



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

Change Leadership: A System Level Case Study

Christopher Day & Christine Grice
The University of Sydney



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Independent research commissioned by the Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta

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"Our world has changed and continues to change. If schools are not changing with it, our young people will be left behind."

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Foreword

How do you take a large complex school system and guide it to success without being vague or overly prescriptive? This is the story of the Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta (CEDP) covering more than a decade (2006–2018). Day and Grice take the complex phenomenon of system change and unpack it with great clarity and insight.

Their analytic framework allows them to dissect the system over time and over function in a way that renders the complexity accessible. They have four main organizers. First are the eight temporal phases ranging from ‘imagining a different future’ to ‘embedding inquiry-led learning: integrating the innovations’. Second, consists of six ‘supportive cross phase change strategies.’ Then come the two contexts of Catholic faith (‘formation’ and ‘inclusivity’). The final organizer involves ‘10 new understandings of system change leadership’ ranging from ‘transformative system change leadership’, to ‘the limits of rationality’.

In so doing the authors render a very complex phenomenon into an account that is interesting to read, comprehensive, and insightful. There are six insights in the report that stood out for me. First, was the way that the report draws attention to the ways the leadership approached the question of how to maintain focus while experiencing constant churn of new policies, demographic composition, and continuous turnover of personnel. They did this through establishing from the outset a firm but flexible mission consisting of: formation, inclusivity, and inquiry led learning. They reinforced this through three interconnected constructs: project-based learning, personalized learning, and data-driven assessment.

Second, the report reminds the reader that the leadership of the system maintained a firm grip on the mission of the system—a steadfast moral compass—coupled with flexibility of how to fulfill it. Within this framework there was a deliberate and continuing attempt to foster innovation—to try things out and learn from them by retaining ideas that worked.

Third, and a big lesson for large systems, it was clear from the report that Parramatta did not start with goals and structure. Within their foundational parameters *they worked toward system alignment*. In other words, coherence was jointly developed with system members at all levels through their experiences and judicious collective assessment about what was working.

Fourth, the Executive Director made judicious use of external researchers and practitioners (I know, I was one of them). This presented the danger of de-stabilising, confusing, and potentially alienating stakeholders across the system. However, this did not occur. This was perhaps because the underlying strategy was based on the following: the various external providers were by and large compatible with the core mission of the Diocese; the idea was for system leaders and members to sort out the convergences through experience and debate. This represented a kind of tight-loose evolution that gradually fostered integration and coherence that arose from shared experiences—a kind of confusion-consolidation evolution.

Fifth, the map of change presented in the report illustrates the building of a comprehensive, responsive and proactive ‘support architecture’ (as Day and Grice call it). In the midst of the journey (2008-2009) leaders at the central level (and with agreement at other levels) realized that there were many great ideas afoot, but there was a lack of coherence and focus, so they began the task of consolidation. This happened quickly because: a) there was a great deal of mutual trust that had been established; and b) there was experiential evidence about what had been working, what needed clarification, and what could be integrated. It was at this stage that the system could link its strategies to student performance data. Another strong feature of what I would call the ‘support and pressure’ system was that the data had become much more precise about what was working and where, and which school and levels were succeeding or not. As the report concludes, Parramatta has done a superb job of aligning system and local leadership with a common focus and the habits of learning together.

Sixth, and finally, accountability was achieved without getting mired in what I have called ‘wrong drivers’ i.e. the use of punitive accountability, or its opposite - vague or little accountability. Instead, the system fostered a delicate combination of trust, transparency and specificity of data to act on failures and successes, what I call ‘culture-based accountability’ (Fullan, 2019). The ways in which the system integrated these reflects many of our own ideas from Coherence (Fullan & Quinn, 2016) to Nuance (Fullan, 2019)—the latter being based in how leaders learn to read ‘context’ by immersing themselves in both the small and big pictures of the systems in which they work.

All in all, the Diocese of Parramatta may be said to be an exemplar of internal development, and external consumption of ideas and innovations that have been developing over the past decade and a half. In other words, Parramatta could not be in a better position to aggressively move forward into the innovative future that is in the offing.

Michael Fullan

OISE/University of Toronto
September 2019

1.0 The Research

1.1 Aims

The aim of this research, carried out from March, 2018 to May, 2019, was to investigate the purposes, strategies and effects of school system-wide reforms in the Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta (CEDP) between 2006 and 2018. The reforms were carried out in the contexts of external demographic, social and policy changes, under the innovative and dynamic leadership of the Executive Director. With his team he developed and persistently pursued his educational mission to improve the life and work opportunities of young people across all parts of the education system through the adoption and enactment of research-informed, values-driven strategies.

1.2 Mixed methods: data collection and analysis

Mixed methods research represents a research design that involves collecting, analysing and interpreting data that is both qualitative and quantitative. The purpose is to gain breadth and depth of understanding by drawing upon data from multiple sources.

1.2.1 Documentation

143 documents relating to change during the CEO's period in office were collected and analysed. These included 53 strategic intent plans and statements, 5 implementation plans, 12 annual reports, 3 technical reports, 57 media articles and 12 months of twitter posts by the Executive Director, annual reports, a 'canon' of academic literature, system planning, monitoring and evaluation documentation, budget information, demographic data, changes in patterns of enrolment, student behaviour, staffing allocations, and academic results.

Table 1: CEDP documents

Document type	Tally	Subgroup count
Google drive	53	Strategic intent plans and statements
	3	Physical learning architecture Technical Reports
Document printouts from Central Office	5	Implementation plans
CEDP website	12	Annual Reports (2006 – 2017)
Media articles	57	From 265 results on Google News search, 57 articles reported in table output, Executive Director's Twitter feed September 2017 – April 2019
Educational literature	13	Books distributed amongst CEDP principals
Total	143	

Documents were analysed using deductive categories within the context of the changing landscape of educational policies in the CEDP.

1.2.2 Stakeholder perspectives

Data were collected from six schools by means of 40 semi-structured individual and 27 focus group interviews with a total of 156 school leaders, teachers, and students, and 4 Central Office participants.

Principals, teachers, students¹ and parents from the six schools were selected from a larger sample size provided by CEPD. Selection criteria included: i) an equal number of primary and secondary schools; ii) a range of small and large schools; iii) a range of ICSEA value or socioeconomic status from low to high; iv) a range of schools that were and were not built or adapted for inquiry-led learning; v) schools with low teacher turnover, led by principals who had been at the school for more than three years. One of the secondary schools was purpose-built on one preschool to secondary school campus. The schools, all of whom gave voluntary consent, were each given pseudonyms.

Table 2: Number of interviews and participants within schools and at Central Office over the year.

System Area	SES	Individual Interview	Participants	Focus Group Interview	Teacher Participants	Focus Group Interview	Student Participants
Central Office	NA	4	4	4	NA	NA	NA
Lantern Primary School	103	2	2	1	5	2	13
Dove Primary School	101	2	2	2	8	2	15
Pasture Primary School	93	1	1	3	7	3	11
Florence Secondary School	97	1	1	2	5	2	24
Solitude Secondary School	95	2	2	1	4	1	9
Beacon Primary/Secondary	NA	1	1	1	2	3	40
Total = 156	NA	13	13	14	31	13	112

1.2.3. Observation

The researchers attended key events in the CEDP calendar, including planning days and professional learning days where system-wide information was disseminated and discussed.

1.2.4 Questionnaire

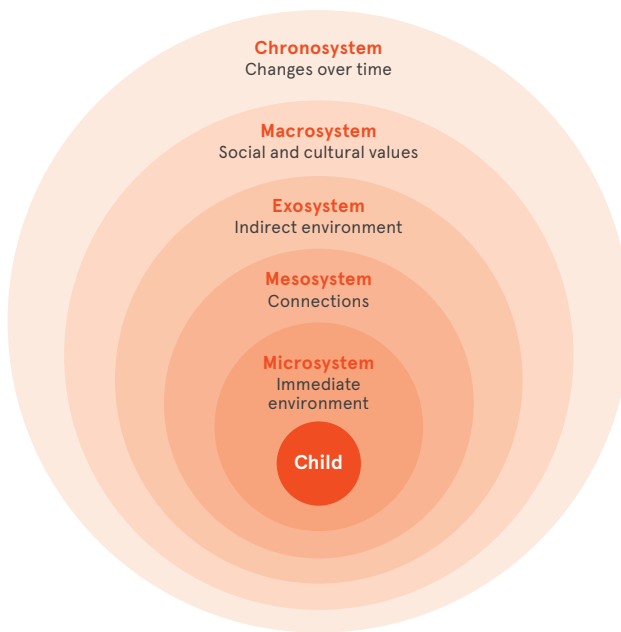
An online questionnaire survey was co-designed with CEPD for dissemination to parents of students in the six participating schools, following initial interviews with principals and personnel from Central Office.

1. Whilst this research investigated the effects of change over time on the thinking, practices and physical teaching and learning environments of schools on principals, teachers and Central Office structures, cultures and roles, it was unable to measure specific changes in students' experiences, other than in the general trends in academic achievement. However, it did seek to understand students' current experiences of teaching and learning, and to relate these to the Executive Director's intentions to ensure a change in schools from teacher-centred didactic to inquiry-led, student-centred education.

1.3 Theoretical framing

The research was informed by Bronfenbrenner's (1995) ecological systems' theory.

Figure 1: Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems' theory



The underlying rationale for the use of ecological systems' theory is a view that progress in the reform of systems of student learning and achievement is unlikely to be a smooth, uninterrupted trajectory. In contrast to assumptions about change that are embedded in rational planning models, ecological systems' theory acknowledges that change will be subject to ongoing, uneven, complex and sometimes unpredictable interactions within and between micro, exo meso, exo and macro and chrono levels. System change is, therefore, understood as non-linear, interdependent, emergent, and uneven in its progress at and between different levels of the system. In short, it is unlikely that simple, direct relationships will be able to be made between the application of any single change strategy or process and its effects over time.

This research, then, acknowledges that uncertainty is a central feature of system change. To understand how systems change through the generation, formation, promotion, uptake and use and impact of new ideas demands that relationships be examined within and between system levels over time and at critical points during the enactment of change strategies and processes. This is key to understanding the extent to which system change is or is not able to build, achieve and sustain success (Levy, 1994; Lorenz, 1963; Marion, 2008).

To date, there is relatively little research on system change which focuses, as this research does, on the behaviours of individual agents and the relationships between these within a multi-level ecosystem (Jacobson et al., 2019).

2.0 Change contexts

Three external factors informed and influenced the direction and implementation of educational reforms in the Parramatta Diocese: faith and formation, changing demographics, and on-going national improvement agendas.

2.1 Faith and formation

CEDP has historically served a vibrant and diverse migrant community. As the Australian population grew in the 1950s and 60s following World War II, the Catholic population further diversified as post-war immigrants came from Europe, many of them settling in the Diocese of Parramatta. During that growth period, schools were built by migrants, and staffed without government assistance.

The Diocese was also central to the formation of Catholic schooling in Australia. The first Catholic Mass was read in Government House, Parramatta, in 1803 by Fr. Dixon, a convict, who wrote to the Vatican seeking permission to minister in the colony. He was appointed Prefect Apostolic in 1804. He sought peace during the Castle Hill rebellion of the same year. The first Catholic school in Australia was established in Parramatta in 1820. Following the Church Act of 1836, many others were established. When the Public Schools Act of 1866 followed, Catholic schooling remained.

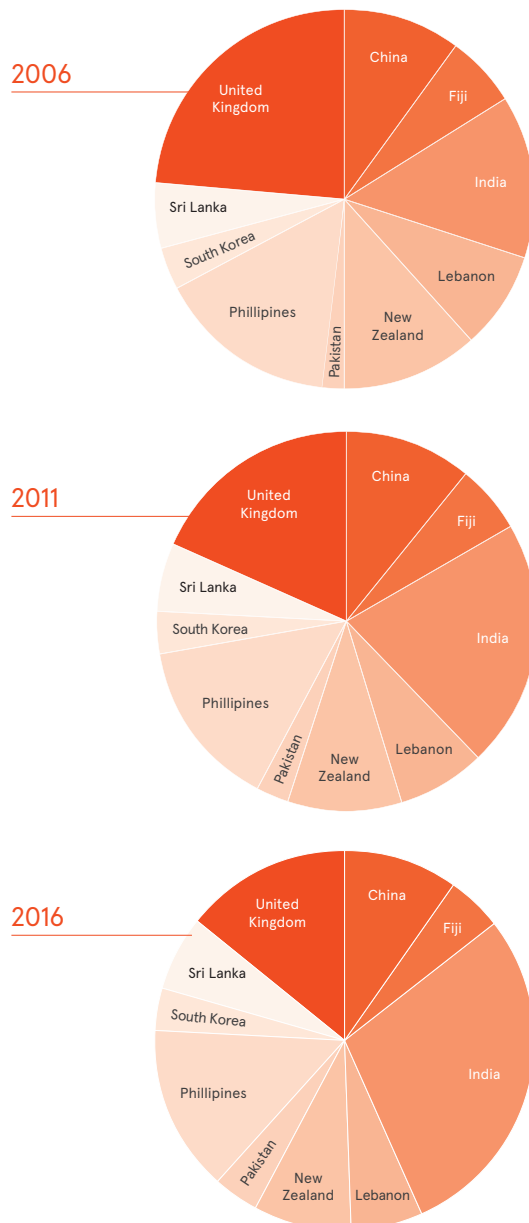
Formation continues to be integral to the work of CEDP today. Historically, most primary schools and a small number of secondary schools in Parramatta were built on the site of their parish, working directly with their communities. The work of the parishes and CEDP schools continues to be influenced significantly by the serving Bishop.

2.2 Demographic changes

Parramatta is a demographically diverse Diocese. Families come from a range of multicultural and religious backgrounds. Some families have been moving into new areas and new housing developments. Others are new migrants settling in Australia for the first time. The number of Indigenous families in CEDP schools has increased. In addition, there are pockets and areas of long established settlements of Australian families.

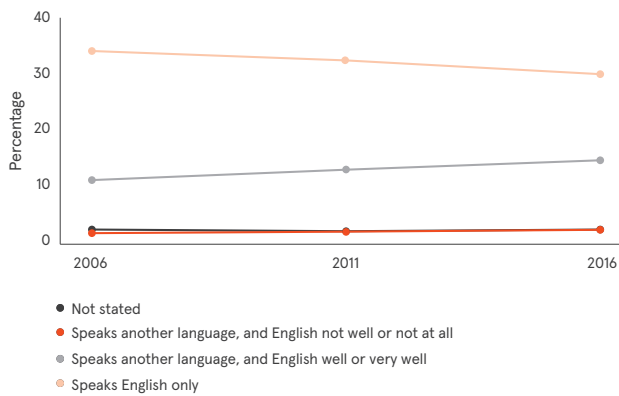
Figure 2 (www.abs.gov.au, 2019) maps the changing demography of the CEDP population over the time period.

Figure 2: Nationalities of CEDP families over time



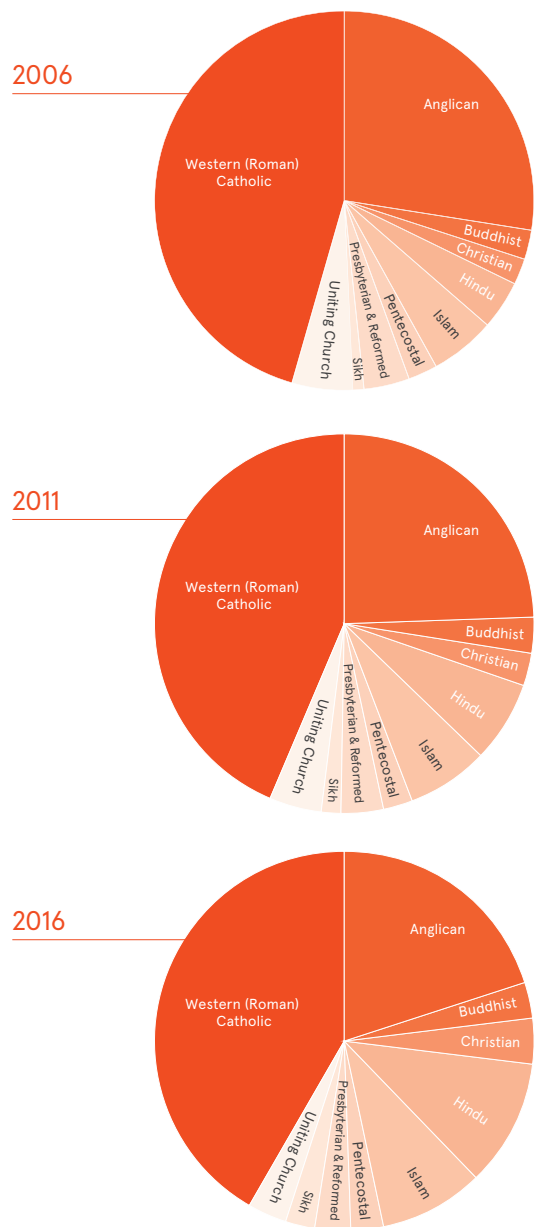
Over this period, there has been a significant increase of families from India and Pakistan, and a decrease of families from Lebanon, New Zealand and the UK. Other populations have remained constant. There have been changes to the languages spoken at home and the English proficiency of families in CEDP schools are outlined in Figure 3 below. The increase in Mandarin and Hindi and a diversity of other languages remains consistent. There has been a decrease in the number of families who speak only English at home.

Figure 3: Languages spoken at home and english proficiency



The religious affiliations of CEDP families have also changed over time. Although the number of Catholic families has remained consistent, there has been a reduction of Protestant families, and an increase in families from Hindu, Islam, and Sikh religions.

Figure 4: Religious affiliations of CEDP families over time



These demographic changes have resulted in an increase in religious and multicultural diversity in schools.

2.3 National events

2.3.1 Educational provision

Australia has experienced continuing reform in curriculum, assessment, accountability and transparency over the time period. In 2007, it was listed as 'high' in the United Nation's Education Index (<http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/education-index>), demonstrating the strength of its educational provision from a global perspective. Within this positive educational climate, the Melbourne Declaration of Educational Goals for Young Australians (2008) was aspirational in promoting a commitment in Australian education for: action, for equity and excellence; successful learners and citizens; quality teaching, curriculum and assessment; school leadership; early childhood education; youth transitions; and improved educational outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and students from low socio-economic backgrounds; while strengthening accountability and transparency.

2.3.2 Standards

- Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) was established in 2008 as the national government body tasked to create an Australian Curriculum in response to the Melbourne Declaration. In addition, ACARA's role was to increase transparency and accountability through the reporting of educational outcomes nationally for the first time in Australia.
- In 2008 the federal government introduced NAPLAN (National Assessment Plan, Literacy and Numeracy), standardized assessment in primary and secondary schools in Year 3, 5, 7 & 9. This increased the student data available to CEDP, enabling it to track student progress and attainment against national benchmarks.
- ACARA produced its first national report on schooling in 2009 in response to the Melbourne Declaration outlining a four-year plan. Data on CEDP schools and all Australian schools, including school population data, financial information, and NAPLAN results were made publicly available on the 'MySchool' website (www.myschool.edu.au) built by ACARA in 2010.

- Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) was established in 2010 as a means of improving teacher quality through the creation of teacher standards, and a professional standard for principals.
- In 2010 the Federal government implemented The Building the Education Revolution to improve the standard of school facilities in response to high unemployment during the Global Financial Crisis. CEDP benefited by upgrading facilities and infrastructure.

2.3.3 Review of funding for schooling

CEDP educates students in an area of socio-economic diversity. The Australian Government Department of Education and Training Review of Funding for Schooling (Gonski, 2011) reported a decline of student performance in Australia over the time period, particularly in disadvantaged socio-economic areas. In 2018 The Australian Government Department of Education and Training Review to Achieve Educational Excellence in Australian Schools, known as 'Gonski 2' (www.appa.asn.au) made recommendations for how school funding could be used to improve school performance outcomes. These resulted in the development of the National School Reform Agreement between Commonwealth and states and territories (www.education.gov.au/national-school-reform-agreement).

2.3.4 Curriculum

Australian curriculum reform has both enabled and constrained the pace of system change. In 2012, the Board of Studies Teaching and Educational Standards NSW (BOSTES), which in 2017 became The NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA), introduced new NSW K-10 syllabi for the Australian Curriculum. This resulted in the implementation of new curricula in CEDP schools.

2.3.5 Restoration and reconciliation

During the period of reform in Parramatta, the Catholic Church has responded to a number of nationwide issues that have challenged its integrity.

- In 2008 the Prime Minister delivered a formal apology to Australian Indigenous peoples for the first time in Australia's history. Aboriginal education increased in prominence following the apology.
- CEDP has sought to address issues of equity in education for Aboriginal people through its scholarship program.
- In 2008, Australia also hosted World Youth Day in Sydney, which brought Pope Benedict XVI on his first papal visit to Australia, where he issued his first public apology to victims of child sexual abuse by Catholic priests.
- This was followed in 2013 by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Australia.
- The Bishop of Parramatta has acknowledged suffering, and the need for repentance and restoration in the public sphere.

Three external factors informed and influenced the direction and implementation of educational reforms in the Parramatta Diocese: faith and formation, changing demographics, and on-going national improvement agendas.

3.0 A chronology of system change

"I don't have a vision, it's all about learning, evangelizing, mission....The first time I ever spoke to the principals I said, 'I suppose you'd like to hear my vision'. 'Oh, I'd love to.' I said, 'Well I don't have one...., So, why don't we talk about what we know about what we want to do, and we'll let that [vision] look after itself. Part of the evangelizing mission of the church, that's our mission.'" (Executive Director).

3.1 The change mission

The Executive Director's mission was a learning, performance and enterprise partnership with schools, in which formation, inclusivity, literacy and numeracy, inquiry-led learning and teaching were integral. Inquiry-led learning and teaching involved three interconnected constructs: project-based learning, personalised learning and data-driven assessment in large, open spaces of a size which allow for different teaching and learning configurations.

His stated intention was to create a new narrative across all schools through which principals, Central Office colleagues, and teachers could connect their beliefs and practices. The intended outcome was for each student to play a more active role in shaping their academic learning and formation.

3.1.1 Personal educational experiences

The Executive Director's personal education experiences as a student in the Diocese, as a scholar, and as a leader in another Catholic Education Diocese, fuelled in him a passion for equity. He believed that critical and creative thinking, reasoning and problem-solving through collaboration and communication are key capabilities that all students need for learning today and in the future.

3.1.2 New direction

Current dominant, 'rationalist' models of teaching and learning, which the Executive Director perceived to be dominant in schools in the Diocese at the time of his arrival, did not meet these needs:

"I am a firm believer that the failure of the rationalist model to build learning organisations, and that's the old industrial model of schooling" (Executive Director).

He wanted to engage staff and students in teaching and learning reforms in which belief and emotion were given equal importance with reason and knowledge.

3.1.3 Shared mission

Reflecting back over the period of intensive reform under his leadership, the Executive Director clarified the importance of the consistent direction for CEDP that he employed over time:

"When we say we don't have a plan, it's disingenuous in one sense. We have a highly sophisticated approach to how we do this. Every staff member is familiar with the mission" (Executive Director).

3.1.4 Protocols

For CEDP to fulfil the Executive Director's mission, there were core protocols which had to be pursued by all schools, albeit within their distinct school settings. These included curriculum planning, data collection and recording, specific teaching and learning programs with inquiry-led approaches, and professional learning and development:

"We encourage our schools to be their own, work in their own context, but there are some agreements and some strategies and system protocols and procedures that we agree are in place in all our schools" (Deputy Executive Director).


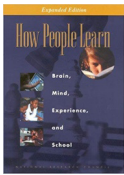
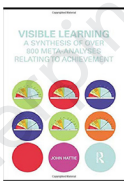
3.2 System-wide change in practice: stages and phases

Over the period of the current Executive Director's leadership, a raft of inter-connected, system-wide change strategies, protocols and procedures were introduced, developed and implemented, within a faith context of formation and inclusivity, and in the face of ongoing external influences. Table 3 maps these changes and identifies four overarching stages of change: Foundational, Developmental, Accelerated, and Embedded. The Phases within these denote particular emphases within particular periods of time. Whilst progress towards achieving his mission continued to be made throughout the period of intensive reform, discontinuities and disruptions were a regular feature. These influenced the timing, number, and combinations of change strategies as CEDP responded to unanticipated policy and social demands from inside and outside the Diocese. Among these were:

- Melbourne Declaration on Education Goals for Young Australians (2008) that led to Australian curriculum reform;
- Introduction of standardized testing in literacy and numeracy (NAPLAN) with results available on the 'MySchool' website as a result of the Melbourne Declaration;
- Introduction of the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL, 2011). These provided a framework for school leadership, teaching standards and accreditation, and the professional standard for principals, and established priorities for the formal professional development of teachers and principals throughout each stage of the reform;
- Adjudged academic failure of a significant number of schools in Parramatta in 2009. (The number decreased over time throughout each stage of the reform);
- Changes in the recognition of Aboriginal Australians through the National Apology (2008), and acknowledgement of their learning needs. This resulted in Jarara Indigenous Education unit being established;
- Increases in government funding that enabled significant building works (2010) and increasing support for educational initiatives during the period of reform.

"Leaders are
the architects
of individual and
organisational
improvements...
The certain challenge
of educational
organisations
is to create an
environment in which
the leaders are
empowered to create
complementary
teams"

Table 3: Change contexts, strategies and influences 2006-2018

Year	Change stages and phases	International literature	International professional learning and development partnerships	Mutually supportive, cross-phase change strategies	Phase related change strategies	Key external influences
Stage 1: Foundational						
2006					Thought leadership: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New CEO; - Annual system leadership days and system reports commence; - Support for Master of Educational Leadership programs commences 	
2007	Phase 1 Imagining a different future		Ann D Clark lecture annual for teachers and leaders commences	Thought leadership	Thought leadership: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Schooling referred to as K-12 not primary/secondary schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Crossroad Report encourages non-Catholic inclusivity in community - 1000 teachers and leaders attend World Youth Day
2008	Phase 2 Arresting decline		System change international scholar-practitioner 1 invited-sustained intervention	Changes in the physical architectures of teaching and learning	Thought leadership: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identified decline in literacy and numeracy New learning support architectures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Digital Education Revolution Program (DER) to provide students in Years 9-12 with access to technology and updated LAN (Local area networks) and WAN (Wide area networks), Wireless networks and telecommunications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Melbourne Declaration on Education goals for young Australians, leading to an Australian curriculum and assessment change - Apology to Australia's indigenous peoples changing understanding and education
2009			Maths international scholar-practitioner 2 invited-sustained intervention		Teaching and learning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Schools focus on learning and request Head Office support; - Extending Mathematical Understanding (EMU) maths programme launched; - 9 Schools Commonwealth identified at risk and new measures of accountability introduced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National Assessment Plan for Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) launched

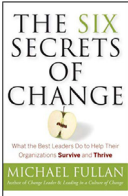
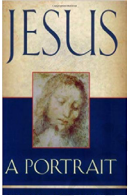
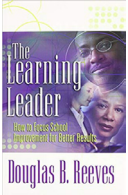
Year	Change stages and phases	International literature	International professional learning and development partnerships	Mutually supportive, cross-phase change strategies	Phase related change strategies	Key external influences
Stage 2: Developmental						
2010	Phase 3 Renovation and recovery: focus on principal change leadership and improving numeracy and literacy		System change international scholar-practitioner 1-invited sustained intervention (continued) International principal development international scholar-practitioner 3 invited-sustained intervention: 'Beginning principals' program		Thought leadership: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leadership framework developed; Newly appointed leaders program Teaching and learning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> System wide approach to reading recovery launched; EMU maths program continues New learning support architectures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1st Iteration Project Genesis refurbishment with 'Building the Education Revolution' BER funding: Secondary Science and Language centres and Primary 21st Century open learning spaces in all 54 primary schools and 5 secondary schools; 700 school computer servers made virtual and upgraded wireless networks, video conferencing, and Google; 13 Smarter Schools National partnerships schools in CEDP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal government 'Building the Education Revolution' (BER) funding Federal government initiative: Smarter Schools National Partnerships – additional funding in literacy and numeracy in low SES communities MySchool website introduced as a central reference for all Australian schools
2011			System change international scholar-practitioner 1 invited-sustained intervention (continued) Literacy inquiry project international scholar-practitioner 4 invited-sustained intervention	Professional learning and development for school leaders	Teaching and learning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Director of Learning appointed; Literacy review: disconnect between schools and office; Literacy inquiry projects commenced with issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gonski review of schooling finds a gap in performance in Australian students and Australia's global performance slipping Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL); professional standards for teachers and principal standard introduced
2012	Phase 4 Reimagining and reorienting learning support systems		Pedagogy and assessment international scholar-practitioner 5 invited- sustained intervention Beginning principal program now led by accredited CEDP	Sustained input by international scholar-practitioners	New learning support architectures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 29 CEDP Schools identified as failing. Focus 160 direct instruction in literacy and numeracy introduced in 29 schools; Student services counsellors became a team from Head Office to meet specific student needs instead of school-based part time 0.2; 2nd Iteration Capital projects construction program commences with age appropriate research designed learning spaces in primary schools, libraries, Technical and Applied Science, science, visual arts, performing arts and hospitality in secondary 	

Table 3: Change Contexts, Strategies and Influences 2006-2018 cont.

Year	Change stages and phases	International literature	International professional learning and development partnerships	Mutually supportive, cross-phase change strategies	Phase related change strategies	Key external influences
Stage 3: Acceleration						
2013	Phase 5 Increased focus on data informed learning assessment and formation		Notre Dame University review Religious Education in CEDP and recommend redevelopment.		<p>Thought leadership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principals masterclass <p>Teaching and learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literacy and Numeracy teams formed at Head Office for school support; All schools want Focus 160; Literacy Inquiry Project ends <p>New learning support architectures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 27 Smarter Schools National partnerships schools in CEDP receiving govt support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD) for disability adjustments commenced
2014			Pedagogy and assessment international scholar-practitioner 5 – invited sustained intervention; International secondary maths international scholar-practitioner 6 invited-intervention		<p>Teaching and learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data walls, case management and instructional walks introduced in all schools; EMU and reading recovery in primary; EM4 literacy co-written with CEDP and introduced in secondary <p>New learning support architectures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20 Smarter Schools National partnerships schools in CEDP receiving govt support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of the Australian Curriculum Primary English, Secondary English, Maths, Science, History. Yr 7 & 9
2015	Phase 6 Accelerated change: major principal redeployment and refinement of data-informed learning				<p>Teaching and learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading recovery and EMU expanded in primary <p>New learning support architectures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Look for learning' online resources created; A quarter of the Principals (22) are reallocated across CEDP schools; Sharing professional learning practice across schools introduced; Purchase of land on greenfield sites for future provisioning of schools; Approval to partner with NSW government to build a school on Sydney Science Park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued curriculum reform in NSW = Primary Maths and Science and. Technology, Secondary English, Maths, Science, History Year 8 & 10

Year	Change stages and phases	International literature	International professional learning and development partnerships	Mutually supportive, cross-phase change strategies	Phase related change strategies	Key external influences
Stage 4: Embedding						
2016	Phase 7 System realignment: Central office restructuring, reculturing, retasking		International scholar-practitioners 2, 5, 6 challenged the learning directorate to look at team delivery System change expert 1-invited intervention steps down		New learning support architectures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Head Office restructure and organisational charts introduced by new human resourcing; - Centrally-based Director's roles changed to those of school-based Learning Leaders; - 20 Smarter Schools National partnerships schools in CEDP; - 8 schools on Commonwealth identification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continued curriculum reform in NSW: Primary History
2017	Phase 8 Embedding inquiry-led learning: Integrating the innovations		Project based learning international scholar-practitioner 7-invited sustained intervention		Thought leadership: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inquiry led learning an expectation; - PBL not mandated but recommended; Teaching and learning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inquiry Learning leader model introduced with coaching New learning support architectures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Targeted financial resourcing across; K-2 instructional leaders (literacy and numeracy); - Family therapy clinic set up; - 9 Smarter Schools National partnerships schools in CEDP; - Wiyanga centre created for high support needs and post-school transition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gonski 2.0. National Reform Agreement for needs based funding for schools - Royal commission into Institutional responses to child sexual abuse in Australia influencing institutional trust - Continued curriculum reform in NSW: Primary and Secondary Geography
2018			Positive behaviour international scholar-practitioner 8-invited intervention		New learning support architectures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Request for service model from learning leaders; - Directors from Central Office support performance; - 3rd Iteration New school architecture design and expenditure on school rebuilds: Kindergarten readers hub and Year 4 inquiry hubs; - Learning exchange provides digital resources to schools and professional learning for teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AITSL Compulsory teacher accreditation - Continued curriculum reform in NSW - NSW Government 'Tell them from me' Survey implemented to teachers, students and parents for feedback on schools

Stage 1: Foundational

3.3 Phase 1: Imagining a different future (2006–2007)

“In the early days the place was in a pretty bad state, we were within about three months of going bankrupt, and there were toxic relationships with the principals. There were a whole range of things” (Executive Director).

The newly appointed Executive Director began his leadership by conducting a root and branch audit, whilst also giving notice of change to the existing system by encouraging school principals and office colleagues to imagine a different educational future.

3.3.1 Thought Leadership

Internal (Parramatta)

The internal thought leadership of the Executive Director was demonstrated through i) his annual system reports to principals, followed by meetings which reinforced and elaborated on these; and ii) his use of published book texts which were given to all principals and Central Office staff each year, and followed through, with principal meetings and professional development opportunities. His thought leadership was also demonstrated through his engagement with key stakeholders at all levels of the education system in Parramatta. These included international scholar-practitioners, the distribution of selected annual texts, his use of the scholar-practitioners’ international perspectives knowledge and expertise for professional learning and leadership of curriculum change, and his stepped changes in the roles, responsibilities, and working practices of Central Office staff, as over time he ‘closed the gap’ between them and the schools.

External (International)

International scholar-practitioners provided external thought leadership through their books, and through the professional learning opportunities that they variously provided and led in person over different time periods during the reforms. Collins (2001) ‘Good to Great’ was the first of a series of annually distributed book texts provided by the Executive Director for all Central Office colleagues and school principals. The book emphasises the critical importance of leadership where effective organisations require disciplined and motivated people in thought and action with commitment to purpose, supported by technology. Its messages signposted the changes in schools that the Executive Director intended to make over during the period of educational reform.

3.3.2 Formation and Inclusivity

A pastoral letter of the Bishops of NSW and ACT, ‘Catholic Schools at a Crossroads’, was published in 2007, emphasising evangelism and Catholic imagination for new ways of encouraging student faith from a Catholic perspective, while also encouraging inclusivity in schools.

The Executive Director's stated intention was to create a new narrative across all schools through which principals, Central Office colleagues, and teachers could connect their beliefs and practices. The intended outcome was for each student to play a more active role in shaping their academic learning and formation.

3.4 Phase 2: Arresting decline (2008–2009)

“We were up in the clouds trying to set the agenda in a theoretical dream, not the practical. I am good on the ground, and that’s where we started. Service and implementation took on a new shape: not just dreaming and theory and that took us to the learning” (Deputy Executive Director).

3.4.1 Thought leadership

A second text, ‘Visible Learning,’ invited principals and teachers across CEDP to consider the influence of teachers on learning:

“Teachers are among the most powerful influences on learning” (Hattie, 2009).

An international scholar-practitioner on system change was invited to advise the Diocese during this Phase to support systematic improvement of student outcomes.

3.4.2 Formation

Catholic formation remained a priority for the newly appointed Bishop of Parramatta, who set up an action plan for the Diocese based upon the ‘Catholic Schools at a Crossroad’ pastoral letter, and a Catholic leadership stewardship framework for school principals.

3.4.3 Student performance

In 2008, nine schools were identified by the Commonwealth government as at risk of low literacy and numeracy student attainments, and were subject to government measures of accountability. The support from Central Office in 2008–2009, therefore, focused strongly upon improving literacy and numeracy. ‘Extended Mathematical Understanding’ (EMU) was also launched with the support of an external maths expert:

“In 2008, we named as one of our key priorities, the task of improving literacy and numeracy across K-12, as part of our strategic intent to improve the learning outcomes for all students” (Executive Director).

For the first time, literacy and numeracy had their own key sections in the CEDP annual report, alongside formation. The emphasis upon raising standards of literacy and numeracy continued through 2009. Central Office staff were employed to provide specific programs across the Diocese by means of two tiers of support: Learning Leaders provided support for system-wide reforms in literacy and numeracy across the schools; and Teacher Educators provided support in specific instructional programs, such as EMU mathematics:

“Broadening projects across the system enterprise was instructional in the early days in order to develop the foundations to get to the next iteration” (Learning Leader).

Teacher Educators work alongside teachers in classrooms in support of specific instructional programs, managed by Learning Leaders.

3.4.4 New learning support architectures

There was significant expenditure on system-wide updates to networks and communications. Technology for Year 9–12 students was prioritized. This enabled students improved access to technology platforms to enhance their opportunities for learning.

“We started from zero six years ago with Reading Recovery and EMU across the system, forming a critical mass. We needed to build a critical mass of the foundations to get to the next iteration of the transformation” (Teacher Educator).

Stage 2: Developmental

3.5 Phase 3: Renovation and recovery: focus on principals' change leadership, and improving numeracy and literacy (2010–2011)

3.5.1 Thought leadership

An international scholar-practitioner on system change continued to provide sustained support to CEDP. He encouraged a strong focus on learning in schools, and supported Central Office in focussing on valuing staff in order to drive forward renovation and recovery.

A program of professional learning in leadership for beginning principals began, utilising a program from New Zealand.

3.5.2 Formation

A Youth Ministry project officer was appointed to work at Central Office in a newly created evangelisation and Religious Education service area.

The Executive Director and Bishop reported that 'faith and learning are as interlinked as DNA in Catholic Education' (2011 Annual Report).

3.5.3 Teaching, learning and inclusivity

The Gonski review of schooling (Australian Government, 2011) found that the performance of students in literacy and numeracy in comparison to other global nations was slipping, with significant gaps between Australian students related to their socio-economic status. The federal government introduced the Smarter Schools National Partnerships initiative (Australian Government, ACARA, 2010), providing funding to schools in low SES areas in literacy and numeracy.

In 2010, thirteen CEDP schools in the funding partnership were identified for additional financial support in literacy and numeracy, based upon their NAPLAN (National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy). The MySchool website (www.myschool.edu.au) was introduced as a central reference site for all Australian schools. NAPLAN (www.nap.edu.au) results and school information became freely available for all stakeholders.

In 2011 the Deputy Executive Director was appointed to Central Office as Director of Learning.

A disconnect was identified between approaches to literacy in schools and Central Office priorities. To counter this, an internationally tested, system-wide 'Reading Recovery' approach was launched (Clay, 1993; 2005; 2016). A literacy inquiry project was also launched based on the expertise of the Woolf Fischer Institute, University of Auckland.

3.5.4 New learning support architectures

In 2010, the federal government funded the 'Building the Education Revolution' in schools throughout Australia. The CEDP utilized \$166 million of funding to complete 13 projects for 'Project Genesis', the first iteration of an ambitious program of refurbishment of schools within the Diocese. The aim was to promote pedagogical reform through the provision of open learning spaces in all primary schools, and secondary Science and language centres in six secondary schools. A further \$23 million was invested in changing school infrastructures, so that they aligned more closely with the inquiry-led learning ambitions of CEDP for all students.

Computer servers and wireless networks were upgraded throughout the Diocese. Video conferencing and Google Classroom were introduced to promote and support new collaborative pedagogies and professional learning for teachers.

The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) established professional standards for teachers and principals. These included mandatory professional learning for Australian teachers as part of their ongoing teacher accreditation.

3.6 Phase 4: Re-imagining restructuring, reculturing, and retasking the learning support system (2012)

“Leaders are the architects of individual and organisational improvements (p.27). The certain challenge of educational organisations is to create an environment in which the leaders are empowered to create complementary teams” (Reeves, 2006, p.29).

3.6.1 Thought Leadership

The Executive Director’s chosen annual text was ‘The Learning Leader’ (Reeves, 2006). A system wide program for beginning principals was led by newly accredited staff within CEDP.

3.6.2 Teaching and Learning

29 CEDP schools were identified by the Commonwealth government as failing in standards of literacy and numeracy. Focus 160, a direct instruction program in literacy and numeracy, was introduced in these 29 schools supported by the expertise of an academic scholar-practitioner.

A second international scholar-practitioner worked with principals and teachers to consider ways of collaborating, in order to build capacity for learning within and across schools throughout CEDP.

3.6.3 New learning support architectures

Central Office refined their learning support practices, with student service counsellors reallocated from Head Office to schools identified as having urgent needs.

During the second iteration of the building program, \$19 million was spent in 2013 on capital construction projects, commencing with age appropriate, research designed learning spaces in primary schools, libraries, TAS (Technological and Applied Studies) workshops, science laboratories, hospitality classrooms, and visual arts and performing arts spaces in secondary schools.

Computer servers and wireless networks were upgraded throughout the Diocese. Video conferencing and Google Classroom were introduced to promote and support new collaborative pedagogies and professional learning for teachers.

Stage 3: Acceleration

3.7 Phase 5: Increased focus on data-informed learning (2013–2014)

Under the leadership of the Deputy Executive Director, the focus of the work of Central Office changed in 2013 to become a data-informed teaching, learning, and assessment system, promoting a continuing focus on new learning strategies:

“Moving toward the implementation helped us get precise... asking the questions we needed to know... 2013 changed us from a cottage to an enterprise with faces on the data. From 2013 we embraced the how: personalising and deprivatising... Our schools would talk about, 'we're into inquiry learning'. We're experiential inquiry learning. That's our next narrative” (Deputy Executive Director).

3.7.1 Thought leadership

‘Putting Faces on the Data’ (Sharratt and Fullan, 2012) emphasised the effective use of relevant data, teacher professional learning, professional collaboration and school resourcing across CEDP schools. Two international scholar-practitioners (2012) were influential in encouraging the CEDP to see the value of the use of data for understanding individual student growth:

“Respondents mentioned the importance of tying leadership decisions to the instructional core and monitoring that moral purpose in every school, believing that every child has the right to be known and literate (p.43). Statistics can and must be converted to strategies that are founded on the human touch” (Sharratt & Fullan, 2012, p.54).

Understanding progress and attainment data of each child promoted shared accountability, transparency and data insights, based on the academic needs of each student.

‘Visible Learning for Teachers’ (Hattie, 2012) invited teachers to use evidence-based messages to collaborate on planning, and to evaluate the impact of their planning on student outcomes:

“Active teaching requires deliberate interventions to ensure that there is cognitive change in the student” (Hattie, 2012, p.19).

3.7.2 Teaching and learning

Focus 160, EMU and Reading Recovery continued in schools. A new English reading and comprehension program for secondary schools was co-written with an international scholar-practitioner. Another scholar-practitioner provided support in the development of teaching in mathematics in secondary schools. The CEDP continued to receive funding support for 27 schools in the Smarter Schools National Partnerships program in 2013, and due to ongoing improvement, this reduced to 20 schools in 2014. The Australian Curriculum was implemented with the start of new syllabus reform in NSW in English in 2014.

3.7.3 New learning support architectures

The specific needs of students and schools were clearly identified by Central Office through evidence-based decision making, based upon student progress and attainment data.

In order to support evidence-informed decision making, resourcing moved from a 'thin' to a 'thick' evidence base about student progress and attainment over time. This was supported by a central student administration system that now measured student performance through the use of dashboards:

"We're the only system in Australia that's got a fully integrated student learning purpose student admin system... the data strategy is itself a story and my job is to bring all of those together" (Executive Director).

3.7.4 Data-informed inclusivity

There was a restructure of student inclusion services alongside government changes to the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD) for students requiring learning adjustments. A 'Youth Mental Health First Aid' program was introduced across schools.

3.7.5 Formation

The University of Notre Dame was invited to conduct a review into the teaching of Religious Education within the Diocese, and recommend redevelopment to reflect a more contemporary pedagogical approach. Concurrently the Bishop launched an initiative for all schools and Central Office to pray the Angelus at midday daily. A 'Forming Intentional Disciples in Every School' (FIDES) online program was introduced for newly appointed teacher educators in schools to connect formation, inclusion, and curriculum with their teaching.

3.7.6. Retasking Central Office (1)

"I am curious about the data" (Deputy Executive Director).

Central Office further increased its capability to track pedagogical assessment data on each child. The Deputy Executive Director was responsible for learning and pedagogy across the enterprise and performance assessment and accountability. Data walls, case management and instructional walks were introduced in all schools. Data walls were used as artefacts to enable Central Office to raise the baseline in data literacy. Learning Leaders worked with teachers and principals in interpreting the data on the wall for each child, with the aspiration of joint construction between schools and Central Office, to move from data on percentages of students to data on individual students.

3.8. Phase 6: Accelerated change: principal re-deployment and refinement of data-informed learning (2015)

3.8.1 Thought leadership

A new text, 'Student Centred Leadership' (Sheninger and Murray 2014), suggested that pedagogical change in schools would have optimal effects if it was led by principals, teachers and students themselves:

"As educational leaders evolve, they must begin to rethink the change process by creating school cultures focused on embracing change as opposed to buy-in (p.38). Schools should be designed to meet the needs of students, but if they're not given a seat at the table or allowed to be a focal point of change efforts that ultimately affect them, then a golden opportunity is missed" (Sheninger & Murray, 2014 p.44).

3.8.2 Deployment of leadership champions

This was a significant change strategy which focussed first on building a core group of principals who championed change, and then redeploying them in other CEDP schools. A quarter of all principals were redeployed in order to promote further pedagogical reform across the system:

"We moved a whole lot of principals in one lot, 22 of them within our Diocese, and they said the thing that shocked them was the degree of 'systemness', so they didn't have to start all over again" (Deputy Executive Director).

3.8.3 Teaching and learning hubs

Schools were placed in networks of four to meet once a term and for shared coaching in inquiry-led teaching and learning, in order to foster collective enterprise learning and pedagogical reform. These groups were known as hubs. Collaboration within and between schools in the hubs was seen as 'enterprise' work:

"We do things as an enterprise. We look for partners to work with, external and internal. We have agreed strategies about how we work. Each school collaborates with three other schools about their formation goal, their literacy and numeracy goal derived from their school action plan. So they're not in isolation, which gives them a much greater strength" (Deputy Executive Director).

3.8.4 New learning support architectures

'Look for Learning' online resources were created to support professional learning. Curriculum reform continued as the NSW syllabus for the Australian Curriculum was implemented in primary mathematics and science and technology, and secondary English, mathematics, science and history.

Data continued to inform teaching and learning decisions across the system. 'Reading Recovery' and 'EMU Mathematics' programs continued to be expanded in primary schools, and resources were shared across the Diocese. Central Office started to restructure the ways that finance, ICT, data, and administration were managed so that they were able to be more responsive to the specific needs of schools.

3.8.5 Retasking Central Office (2)

Central Office staff began to work across the system, with clear initiatives and a shared framework through 'Teacher Educators', who were employed by Central Office to work with teachers in schools to support new pedagogies:

"When new people arrive from other Diocese, they need to learn our system thinking; or people selling us programs and products – how we align them – particularly academic providers and external consultants who think their work is our only work. The intellectual challenge is how we bring it into a coherent framework, fitting into our other initiatives" (Teacher Educator).

Stage 4: Embedding

3.9 Phase 7: System re-alignment: Central Office restructuring, reculturing, retasking (2016)

3.9.1 Thought leadership

Uplifting Leadership' (Weddell, 2012) contributed to the spiritual thought leadership of principals and Central Office. The author proposed that practising Catholics should become 'intentional disciples', who come to understand their own personal relationship with God, and share this with others (both Catholics and non-Catholics), so that they too have an opportunity to have such a relationship.

3.9.2 Inclusivity

A new Bishop was appointed to the Parramatta Diocese. His refugee background informed his emphasis on deeply connecting faith and formation with 'radical' inclusivity. He promoted the work of social justice in schools by inviting CEDP to go to the margins and seek out people to join the Catholic community, inviting diversity. As a result, CEDP reconceptualised its system-wide identity and purpose across the Diocese.

3.9.3 New learning support architectures

In 2016, the focus moved from incremental improvement to transformation, with the establishment of a program for the provision of new physical learning spaces and learning hubs in schools throughout the Diocese. CEDP planned for the future provisioning of schools on greenfield sites. It received approval to partner with the NSW government with Sydney Science Park, a future epicenter for research and development in Western Sydney. The NSW Minister for Planning announced first stage approval for the building of an innovative Sydney Science Park in Luddenham, established by CEDP to focus on contemporary pedagogies, to include a new STEM focused school.

3.9.4 Retasking Central Office (3)

"Schools are where the action takes place. It doesn't happen in this office. We've got people around here: none of them do any teaching. In my contract it says I am responsible for quality learning and teaching and its impossible. I can't do it because I don't do any teaching. I can enable support. I am a pedagogical leader only in the sense of the expertise that I have in helping somebody to learn how to do the work" (Executive Director).

20 CEDP schools were affiliated with the 'Smarter Schools National Partnerships' program. Eight schools were identified by the Commonwealth as failing in literacy and numeracy. As Central Office utilized the data more critically, it continued to look at refining its support models to meet the specific needs of schools and students.

Case management continued to enable Central Office to work more strategically with schools to offer specific personalized education services on a needs basis, rather than providing a generalized, 'off the shelf' support service. This was developed alongside building the capacity to use detailed school data in order to understand and support issues. This was achieved through the provision of 'Learning Leaders' and 'Teacher Educators'.

Positive behaviour support was utilized as a system strategy to support learning and attendance. Central Office identified an issue with student absence in year groups in specific infant schools. By connecting literacy progress and achievement and absence data, the Deputy Executive Director and her team were able to analyse the data in new ways to diagnose system learning issues which required more sophisticated support:

"We made profiles of 50 kids of what is going on with the 5.8 million investment. The common theme was they hadn't been going to Reading Recovery... They didn't come to school. Schools in which Reading Recovery was a lower priority, as one in four [students] weren't receiving reading support. We used to average the attendance so the attendance figures looked good. Then we started profiling kids. We were shocked. Some schools had 63% attendance and we want 90%" (Deputy Executive Director).

Organisational charts were introduced at Central Office for the first time. Alongside school support, Central Office staffing in management and service deliveries was reduced by sixty people in 2016 and reallocated to increase expenditure and pedagogical support based in schools.

3.9.5 New learning support architectures

The shift in focus from teacher to student inquiry-led learning changed the nature of the services available from 'packaged' to 'personalised' services that aligned with specific learning needs of students in schools. Relationship and trust building by Central Office with schools took priority:

"We've done a rebuild of all the relationships with the schools. We've stopped doing the paternalistic approach saying, 'You know I'll come and rescue', and we say, 'It's your job. You go and do it. How can we help support it?'" (Executive Director).

Three international scholar-practitioners encouraged Central Office to further refine the team delivery model. 'Learning Leaders' and 'Teacher Educators' collaborated with the Central Office team in developing a case management approach to school support. One 'Learning Leader' described the change from an instructional to a collaborative case management approach:

The coal face work is where the work happens and becomes more precise. Eleven years ago [in 2007] it was like building an aeroplane in the air, because it started with a strategic intent, but not a plan. When we started developing a theory of action which hasn't changed, it built everything from that layer down – constantly refining our work to how it is today and continually refining the way people work with a common language among teachers, in schools and as a system. That is our great strength" (Head of Leading and Learning).

Learning leaders worked as a team of specialists to support issues in schools:

"A request for service was around literacy, but as time progressed the underlying issues became student management and engagement" (Learning Leader).

Case management enabled Learning Leaders to broker their services for ongoing professional learning and support. They were no longer a *"Band-aid team who solved problems"* (Learning Leader) in school, but instead used jointly constructed goals aligned with school action plans.

- i. Teacher Educators were allocated by Central Office to the schools where they could best provide support.
- ii. Team collaboration provided *"a sharper lens"* to their support work in schools (Teacher Educator). Teacher Educators' and 'Learning Leaders' claimed to build consistency through their own team protocols for communication that they developed over time. As they became better able to be responsive to new areas of focus.
- iii. The 'Learning Leaders' set measurable targets and parameters with schools for specific services. They were written into the service agreement through negotiation with the principal, so that all support was measured:

"[This] puts the principal in the box seat which helps them to manage how much they think can be achieved" (Learning Leader).
- iv. Setting targets and protocols were claimed to enable precision in the timing and the extent of resourcing. One 'Learning Leader' recalled that there had *"been a long tradition of Teacher Educators not doing the sharpest work,"* and that these measures could sometimes *"uncover the underlying issues,"* and were *"indicators of success" (Learning Leader).*

3.10 Phase 8: Integrating the innovations (2017-2018)

“In the last 2 years as a system the focus has been personalising for the schools. We are better at listening to principals, and much more inclusive” (Deputy Executive Director).

In 2017 and 2018, Central Office constrained to become a more responsive support model for schools, integrating innovations established over the time period in literacy and numeracy, and extending its services to include direct support for project-based learning and inquiry.

3.10.1 Formation and inclusivity

The Executive Director implemented the Bishop’s vision for radical inclusivity through a number of projects that supported refugees, asylum seekers, students at risk and Aboriginal students. Jarara Indigenous Education Unit created programs to support Aboriginal students and their families in partnership with schools. A Marist Learning Zone for young people at risk of disengagement was established. Wiyanga Centre for High Support Learning was created for high support needs and post-school transition programs. A family therapy clinic was set up, and behaviour specialist intervention teams were introduced.

3.10.2 Teaching and learning: inquiry-led learning

The Executive Director summed up the purpose and the direction of new learning and teaching in the Diocese:

“The answer to what the learning framework needs to be is the day when we have students taking that responsibility themselves. That’s what this end game has all been about... We have to shift the responsibility. At the moment it’s the adults that have the responsibility for learning. We’ve got to give it to the kids” (Executive Director).

Inquiry-led learning was incorporated into Religious Education during this Phase.

3.10.3 New learning support architectures

The pace of change was further accelerated with the support of data-accessible technology. In 2018 principals interviewed 20,000 students for enrolment, and aggregated the data from a systemwide perspective to make decisions about teacher professional learning and academic partnerships.

“The answer to what the learning framework needs to be is the day when we have students taking that responsibility themselves. That’s what this end game has all been about... We have to shift the responsibility. At the moment it’s the adults that have the responsibility for learning. We’ve got to give it to the kids” (Executive Director).

3.10.4 Retasking Central Office (4)

The objective of Central Office was now to:

“Take away anything that gets in the way of the learning: collecting school fees, building program, technology, people and culture” (Executive Director).

“We're about transformation, every learner, every day, and we're about being a system. We are a system of schools. And there's degrees and degrees of being a system of schools” (Deputy Executive Director).

Engaging with schools' knowledge and understanding of students through 'the faces on the data' enabled close alignment between Central Office and schools. Management and system funding supported individual school programs in specific areas of need:

“Allows us to do equity. We keep schools afloat rather than closing them” (Executive Director).

“CEDP cross fund all schools so that financially viable schools support other schools where those with the greatest disadvantage get the greater share of the pot” (Executive Director).

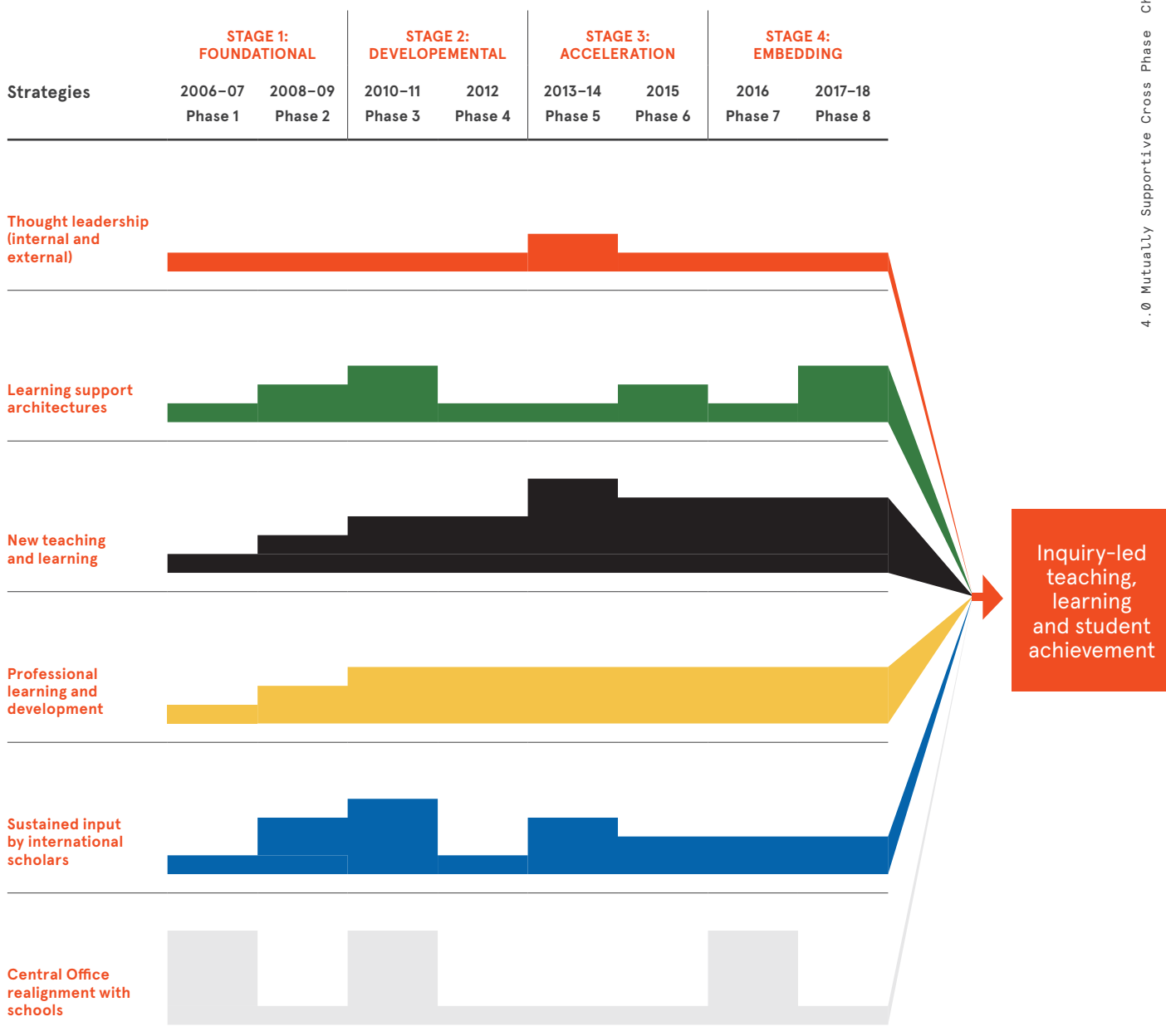
Technology allowed Central Office to be more responsive and adaptive to the financial needs of schools. Data accessibility supported the enterprise activities. Central Office created an engagement site for the 'Learning Leader' team in 2018 that enabled them to track and monitor school visits and priorities as a team and follow up on issues. The finance team used digital enabling to track funding in order to adapt and deliver resources to schools where it was needed the most.

4.0 Mutually Supportive Cross Phase Change Strategies

“We have had the same intent for ten years, with slight modifications” (Deputy Executive Director).

Between 2006 and 2018 there were six key, mutually supportive ‘layered’ system change strategies. Although these were consistently implemented, the relative emphasis given over the period varied. The strategies, and the variations in emphasis between them at different times, are illustrated by the thickness of the horizontal lines in Figure 5 below. Taken together, Sections 3 and 4 illustrate the ‘warp and weft’, the complexity of system change in practice.

Figure 5: Mutually supportive cross phase change strategies



Associated closely with these strategies were the ever-present underpinning system ‘belief’ drivers of formation and inclusivity.

4.1 Thought leadership (Phases 1-8)

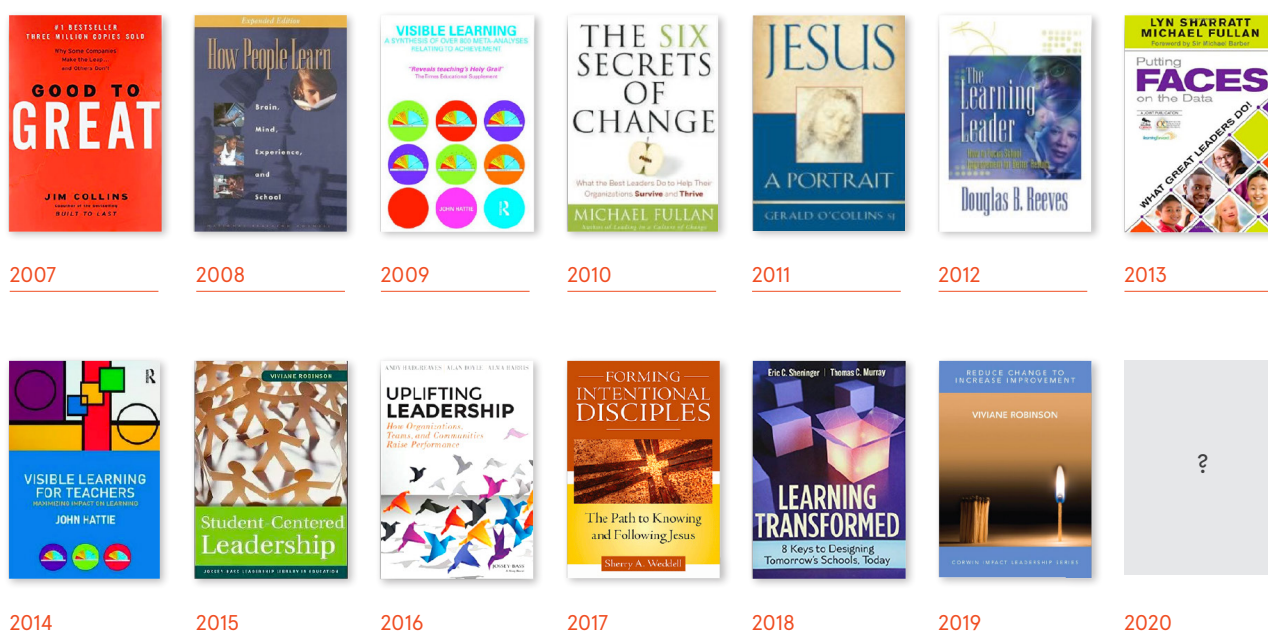
4.1.1 External and internal thought leadership

A key part of the Executive Director’s mission was implemented through his strategy of annually distributing selected international educational literature to all school principals, each in line with his mission and vision for change.

“ We buy 400. It’s the best expenditure” (Executive Director).

The literature emphasised the importance of pedagogy, formation, leadership and transformation. Reading each of these research and practice informed texts provided a means of provoking thought among principals and between principals and Central office colleagues, and helped to promote a shared narrative.

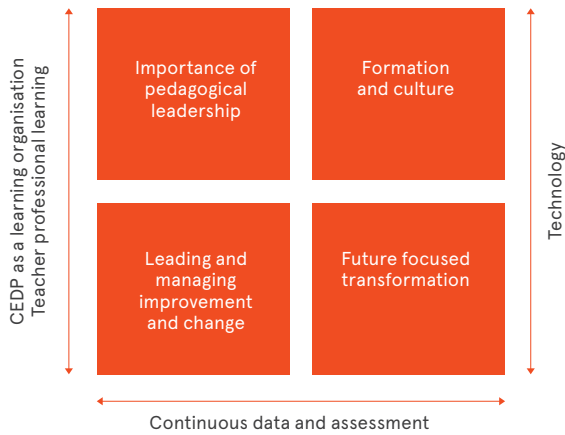
Figure 6: External international thought leadership 2006-2019



The books were a form of internal and external thought leadership that provided a consistent influence throughout the period of intensive educational reform. Central to the thought literature were six key internally developed change actions.

- i. The use of international scholars to stimulate critical reflections on the quality of Central Office and school leadership, and classroom teaching and learning.
- ii. Professional learning and development for teachers and school leaders.
- iii. Regular weekly one hour meetings by the Executive Director with principals of 4 schools (different one each week).
- iv. Changes to the physical teaching and learning environments.
- v. The development of new learning technologies.
- vi. Improved data and assessment practices.
- vii. Changes in the roles of Central Office personnel.

Figure 7: Thought literature themes



4.1.2 Central Office perspectives

Authors of many of the books were invited to work with the CEDP as a means of reviewing and taking forward the quality of educational provision. The Executive Director implemented this strategy by establishing learning partnerships between schools and Central Office, negotiating how change could be enacted in ways which school principals could understand and adapt to their unique contexts.

Eight international scholar-practitioners were invited to make sustained contributions over the period. During Phases 1 and 2, a systems scholar-practitioner and a maths expert were invited in to provide advice and pedagogical interventions with a new system wide mathematics program, to be launched initially in at-risk schools that were under performing in literacy and numeracy.

The sustained intervention of the system scholar-practitioner continued during Phases 1 and 2. CEDP also worked with an international scholar-practitioner to introduce a professional learning program in leadership for principals. By the end of the those Phases, CEDP was accredited to run the leadership program itself. In addition, an international scholar-practitioner led a CEDP wide literacy inquiry project.

In Phases 3 and 4 a research-based approach to curriculum reform was developed; and a local university was invited to conduct a review into the teaching of Religious Education in CEDP, providing advice, also, for its redevelopment.

In Phases 5 and 6 the pedagogical work of CEDP was enhanced by an international scholar-practitioner with expertise in pedagogy and assessment, and an international secondary mathematics scholar-practitioner.

During Phases 7 and 8, three international scholar-practitioners combined their expertise to challenge CEDP to redefine from the roles and responsibilities of Central Office. Another international scholar-practitioner was sought to provide cross-system professional learning in inquiry-led learning. Another international scholar-practitioner with expertise in positive behaviour also conducted system-wide professional learning.

4.1.3 Principal perspectives

Each ‘thought leadership’ book and its implications for practice were discussed each year through regular meetings with principals:

“We’re designing and establishing the new normal” (Principal, Beacon School).

A Secondary School principal reflected upon how students had become active participants in the discussion of the literature used in Phases 1 and 2:

“People need to be able to talk about visible learning. So that’s certainly been a great shift. It’s helped to move the students from the receiver of the learning to being quite active in the learning process. We’ve achieved it through feedback, through going into classes, through working collaboratively, through re-programming (Principal).

Another principal described the difficulties of implementing new learning reforms from the literature and scholarly experts during the 5th Phase:

“When I started [in 2013], I lost 20 families because I was trying to introduce the 5C’s and they didn’t like a modern approach or change, and they still wanted to do rote learning... agile learning spaces turns a lot of parents off too – the unknown... I didn’t really know my community then” (Principal, Lantern Primary School).

The principal of Solitude Secondary School established a learning mantra with teachers, ‘exceed your own expectations’ during the 5th Phase of change that echoed the message of the second text, ‘How people learn’ in order to impact student learning outcomes:

“Our results were trending in a negative direction. Over the last five years, by changing the focus to our simple mantra, ‘Exceed your own expectations’ [the learning has improved]. We’ve got to exceed our expectations if we want to bring about change. Then we introduced our 2020 focus: Reading is Learning, Numeracy is Learning, Writing is Learning, Communication is Learning, Collaboration is Learning, Parent Communication is Learning, and Spirituality is Learning” (Principal, Solitude, Secondary School).

4.1.4 Teachers’ perspectives

Teachers also experienced change in language and practices:

What I’ve noticed since [the new Executive Director’s appointment] is the focus on innovation. Like that sort of catchphrase for this year, ‘curiosity’. The whole ‘data-driven’ stuff that’s come out in the last few years. The old mantra was putting ‘faces on the data’. That’s the only way I’ve noticed that it’s gone from each and every” (Teacher, Solitude Secondary).

4.1.5 Internal thought leadership

The annual system reports detailed the continuing focus on a shared, personalised and research- informed perspective, outlining the sustained input from international scholar-practitioners, and providing a clear narrative of the work of the Diocese throughout the year. The reports emphasised that Catholic identity remained at the core of the work of all schools. Each reflection was a narrative for change that was welcoming and appreciative of principal leadership, system support, and framed though personal stories about individual experiences. Each annual report complemented the focus provided by the educational text. Each report showed the Executive Director’s deep engagement with values-driven pedagogical reform. Each year he followed up the report by meeting with a range of key stakeholders at all levels of the system to reinforce the reform direction and receive feedback.

The six lenses on school effectiveness in Figure 8 below demonstrate the equal importance attached by the Executive Director to values, individuals and community through learning, resourcing and performance.

Figure 8: Six internal lenses on school effectiveness



4.2 Promoting new inquiry-led learning, teaching and assessment (Phases 1-8)

Direct instruction through programs such as Focus 160 and EMU was emphasised (2006-2012) in order to impact student learning outcomes in literacy and numeracy. The Deputy Executive Director was appointed as Director of Learning in 2011. During the 5th Phase (2013-2015) the CEDP moved to a focus on promoting the practice of inquiry-led teaching, learning and assessment (Refer to 3.1). It further refined this by promoting 'project-based learning' (PBL). Project-based learning is defined as "a key strategy for creating independent thinkers and learners [in which] children solve real-world problems by designing their own inquiries, planning their learning, organizing their research, and implementing a multitude of learning strategies" (Bell, 2010.p.39). Project-based learning steps include: 1. Finding an idea for a project. 2. Planning and designing a project. 3. Finetuning; 4. Implementation. 5. Presentation in final event (Patton, 2012).

The movement towards emphasising the importance of student ownership through personalised learning and new assessment processes, was represented in the thought literature in Phases 7 and 8 toward the end of the period of intense educational reform by Sheninger & Murray (2014) and Robinson (2011). which encouraged leaders to foster personalized learning by students:

"Making a difference to nearly all the students in a school satisfies and sustains educational leaders" (Robinson, 2011, p.154).

Project-based learning was a specific form of inquiry-led learning supported by Central Office through targeted professional development for teachers and middle leaders and ongoing coaching from Central Office staff through its dedicated 'Learning Leaders'. Central Office tracked the progress of the schools which participated in the professional development, identifying three levels of engagement. At the *fidelity* level, schools were gaining an understanding of project-based learning and were trialling it. At *integrity* level, the schools were consciously planning the improvement of literacy and numeracy through project-based learning. The *sustainability* level was characterised by the appointment in those schools of a formally appointed leader who strategically resourced project-based learning. Of the 56 primary schools who participated in the professional learning between 2017 and 2018, 41 were at *fidelity* level, 15 at *integrity* level, and 10 at *sustainability* level. Of the 10 secondary schools 5 were at *fidelity*, 4 at *integrity* and 1 was at a level of ongoing *sustainability* in project-based learning across the school.

4.2.1 Principal, teacher and student perspectives

Literacy and numeracy: improving student outcomes

Three system-initiated interventions supported literacy and numeracy: 'Focus 160', 'Reading Recovery', and 'EMU Mathematics'. 'Focus 160', named because it was applied for 160 minutes each day, was designed to change the way that teachers taught literacy and numeracy:

"When they introduced Focus 160 three or four years ago [in 2013] that was huge. You had to change the way you teach English. When it first came out it was very prescriptive. The pressure of the timing was really difficult. There were too many components that were trying to be squeezed in" (Teacher, Pasture Primary School).

Opportunities for improvements in students' literacy and numeracy outcomes also came from system-wide resource support in areas of need. This was provided by learning support teachers:

"There are seven learning support teachers here. There's one for every grade... we've got four reading recovery teachers, we've got [EMU] teachers... We've also put in intervention teachers" (Principal, Pasture Primary School).

There was evidence of improvement in student achievement as a result of system-wide innovations:

"NAPLAN results are improving due to EM4 mathematics strategies. R3, its really good. We have had girls in one term grow 6 months" (Principal, Florence Secondary School).

Targeted literacy and numeracy expertise from Central Office continued to support direct instruction programs in specific schools during the final two Phases:

"We're an LNAP (Literacy and Numeracy Action Plan) school, so we get priority support. We tried a new system last year where the Teacher Educators [Learning Leaders] came in for a week. These teacher educators, these instructional leaders are working with teachers every day" (Principal, Pasture Primary School).

Improvement in reading continued through adequate resourcing of the program with Central Office support for an internationally known 'reading recovery' program:

"Reading Recovery' was making a difference to the reading levels of children. We have two reading recovery teachers and we have an EMU specialist. 'Reading Recovery' is 45 minutes a day, for twenty weeks. And our 'EMU' group is three children, for how long ever they need until they get up the growth points. We had twenty children come out of Year 1 as independent readers last year. We monitor them in Year 1 and 2, and by then we know the ones that have a targeted learning difficulty. Those children will get one-on-one for 30 minutes a day for twenty weeks" (Teacher, Lantern Primary School).

4.2.2 Inquiry-led learning

In Phase 5 (2013), there was a new focus on inquiry-led learning. By the 7th and 8th Phase (2016-2018), many schools chose to use project-based learning as their preferred new teaching and learning strategy. Assessment and reporting structures also changed to reflect this personalised approach.

Project-based learning

Project-based learning as a new way of teaching during the 8th Phase (2017-2018) placed the ownership of learning with students:

"As teachers we've got to be aware that if we don't change, there's not going to be a change in the students. It's not always about the content. It's about the thinking and it's about the collaboration skills that you develop within them" (Teacher, Lantern Primary School).

"I think with project-based learning there will be a lot of opportunity to cater at all levels. It's not just giving them extra stuff to do, it's purposeful" (Teacher, Pasture Primary School).

"Packaging the curriculum in subjects is old thinking. We like to consider a project approach to learning where projects combine the learning outcome across all key learning areas where they naturally align" (Principal, Lantern Primary School).

Students in these schools enjoyed the inquiring nature of project-based learning:

"We started PBL last year. There's so much variety. We learn skills that will help us later on in life... for our jobs in the future" (Students, Lantern Primary School).

"I like PBL because it gives you a chance to know different people and learn about how they function in their classroom.... In PBL we have 'Critical Friends'. That helps us to get feedback about what we can do better" (Student, Beacon School).

"The biggest difference is how we are able to research on i-Pads" (Student, Beacon School).

Part of the pedagogical change journey change was the introduction of project-based learning by an international scholar-practitioner during Phase 8 (2018).

Personalised learning

Inquiry-led learning enabled personalised approaches to learning and assessment. This began with 'knowing the learning needs of each student' during Phases 5 and 6 (2013-2015) and moved to 'student self-assessment' through project-based learning for some schools in the 7th and 8th Phases (2016-2018). The application of personalised learning approaches varied in each school, but all were driven by the value of student learning through collaboration, student choice and mentoring. Teachers identified how teaching had changed over time to more personalised learning through differentiation:

"We now identify more kids that have needs than we did in the past. Years ago you were just expected to be the same as everyone else, whereas we know they're not all the same, so we try to cater for these kids. And there was very little differentiation in teaching. It was just teaching to the masses" (Teacher, Pasture Primary School).

"We're being more adaptive and flexible around the needs of the children, linked to their personalised plans. It's becoming very transparent and alive... We also teach contemporary skills, from Kindergarten. So, we talk about collegiality with our staff, with our students, we teach them how to collaborate, critical questioning, from Kindergarten" (Teacher, Lantern Primary School).

Principals also invited in their own experts to work with children. New and creative forms of direct instruction became part of personalised learning and the encouragement of student voices at Beacon School during Phase 7 and 8 (2017):

Workshops, prompts and teacher teams gave students strategies to improve their learning through personalised support, extension and differentiation:

"With extending prompts, the teacher gives you an extension to the task. You're still learning the same thing just from a different level... For people who aren't really smart in my class the teacher sometimes does something easier. It's like an extending class except the other way. It's like you can't learn to backflip if you don't know how to jump" (Student, Pasture Primary School).

"Most of the learning here is very self-directed, so we can choose how we want to learn. Every Wednesday afternoon we do Adventure Learning where you got to choose and you get to collaborate with new teachers" (Students, Beacon School).

Students were able compare their previous school experiences with their new experience of inquiry-led learning classrooms at Beacon School which opened two years previously:

"More content. The things that we get here actually link to our learning" (Student, Beacon School).

"Another really important aspect of our transformational journey is student voice, and we need to get teacher voice. It's about creating opportunities where people are put in that environment where they've got to learn to adapt and renew themselves" (Principal, Beacon School).

Not all teachers and students, however, were positive about the value of inquiry-led learning:

“In PBL people need to be cautious of making sure everybody is doing work because sometimes people kind of drift off into their own land. You’ve got to make sure you actually help other people and not just do it yourself” (Student, Beacon School).

“For the majority of our students, and with our socioeconomic area, it’s not ideal. A lot of kids are still not independent learners. They need that traditional classroom before they can move into independent learning. They couldn’t deal with it. We needed the foundations” (Teacher, Solitude Secondary School).

“Collaboration, instructional walks and case management allow me to stay in contact with how teachers are doing and we work with those that are struggling” (Principal, Dove Primary School).

4.2.3 Assessment and reporting

Data literacy systems, introduced in 2013, supported inquiry-led learning. Data on student results was reported to Central Office each year:

“You can click on [a student] and you can see how she’s performing in different subjects. That maps with her attendance and her path, on the diversity plan. We’re going in and seeing exactly what makes each child tick” (Teachers, Solitude Secondary).

From Phase 5 (2013) onwards, student data in literacy and numeracy was tracked and displayed on data walls in staffrooms to monitor progress through teacher collaboration as part of the Central Office strategy for change. Case management supported new teaching and learning and assisted teachers in their collaboration.

Students were able to explain how they knew their learning was improving over time as a form of self-assessment. Students as young as infants were able to assess their own learning during the final two Phases (2017–2018):

“Feedback is a big thing. So, if you’re getting feedback and getting less criticism, that could ensure that you’re improving” (Students, Solitude Secondary).

“We have the 6 pillars... to manage, self-relate with others, communicate and collaborate, think credibly and critically and to be digitally literate. Every time students produce a unit of work in our program, a pillar or two is linked as they do the work... [so that each child can]... use the six pillars of learning to complement my individual talents, to solve a problem, or respond to challenge, so that each child would have a deeper understanding of who they are and their life purpose, to use their skills and talents to create a better world” (Principal, Beacon School).

New standards in assessment and reporting were also introduced during the final Phases of change:

“We’re the third school to be given permission to “change the wording in our reports to assess the continuum of contemporary skills” (Principal, Lantern Primary School).

“We don’t really have A, B, Cs and Ds... Grading is worded differently. We have a more specific criteria to follow: and the outcomes reflect on the six pillars: relate, communicate, collaborate... After the end of the projects or tasks we do as reflections so we can see where our weaknesses are ourselves and figure out how our learning’s improving over time” (Students, Beacon School).

However, changes to administrative processes caused stress for some teachers:

“It’s a new year, it’s a new system, it’s a new mission, it’s a new understanding, it’s a new everything... So, what was wrong with the old system, for marking the roles and for entering profiles. Every time you turn around there’s a new system I have to work out. It takes away from the teaching time” (Teacher, Solitude Secondary).

“Data collection and storage: Who has got to enter it? How often? What is the purpose? A lot of that’s not really school-based but it’s coming from the system. There needs to be more clarity” (Teacher, Pasture Primary School).

4.3 Learning support architectures (Phases 3–8)

Learning support architectures include human resourcing, and the financial and physical structures that support new learning, such as building works and IT infrastructure:

“The Diocese has spent a lot on architecture and we want to ensure that the pedagogy matches” (Learning Leader).

4.3.1 Central Office perspectives

Planned building works in schools with digital network support were strategies that supported the new learning agenda. These occurred in three iterations.

Changes to building architectures during the first iteration were most intense. During the first iteration, the CEDP ‘Genesis project’ utilised funding from the Federal Government Building the Education Revolution. Building works for new learning spaces commenced in all 54 primary schools and in 5 secondary schools, as pilot spaces. Digital enabling supported teaching and learning and new building architectures. The most significant expenditure was between 2008 and 2010 on laptops, networks and virtual servers (Figure 6).

The second iteration in 2015 involved the provisioning of greenfield sites for new schools. This led to 30 active projects spanning the second and third iteration of building renovation. The largest expenditure on new builds occurred in 2018 during the 3rd iteration of new school design.

4.3.2 Principal and teacher perspectives

The creation of open learning spaces was not received positively by all schools during the Genesis project (2010), as not all teachers were certain how to use them effectively:

“The biggest challenge, in 2010, was a different school of thought. A number of the teachers were really enthusiastic and a number of them weren’t. And of course there weren’t too many places to go to see this kind of thing in action. So there was a lot of talking about it. The end result was that some people did it really well and others struggled significantly and it didn’t work very well and it was noisy and it was crowded and we didn’t communicate the way we needed to communicate” (Teacher, Dove Primary School).

“There’s always got to be a purpose. I think [in 2010] the architecture was done fairly quickly without a lot of opportunity for us to talk about it. So, all that money was going to be spent on taking the walls out. Not building halls, and things, which I think the state system did largely. We spent it on classrooms. And it had to be spent within 12 months. It was a very quick turnaround where these walls went out and teachers were expected to learn in open spaces. And that didn’t work very well” (Principal, Dove Primary School).

Expenditure in Phase 8 (2018) on building works was double that of 2017:

“Our buildings are very old, like forty years. The one’s that have been knocked down are small and not very conducive to open plan learning... fortunately we’re getting a grant [in 2018] and CEDP are paying the rest of it, so it’s beautiful. It’s going to be state of the art” (Principal Pasture Primary School).

“They’re in the process of spending millions on updating the place [in 2018]. When I got here [in 2014], it didn’t have any of this. It was classrooms with blackboards at the front, and all closed up. So that’s all been opened up now. That was my first project. If we’re going to change learning, we can’t do it in a box with doors shut. They’ve just finished totally revamping the library [in 2017] which is now a very stunning space. They’re in the process of building a two-story building” (Principal, Florence Secondary School).

Principals reported that, during the 8th Phase (2017–2018), new learning architecture and digital enabling resourcing supported collaboration and consistency in curriculum planning:

“The teachers are more deliberate in the work that they do, the planning process. There’s more collaboration. It’s great to hear talk about learning and there’s lots of spaces for them to do that. In the staffroom there are tables and screens and people often just pop together. They’ve got access to spaces and tools that help them in their work – their laptop, iPad – the staff deserve it” (Principal, Florence Secondary School).

“And I could see a teacher over there working with a group and I can see a teacher over here maybe needs something different. It’s not everybody doing the same thing at the same time. Every classroom space has now a flat screen TV and this is fairly new too, and we use iPads” (Principal, Dove Primary School).

4.4. Sustained professional development by international scholar-practitioners (Phases 2-8)

Eight international scholar-practitioners contributed to the promotion of change strategies in literacy, numeracy, assessment, leadership, and learning and teaching across the system during the period of intense educational reform.

One platform for principals' development was an invitation to hear the annual CEDP Ann Clark lecture.

"As leaders, we have been exposed to terrific professional development with big names and tonight we have the Clark lecture, so there's always an exposure to learning" (Principal, Pasture Primary School).

This was in addition to a professional learning program for new principals introduced in 2010, which became self-managed in 2012 and sustained through to 2018.

At the start of the change project an international scholar-practitioner had been invited to comment on the student results across the Diocese:

"He was not impressed... he cut a path through us, he said, 'You've been a Director, you take responsibility'" (Deputy Executive Director).

This scholar sustained a consistent, direct presence in the CEDP until 2016.

During Phase 2 (2009) an international mathematics scholar-practitioner supported the CEDP to write a numeracy program called EMU (extending mathematical understanding).

During Phases 3 and 4, the influence of international scholar-practitioners and their literature started to become more noticeable to principals as a metalanguage developed:

"There is much more sophisticated language being used around teaching and learning... about tracking. Language about the specifics of teaching... Data walls, success criteria, learning intentions, expected growth, anticipated growth" (Principal, Pasture Primary School).

International scholar-practitioners supported Central Office with data led projects during Phase 5 (2013) and Phase 6 (2016), challenging Central Office to reform its roles and responsibilities:

"2013 helped us get precise. [One scholar-practitioner] helped us get precise disaggregating the data" (Deputy Executive Director).

One principal successfully reframed the educational vision of her teachers by reframing thinking about change:

"It's not easy, it's not linear... We're going to look at our theory of action... values, actions and consequences... if you say we need to change something in order to have improvement then you must move from their beliefs and values. Sometimes you won't change, but sometimes things have to change... and then we'll take it to the middle leaders and get them to test some of the theories"... "There are different camps, amongst the teachers. There are people who have been here for 27, 28, 29 years where there's a great sense of ownership and not necessarily always as happy as they could be about change. I have to engage, rather than bypassing them which I think I've done a lot of the time" (Principal, Florence Secondary School).

4.5 Professional learning and development of principals and teachers (Phases 2–8)

“What we’re about is improving the performance of each child by having the best teachers teaching them. That’s it. That’s our strategy” (Executive Director).

The on-going professional learning of principals and teachers supported new teaching and learning in the Diocese in literacy and numeracy teaching, and in inquiry-led learning through project-based learning. Targeted professional learning and development was sustained over time from 2011 onwards, alongside mandatory professional development for teacher accreditation throughout Australia. In 2015 school professional learning hubs enabled schools to group together in mutual support.

4.5.1 Principal and teacher perspectives

Professional learning and development for all principals occurred regularly across the system and reform phases through regular meetings:

“I love how all the principals get together. We have lots of meetings. 80 principals come together” (Principal, Lantern Primary School).

Principals also arranged their own professional learning for teachers:

“I think our teaching is improving. We’re getting better at individualising it and targeting their specific skills. I feel like I’m getting better at that with all the input I’m receiving. Our teaching is improving because of the professional development we’re getting at a school level” (Teacher, Pasture Primary School).

“When the office gives us choices to be able to tap into what’s actually going to suit our school, I think that’s really valuable. Yes we need to do some things across the system. But also our school here is very different to schools down the other end of the Diocese (Teacher, Lantern Primary).

Consistent protocols for professional learning and development were actively encouraged by principals for staff meetings and observations in their schools from 2014 onwards. During Phases 5 and 6, learning clusters and collaborative learning hubs were incorporated:

“We don’t run staff meetings any more. We have ‘learning communities’. A different person leads each time. They use professional reading, they talk about practice” (Principal, Florence Secondary School).

“We have a professional learning cluster. Teachers all come together. We have a two hour twilight every term (Principal, Lantern Primary School).

“We introduced TORP: Teacher Observation Reflective Practice. I created spaces in teacher’s timetables and gave them 18 hours a year to go and observe other teachers, and have that conversation about what they learned, that’s tracked through a document, and at the end of the year, they’re accredited for what they’ve observed and noted... The de-privatisation happened, which was important for the changed culture” (Principal, Solitude, Secondary School).

Informal professional learning and collaboration between teachers also supported change during the final two Phases:

“Collaboration is with the kids, and it’s also between the teachers. You’re not alone in your own little silo. You can say to your grade partner, “Can you just observe this child? I’ve just noticed this: can you just check in on that for me? Am I getting this right?” Or at the end of the day you’re sitting down at your desks together just having that conversation. It’s a constant conversation” (Teacher, Lantern Primary School).

“You’re in a space and you’re doing something with someone else and you go, ‘Okay, this isn’t working. How are we going to fix it now rather than at the end of the year how are we going to fix it for next year.’ I just feel like those conversations happen more. People are talking about learning more amongst the staff” (Teacher, Florence Secondary School).

"It is very challenging, but it's also very rewarding. I do get along quite well with the girl I work with in a space. We have developed this relationship, unlike any relationship I've ever had with someone in a workplace, in that we spend so much time together, and we have to work so collaboratively that we don't really have a choice but to be honest with each other. At the beginning of the year it was really challenging, because [we'd] be sending emails and messages on a [weekend], and we both found [we weren't] switching off. We've begun to set some boundaries" (Teacher, Beacon School).

Ongoing professional learning support for teachers continued to be provided by Central Office during Phase 8:

"An instructional leader (from Central Office) is working shoulder to shoulder with the teachers in kindergarten one and two and upskilling them and their teaching practice" (Teacher, Pasture Primary School).

"Our reading data wasn't the best at the end of last term. So that's been a focus for us, and we've been given extra support this term from [the Learning Leader from Head Office], and I'm really happy with how it's progressed this term" (Teacher, Beacon School).

**"The teachers are more deliberative in the work that they do, the planning process. There's more collaboration. It's great to hear talk about learning and there's lots of spaces for them to do that."
(Principal, Florence Secondary School).**



4.6 Head office reculturing, restructuring and retasking (Phases 1-8)

Staff restructuring, reculturing and retasking occurred throughout the period of intense educational reform. In 2010 a Religious Education support services area was created. This was followed in 2011 by the appointment of a Director of Learning who became Deputy Executive Director to address the disconnect between Central Office and schools. In 2015 a quarter of school principals who were champions of inquiry-led teaching and learning were relocated within the CEDP in a significant system wide reculturing, restructuring and retasking initiative. In 2016, organisational charts were introduced to Central Office. In 2018 Central Office changed to a 'request for service' model with schools:

"I think the focus has sharpened. If it was an educational kind of situation in the past, it was sort of general curriculum. Now, it's about specific learning needs" (Principal, Dove Primary School).

Principals reported that some support mechanisms from Central Office were more helpful and some administration was less helpful in their own local context:

"Our kids are coming with a fairly low literacy level, so we've got to work very hard on that, so we try and address our local needs while ensuring that the system needs are always being covered. There are some things you're asked to do, which you need to do, and that sometimes isn't always as helpful as what it could be" (Principal, Solitude, Secondary School).

"We have progressed a long way with teacher educators (Learning Leaders) when, probably four years ago, anyway, they came in, they observed lessons, they gave feedback to teachers. Teachers felt as though they were students... we had a bit of tears, so that's how it's changed. At that time there were people from the office who were well meaning, doing their job, but we had to have a mental shift" (Principal, Pasture Primary School).

5.0 Faith contexts

Two fundamental Catholic beliefs underpinned all the mutually supportive cross phase change strategies: formation and inclusivity.

5.1 Formation (Phases 1-8)

“The Catholic school is not a stand-alone enterprise. It is intimately connected to the pastoral mission of the Church, and, because of that, connected with the local parish and parish clergy. It has an ecclesiastical context” (Bishop Manning, 2007).

Over this period, formation moved from encouraging strength and depth of faith within individuals and communities and Catholic parishes, so that school parishes reached out to their broader community, shifting the focus from individuals with Catholic faith, to open faith communities.

Each of the six principals spoke of the involvement of the Parish priest in their schools, where formation was central to purpose. For some principals the expression of formation changed considerably over the time period, while others remained traditional in their approaches.

5.1.1 Faith and learning

“Any school can have values, but that can’t be what runs a Catholic school. It has to be the faith element, the element of Jesus’ teachings, the scripture because that balances both. I’ve got a lot of non-Catholics coming here... It’s about nurturing the whole child in Catholic faith traditions” (Principal, Lantern Primary School).

One principal spoke of the learning goals that were established during the 5th Phase (2013-2014), interlinked with faith, and continuing to the present:

“We’ll just continue to build on the learning culture and give students some opportunities for learning and staff. It’s all about life giving. Everything we do is driven by values... Formation we have done through each year group ” (Principal, Florence Secondary School).

Another principal similarly connected formation with curriculum during the 8th (2016-2018) Phase:

“We nurture faith-filled curious children to become creative contributors and innovative problem solvers for a changing world” (Principal, Beacon School).

Religious Education was taught in schools daily throughout the time period. During Phases 7 and 8 (2016-2018) a ‘3 sense’ strategy for teaching Religious Education – literal, spiritual and application – was implemented in schools as a way of bringing scripture to life (Annual Report, 2017):

“Part of the change process was hanging it onto our spirituality. We changed our awards to say, here’s the connection between our religious dimension and our learning” (Principal, Solitude Secondary School).

Well-being, motivation and purpose were connected with formation embedded in school practices, and drew a sense of belonging and purpose in students:

“Every year the new year six class picks a line from the Bible, but it’s from the gospels, whichever one you think will relate to our school. Our year picked ‘May the truth set you free’. It really changes the way that we look at things together” (Student, Pasture Primary School).

“As a school, to be more like Jesus, changes the way we learn and do things. When we have Mufti days, it’s for fun, but also, we donate to the poor, which is also for Jesus” (Student, Lantern Primary).

“The school captains do attendance awards. We say them on the loud speaker when we do the Angelus... It encourages people to come to school” (Student, Pasture Primary School).

These students explained some expressions of formation they saw in teachers, leaders, and themselves while they were learning:

"We say the rosary, and every day we do the Angelus" (Student, Pasture Primary School).

"You sit down with your group and do meditation. We sit down with our legs crossed, and we listen to what the teachers say and we have to think about Jesus and Christ. After we finish this stuff, we have to say a prayer... and it does calm you down so I can really think about what I'm learning and about God as we go really deep through it" (Student, Beacon School).

"Their faith just brings such a peaceful environment to the school... We have a cross in most of the classrooms. Just having that symbolism there brings us together" (Student, Solitude Secondary).

'Faith and learning are as interlinked as DNA in Catholic Education' (2011 Annual Report).

5.1.2 Faith and inquiry-led learning and teaching

In response to external feedback in 2015, the CEDP developed a new Religious Education curriculum in 2018. This placed a new emphasis on student voice:

"The way that they transfer their learning is going to be at the heart of the new religious curriculum and the way we look at scripture and its application. We were using data last year to look at the way that we looked at scripture. We were analysing six kids from each class, and looking at the literal sense, the spiritual sense and then the application, and the deep thinking. That's difficult for lots of different reasons. There's so much student voice in it. So, we interviewed our children: what their questions were about their faith?" (Principal, Lantern Primary School).

Secondary School principals sought to change the way that formation was expressed throughout the curriculum during Phases 7 and 8 (2016-2018):

"All schools have values. The local state school isn't valueless, isn't soulless, but the difference between us and them is the person of Jesus, and that wasn't clearly articulated before" (Principal, Solitude Secondary).

Students from a range of schools reported how formation was also integrated into other aspects of curriculum:

“Every piece of work that we do always comes back to Jesus and God... Most pieces of work” (Students, Lantern Primary).

“On most days we do religion, which really helps to expand our understanding of our Catholic faith. In all our learning, we talk about how we can use it in our everyday lifestyle” (Lantern Primary School).

Not all students, however, incorporated formation in their thinking:

“Sometimes it's hard to believe in all the things that they say, because some of the things we're brought up to, that can't happen. So, it's sort of hard to process it” (Student, Lantern Primary).

5.1.3 Faith and service

As formation in action, for the previous five years (2013–2018) one principal had arranged for a Food Bank to arrive twice weekly to feed school families:

“We have a connection with Food Bank. This is part of our mission, we feel, because we have a lot of poverty in this school.... twice a week the truck turns up... the families come in the afternoon and take what they want... we have it in the newsletter that anyone who has any problems come in and see us and I might tap someone on the shoulder and offer uniform vouchers... we have shoes here too... I don't think that we're any different to anyone else. I think most of our Catholic schools would know their families who need, who they can support and how they can best support” (Principal, Pasture Primary School).

5.1.4 Faith and renewal

The formation focus of the Parramatta Diocese during the Foundational stage from 2006–2009 was evangelistic, influenced by the Bishop. Catholic thinking was a strong focus. Following the Crossroad Report into Catholicism (2007) the Diocese encouraged non-Catholic enrolments.

The Bishop did not avoid public acknowledgement of the difficulties faced by the Catholic church that impacted Catholic education and trust in Catholic education. During the final project Phase, he was one of the few in Australia to speak out about healing:

“This year we reflect on Catholic Education in the Diocese of Parramatta in the light of the terrible findings of the Royal Commission into the Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and particularly how we as Church in Australia have failed in the past to respond with compassion and justice and mercy. It seems God is calling us into the depths and breadth of human suffering and Catholic Education must respond not only in keeping our schools safe, but also by growing our awareness and practice of safe, healthy and open communities” (Bishop Vincent Long).

The principal of one Primary School described the impact of the Bishop during the 8th Phase (2017–2018), of Plenary Council 2020, an Australia wide Catholic council.

“The new Bishop has made a huge difference. ‘Plenary 2020’ has started. The Pope has put it to Australia to ask the open-ended type questions that need to be asked: where are we going, what needs to change?” (Principal, Dove Primary School).

Teachers also commented on how progressive plenary 2020 seemed to be:

“We had a ‘Plenary [2020]’ meeting with the leaders of schools and we came back and we did the same thing [at school]. The teachers had to type in their opinions and they went into a screen. And we were amazed that everybody was so open to change. It wasn't what I anticipated, to be honest, to be more progressive” (Teacher, Solitude Secondary).

5.2 Inclusivity (Phases 1–8)

The emphasis on inclusivity which had developed over this period of intensive educational reform became, in the later Phases (2016–18), ‘radical inclusivity’. As a result, CEDP reconceptualised its social justice identity under the influence of its recently appointed Bishop, with initiatives such as Marist Learning Zone, Aboriginal initiatives, and Special Education in Phases 7 and 8:

“My challenge to everyone who is part of Catholic education in the Diocese is to consider these questions: How can we respond to the challenge of being a Church at the margins today? Where are the new ‘peripheries’ and new ‘horizons’ in Catholic schooling that we are called to be and to offer nearness and proximity? How can we be the merciful face of God to our school communities and families?” (Bishop Vincent Long).

During this time period, an ongoing challenge from the parishes had also been a decline in church attendance from families on a Sunday. The Director of Mission explained from a Central Office perspective that school represented inclusion in church:

“Well, our kids aren’t going to church on Sunday, but we can say in good faith though, 43,000 kids here went to an opening school mass. 43,000 kids participated in Ash Wednesday celebration. 43,000 kids participated in Easter liturgy” (Director of Mission).

“43,000 kids pray every day.” (Deputy Executive Director).

In 2017 the Executive Director implemented the Bishop’s vision for radical inclusivity in the Diocese in support of refugees, and asylum seekers:

“Bishop Vincent delivered a powerful address to leaders, issuing a challenge to staff to ‘go to the margins’ and first serve those in need through their work. Staff heard that rather than providing quality education for Catholics, our Mission is to provide Catholic education for all. It was a call to work and live in accordance with Bishop Vincent’s mantra, ‘Launch into the deep’. In response to Bishop Vincent’s challenge, CEDP community developed strong links with local organisations serving refugees and asylum seekers as well as supporting the work of the Marist Learning Zone. This joint Marist/CEDP initiative was launched in Mount Druitt to extend learning opportunities to young people at risk of disengaging with formal education” (Executive Director, Annual Report, 2017).

The Director of Mission was clear about the implications:

“Wherever Jesus is, that’s church... the doors need to be wide open. His big thing is probably not even ‘open the doors’, he’s saying ‘actually go out the doors and go find them. Go get them and make them feel welcome’. It’s not just opening the doors and if they want to come, come. He’s saying, ‘we need to go out.’ So, his language is a lot about Kingdom of God language. How do we make the Kingdom of God present now in this world, and what are the hallmarks of the Kingdom of God? And obviously that’s about being invitational, being welcoming, about going to the edges, being counter-cultural. And then he’s challenging us, the schools, to mirror that as well. Inclusivity. Radical inclusivity” (Director of Mission).

One principal explained what intercultural understanding meant for radical inclusivity as expressed by the Diocese during the 8th Phase (2017–2018). His school had a multi-faith population with:

“58% Catholic, and 30% Hindu. There are 30 minutes of Religious Education timetabled each day. One student resolved that he’s got two gods, a home god and a school god. This school strongly encourages intercultural understanding as a part of our six pillars: witnessing in the cross is to be inclusive to all and relating with others requires a deep commitment to intercultural understanding” (Principal, Beacon School).

5.2.1 Central Office perspectives

“No child is refused entry if they can’t pay. This means that operational costs are greater because they have greater needs that have to be met” (Executive Director).

“The equity issue is the big issue here, despite all the facts are proving kids are learning, our biggest, biggest problem is the equity issue. The gap is getting wider. The rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer... We have a scholarship program, we try and encourage indigenous students who usually come with no fees at all. They make up about 10 percent of the population” (Executive Director).

Over the reform period Central Office promoted and led Catholic values across the curriculum with an emphasis on scripture and professional learning for teachers from the ‘Crossroad’ paper (2007) encouraging Catholic imagination and inclusivity, through to its action plan in 2009 during Phase 3.

During Phase 8 Central Office was considering what religious leadership looked like in schools, and the meaning of Catholic community and radical inclusivity:

“Is there such a thing as a critical mass? You know, if we had a school that was 90% Hindu and 10% Catholic” (Director of Mission).

Concurrently, in 2018 The Central Office followed a worldwide project from Leuven University in Belgium, called the Enhancing Catholic School Identity project in five pilot schools to:

“Set markers on the preferred stance for what a Catholic school would look like. Our faith is a lived faith and that means outreach. It’s beyond the head. It’s a head, heart, and hands way... I think our challenge now though – probably originally, Catholic school was about the lower classes and bringing them up. And now, it’s pretty mainstream in the middle class. So where are our edges now? That’s a challenge for us” (Director of Mission, CEDP).

5.2.2 Principal perspectives

Many CEDP principals worked in schools with a vast range of socio-economic circumstances and diverse populations. The expression of Catholicism at two secondary Schools was one of inclusivity. One principal had a holistic, pedagogical and spiritual vision for the school with a 40% Muslim and 20% Hindu population and also a refugee population in 2018:

“We’re a multi-faith school with a Catholic focus. We’re welcoming of all our faiths. So, we have girls who wear hijab, we have girls who are Sikhs and wear covered legs, covered arms, turbans. Who cares as long as they feel like they belong?” (Principal, Florence Secondary School).

The mission was connected with service. It hosted a Friday morning breakfast club and gave students canteen passes to collect lunch to foster inclusivity.

5.2.3 Student perspectives

As the demographic data in Part 2 (Figure 2, 3, 4 and 5) show, one of the most significant changes to CEDP schools over the time period was an increase in cultural diversity. Formation was lived out in practice in the ways that people treated each other with inclusivity and respect. Students noticed this in teachers, in other students and in themselves, linked with radical inclusion:

“It goes into our lifestyle as well with being not to judge other people’s culture. It is about believing in Jesus and God, but it’s also a lot about what he does and how we should be” (Student, Lantern Primary).

“[Teachers] always tell us to love each other, ‘love your neighbours’ and stuff. In my old school they didn’t use to do that” (Student, Pasture Primary School).

“When God’s with you with every step of the way he brings the best out of you. I think a lot of the teachers think of him in the back of their head as well. They always think to do the best for the children, and I just think that’s a lot to do with it as well. They really respect us, and so we respect them as well” (Student, Solitude Secondary School).

Formation and radical inclusion were the values-driven threads that connected the interwoven change strategies over the period of intense educational reform.

6.0 New understandings of system change leadership: messages from the field

6.1 Transformative system change leadership: combining academic and humane orientations

The leadership of change in the Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta should be seen in the context of global reform environments which have been characterised internationally as having two basic orientations: (a) a human rights and capacity perspective... for a more inclusive and humane society... that support the development of persons both as individuals and social actors (Sen, 2009); and (b) a neo-liberal socio-economic perspective that links education policy formation to competitive, free market institutional contexts (Friedman and Friedman, 1980). System change in Parramatta had a reform purpose which transcended these. Its leaders addressed both academic improvement and social change. In doing so, they exercised transformative leadership, a critical approach that focusses upon

social transformation, equity and justice (Hewitt, Davis and Lashley, 2014). Their reforms embraced this by managing and actively seeking to engage both with the measurable results-driven neo-liberal agendas, as evidenced, for example, in their continuing focus upon raising levels of numeracy and literacy in schools, and in their ongoing multi-level investments in system-wide, inquiry-led teaching and learning in schools. Support in these areas was provided throughout the intensive reform period through direct instruction in the early Phases from 2006 and then through inquiry from 2012 onwards, with continued direct instruction provided for key, 'at risk' students, and literacy and numeracy through inquiry-led learning developing during the final Phase. In doing so, they remained consistently faithful to the Catholic leadership mission of working for a more humane society, by ensuring that a continuing reinforcement of formation and radical inclusivity beliefs underpinned all reforms (Research Report Sections 2.1; 2.2; 2.3; 3.0; 3.6; 4.2; 4.3; 4.5; 5.0).

Message 1

Leaders of system change are likely to achieve success when they are clear, consistent and persistent in their transformative leadership of educational beliefs, values and practices which reflect academic improvement and human flourishing needs, and when these are mirrored through their strategies and actions.

6.2 New learning and teaching

From the beginning of the intensive reform period, the leadership ambition was to move all schools in the Parramatta Diocese to inquiry-led learning and teaching which would ensure that their students would develop 'twenty first century' skills, and ownership of their learning in order for them to be better equipped for work and life. That this ambition remained throughout was evidenced by the changes to the physical spaces for learning in schools and the parallel professional learning and development provided by internally and by international and other external scholar-practitioners (Research Report Sections 3.0; 4.2; 4.3; 4.4; 4.5).

Message 2

Where leaders seek system change which promotes radically new learning and teaching, they are likely to achieve success in changing school leaders' and classroom teachers' habits of mind and practices when they engage directly with schools, support them through targeted professional learning and development, and combine changes in the teaching and learning environments with the provision of change champions at senior levels who are themselves committed to such changes.

6.3 Variations in use and impact

System-wide efforts to effect radical changes in ways of thinking and acting by principals and teachers in all schools in the Parramatta Diocese over more than ten years led to the widespread adoption, use and embedding of inquiry-led learning. However, the evidence showed that schools had adopted different patterns of engagement, ranging from full time to part-time use. Some schools incorporated literacy and numeracy into inquiry-led learning whilst others used project-based learning to further develop other key curriculum areas. Primary schools adopted project-based learning more comprehensively than secondary schools (Research Report Sections 3.0; 4.2; 4.3; 4.4; 4.5).

Message 3

Leaders of system change are likely to achieve success when they are persistent in supporting change over time, acknowledge that there are likely to be variations in its adoption and use, and continue to exercise pressure with engagement differentially.

6.4 Learning support architectures

Over the period of intensive reform, system leaders, in line with their ambitions to promote inquiry-led learning and teaching in all schools, invested heavily in changes to the physical working environments in which students learnt and teachers taught. The changes over the period ranged from adaptation of existing spaces to the building of new schools. They did so in the belief that these changes were integral to supporting successful change at classroom level. The removal of classroom walls was shown to enable personalized learning and enhanced student well-being through new affordances that facilitated flexible groupings, task dependent space diversification and opportunities for increased interactions, team-teaching, collaboration and closer relationships between students (Research Report Sections 3.0; 4.2; 4.3).

Message 4

Leaders of system change are likely to achieve success when they support their ambition for radical change in classroom learning and teaching with appropriate and timely changes in the physical environments in which these are intended to take place.

6.5 Stakeholder engagement

Emphasis on neo-liberal reform agendas has been claimed to lead to definitions of (good) teaching as a 'craft' managed by 'technicians,' rather than 'professionals' (Furlong 2013, Zeichner, 2014), for whom teaching requires craft, artistry, discretionary decision making, a key component of autonomy, and strong moral purpose. Characteristics of the leadership of system change in Parramatta over the period of intensive reform were an emphasis on discretionary decision-making in schools and strong moral purpose. One expression of this was the drawing together of previous, separately functioning parts of the system together by redefining, restructuring, reculturing, and retasking them, so that they became closely aligned. Thus, 'thought leadership' texts and ensuing professional learning and development activities were shared between Central Office staff and school principals. The activities of the former were decentralised and redistributed, so that they were better able to be responsive to the expressed needs of schools. The fine tuning of student progress and achievement data collected by Central Office enabled schools to monitor their own improvements and interact with Central Office during this process (Research Report Sections 2.1; 3.0; 4.1; 5.1; 5.2).

Message 5

Leaders of system change are likely to achieve success when they step into the change processes that they expect others to make, and engage in sustained interactivity with the key stakeholders, rather than distancing themselves by taking monitoring, evaluation and accountability roles once the policies are created and launched.

6.6 Layering leadership

Supported by Central Office, layers of leadership were developed across a number of carefully orchestrated Stages and Phases, joint projects and collaboration with external partners (Hodges, 2016). The creation of inquiry-oriented principals as ‘champions’ of change, and their re-deployment to the leadership of other schools that had not embraced this was a key change strategy by system leaders. The roles, identities, and practices of Central Office staff also changed as new roles with a school-based and team-based focus were created and accountability was increased. The restructuring, re-culturing and progressive re-tasking of Central Office staff were designed to ensure that new learning and teaching were championed by those who held senior leadership roles and positions both in schools and in Central Office. These strategies occurred later in the reform period, indicating that capacity building for restructuring, re-culturing and re-tasking and extending leadership for change was a longer rather than shorter process (Research Report Sections 3.0; 4.1; 4.2; 4.6).

Message 6

Leaders of system change are likely to achieve success in ensuring changes in learning and teaching when they ensure that policy-centred staff and schools are aligned and led by those who champion the desired changes.

6.7 Thought leadership: an innovative strategy for change

The Executive Director used ‘thought leadership’ texts written by international scholar-practitioners to build a values-driven metanarrative with leaders across the CEDP through the annual introduction and dissemination to all schools of selected educational and spiritual literature. This enabled their leaders to debate and develop broader, research-informed understandings of the purposes and practices of education, and, ultimately, form working partnerships between the key policy enactment stakeholders – principals, teachers, and staff in Central Office and international scholars. Each theme in the texts was augmented by focused professional learning and development opportunities throughout each year of the intensive reform period. The use of this literature to inform and influence was a distinct feature of the system leadership of the Executive Director. The literature emphasized four key themes as a foundation for learning: the importance of pedagogical leadership, leadership and management, future focused transformation, and formation and culture. Such commitment to the further development of new professional thinking through international scholar-practitioners was a key contributory element in the success of system wide change (Research Report Sections 3.0; 4.1).

Message 7

Leaders of system change are likely to achieve success when they challenge the existing thinking of other leaders across the system through the planned, consistent provision, sustained consideration, and application to practice of selected, fit-for-purpose texts written by international scholar-practitioners.

6.8 Professional learning and development: change as a shared journey

In leading the reforms, the Executive Director recognised that to overcome the challenges of aligning schools and Central Office, values and visions in strengthening school performance (Honig, 2004), close-up, sustained, interactive relationships between the key stakeholders in the change processes needed to be created, built and reinforced. This was achieved through shared, lateral, rather than hierarchical, capacity building (Fullan, 2008), using professional learning and development for teachers and leaders through the creation of learning hubs in schools, regular system wide meetings for leaders, and reform-related professional learning and development opportunities for teachers, principals and Central Office staff. Many of these were led by international scholar-practitioners (Research Report Sections 3.0; 4.4; 4.5; 4.6).

Message 8

Leaders of system change are likely to achieve success when they invest in regular high-quality sustained opportunities for key stakeholders to engage collaboratively in reform-related lateral capacity building through professional learning and development.

6.9 Cross phase change strategies

The evidence from this research is that system change occurs at multiple levels, in multiple contexts, and over different time periods. Some change strategies adopted by the Executive Director were emphasised in specific Stages and Phases, and in response to particular predicted and unpredicted needs (e.g. literacy and numeracy concerns). However, six mutually supportive change strategies were pursued throughout the intensive reform period: thought leadership; new inquiry-led teaching and learning approaches; sustained input by international scholar-practitioners; professional learning and development for school leaders; changes in the physical architectures of teaching and learning; and Central Office reculturing, restructuring, retasking. Whilst the intensity of effort assigned to each of these varied across the period, all were central to the application and development of the Executive Director's reform strategy and, when combined, contributed significantly to the success of his mission. All were interconnected and all were mutually supportive of the reform enactment intentions; and all were underpinned by formation and inclusivity (Research Report Sections 3.1; 3.2; 4.0; 5.0).

Message 9

Leaders of system change are likely to achieve success when they combine, accumulate, and sustain inter-connected, mutually supportive strategies which take forward the reform narrative, whilst demonstrating respect for the needs of those leaders in the system who are expected to enact them.

6.10 The limits of rationality

System change texts rarely highlight the personal and professional qualities of the change leaders. Yet it is clear that the radical, system-wide changes in the Parramatta Diocese education system were the creation and constant determination of the Executive Director. That the structural, cultural and role identity changes met with a large measure of success was in part due not only due to his and his team's capabilities in managing these, the clarity of thought, articulation and communication of his values, but also his interpersonal skills, energy and human endeavour, resilience, persistence, and abiding belief that the reforms were 'right'. He understood that, 'the whole of a complex system is more than the sum of its parts' (Jacobson et al., 2019, p.113).

In conceptualising change as dynamic, complex, unpredictable, and not only a rational process, the Executive Director recognised that successful change 'involves developing relationships from a shared sense of purpose, exchanging and creating information, learning constantly, paying attention to the results of our efforts, co-adapting, co-evolving, developing wisdom as we learn, staying clear about our purpose, being alert to changes from all directions' (Wheatley, 2005, p.27). It is clear from the evidence of the six core, mutually supportive change strategies that the nature and quality of the interactions between different actors in and between parts of the system, together with the active presence of formation and inclusivity as belief drivers, were key to the success of his change ambitions (Research Report Sections 3.1; 4.0).

Message 10

Leaders of system change are likely to be successful when they build powerful positional, personal, and authentic interpersonal, productive relationships within and between all parts of the policy and enactment systems through their active and interactive leadership engagement throughout the change process journey.

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