter apparently did not ask about the contradiction between the story of the principalship as simply long hours and pressure and the findings of high levels of job satisfaction - or if so, it was not included. The report of the survey by Public Agenda (Gannett News Service 14/11/2001) also suggested that principals felt high levels of efficacy and needed more support in order to make the desired reforms in their schools.

We struggled for some time to put together these unexplored snippets with the dominant media representation of high stakes principalship and our understandings of the material conditions of principals' work. We have come to see a curious binary in these popular US media representations of the principalship. One the one hand we have the picture of the overworked, underpaid and undervalued victim principal hemmed in by administrivia and subject to sudden death accountabilities. On the other we have the idealised saviour principal of effective schools policies and literatures who is able to create harmonious, happy teams of teachers, students and parents and for whom all reform is possible. The hero principal appears to have no human frailties or needs. Like all binaries both sides have some verisimilitude and some 'take'. They are not mutually exclusive readings. Both are potent enough to obscure other complex and nuanced versions of the job. Significantly, both work against re-thinking the position of the principal.

We can also see the potential for this binary to be writ large in Australia. Like the USA, there are active Australian principals’ associations lobbying for salary, status and training provisions and collecting data about hours worked, stress levels and heart attacks suffered. There are already representations in media about the undesirability of the principal position - Shortage of principals rings alarm bells (The Australian 23/3/2002), Principals job a turn off (The Australian, 13/5/2002), Top job no longer a principal aim (The Advertiser 23/2/2002), Why top job gets low marks (The Age, 2/9/2002) and Swamped principals' bid for help (The Age, 3/10/2002). There are Australian policy makers wedded to high stakes testing and recently in Victoria, the notion of failing schools and principal sackings was enacted in policy.
Australian policymakers also adhere to the 'best practice' model of school leadership in which heroic self-managing principals meet targets and the needs of every child.

It is therefore important for us we think, and for others who research principal supply to focus not only on the reasons why the job is unattractive, but also on the complex reasons why it is worth doing. We hope that using notions of professionalism, career and system, while thinking of the principalship as both an individual and a collective practice, may be generative. We hope to construct a view of the principalship in which 'leaders are social constructions in social worlds'. What we wish to avoid is simply reproducing the binary, a bleak one-sided representation or a paradoxical picture of masochistic pleasure and pain.

A typical day could include any and all of the following: Observing teachers in the classroom, dispensing medication when the nurse is gone, keeping up with the latest technology, meeting with parents, replacing a student's lost lunch card, controlling ants or removing snow (depending on the season), reading up on education research and directing 450 small children to their school buses.

It's a demanding job, but that's part of the allure for Dodds. "I like spinning 10 plates at once," she said.

St Louis Post Dispatch February 26, 2001

Furthermore, these articles don't help us with rethinking the role and work of the principal. As a corpus, they collectively and individually speak to structural and professional problems in the principalship. Indeed, these contemporary articles would probably resonate with the experiences of previous generations of principals as representations of principals in films of the 70s, 80s and 90s suggest similar experiences.

We believe that, rather than systems trying to recruit people into what is seemingly both an unattractive job and a heroic mission, perhaps some work needs to be done on rethinking the work of principals. To do this though would require that systems develop different priorities. Perhaps with a crisis imminent, manufactured or not, now is the time to engage in a fundamental rethinking of the principalship. It is certainly our intention in our research and in partnership with our reference committee of principals to move beyond these binaries and engage in some regenerative speculation about what and how the principalship might be/come different.

References