

WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY

Equity Program Principals:

Policy mediation for equity

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6/30/2017

A thesis submitted to Western Sydney University in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Dedication:

This study is especially dedicated to my family,
and my sister Judy, who gave her all to teaching.

Acknowledgements

In undertaking this study, I wanted to reflect on the changing nature of school leadership as my colleagues and I began to experience it in disadvantaged schools in NSW, Australia. I am therefore absolutely indebted to those who made this learning journey possible for me.

I would like to firstly acknowledge my two supervisors, Dr Katina Zammit and Associate Professor Susanne Gannon. Both Katina and Susanne have been instrumental to my completion of this learning journey to complete this thesis. Thank you so much Katina, for your continuing positive support and belief in my ability to complete the study. Thank you for continuing to demand high standards and for ensuring that I didn't lose my way among the verbiage. Thank you, Susanne for reading endless drafts and providing thoughtful feedback. I was so grateful for the significant amount of time and the really constructive feedback and guidance that you both provided.

Thank you also to all the participants in this project who generously and thoughtfully gave their time to me and this project. In particular, I sincerely thank each of the school principals who reached out in their busy schedules to provide me with generous amounts of their time and the benefit of their insights about school leadership in their current circumstances. This project is about them and I hope in some way, this study is a tribute to their amazing work in schools, even as they are faced with ongoing challenges that continue to test their values, knowledge and skills.

I would also like to thank the School of Education at the Western Sydney University and the Graduate Research School for their support of my candidature. A big thank you also to everyone in the Western Sydney University School of Education for their generous friendship and positive support throughout my candidature.

Thank you also to my husband, Bruce and my sons, Karl, Evan and Andrew for their unstinting and good-natured willingness to provide thoughtful advice and encouragement throughout the time that I was working on my PhD, as well as their help with the many technical aspects of writing the thesis. Lastly, a thank you to my mother, who continues to support whatever I do, even though I probably puzzle her with these un-ending quests for understanding.

Statement of Authentication

The work presented in this thesis is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, original, except as acknowledged in the text. I therefore declare that I have not submitted this material in whole or in part for a degree at this or any other institution

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Date: June, 2017

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Glossary of Acronyms and Abbreviations

A4L	Assessment for Learning
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AECG	Aboriginal Education Consultative Group
AEO	Aboriginal Education Officer
AITSL	Australian Institute for Teaching School Leadership (Limited)
AL	Accelerated Literacy
AP	Assistant Principal
APSTL	Australian Professional Standards for Teachers and Leaders
ARIA	Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia
ATAR	Australian Tertiary Admission Rank
BOS	Board of Studies NSW
BOSTES	Board of Studies Teaching and Educational Standards NSW
BYOD	Bring Your Own Device
CESE	(NSW Government) Centre for Statistics and Evaluation
CIRES	Centre for International Research on Educational Systems
CLO	Community Liaison Officer
CS	Central School – K-12
DEC	Department of Education and Communities NSW
DET	Department of Education and Training NSW
D of E	Department of Education NSW
DP	Deputy Principal
DSP	Disadvantaged Schools Program
EMSAD	Educational Measurement and School Accountability Directorate
EPAC	Employee Performance and Conduct
ESL	English Speaking Background
FOEI	Family Occupation and Education Index

GFC	Global Financial Crisis
GTIL	Great Teaching: Inspired Learning (policy)
HAT	Highly Accomplished Teacher
HSC	Higher School Certificate - Year 12 final Certificate
HS	High School (7-12)
HT	Head Teacher
ICSEA	Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage
IEC	Intensive English Centre
ILP	Individual Learning Plan
ITPTS	Institute of Teachers' Professional Teaching Standards (NSW)
KLA	Key Learning Area
LSLD	Local Schools: Local Decisions
LAST	Learning Assistance and Support Team
LSES	Low Socio- Economic Status
LST	Learning Support Team
LBOTE	Language Background Other Than English
NAPLAN	National Assessment Program in Literacy and Numeracy
NESA	NSW Educational Standards Authority
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PAT	Progressive Achievement Tests
P&C	Parents and Citizens group
PS	Public School (K-6)
PISA	Program for International Student Assessment
PLLD	Professional Learning and Leadership Directorate
PSP	Priority Schools Program
QT	Quality Teaching
R2L	Reading to Learn
RAM(s)	Resource Allocation Model

RSD	Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage
SBA	School Based Apprenticeship
SDO	School Development Officer
SEO	School Education Officer
SED	School Education Director
SIPA	Systemic Implications of Pedagogy and Achievement
SMART	School Measurement, Assessment and Reporting Toolkit (for NAPLAN data)
SLSO	Student Learning and Support Officer
SSLSES	Smarter Schools Low SES School Communities National Partnership
TAA	Teacher Accrediting Authority
TIMMS	Trends in International Mathematics and Science
TTC	Trade Training Centre
WWC	Working with Children check
VET	Vocational Education and Training

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Equity program principals: Policy mediation for equity

Abstract

This study investigates the ways in which six principals from a range of government school contexts in NSW, Australia, implemented the Smarter Schools Low SES (SSLSES) School Communities National Partnership program to achieve equity in their schools. After analysing the ways in which principals were made accountable and positioned by policy discourse underpinned by economic rationalist principles, the thesis explores how the six principals mediated policy accountabilities for student equity. Using a number of Foucauldian conceptual lenses, each principal's practices are examined as they implemented accountability, leadership and quality teaching governmentalities of the policy reforms.

The study is underpinned by constructionist epistemology to better enable an understanding of the complex interrelationships of principals, as enactors, within the contexts of their schools; and as subjects, in interaction with educational policy discourses. Its design is informed by two main methodological approaches comprising a critical policy discourse analysis, and case studies of a sample of six SSLSES National Partnership principals. The policy analysis utilised Gee's (2005) 'D'/'d' discourse concepts. Case study methods utilized semi-structured interviews with each principal and staff and/or community recommended by the principal, together with analysis of relevant artefacts. Data gathered was examined using Foucauldian notions of power, governmentality, resistance, ethics and technologies of the self to investigate how principals negotiated governmentality discourses directing their implementation.

By undertaking the analysis of principals' practices in selected domains of accountability, leadership and quality teaching, the thesis demonstrates that power relations and governmentality operated on and through principals to create them as disciplined subjects who were largely compliant to specific accountability pressures. This included acceding to standardised testing regimes, entrepreneurialism, and targeted continuous school improvement practices.

However, principals also demonstrated the further capacity for contestation, re-articulation and mediation of a range of other key governmentalities, designed to normalize them, but seen to be at odds with their school community's priorities, the principal's own subjectivities and/or their vision for equity. Foucault's notions about power relations, ethics and resistance were important in the study to show where and how principals operated counter to the conduct

required of them in their local contexts. The study also demonstrated how policy governmentalities can be appropriated in ethical ways to implement reforms for equity.

The study's importance stems from its governmentality approach which demonstrates that in key domains, principals are not only enactors wholly 'responsibilised' by policy accountabilities and discourse, but are educational leaders enmeshed within complex histories, with ethical stances and acceding also to the contingencies of their local contexts. They are therefore careful and selective mediators and purveyors of both normalizing and resistant practices and principal-co-producers of complex reform in the education marketplace. Despite disciplining practices of accountability regimes, principals have seized opportunities for agency over equity practices in their complex school contexts.

Chapter 1

Introduction to the Study

The question we need to ask is not whether the schools serving the poorest 10 to 15 per cent of the population have succeeded, but whether the systems of which they form a part have been successful. For, like it or not, the poorest schools serve the whole system...The health of the whole system is reflected in the performance of the poorest schools (Teese, 2007, p. 3).

1.1 Introduction.

Increasingly, economic rationalist approaches to public education are changing the face of education systems and relationships between and within schools in ways which have impacted on the reconfiguration of school leaders and their communities against commonly understood paradigms. Older values of collegiality, community and of equality seem to have given way to the values of the marketplace which celebrates competition, efficiency and self-responsibility (Connell, 2013a). It has been argued by many that these changes constitute a global phenomenon within which the democratic purposes of schooling and equality, in particular, have been subjugated to economic governmentalities (Ball, 2012; Reid, 2010; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). In NSW public schools, Australia, such changes have been charted since the late 1980's and are impacting on principals and the ways in which they lead their schools.

To understand the impact of such policy changes on a sample of NSW principals of disadvantaged¹ schools, this study examines the impact of the Smarter School Low SES School Communities (SSLSES) National Partnership program (2009-14) (COAG, 2009) as an example of a large-scale equity policy. The study is an analysis of how policy governmentalities are constructed at the policy discourse level, and how they are constructed, enacted and mediated by principals at the school level. The study's importance rests on gaining an understanding of the ways in which principals are positioned as subjects by policy discourses and reflect on their mediation of policy imperatives, for equity, within complex system-wide and local contexts.

¹ Note that the term "disadvantaged" is used in the thesis with some reservation given its deficit connotations. However, I retain it as a descriptor of schools supported by equity programs such as the SSLSES National Partnership program, since this terminology is also reflected in much of the program discourse and is critiqued as part of the thesis.

In this chapter, the research questions posed by the study and associated with the ways in which principals managed large scale equity program policy are introduced. Associated theoretical and empirical propositions contributing to the questions are outlined. These include preliminary thoughts about the nature of equity and its interpretation in Australian schools, current understandings about educational leadership and tensions embedded in equity policy. The chapter will also provide a statement about the contribution this study makes to the field of educational leadership of disadvantaged schools and associated large scale government initiated equity policy implementation. Finally, a brief overview of the research approach will be provided along with an outline of the thesis structure.

1.2 The Nature of Disadvantage in NSW Schools.

Socio-economically and socio-culturally disadvantaged students in Australian schools have long been associated with disparities in student achievement, access to employment, and indicators of well-being. Results in national and international tests such as the National Assessment Program in Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) continue to demonstrate gaps between achievements of Indigenous and socio-economically disadvantaged students and their mainstream counterparts of more than a bandwidth (or the equivalent of at least 2 years' schooling as shown in Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority reports (ACARA, 2016b). Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data continues to reveal unequal participation and transition outcomes into the workforce and further education for disadvantaged and Indigenous groups especially (ABS, 2015; Harrison, 2011). Similarly, in New South Wales schools, high proportions of disadvantaged students do not achieve National Benchmarks in reading and numeracy and large gaps continue between the proportions of disadvantaged and advantaged students achieving in the top bands of the NAPLAN tests. The National Report on NAPLAN results for 2015 and 2016 show ongoing inequities, many of which have changed little since 2008 (ACARA, 2016a). This is despite the implementation of a number of equity programs in NSW schools such as the Priority Schools Programs (PSP) and the National Partnership Agreement on Low Socio-economic Status School Communities (COAG, 2008) and resource based funding allocated under the Resource Allocation Model (RAM) operating in NSW since 2015. There remain many reasons for disparities and inequities, associated with students' and some communities' socio-economic and socio-cultural status, school system-level factors, and the influence of school leaders and teachers (Lamb, 2015; Teese, 2011).

1.3 Equity Programs in NSW Education.

Education has long been seen as one way to ameliorate disadvantages to attain equality, with the quality of teaching and leadership of schools seen as important (Gannon & Sawyer, 2014; Munns, Sawyer, & Cole, 2013); and equity programs and differentiated resourcing models, instigated in government policy, seen as important in redistributing resources to improve social inclusion and learning opportunities (Lamb, 2015). This is evident in the continuing interest in the concept of needs-based funding recommended by the Review of Funding for Schooling (Gonski et al., 2011), or the more popularly known Gonski Report, which has remained on political agendas since its publication, and is currently subject to further development in the form of Gonski 2.0 (Koziol, 2017). Equity programs embedded in educational policy have had a substantial history in New South Wales and Australian schools. Equity policy has been the province of both Federal and State governments, even though each State has the dominant responsibility for funding government schools in each state. Since the 1970s, when the Whitlam Federal government (1972-1975) instituted the Disadvantaged Schools Program² (1971-1997), government schools serving socio-culturally and socio-economically disadvantaged students have been supported by a range of both Federal and State government initiatives designed to try to mitigate the effects of social and economic background on student achievement and participation in schooling. In New South Wales, disadvantaged schools have been targeted for involvement in such government initiated, large scale equity program initiatives since the 1970's (Forsey, 2015).

The SSLSES National Partnership program implemented in predominantly NSW government schools was the result of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) National Partnership Agreements between Federal and State Governments in 2008. It comprised one of a trio of National Partnership programs and was specifically targeted at low SES school communities. It was intended to provide additional support (including significant funding support) through six reform areas to address some of the issues of social and cultural inequity for students. These measures, along with the roll-out of school building construction and laptops for secondary students, formed what the then Rudd-led Federal Government termed an "Education

² The Disadvantaged Schools (DSP) program was instituted and funded by the Australian Government in all State education jurisdictions in the 1970's to provide additional resources for schools catering for socio-economic disadvantage measured in voluntary parent surveys of employment, income, and education levels. It was intended to improve participation and achievement for the poorest 15% of students but did this by means of whole school change initiatives. Australian public schools receive the major part of their funding from state and territory governments. The DSP ran until 1997 but was continued in NSW as the Priority Schools Focus Program with funds supplemented from the NSW Government (Ayres, 2003).

Revolution". Its goal was to achieve greater productivity based on improved inclusion and participation of socio-economically and socio-culturally disadvantaged students (Rudd, 2008). Controversially, the SSLSES National Partnership was accompanied by the institution of the National Assessment Program in Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) test program and the My School website, both of which were designed to secure and publicise student and school data to enhance competition and inform policy. However, both measures re-narrativised each school's information, including its socio-economic status (SES), and performance, to sets of easily comparable numbers and graphs (Gorur, 2013; Lingard, 2011). The published data, which included each school's Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) scores, exposed each school to close examination, ranking and comparison, designed for greater transparency of information about each school's performance in specific measures (Gannon, 2013; Lingard, 2011). Each school's uniqueness and responsiveness has since come under closer scrutiny in ways which rendered them more acceptable to governments, based on selected data. As a result, the My School website and NAPLAN testing has been the subject of ongoing review and critique by Australian governments as well as researchers (Cobbold, 2010; Cook, 2014; Education & Employment Refernces Committee, 2014; Kenway, 2013; Lingard, 2014). Some revisions have been made to the My School website and to the NAPLAN testing regime, but all three regimes continue to exert specific effects, which impact on principals' practices for equity.

For equity program support to be allocated among NSW schools, relative measures of disadvantage were defined by the Australian and New South Wales governments. These included the ABS Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage (RSD), constructed from the census (2002, 2006), as well as the New South Wales Priority Schools Program Survey of family income, employment and education levels. When the My School Website was developed in 2010, school disadvantage was classified using the ICSEA value. The ICSEA measure has also been the subject of contestation since its creation with critics claiming the ICSEA score provided little information about the quality and depth of a school's education and that the 'like-schools' comparisons were inappropriate (Bonnor, 2011, March 8th; Gorur, 2013). As well as the RSD index, an enrolment of greater than 25% Aboriginal students and school remoteness as measured by the ABS Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia (ARIA) also facilitated school selection for National Partnership programs in NSW (Australian Government, 2011; COAG, 2009).

The SSLSES National Partnership Agreement targeted six reform areas including adoption of best practice performance management; strengthened school accountability; improving the

quality of leadership and teaching; innovation and tailored learning practices; and school community partnerships (COAG, 2009, p. 8). Using the SSLSES National Partnership Program implementation guidelines (Australian Government, Smarter Schools, NSW DET, AIS, & CEC, 2010), principals were to utilise a continuous school improvement model, based on school systems' analysis evidence, to target specific strategies to improve their school's performance data. Schools were granted significant additional resources based on per-capita enrolments for three to four years. Schools were also allocated greater autonomy over resource and staff management, with some schools piloting the then NSW Department of Education and Communities (NSW DEC) Local Schools Local Decisions (LSLD) trials over the course of the SSLSES National Partnership program³. Devolution occurred more widely after the 2012-13 NSW Department of Education restructure with schools attaining greater autonomy over resources through the (Resource Allocation Model) RAMs processes. All central and secondary schools in this study benefitted from similar allocations of RAMS funding after the completion of the SSLSES National Partnership.

1.4 Conceptualising Equity.

The notion of equity has undergone a number of conceptual translations from its earlier social justice ideals, as indicated for instance by Fraser (2007, p. 27) based on “parity of participation” principles. Social justice was seen to be related to a more even redistribution of resources, recognition and representation by Fraser (1995). Its re-conceptualisation has occurred under the increasing influence of economic rationalist agendas underpinning contemporary education policy. Evolving social justice discourses can be seen reflected in “new policy assemblages”, including that of the SSLSES National Partnership policy, with ensuing implications for its current conceptualisation as “equity” (Savage, Sellar, & Gorur, 2013, p. 161). Such re-articulation of equity in terms of changing notions of productivity, investment and performance measures has implications for its enactment in schools and its understanding by principals.

Education, however, continues to be seen as an important lever for greater participation and inclusion in society (Gillard, 2010a, 2010b) and improving equity has been touted as the *raison d'être* for many educational reforms in Australian education, including the SSLSES National Partnership. For education to be equitable for all participants, education systems need to ensure that the experiences, resource inputs, outputs and benefits of education might be experienced fairly by all. However, as evidence from empirical data has shown, the achievement of equity

³ The NSW Department of Education and Communities (NSW DEC) was renamed in approximately 2007-2008 after being known as the NSW Department of Education and Training (NSW DET) in the 1990s. Since 2015, it has been renamed the NSW Department of Education (D of E)

in NSW and Australian education has been elusive, especially given its re-articulation in terms of school performance and competitive marketisation (Cobbold, 2015; Connell, 2013c).

Interest in equity program implementation therefore needs to be accompanied by interest in the subtle shifts in its meaning that have occurred in policy discourses as a result of the changing purposes of education in Australia (Cranston, Kimber, Mulford, & Keating, 2010; Lingard, Sellar, & Savage, 2014). While national goals such as the Melbourne Goals of Schooling (MCEETYA, 2008) and subsequent COAG National Partnership Agreements (COAG, 2009) were purported to address the equity needs of schools with excellence through quality teaching, the concept of equity has remained “nebulous” and ill-defined (Savage et al., 2013, p. 161), especially when some have been critical that the centrally corporatized strategies of recent education policy have been at odds with social justice (Savage, 2011).

The conceptualisation of equity at the policy and at school levels is important for an understanding of equity program implementation by principals. The conjunction of marketisation and reform accountabilities with social justice agendas in policy discourse has created different understandings of equity thereby creating tensions at worst, and uncertainty at best, for principals’ policy implementation practices. Issues have been further compounded as social justice principles have evolved to comprise concepts of “productivity” (Gillard, 2008a) and have been reframed as issues of “quality” provision (Pyne, 2014) in educational policy. Analyses of policy discourses have noted that the increasing emphasis on evidence-based and data-driven accountabilities has impacted profoundly on what now counts as an equitable education. Moreover, evidence of equity and achievement has become that suggested by reductionist notions now seen, for instance, in the use of National Assessment Program in Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) scores; classifications against the Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) scores on the My School website; and rankings on mediatised league tables as indicators (Gorur, 2013; Lingard et al., 2014).

Therefore, with critical analysts of equity policy discourse increasingly highlighting evolving policy definitions of equity (Singh & Taylor, 2007), it is also necessary to more clearly understand the ideas about equity that principals themselves brought to their translation of policy into practice. Equity understood discursively by a principal as “equality of access” might focus on promotion of school competition in the education market place⁴, and equity

⁴ In this study, even though the word “market” is used, education markets are more accurately described as ‘quasi- markets’ due to the government regulation they require in order to function. The government remains the main provider of funding, policies and regulation which they adjust as needed. In quasi-marketised systems regulations shape and provide oversight of various actors and organisations (Rose, 1999, p.48)

understood in terms of improved test scores would focus on NAPLAN skills development. Equity understood as ‘parity of participation’ may focus on the needs of individual students together with factors which improved engagement and depth of learning.

Equity discourses inherent in both policy and in principals’ discussions are therefore important in this study, as are questions of how school leaders promote equity agendas within the context of their disadvantaged schools in NSW, Australia. The study analyses contextual conditions for, and understandings of, equity in terms of principals’ subjectivities together with their implementation in specific school contexts. The study itself sometimes utilises the terms social justice and equity broadly, to reflect an evolving discourse. The situated meanings of many concepts, including equity, in the SSLSES National Partnership policy discourses reflect a number of conceptual translations associated with changing purposes of schooling.

1.5 School Leadership and Changing Expectations of Principals.

Critical to this study is the examination of principal leadership and management practices in disadvantaged schools within the targeted policy context. Few would contest that school leaders have a significant role in addressing issues of equity and policy implementation in their schools, even if their role has been regarded as secondary to that of teachers in classrooms. But what is generally absent in the research is an unpacking of principals’ practices when implementing equity program policy that aligns policy and practice with individual conceptualisations of equity. While an exploration of the characteristics or traits of the universally ‘successful’ leader could be made, that does not provide a contribution to understandings about the actions principals undertook within their schools, and why they undertook them when implementing equity program policy. This study investigates principals’ practices by probing what enabled, influenced and limited their practices when they implemented the reform agenda in their school context.

Despite this gap in the literature, the educational leadership field in Australia and NSW has continued to be dominated by ‘best practice’ approaches to school effectiveness and school continuous improvement. Many studies have reported such leadership traits where requisite outcomes have been achieved (Dinham, 2008b; Mulford, 2008). Lists of desirable traits and behaviours have been provided, largely drawn from individualist leadership accounts, but with some also describing values-driven practices for social justice (Duignan, 2007; Shahjahan, 2010). The actions of principals of schools able to align program requirements with their own and their communities’ priorities have also been detailed as desirable to illustrate “what works” across contexts (Robinson, Hohepa, & Lloyd, 2009). Whilst such studies have received policy

makers' and system-wide attention, they have decontextualized leadership from the broader practices of schooling to sets of one-size-fits-all strategies and skills.

Educational policy proceeds as though school leaders should be responsive to reforms and it is a simple matter to manage educational change according to policy guidelines. Indeed, governmentality processes of the SSLSES National Partnership required many of the principals' administrative practices to consist of universalised template completion processes (Australian Government et al., 2009, p.6-7) and imposed various accountabilities for reaching reform targets and outcomes. Governmentality technologies are conceptualised by Foucault (2007) to describe the means of securing compliance under various neoliberal and other governing regimes. It is also used in this study to describe the requirements of policy implementation associated with the SSLSES National Partnership program discourses. Required template and table completion seems to imply that a principal's role requires little more skill than that of technician (Ball, 2015a; Niesche, 2010; Niesche & Haase, 2010). The increasing use of numbers and targets in SSLSES National Partnership program analyses, plans, reports and standards frameworks were similarly built into the policy's accountability regime thus normalising many implementation strategies and requiring standardised documented and evidence-based responses.

Subsequently, in NSW disadvantaged schools, principals were made responsive to policy reforms by means of accountability for student achievement data, and their leadership skills judged against leadership standards such as the Australian Professional Standards for Principals (APSTL) (AITSL, 2011) and the NSW Institute of Teacher standards (ITPTS) (2004-2012). These standards and their associated discourses emanated from changing views about the purposes of schooling (Cranston, Mulford, Keating, & Reid, 2010; Reid, 2010), and conceptualisations of school leadership articulated against an increasingly corporatized, devolving and marketised view of leaders' practices. Devolution of management functions under school-based management models increasingly re-defined the role of principals as strategic business managers, accountable for improving school performance on specified indicators, in an increasingly competitive education market place irrespective of student needs (Niesche & Keddie, 2011; Smyth, 2008). Thus, accountability strategies were incorporated into SSLSES National Partnership program implementation guidelines as governmentality mechanisms, designed to normalise practices across schools and facilitate comparisons and competition (Australian Government et al., 2010; NSW DET, 2010).

It is from within a similarly recognisable disadvantaged school context implementing equity program reform that this study has arisen. In one rural NSW disadvantaged school, based on

personal experience as a leader, isolation, unavailable staffing and mandated regional targets in standardized tests, together with increasing administration, exacted heavy tolls on all staff workloads and roles. The enforced targets and accountabilities of the reform program meant that existing positive school narratives offered within the usually supportive community seemed increasingly at odds with targets generated by required data. Despite very strong overall gains and ‘value adding’, the required data remained stubbornly entrenched below the State averages and the more positive school narratives changed. As the usually rich school narratives became subsumed into alternate stories of achievement ‘deficits’, it seemed that the leadership of such a program for equity offered scope for examination of the emerging tensions. Several critical leadership studies have focused on how selected principals have dealt with centralised and rapidly reforming, marketised and audit agendas based on one-size-fits- all expectations for student achievement (Eacott & Norris, 2014; Niesche, 2011, 2015; Niesche & Keddie, 2015; Thomson, 2011; Thomson & Blackmore, 2012). Niesche (2010) and Niesche and Keddie (2015) examined leadership of the SSLSES National Partnership implementation in disadvantaged Queensland schools. These studies have utilised predominantly qualitative work, often mobilising social theory to problematise existing thinking. Studies demonstrate that ‘new ways’ of rethinking leadership can be seen occurring in response to changing educational contexts. Some studies also illuminated several responsive practices through, for example, the constitution of the principal as an “advocacy” leader with respect to student equity needs (Anderson, 2009; Niesche, 2013a, 2013b). Collegial partnerships with researchers to improve reform target areas such as literacy for the SSLSES National Partnership in a Queensland schools cluster have also created an evidence-based cooperative leadership approach to policy implementation (Glasswell, Singh & McNaughton, 2016). Leaders have been able to counter some the effects of technicist discourses with critically re-articulated and reframed “humanist” discourses (Thomson, Hall, & Jones, 2013, pp. 165-167). They have also engaged in counter discourses, resistance and counter-conduct which disrupt and contest at points of tension and ambiguity (Eacott & Wilkinson, 2013; Niesche, 2013a; Niesche & Keddie, 2015).

The importance of a principal’s ability to be “micropolitical” in the interpretation of policy in their school context has been similarly noted (Ryan, 2010, p. 358). In being “micropolitical” the principal can synchronise deep understandings of the intent of policy requirements with socio-political understandings of the local school context. In Comber and Cormack’s (2011) study of principals’ management of newly implemented NAPLAN testing regimes the purpose

of the tests was euphemised as ‘information giving’ for school data transparency, whilst being simultaneously instituted as a ‘performativity’ measure (Ball, 1998).

1.6 Interpreting Principals’ Positioning in Policy Discourse: Theoretical Understandings.

An examination of the ways in which principals were positioned as leaders of the SSLSES National Partnership reforms was undertaken by means of a critical examination of policy discourses using an analytical framework. In this study, Gee’s (2005) discourse analysis framework has been utilized to identify evolving language-in-use and conceptual constructions of the policy texts to understand the discursive policy scripts influencing practices. Gee’s (2005) framework has been developed from Foucauldian conceptualisations of discourse, so that the relationships among power and knowledge also become apparent in the analysis.

In addition to obtaining insights about policy as language-in-use, the study examines the ways in which principals mediate policy implementation for equity, by using Foucault’s conceptual tools (Ball, 2013; Foucault, 1988, 2005, 2007, 2011; Miller & Rose, 2008). The value of examining the discourses of both policy texts and principals’ implementation practices through both discursive and Foucauldian lenses is important for an understanding of the ways in which principals managed the, at times, competing discourses and ensuing tensions impacting on their practices.

Whilst education has been examined by a number of researchers using Foucault’s sociological theories (for example, Ball, 2013 ; Ball, Maguire, Braun, & Hoskins, 2011a; McNicol- Jardine, 2005; Popkewitz & Brennan, 1998; Skourdoumbis, 2014), studies of educational leadership deploying Foucauldian sociological tools in Australian education have been undertaken less frequently until recently, when researchers such as Thomson et al., (2013), Gobby (2013), Niesche and Keddie (2015), Clarke (2012), and Savage (2013a) have published relevant studies. In particular, Niesche (2011, 2013a) has demonstrated how policy discourse and associated surveillance measures have operated to position principals in certain ways and has deployed Foucauldian concepts of power/knowledge and governmentality to describe principals’ work practices in case study schools in Queensland, Australia. Issues of principal subjectivity and ethics have similarly been dominant themes in Niesche and Haase’s (2010) and Niesche and Keddie’s (2015) work. Using Foucauldian conceptual tools, principals’ subjectivities in the face of tighter audit demands can be more fully explored.

Thus, where commitment to equity and inclusivity in educational policy is being challenged by market-based educational policies and where centralised “pedagogical and assessment nooses

[were] being tightened around professional practices” (Lingard & Mills, 2007, p. 235), Foucauldian conceptual tools can contribute to theorising principals’ practices in the face of complex ethical and governmentality tensions. Foucault’s theoretical concepts put to work in understanding empirical research can assist to provide a critical understanding of how principals are enabled to mediate such tensions. However, in this study a Foucauldian approach is not to narrow the researched impact of policy enactment in NSW schools, nor predispose the researcher to specific viewpoints created by specific research epistemologies.

The study also argues that principal’s practices are enacted in complex and varied ways in response to school contexts, as well each principal’s subjectivities. The notion of policy enactment and its accompanying translation into practice has been studied in a number of English schools (Ball, Maguire, & Braun, 2012; Ball, Maguire, Braun, & Hoskins, 2011b) whilst the inclusion of context as an enactment variable was seen as important for demonstrating the complexity of real life policy implementation, by Singh, Heimans and Glasswell (2014) and Keddie (2013). This study therefore acknowledges that schools are complex organic places demanding thoughtful responsive leadership for the specific time and place for policy enactment. It has considered the impact of the applied reality of the SSLSES National Partnership implementation by also considering principals’ subjectivities and by considering the school’s context at the time and place of the policy’s implementation. It has also worked with each principal’s individual interpretation of their policy enactment.

1.7 Research Questions Underpinning the Study.

This study is focused methodologically and conceptually on examining principals’ practices when implementing the SSLSES National Partnership program. Analysis of policy discourses provides the context within which principals were positioned with respect to policy. The study additionally critically engages in a study of educational leadership practices which assists in understanding the complexity of policy implementation for equity in a sample of public school contexts.

Three research questions are the basis of the study:

1. What is the nature and intent of government initiated large scale interventionist equity programs in New South Wales public schools?
2. How do principals of public schools in New South Wales implement these programs in their schools?

3. How do principals mediate large-scale equity programs for equity?

To answer these research questions, this study is underpinned by constructionist epistemology to enable an understanding of the complex interrelationships of principals, as agents or enactors of policy, within the contexts of their schools, and as subjects of policy. Principals operate in interaction with educational policy discourses influencing their practices. The research design is informed by two main methodological approaches comprising a critical policy discourse analysis and six in-depth case studies. Case study methods utilize semi-structured interviews with each principal and staff and/or community recommended by the principal, together with analyses of texts or artefacts seen as relevant in policy implementation. Data gathered is further analysed using Foucauldian notions of power, governmentality, resistance and ethics and technologies of the self to investigate how principals negotiated governmentality discourses directing accountabilities.

The policy analysis develops an understanding of the nature of SSLSES National Partnership policy phase of the study using Gee's (2005) ideas about 'D'/'d'iscourse analysis. Equity program discourse is premised on specific choices of lexical-grammatical language-in-use and evolving 'D'iscursive constructions of concepts like 'equity', 'quality teaching', 'school accountabilities' and 'transparency'. Using a Foucauldian approach the study also describes the ways in which principals implemented the SSLSES National Partnership and examines practices for evidence of mediation, resistance and/or compliance.

1.8 Establishing a niche

Much of the research associated with principal leadership has centred around effective school leadership models and continuous school improvement models which have been measured in terms of personnel performance and standardised test indicators. Subsequently, leadership research has often focused on the successful achievement of efficiencies, standards, and compliance in pursuit of the associated productivity agenda; where productivity was defined in terms of economic benefits rather than social. Australian productivity was seen as the way education best served the perceived needs of the whole social system (Rudd, 2008). In the pursuit of measurable evidence of school effectiveness and efficiencies, research studies which engaged with critical approaches have often been ignored by the broader field of educational leadership and leadership standards research. The reliance on performance and audit cultures of the market rationalist models of education has impacted significantly on notions of 'what counts' in the field of educational leadership and the ways in which leadership roles have been increasingly normalised (Luke, Green, & Gregory, 2010). As a result, critiques of the dominant

discourses of equity program policy and of school efficiency and effectiveness frameworks have been marginalised.

The further institution of one-size-fits-all targets, national testing (NAPLAN), the My School website, performance management, and personnel competency frameworks associated with the SSLSES National Partnership have all contributed to ever-expanding performative and normative expectations of principals' leadership. This has further fed the proliferation of 'best practice' studies and 'step by step' procedures which have contributed to sets of competencies and standards deemed suitable for leading school communities to achieve the requisite targets. Given the current negative and plateauing data sets concerning policy analysts such as the Australian Productivity Commission and federal education ministers (Brown & Cook, 2016), there seems some scope for interest in critical leadership studies which deploy additional theoretical tools and empirical evidence to help deconstruct the complex practices of principals implementing equity, quality teaching and performance agendas in school contexts.

Findings from existing critical studies have also suggested the need for research which provides detailed and insightful accounts of the "what" and "why" of principals' practices especially in disadvantaged contexts. Niesche (2011) and Ball, Maguire and Braun (2012) have argued for further research that provides more detailed accounts of principals' practices in a more extensive selection of circumstances. Niesche (2011, p. 458) states for instance:

What are still needed in the field of educational leadership and management are more nuanced and diverse accounts of heads' everyday work and lives to give an understanding of the day to day realities and pressures they face.

Niesche and Keddie (2015) additionally note a need for further engagement in research which deploys the insights provided by theoretical frameworks applied to empirical studies to help generate deeper knowledge about leadership for equity.

1.8.1 Mediating policy discourses for equity.

Of significance also is what principals believe and understand about social justice and equity in disadvantaged schools as their values influence their practices. Equity matters for fulfilment of democratic purposes of schooling and the entitlement every student has for participation and opportunity in both education and society. However, the nature of principals' understandings has received only scant attention in the research. This study, in examining the reflections in discourses associated with principals' implementation of the SSLSES National Partnership program provides understandings about principals' notions of equity and their practices for its achievement. An examination of the ways in which policy discourses have infiltrated

principals' discourses also assists in this endeavour. The provision of an understanding of the ways in which principals mediated policy expectations for equity as they conceptualised it for their own contexts contributes further to work being done in the field.

Critical studies utilising sociological theorising have begun the work of unpacking much of the complex and nuanced work of principals in disadvantaged schools. Studies examining mediation of complex agendas for equity despite tensions such as Comber and Cormack's (2011) and Niesche's (2011, 2013a) studies have demonstrated that principals can and do make complex choices based on circumstances and discourses. The examination of principals' practices for equity in case studies in diverse contexts in this study is an important extension of their work.

Additionally, critical discourse studies have drawn attention to the importance of language and discourse in social change and as a way of positioning subjects (Gee, 2011; Taylor, 2004). Therefore, this study examines the nature of the SSLSES National Partnership policy discourses to determine the role of language registers in influencing power relationships in policy implementation. Principals prioritise their implementation of the educational policies requiring implementation in schools at any one time, depending on the degree to which compliance is required in the discourse. The conceptual relationship between language form and function helps to identify the ways in which some discursive governmentalities prioritise some responses over others. Whilst various critical discourse tools have been used as a framework for educational policy enquiry and to gather deeper understandings of the role of language in social interactions (Mattheis, 2016; Rodgers, 2011), studies which have combined the discursive role of language-in-use in leadership practice studies are less prevalent. The critical discourse analysis undertaken as part of this research also contributes to understanding relationships between theoretical and empirical policy work (Levinson, Sutton, & Winstead, 2009). In this study, a critical discourse analysis is also helpful in documenting discursive shifts affecting principals' implementation practices.

Additionally, some Australian researchers, as well as the New South Wales Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG) have expressed concern that deep understandings of the educational needs of Indigenous students, for example, have remained unmet and that school leaders need ways of foregrounding social justice and equity values in practices for schools catering for Indigenous students (Craven, 2011; NSW DET & NSW AECG, 2006). It has been argued, similarly, that policy and programs intended to empower Indigenous and socio-economically disadvantaged student learning by means of appropriate pedagogies and curriculum, and in ways which empower local school communities, have become submerged

beneath the ongoing managerial, and deficit rhetoric continuing to operate in Australian schools (NSW DET & NSW AECG, 2006 ; Yunkaporta & McGinty, 2009). This study examines some of these concerns by empirically examining the practices of principals for quality pedagogy in schools catering for Indigenous students.

1.9 Overview of the Thesis.

This study provides an understanding of the nature of the SSLSES National Partnership program as an example of a current large-scale equity program and its implementation in disadvantaged schools in New South Wales, Australia. In particular, it examines the practices of principals who implemented the program for equity. It provides additional empirical evidence of the impact of policy on principals' practices for social justice when impacted by competing centralised, managerial expectations of educational policy discourse. To grapple with the ways in which principals understood and managed tensions emanating from seemingly contradictory educational agendas, the study deployed the theoretical tools of Gee (2005) and those of Foucault's as selected from works elaborated in detail in Chapter 3.

To situate and present the results of the study, an overview of the thesis is provided. Chapter 2 of the study provides a framework for the study with a review of the literature detailing policy changes underpinning the SSLSES National Partnership program, leadership for equity, and for improving the quality of teaching.

Chapter 3 provides a further overview of the theoretical underpinnings of the thesis by summarising selected concepts of Michel Foucault (1926-1984), such as power/knowledge, discourse, governmentality and ethics used as lenses to help understand principals' practices in the study. Foucault's concepts of freedom, ethics and technologies of the self are examined with respect to principal leadership for equity.

Chapter 4 outlines the epistemological basis and methodological approaches used for examining principals' practices in six case studies. The rationale, sampling methods and data collection methods explain the use of data in an examination of the field. From analysis of the data, the themes of 'accountability', 'leadership' and 'pedagogy' are explicated as key domains for discussion of principals' mediation of reforms.

Chapter 5 provides a critical discourse analysis of the policy discourses of the SSLSES National Partnership program predominantly using Gee's (2005) notions of 'D'iscourse/'d'iscourse analysis. The chapter's purpose is to examine the SSLSES National Partnership policy discourse to see how it may have positioned principals and guided their understandings and practices for program implementation.

Chapter 6 introduces the case study schools and principals to provide some context for chapters 7, 8 and 9 which provide findings across the six case study schools. The findings chapters explore the implementation and mediation of domains of ‘accountability’, ‘leadership’ and ‘quality teaching’ practices in view of each principal’s beliefs about equity.

Chapter 7 is the first of the study’s three findings chapters. This chapter analyses principals’ mediation of accountability and marketisation processes. The chapter analyses each case study in turn, utilising Foucault’s notions of governmentality and disciplinary power to illustrate how each of the principals understood and mediated the accountability discourses in order to manage their school’s positioning in the education marketplace. The chapter examines power relations at a broader systemic and school-based level while successive findings chapters explore the principals’ work on themselves and within their school contexts.

Chapter 8 is the second findings chapter and it discusses each principal’s leadership of the SSLSES National Partnership reforms. This chapter uses Foucault’s notions of governmentality to illustrate how each of the principals is positioned by school leadership and management roles conceptualized in the SSLSES National Partnership. Foucault’s notions are deployed to show how the principals are placed within disciplinary regimes that position them as both subjects and enactors of disciplinary power. The chapter considers the ways in which leadership practices are mediated for equity using ethical considerations. It also considers the principal’s work on themselves at an individual level of analysis. The work of each principal as an ethical subject is examined in view of their equity practices.

Chapter 9 is the last of three findings chapters. It examines principals’ implementation of the SSLSES National Partnership’s concept of quality teaching as ‘pedagogy’. Foucault’s work is used to explore aspects of principals’ work practices and technologies of the self, enacted on school development for ‘quality teaching’ and to manage the evolving concept of the quality ‘teacher’.

Chapter 10 provides the conclusion to the thesis and draws together the answers to research questions. It notes the ways in which the discourses have positioned principals, as enactors and subjects in the reform process. It subsequently summarises principals’ implementation practices in the three domains of ‘accountability’, ‘leadership’ and ‘quality teaching’. Principals’ roles in mediating potentially disruptive strategies is discussed to understand how principals managed equity needs of students using ethical practices. As Foucault (1984, p. 41) described in his conceptualization of governmentality and ethics which underpins examination of principals’ practices in this study:

I intend the concept of governmentality to cover the whole range of practices that constitute, define, organize and instrumentalise the strategies that individuals in their freedom can use in dealing with each other... The basis of all of this is freedom, the relationship of the self to itself and the relationship to the other...I believe that the concept of governmentality makes it possible to bring out the freedom of the subject and its relationship to others- which constitutes the very stuff of ethics.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

It is not the activity of the subject of knowledge that produces a corpus of knowledge, useful or resistant to power, but power/knowledge, the processes and struggles that traverse it, and of which it is made up, that determines the forms and possible domains of knowledge. (Foucault, 1995, p. 28)

2.1 Introduction.

The study investigates tensions and pressures impacting on the principals of schools operating the SSLSES National Partnership program in NSW Australia. In this chapter, the study's thesis is positioned within the field of selected literature on educational leadership for equity under neoliberal policy imperatives. Thus, evolving conceptualisations of equity, appropriate leadership practices and the use of standards for quality teaching are discussed against relevant literature from the field.

The chapter begins with an analysis of selected literature examining the economic rationalist (neoliberal) policy environment within which the SSLSES National Partnership policy has been constructed in Australia, together with the ways in which equity and social justice have been conceptualised by policy imperatives. In the next section, the nature of school leadership for disadvantaged schools is examined, and then, evolving notions of quality teaching and pedagogy in the literature are discussed. Additionally, the chapter identifies and interweaves literature associated with specific factors emanating from SSLSES National Partnership reforms such as the use of evidence and data, the appropriation of standards to measure quality of teaching, and the impact of the use of the My School website and NAPLAN across each section.

2.2 Neoliberalism and education

This study's approach is situated among those studies which document and critique the growing hegemony of neoliberalist ideologies and practices adopted by public educational organisations and systems. The study focuses specifically on their impact on principals' practices in disadvantaged schools selected for the SSLSES National Partnership in NSW, Australia. Neoliberalism is conceptualised in terms of an all-encompassing mode of governance based on economic rationalities which have impacted not only on financial institutions but on every field of activity, even those constructed for public and social benefit (Connell, 2013a). Its impact

encompasses economic policies centred on commodifying service industries, labour and all public assets, including education. Features include a complex but unstable set of global practices rather than a concrete or localised doctrine; now seen to be impacting significantly on social and democratic processes in Westernized economies (Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009; Lingard, 2009).

Neoliberal technologies work by creating productive, enterprising and self-responsible personnel. These features are increasingly applied by policy discourses through governmentality techniques for their potential contribution to educational efficiencies. Performativity has become a key governmentality of the competitive market economy which exposes all personnel to market discipline and re-designs political social and economic relationships (Brown, 2015). At the school level, performativity has required organizations to envisage achievement and performance mainly in terms of measurable and targeted improvements (Ball, 1998).

Education was exposed to neoliberalism in Australia, because many saw advantages in its marketising agendas, especially under the associated contracting taxation regimes of the various national and state governments. In commodifying and exposing educational services to the market and its managerial practices, the emphasis for schools and systems was for increasing effectiveness in reaching specific educational targets and outcomes whilst achieving greater efficiencies in use of funds (Australian Government Productivity Commission, 2012).

At the level of the principal's leadership, evidence of governmentality and requirements for performativity might be seen in the practices and discourses employed. Under neoliberal agendas, attention was more likely to be directed away from programs promoting socio-cultural benefits and democratic purposes of schooling, to those producing the requisite data prescribing the "responsibilised" and calculable student (Savage, 2013a). Policy implementation requiring narrower and targeted evidence of student needs being met through 'quality' education has been normalized as the new 'equity' (Anagnostopoulos, Lingard, & Sellar, 2016). Understandings of student equity and social justice have been untethered from conceptual definitions such as those of Fraser (2007) which saw social justice understandings as the need for greater parity of 'input' of more equal opportunities, representation, and recognition.

Principals with an equity or social justice agenda were forced to re-examine their practices and forms of 'ethical substance' (Foucault, 1990) in the light of neoliberal performativities in key areas of struggle (Ryan, 2010). An examination of principals' practices for equity in an accountability regime in Queensland, Australia by Niesche (2013) has noted that principals

driven by social justice values used counter-conduct to resist managerial imperatives to reconcile the tensions between ethical management of the self and expected performativities. This study is similarly interested to examine principals' choices in such regimes.

2.2.1 Effective Schools and Effective Principals.

The changing emphases in education policies in Australia employed corporatized "best practice" strategies and privileged associated research that examined the effectiveness and efficiencies of strategies, traits and behaviours of personnel in effective schools' and continuous school improvement literature (Dinham, 2008b; Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004; Robinson et al., 2009). Research studies underpinning the SSLSES National Partnership program, strategies and professional standards from the effective schools' literature were incorporated, for instance, into the professional learning of school personnel (Australian Government, Smarter Schools, NSW Government, & NSW DEC, n.d.). Positive relationships between reform strategies and targeted outcomes in schools were established to promote specific behaviours and traits required among principals and staff. Australian and overseas studies described best practices, such as effective leadership, which successfully achieved targeted student outcomes required by reforms (Leithwood et al., 2010; Mulford & Silins, 2011).

Effective schools' research has captured the nature of the relationship between reform strategies, personnel traits, and the achievement of targeted outcomes irrespective of local circumstances, system anomalies or the relevance of the evidence base. This study, by comparison, is interested in the adaptive practices that principals use to implement reforms for equity within their schools and utilises a Foucauldian theoretical lens with which to elucidate their practices.

Under the Rudd/Gillard Labor government of Australia (2007-2013), promises of a revitalised era of social inclusion were made through socially democratic notions of 'equity' and 'excellence' (Rudd & Smith, 2007). Whilst critique of these policy intentions was made by those who sought to understand what "version of social inclusion" (Smyth, 2010, p.114) was envisaged, and what tensions and issues were involved, education policy remains premised on productivity ideals. National education goals such as the Melbourne Goals of Schooling (MCEETYA, 2008) and the COAG National Partnership Agreements (COAG, 2009), were designed to address the 'equity' and 'excellence' needs of schools. However, the concept of equity remained ill-defined (Savage et al., 2013) and was subject to successive translations of meaning in education policies, in "collision" with notions of social justice (Savage, 2011).

In Australia, the reach of the SSLSES National Partnership reforms extended to competition engendered by the introduction of the National Assessment for Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) tests in 2008, the publishing of school performance data on the My School website (ACARA, 2011), and the subsequent development of league tables published by the popular press (Harrison, 2010). Data gathered constituted evidence of effective schooling. By the end of 2010, a National Curriculum was developed for implementation in 2013 (ACARA, 2010). Australian Professional Standards for Teachers and Leaders, (APSTL) were also introduced (AITSL, 2011). The APSTL listed leadership accountability standards for principals and teachers in Australian schools similar to those in England and the United States of America (Cranston, Kimber, et al., 2010). They were designed as a framework within which to develop principals and teachers, evaluate their performance, and direct career progression in NSW schools after 2014. Similarly, the APSTL listed the quality of teacher standards expected in schools. These measures all contributed further to competitive approaches to educational provision in Australia and focused principals, and teachers, on expected policy “performativities” (Ball, 1998, p. 190) for targeted school improvements.

Additionally, Australian education policy predicated on economic rationalism gradually re-articulated the purposes of schooling from largely democratic purposes to private and productive purposes of schooling to better suit changing agendas (Reid, 2010; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). Public systems of education were therefore subject to close scrutiny as personnel were subject to greater accountability and changing roles to ensure that productivity purposes of schooling prevailed.

2.2.2 Neoliberal governmentalities and equity

Two axes of global neoliberalism have been identified for education, with parent choice and marketisation on one axis, and the managerial reform of state-wide education systems with changing governmentalities of control on the other (Ball, 2012). Both have impacted on the conceptualisation of equity. In Australia, both axes have been applied in pragmatic but comprehensive ways in state-wide and national educational policies but with a greater concentration on governmentalities of control. They were enacted during the SSLSES National Partnership with the institution of the NAPLAN and My School websites. They have been applied globally by international agencies such as the World Bank, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and international business, making their reach all pervasive (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010).

Several critical studies in education have therefore, conceptualised and explored the nature of neoliberalism as a pervasive governmentality with powerful political, social and economic consequences reflected in current educational policies (Connell, 2013). The impact on family and student engagement with schools and education, due to marketization and competition, has been profound (Smyth, McInerney, & Fish, 2013). Relationships were rethought along economic lines with individuals encouraged to be active in making choices to further their own interests and generate their own capital or worth. Governmentalities were directed at empowering entrepreneurial personnel to compete for their own future whilst simultaneously engaging in deficit discourses in relation to disadvantaged groups (Smyth & Wrigley, 2013). The perpetuation of inequality has been a consequence, creating tensions for policy implementation in education systems and in individual schools (Connell, 2013c; Davies & Bansel, 2007; Smyth, 2008). Changes to principals' work practices under changing notions of neoliberal governance have been pervasive.

2.2.3 Neoliberalism and Governmentality in the SSLSES National Partnership.

Evidence of neoliberalism asserting its role as a governing rationality within the SSLSES National Partnership agreements and associated policies is explored in a number of Australian schools where changing governmentalities or “new mechanisms” have been investigated (Connell, 2013c, p. 279). New mechanisms have included discursive and technicist effects of policy discourses impacting on school socio-cultural systems, equity concepts and leadership practices (Gobby, 2013; Lingard, 2010; Niesche & Keddie, 2015). Neoliberal effects of educational policy on achievement measures have been critiqued and documented using policy scholarship (Gorur, 2013; Sellar, 2014)

There has similarly been an ongoing contested equity landscape culminating in various iterations of what it means to be fair and equitable in Australian education (Savage, 2013b). The changing concept of equity as a notion of social justice conceptualised in terms of parity of participation underpinning democratic functions of schooling (Fraser, 2007) has shifted to re-articulated notions of participation and achievement. Furthermore, social justice re-articulated as equity was transformed discursively by the evidence base demanded by SSLSES National Partnership policy accountabilities. This has taken the form of achievement measures in NAPLAN tests and other participation measures collected as performance data (Gorur & Koyama, 2013; Lingard et al., 2014). These re-articulated and re-crafted conceptual positions are reflected in SSLSES National Partnership discourses contributing to evolving governmentalities.

2.2.4 Governmentalities and Discursive Shifts.

Economic rationalism has also played a role in the re-articulation and translation of several previously held understandings about schooling and the role of school personnel. Quality teaching, for example, was reconceived in terms of universalised standards of teacher behaviours culminating in changing personnel management practices (BOSTES, 2013; Smyth, 2010a). Social justice has been re-conceived in terms of ‘at risk’ students, or ‘inclusion’, and ‘transparency’ has been reconceived as available ranked data encapsulated as numerical evidence from national tests as indicators for parent choice (Lingard et al., 2014; Singh & Taylor, 2007; Smyth, 2010). Narratives of school practices have been re-defined (Thomson, 2013); while disadvantaged schools and their students have been recast as ‘losers’ in the economic marketplace via the My School website. Disadvantaged schools’ complexity in terms of their geographic location, their communities, the status of parents, and students’ socio-cultural status have been encapsulated in an ICSEA score on the My School website denoting disadvantage (Gorur, 2013). Even excluding student performance levels, the classification of schools along the advantage - disadvantage continuum contributes to contested meanings attached to ‘advantage’ and ‘equity’ in the education marketplace.

2.2.5 Governmentalities of Control: Data as evidence.

Governmentality by enumeration and statistics has emerged as a mechanism to normalise and compare student achievements with effects on student self-worth, school effectiveness and equity (Ball, 2015a). Standardised test and participation data has assumed importance on the My School website as evidence of the educational health and worth of systems, programs, schools and personnel; and of the success, or otherwise, of policy implementation. Data gathered from the NAPLAN together with school participation and achievement data has contributed to the ways in which principals, teachers and schools have been made transparent in school communities. This is despite evaluative literature showing that the NAPLAN in particular, now seen as high stakes (Thompson & Cook, 2012), is a poor indicator of success for low SES students, and is inappropriate as a measure of attainment for low SES and multicultural groups (Creagh, 2014; Wu & Hornsby, 2012).

The dominance of technicist educational data required by policy reforms, such as the SSLSES National Partnership program, has similarly resulted in the reduction of almost all educational information in disadvantaged schools as ‘evidence’ to generate support for ‘what works’ paradigms and the proliferation of subsequent data driven judgements about the quality of school principals and their schools (Hardy, 2015). Measurement, comparison and the

monitoring of performance contributes similarly to an emphasis on a need for school staff and students to take responsibility for ‘measuring up’ in order to meet requirements (Ball & Olmedo, 2013). This has impacted across schools and systems in the design of professional learning regimes, in Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) and in performance assessment such as Teacher Assessment Reviews (TARS). Notions of “high performing” teachers and principals (COAG, 2009, p. 5) have subsequently become synonymous with having value, ‘measuring up’ and acceding to notions of human capital development, in this instance, against national standards (Ball, 2015a; Connell, 2009).

However, interrogation of neoliberal educational reforms have coincided with increases in social inequality over the time that managerial education policies promoting competition have been in place (Bonnor & Shepherd, 2016; Vinson & Rawsthorne, 2013). The critical analyses of policy and associated media discourse have argued that educational policies and associated media releases were too often phrased in deficit discourse about unengaged students, and poorly-performing schools and principals, contributing to decreasing confidence in Australian education, especially in disadvantaged schools (Smyth, 2010). This concern was further fed by international and Australian findings and test results that there was an ongoing and disappointing lack of achievement in targeted outcomes both in disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged schools despite additional resourcing (Brown & Cook, 2016; Garrett, 2012; Gotsis, 2015). Disadvantaged students continue to lag behind their mainstream counterparts in the NAPLAN (ACARA, 2012, 2015). The evidence from flat-lining data sets in SSLSES National Partnership schools in evaluative reports (Australian Government, 2012) and deficit discourses signal a need that more nuanced understandings from a greater variety of empirical studies may add further value to the field.

2.3 Leadership in disadvantaged schools

At education system levels, educational policies, such as the SSLSES National Partnership have placed an increased emphasis on an external narrative of managerialism and economic rationalism over that of social justice and equity to accompany the changes to productive purposes of schooling (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). Effects have included the increasing devolution of school leadership and management functions under school-based management models which has increasingly re-defined the role of principals as business-style managers, accountable for improving school performance on narrow, measurable performance indicators, and oversight of the school’s position in the competitive education market place (Niesche &

Keddie, 2011). Associated changes included spatial and structural differentiation accompanying competition and parental choice further residualizing disadvantaged groups.

Accountability, competition and corporate managerialism, however, may be seen to be at odds with a principal's professional and values-driven accountabilities in disadvantaged school communities, even though there appears to be an increase in regulatory demands couched in the name of equity (Gannon & Sawyer, 2014). Expectations for strategic planning systems aligned to transparent national test targets have competed increasingly in workloads for principals' time and attention in the complex environments of disadvantaged schools. Principals subsequently face multiple choices, and at times, competing discourses, that leverage expectations for equity leadership, against more narrow accountabilities for school performance (Ball, 2012; Ehrich, Kimber, & Cranston, 2009).

At the school level, school leaders have retained a central role in addressing the issues of cultural diversity and equity in their practices. The discourse surrounding educational leadership as practice, has generally been concerned, however, with a range of instrumentalist 'best practice' models and one-size-fits-all approaches, often in conflict with the realities of practice (Smyth, 2008).

Important aspects of school leadership, incorporating leadership traits, contingency and transformational theories were linked to the effective schools' paradigm. The links made to an effective principal's ability to influence school reform, student learning outcomes and the achievement of educational policy goals have found repetition in the SSLSES National Partnership discourses and the 'educational leadership' role that principals were to fulfil (Australian Government, Smarter Schools National Partnership, NSW DET, AIS, & CEC, 2010, p. 83). Current meta-analyses of principal leadership studies, from school effectiveness and improvement paradigms by Robinson, Lloyd and Rowe (2008), for instance, summarised leadership behaviours regarded as important for school organisational success with emphasis on the leadership behaviours which impacted most strongly on student learning achievements. Such studies have subsequently ensured the continuing emphasis in educational policy strategies, and in schools, on principal leadership accountabilities for reform management, and found representation in evolving iterations of principal performativities in various achievement measures.

Several studies (Anderson, 2009; Duignan, 2007) have, however, specifically addressed notions of values-driven leadership of socio-culturally and socio-economically diverse groups. Studies explored additional aspects of intercultural leadership for equity in diverse cultural and socio-economic settings. The leadership traits, expectations and capacities needed for

improved outcomes for marginalised and diverse groups have also been studied (Frawley & Fasoli, 2012; Theoharis, 2010; Smith & Bell, 2014).

Many of these approaches have provided important insights into the complex roles that comprised the principalship of schools catering for disadvantaged students and have been premised on notions of leadership of organisations which exhibit an ability to impact substantially on the behaviours, actions and beliefs of others for improved school performance measures. Studies such as Niesche's (2011, 2013a) and Niesche and Keddie's (2015) work have demonstrated how principals managed complex agendas for equity, as social justice, despite being positioned differently by at times contradictory agendas. This study adds substance to these insights by further deconstructing principals' practices in their particular contexts in light of their values for equity and the specific student needs envisaged.

This study draws in addition, on leadership research which has also deconstructed much of the complex work of principals managing evolving neoliberal governmentalities in disadvantaged schools. Studies have identified and explored further the values-driven practices of principals in disadvantaged schools by examining specific leadership subjectivities (Ball, 2015 ; Niesche, 2011, 2014, 2015), their prioritizing of passion (Blackmore, 2007), resistance to accountabilities (Thomson, 2009), leaders' attention to re-narrativization (Thomson, 2013); and their exercise of ethical conduct to disrupt governmentalities (Niesche, 2013a, 2014; Niesche & Keddie, 2015).

Several studies have similarly examined educational issues in governmentality regimes using Foucauldian theoretical tools to extract more nuanced understandings of various educational processes including leadership and growth in self-knowledge which enables ethical choices (Ball, 2015; Clarke 2012; Niesche, 2013a) and school autonomy under privatisation (Gobby, 2016). Studies which explore growth in self-knowledge are based on ideas from Foucault (2011) who conceptualized notions about ethical choices for pathways of compliance, resistance or mediation in the face of governmentalities. Studies such as Ball's (2016) and Ball's work with Olmedo (2013) have explored peoples' involvement in various forms of resistance and struggle against policy imperatives, whilst Niesche and Keddie (2015) have critically examined principals' ethical stances in their leadership of disadvantaged schools. These studies have grappled with examples of the ways in which theoretical notions of power/knowledge, subjectivity, ethics and governmentality principles may help understand the nature of principals - as - subjects' responses to policy governmentalities.

In essence, this study contributes to understandings about the complexities of the work practices and understandings of principals and their abilities to negotiate within increasingly

tighter normalising regimes. The study is positioned among the recent scholarship which has deconstructed principals' practices to explore the nature of adaptive strategies to ensure that students are provided with equitable educational experiences (Ball et al., 2012; Niesche & Keddie, 2015; Singh et al., 2014) . The study similarly uses the theoretical frameworks of Foucault, and the frameworks of Ryan (2012) and Gee (2005). In also using Foucault's work with their own empirical approaches, the aforementioned researchers' conceptual work is used to add further to this study's understandings of a principal's ability to intertwine theory, practice, ethical values, reflection, implementation skills and evaluation in sophisticated ways in various contexts.

2.4 Leadership and Quality Teaching

The principal's leadership of a school's pedagogical practices has long held a prominent place in discussions about schools, school performance and its impact on student learning. It is expected that principals as educational leaders, have important understandings about expected components of quality teaching. However, neoliberal reforms imposed on school organisations can impact significantly on the school's core role as a deliverer of quality pedagogy (Skourdoumbis, 2014; Skourdoumbis & Gale, 2013; Wrigley, Thomson, & Lingard, 2012). The SSLSES National Partnership reforms were significant in that they were designed, in fact, to impact on the core teaching and learning practices of schools through mandated "quality teaching" changes and subsequently on the nature of principals' educational leadership practices (COAG, 2009, p.5). Additionally, discourses identifying the standards associated with the quality of teachers themselves, were introduced (AITSL, 2011) which was a new attempt to apply normative measurement on the teaching workforce (Owen, Kos, & Mckenzie, 2008). Reforms specifically impacting on practices included reforms of teacher performance management, an escalating emphasis on basic skills testing as evidence, and targeted emphases on professional learning. Skourdoumbis and Gale (2013) noted additionally the tendency for pedagogical practices to be increasingly dominated by centralised approaches which diminished the creative and responsive ways by which teachers could exercise professional judgement. These approaches were mostly embedded in standards and programming templates, evident in new curriculum requirements, and embodied in quality assurance techniques, subsequently to be managed by principals.

The notion of 'quality' itself as expressed in discourses about the 'quality of teaching' emerged from the effective schools movement in the 1980's-90's. By the time of the SSLSES National Partnership, notions of 'quality teaching' had been hybridised within the economic rationalist agenda and concepts about pedagogical practices were merged with ideas about 'total quality

management’ (Saunders & Saunders, 1994). The term ‘quality teaching’ referred to the professional language used to describe complex pedagogies and its gradual amalgamation into economic rationalist models of teaching and learning provision. The quality of pedagogy subsequently became linked in economic rationalist models with standards and ‘best practice’ models to facilitate teachers reaching specified learning outcomes.

In a paper for the OECD, Scheerens (1995) suggested the adoption of indicators which re-defined the quality of schools on their outputs rather than the hitherto more commonly applied inputs such as student resourcing ratios. The set of indicators Scheerens developed linked processes and inputs of teaching to desired outputs and outcomes. In this way, the OECD model facilitated the incorporation of processes, such as teaching practices, as key areas for research, measurement and policy making. These areas had hitherto been left to practitioners. This early slippage in the discourse from ‘pedagogy’ to ‘quality teaching’ is readily seen in the Discussion Paper for the NSW Quality Teaching Model (NSW DET, 2003) which heralded processes for measuring elements of pedagogy.

In this study, additional terminology slippages and re-articulations are noted as economic rationalist policies further impacted on the discourses about the quality of teaching in the SSLSES National Partnership. The re-articulation of ‘quality teaching’ into notions of the ‘quality teacher’ are described in detail in Chapter 5, where the SSLSES National Partnership discourse is critically analysed.

By the time of the SSLSES National Partnership, principals had already detected role changes. In a survey of primary school principals in Australian schools, Cranston et al. (2010) found that principals overwhelmingly saw the importance of their role as pedagogical capacity building for democracy and inclusion. However, they also saw that this role was being increasingly appropriated by government education policies promoting the private and productivity purposes of schooling. These included accountabilities for factors which impacted on competitiveness and social mobility such as enacting government regimes for national testing and the publication of results. Associated research has found that the impact of changes was often to the detriment of principals’ wellbeing (Riley, 2016) and school attention to social justice (Smyth, 2012; Smyth & Wrigley, 2013).

Whilst acknowledging the importance of the principals’ role for the efficient administration of the SSLSES National Partnership (Australian Government, Smarter Schools, et al., 2010, p. 83) the implementation plans also articulated the principal’s role as a critical one for the quality of teaching through “best practice performance management” and his or her attention to literacy and numeracy targets (COAG, 2009, p.8). The strategies to improve the quality of teachers

included the administration of the NSW Institute of Teachers Professional Teaching Standards (NSW ITPTS) and, after 2011, the application of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers and Leaders (APSTL). Emphasis on professional learning to improve the quality of teaching was also a key reform (Australian Government, Smarter Schools, et al., 2010, p.83), but to be based on “key accountabilities”. It was significant that the transition from the NSW ITPTS to the APSTP as a framework for evaluation of quality teaching occurred during the time of the SSLSES National Partnership, so that in this study’s findings the differences in pedagogical approaches of principals may become evident between the different SSLSES National Partnership cohorts as they transitioned to the APSTL.

In keeping with a focus on leadership for quality teaching in NSW disadvantaged schools, an understanding of the NSW Quality Teaching model (NSW DET, 2003; NSW DET, Ladwig, & Gore, 2003) has relevance for this study. The model was the prevailing one available to NSW principals to support school wide pedagogical development in the early years of the SSLSES National Partnership and had been premised on the Productive Pedagogies model enacted by Education Queensland (1999-2004) (Hayes, Christie, Mills, & Lingard, 2004). Additionally, the elements and research underpinning the NSW Quality Teaching model was mapped onto the NSW ITPTS framework in 2008, so that the NSW ITPTS standards were predicated on a pedagogical model used as a guiding framework for teacher development and evaluation of teachers in NSW schools (NSW DET, 2008a, 2008b). The quality teaching focus echoed the belief that it was an important determiner of student outcomes from schooling, apart from the impact of students’ social and economic background (OECD, 2005).

Reflecting the interest in critically examining leadership for whole school pedagogical improvements, a number of Australian studies have also argued for the importance of a pedagogical model based on Productive Leadership, or leadership associated with quality teaching and learning (Hayes et al., 2004; Niesche & Keddie, 2011). Productive Leadership was conceptualised as a model which focused on leadership of productive or quality pedagogies, responsive curriculum implementation and the empowerment of local school communities as learning organisations which enhanced pedagogical practices. Notions of an evidence base for evaluating pedagogical practices was adopted by Ladwig, Smith, Gore, Griffiths, and Amosa (2007) and also Hattie (2009). In disadvantaged schools in Australia the principal’s leadership of a school-wide framework for effective pedagogy was also shown to be significant in equity discourses (Ladwig et al., 2007; Munns, 2007; Niesche & Keddie, 2012) and instrumental in assisting to develop cultural capital (Smyth, 2011). Productive Leadership was provided by principals who understood and developed the school’s capacity to

shape and support teachers' pedagogies across the school community, even while also operating within multiple and competing discourses of managerialism and accountability. The productive leadership model proposed by Hayes et al. (2004), and Niesche and Keddie (2012) also regarded responsive localised assessment and curriculum measures as important for social justice and the principal's investment in these practices as leader.

The importance of engaging pedagogies for a social justice education has been recognised by researchers like Smyth and Wrigley (2013) and Munns et al. (2013) who provide examples of rich and exemplary teaching and learning practices in low SES and multiculturally diverse classrooms in Australian contexts. Additional enabling conditions for equitable or social justice leadership, have been provided by principals developing responsive and continuously improving "cultures of learning" in their schools where teachers collaboratively embrace rich pedagogies (Blackmore, 2008, p.18). Socially inclusive practices also included capacity building for the quality of pedagogies using an empirically developed framework (Amosa, Ladwig, Griffiths, & Gore, 2007; Munns et al., 2013; Smyth & Wrigley, 2013). The need for an inclusive and rich curriculum for social justice (Connell, 1992; Craven, 2011), and collaborative school and community partnerships (Yunkaporta & McGinty, 2009) have all been regarded as critical components of education for social justice and equity. Research findings also continue to reinforce the importance of the principal's role in whole school professional learning for rich and responsive pedagogical practice and continue to note the principal's role as an educational leader (Kemmis et al., 2014).

By comparison, reductionist pedagogies include an over-reliance on direct instruction and use of unrelated data for judging students and schools unconnected with students' cultural and background experiences, intellectually undemanding, decontextualised learning, and low expectations, amongst other issues (Smyth, 2010; Sellar & Lingard, 2013). Teaching schemas developed from positivist teacher effectiveness research were adopted in policy imperatives, such as the SSLSES National Partnership reforms, to rely on standardised and normalising mechanisms easily measured and controlled by quality assurance processes (Skoudoumbis & Gale, 2013). This approach tightened technicist perspectives among the teaching profession compared with productive pedagogies frameworks.

The SSLSES National Partnership reform discourse signified the importance of quality teaching for student learning outcomes, but economic rationalist emphases co-opted this agenda by assigning literacy and numeracy improvements and other audited data as measures of quality and success, and then assigned individualised student and teacher responsibility for achievement. Notions of quality teaching became subsumed into notions of the quality of

teachers, and standards were introduced with which to benchmark the attributes of the quality teacher. Skourdoumbis (2014) argued further that quality teaching to ‘make a difference’ for social justice was co-opted using the governmentality agendas for its own ends under the teacher effectiveness agenda. An examination of the influence of performance management reforms on the quality of pedagogy led some researchers to suggest that such frameworks have been too closely related to the one-size-fits-all traits and behaviours of the effective schools’ paradigm to be helpful for principals and teachers, in unique contexts (Gunter, 2012; Lingard, 2014; Smith & Kovacs, 2011).

Policy discourse also exposed an underlying and antithetical distrust of teachers’ pedagogies and principals’ abilities by governments, as shown by nationwide surveillance via standardised testing, the use of league tables, and the creation of teaching standards, which all sought to judge and normalise desirable pedagogies. These factors signalled a change in the relationships between all levels of professionals in teaching processes such that the hierarchical powers within the system prevailed. Influenced by a desire for normative educational provision and more docile teaching professionals, the SSLSES National Partnership program expressed the issues around standards and accountability of teachers as issues of “technical efficiency” or, more simply, the quality of teaching (Clarke 2012, p. 297). Principals, were further positioned as examiners of teachers’ work by the SSLSES National Partnership reforms, which affected collegial practices.

Recent critical studies of principals’ practices similarly suggest that policy governmentalities demanding improvements in standardised test results as a measure of effective teaching, have subsequently impacted significantly on the leadership of teaching and learning (Hardy, 2015 ; Lingard, 2011). Leadership of the school’s involvement in the NAPLAN, for instance, has incorporated the management of the testing regime which has subsequently impacted on other pedagogical practices. Leadership practices impacted include mandated teacher development programs, quality teaching resources, teaching to the test, communication and test administration (Comber & Cormack, 2011; Dulfer, Polesal, & Rice, 2012; Hardy, 2015).

The application of both performance management regimes and teaching standards such as the APSTL has similarly become a normalising influence on the quality of teaching in schools and associated further with teachers’ identities (Mockler, 2013; Skourdoumbis, 2014). As the focus on effective teaching, drawn from the school effectiveness literature, became synonymous and aligned with pedagogical practices that ‘work’ to impact on measurable outcomes, notions of quality teaching and teachers themselves have evolved as the embodiment of cause-effect relationships related to the productivity purposes of schooling. Accountabilities for

achievement of appropriate school effectiveness measures contributed to the further examination of competence and quality measured in the form of the standards. The SSLSES National Partnership reforms similarly encouraged principals to shape teachers' practices in certain ways using the 'carrot' and 'stick' of professional learning and performance management which came to include the use of the APSTL for governing teachers' work.

In exercising educational leadership within the quality teaching domain, principals therefore faced significant tensions to further normalise and control professional practices impacting on student learning. In the face of evolving governmentalities exerted by the application of the APSTL, this study is relevant for examining some early effects of the standards framework on leadership and pedagogy. The full effect of the APSTL is still to be understood in NSW schools as its links to remuneration and staffing practices in NSW schools (BOSTES, 2014-2017) are only now being applied. However, this study can provide some understandings about principals' APSTL implementation and effects on teaching pedagogies in later cohort schools. The current study can also contribute to broader understandings about the nature of professional skills development for quality pedagogy associated with SSLSES National Partnership reforms in NSW schools.

2.5 Conclusion.

The field within which the study is positioned has provided important insights into the evolving impact of neoliberal reforms on public schools in NSW such as the SSLSES National Partnership. Issues of socio-economic disadvantage, too, have long been difficult and problematic in Australian schools (Lamb, 2015; Teese & Lamb, 2007) and often associated with tensions involving student engagement, achievement and participation. Principals now have the role of managing these tensions. This study contributes to the literature concerned with social justice leadership in economic rationalist regimes. It addresses gaps in the literature discussed in this chapter by contributing to research which further examines contextual responses to evolving neoliberal policy while capturing principals' own equity understandings in view of discursive policy.

A persistent theme important for principals' practices is the lack of a universally accepted view of equity despite the intention that the SSLSES National Partnership contribute to equity provision in disadvantaged schools. This is exemplified by its adoption of discourses requiring planning for, and evidence of, accessible and productive educational provision. An aim of the study is to contribute to understandings about principals' policy implementation practices for equity by investigating their insights in view of the challenges of high accountability regimes. Its utility is inherent in the use of pragmatic theoretical and empirical methodologies with

which to explore the subtleties, nuances and complexities of principals' responses. The study aims to see how principals are positioned by policy discourses with regard to equity, and also to investigate principals' understandings about equity in their program implementation. The study identifies relevant conceptual tools used to investigate policy discourses and principals' practices in the next two chapters before analyzing the principals' case studies in Chapters 7-9. The ensuing chapter describes Foucault's ideas thought relevant to the study, whilst Chapter 5 analyses the SSLSES National Partnership policy using Gee's (2005) discourse analysis tools.

Chapter 3

Theoretical Framework: Foucault and Principal Accountabilities

[I]ndividuals are thus the vehicles of power, not its point of application. Individuals are not passive, inert entities who are simply at the receiving end of power ... power is never localized, here or there, never in anybody's hands, never appropriated as a commodity or piece of wealth. (Foucault, 1980, p.98).

3.1 Introduction

Having examined some of the epistemological pressures associated with reconciling educational leadership, equity and policy enactment in the literature, this chapter provides an overview of the theoretical understandings underpinning the study. In particular, several of Foucault's notions have been employed to interpret the data gathered from the study's six principal case studies. These include aspects of power/knowledge, discourse and the subject. Additionally, notions of governmentality and resistance, ethics and truth telling assist in recognising opportunities for mediation in principals' practices. Concepts developed further from Foucault's work such as discourse (Gee, 2005), 'micropolitics' and political acumen (Ryan, 2012) are also utilised to examine policy regimes and principals' practices.

Foucault was an influential French philosopher and critical thinker (1926-1984) who developed many concepts which may be deployed as 'tools' with which to critique and problematise key concepts such as power and knowledge relationships within educational systems. He also saw ways by which power can be used as a means of "objectification which transform[s] human beings into subjects" through such routines and practices as technologies of the self (Foucault, 1982, p. 777). The source of important concepts for this study from Foucault's vast collection has been by means of reference to Foucault's important works including the 'Archaeology of Knowledge' (1972), 'Discipline and Punish' (1975), History of Sexuality: Volume 1 (1978) and 2 (1985) and a number of the more recently translated and published Lecture Series from the Collège de France which contain details of Foucault's thinking and histories of thought for concept development. Foucault's ideas about power and knowledge and governmentality can be deployed for understandings about how policy discourses might position the practices of policy subjects, such as principals, implementing programs such as the SSLSES National Partnership. Additionally, Foucault's later works on his four-fold ethical framework, truth telling and practices of the self are important in this thesis as a basis for examining policy

implementation practices, and particularly for understanding how principals may have mediated policy imperatives for equity in their schools.

This chapter begins with a brief examination of Foucault's concepts of power, knowledge and discourse together with the ways these concepts are deployed in this study to deconstruct policy understandings as well as understandings about the ways in which principals' practices may have been positioned in SSLSES National Partnership schools. It will continue with an examination of the notions of governmentality which can be applied to understandings about policy and practices. This is followed by an examination of Foucault's fourfold ethical framework with conceptualisations of 'telos' 'modes of subjection', 'ethical substance', and 'forms of elaboration' to theorise leadership approaches to managing for equity. Additional insights about possible opportunities for principals' mediation of policy for equity are examined through Foucault's notions of resistance, truth telling, counter-conduct and technologies of the self.

3.2 Foucault, education and educational leadership

Michel Foucault's work has been applied to a study of education because his work translates directly into school environments in many conceptual areas. Some significant examples include work by Ball (1990, 2013, 2015, 2016); Thomson et al., (2013); Ball and Olmedo (2013) and Gobby (2015, 2017). Ball's (2015, 2016) analyses and application of Foucault's work on governmentality and resistance in neoliberal times engages directly with its impact in the face of educational policy. He clarifies the importance of Foucault's ideas for analysing performativities and ethical issues in educational organisations related to invasive neoliberal governmentalities. He saw the importance of understanding subjectivities of educational personnel facing key governmentalities as a site of political struggle. Ball's work with Olmedo (2013) similarly used Foucault's conceptualisations of subjectivity to explore ways in which subjects may approach possibilities of resistance to neoliberalism through notions of care of the self.

School leadership as governmentality or conduct-of-conduct can also be critiqued for the construction of underlying subjectivities and practices. Foucault's work has therefore appeared in studies of educational leadership and management conducted by researchers who have given his ideas close attention in relation to educational policy implementation and the leadership and management of schools, including Australian schools (Gillies, 2013; Niesche, 2011; Niesche & Keddie, 2015; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010; Savage, 2013a). Foucault's notions of discourse, power/knowledge, governmentality and ethical substance applied as thinking tools to school leaders' practices as they implement common globalised policy discourses which

construct certain subjectivities has been summarised by Gillies (2013), whilst Gobby (2013, 2016) has utilized Foucauldian tools to examine policies of school leadership and autonomy in the privatization of public schools in Western Australia. The application of Foucault's work on disciplinary power undertaken in Niesche's studies (2011, 2013) was important for the examination of the subjectification of leaders by means of school-based management regimes and policy governmentalities. Additionally, Niesche and Keddie's (2015) analysis of school leadership in both Queensland and British policy environments is valuable for its critical examination of the ways in which two principals managed unprecedented systemic change for social justice with truth telling, advocacy (Anderson, 2009) and counter-conduct approaches.

The benefits of using Foucault's conceptual "toolkit" (Foucault, 1980, p. 145) with which to view principals' implementation strategies in SSLSES National Partnership Schools include the gathering of insights into understanding the 'how' and 'why' of principals' practices under governmentality conditions within evolving normalising education regimes. In utilizing Foucault's work to analyse the practices of principals in case study schools, therefore, a number of benefits are evident. These include:

- an identification of the confluence of power/knowledge and/or discourse effects on principals' practices;
- an identification of the ways in which policy governmentalities may have influenced principals' practices, and the extent to which resistance is enabled as counter-conduct;
- an exploration of how 'ethical rationalities' may shape practices for equity in an environment which also incorporates marketised rationalities; and
- an examination of the opportunities which enable principals to exercise technologies of the self, counter-conduct and other forms of resistance which may assist in the mediation of policy discourses for equity.

This chapter examines each of Foucault's concepts seen as relevant for the study with reference to the NSW and Australian education contexts during the time of the SSLSES National Partnership program to describe the theoretical basis upon which the study is framed.

3.3 Discourse

Foucault's conceptualization of discourse is broad, and contributes to understandings about the constitution of knowledge together with inherent social interrelationships. Understandings also

inhere from the identification of subjects and objects and social practices. After exploring ideas about culture and knowledge based on assumptions about order and rules in discourse, Foucault later developed an understanding of discourse associated with power and meaning/knowledge, by using exemplars such as Bentham's Panopticon and using genealogical systems of formation. The Panopticon was a surveillance method designed for use in eighteenth century prisons which enabled all inmates to be watched by one guard situated in a tower positioned out of view to overlook all groups of prisoners. Foucault saw this as an effective surveillance model to be applied to modern power inter-relationships. Foucault (1997) was able to trace archaeologically how society's organisational structures could produce meaningful subjects and 'docile' bodies through cultural constructions of meanings and the overarching structures of governing discourses in ways similar to a Panopticon.

Foucault developed conceptualisations about power/ knowledge and some notions of discourse after tracing the histories of thought about these concepts archaeologically. The basis of Foucault's archaeological method is that discursive systems of thought and knowledge are governed by rules that operate to further define a system of conceptual possibilities in a given domain and period. This system was societal or cultural and above that of grammatical constructions. In the 1970s, when conceptualizing notions of subjectivity and ethics, he describes this process more as a 'genealogy' to especially highlight the contestation and struggle involved in evolving and transitioning discursive formations, as archeology was limited in this process (Gillies, 2013).

Notions of all that is said or communicated as well as silences are included in Foucault's ideas about discourse. Foucault (1978, p. 27) summarises his ideas about the all-pervasiveness of discourse, including discourses which were both evident and implied:

There is no binary division between what one says and does not say; we must try to determine the different ways of not saying such things ... which kind of discourse is authorised, or which form of discretion is required in either case. There is not one but many silences and they are an integral part of the strategies that underlie and permeate discourse.

To Foucault (1972), discourse involves a particular way of encapsulating and structuring aspects of society so that everything is formulated discursively. Discourses are shaped in such a way that they "form the objects of which they speak" (Foucault, 1972, p. 49) in interrelationship with cultural practices. Discourses are also envisaged at a number of levels in Foucault's "systems of formation" where texts are related to a field of similar discourses

(Foucault, 1972, p. 173). A system of formation is a series of discourses together which might include, for instance, political discourses, leadership discourses, and any other discourses that might impact on the work of school leaders as subjects. Foucault (1972, p.109-10) notes that for a statement to exist, “it must be related to a whole adjacent field ... a statement always has borders peopled by other statements”.

A discursive formation is distinguished by an associated field and a group of signs and statements which can be analysed archaeologically at a number of levels at the formation of “objects” or at “subjective positions”. The formation of concepts and the formation of “strategic choices” also takes place within such discursive formations (Foucault, 1972, p. 167). The archaeological approach defines the rules of formation of groups of statements but also enables “successive” or evolving events and ideas to be successively captured by the “density of the discourse” (Foucault, 1972, p. 169). Discourses also define the nature of relationships using strategic choices and subjective positions so that power relationships can become evident.

In this study, a critical discourse analysis draws upon Gee’s (2005, 2011) tools of analysis. Many of Gee’s (2011) tools capture Foucault’s ideas about discourse and the ways in which policy discourses might be shaped by discursive formations at cultural levels. An analysis of discourses associated with the SSLSES National Partnership program (see Chapter 5) enables the struggles and power inter-relationships evident at various levels of the discourse to be captured in a way similar to that envisaged by Foucault. The analysis also enables the “successive” events of evolving policy positions (Foucault, 1972, p. 169) to be traced through temporal discursive shifts within their systems of formation. Gee’s tools (2005, 2011) provide the additional links to assist with discussion of cultural /social language-in-use with language at the semantic level. Concepts and domains of practice emerging from dominant discourses associated with leadership can also be further examined, so that for example, associated discourses of effectiveness/ineffectiveness, efficiency/inefficiency, in ‘effective schools’ discourses can be problematized.

3.4 Discourse and Power/Knowledge

Many of Foucault’s ideas about the interrelationship between discourse and power and knowledge were initiated in earlier phases of his work and elaborated in analyses in lectures and interviews (Foucault, 2003, 2013). Foucault (1995) specifically advocates that power in association with constructed knowledge creates certain levels of discourse, any of which can be internalized by individuals and used to influence and even ‘govern’ populations. His analyses of power/knowledge and discourse in his conceptualisation of power relationships is

based on his understandings about the ability of discourse to influence others. Power and knowledge are applied in interrelationships via these means. Foucault states that:

The aim of the inquiries that will follow is to move less toward a theory of power than toward an ‘analytics’ of power: that is, toward a definition of the specific domain formed by relations of power, and toward a determination of the instruments that will make possible its analysis. (Foucault, 1978, p. 82)

Power and knowledge operate through discourse to impact on subjects to normalize and direct their behaviours. Discourse for Foucault provides the wherewithal to constitute power interrelationships and hence subjectivities. Foucault (1978, p. 100) says: “Indeed it is in discourse that power and knowledge are joined together.” The structures in discourses are important for the ways in which knowledge and interrelationships associated with power are depicted. Foucault focuses on power relationships which engaged subjects in some aspects of discourse whilst excluding others, but these relationships are always somewhat ephemeral. He states that power is “produced from one moment to the next” because “Power is everywhere; not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere.” (Foucault, 1978, p. 94).

Thus, discourses of accountability exhibited in any power inter-relationship established between subjects could determine or be determined by the tenor of discourse which “normalized” the behaviours of the subjects. Discourse tenor is relevant in accountability relationships that are set up, for instance, in policy implementation. The regulation of discourse also interested Foucault (1978, p. 52) as he could see that it was subject to contestation and possible resistance:

In every society the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organised and redistributed by a certain number of procedures, whose role it is to ward off its powers and dangers, to gain mastery over its chance events, to evade its ponderous formidable materiality.

Important in Foucault’s work, though, is the notion that there is a multiplicity of discursive factors that may be evident at any one time rather than a system of causality or hierarchy between factors. Foucault also refers to the possibilities of resistance which will be examined in more detail in association with governmentality. Ability to exercise resistance in power interrelationships and to the exercise of governmentalities may result in mediation. Foucault (1978, p.102), in discussing resistance said that:

There is not, on the one side, a discourse of power, and opposite it, another discourse that runs counter to it. Discourses are tactical elements or blocks

operating in the field of force relations; there can exist different and even contradictory discourses within the same strategy; they can, on the contrary, circulate without changing their form from one strategy to another, opposing strategy.

In an application of these concepts to this study, analyses of SSLSES National Partnership discourses are undertaken, for instance, to examine how the discourse constitutes a subject in ways which ensure compliance due to the nature of power relationships. In other instances, some discourses may be constructed to create exclusions and forms of resistance.

It is, therefore, possible to be subject to many competing discourses and subjectivisations according to Foucault. Some of the levels of discourse impinging on principals' practices are the equity discourses evident in principals' understandings of equity and social justice. Conflicting subjectivisations may create possibilities for the further capacities of principal subjects for resistance through silence and perhaps conduct counter to that required by policy discourses. These ideas about counter-conduct will be explored as examples of opportunities for mediation in later sections of the chapter (see Section 3.6). Foucault (1978, p. 101) foreshadows this possibility when he states:

Discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it. In like manner, silence and secrecy are a shelter for power, anchoring its prohibitions; but they also loosen its holds and provide for relatively obscure areas of tolerance.

3.4.1 Power/ Knowledge

In a series of lectures and interviews, Foucault (1982, 2007, 2008) further conceptualized his notions of power and freedom and questioned the nature of social order. Foucault's initial ideas about power and its relationship to knowledge eventually gave way to his ideas about governmentality. Foucault (1995) proposed that power manifests itself in relation to constructed knowledge which influences certain levels of discourse, any of which can be internalized by individuals to 'govern' populations. Foucault saw power in terms of relationships, and in its relationship to knowledge. In studies like "Discipline and Punish" (1977), and *Truth and Power* in "Power and Knowledge" (1980), Foucault (1980, 1995) suggests that power and knowledge are inextricably linked and it is from power relations that knowledge emerges through the micro-mechanisms of power. Foucault (1995, p. 27) therefore indicates that:

[P]ower and knowledge directly imply one another: that there is no power relationship without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations.

This relationship can also be seen in knowledge anticipated by the SSLSES National Partnership reforms. Ideas about power and knowledge have offered useful analytical concepts with which to examine the hierarchical structures of relationships in schools. These power relations and the associated knowledge engendered might be seen for example, in the enactment of performance management regimes in schools where the power relationships with staff can be used to gather knowledge about teachers' pedagogy and hence make judgments about their performance. Foucault (1980, p. 98) similarly saw that hierarchical structures such as those employed in many organizations such as schools and bureaucratic systems create an interlinked network which constructs and reconstructs the power relationships such that:

Not only do individuals circulate between its thread; they are in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising power. They are not only its inert or consenting target; they are also the elements of its articulation. In other words, individuals are thus the vehicles of power, not its point of application.

Power was subsequently described as a network, where each individual was subject to power inter-relationships, and yet each could exert power themselves in an interactive, ascending and/or descending manner. Foucault (1980, p. 96) says that power relationships exist "at its extremities in its ultimate destinations ... where it becomes capillary, that is in its most regional forms and institutions". The implication is that power inter-relationships are distributed across the education system and include the ways in which its tentacles are applied to all personnel. The study aims to see how power and its associated knowledge shapes principals' behaviours and practices.

3.4.2 Disciplinary Power

Disciplinary power was conceptualised by Foucault as a form of power which regulates the subject by manipulating aspects of their environment, such as building spaces, time schedules, and movements (Foucault, 1995). It is enforced by audit and surveillance regimes. Disciplinary power is illustrated in the hierarchical interrelationships between supervisors, principals and staff, for example, and in ways that scheduling directs actions. This process, like power, is:

...distributed in homogeneous circuits capable of operating anywhere in a continuous way down to the finest grain of the social body. (Foucault, 1995, p. 80).

Foucault's ideas about disciplinary power have emerged from examining the significance of mechanisms such as Bentham's Panopticon. Foucault saw that it was possible to "individualise observation by means of the analytical arrangement of space" (Foucault, 1995, p. 203). By extension, this meant that it was possible to control others by re-designing spaces that helped control or produce the 'docile' or compliant body. It was also possible to discipline and control through developing self-management because of the implied discipline of the unseen observer. Additionally, surveillance and knowledge together created ways of normalising behaviour. Examples in the education system include examinations which gather knowledge about students through surveillance and audit, then, norm performances into ranked tables of results. Subsequently, several ways by which power relationships can be exerted in a disciplinary way to control actions and "bodies" were identified. Foucault (1977, p. 250) describes how whole populations can be managed by exerting power and knowledge as a form of 'biopower' requiring "complex systems of coordination and centralisation." In the schools in this study, bio-power can be exercised through hierarchical surveillance techniques. A school system itself can manage populations of students, of teachers, and of principals using surveillance and measurement techniques. These processes can be seen to operate in ways that make principals, students and staff manageable, 'supervisable', answerable and therefore productive. Principals, for instance, are made more manageable when they are required to complete application forms for school funding or complete templates of information (Niesche, 2010).

Hierarchical management structures evident throughout education systems is a technique which assists to discipline principals. The SSLSES National Partnership Reforms can themselves, similarly add to a principal's disciplinary power. Personnel performance management reforms, for instance, require the management of the time and space and behaviour under which staff operates. The documented intensification of principals' workload (Pietsch, 2013; Riley, 2016) is evidence of the link between the constant demand for documentation, disciplinary power, and imposition of self-management for principals in modern Australian education regimes. Foucault saw power as a pervasive force with which to govern each of the 'self,' organizations and society. These notions form the basis of discussion by Foucault (1995) in "Power/Knowledge" about disciplinary power and are applied to governmentality which is also utilized to examine principals' practices in this study. Foucault (1980, pp. 93-94), acknowledges this force as:

Power never ceases its interrogation, its inquisition, its registration of the truth: it institutionalizes, professionalises and records its pursuit.

3.5 Governmentality.

Foucault further developed his ideas about power into concepts about government and governmentality. Governmentality was a portmanteau word consisting of *government* and *mentality*. The term implies that the power exerted also becomes self-fulfilling through ‘technologies of the self’, a concept more fully developed in lectures and notes (Foucault, 2010). The concept of governmentality for Foucault provides an overall framework within which to examine some of the intricacies of power relations further. For this study, notions of governmentality are relevant for their application to principals’ leadership in their schools. Principals were also subject to aspects of governmentality through accountabilities required by the SSLSES National Partnership policy discourses.

Foucault’s (2007) ideas about governmentality began as a way to describe the notion of the state and its techniques of power over individuals, with Foucault expanding his definition to encompass the techniques and procedures designed to govern the conduct of both individuals and populations at every level. He saw that governmentality could be exercised in ways which may or may not lead to domination, but where its rationality impacts on the formation of different subjectivities and where opportunities for resistance exist. Governmentality also operates with previously mentioned forms of power to form a grid or hierarchy of different power relationships. People’s subjectivities are re-imagined under changing notions of governmentality. Whereas a person’s subjectivity was originally seen to be formed by discipline and normalisation, later incarnations embraced care of the self notions, through the growth of self-knowledge, and self-management. Therefore, if power is enacted on us as subjects, then we can reflect that power back to obtain sovereignty or control.

The expansion of these ideas can be seen in the lecture series contained in Foucault’s (2007) “Security, Territory, Populations.” The changing governmentality powers of the state can be seen, for example, to accompany the increasing influence of neoliberalism or market rationalist controls over education systems. In neoliberal regimes, forces of capital creation and competition contribute additionally to the powers of governmentality over organisations by the state.

The further control of the individual as a subject is augmented by Foucault’s definition of governmentality as “conduct of conduct” (Foucault, 2007, p. 193). By “conduct” he refers to one’s self-conduct or self-behaviours, as well as the conduct or behaviours of a population. Foucault (2007, p.195) envisions the governmentality of populations in terms of the self-

regulating behaviours of its individuals after they have internalized the normalizing effects of power because of already mentioned surveillance and disciplinary techniques. Foucault's notions of governmentality can be interpreted as operating along a continuum describing the mentalities of rule for both the state and for individuals. Foucault says (2007, p.122) that governmentality "refers to the control one may exercise over oneself, and others, over someone's body, soul, and behaviour."

Forms of governmentality examined genealogically by Foucault (2007) include for instance, "pastorale" power or the power of "the hope of salvation" (p.126); the power of sovereignty or "Raison d'État," (p.285) and "police" power (p.326). Foucault (2008) also tracked the powers exerted by more recent liberal and neoliberal forms of governmentality. In referring to the emergence of neoliberalism as an art of government, Foucault saw its emergence as a distinct innovation in the history of governmentality (Peters, 2007). He uses the term 'homo oeconomicus' to describe modern neoliberal man dominated by the governmentalities of the market which in turn was regulated by the state (Foucault, 2008, p.267). The term 'homo oeconomicus' is central to understanding his ideas about its evolution. He refers to it as a governing matrix involving the market, competition and entrepreneurship with its importance seen as all-encompassing. He says of the neoliberal state:

The problem of liberal policy was precisely to develop in fact the concrete and real space in which the formal structure of competition could function ... Neoliberalism should be identified...with permanent vigilance, activity and intervention (Foucault, 2008, p. 132).

Neoliberal governmentalities make subjects of diverse types of workers, including educational workers, with social relationships based on competition, calculability, and enterprise. Application of neoliberal forms of governmentality means, for instance, that principals as subjects, whose behaviours are normalised by the policies developed within this system are further empowered to monitor their own 'conduct' but also the 'conduct' of others. They thereby align the goals of the state, indicated in this case by the SSLSES National Partnership policy, with those of the school population. Foucault (1998, p. 288) says of this process:

The good ruler is the one who exercises his power as it ought to be exercised, that is, simultaneously exercising power over himself. And it is the power over oneself that thus regulates one's power over others.

Foucault's recognition of neoliberalism's spread into many fields of endeavour was acknowledged by Brown (2015) who further analysed its influence over the western world's

political, social and economic spheres. In the light of the ongoing evolution of neoliberalism's influence, this study has referenced Brown's (2015) more recent conceptualisation of neoliberalism as impacting on democracy, participation and justice. In particular, Brown saw that under its influence, governmentality has influenced many aspects of public and democratic life, including the democratic purposes of education.

Governmentality has two related aspects united by Foucault's term 'conduct of conduct' (Foucault, 2007). The first is related to political 'rationality' or the knowledge of the field. This embodies an approach to governing one's self and others in terms of certain understandings, knowledge, and ideals. The other aspect embodies the techniques and 'technologies' or the processes of government (Foucault, 2007). In this study, a governmentality 'lens' comprising both processes and knowledge is applied to the principals' leadership practices and to the education system as a whole.

When governmentality regimes also apply to individuals shaping their conduct as a form of self-discipline, 'technologies of the self' (Foucault, 1988) can be developed. Individuals accept responsibility for seeking out opportunities to develop their qualifications and skills in order to be marketable and measurable in the new regime. A new ontology or technology of life-long learning and the continual repositioning of oneself with respect to governmentalities subsequently emerges. The application of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers and Leaders (APSTL), for instance, was intended as a regime which facilitated the development of 'technologies of the self' where future leaders engaged in appropriate 'conduct.' Potential principals and staff leaders can submit to this regime if they wish to be authorised for promotion. The regime normalises acceptable principal practices and creates further competition between staff and a so-called merit-based system within a performative culture. 'Technologies of the self,' self -management, and the development of related subjectivities, may also be seen to be at odds in various governmentality regimes and are examined in relation to ethics and truth telling as aspects of mediation (in Section 3.8, and Section 3.9).

Foucault's metaphor of governmentality is illustrated by a ship's captain bringing cargo safely through risks encountered at sea using knowledge of the relationships, knowledge of sailors, the ship and the sea. (Foucault, 1991, p. 93). The metaphor can be applied to the leadership exerted by principals. Principals evaluate their organizational situation at the school to manage the policy implementation using all the knowledge they have of the interrelationships and conduct of the many complex factors comprising their organisation. These include school-level factors, such as knowledge of pedagogy, curriculum, personnel; their inter-relationships with all their community and with their educational market place; and their own subjectivities. In

the case of principals' leadership of an equity program, they need to steer their school through policy implementation processes that also simultaneously meet the needs of students for an equitable education. It is these inter-relationships between knowledge and strategy that Foucault (1991, p. 93) finds important as he describes government as the "complex composed of men and things."

The strategies or tactics of governmentality are relevant for this study, as understandings about which neoliberal techniques normalize and 'discipline' a principal's behaviour are obtained. Tactics of governmentality regimes include the use of the market, surveillance, audit, hierarchical power and 'biopower' to discipline organisations and manage the power relationships within them. Thus, under neoliberal governmentalities, principals might be positioned within the marketplace as competitive entities subject to surveillance using educational measurements to enable judgment and ranking.

The neoliberalised technologies may be seen in the increased visibility of all school personnel within the education marketplace which encourages self-discipline and conduct of conduct through accountabilities. Under neoliberalism, Foucault (2008, p. 19) notes that, "new objects and subjects are produced in the conjunctions of a whole set of practices from the moment they become coordinated with a regime of truth." There is a new 'episteme' of leadership reshaped by neoliberal regimes which reshape values into capital value and requires a "new type of individual" (Ball & Olmedo, 2013, p. 88). "In brief, the new governmentality ... now finds itself in a situation in which it has to refer to the economy as a domain of naturalness" (Foucault, 2007, p. 354). It is a goal of this study to examine principals' responses to evolving forms of neoliberalism with reference to Foucauldian ideas and also post-Foucauldian researchers such as Ball (2013, 2016); Brown (2015); Niesche & Keddie (2015); Niesche (2013); Ryan (2012) and Rizvi and Lingard (2010).

3.6 Counter-Conduct.

In Foucault's (1978) continuing work on governmentality, he has also introduced ways to further understand the complexity of the power relationships including the notion of resistance. He establishes that the use of power often invites resistance or 'push back' in certain power relationships. Foucault argues that resistance exists everywhere among the networks and hierarchies of power. He later developed these ideas further into an articulation of 'counter-conduct. Just as governmentality is 'conduct-of-conduct' so resistance is seen as "counter-conduct". The use of the word "conduct" is used as a double entendre to describe a person's own behaviour (conduct of oneself) as well as the activity of conducting or managing. Included

are also elements of the ways “in which one behaves (*se comporter*) under the influence of a conduct” (Foucault, 2007, p. 193).

The later translations of Foucault’s lectures in “Security, Territory, Population” (2007) provides further development of Foucault’s concepts of conduct and counter-conduct. Foucault’s exposé of notions of power through governmentality in the lecture of 1st March 1978, is critical to the understanding of these concepts. Counter-conduct comprises notions of resistance which involve behaviours which can be counter to applied governmentalities:

Just as there have been forms of resistance to power as the exercise of political sovereignty and just as there have been other equally intentional [*voulues*, that is, “willed”] forms of resistance or refusal that were directed at power in the form of economic exploitation, have there not been forms of resistance to power as conducting? (Foucault, 2007, p. 195)

These forms of counter-conduct have dimensions which may be evident in a subject’s practices. They include subjects, or principals, needing to conduct activities differently, whose objective is a different type of ‘conduct’ or management. Thus, forms of counter-conduct may include mediation of aspects of a principal’s accountability regimen. They may also include actions that enable the subject to conduct themselves in ways which secure other objectives using “other procedures and methods” (Foucault, 2007, p. 194). Foucault emphasizes that resistance be productive and active, similar to power, itself.

The linking of the concept of counter-conduct to power, which has as its object the conduct of individuals, suggests that pre-requisites exist. These include the subject having self-knowledge, the subject having knowledge and power in their organisations and simultaneously having a detailed knowledge of the power relationships. In this study, principals’ tendencies to counter-conduct would assume they have power and knowledge of ways to mediate possible areas of tension between policy discourse and student equity. There may also be evidence of principals’ management of other objectives; of using alternative processes and practices, using their ‘self-conduct of conduct’.

3.7 Governmentality and Resistance.

Where tensions may be evident between various discourses, say, between that of a neoliberal marketising agenda and a principal’s ethical stance with regard to equity, the leader may experience struggle and resistance. Foucault (2010) argues that struggles may occur at points of correlation between axes of knowledge and truth, power and/or a subject’s ethical stance based on practices of the self. In this study, examination of subjectivity in neoliberal regimes

also warrants scrutiny for evidence of resistances and/or mediation through truth telling or speaking out (see Section 3.9) as well as counter-conduct. Foucault (1982, p. 213) recognizes that marketised governmentalities provide arenas for new struggles and choices:

Nowadays the struggle against the forms of subjection – against the submission of subjectivity – is becoming more and more important, even though the struggles against forms of domination and exploitation have not disappeared ... Quite the contrary!

Foucault, therefore, states that: “What we intend to do is to sketch the basis of a new economy of power relations” (Foucault, 1982, p. 211). As a result, subjects may exhibit a range of forms of resistance to governmentalities (Ball & Olmedo, 2013; Gillies, 2008) as outlined from among Foucault’s notions of truth telling and counter-conduct (in Section 3.10).

3.8 Foucault and Ethics

Initially, Foucault (1998) discussed values and rules of agencies such as schools and families in terms of ‘morals’. However, behaviours of individuals with respect to themselves, and with respect to institutions, he described as ‘ethics’. Foucault (1997a p. 284) states “Ethics is the considered form that freedom takes when it is informed by reflection”. It was among his ideas about ethics that he began to transition and refine his thinking about power relationships. Morals and ethics assumed importance in Foucault’s evolving (1994, 2010, 2011) concepts about governmentality as they are indicators of how one conducts one’s own conduct and sees others’ conduct in governmentality situations. Foucault (1990, p. 25) states:

A rule of conduct is one thing; the conduct that may be measured by this rule is another. But another thing still is the manner in which one ought to ‘conduct oneself’ -that is, the manner in which one ought to form oneself as an ethical subject acting in reference to the prescriptive elements that make up the code.

When self-governmentality, or the self’s relationship with itself, is examined, Foucault identifies a number of ethical stances which drive self-conduct. Foucault (1990) refers to a fourfold notion of ethical behaviour. The first of these he classifies as exercising one’s ethical understandings. Using Foucault’s terminology, the subject’s “self-forming activities” (or “forms of elaboration”), are the ethical activities undertaken to enact an ethical vision (for equity, for instance) when compared to any standard of behaviour or “mode of subjection” aspired to. Foucault terms a subject’s moral stance their “telos” (Foucault, 1990, p. 27).

Because this study explores principals’ definitions of equity as an insight into understanding their practices, many of Foucault’s notions of ethics can be utilized to examine principals’

conceptualizations of equity as ethical aspirations for their school. In Foucault's terminology, principals have developed a 'telos' or an ethical stance on equity and may utilize some specific forms of elaboration to fulfill this vision. For Foucault, (2000, p. 265) the 'telos' refers to the achievement of certain ethical aspirations as applied to technologies of the self. The process of ethical self-formation is one in which the individual:

defines his position relative to the precept he will follow, and decides on a certain mode of being that will serve as his moral goal...This requires him to act upon himself, to monitor, test, improve and transform himself (Foucault, 1990, p. 28).

Principals' visions for equity form the aspects of telos which the study investigates. The nature of a subject's 'telos' can also describe the nature of their inter-relationships with others encountered, and include the nature of leadership practised. These teloi are regulated against evident 'modes of subjection'. The ethical modes of subjection describe the type of benchmark one is using for the judgment of one's ethical behaviour in these instances. Hence, principals in this study may benchmark their ethical stances against the SSLSES National Partnership program measures of equity, or they might similarly base their ethical stance against their own values (Foucault, 1998).

Foucault in reviewing his thoughts about ethical power used intersecting matrices of self-management, power, and relationships. He outlined a concept of 'askésis' (Foucault, 2011) where struggle and/or training is deployed as a way to confront neoliberal discourses of a world in an ethical manner. In this study, a principal may confront governmentality processes in policies which direct action and which may constitute their mode of subjection or their relationship to the rules and/or reform strategies. This may be at odds with their telos. Schools and policy implementations can therefore be seen as sites of struggle or askésis where principals, as subjects, may become caught between their obligation to deliver their telos, the demands of the governmentality agenda or other aspects of their subjectivisation. Foucault (1990, p. 28) states:

Of course, all moral action involves a relationship with the reality in which it is carried out, and a relationship with the self. The latter is not simply "self-awareness" but self-formation as an "ethical subject," a process in which the individual delimits that part of himself that will form the object of his moral practice, defines his position relative to the precept he will follow, and decides on a certain mode of being that will serve as his moral goal. And this requires him to act upon himself, to monitor, test, improve, and transform himself. There is no specific moral action that does not refer to a unified moral conduct; no moral conduct that does not call for the forming of oneself as an ethical subject; and no forming of the ethical subject

without "modes of subjectivation" and an "askésis" or "practices of the self" that support them.

3.9 The Subject, Truth Telling and the Self.

In Foucault's evolving work, which conceptualises ethics, freedom, resistance and subjectivity, the ideas are reconsidered and redesigned in new and complex ways to accommodate his emerging notions about governmentality (Ball, 2013). The task for subjects in these regimes of practice is to 'produce [them]selves', be open to transformation and to re-make themselves through 'care of the self'. "My role," says Foucault in Martin et al. (1988 pp. 10-11) "[Is] to show people that they are freer than they think". His task was to similarly re-examine subjectification in these circumstances.

The ideas about self-formation, self-management, and ways in which individuals develop themselves to accommodate a particular discourse comprise the concept of 'subjectivity' for Foucault. Foucault, in looking at changes between the welfare state and present governmentalities, views the subject as both subject to someone's will and at the same time, tied to one's own identity by self-knowledge. Subjectivity then incorporates the self as agent or enactor, and as an object. Subjectivity becomes the care of the self through the growth of self-knowledge (Foucault, 2010). As Foucault states:

This form of power that applies itself to immediate everyday life categorises the individual, marks him by his own individuality, attaches him to his own identity, imposes a law of truth on him that he must recognise and others have to recognise in him (Foucault, 2002, p. 331).

Subjectivity, ethics and technologies of the self are therefore ideas further developed by Foucault (2010, 2011, 2013) in the lecture series at the Collège of France (1970-1984) in "The Government of Self and Others", "The Courage of Truth" and "The Will to Know" lectures. Foucault similarly introduces the concept of "parrhēsia," which he defines as the ability to speak freely or truly. When a subject is prepared to speak the truth, they need to be frank, truthful and dutiful. They also need to be prepared to take criticism and engage in a struggle for their convictions. The importance of truth telling is that a person is constituted as a subject who engages in an ethical relationship with themselves and with others. Parrhēsia is seen as a political technology (Foucault, 2010) and as a way in which one maintains ethical values by caring for the self. It can be regarded as a way in which a subject could, for instance, engage in challenging the unethical or the inequitable from powerful governmentalities and another way in which mediation of competing discourses may take place. In an exploration of teachers and heads who resisted the accountability demands of policy in British schools using parrhēsia

or truth telling, Ball (2016, p. 1143) noted that the individual was really the site of power. They spoke out against unethical practices by truth telling or parrhēsia. It is possible to see the site of struggles in the following passage:

The point is that in neoliberal economies, sites of government and points of contact are also sites for the possibility of refusal. However, the starting point for a politics of refusal is the site of subjectivity. It is a struggle over and against what it is we have become, [and] what it is we do not want to be.

Parrhēsia may also provide a way for principals in this study to deal with tensions created by policy accountabilities. It may be evident in the form of resistance and counter-conduct to governmentalities. Freedom to assess and manage risk and the refusal of unethical discourses also are evidence of ethical technologies of the self in practice (Pignatelli, 2002). The evidence of freedom for subjects to exercise technologies of the self under governmentality regimes afforded by Foucault's concepts of resistance can assist in describing principals' practices in this study.

3.10 Micropolitical Leadership.

This study also utilises Ryan's (2012) conceptualisation of micropolitical leadership to describe aspects of principals' intervention to manage governmental tensions mitigating against equity. Micropolitical leadership can also be seen through Foucault's conceptual tools of power and knowledge. Micropolitical leadership for equity might also be seen in terms of Foucault's ideas about parrhēsia. Research examining educational politics begins with Innaconne (1975) amongst the early users of the term "micropolitics" to describe politics applied to education systems. Mirroring political scientists of the time, researchers conceived of politics in education in terms of knowledge, power and resources. The concept was taken up in Ball's (1987) description of the school as a place of 'struggle'. Subsequent studies overseas and in Australia further depicted the school organisation as a contested space of tensions and dilemmas (Edmunds, Mulford, Kendall, & Kendall, 2008). Ryan's (2012) research examined leadership for equity in Canadian schools using a micropolitical lens encompassing, but extending, many of these ideas.

Whilst Ball's (1987) work addressed useful insights into school organisations as sites of contestation and tension which underpinned relationships in organisations, Ryan (2012) researched the impact of neoliberalism on leadership to note that reforms supported by market rationalism exacerbated the tensions inherent in leadership and social justice. He noted that the extent to which leadership coincided with inclusion depended on leaders' roles and accountabilities at the time. He examined the ways in which leaders employed political

knowledge to deal with the obstacles they encountered in their pursuit of equity. He saw that supervisors, groups and individuals all marshalled power, knowledge and policy discourses to try to achieve their goals. If leaders themselves were to achieve equity in their organisation, they needed to acknowledge and co-opt the political nature and influences of the systems within which they operated. This included utilising micropolitical skills and aspects of power and knowledge that they had at their disposal to subvert aberrant accountabilities interrupting their vision.

In exploring leaders' political skills to promote equity in schools, Ryan's (2012) study termed the skill which politically deployed power and knowledge for equity as 'micropolitical acumen'. Principals who promoted a whole school equity agenda required additional relevant resources as well as mediation skills to play the political game. Political acumen involved leaders in a struggle to deploy deep understanding of the political context and knowledge of political systems discourse to better strategise their actions.

3.10.1 The Politics of Leadership Acumen.

Ryan's (2012) research explored the multiple aspects of political acumen evident among the leaders in his study. Associated knowledge included knowing and understanding the importance of interrelationships between allies and enemies, the real agendas of resource controllers, the focus of discretionary resource allocation and who controlled these resources. He also noted the importance of the main issues in the current agenda, their discourses, and the importance of who to befriend and who to avoid. He indicated that micropolitical leaders needed to be able to strategise their agenda based on their understandings, knowledge and vision; they needed to build a base of support and manage resistance to their agenda. They needed to be able to market their organisations and develop relationships within and beyond the immediate school organisation. To re-apply some of Foucault's concepts to Ryan's findings, leaders used knowledge of the self, discourse understandings, political governmentalities, aspects of counter-conduct and parrhēsia to exert political acumen for equity.

Leaders in Ryan's (2012) study acknowledged the importance of understanding and managing the political environments in which they worked. They utilised micropolitical strategies to do so. Ryan saw that there was no set formula to apply, but that the existing context and experiences of leaders was important for their choice of strategies. It followed that acumen required deep knowledge of the system, the importance of deploying power and the relationships between people in it, in order to most effectively strategise their responses. If principals were to succeed in their political agenda, then they needed to know the political realities of organisations and utilise this knowledge judiciously.

This study therefore utilizes many of the abovementioned conceptual tools of Foucault to understand principals' practices but additionally deploys Ryan's (2012) conceptualisation of micropolitical acumen to further describe aspects of principals' struggles to achieve equity.

3.11 Limitations of Foucault's Conceptual Tools.

Several criticisms have been leveled at the usefulness of Foucault's ideas, as conceptual tools, in educational studies. His work has been criticised as being too negative and lacking in solutions to the impact of power (Gillies, 2013; Pignatelli, 2002). This study employs several of Foucault's tools to help critique a range of practices in certain regimes of power, but there is no intention that the study offers more positive outcomes from the analysis. The study aims to provide a critical account of the ways different principal subjects managed the emerging tensions facing their practices with insights using Foucault's concepts as analytical tools. It is felt that despite the presentation of Foucauldian tools depicting neoliberal governmentalities

operating in such seemingly fatalistic and powerful ways, that Foucault also provides concepts and tools with which to examine ways by which subjects negotiate and successfully mediate such processes with ethical alternatives.

Additionally, criticisms (Cole, 2008) have been levied at the reliance on discourse as text as one of the bases of his work. It is evident that Foucault uses discourse as part of a multidimensional framework also incorporating power relationships and practices beyond discourse. The fact that this study comprises such a large empirical component examining practices and behaviours assumes that Foucault's work contributes only partially to analysis as a lens with which to examine practice. His concepts provide useful tools with which to examine the empirical evidence. There are also other positions and lenses applied in this study. The emphasis accorded the substantial literature of preceding critical scholars in the field as well as the researcher's position as a subject from within the field of educational leadership will all contribute to the study's findings. The research, subsequently, makes selective but pragmatic use of Foucault's work in this study to construct plausible findings.

The complexity, incompleteness, and ambivalence of much of Foucault's later work was noted by Ball (2013) as he applied Foucault's theories, as he understood them, to his practices as a scholar and academic. In sourcing and writing about Foucault's theories in this light, he saw the justification for using Foucault's theories to understand his workplace in modern times. He concludes his text (which asks, "Do we need another book on Foucault?") satisfied that it is in a spirit of reflexivity and struggle that we can begin to understand aspects of our own and others' practices in new ways, using Foucault's conceptual thinking. This thesis adopts a similar position, in that Foucault's conceptual tools, used as a lens, help to critique and reflect on normalised patterns of thinking in new and analytical ways.

3.12 Envisaging Principals' Subjectivities

3.12.1 Governmentalities

After outlining several of Foucault's concepts considered helpful in deconstructing principals' implementation practices in SSLSES National Partnership schools, Foucault's work suggests ways in which a principal, as subject, may be positioned in relation to power and governmentality regimes exerted by the policy discourses. The principal of an SSLSES National Partnership school might be envisaged as situated at the gateway to a range of governmentality discourses, some of which impact on his/her leadership practices within the school. The diagram in Figure 3.1 illustrates the layers of governmentality discourses which might operate on the principal in the SSLSES National Partnership school. These include

neoliberalism, state-level policies and programs (exemplified in this study by the SSLSES National Partnership) and accountability procedures, which can also include self management or ‘technologies of the self’. They also include ‘surveillance’ monitoring of the community’s regard for a school’s symbolic texts (such as uniforms, buildings, NAPLAN results), and finally the governmentalities of school organizational management requirements (for instance, curriculum structures, quality of pedagogy).

The principal is simultaneously subjectified by their own vision for equity and accountability based on their ethical stance. It is not in the imposition of laws or policies per se, that enable governments to exercise their will over schools but the deployment of discourses, structures, tactics, knowledge, and governmentality processes and systems. The diagram shows for example (using heavy green arrows) how accountabilities and surveillances may operate on the principal and school to influence conformity and accountability.

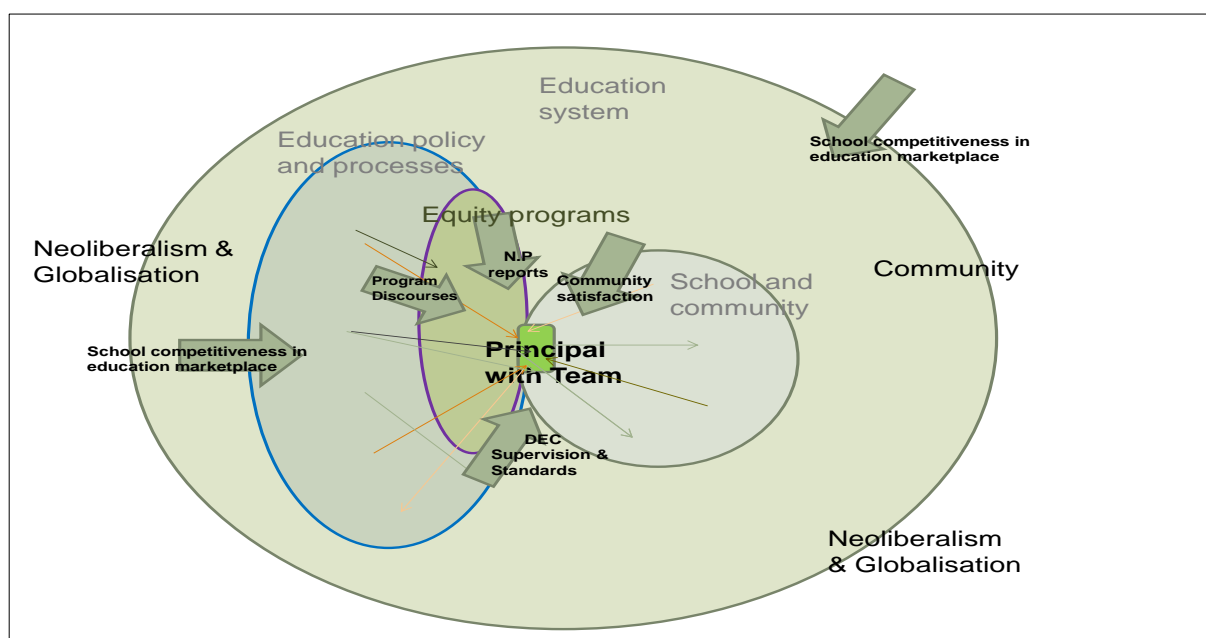


Figure.3.1. Layers of disciplinary power and governmentalities positioning the principal.

3.12.2 Factors for Mediation

In Figure 3.2, it is also envisaged that a principal as subject, may also be able to deploy technologies of the self to potentially mediate policy governmentalities using aspects of knowledge/power, ethical telos, parrhēsia, resistance, and counter-conduct as possible techniques. These factors are shown in the form of large blue arrows indicating possible forms of resistance to governmentalities. Governmentalities as accountabilities impacting are indicated in the opposing pink arrows

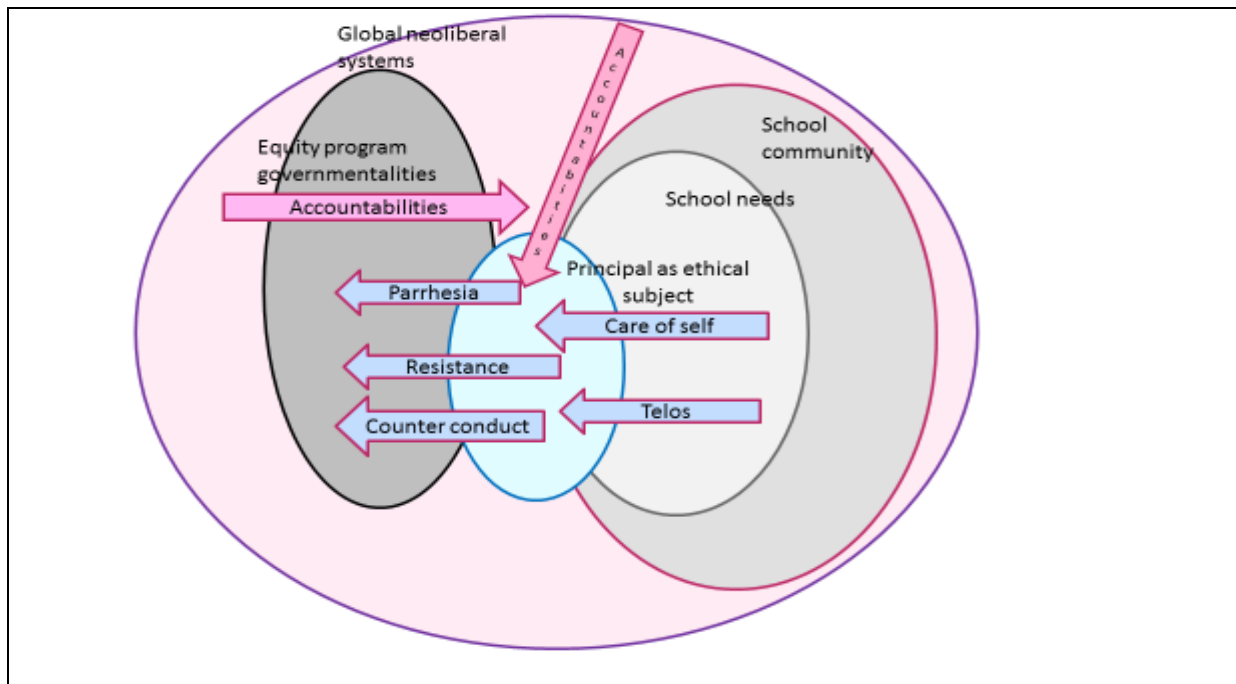


Figure 3.2: Factors enabling possible mediation of policy governmentalities.

3.13 Conclusion

This chapter has introduced several of the Foucault’s conceptual tools considered relevant in informing this study. Despite the vast range of literature and contexts within which Foucault’s work has been applied, this chapter has focused on those thought relevant to this study. Central themes informing the thesis are power/knowledge and discourse. Other key concepts used included disciplinary power, governmentality and ethical formation. It is an aim of the study to investigate how power might be harnessed for normative and potentially productive practices through mediation strategies. A literature basis has been established for this study through the dialogue established between work undertaken by other researchers and the ways in which Foucault’s concepts are being applied in this study. Foucault’s conceptualisations of discourse together with Gee’s (2005) adaptation and development of this notion is used to analyse the governing policy discourses in answer to the research question about the nature and intent of the SSLSES National Partnership equity program in NSW disadvantaged schools. Additionally, principals’ practices are studied using an ensemble of conceptual tools incorporating power/knowledge transactions, self-management, counter-conduct, ethics, and parrhēsia to construct a depiction of principals as mediators from this analysis.

In utilizing Foucault’s concepts to analyse the practices of the six principal case studies, several benefits are expected to accrue from this study. Foucault’s notions about governmentality and power are introduced to understand how relations of power are related to the knowledge and discourses within which the principal operates whilst acceding to accountability imperatives.

Foucault's ideas on governmentality and ethics are also introduced to explore how ethical rationalities may shape practices for equity in environments which also incorporate competitive and marketised rationalities. Finally, understandings about the ability of principals to mediate policy tensions are sought. Foucault's conceptualizations of *parrhēsia*, resistance and counter-conduct seen in the light of technologies and care of the self, create a lens through which a fresh look at principals' practices contribute to the study's understandings about the mediation of policy imperatives for equity. Ryan's (2012) notions of micropolitical acumen are also applied to especially understand the nature of the struggle. Key domains of practice identified in the data, help to answer to questions about the ways in which principals mediate policy for equity in their schools in results Chapters 7-9.

In ensuing chapters of the thesis, concepts from the literature and Foucault's conceptual toolbox are to be utilized to understand the data obtained from principal case studies and from policy discourses. Chapter 4 provides an overview of the methodology being utilized to collect and manage the data examined in the light of Foucault's ideas. Chapter 5 applies Gee's (2005) framework to an examination of the policy discourses to reveal the evolution of dominant neoliberal constructs and the positioning of principals as *homo oeconomicus*. In Chapter 6, an overview of each case study is provided as background for the findings or results chapters. Chapters 7-9 examine principals' implementation strategies for mediation in the light of key conceptual domains of practice emanating from case study data.

Chapter 4

Methodology and Design Framework

Words, especially organized into incidents or stories have a concrete, vivid and meaningful flavour that often proves far more convincing to a reader ... (Miles, Huberman & Saldana, 2014, p.4)

4.1 Introduction

Education systems are the aggregation of a complex array of social structures, human relationships, and conventions all of which have been pulled together into generally recognisable working systems. The ensuing chapters of the thesis examine the workings of these systems in relation to the implementation of the SSLSES National Partnership policy and its discourses. Meanings and intentions can be elucidated within social structures and systems. Social phenomena, such as decisions, tensions, conflicts, language, and hierarchies exist and exert influence because they can be construed in commonly understood ways (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014). The nature of the data to be examined in this study emanates from within a range of education settings and needs to be understood in terms of sound epistemological, theoretical and methodological approaches so as to be reliable and credible to its audiences. Epistemological and methodological approaches selected for the study of policy and principals' practices are provided in the ensuing chapter.

4.1.1 Research questions

Principals face constant imperatives for school reform resulting in an ongoing concern for the solutions to problems and responsive action. They are impacted by policy and educational discourses as well as previous experience in this endeavour. This study asked how equity policies may have positioned principals' practices in schools in receipt of the SSLSES National Partnership program and obtained understandings about the nature of principals' practices when they implemented centrally mandated policy. Before it interrogates policy discourse and the ways in which principals understand and implement equity programs for the benefit of students, a design framework, epistemology and methodological processes have been designed to capture data best placed to answer these three research questions:

1. What is the nature and intent of government initiated large scale interventionist equity programs in New South Wales public schools?

2. How do principals of public schools in New South Wales implement these programs in their schools?
3. How do principals mediate large-scale equity programs for equity?

The design of the study analyses the reform discourses and explicates the complexities inherent in equity program governmentalities within which principals operated. It clarifies the ways in which principals understood and managed these complexities in their implementation practices for the benefit of their students and equity for their community. Policy is examined using Gee's (2005) theoretical framework, while experiences of principals in six case studies are also detailed in case studies. Findings were extracted from themes drawn from the data obtained and examined using a predominantly Foucauldian theoretical lens, but also appropriated from other concepts from the literature, such as Ryan's (2012) notions of micropolitical strategy.

4.2 Constructionist Epistemology.

A constructionist worldview predominantly underpins the design of this study, with its focus on understanding the complex inter-relationships of principals, as enactors, within the contexts of their schools and as subjects, in interaction with the educational policies and programs influencing their work. A constructionist approach involves the co-construction of knowledge through human interaction and subsequent reflection. Views about the world are informed by a belief that the world is "socially and linguistically" constructed (Crotty, 1998, p. 54).

Thus, the reality of principals' practices can be understood because of their discursive experiences, perceptions, reflections and interrelationships within their contexts. This approach assumes that principals as participants in the research actively interpret and create meaning from the associated discourses and nature of their work in their schools and within the education system itself. In this worldview, it is also assumed that the researcher co-contributes to these understandings when research material is interpreted. Care needs to be taken, however, to consider possible ontological conflict between understanding principals as subjects positioned by policy governmentalities, and principals as enactors translating their implementation practice (Ball, 2015).

The approach taken in this study is in contrast to studies of educational leadership and management which have often been positivist in their design (Bates, 2006). Positivist frameworks have been associated with educational leadership studies of effective and continuously improving schools. Effective schools secure improved achievement measures on standardised test scores using specific measures. The use of many of these behaviours and

strategies has also come to underpin the performativity frameworks by which school leaders and equity programs were evaluated (Ball, 1998). The reductionist nature of attempts to evaluate and rank schools using students' scores on standardised tests and other equally simplistic performance measures used in education programs such as the SSLSES National Partnership have been critiqued (Thompson & Cook, 2012). Such evidence strips away many of the important contextual variables contributing to understandings about the leadership of large scale equity programs. Bates (2006), among others, therefore proposed that such studies be complemented by discussions of the actual realities and complexities of interactions in various school contexts, and underpinning values of principals operating for equity. Therefore, this study considered empirically the complexity of factors impacting on the principalship of schools implementing large scale equity programs for social justice using a constructionist epistemology in interaction with policy and with the research itself.

There are multiple discourses, voices, and realities in the constructionist position, and so the study sought methods to tease out overarching themes concerning the different sources of data (Crotty, 1998; Yin, 2011). The use of a variety of data sources was an important feature in the context of this research cross referencing to be obtained.

4.3 Positionality

An important element of the co-creation of research information involves the relationship of the researcher to the study. Researchers themselves, bring ideas, theoretical understandings and assumptions to research in the field (Yin, 2011). The process by which interpretation and reality is created by the researcher can be termed "constructivism" (Lincoln & Guba 2013). A researcher's culture, background, ethnicity, gender, and experience will inform their work, which will subsequently filter and mould the knowledge sought and produced by the research. The premise is that the researcher in reflecting on her own experiences, and her understandings of how the world is constructed, uses this as the basis for interpretation of data in this study. It is important, therefore, that the researcher indicates how such positioning has been influenced.

Having recently experienced leadership of a small number of isolated and metropolitan disadvantaged schools similar to those which are the subject of this research, a number of observations have been made about the ways in which such equity program school communities have been impacted and positioned by educational reforms and the accountabilities of equity programs. Additionally, and by contrast, leadership experiences in non- targeted government schools, have also been gained.

Additionally, positionality has been influenced by the purposeful selection of theoretical lenses with which to explore the data. As Crotty (1998, p. 54) argued, it is possible to make sense of the same reality in different ways depending on the researchers' framing of the study. Dominant theoretical influences which shaped the way in which this study was constructed and analysed rely on aspects of critical theory, and relevant Foucauldian ideas especially about power /knowledge, discourse, governmentality, and ethics, (see Chapter 3).

The discussion of SSLSES National Partnership policy discourse has been shaped by Gee's (2005) framework for analysing 'D'/'d'iscourse (see Chapter 5). The study was also framed by a pragmatic enquiry lens governing the research strategy. In terms of a theoretical framework, this hybrid style provides a way of conceptualising a multi-paradigmatic methodological position. The analysis was shaped by a synthesis of analytical frameworks, which influenced methodological decisions and provided relevant lenses through which to view the principal's work in equity program schools as they mediated policy discourse as represented by the SSLSES National Partnership program.

4.4 Research Design.

To ensure that the multiple voices of the study were heard according to the time and place of the study (Thomson & Gunter, 2011), steps suggested by Wheeldon and Ahlberg (2012) were taken to strengthen the study's rigour and potential alignment between differing approaches. A pragmatic qualitative design provided opportunities for an in-depth interpretation of the research data. The narratives and responses of the principals, for example, defined as context dependent on the time and place of the particular school community in the case studies, were evident in the qualitative methodologies employed. Additionally, aspects of generalisability were obtained using a questionnaire canvassing the opinions of a range of principals involved in the SSLSES National Partnership.

The study design was conducted in three sequential phases. Each phase also developed data obtained from the previous phase. Thus, the discourse analysis contributed data for the construction of the questionnaire whilst the questionnaire enabled principals to self-select themselves for further case study analysis and provided a basis for semi-structured interview questions. The three phases comprised:

1. A critical discourse analysis (CDA) of the educational policy and program documents associated with the SSLSES National Partnership program.

2. A questionnaire which gained general information about school contexts, principals' understandings about equity, and enabled principals to self-select for case studies in Phase 3.
3. Case studies of individual principals' implementation of the SSLSES National Partnership program in the context of their school.

The methodology to be employed in each phase of the research is examined in relation to its rationale, study sample, analytical methods, data analysis and ethical considerations. The way each phase addresses the Research Questions will also be considered in the discussion of each phase's contribution to the research.

4.4.1 Phase One: Critical Discourse Analysis of Equity Program Policies

The first phase of the study aimed to elucidate the nature and intent of the Low Socio-economic (LSES) School Communities National Partnership Agreement (COAG, 2009) and its associated discourses. This was undertaken through the critical discourse analysis (CDA) of a number of education policies and equity program documents available to schools and to school communities and impacting on principal practices (Table 4.1)

This first data analysis phase of the study will answer the first research question: What is the nature and intent of government initiated large scale interventionist equity programs in New South Wales public schools? Its analysis guided questionnaire and interview questions in subsequent phases of the study and provided a framework with which to understand principals' discourses and practices.

Table 4.1: Table of Documents to be Analysed.

Date of publication	Title of Text
2007	Rudd and Smith (2007): The Australian Economy Needs an Education Revolution: New Directions Paper on the Critical Link Between Long-Term Prosperity, Productivity Growth, and Human Capital Investment.
2008	COAG (2009): National Partnership Agreement on Low Socio-Economic Status School Communities
2008	Rudd (2008): Quality Education: The Case for an Education Revolution in our Schools.
2008	Gillard (2008): A New Progressive Reform Agenda.
2008-16	ACARA (2008): NAPLAN Test and My School website
2009	Rudd (2009): The Global Financial Crisis. Rudd (2009): One Year on from the Crisis: Economical and Social Policy Challenges for Australia

2009, 2012	Australian Government et al. (2009; 2012): National Partnership for Low SES School Communities: Preliminary Information Package for schools.
2009	NSW DEC (2009): School Self-Evaluation Guidelines. Guidelines for Developing the School Self Evaluation Report.
2009, 2010	Australian Government et.al. (2009; 2010): NSW Implementation Plans for the National Partnerships. Teacher Quality, Literacy, and Numeracy, Low SES School Communities.
2010	Gillard (2010): Delivering the Education Revolution
2010	NSW DET (2010): School Self-Evaluation, NAPLAN School Performance Analysis: School self-evaluation tool for analysing school NAPLAN data using SMART software
2012	Gillard (2012): A National Plan for School Improvement.

The rationale for the use of a CDA was to provide the policy context of the SSLSES National Partnership. Ball, Maguire, Braun and Hoskins (2011b) have argued that modern policy discourses prescribe the roles of principals and teachers as subjects and also prescribed the work to be done using the discourses employed. This phase provided a critical analysis of the equity program policy itself and the associated politico-social environment within which principals worked. The employed discourses determined many of the interrelationships between policy and subjects (Bacchi, 2009) and may be seen reflected in practices.

4.4.1.i. Data Analysis

A socio-political stance was employed to critique policy representations. The study's approach was based upon Gee's (2005) notions of critical discourse analysis which also interpreted the nature of relationships among language and important political, social and educational issues. Its methods encompassed notions of 'D'iscourse similar to Foucault's discourses (1969;1985) which conceptualised an overarching model of cultural behaviour patterns, discourse models and situated identities. The further analysis of the language-in-use to describe the overarching cultural framework was termed 'd'iscourse and was based on contributing registers denoting various linguistic elements of texts such as text structures, cohesion, grammar and vocabulary/meaning. Links were therefore generated between micro-level textual analyses and the macro-level knowledge generated by policy makers. Gee's (2005) discourse analysis tools provided a framework with which to examine selected discourses against the wbroader policy

background. Specifically, the analysis attempted to understand how the SSLSES National Partnership discursively positioned schools and principals by means of the language used at both macro and micro discourse levels.

The analysis of selected documents examined their inherent registers based on Halliday's (1985) functional model of language. The analysis included the socio-political context within which documents were created and was termed the 'D'iscourse of the Discourse model by Gee (2005). In the functional model of language-in-use described by Halliday (1985) and subsequently used by Gee (2005) the analysis comprised an examination of the metafunctions and semantic configurations of the language, where components of texts served both a social and cultural function. Language is at the centre of the construction of reality, identity and interrelationships and is the way of communicating with others. In particular, the study examined the register of the politico-educational documents and instructional guides of the SSLSES texts used by principals to guide their practices, where the register comprised the 'field', 'tenor' and 'mode' of communication. The 'field' is the content or subject matter; the 'tenor' helps define the nature of interrelationships created, and the 'mode' is the channel or shape of the texts used (Halliday & Hasan, 1985).

Policy register therefore comprises the politico-educational content of the field itself, and the structures and grammar contributing to the interrelationships including power relationships created by the policy as well as its channel of communication and genre. This study's discourse analysis will explore the register of the policy documents which impact on principals' practices.

Gee's (2011) theoretical tools deployed for the CDA included 'intertextuality,' 'conversations,' 'situated meanings' and 'social languages' to assist in the deconstruction and critique of constituent components of relevant 'Discourse models'. Policy register was explored to explicate roles and purposes of the Discourses for principals' implementation practices. Particularly useful in such policy reform analyses, were the intertextuality aspects of Discourse texts presenting authoritative strategy and additional information cohesively related to already familiar ways of operating.

At the language-in-use level of 'd'iscourse texts, Gee (2005) argued that analysis may be understood in terms of the lexico-grammatical choices seen in the component text structures. The analysis conducted in Chapter 5 will deconstruct some language-in-use at the 'd'iscourse level to help understand governmentality inter-relationships and is concerned with the analysis at the socio-political level.

A discourse analysis of the SSLSES National Partnership ‘D’/‘d’iscourses enabled such contested concepts as ‘marketisation’, ‘competition’, ‘quality teaching’, ‘leadership’, ‘standards’, ‘accountability’ ‘transparency, ‘pedagogies’ and ‘entrepreneurialism’ to be deconstructed in terms of the associated Discourse model. They were further examined in relation to principals’ practices (see Chapter 5) and in data Chapters 7-9.

In the discourse analysis chapter (Chapter 5), concepts associated with Gee’s (2005) notion of “Discourse” will be capitalised to distinguish it from his language- in-use “discourse” whilst tools applied in the analysis of selected texts will be further enunciated so that they can be closely applied to policy and instructional discourses.

4.4.2 Phase Two: Principal Questionnaire

The questionnaire was constructed to gain an overview of school contextual information as well as gain an overview of sample principals’ beliefs and practices for implementing the SSLSES National Partnership equity program. The study’s consent forms for the questionnaire administration appear in Appendix 1. A copy of the questionnaire is located in Appendix 2 The analysis of data from the questionnaire contributed to the second research question: *How do principals implement these programs in their schools?* and informed semi-structured interview questions in case studies. The answers to research questions were addressed from both a pragmatic and a constructionist enquiry lens where the research both deduced knowledge about principals’ practices from within their school contexts utilising questionnaire methods and additionally constructed narratives of principals’ practices from open responses.

The rationale for utilising a questionnaire approach was to:

- (1) Gain a generalised view about principals’ understandings about equity and how they envisioned it in their schools. Principals described their vision for equity in Section Two of the questionnaire (in Appendix 2.1.4): *Please describe the vision you have for equity in your school.*
- (2) obtain basic demographic data about the nature of SSLSES National Partnership program schools and the general experiences of principals leading them. Demographic data was obtained from multiple choice items in Section One of the principal questionnaire (Appendices 2.1.4 and 2.1.5);
- (3) obtain principals’ ratings about the most and least helpful strategies they implemented from the SSLSES National Partnership program for equity. Strategies listed were sourced from SSLSES National Partnership Agreement and NSW Smarter Schools Implementation Plan; (Australian Government, Smarter Schools National Partnership, et al., 2010; COAG, 2009).

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of thirty SSLSES National Partnership strategies for achieving equity in their school on a Likert scale from Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, to Strongly Agree (and Not Applicable). Rating Average Scores (RAS) were allocated to rank strategies from most to least useful (Appendices 2.1.5 - 2.1.7).

(4) probe principals' judgments about their ability to balance tensions between policy imperatives and school equity needs. This section addressed the research question: *How do principals mediate equity program discourse for social justice?* (Appendix 2.1.7-2.1.9);

(5) enable interested principals to self-select themselves for further in-depth case study research. This was achieved with an opt-in section attached to the questionnaire. The principal case studies constituted a more in depth analysis of principals' practices (Appendix 2.1.9).

In summary, the study sought to identify whether a principal sample involved in the SSLSES National Partnership program believed that they could make sense of equity concepts and mediate program strategies in ways which enabled them to attain equity in their school, and if so, under what conditions. Predominantly, the questionnaire was utilised for gaining an overview of principals' equity visions and their rankings of SSLSES National Partnership strategies for equity.

4.4.2.i. Questionnaire Sample and Administration.

Approximately five hundred NSW government schools of all sizes (50-1200 enrolments), types (K-6; 7-12 and K-12) and locations (provincial, remote, metropolitan) were invited to participate in the SSLSES National Partnership questionnaire. The list of schools was obtained from the SSLSES National Partnership Information Guide (Australian Government, et al., 2012) which was available publicly on-line (Appendix 3).

Principals were asked to participate in the study's questionnaire by means of direct emails to principals with email addresses obtained from the NSW DEC schools directory. Schools for Special Purposes and one teacher primary schools were excluded because of their small size (<50); the small and specialised purpose of these schools making anonymity difficult to attain.

The questionnaire was prepared using the Survey Monkey program (Survey Monkey, n.d) with a web link obtained for insertion into principals' emails for completion. Principals were also sent an information and consent package (see Appendix 1) as attachments to the email, in order that they could provide informed consent to participate in the questionnaire. The questionnaire took approximately 20 minutes to complete on-line.

A reminder email containing the Survey Monkey link was also sent at the end of June 2014 and another at the beginning of July 2014. Sixty-eight principals completed the questionnaire including those implementing the SSLSES National Partnership within the last year(s) of the program. This meant that they were able to provide an experienced reflective stance in responses. This was a strength of the research, as principals could evaluate the totality of their experience in responses.

Completed questionnaire items were collected in the form of Microsoft Excel spreadsheets provided by the Survey Monkey program for analysis. The sample of sixty-eight principals, or 13% of those emailed, provided consent to participate. This sample was seen to be generally representative of the larger sample of schools participating in the SSLSES National Partnership when investigated demographically. There was a slight tendency for principals participating to be members of the later cohorts of the SSLSES National Partnership.

Of the sixty-eight questionnaire responses received, twelve were incomplete even though consent forms were signed. Data from partially incomplete questionnaires was still utilized in the data analysis. The Survey Monkey online process disallowed principals from resuming their questionnaire if interrupted, which was an anomaly possibly contributing to questionnaires being incomplete after principals had provided consent. Approximately 50 emails ‘bounced’, or were redirected, indicating that the principal was on leave at the time of the questionnaire which affected the response rate.

From the questionnaire, eight principals offered their schools for further case study analysis with six selected according to criteria listed in the sub-section 4.4.3.i Case Study Samples and Administration.

4.4.2.ii Ethical considerations: de-identification of data

All data was allocated a de-identifying code. The demographic information from the questionnaire was used to code principal responses for analysis. When data was dis-aggregated the code used contained the questionnaire response number, school type, school location, principal gender and SSLSES National Partnership cohort in the form 45S/U/M/10. Thus, the code of 45S/U/M/10 indicated that the response was number 45 from a male (M) principal from a secondary (S) urban (U) school in the 2010 cohort. This code helped to also note any differences between responses relating to these variables.

4.4.2.iii Questionnaire analysis.

Questionnaire data was analysed from each section of the questionnaire sequentially and comments and comparisons drawn from each. An analysis plan detailing analysis methods for each section, variables and emergent themes from the questionnaire was developed.

Several questions required open answers, others required a choice from a response scale. Scaled responses were quantified according to a Ratings Average Score (RAS). Open questionnaire responses were transcribed and inductively aggregated around emergent coded categories or themes of information in the QSR NVivo (10.00) program. Data was also subject to deductive thematic coding where data was aggregated around existing theoretical frameworks or patterns.

4.4.2.iv Questionnaire Findings.

The questionnaire yielded an analysis of principals' beliefs and understandings about the SSLSES National Partnership equity program strategies.⁵ The questionnaire's power was its ability to help guide the direction of the case study research process. Most notably, the questionnaire demonstrated that principals regarded the SSLSES National Partnership program positively, and especially appreciated the additional resources allocated to help engage their students in education. They were anxious that this additional resourcing be sustained. The additional resources enabled principals to offer pedagogies and experiences much needed for enhanced equity in schools. Principals also appreciated the additional funding and emphasis on opportunities to improve the professional learning of teachers, especially in the use of current technology and improving pedagogies and curricula. This also included the narrower focus on improving literacy and numeracy teaching, even though the NAPLAN and publication of school results on My School was also seen to create tensions for equity.

Conversely, strategies communicated in deficit language, and which promoted competition between schools (such as the league tables generated by My School), impacted on marketization, and further impacted on school numbers and enrolments, were however, almost universally disparaged in questionnaire responses. These tensions equated with the critical literature (Smyth, 2012; Thompson, 2012). The strategy which was ranked the most negatively for equity was the My School website.

⁵ The detailed questionnaire analysis can be obtained from the researcher.

A discussion of the questionnaire data showed that there emerged some inconsistencies in the processes by which principals perceived their equity program implementation. Program implementation requirements via school continuous improvement planning with literacy and numeracy targets in general were seen to be appropriate (in Section three of the questionnaire). However, barriers associated with the process were also identified (in Section two of the questionnaire). The barriers mentioned included the high administrative load which diverted principals from their preferred pedagogical focus, together with markedly increasing stress levels. There were also tensions associated with implementing what seemed to be reductionist strategies with inadequate and sustainable staffing resources especially in rural or provincial schools. Acquiescence and support for program accountabilities were seen to be important in one section but seen as barriers in another.

Additional strategies sought by principals for equity included the need to access more comprehensively funded student wellbeing programs which were not explicitly included among the SSLSES National Partnership strategies. For instance, principals mentioned the wider use of video-conferenced lessons for curriculum depth and catering for individual medical and wellbeing needs of students.

The narrow, and somewhat simplistic reliance on standardized test and school participation data expected in program evaluations was seen to be at odds with principals' need for opportunities for more responsive and nuanced strategies that better reflected the range of mediated and micro-political understandings. The analysis of the questionnaire with some of its perceived anomalies, therefore demonstrates the benefits of further probing of principals' practices. It was evident that here remained a need to further tease out the more detailed and nuanced analyses of principal practices for equity.

Of most significance were the variety of notions about equity envisioned by principals, some of which accorded with more democratic purposes of schooling not evident in the SSLSES National Partnership reform principles. The varying concepts were seen to have influenced the variety of strategies that principals evaluated as useful and applicable for equity in their schools. That these visions were diverse is also explored in case study findings.

Additionally, theoretical perspectives such as Foucault's governmentality and counter-conduct concepts (Foucault, 1977, 2007; Gillies, 2013) as well as micropolitical strategizing (Ryan, 2012) used in open question analyses, began to offer useful analytical tools for further probing

principals' leadership and policy implementation practices. Power relationships were evident in the normalisation of many strategies and the attention accorded to accountability strategies was noted for further exploration. Scope was also seen for counter conduct due to the varied conceptualisation of equity which offered a preliminary dynamic to be further examined in principal case studies.

4.4.2.v Limitations of questionnaire research

A limitation of questionnaire research is, therefore, that questionnaires produce bounded data which inhibit a full exploration of the role of intent, power/knowledge, goals, and values as important sources of action. Additionally, the questionnaire fell short of probing fully the ways in which principals saw their accountabilities and especially their conceptualizations of 'leadership', and 'quality teaching'. These factors were especially sought, given that an examination of mediation of policy accountabilities for equity was at the heart of the study.

4.4.3 Phase Three: Principal Case Studies.

The research framework utilised to examine principals' implementation of the SSLSES National Partnership equity program incorporated a multiple case study design where each principal's practices were studied within a bounded system using a degree of replication logic. Conclusions and findings were drawn from across the cases as well as from individual cases (Yin, 1989).

The rationale for selection of a multiple case study design was to ensure an opportunity to capture the principals' lived experiences, their thoughts, reflections, feelings and reasoning in the face of wide ranging, countermanding and complex circumstances. The case studies enabled the research to examine practices within diverse contexts in space and time as well as examine some emergent themes across different cases. The timing of the study in relation to the National Partnership program was important and a significant benefit for the research as it enabled principals to reflect on the impact of their practices and overall processes in relation to the reforms. The data to be explicated for each case was extensive and included both subjective and objective data as evidence of their strategic implementation (Yin, 1989).

The logic of the design of case studies was related to findings from the questionnaire, with interview questioning probing principals practices in more depth. The ensuing discussion enabled the research to better explore the scope of interrelationships evident between principals and their school context, as each impacted upon the other (Yin, 1989). Case study enquiry also enabled wide ranging evidence to be induced from the many sources of data within the context. The evidence was further examined for explicated themes, their convergence and comparisons.

Data was also deduced with reference to theoretical positions taken within the research study. In each case, the data collected assisted in answering the research questions: *How do principals of schools in New South Wales implement the SSLSES National Partnership program in their schools?* and *How has the principal mediated the implementation of a large-scale equity program for social justice improvements in their school?* Evidence obtained also included:

- Demographic and distinguishing information about the school context.
- Information about the principal's previous experiences in disadvantaged schools.
- The principal's understandings about the nature of equity and the equity needs of the students within the specific school context
- The nature of the effects and implications of specific program requirements on principals' decisions and practices - such as the implications of accountability processes, and stronger performance management.
- Perceived incongruencies or tensions encountered and how they were resolved.
- The collection of any highlighted additional evidence from staff and parents.

4.4.3.i Case Study Samples and Administration.

The sample for the case studies was obtained by inviting principals to self-select their involvement after completing the questionnaire in Phase 2. Eight principals gave consent for their involvement. When more than six schools expressed an interest in being involved, they were invited to participate after screening on the following additional criteria:

1. Continuity of service of the principal in the school and in particular, throughout the duration of the SSLSES National Partnership
2. The prevalence of that school type, size and location already expressing interest in the study as a representative cross section of principals was required.

The sample of six principal case studies finally included those in schools from all locations including provincial, remote and metropolitan schools. They also included each of three main school types, secondary (Years 7-12), Primary (Kindergarten – Year 6) and Central (Years K-Year 12) and contained a range of different enrolments from 100 to over (>) 1000.

Self-selection indicated that each principal volunteering felt positive about their implementation of the SSLSES National Partnership Program for their school context and their implementation of the program for equity in their school. Table 4.2 provides a summary of the relevant contextual data for each school (using pseudonyms) selected.

Table 4.2 Table showing case study schools and contextual data.

School	Principal	Enrolments in 2014	ICSEA score	Location in NSW	% Low SES	School Visit
Cottonwood Central	Alison	190 K-12	810	Provincial	75%	June 2014
High Tops Public	Natalie	168 K-6	885	Provincial	70%	June 2014
Parkeview Central	Stuart	95 K-12	991	Remote	40%	July, 2014
North Plains High	Marjory	371 7-12	887	Provincial	60%	July 2014
Colborne High	Boyd	1220 7-12	933	Metropolitan	70%	August 2014
Southern Girls High	Don	1043 7-12	947	Metropolitan	70%	Aug-Sept 2014

4.4.3.ii Data Collection in Case Study Schools.

Following each principal's self-selection, research information and ethical consent forms, the researchers' Working with Children (WWC) status, and an overview of question types (Appendix 3) as a potential basis of a semi structured discussion was sent to principals for informed consent. Interview data, artefacts, field notes and observations from case studies were gathered on visits to each school after appointments had been organised and consent provided by the principal. Each school visit lasted between 2-4 days between June and September, 2014. A copy of the information package and interview questions used as a guide for discussions with principals and teachers is found in Appendix 1 and Appendix 3. Data from all interviews was recorded using a Live Scribe pen and transcribed into a Microsoft Word document. Transcriptions were sent to principals for member checking prior to entering into NVivo and being analysed. Field notes were written about meetings and observations immediately after each visit and similarly sent for member checking.

Generally, a similar structural logic was used for each principal case study even where discussion direction was predominantly led by the principal. Data was obtained by means of semi-structured interviews with the principal, and with any teachers, and community members selected by the principal for their role in SSLSES National Partnership implementation. Additional data was obtained from available standardised test data (including NAPLAN), Annual School Reports, School Plans, the My School webpage, observations and school

artefacts like photos. Each case study documented the principals' and other interviewees' reflections about equity and how they translated equity program strategies into changes in school administrative, organisational, pedagogical and curriculum practices for the benefit of students. All personnel and place names were allocated pseudonyms throughout the discussion.

4.4.3.iii Case Studies Data Analysis.

Each case study's transcriptions were colour-coded for ease of analysis in the NVivo program, and first cycle coding undertaken. A journal was also begun in NVivo to document understandings and decisions made in coding processes. After the initial round of coding, emergent themes were identified which were further aggregated by second round coding and annotations. Finally, a number of major constructs underpinning the data were identified.

4.4.3.iv First Cycle Coding

During first cycle coding, all transcripts from each case were examined using "descriptive coding" in NVivo (Saldana, 2009, p. 71). Coding identified segments of data relating initially to the key areas explored by interviews and the questionnaire. The questionnaire had generated a 'start list' of codes including: 'school context', 'leadership', 'student equity needs', 'staffing', 'literacy and numeracy' and 'school data'. A full 'start list' of descriptive codes is available in Appendix 4.2, Table 4.3, together with several emergent themes aggregated around patterns of information which emerged "simultaneously" from the data (Saldana, 2009, p18). Aggregated themes included for example, "school contextual data", "leadership for equity and reforms" and "quality of teaching", and "quality teaching and standards"

The aggregation of 'first round' codes into themes, resulted in data segments able to form the basis of further in-depth descriptions within each case study, and the ability to form cross case links for further discussion. The aggregated themes generated were utilised as an organiser for the exploration and discussion of main themes emerging within each principal case study, such as, for instance, "A Sense of Place", and "Mediating Leadership". Engaging in descriptive coding also helped to develop strong familiarity with transcripts so that extracts from transcripts could be utilised for further case study analysis. Appendix 4.1, Table 4.1 provides the beginning of the conceptual framework developed from applying descriptive codes and emergent themes as a basis for discussing each principal case study to extract significant patterns of data. The use of this further framework was used to provide coherence for the discussion of each case study and facilitated the emergence of further overarching key constructs or domains to emerge.

Six principal case studies were subsequently constructed under aggregated theme headings seen in Appendix 4.1, Table 4.1 using interview and field study data extracts as evidence of practices implemented. Each case study therefore provided a generally category matched, or pattern matched, account of the ways in which the SSLSES National Partnership was implemented by principals in each of six different school contexts (Miles et al., 2014, p. 82). Careful attention was paid to principal comments which provided reflection and detail about leadership for equity and the practices which explained the management of tensions arising from the SSLSES National Partnership. Case studies provided detailed information about National Partnership implementation practices and may be obtained if requested from the researcher.

4.4.3.v Second Cycle Coding.

Following the first cycle coding of data, further pattern coding or common threads enabled the researcher to group information into several constructs or domains which enabled further in-depth examination of the data across all cases (Miles et al., 2014, p.86). Data was also discursively examined in the light of the literature and Foucauldian theoretical frames underpinning the study, so that links and discussion were also aggregated around paradigms and theoretical ideas such as examples of ‘power/knowledge’, ‘governmentality’, and ‘counter-conduct’ as well as notions of ‘micropolitics’ to develop key domains of practices describing practice from within construct groupings.

Patterns and links within and between data were created using NVivo program tools. Several ‘see also links’, ‘memos’ and ‘annotations’ were used to consider some of the links between information about principals’ practices and theoretical constructs (Miles et al., 2014). Critical ‘memo’ links, ‘see also links’ and ‘annotations’ provided examples of patterns and links between cases, and with the literature, resulting in a number of emergent key constructs or domains helpful for further in-depth case analysis, and later inclusion in chapters reporting results of the data analysis (Chapters 7-9).

Examples of important links explicated in these ways from the data included the importance of the principal’s emphasis on pedagogy and professional learning for student engagement and equity in each school, and the effects of accountability and school choice on leadership for equity. Similarly, links were also made to evidence of Foucauldian concepts evident among the data. These included for instance, examples of opportunities for principals to engage in resistance or counter-conduct. Such engagement enabled evidence of principals’ mediation of some of the tensions created by the SSLSES National Partnership policy to be gathered. Appendix 4.2, Table 4.2 summarises some of the domains of practice that emerged in each

principal's case study together with a general judgement about the principal's mediation of concepts evident in each case study.

Finally, from the second cycle analysis, a small number of the key constructs or domains of practice were selected which enabled findings in these domains to be further examined (in Chapters 7-9). These domains from across all the principal case studies were analysed with reference to research questions, and theoretical paradigms applied. Three main domain areas were identified and formed the basis of the study's three findings chapters. Chapters examined the empirical data detailing the ways in which principals implemented the SSLSES National Partnership and with theoretical tools explored ways by which mediation of tensions occurred. Discussion in Chapters 7-9 also exposed those areas of policy unable to be mediated easily and which demonstrated compliance to policy governmentalities:

- Mediating accountabilities and competitive market forces for equity.

Chapter 7 describes principals' practices in this domain by examining the ways by which they managed some of the accountabilities of the SSLSES National Partnership reform processes. The chapter also explores principals' mediation of between-school and sector competition.

- Mediating leadership practices.

Chapter 8 describes the principal leadership domain by examining the ways by which principals aligned their leadership practices to their school contexts and the requirements of the SSLSES National Partnership.

- Mediating quality teaching.

Chapter 8 explores each principal's understanding and implementation of quality teaching governmentalities of the SSLSES National Partnership, with attention to the incorporation of the APSTL.

The research concludes with an overview of understandings of the principalship of disadvantaged schools implementing a large-scale equity program such as the SSLSES National Partnership. To ensure that the multiple voices of the study could be heard according to their contexts (Thomson & Gunter 2011), steps suggested by Yin (2011) were taken to strengthen the study's construct, internal and external validity, so that the narratives and

responses of the study's principals - context dependent on time and place, were evident in the qualitative methodologies employed. These steps included:

(i) Using a generalised replication logic and reference to theory in the design of the principal case studies, and situating the study within a comparable time frame (for external validity);

(ii) using multiple sources of evidence both in the form of questionnaires, interviews, observations and artefacts in the study;

(iii) ensuring construct validity of participants' interviews was obtained by asking participants to confirm that their interview had been represented faithfully (Yin, 2011). Construct validity of the questionnaire was also obtained by piloting it among a small number of retired principals;

(iii) using pattern matching of theories, such as Ryan's (2012) ideas about micropolitics, across cases (Yin, 1989); and,

(iv) by developing case study and questionnaire protocols or a set of guidelines which governed the general consistency of research instruments, procedures and coding procedures.

The use of an audit trail as suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1986) was also implemented, which involved the use of a journal (memo) within NVivo describing relevant progress of the study and offering explanation of the links between the researcher's claims and the raw data for possible further checking .

4.5 Ethical Considerations

There were a number of ethical issues to consider in this study. Before the study was undertaken, it was submitted to and approved by the Western Sydney University Ethics Committee. Before participants were involved in the study their informed consent was obtained. All targeted participants received an information package summarising what the project was about, together with researcher and university contact details so that they could provide informed consent and obtain additional information if necessary (see Appendix 1).

Participants who needed the support of a liaison officer or translator to participate were offered this support in order that they contributed. Participants were also offered the opportunity to participate as a group or as an individual with care taken to schedule interview times at mutually convenient times. All participants had the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any time without any impact on relationships between schools and the university. Care was also taken to accommodate the cultural sensitivities of the Aboriginal groups involved in the research.

The schools involved in case studies were those identified as disadvantaged schools, many catering for Aboriginal students and students from language backgrounds other than English

as well as those from low SES backgrounds. Some were located in remote environments. Thus equity, Aboriginality and LBOTE factors played a significant role in considerations about subjectivity and positionality in this study with attention drawn to deficit language used. Principals comprised a more prevalent percentage of females to males in the questionnaire (65%:35%), but an even mix of genders in case studies -three males and three females. Gender was therefore not regarded as an important variable in findings. Principals offering their involvement in case studies were generally regarded as ‘successful’ in their leadership of the SSLSES National Partnership for equity since principals themselves, self-selected their schools for study.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter has summarised the study’s epistemology, methodologies and sources of data collected for analysis from three phases of the research. Data analysis tools were elucidated. Important directions for further investigation have also been foreshadowed by this chapter’s preliminary identification of contested regimes of practice in key domains such as the quality of teaching, leadership and policy accountabilities and marketization which have been explicated from the second cycle coding phases of case study data analysis.

The ensuing chapters contain the study’s findings. Chapter 5 comprises the SSLSES National Partnership policy discourse analysis. Chapter 6 contains an overview of the six principal case studies, whilst Chapters 7-9 comprise the research findings developed around analyses of three main domains of practice. Chapter 10 concludes the thesis with a summary of the study’s argument and general implications. The questionnaire data has been summarised whilst detailed case studies were written around preliminary themes. Both sets of data are available on request. Selected evidence of answers to research questions has been included in findings chapters (7-9).

Chapter 5

Critical Discourse Analysis of the SSLSES National Partnership

Political language - and with variations, this is true of all political parties, from Conservatives to Anarchists - is designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable, and to give an appearance of solidity to pure wind (Orwell, 1946).

5.1 Introduction

The politics of policy making itself has often been seen as an arena of discursive struggle, where policy development is seen by Fulcher (1989) as a “struggle between contenders of competing objectives”, and where “discourse is used tactically” to set specific agendas (Taylor, 2006, p. 26). The current study examines the nature and intent of the SSLSES National Partnership program, a large-scale government initiated interventionist policy, designed to address issues of equity in NSW public schools. It examines the ways in which principals and their schools are managed by or positioned by such policy as educational reform. The study considers policy as text and its potential interpretation by principals. It also examines policy as discourse- where principals as subjects are shaped by the politics, culture and societal norms underpinning policy to act in certain ways. The interpretation of policy as text entails a consideration of the language-in-use in policy texts and an understanding of its instructional capacity (Gee, 2005). The consideration of policy as discourse examines the range of discursive communication practices involved in the interpretation of various texts, speeches, templates, artefacts, reports and instructions associated with policy discourse as well as their constituent constructions. These notions are also reflected in Foucault’s views on the constitution of power, knowledge and culture in interplay between discourse and practices (Foucault, 1972).

The effect of policy discourses is to describe and normalise thinking and action, as they contributed to the formation of ‘technologies of the self’ as policy enactors interpreted texts and artefacts (Foucault, 2010). To this extent the interplay between policy discourse, analysed in this chapter and its interpretation and practices in schools analysed in subsequent chapters, requires investigation to make visible the results of such interplay. As the case study principals’ practices were examined (see Chapters 7, 8, and 9), analysis makes visible the influence of policy discourse and its interpretation in the practices in schools, including conceptualisations of governmentality through the “embedding of routines of neoliberal governance” through discourse (Peck & Tickle, 2002, p. 384).

In order to understand the SSLSES National Partnership policy as discourse, the language of its associated media, formal agreements, instructions and assorted artefacts were examined using a critical discourse analysis framework incorporating a sociocultural view of language (Gee, 2011, 2015; Gee & Lankshear, 1995). A critical discourse analysis aims to explore how texts represent social relationships, identities and depictions of the world, with an emphasis on power relationships which, together with social analysis, help understand policy as practice (Taylor, 2004).

The chapter begins by providing explanations of the way discourse was defined and analysed in this study, and includes a summary of a number of Gee's (2011) discourse analysis tools. An interpretation of the political and economic context of the SSLSES National Partnership policy follows, thus providing the context within which the policy was constructed. A discourse analysis of the SSLSES National Partnership policy reforms using Gee's (2005) tools is presented, together with associated discourses noting the intertextual shifts and hybrid texts. Finally, the chapter considers the ways in which principals may be positioned by the discourse. The chapter argues that the SSLSES National Partnership policy encompassed a range of evolving and intertextually connected governing discourses guiding principals' practices, which potentially generated anomalies and tensions for reform implementation. The ways in which policy discourse was implemented by principals underpins the empirical work in this study.

5.2 Discourse Analysis.

Discourse analysis is an approach to the analysis of communication which examines language in the form of text within its social, historical, political and economic context through the notion of discourse. The term 'discourse', itself, has been variously defined to reflect its constituent social and political concepts with the work of Foucault (1972), Fairclough (2003) and Gee (2015), eminent in the field. According to Foucault (1972, p. 49), discourses "systematically form the objects about which they speak," thereby shaping or influencing personnel as subjects of the discourse. The knowledge/power relations are achieved, according to Foucault (1980), by the construction of discursive 'truths' that become the generally accepted understandings by which governmentality occurs. In these ways, language and the power interrelationships within a social context are closely intertwined. Fairclough (2003, p. 2) additionally combined ideas about "language-in-use," and language that was "dialectically interconnected with other elements of social life," in his definition of discourse, while Gee (2015) argued that evolving socio-cultural ideologies re-framed many of the concepts in discourses for analysis.

The discourse analysis framework used in this study has similarly built on both language-in-use and broader sociological approaches for enquiry (Gee, 2005), with methods encompassing the linguistic elements in texts such as text structures, grammar, vocabulary/meaning and cohesion. In this way, links were made between micro-level textual analyses and macro-level knowledge generated by policy making institutions. Gee's (2005) discourse analysis tools provided a framework with which to examine discourse at these two levels which assisted in an interpretation of a selection of SSLSES National Partnership generated texts and its associated policy. Specifically, the analysis attempted to understand how the SSLSES National Partnership discursively positioned schools and principals by means of the language used at both macro and micro levels.

The intention of the discourse analysis in this study was to examine policy texts as expressions of politico-social and economic power in their delivery of authoritative values to principal subjects. By critically examining the concepts authorised through policy documents (and also excluded from them) the governmentalities and power/knowledge relationships became explicit (Ball, 1990). In its examination of the socio-political power embedded in texts, the criticality of the discourse analysis was also explored (Gee & Lankshear, 1995; Popkewitz & Brennan, 1998).

5.2.1 Discourse analysis tools for analysing policy.

Texts critical to understanding the SSLSES National Partnership Discourses can be defined as "moments when language connected to other semiotic systems is used for symbolic exchange" (Luke, 1996, p. 13). Subjects such as teachers and principals use such texts to obtain meaning and assume agency for various forms of enactment in their institutions. Educational practices are therefore informed by their purposes and values which are the outcome of political processes and underlying principles. The structures and grammar of the text reflect the function and purpose of the language. Discourse analysis of policy is useful for identifying some of the governing effects on the practices of subjects such as principals. Texts as discourse can position and construct meaning for individuals by providing various ideas and versions of the world which can be blended with theirs. However, they are rarely static so that education policy, media releases, program implementation guides, forms, directives and reports operate intertextually to dispense the intended meaning to principals (Smyth, 2010).

Drawing on both linguistic theory and the social sciences Gee's (2011, p.ii) discourse analysis tools assist in investigating texts for their "meaning in social, cultural and political terms".

Gee's (2005, p.33) notions of 'D'iscourse or Discourse, similar to Foucault's discourses (1969; 1985), encompass a conceptualisation of an overarching model of behaviour patterns, situated identities and cultural language. The analysis tools for investigating language-in-use is termed 'd'iscourse, or discourse. In this chapter concepts associated with Gee's (2005) notion of "Discourse" will be capitalised to distinguish it from his language- in-use "discourse".

Within a discourse analysis framework, a "Discourse model" comprises the overall theory, or linguistic model for making sense of the world (Gee, 2005, p. 32). Discourse models assist in analysing a text's meaning, as each model comprises linguistic patterns, meanings and conventions of the overarching socio-cultural context which are expressed in contributing texts. Within specific texts, "social languages" describe the specific registers of language used in interactions between specific groups in common - such as principals and teachers (Gee, 2011, p. 155). These contain examples of specific uses of terminology associated with distinctive contextual fields and associated grammars. A social language is one used by a specific type of person who acted and communicated in similar ways. Specific terminology is used by the group who needed to articulate 'who' and 'what' they were, and what they understood in terms of common socially situated activity. They are associated with a particular social identity and role in society (Gee 2011, p.156). Social language is often distinguished by specific patterns of grammar and lexical resources that situate the utterance within its circumstances.

The notion of "intertextuality" (Gee, 2011, p.164) provides a means to examine the ways in which meanings and structures are used to reference other texts and where one text helps to give meaning to another. Intertextually, conceptual meanings and understandings within the field can be shaped and shifted. These linked texts contribute to the overarching Discourse model (Gee, 2011, p.181). Intertextuality in and between Discourse models, based on Gee (2005) has conceivably contributed to the ongoing discursive shifts in meanings of concepts such as 'social justice', 'equality' and 'equity' noted in the literature (Lingard et al., 2014; Savage, 2013b).

Gee's notion of a text's "situated meaning" refers to the meaning allocated by the field or subject with which it is associated (Gee, 2011, p.153). Thus, terms like 'competition' and 'capital' used in educational policy texts have meanings assigned to them by economic rationalist theories. It is at the level of situated meanings that analysis was important since the interpretation of meaning was based on particular values - "normed by already understood discourse models and social practices" - but capable of evolution (Gee, 2011, p.153). With evolution, so there are examples of hybrid texts appropriating multiple social practices and

values. Thus, related texts associated with a Discourse model may contain examples of economic rationalist as well as socially democratic situated meanings.

According to Gee (2011, p.176) “Conversations” are themes reflecting the more multifaceted aspects of situated meanings and social languages as they have been integrated into policy Discourses and are carried out amongst those who share similar language understandings. Principals, for example, would be assumed to engage in conversations using the relevant social language and situated meanings employed by the Discourse model about educational matters with supervisors and with teachers.

In using Gee’s discourse analysis tools of “situated meanings”, “social languages”, “intertextuality”, and “conversations” as part of overarching “Discourse models”, it is therefore possible to explore the nature and meaning of various texts which comprised the SSLSES National Partnership Program Discourse for evidence of governmentalities which may influence implementation practices. Governmentalities situated principals in specific ways as subjects and enactors of the policy. By exploring the nature of a sample of texts, it is possible to begin to engage in a broader debate over how Discourse models and texts might operate socio-politically, and to deconstruct and reconstruct social subjectivities and formation of inter-relationships. To critically analyse a sample of the texts associated with the SSLSES National Partnership, relevant political and media texts are examined, followed by the reforms of the National Partnership Agreement for Low SES School Communities (COAG, 2008), and instructional implementation guidelines issued by the Australian government education authorities.

5.3 Analysis of SSLSES National Partnership Discourse

The SSLSES National Partnership policy Discourse model can be viewed as a complex product of social, economic and cultural interactions in a state of flux, influencing and being influenced by other Discourses and stakeholders at various global and local levels (Levinson & Sutton, 2001). To understand the SSLSES National Partnership Discourse, texts situated within their political, social and economic contexts were analysed. The selection of texts examined is provided in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Table of Documents for Analysis

Year of publication	Title of Text
2007	Rudd and Smith (2007): The Australian Economy Needs an Education Revolution: New Directions Paper on the Critical Link Between Long Term Prosperity, Productivity Growth and Human Capital Investment.
2008	COAG (2009): National Partnership Agreement on Low Socio-Economic Status School Communities
2008	Rudd (2008) Quality Education: The Case for an Education Revolution in our Schools.
2008	Gillard (2008): A New Progressive Reform Agenda.
2008-16	ACARA (2008): NAPLAN Test and My School website
2009	Rudd (2009a): The Global Financial Crisis. Rudd (2009b): One Year on from the Crisis: Economical and Social Policy Challenges for Australia
2009, 2012	Australian Government et al. (2009; 2012): National Partnership for Low SES School Communities: Preliminary Information Package for schools.
2009	NSW DEC (2009): School Self Evaluation Guidelines: Guidelines for Developing the School Self Evaluation Report.
2009, 2010	Australian Government et.al. (2009; 2010): NSW Implementation Plans for the National Partnerships. Teacher Quality, Literacy and Numeracy, Low SES School Communities.
2010	Gillard (2010): Delivering the Education Revolution
2010	NSW DET (2010): School Self-Evaluation NAPLAN School Performance Analysis: School self-evaluation tool for analysing school NAPLAN data using SMART software
2012	Gillard (2012): A National Plan for School Improvement.
2012	NSW DEC (2012): Preparing for and Writing the School Plan

5.3.1 Political and social context analysis

As the Australian Labor Party was swept into office in 2007 under Prime Minister Rudd, the period ushered in strident calls for reform and an Education Revolution in schools. The strong terminology carried the promise of a renewed interest by the Australian federal government in government schools, which were traditionally administered within each State's jurisdiction, and intimated the impact of the changes to come. These political changes constituted the nature of the Discourse models underpinning the SSLSES National Partnership reforms. Prime Minister Kevin Rudd and the new Minister for Education and Deputy Leader of the Australian Labor Party, Julia Gillard, established a government that would subsequently work on education for

greater social inclusion in “consensus” with the State governments’ emphases on “excellence” and productivity through “aspiration” (Gillard, 2008b). Terminology used, and indicated in extracts as emphases, illustrated the government’s engagement with the social languages of current neoliberalism and an attempt to align seemingly conflicting agendas such as increased productivity, quality and meritocracy with the more traditional welfare state. The associated allocation of needs-based funding to disadvantaged schools seemed to redistribute additional resources according to older welfare state notions but also was used transactionally to ensure accountability. In the 2008 Fraser Lecture delivered May 28th, Gillard (2008b) stated:

It is my intention as Commonwealth Minister for Education to do what our predecessors refused to do: to build a new *consensus* around the idea that when it comes to schooling, that we should *strive for both equity and fostering individual aspiration*. A new *consensus* is that in *education excellence and equity are partners not combatants*... Therefore, a new national strategy to improve Australia’s schools will be a big part of the *Education Revolution* we have promised (added emphases).

The improved cooperation between State and Federal governments under the Australian Labor Government was levied through the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) which set the broad parameters of a social justice policy within the Ministerial Council on Education, Training and Youth affairs (MCEETYA). Cooperation and compromise was promised between conservative free market agendas and equity, seen in situated meanings of terms such as “partners[hips]” and a greater “equity” and “excellence” agenda.

Whilst the Labor government expressed educational values in terms of both equity and existing economic rationalist concepts, Rudd had defined the changes as “social capitalism” (Rudd, 2009a, p. 10), or social democracy, a modification of the unrestrained competitive free-market approach of the previous government, and which attempted to incorporate welfare state elements. The situated meanings conflated “human capital” development and “equity” within the neoliberal structures of competition, efficiency and productivity. Rudd believed that his political and social agenda did “no violence to market competition” within this conceptualisation of greater productivity embracing equity (Rudd, 2006 p. 13). In the extract, the terms emphasising areas of tension in the social language are italicised:

Equity does no *violence* to market competition. Furthermore, if education and training becomes the engine room for *equity in the social democratic project*, this investment in *human capital* will *enhance market performance*.

Having come to office just as the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) crippled many of the world’s economies, however, Rudd’s aim was also to re-imagine politics for the post-financial crisis era with an attempt to incorporate equity in terms of a revised, re-regulated welfare state but with

an increased focus on productivity and marketisation. He also went so far as to write in “The Monthly” (Rudd, 2009a) of his antagonism to the doctrines of unfettered free market neoliberalism and the need for additional government regulation and public support. Situated language echoed earlier (Labor) governments of Bob Hawke and Paul Keating where the State:

harness[ed] the power of the market to increase innovation, investment and productivity growth - while combining this with a regulatory framework which manages risk, corrects market failures, funds and provides public goods and pursues social equity (Rudd, 2009a, p. 25).

However, it has been argued that neoliberalism in Australia in the post Global Financial Crisis (GFC) era, had already shifted from an eighties “social democracy” phase with the neoliberal economic agenda creating “new social realities” and where the cultures and interrelationships in organisations were increasingly impacted by performance management regimes and competitive practices (Connell, 2013a, p. 46). Managerialism was becoming more dominant in public sector organisations with conversations about labour market flexibility and school sector competition already beginning to consign disadvantaged groups as failures in the education market place (Smyth, 2010; Vinson, 2009).

The idea of inclusive social networks operating within the logic of the capitalistic market was seen to be contradictory at best (Smyth, 2008) whilst Savage (2010, p. 39) also queried if the Melbourne Declaration’s “excellence and equity” agendas could ever be “equal partners” since both concepts had been influenced by the continually marketising systems of education based on the competitive practices of market rationalism. Brown (2015, p.1) saw neoliberalism as a “governing rationality” where all personnel were being re-positioned by neoliberal Discourse as “market actors”, forced to “tend to their own present and future value” in the capitalised marketplace instead of tending to democratic and public values of the welfare state. It could be argued that Rudd, in his conceptualisation of an Education Revolution, failed to see the “tsunami” of neoliberal consequences (Ong, 2007, p.3) that were to be unleashed by his accountabilities and reforms of the National Partnership Agreement on Low SES School Communities. These, when based on evolving governmentalities, contributed to greater tensions for implementation rather than the “consensus” he claimed.

In the New Directions Paper presented to the Australian Labor Party (2007), and in the media releases explaining the case for an education revolution, Rudd’s use of a strongly marketised social language and situated meanings underscored the underlying principles of the SSLSES National Partnership (Rudd, 2008, p. 4). The dominant social language and situated meanings

evident in texts pre-empting the SSLSES National Partnership Agreement remained those of renewed neoliberal economics with emphases on increased ‘productivity growth’ and the efficient production of ‘human capital’ mitigating against many factors, such as recognition of individual needs required for social justice (Fraser, 2007). Indeed, any situated meanings and social language terminologies for social justice are notably absent from the discourses of the political texts, while there remain few conceptualisations of equity except intertextually via the re-articulated situated meaning of “human capitalism” (Rudd, 2006) and the “quality and quantity of our national investments” (Rudd, 2008). Already, use of intertextuality had begun to shape the concept of equity in economic terms designating growth and performance. For example, Rudd’s address (Rudd, 2008, p. 6) explained that:

The core of our *economic reform agenda* is to build long term *productivity growth* –in large part by an education revolution in the *quality and quantity of our national investments* in the next generation of Australians ... [I have said] ... the evidence about the link between long term *prosperity, productivity growth and investment in human capital* could not be clearer (added emphases).

Rudd’s (2008) presentation about ‘Building the Education Revolution’ and plans for the SSLSES National Partnership to the Australian Press Club also expressed the imperatives of the new reform agenda for education in the situated meanings and social language of government educational policy. Situated meanings and intertextual themes from economic rationalism were evident throughout the Discourse and had an impact on evolving educational conversations. Terminology from the associated situated meanings and social languages of economic rationalism and translated into educational policy has been emphasised in Table 5.2 and is discussed in the ensuing conversations around the reforms.

Table 5.2: Extracts from Rudd's 2008 speech (all emphases added)

1. Our focus must be on the *basics*, ensuring [that] all our children emerge from school *able to read and write*, with basic maths and science skills... (Rudd, 2008, p. 7);
2. We must insist on *teaching excellence* in every school, and insist that school *leadership is strengthened*, particularly in the schools where the learning needs of students are most acute (Rudd, 2008, p.8);
3. [We will] establish national *standards to reward* both principals and the *best performing* teachers (added emphases) (Rudd, 2008, p.8);
4. We will send a message to *experienced teachers* ...that they should keep *striving for excellence* (Rudd, 2008, p.8);
5. I want school principals to have *autonomy* to make *staffing and salary* decisions (Rudd, 2008, p.8);
6. Australian school students deserve a higher level of *transparency concerning the overall performance* of their schools (Rudd, 2008, p.8) (*through publishing performance data on My School-added text*).
7. We will not be making those investments without demanding *greater accountability* in return” ... Part of [that] accountability means that parents... know how the school is *performing* ... (Rudd, 2008, pp.8-10).
8. I appreciate there can be a debate about the most reliable *indicators* of *school effectiveness* ... Right now, we do not have accurate comprehensive information to allow *rigorous analysis* of what schools and students are achieving (Rudd, 2008, pp.8-9);
9. All Australian schools need to do more to *demonstrate the outcomes they achieve* with the resources they achieve from the broader community...We will be making agreement on *individual school reporting* a condition of the New National Education Agreement in 2009. (Rudd, 2008, p.9);
10. Where schools do not lift performance, the Commonwealth expects *education authorities to take serious action* (Rudd, 2008, p.10);
11. ...*Disadvantage holds the economy back by reducing workforce participation*...In Australia, socio-economic status is more strongly associated with educational achievement than it should be... That is why, today, I announce that we will pursue a further National Policy Partnership with the States and Territories to tackle *underachievement* in our schools... I want to see resources (approx. \$500,000) per average sized school beginning to be deployed in our most *disadvantaged schools* (Rudd, 2008, pp.4-5)

Rudd's language was marked by many of the features of political debate and formal speech delivery. The use of third person pronouns describing enactors of policy delivery as “the Commonwealth”, “schools will” etc. helped to universalise many of the actions comprising the Education Revolution, ensuring the power of governance over his agenda, while less powerful promises in the first person such as “I announce” was attached to promises of additional resourcing. Relational and action verb groups signifying a need for action dominated the

speech. Of ongoing significance was the preponderance of economic rationalist terminology expressing principles of ‘competition’, ‘capital development’ and ‘productivity’ because of the reforms. Deficit notions of disadvantaged students holding the economy back, and a reductionist basic skills agenda were also evident.

Most evident, however, were the dominant conversations situating the existing issues with the need for quality teaching. The conversations insisted that “teaching excellence” was critical to improved learning outcomes. The use of comparative language like “We must insist on teaching excellence in every school, and insist that school leadership is strengthened...” (Rudd, 2008, p. 8) immediately raised doubt about the existence of teaching and leadership excellence in targeted schools as the converse was suggested; that is, teaching and leadership needed “strengthening”. The conversations put the emphasis on the quality of teaching and leadership in disadvantaged schools. This emphasis became a recurring one in all conversations about Australian (public) education and distracted the electorate from any real consideration of systemic equity issues, as parents were informed that the public education system was no longer performing as well as it should and omitted any reference to contextual issues like the SES status of school communities. The enduring focus on the quality of teaching especially in basic skills areas such as literacy and numeracy also became part of the Discourse model underpinning the SSLSES National Partnership and has continued to underpin conversations about performance and productivity in disadvantaged schools.

As additional texts comprising the Discourse model included those that suggested the existence of deficits in the quality of teaching and leadership, situated meanings and social languages also shifted to incorporate the need to norm performance against new teaching and leadership standards which would measure the “best performing teachers” and leaders (Rudd, 2008, p.8). It became apparent that the discursive problem for disadvantaged schools was the need for improved performance of its teachers and principals. Improved teaching/learning and leadership became the discursive code for improving productivity, which was a stronger concept than the improved processes of teaching and leadership, through the application of work standards. The APSTL standards were introduced as a permanent feature of the Discourse model in 2011, marking a new set of relationships predicated on increased competition between staff in a devolving structure and the introduction of concepts like ‘rewards’ for highly performing staff. The importance of the use of the word ‘reward’ associated with the standards foreshadowed the use of the standards in the eventual remuneration changes for NSW teachers and principals.

5.3.2 Analysis of SSLSES National Partnership reforms

Conterminously with political policy Discourse, the SSLSES National Partnership program comprised the following reforms (emphases added):

Reform 1: Incentives to attract *high-performing* principals and teachers

Reform 2: Adoption of *best practice performance management* and *staffing arrangements* that articulate a *clear role for principals*

Reform 3: School operational arrangements that *encourage innovation and flexibility*

Reform 4: *Providing innovative and tailored* learning opportunities

Reform 5: *Strengthened school accountability*

Reform 6: External partnerships with parents, other schools, *business* and communities and the provision of access to *extended services (including through brokering arrangements)* (COAG, 2008, p.10-12)

Intertextually, Reforms One and Two (COAG, 2009, pp. 10-11) encompassed the same situated language and introduced the same conversations about teaching and leadership performance. There were to be “incentives to attract high performing principals and teachers” and “best practice performance management and staffing arrangements that articulate[d] a clear role for principals”. The problem to be solved by the new policies was the boosting of the “performance of low SES children” for improved productivity (COAG, 2008, p.10) and the idea of “incentives” for appropriate “high” performance of teachers and leaders. The situated meanings in additional texts in the Discourse model, such as the My School website incorporated concepts of competition and comparisons through the ability to measure the levels of performance in the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) amongst “similar schools” and “all schools” (ACARA, 2016b). Intertextually, “high performance” became linked to performance as depicted in texts like the NAPLAN results and publication on the My School website.

The conversations and situated meanings of Rudd’s (2008, p.8) comments about devolved power to schools over “staffing and salary” decisions also canvassed emerging ideas about flexible staffing arrangements designed to increase staff competitiveness and self-management, and served to sever the collegial relationships between principals, schools and staff developed from longstanding staffing agreements. The second reform of the SSLSES National Partnership

(COAG, 2008, p.11) also required "...staffing arrangements that articulate a clear role for principals". The flexible staffing "arrangements" that accompanied the SSLSES National Partnership were designed to re-engineer the existing school staffing structures, facilitate devolution strategies and facilitate greater control over teachers. The situated meaning of "arrangements" incorporated the additional meanings from the associated social language and intertextuality. Principals were to seemingly gain more control over their school's staffing configuration and curriculum structures. The situated meanings of the neoliberal Discourse models had seemingly been retro-fitted onto complex values-driven learning organisations in the hope that the relevant positivist notions associated with data, inputs and outputs, alternate "arrangements" and expendable components could be integrated. Principals seemed to be positioned to incorporate all of the changes into existing structures by means of a mix of both accountability and reward.

Rudd (2008, p.7) in the preceding extracts similarly maintained the previous government's conversations about the need for improving basic skills for disadvantaged students to ensure that they would graduate with "reading, writing and mathematical" skills suitable for Australia's workplaces and its productivity agenda. Rudd, (2008, pp. 8-9) however, admitted that there was no "accurate comprehensive information to allow rigorous analysis of what schools and students are achieving". This paved the way for the government's introduction of the NAPLAN and the My School website for providing "transparency" about measurements of basic skills levels. The term "transparency" subsequently underwent a transformation in its situated meaning as it became linked intertextually to nationally publicised data about school, teacher and student performance on the My School website. The rearticulation of "transparency" terminology suggested the ease with which parents may choose their child's school based on its perceived competitiveness and productivity using data on the My School website. The My School website also enabled the linking of the lower ISCEA scores of disadvantaged schools to lower NAPLAN performances. Intertextually, situated meanings of terms like "transparency" and its links with NAPLAN data, My School and school choice were captured by headlines like: 'Schools' data to go on the web: Vital information to help parents make comparisons' (Harrison, 2009, April 18, p. 7).

The Discourse model encompassing Rudd's (2008, pp. 9-10) language and the SSLSES National Partnership also reassured the electorate that schools were to be held to account for lifting performance and it was expected that failing schools would be dealt with by "education authorities", suggesting the effective governmentality of reforms. "Where schools do not lift performance, the Commonwealth expects education authorities to take serious action". Media

reports suggested that this could involve sacking the principal and senior staff and re-organising the school (Grattan, Tomazin, & Harrison, 2008, August 28). Gillard's media release of her Fraser lecture delivered in Canberra, 2008, simultaneously promised resource rewards for improved outcomes compared to Rudd's threats of sanctions whilst extending the situated meaning of terminology like "accountability", "resources", "evidence" and "comparisons", and ultimately, "transparency" found in the associated social languages:

...*funding* and *accountability* arrangements will be delivered under the promised National Education Agreement [between Federal and State governments] ...[that] will *better* link investment in schooling to *improved* educational *outcomes*...[Furthermore there will be] *stronger* use of *evidence* to inform the allocation of resources ... [and] for the first time parents, teachers and members of the community will have access to nationally *comparable details* of a school's results (added emphases) (Gillard, 2008b)

Intertextually, the focus on "strengthened school accountability" was further elaborated in the situated meanings and social language of Reform Five (COAG, 2008, p.12). Accountability required better reporting of student outcomes to parents and community, in addition to improved "assessment of literacy and numeracy performance" and continuous evaluation techniques to provide appropriate school data which contributed to performance management systems. Accountability was seen to be secured by school planning documents which targeted "continuous improvement" in targeted learning achievement data, and which was to be sanctioned by supervisors. Accountability and sanctions for non-performing schools subsequently became part of the deficit Discourse models also surrounding the SSLSES National Partnership schools where situated negative and comparative meanings were applied to disadvantaged schools which needed "strengthening" and "'stronger' use of evidence" (Gillard, 2008a, pp. 1-2). Parents were encouraged to compare such schools using the "evidence" whilst governmentality regimes based on accountability regimes were implemented. Situated meanings also gathered emphasis from the multiple use of comparative terminology like "improved" and "stronger" used throughout the text.

The Government's agenda similarly implied that society's disadvantaged students held back the economy and suggested that the issues for low SES students was their impact on economic productivity by means of their "reduce[d] workforce participation" (Rudd, 2008, p. 5) in the deficit social language of productivity. Intertextually, the National Partnership Agreement on Low SES School Communities (COAG, 2008, p.11) also stressed the need for individual self-responsibility, innovation and entrepreneurialism for improved participation of low SES students in the economic rationalist situated meanings contained in Reforms Three and Four.

These could include strategies such as the extended use of buildings, additional student tutoring and alternative transition pathways to attainment. The use of terms like “innovation” and “flexibility” suggested the ways by which students, parents and communities could be positioned to take greater responsibility for themselves. Parents were encouraged to contribute to the process in Reform Six by means of improving business partnerships and with brokering arrangements (COAG, 2008, p.12).

Most social language in the Discourse model contained indicators of existing deficits steeped in the economic productivity terminology. Economic rationalist social language contained comparative adjectives and verbs suggesting the level of inadequacies in the current systems to be revolutionised. For example, a “stronger use of evidence” will be introduced, and the reforms will “*better* link investment in schooling to improved educational *outcomes*” and “*strengthened*” school accountability will result.

5.3.3 Analysis of SSLSES information and implementation guides

The economic rationalist agenda reflected in the National Partnership Agreements developed by COAG (2008) and associated program and media statements developed for the NSW Department of Education and Communities (NSW DEC), were rolled out to over 500 public schools in NSW. As cohorts of schools were allocated to the SSLSES National Partnership, their practices were further guided by the Low SES School Communities National Partnership information and implementation guides (Australian Government & NSW DET, 2009a; Australian Government, Smarter Schools National Partnership, et al., 2010). Guides were an attempt to reconcile the intent of the policies with requirements of the national and state education systems as well as to guide the practices of principals, executives and school communities. They were published for each cohort of schools following feedback from ongoing evaluations and reporting.

Guides and information for schools exhibited intertextually similar situated meanings and conversations to those developed in policy Discourse models. The social language of the texts was informative and directive. Clarity was provided about appropriate implementation processes, step by step strategies for implementation, the nature of evidence to be collected and specific areas of accountability. Guiding conversations were evident in the sets of instructions for school personnel with several common conversations developed between policy texts and instructional texts. Such themes included priority action areas for schools such as improved literacy and numeracy practices for transparency; improved teaching and leadership performance together with greater accountability for evidence of performance; and

suggestions for school-based entrepreneurialism. Within the guidelines there were added emphases to secure the participation of Aboriginal and low SES student needs, and parent/community partnerships.

The National Partnership on Low SES School Communities Preliminary Information Package (Australian Government & NSW DET, 2009a, p. 4) addressed guiding information directly to principals using second person directives whilst also promoting aspects of the transformative nature of the original policy: “Your school has been included in the Low SES School Communities National Partnership...Participation will give your school community opportunities to transform the ways schooling takes place” (original emphasis). The situated meanings of the intertextual themes explicated in the guidelines continued to centre on the importance of the SSLSES National Partnerships for improving the quality of teaching to achieve the policy’s outcomes for enhanced productivity. The strength of imperatives was evident in the highly modal social language which used terms like “compelling”, “most effective”, “mandates” in association with “improving results” (Australian Government & NSW Department of Education and Training, 2009a, p.4):

There is *compelling* evidence that *high quality teaching* is the *most effective method of improving results* for students in low SES school communities. This is why the Low SES School Communities National Partnership *mandates* reforms drawn from the Teacher Quality National Partnership (added emphasis).

The importance of the quality of teaching was marked by its recurrence as a dominant theme or conversation and social language in all instructional guides for principals. The focus on the quality of teaching was mandated in all National Partnership schools across each of the Partnership Agreements. Whilst principals were provided with the six reforms as listed from the National Agreement documents (Australian Government & NSW Department of Education and Training, 2009a, p.5) it was evident that “**two** mandatory elements” (original emphasis) dominated the areas of reform for NSW schools. Principals were to focus on actions to “improve the availability of high quality teaching (Reforms 1, 2)” and to ensure that executives and teachers could “use and analyse [literacy and numeracy] data to cater for student needs (Reforms 2,4,5)”, thus linking intertextually to the political conversations developed about increased transparency and school competitiveness. The transition between quality teaching from quality teaching models to depiction of the quality teacher was also created in the SSLSES National Partnership Program Discourse model.

SSLSES National Partnership reform social language and situated meanings transitioned notions of “quality teaching” into the conceptualisation of the “quality teacher” in preparation

for the implementation of the APSTL. The Smarter Schools National Partnerships Implementation Plan (Australian Government, Smarter Schools, et al., 2010, p. 17) utilised the changed emphases on ‘teacher quality’ and heralded the changing social languages and situated meanings of the quality teacher extracted from notions of quality teaching in disadvantaged schools when it noted:

International evidence-based research indicates that *teacher quality* is the single greatest in-school influence on student engagement and outcomes. Widespread research confirms that *quality teaching* significantly contributes to overcoming the negative effects of location and other disadvantages (added emphases).

In the planning document principals were exhorted to place emphasis on the quality of teaching through mandatory reform elements which ensured over all else: “...the availability of high quality teaching in the State’s most disadvantaged schools” (Australian Government, Smarter Schools, et al., 2010, p. 18). Evidence of the quality of teaching was to be garnered from the reaching of school plan targets in literacy and numeracy and implementation of other reforms, as well as the measurement of teachers’ practices against the standards. Principals in Reform 1 of the National Partnership Agreement (COAG, 2008) were subsequently required to emphasise measures in their planning which achieved “quality teaching” and attracted high performing “teachers”. There was to be an emphasis on targeted professional learning, and the employment of additional staff like Highly Accomplished Teachers (HATs). Principals were additionally required to align their performance management practices with the APSTL.⁶ From 2012 onwards, the Australian teaching standards gradually took precedence in the quality teaching discourse as a way to benchmark the quality of teachers in each school over earlier frameworks.

Principals’ choices of strategies notably could include concepts from the economic Discourse models underpinning policy. For example, employee performance and personalised professional learning was to comprise significant aspects of a quality ‘teacher’ workforce, as was the introduction of a more flexible workforce. Flexible staffing in the form of new categories of teachers like HATS could be funded by the SSLSES National Partnerships money and could be utilised to support “mentoring and play a lead role in school-based professional

⁶ In NSW, systemic changes aligning new curriculum implementation and teacher assessment practices was overseen by the NSW Board of Studies which when linked with the NSW Institute of Teachers became the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards NSW (BOSTES)- now the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA).

learning” (Australian Government & NSW DET, 2009a, p. 12). The information guide additionally noted the importance of the social language contained in professional learning attenuated to quality teachers who could be benchmarked on ‘performance’, and stated that:

Options are aimed at attracting and retaining *high quality staff* and improving the capacity of existing staff...building and sustaining a school culture of ongoing *professional growth* is in itself a strategy for attracting and retaining *high performing* staff (added emphases) (Australian Government, Smarter Schools National Partnership, et al., 2010, p. 81).

Notably the guidelines also included intertextual references drawn from a supporting research base for the SSLSES National Partnerships at the time. These contributed, in part, to a standardising framework for implementing and evaluating school performance in SSLSES National Partnership schools. Intertextual references were made to a selected research base including the quality teaching and effective schools research of Dinham (2008a), Hattie (2003), and Robinson (2007); change management theories of Fullan (2005) and Hargreaves (2000); together with the models of leadership by Elmore (2006). (Australian Government, Smarter Schools National Partnership, et al., 2010, p. 115).

However, as AITSL had developed the leadership and teaching standards in 2011, these standards became the framework for evaluating teachers’ and leaders’ performance and the quality of teaching from the middle years of the SSLSES National Partnership. Over the course of the SSLSES National Partnership (2009-14), the Discourse model incorporated these intertextual imperatives as part of an evolving performance management scheme to be linked in NSW via the Board of Studies Teaching and Educational Standards (BOSTES) authority to changed personnel and remuneration practices for NSW teachers. Associated governmentalities reflected the changed interrelationships between staff, principals and DEC. The conversations associated with improving literacy and numeracy achievement and hence their contribution to the “transparency” of school data also featured in implementation and resource documents. The focus on basic skills achievements was incorporated into the conversations about accountability and data-as-evidence. The intertextual importance allocated to literacy and numeracy improvements as a common social language was similarly enunciated in the information guide using second person pronouns and modal adjectives like “key” aim and “clear” link (Australian Government & NSW DET, 2009a, p. 4):

Improving *literacy and numeracy* results is also a *key aim* of the Low SES School Communities National Partnership. In recognition of this, *your* school will be able to select *evidence-based reforms* (such as specific literacy and numeracy

interventions) from the Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership and implement them within *your* school (added emphases).

The emphases on basic skills' data-as-evidence in information and implementation plans simultaneously signaled notable change in the types and richness of evidence being used for judging student achievement, the nature of the overarching evidence of productivity purposes of schools and a narrowing of situated meanings about the quality of teaching as pedagogy. The intertextual neoliberal Discourse models established new governmentality relationships described by Brown (2015) which were dependent on evolving accountability regimes based on the reductionist "basics" performance data (Rudd, 2008, p. 7). Literacy and numeracy achievements as governmentality rationalities became especially important as principals became accountable for setting and achieving school targets after having conducted systems analyses of the school's performance in these areas (Fig 5.1). Not only was the new emphasis on gathering data, but certain types of data were privileged in the SSLSES National Partnerships Discourse model. It can be seen in Figure 5.1 that literacy and numeracy NAPLAN data comprised a privileged evidence base, although later systems analyses templates for the 2011-2 cohorts, for example, broadened the social language discourses involved in the evidence base associated with each of the six reforms. Thus, intertextual links were established between common Discourse model governmentalities exerted by economic rationalist policy, the SSLSES National Partnership reforms, and the evidence base expected. In economic rationalist Discourse models, data became the accountability mechanism establishing the relationship between policy and evidence of reform achievements and school and leadership success.

**Low SES School Communities National Partnership
Situational Analysis Report (2009-2010)**

[Use the following questions as prompts to discuss the findings from your school's data. Enter your findings into the relevant sections below. Delete this text and the questions from your final report.]

Student performance (all schools).

- How were the students represented across the bottom 2 and proficient (top 2) bands in NAPLAN?
- What comparisons to LSG and state could be made?
- How did the growth rates for the various aspects compare with state growth rates?
- What are the overall areas of strength and those for further development?
- What does the value-added data indicate for: lower, middle and higher performing students? Is this significantly different from previous years?

Fig 5.1: Systems Analysis Template questions for SSLSES National Partnership (2009)

Implementation guides and the Situational Analysis Report explained at length how funding and accountability mechanisms worked using the social language and evolved situated meanings of neoliberal business style texts (Australian Government, Smarter Schools, et al., 2010; Australian Government, Smarter Schools, NSW Government, & DEC, 2009). Students' literacy and numeracy learning achievements were subsumed into conversations about the achievement of 'targets' through 'school planning'. Evidence of performance was to be judged by the NAPLAN test results and published on the My School website (Australian Government & NSW DET, 2009a, p. 9). Social language and situated meanings about 'performance', 'accountability', 'evidence', 'transparency' and 'competition' all became enmeshed via intertextuality with the growing importance of certain privileged school data in the Discourse model.

The importance of understanding and managing school data as evidence cannot be underestimated as a dominant conversation emanating from the SSLSES National Partnership policy discourse, and as an ongoing measure of the health of Australia's educational system (Australian Government, Smarter schools, NSW Government, & NSW DEC, 2012, pp. 6-7). NAPLAN evidence constituted a mandated reform of the SSLSES National Partnership in NSW. Instruction manuals were developed by the NSW DET and NSW DEC to take teachers step by step through the processes of decoding the NAPLAN data as a normalising tool for teaching and learning (NSW DET, 2010). Similarly, processes for gathering evidence for school plans were tabulated and noted sequentially.

Low SES School Communities National Partnership Situational Analysis (For schools beginning 2012)

Student enrolment

- Are *enrolments* increasing, decreasing or remaining static?
- Are there particular reasons for enrolments being at these *levels*?

Student attendance

- Are *attendance rates*, increasing, decreasing or remaining static?
- Are attendance rates above, below, or consistent with the state or region?
- What are we doing to improve attendance rates?

Student retention (central and secondary schools)

- Are *retention rates* increasing, decreasing or remaining static?
- How do they compare to state, region and SEG measures?...

Student performance

- How were the students represented across the bottom 2 and proficient (top2) bands in *NAPLAN*?
- What comparisons between the LSG and state could be made?
- How did growth rates for the various aspects compare to state *growth rates*?
- What are overall areas of strength and those for further development?
- What spread of students were represented across the bands? Is this significantly different from previous years?
- What does the *value-added data* indicate for lower, middle and higher *performing* students? Is this different to previous years?

Student performance (high and central)

- How many students are choosing VET pathways? Is this an increasing/decreasing trend?...

Student engagement

- What findings did the surveys generate on student attitudes and learning experiences in *numeracy and literacy* to inform school planning?

Staff profile

- What percentage of various funding dissections supported staff *professional learning*?
- Are there implications for areas of professional learning that could be enhanced?
- What were our *targets for 2009/10* and did our *PL funds build staff capacity* to help us achieve our targets?
- What findings did the surveys generate on teacher confidence, beliefs and perceptions in the teaching of *literacy and numeracy* to inform school planning?

Parents /community.

- Are there implications for improving parent satisfaction with aspects of school operation?
- Are there implications on the level of home school and community partnerships?

Fig 5.2. Extract from the situational analysis template for data insertion (For new schools with 2012 start date (2012))

The use of step by step instructions in guides and templates for completion became an important discursive feature of the SSLSES National Partnership. They were utilised for school planning (Australian Government & NSW DET, 2009a, p. 5) and for reporting (Figure 5.1 and 5.2). They comprised a normalising social language directing the measurement and delivery of data for summarising accountabilities. Niesche (2010) has similarly highlighted their role in the changing governmentality rationale of the SSLSES National Partnerships.

5.4 Leadership of SSLSES National Partnership Reforms

The social language and situated meanings of the SSLSES National Partnership implementation guidelines contained implications for the positioning of principals as leaders of the reforms and for their leadership of the quality of teaching. Principals' actions were defined and normed by closely constructed instructional imperatives and especially by fill-in-the gap templates used for accountability. Step by step procedures were designated for almost automated completion. Principals were seemingly positioned by these social languages as administrative technicians with few choices in the implementation of the SSLSES National Partnerships. Their accountabilities for implementation were determined by reductionist and normalised discourses requiring specific metrics which provided clear and succinct evidence of productivity 'growth'. Principals' practices were carefully directed by language used in the conversations and social languages generated by the guidelines. Principals appeared to be positioned by the conversations shaping concepts such as "targets", "evidence", "achievement", "productivity" and "performance" which were developed and linked intertextually and shaped discursively to direct practices (Australian Government, Smarter Schools, et al., 2010, p. 76)

Implementation guides suggested that principals' consultative planning, evident in existing leadership literature, was acceptable, but the expectation of accountabilities requiring tight time frames and more rigidly automated metrics was at odds with collegial practices in evident social languages:

The Low SES School Communities National Partnership evaluation found that the self-evaluation process was highly valued by Partnership schools, with schools developing and implementing school strategies or activities based on the analysis, consulting with the whole-school community, staff and students as part of this process (Australian Government, Smarter Schools, et al., 2010, p. 74)

Finally, the use of the word "capabilities" in implementation guides, foreshadowed the application of standards to principals themselves, as they were simultaneously concerned with policy governmentalities. The Discourse model shifted from emphases on quality teaching to the social languages of capacities and capabilities demonstrated by the quality teacher:

Principals will be critical to the reform envisaged in this partnership. Their role in leading the development and delivery of the school plan will require strong *capabilities* as an educational leader while meeting the challenge of *administering*

a new and flexible set of reforms within the school (Australian Government, Smarter Schools, et al., 2010, p. 83).

5.5 Silences about equity in the SSLSES National Partnership

Whilst the dominance of economic rationalist conversations in the SSLSES National Partnership Discourse model were evident, silences associated with the conceptualisation of equity and social justice were also noticeable. Whilst the SSLSES National Partnership was promoted as an equity program for disadvantaged school contexts, there was no guidance for defining its meaning, nor that of ‘equality’ or ‘social justice’. There were similarly no directions for achieving equity in the program conversations and situated meanings, except indirectly via the conversations associated with skills measurements and pedagogical reductionism. This supports Lingard et al.’s (2014) work that conceptualisations of equity have been subsumed into the increasing technicisation discourses.

5.6 Conclusion

The SSLSES National Partnership Policy and its associated discourses have therefore created an intertextually evolving Discourse model which has conveyed and transformed the social languages and situated meanings of prevailing neoliberal ideologies which underpinned SSLSES National Partnership guidelines. Principal leaders were positioned as administrators and managers authorised in specific ways under the governmentalities of the neoliberal Discourse models. Evolving intertextuality generated among political discourses, policy reform documents and policy implementation guides, resulted in re-articulated imperatives, via governmentality regimes of practice and instructional registers designed to influence principals’ practices. The Discourse model reconstructed principals’ practices for success in terms of specific metrics, competition transparencies, and ultimately, benchmarking practices for measurable targets and performance standards.

The situated meanings of terms like ‘transparency’ evolved to a social language synonymous with published league tables of test data and school rankings; while the social language surrounding conceptualisation of ‘quality teaching’ was replaced by notions of the quality ‘teacher’. The introduction of professional ‘standards’ with required literacy and numeracy ‘targets’, subsequently decoupled notions of quality teaching from the pursuit of rich pedagogies. The adoption of the evolving situated meanings and social language of the SSLSES National Partnership policy impacted on practices through changing governmentalities and accountabilities. Discourses heralding an education ‘revolution’ potentially positioned principals in revolutionary ways.

The interviews undertaken with principals at the completion of the SSLSES National Partnership program in their schools, incorporated many of their reflections about the impact and incorporation of many situated meanings and the social language of SSLSES National Partnership policy Discourse model on practices. The impact of situated meanings and associated social languages around 'quality teaching', 'performance management' and 'entrepreneurialism', for example, might be seen to impact on principals' enactment of the SSLSES National Partnership and discursive shifts in their reflections.

Principals' roles as leaders with accountability for the changing relationships and demands brought about by the neoliberal Discourse model will be discussed in Chapters 7-9. The key domains of practice in 'accountability and marketisation', 'leadership' and 'quality teaching' are discussed in relation to practices of each of the six principals operating according to the situated meanings and social languages engendered by the reforms. Principals' own conceptualisations of equity are noted in Chapter 6 while Chapters 7-9 introduce the ways in which understandings of equity might be enacted within a neoliberal Discourse model. An examination of the possible tensions between Discourse models and their implementation is further examined using Foucault's concepts of power, knowledge and discourse, and governmentality for evidence of mediation.

Chapter 6

Introduction to Principal Case Studies

Once more unto the breach, dear friends, once more,

Or close the wall up with our English dead!

(William Shakespeare, Henry V).

6.1 Introduction.

This study is premised on the understanding that school leaders have a central role to play in addressing the issues of cultural diversity and equity in their practices in schools. Expectations of principals have been compounded by ongoing marketised approaches incorporated in large scale equity programs like the SSLSES National Partnership program. Expectations impact on practices which can be at odds with the notions of equity they purport to address. A critical discourse analysis has been applied to SSLSES National Partnership policy texts as well as to program implementation guidelines to analyse the ways in which principals may be influenced by policy concepts. Ensuing tensions emanating in part from hybrid economic rational and educational texts and discursive shifts have been examined in six principal case studies from which the key domains of accountability and marketisation, leadership and quality teaching have been explicated and which will be examined in Chapters 7-9.

This chapter introduces each of the principal case studies prior to their analysis in the ensuing chapters. Relevant background is provided about each principal's school context against which principals implemented the reforms of the SSLSES National Partnership. Contextual details were considered relevant to the ways in which principals interpreted their role for the benefit of both their students and in consideration of reform governmentalities. Understandings about each principal's conceptualisation of equity have also been gathered to better understand how principals interpreted reforms of a large-scale equity program.

Explanations about the nature of principals' views about equity were insightful for this study (Gee, 2011), as they expressed the ways in which principals filtered the meanings and registers of their educational and social experiences to construe a unique and subjective view of policy texts for enactment and equity (Foucault, 2007, 2010). This view applies to each principal's particular understanding of equity and their school's needs from data gathered from the study's questionnaire and case study interviews. Conceptualisations of equity in this research were seen as historically grounded in individual experiences and normalized understandings, as well

as in knowledge of the needs of local communities within which principals participated. For most case study principals, their view of equity included provision of experiences and opportunities that corresponded with those experienced by their non-disadvantaged peers. Principals' understandings also extended to the ways in which all students were enabled to participate fully in successive levels of schooling and society generally. The importance of the quality of teaching and learning was also critical in most cases.

6.2 School Contexts

Case study principals and their schools studied came from a variety of disadvantaged rural and urban contexts and included large and small central, primary and secondary schools. Primary schools in NSW enrol students from grade K to 6, Secondary schools from grades 7 to 12, whilst central schools enrol students K-12. Principals studied led Cottonwood Central School, Parkeview Central School, North Plains High School, High Tops Primary School, Colborne High School and Southern Girls' High School. Four were rural schools located in western, southern and north western provincial NSW, with Parkeview Central the only remote school studied. All but one of the schools (Parkeview Central), were subject to market competition from nearby schools easily accessible by subsidized transport. Parkeview Central students accessed other larger rural and metropolitan boarding schools.

Colborne High and Southern Girls High were both large metropolitan high schools, each catering for over 50 different language communities and situated in largely migrant communities in South Western Sydney. High Tops Public School was the only K-6 school catering for the social housing enclave of the town among three similarly sized public schools in its southern NSW provincial township. The six principals interviewed for each case study were Alison, Stuart, Marjory, Natalie, Boyd and Don respectively. Table 6.1 summarizes each school's key contextual data together with principal and school pseudonyms.

Each school comprised students who experienced disadvantage in the form of poor access to sufficient educational resources and to societal infrastructure as well as other socio-cultural factors. The level of disadvantage of each school community had been designated for the purposes of the SSLSES National Partnership by its ICSEA score explained on the My School website⁷ as well as other indicators of disadvantage (Chapter 1). Principals in this study led

⁷ The ICSEA score comprises variables that include socioeconomic characteristics of school communities from ABS data together with information about the school's isolation, and the proportion of Aboriginality and LBOTE among its students. (ACARA, 2015)

schools in the mitigation of many of these inequities using equity program resources in widely differing disadvantaged contexts.

Table 6 1: Contextual data for each case study school (data from *My School* website and Annual School Reports)

School	Principal	ICSEA	Location	% Aboriginal	% NESB	% low SES	Enrolments 2014
Cottonwood Central (K-12)	Alison	810	Provincial	43%	0%	75%	190
Parkeview Central (K-12)	Stuart	991	Remote	14%	1%	40%	95
North Plains High (7-12)	Marjory	887	Provincial	23%	3%	60%	371
High Tops Public (K-6)	Natalie	885	Provincial	11%	6%	70%	168
Colborne High (7-12)	Boyd	933	Metropolitan	1%	87%	70%	1220
Southern Girls' High (7-12)	Don	947	Metropolitan	2%	88%	70%	1043

6.3 Alison and Cottonwood Central School

Cottonwood Central was located on the Western Plains of NSW, close to a larger provincial centre and several other small rural central schools. The township had a population of 850 and serviced a large grain and sheep growing area with smaller agribusinesses. It had access to a subsidized rural bus service which facilitated the easy transport of students to and from a nearby larger regional centre about 60 km away as well as some smaller close townships, thus fuelling competitiveness among all accessible schools. The primary students of Cottonwood also had access to a Catholic school with students also able to attend secondary schools in both the private and public sectors in the nearby larger regional centres.

The school facilities at Cottonwood comprised older style wooden portables as well as newer brick classrooms in both the primary and secondary. The primary and secondary buildings were located across a split site with the secondary site also housing a modern shared community hall and gymnasium and modern Hospitality and Wood/Metal Technology buildings. The school offered full Vocational Education and Training (VET) accreditation for courses offered to students and the community enrolled (Figure 6.1). The school also accessed two of the region's major video conferencing communities which enabled senior students to join other similar rural students to study any of the HSC subjects they needed using online/video-conferenced learning.

All student pathways into higher education or work were thus facilitated by the breadth of choice available. Talented and gifted students also accessed an online Opportunity Class (OC) and the school could deliver science curriculum via technology to these students as the school had employed a fully trained Science teacher unlike many other rural schools accessing the program.



Figure 6.1 (a) Cottonwood Central's Gymnasium/Hall and (b) and (c) well-resourced Wood Technology and Hospitality VET areas

Alison attained the principalship of Cottonwood Central just as the school was selected to join the first cohort of schools in the SSLSES National Partnership in 2009. She was immediately disappointed with the depleted status of the school within its community. Alison had previously been Deputy Principal of a similarly disadvantaged central school in the same region with similar issues, and had progressed through the ranks of Head Teacher and secondary mathematics teacher prior to that. Her discourse and subjectivities had already been moulded by extensive educational leadership experiences and relevant professional development.

Alison's beliefs about equity encompassed her view that all students should particularly have access to the quality of teaching and:

[T]hat the students in my school [should] have access to the same opportunities [and] access to resources and curriculum that students in affluent parts of the state do (Cottonwood Principal Interview).

Alison's view of equity was very much focused on an 'input' model of equity but with a more flexible attitude to the achievement of similar outcomes.

Alison's subjectivity had been constructed in relation to what she believed disadvantaged students required to be able to take their place with non-disadvantaged students at key transition points from school to society. She had also previously based her leadership of learning on student involvement in the creative arts because she believed it simultaneously improved students' sense of self-worth and belonging. At Cottonwood Central, she similarly facilitated

a creative arts focus. This she had accomplished by 2012 at the conclusion of the SSLSES National Partnership.

Discursively, Alison's understanding about the students' equity needs was weighed down by the accumulation of all the factors that she would need to harness if she was to re-secure the school's position as a competitive force in the district's education marketplace. She sought to attract the enrolments that would in turn secure sufficient resources to subsequently achieve equity and opportunities at her school.

6.4 Stuart and Parkeview Central School.

Parkeview Central was situated in a small isolated rural town of 300 people on the South-Western Plains of NSW. It was over 150km from its nearest regional town and was not serviced by mobile phone coverage. The township serviced a mainly sheep and wheat growing area. Students enrolled at the school comprised a number of socio-economically marginalised town families and the more economically advantaged farming families who lived out of town. Students from farms often travelled large distances to school by subsidised bus, sometimes taking over an hour, while all the town students had close access. Farming families had traditionally moved their children from Parkeview Central into regional and metropolitan private boarding schools in Year 7 believing the school to be too remote for the depth of curriculum needed. This left only 20-30 of the more marginalized students in the secondary department. This contributed to an inequitable situation where the remaining students were further marginalized by the lack of curriculum choices in Years 7-10 but they could access the full breadth of the HSC curriculum via video conferencing and online access.

I think, like a lot of small country towns there's a big difference between students from the farming community and students who're in town. They've ... moved to places like [Parkeview] because of the advantages of lower rent, and welfare benefits... (Stuart: Parkeview Central principal)

The school itself was well resourced with attractive wooden and brick verandah-enclosed buildings in both primary and secondary (Figures 6.2 (a) (b) and (c)). All buildings were decorated with attractive murals reflecting both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultural heritage of students. The school shared the town's extensive sporting fields and Olympic sized swimming pool and comprised modern technological facilities enabling students to also access the region's online and video-conferenced lessons in senior secondary school. It had modern well-equipped classrooms with commercial kitchen facilities and Wood and Metal Technology

classrooms shared with the community. It also received additional equity program support via the Country Area Program (CAP).



Figure 6.2 (a) 'Portable' primary buildings at Parkeview Central among native gardens, and; (b) secondary technology buildings, and; (c) Aboriginal artefacts and memorabilia in the administrative area

Stuart attained his principalship of the isolated central, Parkeview, at the same time as the SSLSES National Partnership was offered to his school in 2010. He was no stranger to students who experienced disadvantage caused by isolation as he had previously been a Head Teacher, Secondary Studies, in a similar small isolated central school, and he himself lived on a farm on the outskirts of a larger provincial town, thus accounting for many of his values or 'telos'. He had had only short-term relieving experience in higher executive roles such as the principalship and was thus inexperienced in managing large equity programs.

He also believed that students needed to access opportunities "equally" to those experienced by non-disadvantaged students. His view of equity was like Alison's in that he believed that equality of 'inputs' was necessary for disadvantaged students. Stuart noted that inequity was also caused by isolation as well as poverty:

There are families struggling with isolation, more so the town kids... the kids we're just talking about from low socio-economic families. They, for example, these holidays they may have gone to D [large regional town] once in the 2-week holiday. The rest of the time they would have been home or wandering the streets of Parkeview, so there's certain disadvantage in terms of location and their financial ability to leave town because we're over 150 kilometres from D. It's over \$50 worth of petrol for a start, and that's going to be their spending money. Often those kids...don't see much outside of Parkeview most of the year... They're examples of what the isolation and lack of enough income do... [They lack] what city kids would have on hand everyday (Stuart: Parkeview Central principal).

Subsequently, Stuart's vision for equity also involved the students gaining broadened experiences associated with the curriculum by attending resource rich field studies and excursions. These were in part subsidized by the SSLSES National Partnership and by the Parents and Citizens (P&C). Stuart's experience as a Technology and Engineering Science

teacher meant that he ensured extensive access to the latest technology and equipment at the school, especially to counter the lack of mobile coverage and the general lack of technological infrastructure available to students in their homes. His ideas about the quality of teaching also involved an emphasis on experiential, creative and practical learning. However, despite access to the additional experiences and resources offered, the parents of the rural students at Parkeview Central continued to send students to larger metropolitan and regional schools.

6.5 Marjory and North Plains High School.

North Plains High School was situated in the medium sized provincial town of North Plains which served an extensive and rich agricultural area on the Northern Tablelands of NSW growing mostly cattle and broad-acre crops. Its population was approximately 8,000 with the town offering public primary and secondary schooling and Catholic primary education. North Plains was only 40 km away by subsidized bus from the large regional town of Trenton (pseudonym) which comprised a range of private and public education facilities. North Plains High also provided secondary education for a large group of Aboriginal families from the nearby small township of Corrawalli (pseudonym) which had previously been an Aboriginal mission. Many of the wealthier ‘farming’ primary students travelled to Trenton schools for secondary schooling which explained why the primary school at North Plains did not receive the SSLSES National Partnership program.

Facilities and buildings at North Plains High were traditionally styled, having been built in the late 1890’s. Newer science and technology buildings had been added to the site, with the last building, the shared community Trade Training Centre (TTC), having been added in 2013 [Figure: 6.3(a) and (b)]. Marjory also allocated much of the SSLSES National Partnership grant to upgrading classroom resources and technology to ensure equity for students. Agriculture was a major focus of the school with the school having access to over 100 acres with which to develop strong community links with the area’s agricultural sector.

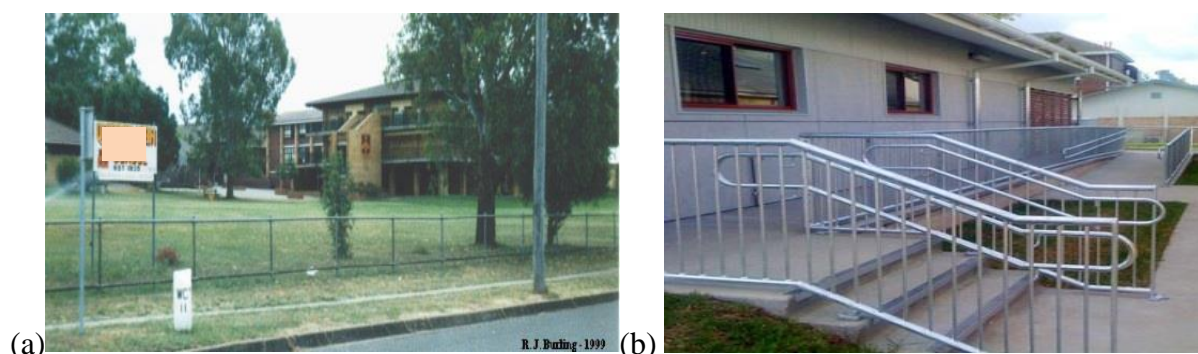


Figure 6.3: (a) Newer science buildings, and; (b) Shared Trade Training Centre at North Plains High

Marjory had been principal of North Plains High for two years prior to its being selected for the SSLSES National Partnership in 2010. Additionally, the school was selected as a Centre of Excellence. It had simultaneously been allocated to the Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership so Marjory chose to share the school's development in quality teaching and literacy and numeracy with the school's feeder schools to create a collegial 'learning community'. Marjory saw the inclusion in the SSLSES National Partnership as an additional way in which she could implement school reform and share relevant education resources within her professional and local community.

Marjory had been a secondary Visual Arts teacher before attaining successive Head Teacher and Deputy Principal roles in large high schools in the Hunter and North Western regions of NSW. She had attained the principalship of North Plains after having been a student there herself. She therefore knew students' and parents' circumstances and expectations well. This enabled her to reflect in a deeper and more personal way about her leadership for equity for these students.

I originally came from [North Plains] and went to school here. I am seen as a confidante by some parents in the community because of this. I went to school with many of the parents. I know many of the Aboriginal community really well, and I have developed a deeper knowledge about the equity needs of students because of this. (Marjory: North Plains High principal)

Marjory's vision for equity illustrated the importance of students being engaged in their schooling through quality pedagogy so that they could attain the same outcomes as their peers. The vision for equity from the North Plains principal illustrated this factor as well as the fact that some students may need additional resources according to their needs. Her vision for equity utilised a variable 'inputs' view that saw a need to provide additional resources and improve teaching pedagogies for students to have the same opportunities as other non-disadvantaged students. She also focused on upgrading all technology infrastructure in the school so that students had access to modern technology:

All students must have access to the tools they need to give them the same opportunities as students in less disadvantaged areas. This means that some students will be treated differently. Equity is not the same as equality (Marjory: Principal Questionnaire).

Access to quality teaching pedagogies formed the core of her vision for equity in the study and was linked to her conceptualizations of pedagogy at the school. Her view of quality teaching

was based on the NSW Quality Teaching framework as well as pedagogical styles provided in research by Hattie (2003) and Marzano (2003). She later embarked on a greater advocacy role (to ensure that each student's individual needs were met in collaboration with greater interagency support).

6.6 Natalie and High Tops Public School

High Tops Public School was a medium sized primary school situated in a large regional centre with a population of over 23,000 people on the Southern Tablelands of NSW. The High Tops township served mostly sheep and cattle grazing and rural service industries. High Tops Public School itself, comprised students from the town's social housing sector and thus included most of the low SES students in the town. Students in High Tops could attend any of three other public primary schools and at least two private schools, but in reality, most students at High Tops Public were from the local housing area.

Like North Plains High, the school facilities at High Tops Public School were very traditional with many of the buildings constructed in the late 1860s. The school was one of the earliest schools to be gazetted by the NSW Department of Education. Most rooms had been refurbished as modern classrooms and the SSLSES National Partnership was utilized to better enable the school to upgrade its technology infrastructure and develop a purpose-built technology laboratory in one of the 'spare' classrooms.

Natalie, similarly to other principals, gained her principalship at the beginning of the National Partnership in the 2010 cohort. Natalie had been the DP of a similarly large disadvantaged public school in a nearby regional township after having been a K-6 teacher in several rural and regional schools as well as lecturing in Special Education at a local university. She had formed a clear vision about equity for her school.

Natalie's vision for equity, which underpinned her leadership at High Tops Public, was about ensuring that all students' individual basic needs were met first, and then, that they acquired similar opportunities and choices for their future to other non-disadvantaged students. This involved predominantly ensuring that they could take their place competitively on transition into local high schools with other High Tops students. Her vision for equity involved a mostly 'input' view but encompassed also a broad democratic view about the purposes of schooling. It also involved ensuring that students were equipped for ongoing learning in more than just a basic education:

The school... goes out of its way to meet needs but at the same time focus on the school's main role in promoting learning. [But] I know that unless students' basic needs are met, that they have breakfast, shoes on their feet and warm clothes, and feel happy at school, they can't learn or engage, so implementing plans to improve academic achievement involves ensuring all of these needs are simultaneously met together... (Natalie: High Tops principal).

Natalie was clear however, that the learning program was still a focus of the school's agenda and she acknowledged the significant role of the school in literacy and numeracy development, as most students came to school in kindergarten with little early literacy and numeracy knowledge. Therefore, a focus on literacy and numeracy learning also remained high on all teachers' agendas at High Tops Public together with ensuring that 'inputs' enabled students to acquire the quality of learning experiences to enable students to compete amongst other students at transition points.

Such knowledge about context clarified the ways in which Natalie had interpreted and implemented the SSLSES National Partnership program. Students' access to responsive teaching and literacy and numeracy support were important for equity in a broader societal sense and these understandings were applied at High Tops. This occurred after an individualised approach to each child was accommodated to ensure that students could take their place with other non-disadvantaged students. The individualised approach, similar to North Plains High, was often covert but a basic premise of most principals in the study in understanding equity for their students.

6.7 Boyd and Colborne High School

Colborne High School with over 1200 students, was situated in the suburb of Colborne in South Western Sydney and catered for over 87% immigrant families. Many students, as newly arrived immigrants, also had access to an Intensive English Centre where they learned English prior to being enrolled in one of the comprehensive high schools, including Colborne High. The school was built in the early 1960s with modernized and refurbished classrooms and curriculum areas. It was situated within easy travelling distance of a variety of private, public and faith based secondary schools. Similarly to other schools in the case studies, the SSLSES National Partnership funds were utilised to help modernize much of the school's technology to enable students to embark on aspects of on-line learning and utilise the modern technology provided by the government's Education Revolution. Funds were also made available to build attractive garden areas around buildings to facilitate pleasant surroundings and ensure that buildings were decorated with student art work and inclusive structures such as the multicultural pathway celebrating reconciliation and harmony between all groups [Figure 6.4(a), (b) and (c)]



Figure 6.4: (a) student art works decorating school corridors at Colborne High (b) the multicultural pathway constructed through newly planted gardens, and (c) Flag Day: a celebration of diversity.

Boyd attained the principalship at Colborne High School at the beginning of 2011 after the initial systems analysis of the SSLSES National Partnership had been already been conducted by the previous principal in 2010. Initial targeted strategies had been set into the school plan. Boyd had felt that the process occurred with too little interaction with staff, and Boyd, as an incoming principal, also felt he needed to establish his leadership over the process as the school leader with accountability for its implementation.

Boyd had originally trained as a secondary English/History teacher and gained positions in a few Sydney secondary schools with the NSW DEC. He moved ultimately into positions as a NSW Literacy Consultant and librarian followed by a career for several years as an academic at a Sydney university. However, he took an opportunity to move back into NSW DEC schools in the early 2000's. After positions as Deputy Principal in three similarly multicultural disadvantaged schools in South Western Sydney, he gained the position of principal at Colborne High School. Boyd also had acquired other committee roles in policy development areas which enabled him to align the SSLSES National Partnership reforms with emerging policies associated with the Local Schools: Local Decisions policy and the Great Teaching: Inspired Learning policy in NSW. He implemented SSLSES National Partnership reforms in the light of these understandings. Reforms were implemented in ways which helped position staff at the forefront of proposed NSW DEC accreditation and remuneration changes.

Boyd's views about equity at Colborne High were shaped by his understandings about the importance of quality pedagogy for diverse student groups and the need to equip students with the lifelong learning skills and knowledge to take their place in society after experiencing secondary education. He felt that schooling needed to encompass opportunities for challenge and problem solving in learning. This may mean that for some, additional support and more relevant experiences may need to be provided. His vision was stated as:

Students exiting Colborne will be critically literate, technically adept problem solvers who know that lifelong learning is the key to personal fulfilment. They will possess a strong social conscience, be ethical and enshrine respectful tolerance and acceptance as the basis of all their interpersonal interactions. Throughout their time at Colborne they will be supported by high challenge, high support curriculums delivered by skilful professionals... (Boyd: Principal questionnaire).

There is evidence of both ‘input’ and ‘output’ elements in Boyd’s beliefs, as well as a democratic view of the purposes of schooling. The importance of quality pedagogy is also evident giving an indication of the direction he wanted to take in applying the SSLSES National Partnership for equity.

6.8 Don and Southern Girls High School

Southern Girls High comprising over 1000 students, was a large multicultural girls’ high school in South Western Sydney catering for 88% immigrant families. From the outside, it presented a well-worn façade, having been constructed in the late 1890s in a sombre Georgian style. It too was situated within ready travelling distance of a variety of private, public and faith based secondary schools. However, on entry, the school presented colourful, refurbished and modernised spaces. The foyer provided conversation areas for interviews with the relevant executive staff whose offices were located nearby, whilst students had been provided with several social spaces throughout the school. The principal, Don, had utilized global grants freed up using SSLSES National Partnership funding to refurbish conversation and recreation areas and modern learning spaces in the school as well as to foster student participation [Fig 6.5(a) and (b) and (c)]



Figure 6.5: (a) Refurbished social spaces for students, and; (b) redeveloped classroom spaces with breakout and open learning spaces at Southern Girls’ High School. (c) Indigenous students dance ensemble [Southern Girls High Annual School Report (2013)].

Don had gained the principalship of the school two years prior to being granted the SSLSES National Partnership in 2011. He, similarly to other principals, had an extensive executive background in disadvantaged schools having been a Head Teacher English, and Deputy Principal in two similarly disadvantaged and multicultural schools in South Western Sydney. He also had benefitted from roles as a NSW DEC English Consultant and executive roles in

well-known professional associations where he had become known among a network of teachers and DEC personnel for his innovative and progressive programs.

His view of equity was centred around ensuring all students accessed quality teaching programs and resources needed for a 21st century education. However, he was also focused on student responsibility and self-fulfilment through high expectations as part of his vision- so that students were all involved in setting their own ILPs, for which they also had responsibility:

So, always with me, the bottom line is about learning and student learning outcomes because you want to get the best [teaching and learning] that you can possibly get (Don: Southern Girls' High principal).

Simultaneously with improving student access to their learning in innovative ways, he also focused on the quality of teaching and learning so that students could achieve their goals and required outcomes. He initiated an evidence-based whole school evaluation agenda which ensured that all changes and reforms were driven by the data obtained from students and teachers at the school and decisions made were from school needs rather than from policy imperatives.

6.9 Conclusion

The six principal case studies have been introduced with reference to two significant factors. These included the school context at the time of the SSLSES National Partnership as well as the principal's vision for equity, both of which accounted for some of the more dominant influences impacting on principals' practices. Indeed, three main domains explicated from the principal case studies data and illustrate ways in which principals attempted to mediate some of the possible tensions associated with implementation of the SSLSES National Partnership for equity form the basis of the next chapters. These include analysis of principals' mediation of the accountability requirements of the SSLSES National Partnership and management of competitive market forces in Chapter 7; leadership practices in Chapter 8; and quality teaching for equity in Chapter 9.

Mediation in this study includes the ability to intercede in micropolitical ways and in ways counter to those anticipated, to manage the dilemmas occurring at times between the SSLSES National Partnership discourses, local and systemic contexts and student needs (Comber, 2012; Ryan 2012; Reid 2010). The critical domains drawn from the principal case studies depicting the ways in which principals implemented the SSLSES National Partnership for equity include the following:

Chapter 7: Mediating accountability regimes and competitive market forces for equity.

This chapter explores the ways in which principals managed the accountabilities of the SSLSES National Partnership reforms and the between-school competition generated under marketised education policies.

Chapter 8: Mediating leadership practices.

This chapter explores the ways in which principals exercised leadership when implementing the SSLSES National Partnership for equity.

Chapter 9: Mediating quality teaching.

This chapter examines each principal's understanding and implementation of quality teaching when implementing the SSLSES National Partnership's reforms. The chapter includes principals' focus on quality pedagogies in view of the implementation of the Australian teaching standards (APSTL).

6.9.1 Domains for Study.

The diagram in Figure 6.1 shows the interrelationship between the focal areas explicated from the six case studies and principals' practices within their school environment. Principals practices were influenced both by their school context, the policy environment and by their vision for equity and background experiences. The selected domains of practice explored in the study for evidence of mediation of policy imperatives for equity included mediation of accountability and market regimes, their leadership practices and their mediation of quality teaching to ensure rich pedagogical practices.

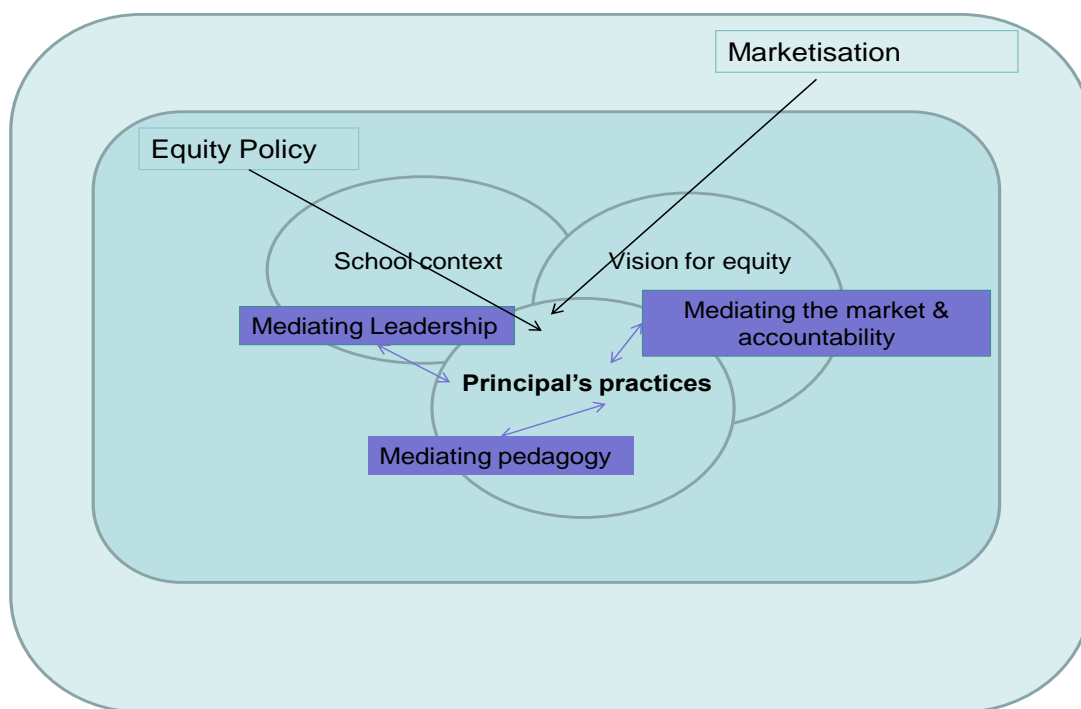


Figure 6.6: Diagram showing principals' mediated practices when implementing the SSLSES National Partnership.

The SSLSES National Partnership policy and accompanying educational infrastructure reflected what was valued by governments and policy makers and thus formed part of the context within which principals worked. The SSLSES National Partnership policy reflected many of the changing purposes of schooling from democratic to individualised and productive purposes emerging from the application of increasingly market rationalist philosophies (Reid 2010; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). These changing purposes were evident to various degrees in school modalities and contexts such as school support structures (such as their funding), the mandated curriculum (including school curriculum structures, assessment, reporting and pedagogy) and school cultures and ethos. These purposes shaped the SSLSES National Partnership educational discourse in some form and therefore impacted on principals' practices and any potential mediation processes.

Also, shaping principal practices significantly were the local school contexts. School contexts included the size, location, community type, and school attractiveness and resources evident. They also included the quality of buildings and technical infrastructure, and other factors, such as discipline and students' presentation in their communities. The diagram also shows the selected areas of mediation being analysed in this study and some of the interrelationship with the globalised education system within which the principals operated.

Chapter 7

Mediation of accountability regimes and marketisation for equity

Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge?

Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?

(T.S. Eliot. "The Rock")

7.1 Introduction

Principals' accountability and audit imposts for the SSLSES National Partnership program were shaped by policies underpinned by globalised neoliberal discourse and associated "performativity" pressures (Ball, 2012, pp. 30-31). Policy discourses, influenced by economic rationalism, denoted the 'problem' with education in terms of a lack of teaching quality and efficiency, and constructed the 'solution' in terms of market competition, parent choice and quality teaching. Governments, through policy, subsequently created regimes which measured these features, so that schools as organisations were made accountable, calculable, and comparable for 'stakeholders' and 'consumers' as well as among personnel.

The effect of economic rationalist governmentalities on personnel like principals was to configure them as "market actors" reshaped as human "capital" (Brown, 2015, pp. 30-31) Principals as market actors are positioned by governmentalities of policy to always try to strengthen their economic or competitive position in the market place by enhancing their value by any available means. Pursuit of opportunities therefore might also include improving capital value by improving market share and may also include appropriating required elements of social languages in the pursuit of required performativities. This determines their ethical mode of subjection (Foucault, 2005) and determined opportunities for possible mediation, resistance or compliance. Brown's (2015, p.28) definition of neoliberalism, based on many of Foucault's ideas about governmentality applied to social enterprises, was that of a governing rationality which enacts:

...an ensemble of economic policies in accord with its root principle of affirming free markets. These include deregulation of industries and capital flows; radical reduction in welfare state provisions ...privatized and outsourced public goods; ...the end of wealth redistribution as an economic or social political policy; the conversion of every human need...into a profitable enterprise... and the financialisation of everything...in the dynamics of everyday life.

This chapter examines discourses and practices of principals managing the SSLSES National Partnership program for equity, and for evidence of engagement in responsive regimes of ethical substance and micropolitical skills with which they mediate the accountability effects of the six SSLSES National Partnership reforms. The chapter proceeds by engaging in a case by case examination of the ways in which the six principals accommodated accountabilities for SSLSES National Partnership reforms and the ways by which they mediated tensions between accountabilities and their visions for equity in a marketised system. Principals' accession to reform accountabilities is examined in the light of Foucault's (2007) notions of governmentality and ethical counter-conduct and Ryan's (2012) notions of micropolitical acumen. Application of technologies of the self, seen in part, by parrhēsia (Foucault, 2010) are also examined. The application of these lenses enabled the ensuing examination of principals' practices to see how they mediated governmentalities for equity.

The accountability and marketing practices of Alison at Cottonwood Central School is considered, followed by discussions of the principal case studies of Parkeview Central, North Plains High, High Tops Public, Colborne High, and Southern Girls High in turn. Rural and regional cases are examined first followed by the two metropolitan cases. Rural schools were mostly involved in the earlier cohorts of schools (2009-10) to be allocated the SSLSES National Partnership, whilst metropolitan schools mostly comprised later cohorts (2011-12), accounting for the order of presentation.

7.2 Accountabilities at Cottonwood Central

On attaining the leadership of Cottonwood Central for the beginning of the 2009-2013 cohort of SSLSES National Partnership schools, the principal, Alison, immediately faced performativity requirements, as well as the falling enrolments of a school seemingly failing in the education marketplace. She noted SSLSES National Partnership accountabilities for strategising literacy, numeracy and participation improvements as well as teachers' performance management in quality teaching, and innovation and entrepreneurialism. Of most importance to her was the school's standing in the local community, since enrolments helped secure the schools resource sustainability. This determined her mode of subjection.

With the school competing poorly on most indicators, including enrolments, and quality teaching compared with other local schools, Alison's initial concern as she evaluated the school's situation, was with how to lead and manage the SSLSES National Partnership reform implementation and manage the school "disaster" that she felt was quickly spiralling out of

control. Of especial concern were the dwindling enrolments which meant loss of funding, her achievement of required accountabilities and her vision:

When I came here, I was warned that this school was in a *disastrous* state. It wasn't just the community and the socio-economic needs of the students. It was that the school culture itself was affecting students' learning...The school had to be reclassified down. Teachers left. There was no Year 12 and we had *only 4 kindergarten students enrolled!* The enrolments had to be built up from the bottom up. *Our resources were also being cut back* because of the drop in numbers. There was a *further narrowing of opportunities* for students as numbers dwindled and choices diminished...

When I came, there was a busload of students that went into Newtown [larger nearby regional town]. Parents also chose to send their children to the Catholic school leaving only those students whose parents *didn't much care* or didn't have *the wherewithal to move* them. There was a major social divide here then. Parents had no confidence in the school. There was a significant *social divide* with the central school drawing students from struggling families where opportunities were already lacking state (added emphases) (Alison: Cottonwood Central principal).

The self-governmentalities of Alison's practices (Foucault, 2000) when examined, indicate that Alison's priorities were to ensure the competitiveness of Cottonwood Central in the marketplace where she sought the enrolments of parents and students who did "care" and who did have the "wherewithal to move". In so doing, she prioritised her accountabilities to her potential parents of enrolments. Also evident were her attitudes about what contributed to an equitable school. Alison had defined her vision of equity as the provision of additional learning experiences to enable disadvantaged students the same opportunities as mainstream students. In the short term, the SSLSES National Partnership reforms may have helped provide those experiences. However, it was clear that regaining additional numbers and ensuring a greater student diversity were also important for the longer term, as they ensured improved market share and thus improved sustainability of program resources. Equity could also be achieved because of being able to attract a more diverse and numerous group of students and further competition.

Alison's discourse illustrates hybrid social language, illustrating both the need to "compete" and the need for equitable "opportunities". Her vision underlines her emphases on appropriate 'inputs' which secure social and educational capital, or 'outputs', for students, and eventually sustainable programs for the school.

The SSLSES National Partnership program was important as it helped us to improve the school and helped to fund programs that the community saw as

important to give the students *opportunities* that they would not normally get here. It [the SSLSES National Partnership] also allowed us to *compete* more equitably with the Catholic school (Alison: Cottonwood Central principal).

Alison attended to the SSLSES National Partnership performance accountabilities for completion of the required systems analysis and associated planning targets in the first weeks of being offered the SSLSES National Partnership. System Analysis templates for completion (Refer to Figure 5.1) required significant administration. Alison acknowledged that she acceded to accountabilities while dictating the ways in which funds would be directed for her vision:

The National Partnership, whilst good, did involve a lot of paperwork ... It was the first time that I had done a situational analysis and the school planning stuff. It took a lot of time to complete ... [but]... I utilized the National Partnership program [funds] to help *focus [on]the changes that needed to be made* here to halt the downward spiral that had begun (added emphasis) (Alison: Cottonwood Central principal).

However, her focus remained on securing potential enrolments enabling her to exercise market share in her community. Not only does she explain in her interview, that her very first task was to employ a Community Liaison Officer (CLO) who could help attract local parents to the school, but Alison's ethical stance in terms of Foucault's (2000) ideas about self-governmentality and technologies of the self, were also illustrated by these priorities. She noted the importance of seeking out the additional enrolments and rebuilding community relationships:

The CLO helped to sell these school learning programs positively out in the community. Also, the music teacher who comes from Dunstan one day a week teaches the Violin to students and students then have opportunities to play in the band and join with the [District schools] band. The music teacher is just brilliant! ...The [SSLSES] National Partnership funded these sorts of special opportunities for students. The equity funding moved us through the transition that had to be made here. But now the National Partnership has finished and we must scramble to find the staffing to keep the programs going (Alison: Cottonwood Central principal).

Alison's mode of subjection, or criteria on which her behaviour was based, demonstrated that her pre-eminent values were those aligned with acceding to some of her parents' requirements for their children's education. She valued securing the school's and her own situation despite the school's pedagogical issues exposed by the school's evaluations and her initial criticisms of a "school culture affecting students' learning". This served a mode of subjection that also

valued pre-eminently her own security as leader and her own developing technologies of the self (Foucault, 2000) within the education marketplace. In prioritising a deliberate quest for enrolments before acceding to school plan targets, Alison was engaged in a form of counter-conduct to subvert reform governmentalities after weighing up the associated risks. Her priorities also showed that her conduct to secure enrolments and sustainable resources involved a form of *parrhēsia* related to a lack of confidence in short-term reform imperatives of literacy and numeracy improvement targets for her school.

Coincidentally, the attraction of additional resources and enrolments also helped her to maintain funding of additional curriculum opportunities that would also help her attain greater equity as she envisaged it for her students. Her equity telos as well as her micropolitical response to policy governmentalities ensured that students at Cottonwood Central all benefitted from similar educational opportunities to their non-disadvantaged peers. Alison's mediation of competitive accountabilities indirectly aligned with her equity telos for students through her creative and performing arts programs and music lessons, all funded and marketed by SSLSES National Partnership funds, to attract students. The SSLSES National Partnership program and its accountabilities were successfully aligned with, and mediated by, Alison's emphasis on the need for school enrolment growth. Alison concludes that: "The National Partnership funded these sorts of special opportunities for students. The equity funding moved us through the transition that had to be made here".

In terms of accountability for the other reforms, Alison eventually complied with most reform areas in subsequent years of the SSLSES National Partnership by mediating and prioritising governmentalities as she saw relevant. She was always compliant in applying appropriate discourses as seen in required principal's reports for Annual School Reports (Cottonwood Central Annual School Report, 2012-13). Alison's accountability for the SSLSES National Partnership reforms in literacy and numeracy, for instance, whilst secondary to those of her re-positioning of the school for market share (and her status as leader), were finally met by delegating responsibility to the region's literacy and numeracy consultants assisting the school. She stated that:

We were mandated to do Reading to Learn (R2L) and Multilit (as the intervention) as part of the National Partnerships ... In the meantime, we began the process of development in R2L. JW and CK (literacy consultants) helped me to get this process rolling (Alison: Cottonwood Central principal)

Alison's use of medium and low modality phrases like "get[ting] the process rolling" and "to some extent" in her social language shows the lower priority of these. In implementing the use of the School Measurement, Assessment and Reporting Toolkit (SMART) (for analysing NAPLAN data) Alison also eventually paid the required attention to accountability audits of school achievement measures in literacy and numeracy. These were the data by which the school's performance was being formally monitored over the time of the SSLSES National Partnership program and Alison's compliant use of relevant social language shows her preparedness to accede to discourses about school plan targets without necessarily prioritising requisite practices. She says about their use of the School Measurement, Assessment and Reporting Toolkit (SMART) for analyzing NAPLAN data:

We did examine the Smart Data package *to some extent*, and we used the data to *help* us focus on *some* aspects of literacy and numeracy. We only spent *a short time on this*. (added emphases) (Alison: Cottonwood Central principal).

Alison's minor interest in the NAPLAN scores and the associated My School website also constituted a form of counter-conduct to the audit performativities associated with the website (Niesche, 2013). She exercised technologies of the self to ensure that she complied with the most overt governmentality requirements of the SSLSES National Partnership but that any reforms conflicting with prioritized niche programs were appropriately submerged beneath her emphases:

This [My School] was not an issue as parents were *not really interested*. They were only really interested that their children had the *same opportunities* in their learning as other students. They didn't care too much about *the rankings*. They liked the breadth of education we were offering and [that] we were beginning to be competitive (added emphases) (Alison: Cottonwood Central principal)

As an associated feature of her accountability for improved teaching performance, Alison also updated the school's performance appraisal scheme to align it with the professional teaching standards and partially meet reform governmentalities (see also Chapter 9). By the end of the SSLSES National Partnership in 2012, all new staff (a third of her staffing establishment) had applied for proficient teaching status with the NSW Institute of Teachers using the standards. The institution of the Teaching Assessment Review (TARS) processes involved all teachers presenting evidence showing accomplishment of the standards, or showing that they were working on areas which needed further development. Alison stated:

We use the elements of the [NSW Institute of Teachers] standards in our TARS and EARS process. Teachers talk the elements through with supervisors. And the

executive go through the elements with me... There are no observations of lessons. Our TARS and EARS can be time consuming but it works for the school (Alison: Cottonwood Central principal).

However, as Alison implemented reforms for “best practice performance management” (COAG, 2009, p.12) of staff for which she was accountable, she simultaneously aligned required performativities with securing a more ‘governable’ staff. This also aligned with her mode of subjectivity attuned to school competitiveness. She needed staff compliant to parent and accountability demands. These areas will be discussed further in Chapter 8 on Quality Teaching.

Alison met many of the key accountabilities especially in implementing performance management and mandated literacy and numeracy programs. She also completed all SSLSES National Partnership program administrative and performance management requirements. What was evident from Alison’s implementation of the program was her ability to exercise conduct counter to several SSLSES National Partnership accountabilities, so that she mediated aspects of the reforms. In utilising counter-conduct and a micropolitical stance she has been able to align her accountabilities to her community’s priorities. She re-established the school’s competitive position and secured resource sustainability. At the same time, however, she has acceded to aspects of the quality teaching and performance management accountabilities seen in her adoption of the social language of the NSW Institute of Teachers’ Professional Teaching Standards (ITPTS) so as to secure a more ‘docile’ staff. This simultaneously aligned with her vision for equity as she secured wide ranging extra-curricular choices and a more compliant staff focused on the ‘quality of teaching’ as described in the SSLSES National Partnership Discourse model.

Finally, at the completion of the SSLSES National Partnership in 2012, Alison, using the intertextual discourses and situated meanings of the reform targets, reported on her school’s achievements in the school’s Annual School Report. She suggested that she had compliantly acceded to policy demands and that she had achieved:

A huge cultural change ... in every classroom K-6. ‘*Reading to Learn*’ is consistently delivered across K-6. There has been a huge improvement in the delivery of *quality Mathematics* and we now have consistent programs that reflect the syllabus... *Reading levels are rising* and the ‘Multilit’ program has had positive and *measurable success*... (Cottonwood Central Annual School Report, 2012-13, p.17)

7.3 Mediating the Market at Cottonwood Central

Many of Alison's accountabilities to her community were met by strongly marketing the extra-curricular programs thought advantageous by parents prepared to enroll their children in the school. She avoided accountability for the transparency of student results in NAPLAN sought by the most evident policy governmentalities. Alison sought solutions for changing the school's marketability on her arrival with the help of the CLO who worked with the school's potentially more influential farming parents. This involved marketing the school as an innovative enrolment destination via the institution of extra-curricular niche opportunities that parents indicated they were interested in for their children. The CLO operated a concerted marketing campaign in the local bank and various shop fronts to attract the attention of parents in the district, utilizing the SSLSES National Partnership funds to help her. Alison's goal of such marketing was so that she could "compete" for desired enrolments with the local Catholic school:

The [SSLSES] National Partnership program was important as it helped us to improve the school and helped to fund programs that the community saw as important to give the students opportunities that they would not normally get here. It [the SSLSES National Partnership] also allowed us to *compete* more equitably with the Catholic school [added emphasis] (Alison: Cottonwood Central principal).

Alison utilised her knowledge of education systems to mediate the performativities expected in school planning documentation to those which would make the most impact in her marketplace. An audited data system becomes more difficult to measure in a constantly evolving school culture. With the increasing diversity of students now enrolling at Cottonwood Central, the socio-economic profile and associated ICSEA score of the school changed (Table 7.1). At Cottonwood, the result of mediation in her marketplace was a changing demographic positively related to an improving socio-economic status level. The position of Cottonwood Central in relation to NAPLAN results for similar schools on My School also showed corresponding changes, so that the principal's introductory overview on the My School website (2017) noted "The focus on Literacy and Numeracy has been reflected in outstanding NAPLAN growth".

Table 7.1: Cottonwood Central School’s enrolment data and related ICSEA variables

Enrolments	Enrolments	Enrolments	Enrolments	Enrolments	Enrolments
2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Approx.	Approx.	Approx.	Approx.	Approx.	Approx.
111	158	160	194	160	190
ICSEA Value	ICSEA Value	ICSEA Value	ICSEA Value	ICSEA Value	ICSEA Value
761	810	824	828	846	834

As principal of Cottonwood Central, Alison exercised agency over the management of the SSLSES National Partnership accountabilities and mediated aspects of the reforms to attain a competitive place in the market as well as her vision for equity. In the struggle against subjection to policy accountabilities she ensured through multiple forms of counter-conduct that she was able to mediate many of these policy imperatives for the benefit of the school, the students and her original ‘telos’. She stated:

The National Partnership has worked for us. *We forced* [researcher’s emphases] the [SSLSES]National Partnership reforms to work for what we wanted for equity in our school (Alison: Cottonwood Central principal).

Alison’s stance, however, was at the expense of the quality of Key Learning Area (KLA) staffing and a responsive KLA curriculum structure. Alison’s struggles and choices were illustrative of Brown’s (2015) concerns about the impact of neoliberal modes of governmentality now dominating marketplaces. Conduct was at the expense of neighbouring schools and Cottonwood Central’s own curriculum structures. Despite this, she enhanced her own and the school’s present and future value through ‘self-investments’ and ‘self-management’ (Foucault, 2010) that, in turn, attracted investment in the form of additional enrolments which will add to her ongoing ability to sustain resources. Capital market conduct entails increasing or maintaining one’s own ratings, whether through NAPLAN results, or, as in this case, increasing enrolments.

7.4 Accountabilities at Parkeview Central (K-12)

Stuart’s approach to the SSLSES National Partnership systems analysis and planning templates was collegial when he found the staff at Parkeview Central very tight-knit, but supportive. Both Stuart and his Head Teacher (HT), Secondary Studies, Susan, engaged closely with the accountabilities required by the SSLSES National Partnership discourses. They indicated

compliance with school analysis and planning procedures within the confines of the templates, not realising that the use of the situated meanings of SSLSES National Partnership discourse were important as program governmentalities. The HT, Susan, says that compliance to reforms is important for “feedback”:

We were all made accountable by the National Partnership. I think it is good that we are accountable for what we do in the school. We always pride ourselves on our work and it’s good to have the feedback about our achievements (Susan: Parkeview Central HT).

However, Stuart had never led the implementation of a large-scale equity program before and was unaware of the significance of correct discourse appropriation for program compliance. After collaboration with staff on the systems analysis and school planning strategies, Stuart prioritised the employment of an additional teacher in the primary section to enable the student numbers to be better distributed (even though numbers were just one short of acquisition of an additional teacher). Stuart’s supervising School Education Director (SED) exerted disciplinary power over Stuart by withholding funding until appropriate reform social language was deployed, and accountabilities were utilised correctly in templates to justify the use of funding. Stuart, as leader, was subsequently required to engage with the SED in the appropriate conversations about the school literacy and numeracy targets as part of the systems’ analysis (Figure 5.1) and not engage in a resources Discourse model. Stuart’s leadership of required reform discourse involving literacy and numeracy targets had been questioned and hence his power as leader was undermined in the initial stages of the SSLSES National Partnership (see also Chapter 8).

It was not until Stuart adopted the appropriate SSLSES National Partnership discourse that expressed school planning targets in terms of the literacy and numeracy targets instead of an additional teacher, that Stuart could access the grant. The incident quickly made him realise that the SSLSES National Partnership embodied an underpinning performativity regime within which he was positioned as a market actor, or enactor, in an economised transaction (Brown 2015). The National Partnership Information Guide targeted this transaction in one of the core elements of its discourse where: “Literacy and numeracy attainment is a cornerstone of schooling from which students build their future education work and life opportunities.” (Australian Government & NSW DET, 2009a, p. 2). Stuart finally utilised the required social language and terminologies in exchange for the grant. The discourses he subsequently employed embodied the transactions being made. He thereafter, still somewhat hesitantly,

summarised his achievements in terms of his accountabilities for literacy and numeracy targets as:

Mostly we [achieved our *targets*], with the low SES funding, with 4 classes [created] in primary ... We generally achieved the targets as a combined 3 - 5 -7- 9 group. We increased the *results for those NAPLAN classes* (added emphases). (Stuart: Parkeview Central principal).

After this experience of being made performative within the terms of the SSLSES National Partnership policy's discourse, Stuart's accountabilities for the reforms were closely maintained. He became a self-disciplined participant in the stated accountabilities. The requisite literacy and numeracy programs were implemented, together with other accountabilities, such as the performance management processes, to fulfil program imperatives. All subsequent administration utilising the SSLSES National Partnership was couched in terms of the required social language and fulfilled required performativity processes.

7.5 Mediating the Market at Parkview Central.

The experiences with his supervisor inhibited Stuart's opportunities to market his school's participation in the SSLSES National Partnership in ways other than via the attainment of students on the NAPLAN and other achievement tests. Parents were able to more easily place their children in private schools because of students' attainment of above state average results in NAPLAN. Many private boarding schools regarded above average NAPLAN results positively and selected students on the basis of results. The exodus left fewer than 30 students in the secondary area. Without realising the value of the NAPLAN test results as capital in the education market place, and without having established any other school assets with which to market the school, Stuart criticised the market power allocated to rankings in the NAPLAN which empowered his wealthier parents to make alternative school choices which contributed to inequities for remaining secondary students at Parkeview Central:

Private schools do [utilise the NAPLAN for selection] and I think parents use it as... an excuse to take the kids out of school in Year 6 and Year 7 if they have good results. I think it's terrible that students should be judged on NAPLAN results. It's a one-off test! (Stuart: Parkeview Central principal).

Parents who had the wherewithal to make choices made them based on NAPLAN test based selection into boarding schools. NAPLAN results and associated pedagogies associated with decontextualised literacy and numeracy targets had become the capital traded in a marketized system when they were made high stakes by the unmediated SSLSES National Partnership.

Stuart's concurrence with the required accountabilities in the SSLSES National Partnership and their subsequent marketing on My School, facilitated parental participation in the competitive education market to the ongoing detriment of disadvantaged students remaining at his school. The school continued to lose over two thirds of its students between Years 6 and 7, due to the school's compliance with accountabilities. Stuart was ultimately unable to mediate the school's accountabilities against private school competitors in the education market place. Bureaucratic and disciplinary supervision forced compliance within the audited spaces occupied by non-disadvantaged regional and metropolitan schools where he was forced into unfair competition.

Compared to Alison who mediated her school's market capital to create niche programs with which to compete for market share, Stuart was prevented from mediating the school's focus on literacy and numeracy because of his accountabilities for those emphases normalised by the SSLSES National Partnership reforms. This was even though the school offered, for example, access to significant senior schooling choices via a video-conferenced curriculum and other technological strengths which were marketed as niche programs by other principals like Alison.

7.6 Accountabilities at North Plains High School

In North Plains High School's case study, Marjory was influenced strongly by many of the implications of performativity requirements of the SSLSES National Partnership policy discourses, having been allocated additional National Partnership programs such as Centre of Excellence status. She ensured all policy accountabilities in school planning documentation were strategically and micropolitically allocated in planning documents. However, her origins as a student in North Plains High herself meant that her real mode of subjection and accountabilities were to her community and their equity needs. She also was mindful of the deficit discourses inherent in SSLSES National Partnership governmentalities and protected the local community against their implications, preferring instead, to publicise positive discourses. Ethical subjectivities were subsequently in some tension with SSLSES National Partnership reform governmentalities. She was critical of the negative connotations implied in the SSLSES National Partnership discourses explaining that:

I didn't advertise it [SSLSES National Partnership] hugely. I didn't see it as a positive thing. The deficit language was the concern with it. When I wrote about it in documents etc., I left out the "Low SES", so I didn't flag it. I just ...advertised the fact that we had close on \$420,000 extra a year to spend on programs for our kids. (Marjory: North Plains principal).

Thus, Marjory, like Alison, managed the risk of prioritising certain reform accountabilities over others by asserting an ethical mode of subjection, based more strongly on her equity telos. For her, the quality of teaching across North Plains High was most important for student engagement and equity, but also for marketing the school's competitiveness in the market place. She particularly valued the education that she visualised for students at North Plains High. Her view of equity comprised an 'outputs' focus that valued students' access to societal opportunities (see Chapter 6) as well as the educational relationships built on quality teaching. This ensured that the capital associated with the quality of teaching, became synonymous with the school name, and students' identification with credible academic performance in public competitive pathways and transition points, such as the HSC. Marjory stated in explanation: "It's not only what you put on the board, but it's that the learning becomes based on the [quality of] relationships built" and later in the interview she comments: "We've got some good kids here. Most would get ATARs of 90 and some over 90 ... I know the quality of what is available here and we get kids into tertiary pathways all the time" (Marjory: North Plains High principal) (see also Chapter 9).

Marjory took many of the specific SSLSES National Partnership accountabilities seriously for the sake of students in the town forced to compete against Trenton students for post-school opportunities. However, she selected the accountabilities she would prioritise based on her mode of subjectivity. She noted the need to oversee these accountabilities carefully with reference to her emphases on equity and school identity. Marjory stated: "While I am sitting here strategising ... You don't get to do everything... You need to be directive of the way the development will happen".

Similarly, to other schools, the SSLSES National Partnership systems analyses and plans were appropriately documented and submitted— albeit with all the SSLSES National Partnership targets clearly documented. In terms of all the reform accountabilities, including literacy and numeracy improvements and staff performance management, Marjory complied with key accountabilities in literacy and numeracy development but mediated her response to these imperatives according to her equity telos. She stated: "The other aspect of the SSLSES National Partnership included the emphasis on Literacy and Numeracy which was driven by (the needs of) our middle and lower NAPLAN results..." but she also noted that, "No matter how good the literacy and numeracy program is, they are not going to fix those issues [of low SES status and trauma]". Marjory subsequently delegated the implementation of the school's literacy and numeracy accountabilities (for NAPLAN) to the school's Learning Support Team, which also assisted students individually with their learning and socio-economic needs. She clearly

complied appropriately with systems analyses and planning governmentalities, whilst operating according to her own priorities.

However, Marjory also demonstrated a keen micropolitical awareness of the need to manage these priorities in market terms of mitigating ‘risk’ of reform accountabilities. For instance, staff collectively resisted the implementation of NAPLAN testing in 2010. Marjory was forced to intercede in this resistance, and govern staff conduct to explain the conditional accountabilities of the SSLSES National Partnership funding. She noted how the regular audits of the students’ basic skill levels through NAPLAN testing had been traded as capital for the (regulated) power that the additional funding gave the school to implement more ‘beneficial’ programs when they accepted the SSLSES National Partnership. She explained how important the risk assessments were to her compliance or mediation, in association with accountabilities, She explained the trade-offs to staff:

Staff in the end agreed that we as a school were implementing the programs to benefit the kids, and [that] they had accepted the funding agreements based on the use of the NAPLAN as a measuring tool. (Marjory: North Plains High principal).

In implementing the other reform accountabilities such as ‘best case performance management’, Marjory micropolitically aligned her focus on the competitiveness of her schools’ pedagogy in the marketplace with her accountabilities for implementing stronger performance management programs which will be further examined in Chapter 9. However, Marjory engaged in extensive counter-conduct to meet her accountabilities for provision and analysis of performance data as evidence of reform implementation. She applied her own operational governmentalities in liaison with partner research institutions to provide her own evidence of success and to build evidence of professional capital (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). She abandoned policy emphases for provision of NAPLAN data as evidence for the quality of her school programs. She reasoned: “So the NAPLAN analysis ...we were doing that anyway, but it was of little value, because it is a snapshot in time. You can do a much more informative analysis...” (Marjory: North Plains High principal). Using policy “borrowing” or practices modelled on policy accountabilities, (Lingard, 2010), she exercised regular audits and evaluations across the gamut of her own school’s programs and practices. She probed her own school data utilizing the resources of the SSLSES National Partnership. She explained that she had “come into the process with an understanding of using measurement, the processes of school improvement and the necessity of [using] the quality of teaching.” (Marjory: North Plains High principal). She finally says of the SSLSES National Partnership and the “permissions” she garnered from its governmentalities for her practices:

What they did, was give us enough money to give us *permission* to go very deeply into our schools and understand them *very deeply*... on a *data basis* but also on an anecdotal basis. This was the most helpful thing [about the National Partnership] (added emphases) (Marjory: North Plains principal).

Marjory micropolitically applied her knowledge of the way data as evidence was used in education systems to feed competition and transparency. She mediated the narrow data performativities with delivery of her own evidence of broad based school reform based on quality pedagogies and other school-based programs. She countered the audit conduct of the SSLSES National Partnership accountabilities by conducting more complex and relevant audits of her own school data. She incorporated practices which enabled her school to make a competitive impact on the marketplace by promoting her school as an innovative but equitable school with excellent academic results obtained with quality pedagogies.

Subsequent judgments about school and principal performance against the SSLSES National Partnership's narrow performativities can become more difficult for supervisors and neoliberal proponents when they are presented against such rich data sets gathered with the help of associated research partners. The complex and rich evidence gathered at North Plains High was collected from both qualitative and quantitative sources. Marjory summarised some of the sources of these data sets and made comparisons with the narrow NAPLAN data set required and its lack of reflection on the requisite quality teaching imprimatur.

Another of the analyses we do is an *Instructional Practices Inventory*⁸. We do that once a year now... So we were looking at the types of teaching and learning that was happening in classrooms. It's like a snapshot checklist of what is happening in someone's classroom while you are in there, and its different types of learning that it focuses on... And we were using *Time on Task Analyses*, and different types of observational tools in classrooms to pick up what is happening at different phases of the lesson...and what was happening across the board in Year 10... (Marjory: North Plains principal)

In summary, Marjory's accountabilities were achieved by strategizing multilayered tactics that resulted in a re-imagining of her leadership (see also Chapter 8). Her practices therefore focused predominantly on enriching the quality of teaching and the achievement of equity within the school's community, and on marketing these approaches in an entrepreneurial way across her school's educational community. She discounted much of the accountability evidence as "of little value" in her complex educational environment as she countered the conduct expected with her own priorities.

⁸ A set of quality teaching skills indicating the depth of creative and problem solving in a check box format

Additional educational capital accrued to Marjory's approaches with her development of collegial arrangements with her wider educational community as well as her community of schools which countered the expectations of competitive conduct required by the governmentalities of the SSLSES National Partnerships. This meant that Marjory could account for SSLSES National Partnership implementation practices by simultaneously focusing on quality experiences and pedagogies across the school as her operating telos.

7.7 Mediating the Market at North Plains High.

The North Plains High School data demonstrated that Marjory as a market actor was positioned by policy governmentalities to seek always to try to strengthen her economic and competitive position in the market place by means of enhancing the school's value and status as an enrolment destination (Brown, 2015). These tendencies were evident in Marjory's practices as she mediated policy imperatives for the benefit of her students in competition with institutions in nearby larger and more educationally diverse communities. She engaged in measures which predominantly aligned with both policy imperatives and program accountabilities but also engaged in micropolitical strategies and counter-conduct which enabled her to strategically market her school and attain equity for her students.

The emphasis on the quality of teaching in the SSLSES National Partnership implementation and information guides (Australian Government, Smarter Schools National Partnership, et al., 2010) and the promotion of being a Centre of Excellence enabled Marjory to prioritise the reform focus on the quality of teaching in her school. Ultimately, these emphases enabled her to establish a niche entrepreneurial focus which helped her position the school strongly in the competitive marketplace (see Chapter 9).

As a Centre of Excellence, she was also able to align accountability for literacy and numeracy changes and quality pedagogy emphases with her marketing to feeder schools. Since the feeder primary school's wealthier students travelled by subsidised bus to Trenton secondary schools there was a need for a strategic marketing campaign targeted at the school's 6-7 transition process to capture student enrolments. Marjory micropolitically mediated the SSLSES National Partnership's program to fulfil her accountability targets and simultaneously market the school's literacy, numeracy and quality teaching strategies. She funded the implementation of the targeted Quicksmart literacy and numeracy programs for students needing support in the feeder primary schools, recognising, that collegially, her school was also well placed to help build a normative community of practice in the area. She similarly involved primary students in quality pedagogy experiences in the school's transition programs. She explained how they

were prepared to broaden the basic skills experience to look at the “whole” child, using their developing skills in pedagogy:

We track them from the primary school, students who have significant learning needs...low literacy and numeracy...and their parents have low literacy and numeracy, and they suffer from the deprivation caused by low SES and traumas... In order to put into place programs that fix those issues we [also] need to do more than look at just literacy and numeracy but we need to look at the whole child. No matter how good the literacy and numeracy program is they are not going to fix those issues (Marjory: North Plains principal).

In this way, entrepreneurial skills were aligned with accountabilities and exercised to maintain the desirability of her school as a secondary school destination for all students in the North Plains drawing area. Such support also normalised quality pedagogy practices across her school community. This was in counter-conduct to the SSLSES National Partnership’s emphasis on competition created by data on the My School website. In this way, Marjory exercised governmentality rationality and technologies to improve educational capital for all students in the North Plains community. Collegial conduct among the community of schools became a significant lever to counter competition from the rest of the market.

Marjory’s personal mode of subjection was therefore closely and ethically tied to that of her local community with whom she shared close bonds as a prior student. Her ethical telos, extended to equity for a diverse student group, and to ‘hometown’ pride in her school and community. This made Marjory more sensitive to policy rationalities and technologies as applied to her school and entrusted to her governmentality techniques and understandings. With a strong telos developed around equity and opportunities for the diversity of the students in her community, Marjory also saw the marketing of reforms of the SSLSES National Partnership as a longer-term benefit to her community. Specifically, she noted that “Re-enrolment [at North Plains High] leads to more management of inter-generational issues and social re-building. This is [for the benefit of] our community” (Marjory: North Plains High principal). As a community ‘insider’ Marjory was especially sensitive to the deficit tone of the SSLSES National Partnership program and the way it positioned her school and its community as socio-economic ‘outsiders’ by means of its discursive competitive marketing intent.

Whilst Marjory’s language was not always couched in market or capital terms, it was clear that the intention to utilise the additional enrolments for sustainable resourcing, in competition with Trenton schools, was also one of the major drivers of her practices. The importance of experiential transition programs and her work in quality pedagogies was the basis of her marketing strategy (see Chapter 8). The use of evidence-based language describing her

achievements in evaluative social language terms similarly showed some re-positioning as principal in the economically rationalised and marketised system. It was clear also from her overall emphasis in setting the school apart for its research into quality pedagogy that Marjory saw the importance of establishing her school as an entrepreneurial entity in this area in response to the policy rationales.

Marjory similarly marketed her school's accomplishments in the broader educational community to promote her gains across the broader educational audience. This secured creditable educational accolades for her school's achievements as Marjory constantly communicated with interested researchers, her school community, and human rights representatives, among others, who viewed her school achievements positively, especially in quality teaching as pedagogy and the programs for her Aboriginal students. She smiled, for instance, when she was praised for her community and interagency approach: "The Ombudsman told me that I was the only Connected Community school he's seen!" (Marjory: North Plains High principal). Data presented to critical audiences was that gathered by action research processes (Reason & Bradbury, 2007) in counter-conduct to the prescribed NAPLAN and My School evidence. This always formed a critical part of her marketing strategy.

Notably, her required school achievement data showed little change and reflected little of the success story that Marjory chose to market. However, in Marjory's extended education community of practice, which included her educational and research colleagues, the achievement of SSLSES National Partnership performativities seemed to matter little. North Plains High's mediated narrative merely demonstrated the NAPLAN's low credibility as a measure of success of school reform among Marjory's audience. Marjory was aware of her parrhēsia in marketing her alternate practices in contrast to the performativities expected in the SSLSES National Partnership when she stated that:

They asked for a certain set of things so I gave it to them. Giving them all this other stuff just lengthens the [SSLSES National Partnership] report... and my impression was that they were not going to use it anyway... That we achieved these instructional improvements didn't [ever] get much commented on. (Marjory: North Plains High principal)

The data required for My School and in SSLSES National Partnership reports similarly presented little evidence of the school's entrepreneurial success which saw Marjory retain her school's status and resources after the SSLSES National Partnership had concluded, unlike other schools, such as High Tops, and Parkeview, which hadn't been able to market their achievements broadly for future sustainability, nor had an amenable context. Utilizing SSLSES

National Partnership technologies and rationalities, Marjory subverted the reductionist and deficit discourses of the SSLSES National Partnership accountabilities to create a niche market for promoting North Plains High for its quality of teaching. These included understandings about mediating school change, program implementation for quality pedagogy and micropolitical management of accountabilities.

7.8 Accountabilities at High Tops Public school

Similarly to all other case studies, required accountabilities were adhered to in the completion of the required system analyses, school planning and required reports for Natalie at High Tops Public. However, having completed the required systems analysis template, and ensured that she implemented suggested literacy and numeracy programs like Accelerated Literacy, Natalie also secured additional school base-line analyses from educational academics from rural universities in NSW for more targeted educational programs. Her mode of subjection was to secure innovative programs for students for equity. She immediately promoted a positive discourse about the school's needs and programs. Academics helped her establish several innovative programs especially tailored for the High Tops Public students and enabled Natalie to select programs counter to those supported by the SSLSES National Partnership program.

The school was, however, also subject by association with its context, to some deficit discourse because of its low SES student clientele, which Natalie sought to manage despite accountabilities. She says that in implementing more responsive programs that:

Students become resilient at High Tops Public. They learn how to meet the obstacles and get over them because of the additional support we give them to manage this (Natalie: High Tops Public principal).

Natalie's ethical stance was based on ensuring meaningful educational opportunities for students to engage them for an equitable future. This was the focus of accountabilities at High Tops Public. Natalie stressed the quality of programs that they chose to implement and explained:

We used the National Partnership Program as a launch-pad to help us do the things that would enable us to make a difference for our students. We wanted to create excitement about learning and facilitate change in our school for our students and staff. We regarded it as an exciting opportunity and all staff participated. (Natalie: High Tops Public principal).

Chris, one of the school's Assistant Principals stated that they:

[U]sed the programs with *proven results*. For example, Fast For Word, Accelerated Literacy, Digi Ed...So we looked at the Fast For Word program's results in other schools and decided it would be important in *developing comprehension, memory retention and problem solving* [These were the indicators of success for this program] (Chris: High Tops Public AP interview).

In response to other accountabilities, unlike most other cases studied, Natalie didn't implement requisite changes to teacher performance management, and neither did she force a whole school developmental approach on the school, preferring instead to focus just on the additional collaboratively developed innovative programs for students. She says "The TARS/ EARS system *continued in the way it has always worked here. We made it work with what we wanted to do*". In this sense, she operated in ways counter to the discourses of the SSLSES National Partnership reform. Staff responsible for implementing the new innovative programs were given full responsibility for the management of program approaches but most worked collegially with all other staff in planning and evaluation.

Nonetheless, with the SSLSES National Partnership repositioning principals as accountable for specific actions, Natalie did ensure that when supervised she had acceded to processes for which she was most obviously accountable via the use of required templates incorporating acceptable discourse. Additional teachers and support staff were employed with SSLSES National Partnership funds to implement all targeted programs (including Accelerated Literacy) across all classrooms in addition to the innovative programs developed. She was also made accountable for the financial administration of the program and when they overspent on a program, the supervising SED made the school repay the debt of \$500. Natalie explained:

We were also careful to make sure that we were *accountable* for the spending in the National Partnership Program and that the additional funding was spent in the way it was intended... Reports detailing our anticipated and real expenditure were submitted to the program [supervisors] at least twice a year and a detailed report was *provided about achievement of targets* at the end of every year to the DEC (and Smarter Schools Low SES National Partnership group) (Natalie: High Tops Public principal).

Due to Natalie's ethical telos and belief in the importance of quality programs for students, she recognized the importance of working with parents in close partnerships which ensured students engaged fully in their education, and subsequently society. For instance, an attendance program was purchased, which sent an automatic mobile phone message reminder to parents about notable events and attendance. Community partnerships were also subject to Natalie's expressions of counter-conduct to the marketizing agenda of the SSLSES National Partnership despite being one of the reform areas promoting school accountability. Natalie's vision for

equity ensured that school collegiality and unity of purpose was a source of support for all parents. Natalie subsequently developed a strongly collegial and interrelated community for the ultimate benefit of student equity instead of acceding to the competitive, transparent marketizing accountabilities of the SSLSES National Partnership.

However, accountabilities for reform imperatives in literacy and numeracy and the use of My School were met with counter-conduct. Natalie also recognised the inappropriateness of the NAPLAN by itself, as an assessment for her students, calling it “high stakes”. She saw it as just one of the ways in which students’ literacy and numeracy progress could be assessed. Her comments emphasized the small role that NAPLAN played in student assessment and diagnostic teaching at High Tops Public:

The NAPLAN can be considered *high stakes*, but we need to also regard it here as a *one-off test* that is used with all of our other *assessments*. We make sure however that our *literacy and numeracy teaching is very strong* and we monitor the SMART data to check the data when it comes back (added emphases) (Natalie: High Tops Public principal).

Additionally, in counter-conduct to the more limited systems analyses required for the SSLSES National Partnership, evaluations of the innovative implemented programs were undertaken rigorously and with different success criteria. Natalie and her staff had envisaged that equity for all students leaving High Tops Public would involve their having the same opportunities for success as all their peers as they continued into the local high schools and thence on to further education and into society at large (Equity Program Principal Questionnaire). Hence, all innovative programs were evaluated using an action research approach (Reason & Bradbury, 2007) with base line data taken by university academics working with the school. They demonstrated reform outputs that provided multifaceted and well researched narratives about the effects of the programs funded by the SSLSES National Partnership program. Academics noted student engagement in their learning and their readiness for transition to secondary school as evidence of success of the programs, unlike criteria promoted by the SSLSES National Partnership. For instance, Aleisha (High Tops Public technology teacher) noted the importance of their criteria for judging success of the SSLSES National Partnership programs at High Tops Public, thereby illustrating the counter-conduct applied to notions of ‘evidence’, ‘competition’, and ‘success’:

The result [of the National Partnership programs] was that a significant number of students from here were nominated into leadership and academic programs at High School and more than 50% got into these streams from here - better than all other

schools from round here... which shows that our students [have] become just as competitive as other [non- disadvantaged] students.

In general, all principals were repositioned by policy governmentalities to apply programs in ways which accede to market performativities. Principals may be able to enact policy in ways in which ethical responsibilities can be met as well as the market accountabilities. The art of Natalie's leadership was to balance the two by mediating the complex discourses and subjectivities within the school's context. At High Tops Public, Natalie mediated policy discourse for the benefit of her students, staff and community during the SSLSES National Partnership but was unable to extend success to retain sustainable funding support because her context largely mitigated against sustainable educational 'capital' building. Her case shows the importance of contextual circumstances within which to mediate political rationalities and technologies to create credible capital.

7.9 Mediating the Market at High Tops Public.

The expectation of the school's ability to make improvements to student achievement levels over the brief time frame of the SSLSES National Partnership and hence see improvements in the competitive status of the school, remained elusive. The proximity of the school to its low SES drawing area seemed to eliminate opportunities for marketisation of the school and hence the creation of competition with district schools. Natalie indicated that few additional enrolments were attracted to the school despite the regular marketing of accessible and innovative programs during the time of the SSLSES National Partnership.

Thus, Natalie's self-management and leadership of conduct underpinning her practices and ethical mode of subjection enabled her school to meet each child's individual needs with innovative and supportive programs- all of which were in counter-conduct to accountabilities proposed by the SSLSES National Partnership. This meant that students themselves were endowed with competitive educational 'capital' with which to embark on their educational journey, whilst the school itself, laboured under its inability to capitalise on its innovative programs after the SSLSES National Partnership had ceased to be funded. Despite the meeting of many program performativities, Natalie was unable to retain the educational program capital without having developed the school's own sustainability processes by marketing more broadly to her High Tops community.

Natalie's engagement in counter-conduct which negated the competitive impact of the NAPLAN for High Tops Public students, can be seen as her refusal to treat students as 'capital' to be manipulated by the competitive mode of subjectivity inherent in the testing regime and

educational marketplace. Natalie's telos was wholly focused on ensuring student equity and engagement in school. Because this was the case, the capital they engendered was that associated with students' lifelong learning opportunities. This can be seen in Natalie's account of her role in implementing the National Partnership.

The school's role is to focus on the *job of student learning* –to fully educate students so that they can *take advantage of all opportunities*. That is always *pre-eminent* in what we do- although we try to make sure that in the process, students' other [individual] needs are dealt with, so they are free to learn (added emphases) (Natalie: High Tops Public principal).

Whilst Natalie successfully mediated the SSLSES National Partnership strategies for the benefit of her equity vision, and student engagement, she was trapped by a mode of subjection to her students and school community unrelated to neoliberal definitions of market-share and competitiveness. The education system cared little for success narratives that could not be repackaged into entrepreneurial capital based on performance data. The SSLSES National Partnership, arising from neoliberal rationalities, measured success only in terms of each school's ability to become self-managing, marketised, competitive and entrepreneurial.

7.10 Accountabilities at Colborne High.

At Colborne High School, Boyd's pre-eminent task was to establish his leadership of the SSLSES National Partnership reform implementation process to ensure his accountabilities for targets could be met after systems analyses and plans had already been completed by the previous principal. He, similarly to other principals, approached his role with a strong equity telos, hoping to initiate the quality of teaching and the individualised support required by students, for equity.

Boyd ensured the reforms for which he assumed accountability were those which helped him consolidate his own leadership over the SSLSES National Partnership. He delegated reforms targeting literacy and numeracy improvements to existing executive staff such as Carole (DP, National Partnerships), who had been on the executive at the time of the original school planning processes. Boyd therefore focused his attention on accountabilities for improving the quality of teaching and associated "best case" performance management reforms (examined further in Chapter 8 and 9).

Boyd became accountable for the quality of teaching, but only under his terms. In his attempts to secure reform accountabilities for quality teaching he simultaneously applied his knowledge

of future performance management processes and Great Teaching: Inspired Learning (GTIL) policy changes. These actions met with great resistance from staff:

It has been really hard! I was resisted at many levels in many areas. For example, one instance of how behind the times this school was, when I came here, the Executive didn't have an Executive Assessment Review (EARS) process. When I tried to introduce it, they took me to Federation, and there was a *bitter* fight. Federation told them to pull their heads in, but it was a very *bitter* fight. ... I was called "Hitler" to my face. And I also said that I wanted them to observe [the lessons of] all the teachers in their faculty as part of it- and teachers were to observe them. It was a *major* argument! *They said they were not doing it!!* [original emphases] (Boyd: Colborne High principal).

Instead of strategizing and prioritising reforms as principals like Marjory did, Boyd wrestled for disciplinary power over Colborne staff by appropriating unfamiliar social language and situated meanings of the educational policy discourses. He excused his use of disciplinary and discursive power by indicating that he was "just" the policy messenger. His use of words like "tsunami" and "generational" change demonstrates his somewhat hypocritical use of power/knowledge policy discourse in governmentality processes:

When all the changes come in, it will be like a *tsunami* impacting the teaching service. This is a *generational change* in education... Under *Local Schools: Local Decisions* we will get the full bucket of money to fund everything, [including the staffing structure] in the school. This could be a problem because ESL teachers and Librarians have become worried, for example, that their positions may be dispensed with...I consistently conveyed the *new policy* environment and had to indicate that I was *just the messenger* in all of this (Boyd: Colborne High principal)⁹

As he reflected on the furore over his insistent implementation of accountabilities at Colborne High, he said that he had warned the staff that they would eventually have to accede to the changes to teacher accreditation (via the APSTL). He finally asserted full disciplinary power over performance management accountabilities by placing one of the more recalcitrant staff on a performance improvement program. This, together with the gradual re-culturing of the school by the employment of contracted staff, enabled Boyd's implementation of SSLSES National Partnership accountabilities to occur.

⁹Researcher's note: ESL and Librarian positions in NSW at that time were protected by existing staffing formulae and agreements but relied on principals' curriculum preferences in new staffing arrangements after 2017).

Whilst Boyd had acceded readily to SSLSES National Partnership accountabilities, he also suggested that his tactics were “micropolitical” and “strategic” in order to exercise power/knowledge over staff. He said of his actions that: “I believe my understanding of micropolitics of the system and strategic thinking has got us through. I was always ahead of the game” (Boyd: Colborne High principal). He, more than most principals in the case studies, aligned most of his practices with his required policy accountabilities through appropriation of the social language. Boyd felt that ensuing staff resistance was due to the new expectations about teaching practices expected by the SSLSES National Partnership.

Boyd eventually exercised his accountabilities under the SSLSES National Partnership to align the school’s direction in professional learning and the performance of teachers as part of his overhaul of the quality teaching culture at the school. He secured some coherence with policy direction, in later years of the program. This was not before he was forced to mediate some of the processes of change due to the strong and consistent resistance by staff he experienced.

Boyd, however, did remain committed to his vision for equity, whilst simultaneously acceding to many program accountabilities. In conducting a tour of the school, he proudly showed student HSC works and student achievements that he had displayed in the school foyer, in prominent locations around the school, and on the school’s Facebook page. He delegated the fulfilment of his equity vision to his newly employed support staff, who worked specifically with students according to his equity telos. Similarly, to Marjory at North Plains High, Boyd felt that he mediated accountabilities for quality-of-teaching reforms, to ensure student equity. Boyd saw equity in terms of enabling all students to experience the same quality of teaching as their peers and having similar opportunities for their future.

In other reform areas, Boyd also acceded to governmentalities of the policy’s literacy and numeracy targets from the original systems analysis and planning. As indicated, he delegated accountabilities to the DP, National Partnerships, Carole. In terms of Carole’s own ethical mode of subjection, she was repositioned by these performativities as being accountable both to Boyd, and against the SSLSES National Partnership outcomes. She subsequently instituted “mock” NAPLAN tests, when NAPLAN results showed no improvements after school-wide program interventions. The additional testing introduced proved controversial among teachers with many complaining that it had become high stakes and they were “teaching to the test” (Carole: Colborne High DP NP). She recognized that in doing so, she was being repositioned to accede to literacy and numeracy policy accountabilities. There was so much opposition that she changed the name of the “mock” test to a “literacy and numeracy skills trial exam” from which they collected real time literacy and numeracy data for diagnostic analysis. This was

instead of using the SMART data package summarising the NAPLAN data. Carole says she knew that the “mock” NAPLAN was “unacceptable” but felt strongly accountable for literacy and numeracy improvements. Carole’s interview demonstrated the tension that SSLSES National Partnership accountabilities placed on her. She was being made responsabilised both by the SSLSES National Partnership and by the newly created power relationships with the principal.

Eventually, after finding that instituting trial NAPLAN testing did not help Boyd or his staff understand the downward spiralling results, the school utilised the NSW DEC’s Literacy (and Numeracy) Continua (NSW DEC, 2013, 2014) to benchmark students’ progress. Carole and Boyd began working closely with the feeder schools to track student progress and diagnose their skills within those frameworks. Carole’s comment that the NAPLAN was only useful to track the progress of each student reflects the lack of confidence that Colborne High teachers showed in the test’s ability to measure the achievement of school wide targets. However, it remained a target for which Carole felt accountable, but conflicted as shown in the hesitation in her interview around the validity of the measure:

We still used the NAPLAN. We still think...it’s a valid measure... [It’s] one measure out of many –If you’re looking at... not so much comparing one year to the other... but comparing [an] individual student’s growth, which is what we looked at... we looked at a student’s growth...That’s all you really have [from the NAPLAN test results]! (Carole: Colborne High DP NP).

Boyd’s acceptance of NAPLAN testing regime governmentalities is reflected in Carole’s hesitant language even though she recognised the testing’s weaknesses. She also recognised that in implementing so many SSLSES National Partnership accountabilities that staff became more and more resistant. When staff were asked to justify their students’ literacy and numeracy data to her, she said that she had to “be mindful” not to link data to any reference to teacher performance. She complained that:

You would mention National Partnerships, and they *would roll their eyes...!* We were always very mindful [then] of making sure that [any] National Partnership data was *never* linked to any kind of *appraisal* or anything! (added emphases) (Carole: Colborne High DP NP).

The case illustrated the multiple governmentality stances Boyd took to implement the SSLSES National Partnership. Boyd indicated his ability to implement his ethical stance according to student needs using his mode of subjection, whilst also exercising required governmentalities over entrenched staff subjectivities. Staff resistance to SSLSES National Partnership

governmentalities meant that his implementation of reforms was a complex and gruelling process driven by strong power/knowledge (Foucault, 1980) inter-relationships and eventually fully utilising the disciplinary power enabled by the policy, his role as principal in the hierarchy, and his delegation of difficult accountabilities.

7.11 Mediating the Market at Colborne High

Boyd as a market actor was positioned both by SSLSES National Partnership policy governmentalities but also by his additional grasp of the future governmentalities of the teaching accreditation policies begun under the SSLSES National Partnership reform process, which would impact on teachers' roles and salary progression. His preoccupation with implementing the teaching standards based on future policy direction together with required improvements to pedagogy enabled him to establish a market credibility for his practices among some education colleagues and SSLSES National Partnership proponents based on his educational subjectivities and policy expertise. He also marketed his quality teaching changes, and strong inclusive and equitable practices to his community to ensure that his school remained competitive in the local education market place.

It was the supportive intercommunity relationships developed by some of his newly employed staff which enabled Boyd to market his school's programs among his diverse community and secure his competitiveness within the local educational area. Thus, a newly employed Aboriginal education teacher funded under the SSLSES National Partnership grant, was enthusiastic about the additional support and cultural experiences she could provide for students using her many contacts in the Aboriginal community. There was also much work done on cultural extra-curricular and school environmental improvements such as the construction of an Aboriginal cultural garden. The foyer area also celebrated the many cultural experiences and achievements of its diverse student group. Boyd says of his Aboriginal Education Officer:

The AEO has given extremely strong support to this [Aboriginal] group to the point that all of the community now trust her and she can contact any parent at any time using current mobile numbers. She visits parents, takes the Homework Centre and takes students to cultural excursions like Bangara Dance...The teachers have been given a broader understanding of student individual needs [because of her support] but many still don't understand that low SES students lack the social capital [to succeed] (Boyd: Colborne High principal).

With a predominantly newly arrived multicultural community, there was also much demand for high educational outcomes for students. The school therefore similarly emphasised the marketability of its HSC results in a community respecting higher education access and support for students' pathways to employment and higher education. Marketisation aligned with Boyd's equity vision which used social language emphasising outputs and outcomes. The SSLSES National Partnership funded a school-to-work and higher education coordinator who strongly positioned the school as a relevant broker for responsive pathways from school to work and higher education for its students. The reputation of the school's HSC results and pathways into higher education was conveyed by Boyd:

This school has over 1300 students and over 100 teachers. It has two campuses...The school has retained a good reputation for parents. It's low SES and we get good community support. It is seen as a middle-class school for its high HSC results and academic standards. We have quite a number of ATARS in the 90's. This is especially so in science ... always scoring really well in Biology.

In these micropolitical ways, Boyd, mediated reforms for increasing equity and increasing market share in his school. In particular, his vision for equity helped the school market its advantages among its diverse community, since his support staff ran regular information meetings with the various language groups in his community and consulted them about school direction. The development and effective use of the school's Facebook page in 2012 was also a major link with its community with the ITC coordinator facilitating frequent commentary, photos and marketing of students' participation in its many extra-curricular and in-curricular cultural events (see Figure 6.4(c)).

In this, Boyd, like other principals, secured educational capital building through his emphasis on community partnerships secured by liaison staff and the celebration of his extra-curricular and cultural programs to the community. In Colborne High's case, Boyd's knowledge of broader education policy directions and pathways to the higher education sector because of his previous role as an academic, also helped him to develop responsive and exclusive marketing opportunities. He knew his community was anxious to secure pathways into higher education for their children. Within the governmentalities exerted by the SSLSES National Partnership Boyd exerted a measure of counter-conduct with his overt support of a more culturally responsive curriculum which, with Boyd's focus on pedagogical changes, helped mediate the reductionist emphases required by specific literacy and numeracy targets of the SSLSES National Partnership. These areas formed the basis for his more evident micropolitical marketisation of the school for sustainability.

In summary, Boyd's pre-eminent success for the marketing of his school came with his funded additional staffing and marketed multi-cultural entrepreneurialism. He mediated some reform accountabilities by delegating much of his vision for equity to new staff who utilised an individualised approach to help him attain his vision for equity. Technologies of the self also enabled Boyd to broker student access pathways through their schooling into further education and society whilst simultaneously engaging in culturally appealing curricula. These actions helped Boyd to secure a competitive edge among his community to maintain his enrolments after the end of the SSLSES National Partnership in 2015. Boyd confessed that he was satisfied by then to consolidate the reforms he had battled to implement, even though he had not attained the goals he had set.

7.12 Accountabilities at Southern Girls High.

As in other principal case studies, Don acceded to required administrative and management accountabilities to carry out the systems analysis and school planning processes to ensure the SSLSES National Partnership planning and reporting was completed. He continued to plan and report assiduously according to guidelines and within set templates, and alluded to his very comprehensive Annual School Report detailing the school's achievements under the SSLSES National Partnership to demonstrate his attention to reporting responsibilities.

He had a vision for equity which saw his students engage in innovative and self-responsible learning opportunities that would equip them for engaging with relevant technologies and pedagogies for deeper learning. His vision for the school was for the creation of a 'lighthouse' school known for its innovative practices and responsive relationships with his parent community and an educational community of practice (Wenger-Traynor & Wenger-Traynor, 2015). He mediated the SSLSES National Partnership reforms to steer this innovations agenda and to market his school extensively within the education and local community to achieve this vision. Don's subjectivities were moulded by experiences in previous disadvantaged schools and from managing several equity grants in senior executive educational roles. They were shaped also by the selective and innovative use of student and program evaluations he instituted within the school to drive change, un-related to many accountabilities of the SSLSES National Partnership.

In order to facilitate the implementation of his own vision and irrespective of required accountabilities Don employed additional key staff whom he knew could implement plans. He was thus able to attain the demands of the first SSLSES National Partnership reform (COAG, 2008, p.8), whilst fulfilling his vision, similarly to Boyd. His mode of subjection and self-

management was to his own innovative educational ideas. Key staff included Olivia, the DP (National Partnership), who was employed from his knowledge of her work in school wide program evaluation at his previous school. He similarly seconded Caty as Head Teacher (e-Learning and Innovation) from an innovations technology program at one of Sydney's universities, as well as Sasha, a Head Teacher (Classroom Practice). Sasha's role was to implement all the literacy, numeracy, and quality teaching as pedagogy, changes across the school. She also involved staff in innovative professional learning. Don also employed an HSC study skills teacher who helped broker students' pathways into higher education and the workforce as well as supported progress through senior study. These highly credentialed staff were assisted by Resmi, a CLO, who organized regular carer/parent and daughter information days which facilitated Don's important interrelationships with his parent community and helped broker school-community expectations.

Of note, was Don's somewhat maverick approach to his role as principal in the face of neoliberal accountabilities. He had served for many years as an education officer in the NSW DEC's executive service, which meant that he was confident about his innovative approaches and colleagues' indulgent acceptance of his school change agendas. His continuing reputation as an innovative and unconventional leader among key educationists also formed part of his telos and mode of subjection. He subsequently believed that his school's planned direction could be attained with some impunity, judging by his use of terms like "cheating" and "reputation" compared to expected social languages and situated meaning of SSLSES National Partnership discourse. This accounted for a propensity to engage largely in counter-conduct to many performativities, thus facilitating mediation and resistance to required reform implementation:

I cheat a lot [with formalities and paperwork- researcher's insertion]. Because of my reputation and things that I've done, everybody knows me; I'm never questioned. So, I think... I don't want to brag or sound bigheaded or anything... but I think it's been a wonderful advantage that I've had, that people still know me-from all over the state, and especially in South-West Sydney (Don: Southern Girls' High principal).

However, Don was careful to accede to accountability for the documentation requirements of SSLSES National Partnership reforms with appropriate systems analyses, school plans and reports completed. The remainder of his practices largely demonstrated obvious counter-conduct as he bypassed and adapted targeted accountabilities to implement his own data driven change management processes. A degree of parrhēsia was also involved, as he selected only those measures he wanted as evidence in setting his school direction. Measures selected

constituted only a small fraction of the data driven practices acceding to policy accountabilities. He says he “picked bits and pieces” from the Department [of Education and Community’s] measuring tools together with creating his own measures of school reform. His own data, which exposed the differences between what students said about their learning compared to staff understandings, was critical for staff professional learning. Students had said that they were “bored” at school, whereas staff believed that students were “passive” and unengaged learners.

Reforms like the employment of quality teachers and leaders using the SSLSES National Partnership funds were important as he selected the leadership team which drove school change. However, counter-conduct was strongly evident in his distributive and collegial leadership style both within and outside the school (see Chapter 8). Apart from strategising overall direction, selected staff were delegated power to be innovative and responsive within the overall vision set by Don. His implementation of his own student and school evaluation process and adaptation of required measuring tools was an unashamed exercise in counter-conduct to required accountabilities for evidence by the SSLSES National Partnership. Program leaders were encouraged to practice action research methodologies with the DP (National Partnership) managing all school program and school evaluations. Thomson (2012) noted, that while ever targeted measures remained positive, as they did for Southern Girls’ High, it was acceptable for resistance and counter-conduct to be exercised, and SSLSES National Partnership governmentalities to be ignored. The school maintained its positive student achievement measures on the state average which is why Don’s principalship continued to be regarded with approbation. Departmental audits showed that enrolments remained high and attendance and retention remained above state averages.

Don’s consistent exercise of counter-conduct and micropolitics towards his accountabilities for the SSLSES National Partnership were exemplified by his strategy of conducting the school’s own faculty and program reviews as a measure of the success of his school’s programs, in contrast to audit measures required by the SSLSES National Partnership. This together with the employment of teaching ‘coaches’ meant that he mediated the quality of teaching and staff performance through faculty /program reviews and student evaluations of their own Individual Learning Plans (ILPs). Such performance management methods were in counter- conduct to the policy’s requirements for TARS and EARS. Staff were allocated time from their teaching to engage in cross faculty team professional learning and research projects which formed the basis of their own individual learning programs. Don subverted the situated meanings and social language of the SSLSES National Partnership in his discussion, saying that he believed that much of the measurements undertaken by NAPLAN for the SSLSES National Partnership

were “unrelated” to the learning of either staff and students. He also adapted his school’s data gathering processes to his own ends, suggesting that he gathered “their” data only as back up to his own data gathering. He used expressions like “terrible” and “gut feeling” to show his disdain for the evidence gathering processes of the SSLSES National Partnership.

His accountability for involving the community in a school partnership was also innovative. He had ascertained that many of his community, as recently arrived migrants or refugees would benefit from better insider knowledge about the NSW education system. Regular invitations were extended to his community to spend a day or so shadowing their daughters, being involved with the development of ILPs and being involved in workshopping the school’s innovative technologies. This ensured that his mode of subjection was jointly shared between his educational community and his student community. Resmi, the Community Liaison officer (CLO), says of these mother/father and daughter days:

You want parents to be involved in their girl’s learning. So, what that looked like to me with support of Don’s vision... were things such as the parent/ daughter days, where the parents come and share their [daughter’s] experiences at school for a day ... They actually come in and see what their daughter’s experiencing throughout high school. Now at the end of the day, we’ve had feedback from surprised parents about how much [they would see] happen in any one day at the school (Resmi: Southern Girls High CLO).

Don’s concern for the sustainability of the SSLSES National Partnership program was an aspect of his mode of subjection and ongoing equity telos, since the additional funding had facilitated his vision for innovation and student driven reform. It had funded staff and enabled staff time for involvement in action research and in the innovative technology practices attracting attention to his school. Eventually his micropolitical approaches enabled him to secure a number of sponsorship deals for the school at the end of the SSLSES National Partnership and the ongoing enrolments to attain sustainability for his innovative practices:

And, I think too, in the back of my mind, it’s always been [about] sustainability... that you've got to keep those things happening even when the funding runs out. So, a lot of it is conceptual development and thinking and really looking at whether you can provide the best learning for students. So, always with me, the bottom line is about learning and student learning outcomes because you want to get the best that you can possibly get (Don: Southern Girls’ High principal).

7.13 Mediating the Market at Southern Girls High

Through use of Foucauldian lenses of power and counter-conduct it is possible to see how Don has been able to negotiate accountability measures to introduce niche practices which were

counter to the demands of the policy, and with which he has been able to successfully market his school in the broader educational community. He has secured interest from educational professionals, sponsorship from interested technology companies and enrolments from feeder schools. He was also able to create sustainability for his school's direction as a 'lighthouse' school researching innovative technological and pedagogical programs.

He repositioned his school and secured his leadership role largely because of his confidence in negotiating his accountabilities with supervisors and with policy proponents but with the 'success' of his school programs as evidence. He didn't secure many changes to his requisite standardised test accountabilities but he was able to demonstrate significant accountability to his community because he had maintained the trust of his supervisors and his community for the school's direction.

Like other case study schools, Don claimed that there was little attention paid to My School by the school's community. Neither Don nor his DP (National Partnerships) believed the parents accessed the data on the site, as they were keener to see the school's own evidence generated in the ongoing student and school reviews. They similarly made their own judgements about how students appeared and behaved.

I don't think they pay much attention [to My School]. They are more interested in our reputation and what we look like on the outside. We're strict on uniform because our uniform looks so good and that sells us... and because literacy and numeracy is so embedded anyway in [our school focus]. NAPLAN is just another thing that we've got to do. We don't teach towards it. We [certainly] don't plan tests around it. (Don: Southern Girls' High principal).

Thus, Don's marketisation emerged from his micropolitical and strategic mediation of the SSLSES National Partnership accountabilities. He accommodated sufficient accountability requirements of the SSLSES National Partnership program, but he went further to market an innovative and futuristic educational change process to his broader community thereby generating educational capital from his processes for future sustainability. He simultaneously shared and marketed his school's innovations to his feeder schools and thence to the broader education community as proof of his micropolitical management of performativities.

7.14 Discussion

Governmentality as conceptualized by Foucault (2007), comprises 'conduct of conduct' concepts. Conduct of conduct is related to political 'rationality' or the government of one's self and others in terms of certain knowledge and understanding. It also involves the processes or 'technologies' of government or control. The subjectivities of principals in this study have been formed by 'technologies of the self' in relation to governmentality experiences in NSW

schools. This includes conduct of themselves, or self-management, in response to governmentalities and their knowledge of policy processes. Ethical subjectivities also included principals' visions for equity for students. The nature of a principal's telos was used to understand the nature of inter-relationships with others and mediation of policy evident in leadership practices. Teloi are regulated against modes of subjection formed from their judgements about policy and its application (Foucault, 1997a). Principals in this study benchmarked their ethical understandings of equity against the SSLSES National Partnership program impact on equity to enact a stance in their schools. This meant that enactment of policy reforms may involve any of compliance, resistance, or ongoing struggle or 'askésis' to achieve their telos. The examination of practices in this study has ascertained the extent to which each principal was able to manage the tensions associated with compliance to policy governmentalities in the face of equity needs of students. This examination was in part-answer to the research question: *How do principals mediate equity program discourse for social justice or equity?*

The study simultaneously provides evidence of principals' ability to micropolitically strategise their school's agenda for the benefit of student equity using a deep understanding of the education systems' operations and their interrelationships with it (Ryan, 2010). Principals who were most successful mediated the competitive marketing of their school's reforms for sustainability, knowing that the SSLSES National Partnership was a short-term opportunity with long term repercussions for their schools. Principals also mediated aspects of their accountabilities where their compliance conflicted with school needs or visions for equity. However, principals' deployment of counter-conduct, self-management and micropolitical strategies were largely dependent on each principals' experiences and school contextual variables.

In general, the six principals in the study demonstrated high preliminary compliance with the dominant administrative requirements of the SSLSES National Partnership. All principals were careful to comply with the administrative and discursive demands of the SSLSES National Partnership, as Niesche (2010) confirmed in his research. All required documentation was finalised using appropriate discourse and using regulated audits that "strengthened principal accountability" and "articulated a clear role for principals" (COAG, 2008, p.8). Stuart at Parkview was made accountable for using appropriate policy discourse under early supervision which strongly influenced his ensuing practices. Findings from this study accord with the acceptance of governmentality technologies and disciplinary power of the administrative processes demanded by the SSLSES National Partnership (Niesche, 2012).

However, Don at Southern Girls High was the only principal confident enough to deploy his own measuring tools in the introductory program systems analyses to back up his “gut” feelings about the school. However, he was also quick to acknowledge that he was always able to comply with NSW Department of Education’s (and SSLSES National Partnership reform) administrative requirements which aligned with much of his own school’s evaluation processes. Don also believed, however, that his own evaluation processes were much more comprehensive and valid for his purposes. He said that his systems comprised “such a rigorous evaluation system, that we are reporting constantly on the school overall”. High Tops Public and North Plains High similarly examined their school’s programs using action research (Reason & Bradbury, 2007) approaches to secure comprehensive and wide-ranging evidence about the specific effects of their programs. This involved these principals in forms of counter-conduct and self-management to ensure that their evidence was fit for purpose and a valid measurement of the SSLSES National Partnership program’s specific implementation effects.

All principals implemented the required programs involved in literacy and numeracy learning in order to accede to accountability requirements and audits of results. Annual School Reports all documented changes in literacy and numeracy teaching. Noticeably, all principals delegated the oversight of literacy and numeracy changes to other executive or regional coordinators and chose oversight of professional learning of complex pedagogical change for their own leadership efforts. Results of NAPLAN testing in each school since 2009 generally indicated a lack of measurable improvement in targeted measures. This also accorded with early reports of the overall literacy and numeracy achievements from the SSLSES National Partnership (Australian Government et al., 2010) which similarly demonstrate little improvement in literacy and numeracy results across all schools despite interventions.

Recent studies have also shown that NAPLAN results are a generally poor indicator of low SES and NESB student success (Creagh, 2014; Lingard, Thompson, & Sellar, 2016; Teese, 2011). In fact, literacy and numeracy performativities can result in schools feeling pressured to implement reductionist pedagogies to attain accountabilities (Kerkham & Comber, 2016; Thompson, 2016). For instance, ongoing lack of positive gains in Colborne High’s NAPLAN scores resulted in the attempted introduction of such pedagogical practices, as Carole, the DP (NP), who was made responsible for the literacy and numeracy program by Boyd, attempted to make staff ‘teach to’ the NAPLAN. This was despite her understanding that only improved pedagogical quality contributed to improved engagement and learning in the long term. Her evident concern for performativities and the conditional nature of the SSLSES National

Partnership investment is reported in her interview about Colborne High's ongoing poor performance in the NAPLAN: and her acknowledgement that a mock test was unacceptable.

Significantly, none the principals in the study became involved in the competitive accountabilities promoted by league tables of NAPLAN results and the My School website (except for Stuart at Parkeview Central). They consequently noted and contributed to the overwhelming silence engendered by the website in their schools and engaged in the conduct of silence themselves about My School as a form of counter-conduct. All principals, except Stuart, noted that parents were not interested in My School and commented on parents' greater interest in the alternative education narratives promoted by their schools, such as the quality of pedagogy, school discipline, school uniform, the HSC results, parent partnerships, 'lighthouse' programs or the positive inter-relationships between the school and its community. The website which was designed as a mechanism for facilitating educational choice was actively shunned by all principals. Thus, all principals, by means of their silence engaged in a form of counter-conduct to performativities, marketability, and competitiveness associated with the NAPLAN test and the My School website.

All principals (except Natalie at High Tops Public) utilised the disciplinary power sanctioned by the SSLSES National Partnership governmentalities to comply with some performance management accountabilities. Natalie relied on the strong positive collegiality of staff to implement their vision for student equity and participation. The other five principals adapted and mediated the performance management processes to their particular professional learning emphasis and learning mode of subjection. Alison tied Cottonwood Central's performance management to the NSW Quality Teaching Framework and Yunkaporta's (2008) 8 Ways Learning Model. Don's implementation of performance management at Southern Girls High involved staff and executive in positive professional conversations whilst most staff performance improvement was managed via school evaluations. Marjory at North Plain High similarly mediated the implementation of performance management with the school's professional learning focus in A4L. In the case of Colborne High, teachers were provided a glimpse of the future via ways in which they were being repositioned as "responsibilised", entrepreneurial and competitive entities (Savage, 2013, p.96) in an evolving contractual staffing agreement for 2018. They experienced acrimonious power struggles over their accountabilities in the process:

The Head Teachers expressed their hostility about the continuing use of the word "accountability". ("We're sick and tired of the use of this word" they said!) ... At least they were hearing it!" (Boyd: Colborne High principal).

Few principals, except for Boyd, saw the future significance of performance management schemes in neoliberalised regimes. However, they did facilitate some normalisation of the school's pedagogical capital within a rapidly changing self-managing autonomous system. Such pedagogical capital building set the stage for more closely managed performance management through standards and future contractual arrangements for the employment of a more competitive, responsabilised and casualised teaching workforce in NSW education. Natalie at High Tops Public and Don at Southern Girls High were the only two leaders who did not engage in such disciplinary power behaviours and continued to build collegial and cooperative staffing practices in counter-conduct to the competitive practices expected by the performance management processes of the SSLSES National Partnership imperatives. Collegial staff development and capital were more important to principals of those schools for the advantages accrued to school collegiality and student engagement.

In describing the effect of neoliberalism on subjectivities, Brown (2015, p.31) described a subject's re-configuration as a market "actor" or "homo oeconomicus" who has been positioned to strengthen his or her market share by any available means. This mode of subjection promised future resourcing and the attainment of market "success" and other teloi, such as equity, as principals struggled to secure a competitive position in the education market place with additional SSLSES National Partnership funding. All principals except Stuart, vigorously strove to utilise their SSLSES National Partnership funding to secure competitiveness in the educational market place, and hence sustainability of resources. They were positioned by the SSLSES National Partnership policy as 'homo oeconomicus' with their mode of subjection to their local educational communities who would hopefully provide ongoing and future enrolments and attract resourcing based on pro-rata establishments. As homo oeconomicus they engaged in aspects of micropolitical leadership to market their schools, strongly positioning them as niche entities for future funding sustainability and improved competitiveness. Examples included the marketing of the wide range of extracurricular programs at Cottonwood Central; the pedagogical strengths at North Plains High and the innovative and responsive programs at High Tops and Southern Girls High. All provided a well-researched narrative of each school's success. It was evident that Stuart had been unable to secure Parkeview Central school's position in the market place during the time of the SSLSES National Partnership, due to accountability demands.

With disadvantaged contexts that were isolated like Parkeview Central's or segregated around social housing like High Tops Public, principals were compelled to market their students' successes in place of being able to create a market niche for the school. In both cases, Stuart

and Natalie found it difficult to mediate a marketisation agenda and will continue to require additional needs-based funding to assist their schools to attain their equity vision and secure an equitable educational future for students.

Notably, principals engaged in many forms of ethical counter-conduct despite their compliance with many SSLSES National Partnership imperatives. Whilst principals were silent on data contained on My School and from NAPLAN, they proudly marketed their positive evidence-based narratives to their communities and within their educational collegiates. This took the form of marketing community-valued niche programs such as music and dance tuition and experiential learning programs, or valued HSC results for communities who were making choices about enrolment. The principals of High Tops Public and Southern Girls High also utilised counter-conduct to establish collegial and team based personnel management methods rather than subjecting their staff to the governmentalities of competition in an effort to generate greater efficiencies.

Counter-conduct also took the form of alternative action research programs collecting and demonstrating relevant evidence based improvements, such as North Plain's A4L program, High Top's tailored Digi-Ed and Fast For Word programs, and Southern Girls High School's ILPs, program reviews and Parent/Daughter Days (Reason & Bradbury, 2007). Sophisticated practices such as Faculty and Program Reviews at Southern Girls' High and quality pedagogical practices in the A4L program at North Plains High presented rich school data in forms counter to the evidence bases required by the SSLSES National Partnership systems analyses accountabilities.

Educational data also provided rich and multifaceted evidence of engaging student experiences. Principals' counter-conduct and associated ethical teloi were communicated across school systems and within the educational collegiates to demonstrate alternate ways by which school governmentalities were mediated and evaluated. Principals themselves provided judgement criteria for evaluating some of the innovative and tailored mechanisms put into place with the SSLSES National Partnership funds. It is interesting to note that the SSLSES National Partnership policy had stated the desirability of tailored and innovative solutions among reforms and facilitating areas for mediation of more stringent governmentalities in Reform 4. Significantly, as the educational systems invested in measurable technologies which rendered principals, teachers, and students comparable and accountable in order to exercise control, so principals in this study engaged in counter-conduct based on provision of non-comparable evidence and individualised programs.

Principals marketed their innovative and tailored programs in specific and community-responsive ways whilst rendering some SSLSES National Partnership discourses with silence. Marjory at North Plains High school, for example, didn't publicise the SSLSES National Partnership itself to her community because of its deficit language. She saw the subjectivities crafted in its social language as being inferior and punitive. Using *parrhēsia*, she publicised instead only the positive narratives and conversations associated with being a School of Excellence. Advertising campaigns using positive conversations from alternative Discourse modes were targeted specifically, so that they additionally addressed enrolment needs. Alison, the principal of Cottonwood Central mediated the marketing of her school via a Kindy transition program for new parents, whilst Marjory targeted the Year 6- 7 transition program to capture enrolments at North Plains High before students sought enrolment in Trenton schools. Natalie, the High Tops Public principal, marketed her school's achievements via their students' superior accomplishments and skills in comparison to many other High Tops students in Year 7 at the local high school. Don at Southern Girls High marketed their innovations in school evaluation and technology to a growing educational collegiate hungry for innovative ideas about being at the forefront of technical advances and alternative sponsorship funding for successful (disadvantaged) schools. The mode of subjection was always to student success and equity.

Principals in this study saw themselves as having a unique role to mediate and resolve the tensions evident by catering to the equity needs of students with successful pedagogically rich experiences and positive wellbeing opportunities compared to managing the competitive relations and efficiencies of the market which identified marginalised students with reductionist discourse and inequitable access to quality pathways. All principals similarly engaged in counter-conduct and strong technologies of the self to ensure that in addition to their focus on improving literacy and numeracy skills for student productivity purposes, their practices ensured a broad experiential curriculum, much of it extra-curricular, to ensure more democratic and social justice purposes of education were being catered for, and that their students accessed opportunities available to others. In this way students' well-being, cultural experiences and learning attained pre-eminence. Many of these notions about engendering democratic purposes of education emanated from principals' existing subjectivities, a willingness to speak out in a form of *parrhēsia* (Foucault, 2010), and engagement in an equitable educational Discourse mode.

Principals' conduct of themselves and others in this study utilised educational subjectivities based on an existing love of learning and a care for students' well-being, not evident in

requirements for the conduct of policy imperatives (Ball & Olmedo, 2013). The subjectivities of Marjory, Natalie, Don and Boyd took precedence over SSLSES National Partnership governmentalities to ensure students had sufficient basics like food and clothing, safety and support in order to take advantage of the learning offered.

Thus, whilst demonstrating the power of the “neoliberal juggernaut” (Doherty, 2015, p. 395), operating via the SSLSES National Partnership project and in a broader systemic plan for the education market, this study has identified aspects of counter-conduct, conduct of the self and collegial subjectivities benefitting equity and social justice education. Such micropolitical acumen (Ryan, 2010), ethical self-conduct, and a commitment to an equity telos, enabled principals to mediate the implementation of one-size-fits-all competitive technologies for the benefit of their students’ individual needs for equity. The principals, while positioned by governmentalities of the policy to strengthen their competitive positioning in the market place were able to utilise additional and alternate ethical “modes of subjection” to better mediate equity across their schools whilst at the same time securing access to sustainable market share.

In the next chapter, a study of the ways in which the principals of each school exercised leadership for equity are presented. SSLSES National Partnership discourses positioned principals in ways which relied on their capacity to implement reforms, and yet exercise technicist governmentalities requiring seemingly narrow productivity metrics (see Figure 5.1) in tension with leadership practices for equity.

Chapter 8

Mediating Leadership

The point is that in neoliberal economies, sites of government and points of contact are also sites for the possibility of refusal. However, the starting point for a politics of refusal is the site of subjectivity. It is a struggle over and against what it is we have become, [and] what it is we do not want to be (Ball, 2016, p.1143).

8.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the practices of leaders of the SSLSES National Partnership program in appreciation of discursive shifts embodied in the reforms which have re-articulated the nature of educational leadership. Questions about leadership practices for disadvantaged schools arose as principals sought to manage tensions between discursive policy imperatives, equity leadership and leadership Discourse models underpinning principals' 'systems of formation'. The concept of leadership for each principal was considered to be that "of which they speak" (Foucault, 1972, p.49) and was related to power/knowledge interrelationships (Foucault, 1997, p. 167).

Policies, such as the SSLSES National Partnership, based on evolving economic rationalist discourse facilitated a reformulation of the relationships between teachers, principals, parents and government, as leaders were seemingly made more accountable for reform implementation and reform accountabilities. Disciplining factors in the Discourse model examined in Chapter 5 included overt surveillance measures such as the exercise of tight time frames, completion of set templates and metrics for the return of school/student data, adoption of required discourses, and the examination of and the use of agreed data. These techniques provided a normalizing 'gaze' which exercised tight governmentalities on leadership practices. Leadership practices analysed included the leadership of whole school direction in the light of the SSLSES National Partnership reforms, leadership for student equity, decision making, technologies and rationalities of the self, and leadership of personnel, including staff. These interactions have been selected for their tendency to reveal areas of power/knowledge interrelationships or askésis. (Foucault,1980)

The importance of leadership of the SSLSES National Partnership schools was recognized in the text of documents such as the Smarter Schools Implementation Plan (Australian Government et al., 2011, p.17) which noted that, "school leadership plays a key role in improving student learning by shaping the conditions and climate in which teaching and

learning occurs”. These guidelines together with available leadership research contributed to leadership discourses documenting expected practices. Contemporaneously, policy advocated revised staff recruitment practices, imposed tighter accountabilities (Chapter 7), and encouraged the improved capacity of existing staff by engaging them in accredited professional learning. Reforms which promoted a specific role for principals in policy administration and implementation noted their importance in statements such as, “[Principals’] role in leading the development and implementation of the *school plan* while meeting the challenge of *administering* [the] ...reforms ...will require ...*strong* leadership capability” (added emphasis) (Australian Government et al., 2009a, p. 70).

Situated meanings of words like “school plan”, and “reforms” with “strong leadership capability” were immediately associated with notions of technical administration and the expectation of increasing governmentalities over staff cultures to ensure efficient policy implementation. The creation of some tension between existing leadership roles, advocated in the literature (Dinham, 2008a; Duignan, 2009; Fullan, 2005; Mulford, 2008) and the SSLSES National Partnership was implied in the additional social language of policy discourses which simultaneously used terms like “flexible” and “innovative” (see Chapter 5).

This chapter examines each principal’s case study using Foucauldian notions of governmentality, power/knowledge and ethical subjectivities as they applied to principals’ implementation of the SSLSES National Partnership in their schools. The chapter argues that principals embarked on technologies of the self which shaped their practices in relation to the prevailing Discourse model. It was also thought that the SSLSES National Partnership influenced principals to re-conceptualise their leadership practices in view of the changing expectations of competition, marketisation, disciplinary discourse, and increasing administration and autonomy.

Similarly to Chapter 7, an examination of the leadership practices of Alison at Cottonwood Central will be considered followed by a discussion of the principal case studies of Parkeview Central, North Plains High, High Tops Public, Colborne High, Southern Girls High in turn. Rural and regional cases are examined first followed by the two metropolitan cases who joined the SSLSES in later cohorts.

8.2 Cottonwood Central: Rethinking Leadership

Alison’s leadership of Cottonwood Central saw her conceptualising her leadership practices during the SSLSES National Partnership to utilise authoritative practices with staff to manage the dislocation that she perceived in the school’s programs on her arrival. At the same time,

she, herself, was compliant to obligations for systems' analyses and school planning templates of the SSLSES National Partnership, which occurred within tight time frames and hierarchical supervision. Her systems evaluation specifically utilized the planning templates which highlighted student participation and literacy and numeracy targets that leaders were expected to address. Using governmentality processes Alison acceded to policy suggestions that key stakeholder groups should be involved in consultation. (Australian Government et al., 2008, p.8). However, this mainly applied to certain members of her community as she re-evaluated her leadership position.

The re-prioritizing of her ethical mode of subjection drove her instead to seek direct consultation with her narrow but influential parent group in the community to re-establish the school's direction for enrolments and parent and community partnerships. Alison simultaneously discouraged staff collaboration, believing that staffing issues underpinned the school's poor performance and culture stating that:

When we began the planning for the school plan early on, I [only] invited anyone who was interested to come, but it was not compulsory (Alison: Cottonwood Central principal).

Alison's leadership of her staff at Cottonwood Central was subsequently more authoritative and managerial in style, and reflective of the SSLSES National Partnership Discourse model, thus beginning to illustrate the normalising effect of associated governmentalities which situated practices. The disciplining of Alison's leadership was also manifested in tight implementation time frames, and competitive discourses determining Alison's immediate recourse to securing enrolments. Alison's practices therefore exercised many of the evolving technologies and rationalities of leadership expected by the SSLSES National Partnership processes. Application of technologies of the self, allowed Alison to operate as an individual on "her conduct and way of being" to transform herself (Foucault, 1988, p. 18) in ways which best accommodated her situation. This ensured that she authoritatively plotted a direction for applicable practices and conduct using subjectivities honed in previous circumstances. Alison engaged her parents as co-collaborators in the development of the school's strategic direction at the expense of staff whom she eventually reorganised. Her selected parents were her market and potentially ensured resource sustainability.

Stricter hierarchical supervision structures, tight time frames, promotion of disciplinary school management measures, together with the need to be cognizant of the power of market accountabilities significantly reframed Alison's principalship in tension with some policy and

leadership discourses. Goals demanded in school planning document targets remained simplistic and measurable (via NAPLAN) in the required discourse, while the capacity to influence and direct teachers was made straight forward by requiring “best case” performance management processes. Tight time frames for change and normalising regimes for quality teaching ensured leadership practices which also exacted greater staff self-discipline and maintained authoritative leadership practices. Compliance with policy governmentalities influenced Alison’s initial engagement in ‘disciplinary power’ over her staff, rather than her promotion of longer term collegial development or professional learning practices in order to achieve the policy outcomes. Alison felt that disciplinary power regulating her own accountabilities and action constraints justified these practices under the circumstances. Alison had noted especially the impact of some teachers’ performance on her accountabilities for targets to be met. The school had lost valuable resources after being “reclassified down”. She singled out specific teaching behaviours like “explicit teaching” for improvement:

The school had to be *reclassified down*...It was a *dysfunctional* environment for everyone. The children learned nothing day after day... There was no *explicit* or quality of teaching as such (added emphases) (Alison: Cottonwood Central principal)

Alison authoritatively applied swift normalizing judgements with which she sorted and managed her staff’s performance. Her power, exerted across the school, involved staff being governed in such a way as to force their alignment with the school’s policy directions and the dispensing of staff unwilling to comply. She demanded normalized staff behaviours by initially setting up a strict code of conduct and demanding practices such as students’ Reflective Learning Logs for every lesson where students provided written feedback about lessons. Alison herself monitored Learning Logs on a periodic basis. An example of Alison’s account of one of these processes included the introduction of the Learning Log which “initially met with a lot of resistance”, but after “asking [staff] if they had any better suggestions [for student feedback on lessons/improving literacy] ... [I immediately] began the Learning Logs here.”

Important to Alison’s leadership strategy for the attainment of required reform outcomes was a strategic knowledge of the efficient deployment of resources to ensure accountabilities and targets could be met. This required micropolitical management of school resources to staff the school in ways which best accommodated the curriculum needs of students as well as her ability to lead and manage the school. The SSLSES National Partnership reforms themselves promoted the introduction of flexible staffing processes in New South Wales, designed to subvert existing staffing agreements and decouple longstanding DEC/school/staff

relationships. The decoupling of expendable teachers and their unions from organizations was symptomatic of prevailing organizational models appropriated by neoliberal regimes (Connell, 2013). The SSLSES National Partnership reforms, specifically Reform 1, empowered Alison's redesign of the school's staffing composition to reconfigure the interrelationships between staff and principal. Alison, similarly to other case principals, saw these reforms as an opportunity to re-design personnel interrelationships, and re-culture the school using the flexible staffing and performance management changes required by the SSLSES National Partnership reforms.

Using the SSLSES National Partnership program's performance management reforms, two staff were disciplined by being quickly placed on lengthy and acrimonious performance improvement programs and transferred. Gunter (2015, p.1) describes the process of silencing "inadequate" teachers as forcing them to "get off my bus". Their contribution, professional voice and knowledge were eradicated from the school as they were non-complicit with the school's direction. Alison's institution of performance management processes and the changing processes of measuring and sorting staff in competitive ways resulted in new stressful and nasty interrelationships. Alison says of the resultant interpersonal relationships still evident in staffroom interactions:

The first "[improvement] program" was very stressful and time consuming with the teacher eventually being demoted. The second teacher left but continues to undermine and complain about me among the community at every opportunity (Alison: Cottonwood Central principal).

Other staff were transferred peremptorily into the secondary area to break up existing staff alliances and ostensibly to implement specific literacy support programs (such as Reading to Learn) in the secondary area. Alison subsequently manipulated the placement of her teachers, describing this personnel management as a "chess game trying to match the staff with the programs we wanted to implement". Simultaneously, she complained that:

The [NSW DEC Staffing Agreement] system of staffing doesn't help schools to attract the staff they want often enough. It hinders you from bringing in staff that you want to attract, to run some of these programs with students (Alison: Cottonwood Central).

As a rural principal, Alison had to also manage the mismatch between SSLSES National Partnership reforms and education system staffing anomalies. She found that accessing appropriate and/or temporary staff under the reforms became a challenge due to scarcity of needed Key Learning Area (KLA) staff for rural secondary schools, as well as issues created by the temporary nature and payment of new positions. Although Alison indicated that she was

eventually able to source newly graduated staff from practicums and some from a nearby regional town as her school changed, she used words like “game” and “match” to signal the micropolitical manoeuvrings she needed to perform.

Using leadership experience, Alison utilized power/knowledge (Foucault, 1980) of staff skills and weaknesses to exercise disciplinary power over the strategic placement of personnel throughout the school in various programs. In acceding to reform governmentalities for performance management, Alison positioned her most valuable staff, such as those able to provide the promised extra-curricular programs, in key curricular areas even before key English or mathematics or primary staff. Some staff, such as the music staff, were not necessarily trained in needed school curriculum areas. In this way, Alison micropolitically implemented reforms for which she was accountable while simultaneously re-culturing her school to fulfil niche program requirements.

Ultimately, Alison utilized micropolitical personnel management skills to attract and align the staffing of her targeted niche programs with the need to replace as many of her original staff as she could via casual staffing and transfer processes. Notably, staff selected for their extracurricular skills and compliance were not always trained in KLA areas needed by the school’s curriculum structures at the time, but were selected for the high-profile programs being marketed by the school. Thus, despite the constraints of the SSLSES National Partnership processes which exerted disciplinary power over her leadership conduct through many structural rationalities, Alison managed the flexible staffing at her disposal using knowledge of both her staff and the education system, to strengthen her power over a more compliant and disciplined staff.

In summary, Alison’s micropolitical leadership and counter-conduct enabled her to indirectly mediate the reforms for equity with increased market share due to additional enrolments. Alison procured additional resources for her school with which to secure her vision for equity and enrol an increasingly diverse socio-cultural group which similarly impacted beneficially on the experiences of the whole group. Alison elected to reposition her leadership practices in line with governmentality requirements of the SSLSES National Partnership, and in so doing exerted power over staff to secure many of the measurable outputs desired by the reforms. In so doing she has seemingly stepped away from the prevalent existing leadership discourses, and ignored traditional leadership interests in professional learning, curriculum and pedagogy. She consigned these areas for further management in a customer focused technical rationalist style.

8.3 Parkeview Central: Rethinking Leadership

Stuart's preferred leadership practices for implementing the SSLSES National Partnership at Parkeview Central in 2009 were collaborative and consultative (Dinham, 2008a; Harris, 2004). The school's systems' analysis carried out by Stuart's team showed data which was higher than all state averages attesting to the stability of Parkeview Central teachers and their engagement in responsive teaching. Stuart delegated much of the SSLSES National Partnership administration to the Parkeview Central Head Teacher [Susan] who summarized Stuart's practices:

We began the National Partnership when [Stuart] introduced it to us at an Executive meeting. We all provided input about the reforms. The Assistant Principal [Robyn], [Stuart] and I with the P&C president were all on the group which did the Situational Analysis. Then [Stuart] went to all the staff for input, then to the P&C. For example, for Reading 2 Learn the Assistant Principal, [Robyn], was trained as the facilitator (Susan: HT, Parkeview Central school).

However, Stuart was forced to abandon his initially collaborative and distributive leadership practices, understood and based on existing leadership practices modelled by some of his peers, after he joined the SSLSES National Partnership in 2009. He found he was positioned to exercise more authority over the way reforms were implemented by the School Education Director (SED) as his supervisor. Stuart was required to use the accepted situated meanings and social language of the SSLSES National Partnership processes and pay more attention to specific template requirements requiring changes to his collaborative decision making. He felt he was disciplined by the social language of the Discourse model to become the type of leader envisaged by the SSLSES National Partnership. That is, he was expected to be a leader with the key role in "the development and implementation of the school plan while meeting the challenge of administering and leading a new and flexible set of reforms within their school" (Australian Government, et al., 2009, p.70). He felt that his preferred collegial leadership of the staff was stymied by the SSLSES National Partnership supervision.

Stuart's uncertainty as a leader is shown in his recount by repetition of terms such as "probably", his hesitant discourse, and his uncertainty about managing a difference of one in staffing calculations by other micropolitical means or counter-conduct. He says of the process:

It mattered what the priority [of the National Partnership] was. Our priority was *probably* catering for the larger primary numbers. They were *probably* in the high 70s, but we were one student short of being able to employ a fourth teacher or to form a fourth class, so we did want to use the low SES funding to try employ an additional primary teacher five days a week... [The SED who] was here when the

Low SES funding came through...didn't agree with putting extra staff on...and ...didn't like the suggestion that I wanted to form four primary classes... (Stuart: Parkeview Central principal)

Notably, Stuart's leadership and administrative practices which acceded to literacy and numeracy accountabilities secured only insignificant improvements to already positive NAPLAN and attendance results in the school during the time of the SSLSES National Partnership and were not based on any analysis of the school's evidence.

Significantly, compliance with appropriate discourses and the disciplinary power exerted by the SED proved to be detrimental to Stuart's further development or practice as a leader in a SSLSES National Partnership school. He felt that he, as principal, was 'disciplined' by all aspects of the SSLSES National Partnership which forced him to comply with accountabilities for a negative school benefit. He says:

You know you have to jump through too many hoops... you have to meet the targets you set... It was very taxing and to some extent stressful. We really only got a relatively small amount of money (Stuart: Parkeview Central principal).

Stuart also emphasized that he received little support as a leader. He stated: "And being in an isolated school also, I felt to a degree a lack of support from my supervisors" (Stuart: Parkeview Central principal). Stuart noted the lack of timely support which showed that he was aware of his leadership being unfairly 'disciplined' because of his lack of knowledge. He was unable to abrogate the risks exerted by governmentalities of the SSLSES National Partnership, its time constraints, its Discourse model and his SED. Stuart was never able to take control of governmentalities to mediate tensions, but remained at their mercy. He felt that support was necessary to help him navigate an equity education telos to mediate a good 'deal' for equity for all Parkeview students from the SSLSES National Partnership.

Stuart subsequently felt keenly the unfairness and complication of managing significant staffing anomalies when he lost control of his secondary KLA staff establishment with resultant decreasing enrolments. His description of his attempts to exert power over his school's staffing are reminiscent of Alison's manoeuvring of her staff at Cottonwood Central, except that Alison seized power over her staffing establishment. Stuart was forced to accede to SSLSES National Partnership performativities to the detriment of the school's ability to offer a comprehensive curriculum for students in Years 7-10, where technologies of the self, counter-conduct and micropolitical acumen may have helped secure his secondary enrolment:

We can cope... but it's not very fair on our students because we have a food technology teacher who's also self-training in ICT. She does the elective ICT /Information Technology in Year 11 and 12, because she had a strong interest in computers and not because she's trained in it and she is doing a great job teaching that. But she is *untrained!* She's actually a Home Economics teacher ...and she obviously does the Food Technology and VET Hospitality as well, and then...until this year, we had an Industrial Arts teacher for 3 days who was also willing and able to teach Agriculture and VET Primary Industries. Unfortunately, because our secondary numbers dropped at the beginning of this year the Industrial Arts teacher ... [is now] getting five days a week work in another school who can give him the hours ... and we are left with outstanding periods to fill ...

I've now employed a Primary teacher to do the Ag', who's very knowledgeable about agriculture, ...and I'm teaching all the Industrial Arts subjects... so in terms of electives we offer in our Stage 5 class...their options are Food Technology, Information Technology or Wood Technology or Agriculture. We offer [only] 4 electives, so...they have no opportunity of being exposed to *Art, Music, or Languages* (added emphases) (Stuart: Parkeview Central principal).

Stuart was forced to react to the disciplinary power relationship with the SED with no strategies for resistance, or counter-conduct so that his equity telos became subsumed within SSLSES National Partnership targets and their narrow focus on literacy and numeracy discourses. The equity needs of his secondary students were compromised and Stuart was forced to rely on his community links and the P&C to further fund the school's ongoing technological improvements and field trips that he believed were important for student equity.

8.4 North Plains High School: Rethinking Leadership

Marjory as principal of North Plains High School for two years prior to being offered the SSLSES National Partnership program in 2010 had embarked on leadership of an extensive school pedagogies improvement process, called Assessment for Learning (A4L) based on the work by Hattie (2003, 2006) and Marzano (2003). This became the signature program that secured her school attention in the marketplace and for her leadership. Her leadership subjectivities were influenced also by prior leadership experiences as an executive of large comprehensive schools in the Hunter Valley and the North-Western Regions of NSW and work with the NSW Quality Teaching model. Significantly, as she reflected on her leadership practices under the SSLSES National Partnership at North Plains, she could recognise the ways in which she had been repositioned as a leader.

In the face of changing reform accountabilities Marjory reviewed and critiqued her leadership practices at North Plains High, to make sense of the leadership needed for the implementation of the SSLSES National Partnership. She felt that in implementing a change agenda, she needed

to involve all staff in the decisions to be made, to get alignment and ‘buy in’ to the school plan direction. As principal, she had utilised collaborative processes as indicated in existing leadership discourses (Hattie, 2003, 2005; Fullan, 2005). She found, however, that under the SSLSES National Partnership she needed to rethink these practices, as increased scrutiny and assessment of her performance took place within more limited time frames, using more specific administrative templates demanded by the SSLSES National Partnership (Australian Government et al., 2010), which impacted on the ways she exercised leadership.

As she worked with the SSLSES National Partnership reforms, Marjory felt that she was being made increasingly accountable and responsabilised (Savage, 2013) for the decisions to be made, and that her leadership was being more specifically defined in terms of her accountability for targets, which positioned her school specifically in the education marketplace. Simultaneously, she realized that disciplinary techniques such as tight timeframes and specific social languages required by the Discourse model impacted on the extent of her power over the agenda. She felt that she was being re-positioned to more closely direct the governmentality agenda and that her role was being reconstructed more authoritatively due to the increasingly prescriptive agendas, closer scrutiny and defining Discourse model. She noted staff misapprehension and early resistance emanating from these changes when she said:

The staff were happy with the funding but not necessarily with the direction. I don't think many schools would say that their staff are 100% on board when concepts involve developing them! That then, becomes a leadership issue [for the principal]! (Marjory: North Plains High principal).

The repositioning of Marjory's leadership practices subsequently involved her rarely consulting staff about decisions to be made without prior planning of the outcomes she needed to achieve. She strategized the ways in which she would reach those outcomes whilst simultaneously consulting staff. She therefore felt forced to mediate decision making processes so that her accountabilities might be met. In these ways, she was forced to utilize conduct counter to her collaborative practices and apply more independent and autocratic technologies of the self, in order to secure the decisions she wanted. She also felt that in terms of the tight efficiencies she was required to attain, she needed a more cohesive overview of the school's complex agendas and needed to step away from the day to day management. She stated that: “I [was] the person who ma[de] all those connections.... This [was] my conceptualization of the reforms and my understanding of the [whole] school needs” (North Plains High principal interview). She continued:

I think my style is collaborative. However, I am directive in terms of my expectations of the school. That's *not* collaborative. I *set them [expectations] up* (added emphasis). However, while the executive have input into the decision making, there are some things which are my job... While I say this, I have worked hard on getting this [impression of] cohesion and unity. I would hate anyone to think that it has happened by accident... When I say that I am collaborative, *it's a strategy*. It is not that I am unsure of what to do, but it's that I want to make sure that everyone is on board and that the decision making is inclusive (Marjory: North Plains High principal).

In being forced to re-strategize such complex change, Marjory found that governmentality of her leadership across the school was impacted by the increasing complexity, demanding administration tasks, surveillance processes and mandated time constraints. She tried to micropolitically align as many of the National Partnership programs' reforms as she could in planning:

We set up the two programs together on the one school plan and I divided up the funding for both of them according to the focus areas or reforms of both programs and put the funds towards them. The priorities of the LSES National Partnership were equity, literacy and numeracy, and teaching and learning development while the priority of the Quality Teaching National Partnership was building the capacity of staff- so you can see how they dovetailed in together! (Marjory: North Plains High principal).

She complained, however, that the administrative tasks required via evaluation reports and analyses expected of her (Australian Government et al., 2009) were excessive, demanding and unnecessary, claiming: "Some weeks it was all I did... At evaluation time...it was hideous! The stuff that I did that was mandated was the least valuable!" (Marjory: North Plains High principal).

In re-envisioning her leadership role under the SSLSES National Partnership, Marjory also found that she had to be prepared to delegate roles and authority to targeted staff. The use of the words "directive" and "credibility" demonstrated her understanding of the importance of prioritising governmentalities embedded in the choices to be made to staff able to implement the school's quality pedagogy focus:

You don't get to do everything [and] principals need to accept that. You need to be *directive* of the way the development will happen, leave the importance of what happens with the development.... and be prepared to hand over the reins to somebody else to be the instructional leader so that you can maintain *credibility* for [your strategy] (added emphases) (North Plains High principal interview).

Marjory complained that appropriate staffing was a “major issue” after she had allocated her executive to the new Highly Accomplished Teacher (HAT) positions advocated by the SSLSES National Partnership leaving inadequate staff available to backfill those roles. Nor were there sufficient casual staff available to support school staff in professional learning. This was a significant system failure for a complex rural school, contingent on tight efficiencies and accountabilities. Such anomalies added significantly to the risk factors affecting Marjory’s conduct. Her subsequent secondment in a major regional role had to be terminated as her relieving principal was similarly unable to lead and manage the school at the level needed. Marjory complained “As a result, faculties and the school’s capacity was left weakened rather than strengthened by the staffing changes.”

Like other rural principals, such as Alison, leadership of targeted accountabilities depended on timely access to appropriate staffing resources. Appropriate personnel were necessary to help secure the targeted outcomes. Marjory’s leadership was hindered by major systems personnel failures evident in most rural schools during the SSLSES National Partnership.

These system failings amid insistent accountabilities created major tensions and risks for rural principals’ leadership, as did staff resistance to the implementation of many aspects of the SSLSES National Partnership performance management changes and NAPLAN changes. Tensions impacted on leadership practices. Resistance often emanated from the lack of ongoing development available to rural staff. The demand for rapid reform and tight time constraints meant that the SSLSES National Partnership governmentality regimes became contingent on teachers themselves demonstrating required accountabilities under new and straitened circumstances. Ongoing involvement and expert application of the professional learning opportunities provided enabled Marjory to assess personnel, and identify staff for promotions positions. She therefore aligned the implementation of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers and Leaders (APSTL) with the schools’ quality pedagogy focus to help her efficiently manage the ranking and sorting of staff within her school. For example, she identified and supported her deputy principal for further leadership positions and she mediated the use of the standards to help her Acting Head Teacher (Administration) gain promotion. She says:

I have a Head Teacher Admin[istration] role being advertised now. I am hoping that the relieving HT will step up as she has made the role here. Everything works like clockwork. That’s another aspect of leadership ... recognizing [and pegging] the strengths of your staff ... and assessing what skills you need to make sure everyone contributes to the team (Marjory: North Plains High principal).

Marjory also finally used her understanding of continuous staff learning processes to align focused staff improvement (via professional learning plans) with prompt recourse to performance improvement programs for staff not immediately demonstrating compliance with the school's directions. Principal/staff relationships were subsequently adversely impacted by the repositioning of leaders in disciplining governmental roles needing obedient 'docile' staff. Hence, using disciplinary power/knowledge Marjory aligned all performance management (EARS & TARS) processes with the school's professional learning focus in A4L and with the Australian (and NSW) teaching standards. She monitored teaching performance according to these frameworks, which proved to be very stressful and time consuming:

I was telling you that we run regular Teacher Improvement Programs ... and one of the things has also been the stress of addressing the quality of teaching in the school... I have put about 5 or 6 [teachers] on Improvement Programs over the past 7 or so years... There is a lot of work here around teacher improvement, not only through really good professional learning but also in making sure people are doing the basic job. (Marjory: North Plains High principal interview).

Whilst Marjory understood that leadership governmentalities additionally required her to utilize the disciplinary powers of performance reviews as an element of her performance mode of subjection, she complained that yet again the DEC's Employee Performance and Conduct (EPAC) processes were malaligned with school accountabilities. She emphasized the significant work load, stress and tension that they caused her using terms like "frustration", "time consuming" saying that "the timeframes through Employee Performance and Conduct (EPAC) make a real chain around your neck... you cannot do another thing!" (Marjory: North Plains High principal interview).

Despite these stressors underpinning changes to her leadership, and inter-relationships with staff, Marjory's subjectivities and mode of subjection remained focused on leadership in her local community for equity. This was despite modes of subjection and her telos being in tension with her repositioned leadership responsibilities. It soon became evident that the SSLSES National Partnership one-size-fits-all stance towards the equity needs of students would not suffice in her community where so much more was expected of her leadership. Her leadership practices accommodated these ethical realisations as a form of counter-conduct and parrhēsia. Marjory's leadership assumed an additional advocacy role (Anderson, 2009) in tension with SSLSES National Partnership accountabilities:

I need to clarify this...When I first started here I was very focused on trying to improve the quality of teaching [for improving equity]. But I ...[now] also focus on

dealing with the needs of students who may be experiencing poverty, and on levelling the playing field for these kids... As I said to you, I really didn't realise how bad the equity issues were for some kids. It came into focus for our Aboriginal kids to start with... because we [needed to] implement a long-term welfare (support) process for them. (Marjory: North Plains High principal).

These measures were in counter-conduct to leadership approaches indicated by the SSLSES National Partnership which advocated community partnerships with “extended services (including through brokering arrangements)” and “sponsorship” (COAG, 2008, p.12). To secure additional strong interagency support for students, Marjory established clear links with relevant community groups, spoke up about student needs for intervention and funded support from the SSLSES National Partnership program. The school itself managed and funded individual students' needs in addition to SSLSES National Partnership grant:

What's in place now is that when we identify a particularly needy student and we get parent permission...we put structures in place for getting any kids that need it, access to any interagency support. So, we will get kids to the doctors for health checks in Trenton, pay for their medication...We get them shoes... things that they need...These are the aspects now of how we help our kids (Marjory: North Plains High principal).

Thus, the repositioning of her leadership status at North Plains High together with her modes of subjectivity made Marjory more closely strategise her leadership of the SSLSES National Partnership reforms and micropolitically manage the changed relationships engendered. With careful mediation of governmentality strategies involving counter-conduct and *parrhēsia* she pursued her equity agenda and accommodated her student and community advocacy telos whilst repositioning her disciplinary relationships with staff as a last resort due to system staffing failures. Marjory's prioritization of her students' equity as well as reform accountabilities affected her inter-relationships with staff, which meant that her role as principal was stressful, and at times very lonely. Mediating the program tensions meant repositioning the principals' role in very different ways, that Marjory noted “didn't always make you a well person ... sometimes.”

With the SSLSES National Partnership, principals became permanently assessable subjects as governments exerted political power through audits and regular data collection. Audits that continually constructed schools like North Plains High using deficit discourses and principals in terms of standards similarly affected technologies of the self. Principal wellbeing became of concern in this regime with some principals like Marjory, indicating that continually re-strategising the many issues associated with performativity, re-aligned leadership inter-

relationships, and advocating for student equity took its toll on her. Marjory, after saying that she had to take ‘time out’ from the principals’ role, remarked ruefully that “You have to put your own processes in place though ... in terms of [managing] resilience”.

She also exercised counter-conduct with respect to her silence about the My School website in the school together with her collegial marketing campaign. She judged that her community were unconcerned by My School or NAPLAN as measures of students’ achievements. She recognized that My School was only being used by a certain group of parents in the education marketplace. She herself, remained silent on promoting NAPLAN results and noted that parents were more concerned with the school’s care for students, its focus on quality teaching, its HSC results, its traditional façade and curriculum focus. This accorded with similar data for targeted Queensland principals (Niesche, 2010) and findings from other principals in this study. Marjory explained that the school looked after her parents’ emphases. She says of the My School website:

My School! Our parents don’t go on there. They don’t really have any interest! I haven’t had one question about My School from the P&C in the entire time I have been here! They rely on their relationship with us. We make sure that we get every student into a uniform and we look after our students’ needs very closely [see also other notes about the Student Welfare policy changes] (Marjory: North Plains principal)

In the changing times of the SSLSES National Partnership program, the reform agenda could be seen as a test of principals’ leadership acumen to exert influence over teachers’ performance and mediate the school’s role in broadened education markets and communities. It was also a test of a principal’s leadership of new governmentalities to mediate changes in the school’s learning culture and changing personnel management systems. Marjory successfully exercised counter-conduct to institute these understandings broadly and collegially in competition with required narrower reform accountabilities. She mostly recognized the ways in which the SSLSES National Partnership agenda had repositioned her as principal and forced her to reconceptualise her leadership practices to meet narrower accountabilities, leadership standards and the school’s sustainability in the rapidly evolving education market place. She exercised strong forms of self-management and self-adjustment to accommodate these evolving governmentalities in ways that did impact on equity, and staff management but also did affect her well-being and need for collegiality as a basis for school change.

8.5 High Tops Public School: Rethinking Leadership

Natalie's equity vision was for all students to experience parity of opportunity for all stages of their schooling ensuring that her equity telos incorporated strong modes of subjection to her students, staff and the community. Natalie's leadership was characterized by recognition of the importance of staff unity and collegiality for student equity. She believed that staff cohesion around the school's key values of student support and justice were key to ensuring quality of teaching and learning. Like Marjory, she understood the value of specially tailoring the school program responses to students' individual needs of students and advocating for their needs. All of Natalie's actions were counter to the competitive and reductionist conduct indicated by the SSLSES National Partnership program. She was critical of the reductionist agenda for disadvantaged students and the disciplining staff agenda of the SSLSES National Partnership whilst appreciating the importance of the additional funding support.

Natalie subscribed to discourses about inclusive and values driven leadership (Duignan, 2009) and exercised counter-conduct and parrhēsia to SSLSES National Partnership leadership notions by prioritising a school community of practice (Wenger-Traynor & Wenger-Traynor, 2015). She was especially resistant to required competitive, 'docile' staff relationships espousing reductionist learning development and pedagogies. Natalie subsequently resisted changes to the school's performance management practices which impacted on the collegiality of staff. Natalie's dedication to staff cohesion is seen in her collaborative style for completing SSLSES National Partnership systems analyses, school planning and program implementation:

We set the plan collaboratively as a whole staff for most programs, and then I worked with the staff who were expert in certain areas on the specifics. Katie (School Administrative Manager) and I then worked on putting the funding together using the planning tool and allocated the resources needed. ... I led the planning by getting the process organized, and getting the data needed for the decisions to be made at staff meetings and with some of the executive and experts (Natalie: High Tops Public principal)

Realising the importance of implementing specifically tailored programs for students associated with relevant data collection rather than applying the blunt instruments and one-size-fits-all programs proposed by the SSLSES National Partnership she also engaged a number of university academics to work collegially with all staff on devising specific programs for students using appropriate data sets for monitoring success or otherwise of programs.

Indicating her counter-conduct in providing detailed evidence of achievement and participation data, Natalie emphasized that the focus of the SSLSES National Partnership evidence base was

too narrow to describe the complex needs of High Tops Public students. She noted that it promoted a too regulatory and restrictive leadership discourse for a school like High Tops Public and hence, she specifically gathered a broad evidence base for programs implemented which helped her gauge the success, or otherwise, of all programs implemented.

Natalie's leadership had also assumed an advocacy role (Anderson, 2012) in supporting students' growth as individuals poised to be integrated into society, as a whole. Her advocacy was in counter-conduct to the disciplinary approaches and reconstituted equity-as-access-discourses advocated in the SSLSES National Partnership (see Chapter 5). Whilst the school had sought some excellent interagency support over time, Natalie continued these leadership practices as part of her equity telos and mode of subjection, so that the students benefitted from the many extra-curricular and curricular experiences like creative arts, music and science that their non-disadvantaged peers already enjoyed. She also ensured that students had access to shoes and warm clothes and food when they needed it:

We have also been able to benefit from relationships and sponsorship from the community. Prominent organisations have been ... the Regional Conservatorium, and the Smith Family [for reading and homework and resource support]. The school has also been able to develop excellent interagency relationships with Out of Home Care, Schools as Communities and Families NSW. Many of these organisations provide additional resources for students (Natalie: High Tops principal).

However, like other rural and regional principals, Natalie struggled to retain the appropriate levels of staffing she needed for continuing student engagement following the SSLSES National Partnership. Whilst she secured additional temporary and casual staffing including Teachers' Aides for the innovative programs funded by SSLSES National Partnership, she was unable to retain those staff because of the program's short-term focus, and the difficulty of marketing an apparently residualised school to potentially interested staff (Vinson, 2015). This left existing staff stretched to cater for the intensive individual learning needs of students begun under the SSLSES National Partnerships. Inadequate staffing resulted in continuing inequities for the High Tops students who benefitted from the ongoing individualised engagement in learning during the SSLSES National Partnership.

Except for Natalie's collegial leadership practices which developed the professional learning capacity of all staff, additional pedagogies attained by staff may have been more completely lost from her school after the SSLSES National Partnership. Using technologies of the self which comprised loyalty and commitment to an organisation as part of capacity building engendered by Natalie, High Tops staff maintained their dedication to High Tops Public

students. After the SSLSES National Partnership, staff retained innovative professional capital experiences for High Tops Public (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012) in positions that involved additional workloads. Natalie's inclusive and collegial leadership contributed to the fostering of technologies of the self, attuned to ongoing social justice and school loyalty.

Despite advocacy and distributive leadership practices encouraged in equity leadership discourses (Dinham, 2009; Duignan, 2009), Natalie's leadership practices and counter-conduct were insufficient to fully sustain the additional program and development capital generated by the SSLSES National Partnership program, and the school lost many of its innovative programs at its completion. Despite the significant capacity building and equity generated by Natalie's leadership technologies and *parrhēsia*, the realities of a school catering for marginalised social housing students demonstrated many of the reform program's inadequacies for long term sustainability and equity.

8.6 Colborne High: Rethinking Leadership.

At Colborne High, Boyd as an incoming principal, was compelled to establish agency of the SSLSES National Partnership to meet program performativities. Most notable in Boyd's case was his exercise of power/knowledge over resistant staff in the exercise of his subjectivities and his seemingly ready adoption of reform discourses causing friction with staff. The exploration of the power relationships exercised in Boyd's study has emanated from the particular context at Colborne High. Using notions of power/knowledge from Foucault's work (1977), some principals' leadership practices can be seen to be driven by the need to apply specific knowledge as a basis of the power relationships established. This was particularly the case for Boyd, where much of the SSLSES National Partnership planning undertaken by the previous principal and had been based on limited educational policy knowledge at hand and on more collaborative leadership practices. Boyd's criticism of previous practices compared to his own can be seen in the following statement:

I have said repeatedly- I am not their friend. The door is always open. I am willing to listen and negotiate but I do not rule the school through friendship as the previous administration did (Boyd: Coleborne High principal).

Boyd' became principal of a particularly difficult executive at Colborne High School where the previous principal had more readily empowered staff involvement in decision making. Boyd's current executive were particularly recalcitrant in the face of his more autocratic leadership style, and in the face of the reforms he tried to institute. Boyd saw his more authoritative leadership was driven by his accountabilities in the SSLSES National Partnership. This caused issues for Boyd's leadership practices, as many staff were unwilling to cooperate

with any of the SSLSES National Partnership reform processes and Boyd experienced ongoing power struggles with staff and the NSW Teachers Federation before the staff eventually acceded to any SSLSES National Partnership requirements and Boyd's leadership of its implementation. Boyd used policy Discourse models to have staff understand the use now being made of data and knowledge in reform targets and new accountabilities. Staff by comparison could see that the exertion of policy rationalities throughout the school functioned to "discipline" schools and teachers as they were forced into compliance.

Boyd explained, that he was forced to reconsider his leadership practices when he came to Colborne High in order to manage the ensuing power struggles and to manage the increased accountabilities of the reforms. Boyd spoke of the contrast in school cultures between his previous school where it was "interesting and dynamic" and Colborne, where it was like "jumping off a moving train onto the platform and slowing to an absolute halt!" He believed that the school culture at Colborne High and narrower accountabilities from the SSLSES National Partnership contributed to his need to exercise a more autocratic leadership.

With the SSLSES National Partnership systems analysis already completed, Boyd therefore exercised agency over school planning processes by leading a review of school data using the National School Improvement Tool developed by the ACER to promote staff understanding of the importance of evidence for setting and monitoring school direction. On the basis of the responses received, Boyd re-set the school's direction to that based on pedagogies for differentiated teaching programs (see Chapter 9). He seized leadership over the major changes to pedagogy needed by the school for the devolutionary changes of Local Schools: Local Decisions (LSLD) and personnel management changes to occur in Great Teachers: Inspired Learning (GTIL) policies. His leadership practices therefore centred around preparing staff for their accountabilities according to planned NSW DEC performance management changes and staff remuneration reforms based on 'teacher quality'.

Boyd's subjectivity was important in this case because of his knowledge of impending policy developments on the teachers in the NSW education system under the GTIL policy. Boyd's leadership practices were impacted especially by his membership of key educational committees implementing the Australian teaching standards and associated changes to personnel policies across NSW schools. Boyd, alone of all the principals in the cases examined, understood the importance of the reforms of the SSLSES National Partnership in relation to the parallel reforms being implemented across all schools, which would significantly alter personnel practices in all NSW schools by 2018. He saw that the growth of greater school

autonomy and self-management proposed by the LSLD policy would significantly impact on schools' autonomy and leadership practices, whilst the implementation of the Australian teaching standards and GTIL would also impact on teacher progression and remuneration in the NSW Department of Education and Communities. He similarly understood that the SSLSES National Partnership policy had re-positioned his leadership in less collegial and more autocratic ways by means of the reform accountabilities as a precursor to these further reforms. He noted the importance of his knowledge for his disciplinary leadership agenda and explained using reform social language such as “accredited” and “accountability”, “TARS and EARS”:

I said back in in 2011 that staff would need to be *accredited* by the Institute (of Teachers) and there was going to be a revamp of TARS and EARS measures. I said that and we would need *to use accountability measures*. The Head Teachers expressed their hostility about the continuing use of the word “*accountability*”. (“We’re sick and tired of the use of this word”, they said) ...This is coming. This is the new educational landscape. You need to prepare for it! (added emphases) (Boyd: Colborne High principal).

These experiences impacted on Boyd’s practices directly to incorporate revised technologies of the self as principal. He stated confidently that he felt “ahead of the game. I can pinpoint what needs to be done”.

Seemingly incongruously, however, Boyd’s vision for equity encompassed strong values-driven practices that saw all students able to capitalise on post school opportunities because the school enabled students to be “critically literate, technically adept problem solvers... and life-long learners” (Boyd: Principal questionnaire). His leadership practices also incorporated an equity telos and mode of subjection. He sought to mediate the tensions between these rationalities and school realities. He eventually mediated student experiences using micropolitical means grounded in a “social capital” and equity discourse. He noted that:

Students all need an infusion of *cultural capital*, and with low SES students, they also need *social capital*... (One response to trying to get teachers to empathise with these aspects of students’ lives was... “but we’ve got our problems too...”) This is totally unacceptable to me and I hope that we can eventually change this culture of ignorance- and these few [teachers] are educated! (added emphases) (Boyd: Colborne High principal)

Finally, Boyd took advantage of SSLSES National Partnership policy to exercise micropolitical leadership over staff resources. Like Alison, he chose to re-staff and re-culture the school using the flexible staffing measures available in the SSLSES National Partnership reforms. In this, he sought to normalize higher expectations for student equity whilst simultaneously

undermining the growing resistance to his leadership. Employment of more compliant staff was used as a micropolitical mechanism to re-culture the school for improved ‘docility’ and control. However, he simultaneously employed several specialist student support and executive staff, sympathetic to his equity vision who helped mediate the individual needs of refugee, Aboriginal and low SES students across the school. Staffing changes were “significant” to achieve both goals. He stated:

I have made some *significant* breakthroughs- as I employed three new dynamic Head Teachers. We began to have an impact when we had meetings for Professional Learning and discussions about pedagogy- and [we] did not give in to the *winge festivals and administrivia sessions*. The meetings have changed to include agendas involving pedagogy and professional learning (added emphases) (Boyd: Colborne High principal interview).

Thus, at Colborne High the SSLSES National Partnership reforms had positioned a principal like Boyd as a micropolitical actor, managing multiple governmentalities and Discourse models to secure school targets in a resistant environment. Foucault noted that knowledge can be produced and used within power relationships such that some knowledges can be used to “silence” other [knowledges] (Foucault, 1992, p.4). When the principal as subject, manages certain power relationships armed with superior knowledge, they can ensure that their will prevails and existing understandings can be “silenced”. Boyd illustrates these characteristics in the early confrontations with staff. He said he benefited from his understandings of the complex ways in which the education system worked because of his roles on educational policy committees. There was an observable power/knowledge advantage evident in his leadership practices. With the additional knowledge from previous and outside roles impacting on his “subjectivity”, he tried to mediate rationalities and technologies of school change to overcome the resistance.

Boyd finally described leadership as a “bit of a labyrinth” that he managed with perseverance and yet advocacy and parrhēsia on behalf of students. He felt that his superior knowledge of the “system” enabled him to achieve what he did. He commented finally about the effects of his leadership practices based on his knowledge/power relationships:

They are getting used to my determination ... If I can’t get something done one way, I reverse and find another way to get it done. *Leadership is a bit of a labyrinth, so if I get blocked by an unfriendly landscape, I just go back and find another way through...* (added emphases) (Boyd: Colborne High principal).

Instead of exercising counter-conduct to mediate the effects of the SSLSES National Partnership on his leadership, Boyd himself appropriated leadership governmentalities and the

social languages of reforms in order to implement them. He utilised his hierarchical power and additional knowledge and technologies of the self to implement reforms to seize power over the SSLSES National Partnership reform process. Since applying technologies of the self involves practices which enable individuals shape themselves in specific ways in response to governmentalities, Boyd's responses to the SSLSES National Partnership discourses demonstrated his willingness to adopt much of the Discourse model shaping leadership practices. The implementation of his superior policy knowledge earned him a promotion a couple of years later to the NSW authority implementing the AITSL Standards. He re-targeted schedules, communication techniques and re-cultured teaching teams. Similarly to Alison he manipulated his staffing to employ new staff who enjoyed his favour, and empowered some staff over others to benefit students. He instituted his own professional development model and determined its evidence for success across the school. Boyd subsequently commandeered the normalising and governmentality technologies of the SSLSES National Partnership for the benefit of his own leadership and authority at Colborne High.

8.7 Southern Girls High: Rethinking Leadership

Don had become principal of Southern Girls High School two years prior to being selected for the SSLSES National Partnership 2011 cohort. His leadership was signified by a confident and independent approach to the ways in which he felt he had been positioned by the SSLSES National Partnership program. He exercised counter-conduct to governmentality technologies as can be seen in the ways he negotiated prevailing SSLSES National Partnership requirements and utilized innovative micropolitical skills to create his own research-based school agenda. Don's leadership style was based on his own interpretation and vision of the school's needs and utilized a distributive and collegial approach.

Don's subjectivity had been determined by a range of positions in the NSW Department of Education's executive service where he had been respected for his flexibility as a program innovator. In 2011 when offered the SSLSES National Partnership he utilized the reform technologies and his own measuring tools to perform the relevant situational analyses of the school in preparation for the reform implementation. He, like Marjory, stayed focused on the overall strategy needed for his school plan implementation, preferring an innovative rationality. He says of the initial systems' analysis:

I used my own [measuring tools]. I used some of the Department's tools. I picked bits and pieces out of it to create our own measures because I knew exactly what

we needed, and if anything, the tools were backups for me (Don: Southern Girls' High principal)

With his overall strategy in mind, Don's leadership practices comprised a collegial approach developed around the construction of Inter-Faculty Teams engaged in their own research projects. He commented that that his initial attempts at leading team work and collaboration were met with suspicion and negativity by a staff who had been used to a more authoritarian leadership style and were resistant to change. Don's leadership schema were, however, all mostly in counter-conduct to the competitive practices expected by the SSLSES National Partnership processes. He concluded that after three years of the SSLSES National Partnership, that staff were positive about continuing this collegial teamwork, although he had been careful to reposition himself at arm's length from the processes, allocating distributed leadership practices to his Head Teachers and Deputy Principal. He says of the initial reaction of staff:

I came here in 2010, and I followed a very strong principal who ran things very differently. It was very autocratic, top-down, [and] because I work the other way [bottom up] ... that's made it harder, and also, because results, discipline and everything else here was very good, [staff said] "why do we need to change?" (Don: Southern Girls' High principal).

Don's vision embodied developing a culture of innovation and research, emanating from staff and students' collaboration and research, and based on every teacher's involvement in delivering quality pedagogies and curricula. This was counter to the more stringent governmentalities associated with the SSLSES National Partnership. His strategy promoted collegiality instead of competition and it was based in a strong professional learning culture (Fullan & Hargreaves, 2009). The following also summarises his vision for the culture of the school:

A lot of the time it's about changing the culture...And if you've got people happy, volunteering, all these things are happening; the place is abuzz. That tells you a hell of a lot, whereas, once you start having unhappy people, infighting, avoidance, big absenteeism- that tells you something is not right. So, "gut feeling" is something I use...based on experience (Don: Southern Girls' High principal).

Don's attitude to leadership of the changes at Southern Girls' High seemed rather organic at times and ran in counter-conduct to the authoritative leadership discourses engendered by the SSLSES National Partnership. Don was also a leader who, having established an overall vision and strategy, left delegated staff to complete the specific strategies. These strategies underpinned his conduct of staff at Southern Girls High, although he recognized that the staff were not initially as ready for change as was required by reform processes. His delegated

practices were associated with the selection of talented staff able to support such an innovative vision, funded by the SSLSES National Partnership program.

When asked about his management of initial resistance, he laughed and said that as an [ex] English teacher he had developed ways of communicating which usually helped him attain his objective. In this, he was similar to Boyd who saw that with his superior systems knowledge he could negotiate a “leadership labyrinth”. There is some evidence of the importance of the conflation of power/knowledge and discourse explained in Foucault’s conceptualisation of power and governmentality (Foucault, 1995) impacting on practices. For instance, he placed some emphasis on “gut instinct” for his evaluation of the school’s progress, and indicated that he envisioned a vibrant school culture centred around professional collaboration counter to the more disciplinary SSLSES National Partnership leadership Discourse model. He therefore approached leadership with a mix of micropolitical, collaborative and flexible practices. Of all the case principals, he seemed the least concerned by the SSLSES National Partnership governmentalities and any constraint on his leadership practices. He was prepared to be somewhat eclectic and cavalier about measures to achieve his vision. He says that he “cheats a lot (with formalities and paperwork)” because of his reputation for innovative leadership of educational programs.

His comments about his occasional encounters with staff resistance showed his micropolitical practices, as he cleverly negotiated the issues to maintain his overall strategic vision and delegated much of his leadership to his executive. However, if he mismanaged a decision, he indicated that it weighed heavily on him. For example, he lost a recent “fight” with the NSW Teachers Federation over student absences and comments being placed on school reports. He said that at times leadership had been very tough, admitting that “Coming here has [really] been the toughest thing!”

Don, like Marjory, re-strategised his direction from the SSLSES National Partnership systems analysis which had backed up his “gut feelings” by using a range of school evidence, including major internal school reviews. He used counter-conduct to generate thorough and more relevant evidence from Southern Girls High students, staff and parents. For instance, the school evaluation that Don carried out along-side the SSLSES National Partnership systems analysis in 2012, told two different stories. After conducting additional focus groups with parents, staff and students, (compared to the narrower SSLSES National Partnership systems analysis) students had confessed to being bored at school while staff had believed that students were overly “passive learners”. As Don indicated, it was “eye opening” to staff that they had

misunderstood the evidence from their students. Despite his casual-seeming approach to the SSLSES National Partnership systems analysis, his leadership and strategy was in contrast, fully informed by a thorough collection of evidence from all sources via his ongoing school and program evaluations. Olivia, Don's DP (National Partnerships) had been employed to specifically lead this process based on a thorough collection of data from all school sources for each review.

Don understood also that the governmentality technologies and rationalities of the SSLSES National Partnership were driven by evidence of success generated by performance and achievement data. However, counter-conduct saw that the evidence collected at Southern Girls high school was much more comprehensive and relevant than that required by the SSLSES National Partnership. Like Marjory, required analysis data was submitted for supervision by the SED but was irrelevant for Don's use. Don's leadership strategy relied instead on the extensive use of data provided by students and their parents about the school's own extensive programs, pedagogy and direction. The use of wide ranging evidence gathered extensively from students and staff teams enabled Don to institute whole school changes to teacher pedagogy responsive to student feedback and the professional learning of interfaculty teams. Students' Individual Learning Plans implemented by the Deputy Principal (National Partnerships) were designed to provide regular student feedback about each teacher's pedagogy and the school's curriculum structures. Similarly, biennial faculty reviews conducted by selected teams of teachers evaluated the pedagogies most valued by students. There was therefore, no need for disciplinary performance management reviews as evidence was gathered responsively, collaboratively and qualitatively about every student, teacher, program and faculty's performance via the school's evaluation processes.

Don's leadership of personnel was cleverly micropolitical in that he gradually broke down the faculty silos to create collegial interfaculty learning development teams which engendered an excitement about learning for many teachers. Staff were not subject to the narrow time frames and restricted Professional Learning Plan templates instituted as governmentality technologies by the SSLSES National Partnership. Don also mediated the power allocated to his leadership to engender innovation and equity by redistributing power to his staff and executive to run interfaculty research. He re-allocated funded time, space and autonomy from the SSLSES National Partnership program funds to secure his own envisioned school change.

Mediated leadership governmentalities assumed that the power rested with each staff member for their development. Most staff who were allocated power over their own development, subsequently took control of their own learning progress using technologies of the self to

establish revised teaching and learning roles in the school's own reform context. Don's leadership style facilitated the building of this collegial self-responsibilised culture functioning from the classroom and staff 'up', rather than from the 'top down', as indicated in policy discourses. His practices enabled individualized innovative learning processes in contrast to the narrow one-size-fits-all conceptualization of leadership of the SSLSES National Partnership documentation.

Like all other principals, however, Don depended on the quality and availability of staff for the ensuing quality of his innovations and the school's SSLSES National Partnership strategy. He also utilised the SSLSES National Partnership flexible staffing changes to secure additional staff for the school change he envisaged. Don's leadership was supplemented by his employment of highly sought-after recruits for innovative roles in his school. With his extensive professional networks and having had access to many talented staff in previous roles, he selected only the most capable staff for roles at Southern Girls High. In this he was much more fortunate than his rural colleagues. His leadership of his executive team was based on providing them with all the tools with which they themselves could exercise leadership. His vision was repeated consistently by executive staff across the school, even though they also indicated that they felt at times overwhelmed by their roles but felt privileged to have had a leadership role in applying such innovative practices. For instance, Caty, Head Teacher (ITC Innovation) says:

[Don] had this vision. He wanted to break down the walls for teachers first. He wanted to get them talking [about their teaching]. I don't think he envisaged so much would happen, but he wanted it to happen here. So, much of this brief was quite hard for me, even though I came from a background where I had many [innovative] teachers on board [at a University ICT Innovations Centre]. Starting from the ground up [at Southern Girls High] is a different matter... Starting from the ground up, what it's taught me is you really have to listen, you have to respect where teachers are at... You have to acknowledge their skills and a lot of it is baby steps ... It comes down to this, if the teacher is willing, then a lot of things will happen. It is that shift to take some risks that really makes a difference.

Don's transactional approach to the SSLSES National Partnership, was in antithesis to the more disciplinary leadership conduct envisaged by the program. Mediation of power for reform of school structures and teaching programs was also accompanied by an advocacy leadership role for student equity. He empowered students to take control of their learning through negotiated individualised programs, where again power was similarly allocated to students for change. Needed individual support was provided by specially selected staff such as the CLO who also worked with parents, and the senior studies support teacher.

Don also explained that his leadership of these innovative practices was for the long term and not just for the term of the SSLSES National Partnership. He had therefore simultaneously embarked upon significant school cultural change through the institution of a multi-stage capacity building process targeting pedagogical innovation and continuing program evaluation for the future. School evaluations synchronised local context with overall vision which enabled it to build sustainability of its programs due to the ongoing capacity building of all staff and students involved. Don concluded:

I think too, in the back of my mind, it's always been [about] sustainability... that you've got to keep those things happening even when the funding runs out. So, a lot of it [professional learning and programs] is conceptual development and thinking and really looking at whether you can provide the best learning for students. (Don: Southern Girls' high principal).

8. 8 Discussion

As concepts like educational leadership have been discursively shaped by effective schools' leadership literature, by the SSLSES National Partnership policy, leadership standards and by the discourses of principals themselves, this study has interpreted principals' leadership practices in the light of these "systems of formation" (Foucault, 1972, p. 73), and engaged with the Discourse model to understand its meaning. Foucault's work suggests that discourses change over time, and in his archaeologies, he has probed the how and why certain discourses have been superseded. He described the gradually emerging discourses in terms of a "discursive struggle" as language used in social practices changed in line with struggles over power/knowledge relationships (Foucault, 2010, p. 75).

The SSLSES National Partnership reforms, under the neoliberal regimes of practice re-positioned leadership in more disciplining, autocratic and authoritative ways, such that in this study, principals were disciplined by policy governmentalities to secure the reform outcomes efficiently and effectively. Governmentalities and disciplinary requirements promoted by the Discourse model (examined in Chapter 5) resulted in principals reconceptualising selected leadership procedures and hence mediating many of their taken-for-granted leadership practices. It also involved principals mediating governmentalities by co-opting normalised Discourse models of leadership to demonstrate how leadership could be constructed in response to their local contexts and subject to their experiences. In an ever-evolving reform Discourse model, power/knowledge interrelationships were changed, decision making practices were affected, as was leadership for equity and understandings of change management processes.

All principals noted the effects of these SSLSES National Partnership discourses on their leadership practices when leading the reforms. Gillies (2013) explains that there are generally a number of main objects around which leadership can be formed and judged in the discourse. These include organisational practices, such as decision making, and planning. They also include leadership influences over personnel and for students. Most principals recognised the disciplinary effects of reform implementation as time schedules tightened and reform accountabilities narrowed. They saw also the impact of evolving social language and situated meanings on their administrative practices, their relationship with personnel, their equity vision and their technologies of self. Staff interrelationships were re-positioned via decision making practices, new flexible staffing procedures and performance management reforms, while interrelationships with communities were impacted by changing narratives about student achievement. Leadership for student equity was a focus of the study, and predominantly, principals mediated SSLSES National Partnership reforms in adaptive ways to maintain their vision for student equity whilst implementing the policy.

Marjory most clearly expressed the impact of policy governmentalities on her administrative leadership of North Plains High as she was forced to reshape existing collaborative decision-making practices to those based on contrived outcomes and targets. She also felt compelled to adopt a much more strategic role than previously because of her significantly increased workload. Alison similarly realised that collaborative leadership practices with her disaffected staff were inappropriate within tight time frames and narrow reform accountabilities. She mediated her decision-making practices to ensure her school's market share. Boyd's awareness of the 'tsunami' of forthcoming reform accountabilities, and resistant staff, dictated that he acceded to required leadership of reform governmentalities at Colborne High. Leadership practices of these principals illustrated the impact of various forms of disciplinary power determined by reform governmentalities and changing technologies of the self. Each leader enacted decision-making and subsequent planning which applied the reforms of the SSLSES National Partnership in selective but increasingly autocratic ways. Additionally, in reaction to within-school struggles, each of these principals applied disciplinary performance improvement programs for teachers and deployed specific or mandated professional learning programs across the school, such as Learning Logs, A4L and High Challenge: High Support learning (Apple, 2011), all tied to their school's performance management reforms. These principals felt compelled by various local variables to deploy self-management in this way, and applied their leadership in response to administrative demands.

Stuart at Parkeview Central, however, recognised disciplining rationalities impacting on his leadership when corrected by his supervising SED for his collaborative leadership practices and for inappropriate discourse in setting the school plan. However, because of a range of factors, including his inexperience as a principal, he was unable to mediate practices in ways demonstrated by most other principals in the study.

Don at Southern Girls High and Natalie at High Tops Public, however, resisted re-applying autocratic disciplinary reform governmentalities and continued to involve staff in collegial decision making to generate professional shared communities of practice (Wenger-Traynor & Wenger-Traynor, 2015). Both employed conduct to counter the competitive discourses and technologies of the self, engendered by the SSLSES National Partnership reforms. Both also exercised a form of *parhēsia* to criticise, resist and by-pass policy leadership Discourse models from the SSLSES National Partnership to manage staff in this way. Discursive notions of desirable leadership traits or drivers (Fullan, 2005; Leithwood et al., 2010) were also countered by these principals by governmental reason which enabled these principals to shape their own responses to reform governmentalities. Don for instance, delegated all professional learning direction to cross faculty groups using action research and investigative research approaches (Hayes et al., 2004), and deployed major school wide evaluations to drive the school's own program of reform and recreate an innovative school learning culture. Natalie, at High Tops similarly implemented innovative programs in school wide action research models, where all professional development and decisions were made collegially and with selected expert intervention. Both principals resisted many of the disciplinary performance management processes of the SSLSES National Partnership which shaped teacher behaviours and interrelations in competitive normalised ways, stultifying creative professional growth. Both mediated administrative governmentalities with collegial practices because of existing subjectivities and school context.

All principals were also repositioned to an extent by the SSLSES National Partnership governmentalities involving the deployment of flexible staffing arrangements. Additional casual staff were employed to help innovate, manage staffing anomalies with new designations, accommodate tight time frames and also manufacture staff competition and compliance, all of which re-articulated power interrelationships between existing staff and the principal. The deployment of flexible staffing arrangements, coupled with performance management changes, enabled principals like Alison, Boyd and Marjory, for example, to break down resistant staff

silos and more readily implement difficult reforms using competitive technologies of power. Staff at North Plains High were also employed by Marjory in expert specialist roles for program sustainability in succession planning and for student support. Principals utilised newly acquired staff in complex individual ways to assist them in the re-culturing and restructuring their schools to accommodate reform governmentalities as well as equity. They re-articulated leadership inter-relationships with staff by mediating the nature of staffing configurations.

Don at Southern Girls' High and Natalie at High Tops Public were most able to mediate flexible staffing practices to create collegial expert groups to implement school developed programs counter to those mandated by the SSLSES National Partnership. Don recruited highly accredited staff with SSLSES National Partnership funds to implement innovations he envisioned, and reorganized faculty 'silos' into cross faculty research teams to accommodate professional learning, whilst Natalie funded flexible staffing to implement innovative learning programs for students. Not only did these initiatives enable principals to transform their school's culture into individual communities of practice (Wenger-Traynor & Wenger-Traynor, 2015), but teacher technologies or practices of the self were facilitated in relation to the ensuing discourse (Foucault, 1998). Teachers became involved in individual research projects which were communicated to similar schools and formed the basis for promotion for many of them. Don subsequently claimed that he was continually replacing his staff as they successfully appropriated the reform discourses. The mediation of personnel practices under the SSLSES National Partnership was therefore key to organisational and cultural change for these principals in maintaining their collegial interrelationships.

Such was the significance of the interpersonal and personnel shifts required by the SSLSES National Partnership and its associated policies, that an inexperienced principal like Stuart was unable to mediate these reforms for his school. The inability to effectively take advantage of personnel policy changes in more isolated rural schools like North Plains High and Parkview Central and to a lesser extent Cottonwood Central because of unavailable staff also added to the existing disadvantages of those schools and needed to be further managed by principals.

Of special note for enactment of leadership, was each principals' vision for equity in their schools which underpinned their practices in the face of tensions engendered in part by counter intuitive targets. Walden (2016, p. 10) noted that the need for a "vision can be underestimated at our peril because it is so often important to cohesion and destiny". He similarly queried the impact on principals' practices when forced to implement strategic targets which don't serve the principal's vision. Whilst the reforms positioned many of the principals as subjects of some reform governmentalities in more autocratic and disciplining ways, all principals mediated

their leadership of the SSLSES NP for student equity because of their equity visions. Most principals adopted an advocacy leadership role (Anderson, 2009) as a significant feature of complex leadership repertoires. All purchased additional learning resources and instituted programs to better enable students to engage with their learning. At Cottonwood Central, newly acquired staff assisted Alison to implement the extra curricula planned, irrespective of their value as KLA teachers, which ironically improved equity.

The attention to complex micropolitical skills and technologies of the self to mediate the reforms for student equity can also be seen clearly in two other principal case studies. Marjory, the North Plains principal, noted the importance of leadership skills that exercised micropolitical strategic management for determining priorities for the benefit of the students. Subsequently she was able to case-manage programs for specific students and fund specialist interagency intervention “focused on levelling the playing field for these kids”. The purposeful deployment of additional support staff also enabled Boyd to mediate his leadership practices for equity and assume a strong, albeit indirect, advocacy role for the benefit of students’ individual needs. Principals funded a variety of locally determined programs like breakfast programs and cultural and experiential learning programs as well as restructured curricula for improved student access and experience.

This study asked how principals implemented the SSLSES National Partnership and evidence documents how principals were involved in individual struggles which repositioned their leadership subjectivities for the achievement of both equity and reform outcomes. It had seemed (in Chapter 5) that leadership as discourse might be re-imagined peremptorily and technically by all principals in the face of normalising neoliberal discourses, the leadership literature and SSLSES National Partnership (Australian Government & NSW DET, 2009a) comprising the policy Discourse model. It also seemed that leadership practices had been discursively shaped by disciplining governmentalities in even more prescriptive and normalising ways than documented in the consultative, distributive educational leadership styles favoured in some existing leadership literature. The reform Discourse model tacitly generated a more universalised one-size-fits-all leadership process which took little account of the individual complexities of each school’s circumstances and the equity needs of students.

However, as principals described their implementation of the SSLSES National Partnership reforms, conceptually multifaceted practices which mediated the reform responses according to individual leadership subjectivities and local contexts came to life. Principals applied complex leadership repertoires developed in earlier executive roles to re-invent and re-apply their leadership practices in case study schools. Principals drew on their subjectivities, their

technologies of the self, notions of equity and understandings about their school contexts, to exercise individualised leadership which mediated reform governmentalities with responsive, practices. There was evidence of principals' capacity for flexibility and micropolitical acumen even though this intensified their workload and isolated them from colleagues. They provided much evidence that their leadership encompassed a greater depth of understanding about ways to influence staff and to provide vision driven and advocacy leadership.

The case studies suggest that principals as leaders, in mediating disciplinary power were also empowered as ethical subjects (Foucault, 1997a). In this study, the outcome of principals' struggles with ethical self-formation to exercise leadership within the governing discourses illustrated a mode of subjection that culminated in their freedom to resist or exercise counter-conduct. The freedom that evolved from these struggles emerged from technologies of discipline and control, to enable principals as leaders to become autonomous creators of power/knowledge in their own right. Conditions of governmentalities that re-constituted subjectivities drew on ethical understandings. As Foucault noted:

...if I am now interested in how the subject constitutes itself in an active fashion through practices of the self, these practices are nevertheless not something invented by the individual himself. They are models that he finds... imposed on him by his culture, his society, his social group (Foucault,1998, pp.290-1).

Case study principals who pursued technologies of the self, which extended beyond the political operation of disciplinary power/knowledge into further struggles for resistance or counter-conduct enabled these leaders to emerge as co-producers of complex reform in the education marketplace. This means that they were able to reconstitute much of the reform discourse to focus reform practices for leadership of their own context. Their practices were adapted to their circumstances because they were able to probe the reform discourse to engineer micropolitical understandings which enabled ethical capabilities for reconciliation practices for compliance, resistance and/or mediation.

Chapter 9

Mediating Quality Teaching

So, the test of whether disadvantaged schools, taken as a group, have been successful is whether the school system, taken as a whole, has shifted one inch in equity over the past three decades. (Teese, 2007, p.3)

9.1 Introduction.

Education has been described as a process of both forming and inculcating a culture, with the importance of school structures, leaders, teachers and especially their pedagogies, all prominent (Connell, 2009). The Discourse model of the SSLSES National Partnership reconceptualised the nature of quality teaching and reformulated the relationships between teachers, principals, parents and government. Variables influencing equitable education provision, such as the SSLSES National Partnership policy's accountability and marketisation imperatives together with the nature of principals' leadership of reform in this environment were affected and explored in the two previous chapters. One of the questions posed by this study for examination is the extent to which principals have been able mediate the ensuing tensions created by the changing emphases on the quality of teaching for the benefit of students' engagement in learning, and hence for equity.

This chapter therefore examines principals' practices to implement the quality teaching reforms and associated professional learning of the SSLSES National Partnership. It describes principals' practices to promote rich pedagogies for student engagement and equity as part of a quality teaching agenda. In addition, the chapter examines principals' implementation of the quality teaching requirements of the SSLSES National Partnership resulting from the discursive shifts embodied in the reforms which directed the gaze of policy at the quality teacher to be normed and assessed against the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers and Leaders (APSTL).

Economic rationalist discourses in the SSLSES National Partnership texts co-opted the quality teaching agenda by assigning literacy and numeracy improvements and other audited data as measures of the quality of teaching, and assignment of unsystematic standards as designations of the successful teacher (Connell, 2009; Smyth & Wrigley, 2013). From the perspective of Foucault's ideas of power/knowledge and governmentality (Foucault, 1977,1982), the SSLSES National Partnership reforms heralded both the deconstruction and reconstruction of notions of the quality teaching 'body', much of which was to be allocated to principals' leadership for

reform under the SSLSES National Partnership. An analysis was undertaken of the practices deployed by principals in the construction of ethical subjectivities resulting from contestation or parrhēsia which may have created possibilities for mediation of these reforms in schools (Foucault, 1997).

Notably, in this study, changing discourses about quality teaching emerged from the case studies in different measure, depending on the cohort of the SSLSES National Partnership. Principals of earlier cohort schools like Alison at Cottonwood Central and Stuart at Parkeview Central, adopted different frameworks against which to benchmark quality teaching to later cohort principals like Boyd, Marjory and Don. At the beginning of the SSLSES National Partnership, pedagogical models and associated research such as the NSW Quality Teaching model were still in evidence in many schools and leadership of implementation of these models promoted (Hayes et al., 2004; Niesche & Keddie, 2011). However, gradually notions of quality teaching were subsumed into the APSTL which represented an analysis of:

...effective contemporary practice by teachers throughout Australia. Their development included a synthesis of the descriptions of teachers' knowledge, practice and professional engagement used by teacher accreditation and registration authorities, employers and professional associations (BOSTES, 2014).

In addition to examining the implementation of quality teaching governmentalities, this study also examined principals' promotion of pedagogies for equity and social justice within changing regimes of practice. It suggests that there was scope for principals' leadership for improved student engagement in learning and thus equity, at the time, so that teachers could remain focused on authentic contextually rich and relevant pedagogies. The chapter therefore, examines the ways in which principals mediated the quality of teaching, as pedagogy, for equity in their schools during the SSLSES National Partnership counter to the implementation of the APSTL and some of the more deficit pedagogies associated with the SSLSES National Partnership governmentalities.

As with the previous two chapters, this chapter examines each principal's case study using Foucauldian notions of governmentality and ethical formation in pursuit of understandings about pedagogical reform. An examination of the quality teaching practices at Alison's school will be considered first, followed by its examination at Parkeview Central, North Plains High, High Tops Public, Colborne High and Southern Girls' High in turn.

9.2 Pedagogy, Professional Learning and Quality Teaching at Cottonwood Central

In previous executive roles, Alison had developed a view of pedagogy she believed to be necessary to achieve equity for students in her school, and which subsequently underpinned her practices at Cottonwood Central. The view of the pedagogy seen as necessary for engaging students in their learning and ensuring similar access to opportunities, resources and curriculum involved a focus on:

...learning through creative and performing arts, music and drama and sport [at my previous school]. We worked on these areas to change the perception of community about the school. We concentrated on raising students' self-esteem through creative and performing arts. Music and drama enabled kids to be creative and feel better about themselves. It allowed students to develop their talents. (Alison: Cottonwood Central principal).

This accorded with Alison's vision for equity underpinning her leadership at Cottonwood Central which was, "that the students ... have access to the same opportunities [and] access to resources and curriculum that students in affluent parts of the state do".

In implementing the SSLSES National Partnership, Alison maintained these understandings to ensure that the students gained access to a broad curriculum and ready access to strong creative and performing arts extra-curricular programs. Hence a violin teacher simultaneously working in the regional symphony orchestra, a prominent local Aboriginal artist, teachers with band experience and graphic design skills were all employed with SSLSES National Partnership funds to enrich student engagement and learning at the school. Alison believed that these rich pedagogical experiences were synonymous with quality teaching and improved equity provision. She also delivered additional experiential activities such as debating, steer leading, mock agribusiness opportunities and Aboriginal cultural experiences.

Many of these experiences, such as the local cultural and creative programs and practical experiential activities closely aligned with the intellectual quality dimensions, quality learning environment and significance dimensions of the NSW Quality Teaching model and the 8 Ways Learning model (Yunkaporta, 2008) which she demanded as the basis of teaching and learning programs across the school. Notably, Alison's need to quickly market niche activities at her school meant that no time was spent on professional learning in these quality pedagogies. Staff were expected to comply or be disciplined. She purposefully employed new staff as staff replacements under the SSLSES National Partnership, relevant to this vision. In her discussion,

she conflates this school direction with the SSLSES National Partnership reforms because the additional programs and staff were funded by the program. She mediated the reductionist technologies of some of the reforms using the third reform which enabled her to apply “school operational arrangements that encourage[d] innovation and flexibility”. She explained:

We also focused on improving the *quality of teaching*...We forced the National Partnership reforms to work for what we wanted for equity in our school...We told staff that it was *mandated* but it was the best thing in our situation...The [niche] opportunities that students now have, improved their learning and their access to an improved education (added emphases) (Alison: Cottonwood Central principal).

In addition to the emphasis on the creative and performing arts and experiential learning as quality pedagogy, SSLSES National Partnership funds were spent on updating all technology across the school so that students could access experiential learning using the most modern technological tools. All classrooms were furnished with interactive white boards, and additional Connected Classrooms videoconferencing technologies were installed. She promoted the existing access to the rich online learning community and the region’s best teachers through video-conferencing thus enhancing access for students. The senior video conferencing program which she had prioritised as one of her most important equity programs enabled students to access the full range of senior curriculum and VET subjects via collegiate schools, TAFE, Schools of Distance Education and The Open High School. The program had been operating for over fifteen years, well before the SSLSES National Partnership program. However, during the time of the SSLSES National Partnership, this program was strongly marketed by Alison because of its ability to provide full access to a broader senior curriculum for students and facilitate school to work and higher education needs. It featured prominently in Alison’s reports about the SSLSES National Partnership as one of the school’s most important reform focus areas (Alison: Principal Questionnaire, 2014).

Finally, for Alison quality teaching under the SSLSES National Partnership, was also conflated with teaching learning and performance in literacy and numeracy in combination with other performativity requirements, as seen in her social language. She says:

The maths teaching, for example, consisted of teachers setting a page of a textbook of work each day and teachers-aides marking that work. There was no explicit or *quality of teaching* as such. (Alison: Cottonwood Central principal)

Alison equated the quality of ‘teaching’ and also the nature of the quality ‘teacher’ to success in literacy and numeracy teaching and this enabled Alison to apply the ‘best case performance management’ processes of the SSLSES National Partnership reforms to disciplining and

normalizing teacher practices in designated ‘performance’ areas. She thus also acceded to the view of the quality teacher promoted in the SSLSES National Partnership. She commented also that this improvement in literacy and numeracy teaching was key to meeting student equity needs, but simultaneously knew that improving the richness of learning experiences via richer experiential pedagogies was also important. Narrow and repetitive pedagogies had contributed to the downward spiral of education at the school prior to her arrival. Alison noted “This [teaching] impacted on equity for students because of the lack of quality of teaching and [also] the lack of quality of the educational programs offered” thus summarising her more nuanced understandings. For Alison, all the improvements in the school’s teaching and program delivery were important since while:

The National Partnership might have been *prescriptive*... we needed that tightness and accountability...It *all* worked well for us and provided the opportunities for students that they wouldn’t have had (added emphases) (Alison: Cottonwood Central principal).

She utilized a form of counter-conduct as well as micropolitical strategy to align her implementation of niche experiential programs with richer pedagogies for equity whilst engaging with requirements of performativity discourses. Her ability to “force” the selection of reforms which worked for her secured her ability to mediate SSLSES National Partnership reforms for equity. She improved literacy and numeracy teaching whilst simultaneously applying richer pedagogical models fostered by the then NSW DEC and NSW Institute of Teachers such as the NSW Quality Teaching model.

In terms of student engagement in their learning and equity, Alison’s mediation of the quality of teaching at Cottonwood Central was best seen in her ability to foster creative, technological and experiential pedagogies and the use of the NSW Quality Teaching model whilst also acceding to normalising conversations about best practice performance in literacy and numeracy. She reported her achievement at the end of the SSLSES National Partnership as showing that her mediation of the reforms was a micropolitical use of means to an end:

Student engagement has been enhanced by the development of a Creative and Performing Arts program which included the band program, Aboriginal dance, a Music, Art, Dance and Drama (MADD) night, and emphases on beautifying the school through art and the creation of murals. (Cottonwood Annual School Report, 2012, p. 16-18)

9.3 Pedagogy, Professional Learning and Quality Teaching at Parkeview

Central

Like Alison, Stuart believed that experiential, authentic and creative learning benefitted student engagement for equity. His teaching background was in design technologies, and so he favoured students' exposure to a wide range of experiential and technology-based learning. The school and grounds were remarkable for the many sculptures, creations and student works located in the school gardens, buildings and offices encouraged by this vision. He believed that inequities resulted from poverty related to narrow experiences. He also believed that students in his school were disadvantaged in their learning due to lack of access to the range of understandings experienced by their non-isolated peers. This was due to isolation compounded by the lack of the town's mobile phone coverage and access to technology.

Stuart's view of equity involved broadening students' access to experiential learning through involvement in major matrix excursions which explored various aspects of the curriculum. He valued experiences which expanded students' learning opportunities and promoted capacities for wide ranging experiential learning. He commented:

Excursions are one thing [we do]. If they get different experiences to what they get here... Say [if they go to Sydney] ...They [go to] a theatre in Sydney, a multicultural type restaurant... They also make inter-school visits... [It's] always good for kids to see how other big schools operate... (Stuart: Parkeview Central principal)

The funding of these experiences, however, fell to the Parents and Citizens (P&C) and local community fund raising since the SSLSES National Partnership funding had been targeted at literacy and numeracy improvements and professional learning. The P&C had also funded the technological innovations at the school, so that every classroom was already equipped with an interactive whiteboard prior to the SSLSES National Partnership, and senior students also accessed the full range of senior curriculum through videoconferencing similar to Cottonwood Central students.

Quality teaching and associated professional learning targeted by Stuart with SSLSES National Partnership funds comprised only that associated with the literacy and numeracy changes demanded by the policy. Accountabilities for performance management changes were also achieved by linking the school's TARS processes to literacy and numeracy professional learning. In these ways Stuart closely acceded to the demands for quality teaching as understood from the SSLSES National Partnership. He commented about the SSLSES National Partnership that he found this intensive support valuable for resources:

We bought lots of literacy and numeracy teaching resources, readers, class sets of readers...we did Reading to Learn very intensively...and everyone was trained... I ha[d] between 5% and 10% of students in Support Teacher Learning Assistance (STLA) programs...and that varied, I guess, between group programs and individual programs...and now...we'll do fewer individual programs. That's what we're doing now ... and cater for a lot more students... So definitely it [the National Partnership] had a big impact on our classes (Stuart: Parkeview Central principal).

However, Stuart remained critical of the impact of adhering to the reductionist demands of a program which ignored the school's needs for rich pedagogical experiences for retention and equity for students at his isolated school. Reduced enrolments meant that additional staffing gained, was lost at the end of the program making even the school's curriculum structures unsustainable. He saw the SSLSES National Partnership's focus on achievements in high stakes testing had enabled wealthier students to take up offered enrolments in regional and metropolitan boarding schools, which left secondary students disadvantaged:

And [as to] ...offering a pathway for those sorts of students with such a broad syllabus, this year we'll only have 20, well 21, kids in secondary... we don't have the ability to offer the range of electives that they would need (Stuart: Parkeview Central principal).

Thus, at Parkeview central, the anomalies involved in leadership for quality pedagogies and curriculum depth were played out negatively, with the equity needs of his secondary students compromised by the targeted literacy and numeracy focus he was forced to implement as part of the SSLSES National Partnership reforms. Parkeview Central in particular, demonstrated the significant effects on equity that a focus on evidence-based teaching, high stakes testing and narrow curriculum pathways could have in a marketised system.

9.4 Pedagogy, Professional Learning and Quality Teaching at North Plains High

Marjory had chosen the quality of the school's pedagogy as the focus of her school's marketability prior to being offered the SSLSES National Partnership. This was important for the school's and students' competitiveness and access to available school-to-work choices. It was also important in terms of enrolment numbers at North Plains High compared to Trenton schools. Hence Marjory's priority whilst incorporating all the SSLSES National Partnership reforms in her school plan was also her focus on significant and responsive pedagogical change judged best suited to North Plains High School. Professional learning ensured that Marjory was able to strengthen pedagogical capacity across the school for the benefit of all students and for

many of her experienced but isolated teachers who had previously had limited professional learning opportunities.

Marjory, herself, had been a visual arts teacher, which impacted to an extent on her preference for rich and experiential learning for students at North Plains High. With the help of university researchers from at least two NSW universities and a School Development Officer (SDO), she involved staff in a major evidence based whole school action research study (Reason & Bradbury, 2007) examining the implementation of Assessment for Learning (A4L) based on Hattie's (2003) and Marzano's (2003) work. Marjory also noted the school's investment in experiential activities for equity:

In terms of other teaching and learning improvements for equity, we make sure kids get access physically to things. We get them out of the school a lot. So, we've spent money to get the kids access to things but the most important thing was teacher development, so we started this Assessment for Learning (A4L) program as a whole school. It's in its third year of operation and its being measured. It's basically an agreement about what we expect to see [as evidence] in every classroom. It's been the most significant professional learning that most teachers have done since they left university, and it most certainly is the first time they have been in anyone's class since they left practicum. It involves peer support and instructional rounds on a periodic basis throughout the year (Marjory: North Plains High principal).

Marjory had previously involved some staff in the Systemic Implications of Pedagogy and Achievement (SIPA) research associated with the NSW Quality teaching model but she had moved on to the A4L research to "put the flesh around it [the Elements of the NSW Quality Teaching Framework]" (Marjory: North Plains High principal). The A4L project remained an actively monitored research project throughout its implementation so that it fulfilled the specific needs of students at North Plains High and contributed to the evidence Marjory used to evaluate the school. A4L helped teachers to institute specific strategies in the classroom such as creative problem solving, questioning and setting relevant assessment criteria. Through its application Marjory mediated the institution of more narrow teaching associated with mandated standardised tests and remained involved with productive pedagogies models of teaching. Her approach was fully underpinned by the available pedagogical theories. She stated:

We have got Hattie and Marzano on board as well as using as a number of other schools of thought. Depending on what we are doing we've got different [research] people involved and using different evidence. A lot of it is [classroom] strategy based (Marjory: North Plains High principal).

Equity to Marjory meant ensuring that students had greater access to these enriched quality pedagogies that were responsive to individual needs. “[T]his means that some students will be treated differently. Equity is not the same as equality” she stated (Marjory: Principal Questionnaire). Equity also meant ensuring students could access and engage with their education because of the positive interrelationships based on intercultural understandings engendered within the school.

Marjory clearly defined what she meant by the quality of pedagogy needed at North Plains High, and especially the teaching needed for successful engagement of Aboriginal and low SES students. It was also on the basis of teachers’ grasp of these necessary aspects of their teaching that she applied performance management reforms:

I had to pick staff carefully and ensure that they would fit into the school environment...Everyone can come with a set of skills, everyone can teach their subject, everyone should know how to teach and everyone should be able to get a good result. I want people who can teach low SES kids and also the Aboriginal students. I want people who understand single parent families and who understand deprived children. They needed to understand the whole Bloom’s framework. It’s not only what you put on the board, but it’s that the learning becomes based on the relationships built...You cannot teach an Aboriginal child unless they feel that you understand them, that you are making sure they are learning and... they pick up that you think they are a good person. Students need to know that you care and they need to be able to relate to teachers. If you don’t have this, then you may as well pack up! (Marjory: North Plains High principal).

Simultaneously Marjory also utilized the SSLSES National Partnership reforms to update the school’s technology and upgrade teachers’ skills in utilizing it. She says of practices designed to upgrade the school’s ability to provide the relevant quality of technology teaching needed in new curricula, “we had to improve the teachers’ capacity to use the technology”. This she did by instituting a peer support or buddy system so that everyone developed the skills in a constructivist mode designed to assure technological equity for North Plains High students:

We levelled the technology playing field by networking the school and ensuring every room had required points. We bought electronic white boards or projectors for every room. I used over \$100,000 of National Partnership money getting server upgrades, power points, and improving all spaces to take technology (Marjory: North Plains High principal)

When pedagogical developments were evaluated Marjory said she was overjoyed with the emerging quality of teacher development demonstrated at School Development Days. This to Marjory was quality pedagogy:

After 2 years [with the facilitator of A4L working with staff] we had a celebration day [evaluation] of how far we had come. Faculties had to come up and present what they had learned over the time... and they had to use A4L language and they had to use technology to present it. You should have seen the presentations! It was just gobsmackingly good! I just about cried with pride at the quality, and how far the teachers had come. We documented it with video and it's just a fantastic thing to watch! (Marjory: North Plains High principal).

However, while the professional learning emphases at North Plains High provided staff with additional practical and experiential strategies for classrooms to enrich learning, they also ensured teachers' own continuing employment as responsabilised contributing staff (Savage, 2013). The use of normalised teaching frameworks accompanying these models of teaching with their standardized metalanguage enabled Marjory to assess teachers' performance against the teaching standards and involve teachers in self-management to become 'quality teachers'. Professional learning in A4L was institutionalized as a part of the school's governmentality processes as Marjory aligned specific performance with the school's TARS processes and with the APSTL. A4L concurrently educated staff about the need to pre-emptively manage their own employment trajectory against the emerging national teaching standards in the competitive employment marketplace. Marjory imposed performance management governmentalities within which teachers would need to manage their own technologies of self, and their own professional capital (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2015). Teachers were thus made accountable, competitive and responsabilised as educational entities both by results and by the performance management processes accompanying reforms.

Marjory subsequently explained how the school's professional learning focus in A4L helped provide teachers with a meta-language to use when they were engaged in Professional Dialogue¹⁰ as "part of [their] TARS processes". The A4L evaluation similarly became synonymous with the SSLSES National Partnership's emphasis on 'quality teachers' and engaged staff in relevant conversations as part of the Discourse model. All professional practices, pedagogical conversations, situated meanings and associated social language prepared teachers for accreditation against the APSTL and enabled Marjory to apply the

¹⁰ A Professional Dialogue consisted of the professional discussion that teachers have with supervisors as part of their TARS processes. Discussions were used as a form of oral examination of teacher's pedagogy.

standards to promote, sort, examine, and exclude any non-complicit (and non-performing) staff by means of several performance improvement programs.

In these ways, Marjory's practices showed her micropolitical ability to navigate the leadership tensions between the standardised teaching practices of the APSTL and associated performance management, in combination with her rich, locally contextualised pedagogical practices for equity. The implementation of quality pedagogies was mediated both by alignment with the standards required by the SSLSES National Partnership. They also incorporated the richer pedagogies for equity. The use of appropriate social languages enabled staff to engage in professional conversations across the system in professional rounds. Marjory used counter-conduct to mediate the achievement of contextually based and evidentiary research based pedagogical improvements across the school by applying a common metalanguage for talking about the quality of teaching and learning across her school. She was able to strengthen her implementation of a nondescript generalised APSTL with detailed rich evidence based pedagogical practices. These practices helped her define the type of quality teacher for equity needed at North Plains High.

The importance of the professional learning undertaken as part of the SSLSES National Partnership was in the development of improved pedagogies accommodating new technologies and curricula for the North Plains High teachers. The APSTL were used by Marjory to benchmark her teachers' learning to a re-defined quality pedagogical standard for equity for North Plains High students. The standards helped Marjory as an 'examiner' of teachers' professional learning at North Plains High to redevelop staff, unavailable to her in systemic staffing procedures. In maintaining her equity telos and mode of subjection to equity provision she was able to mediate reductionist teaching processes of the SSLSES National Partnership for the rich pedagogies befitting "a school of excellence".

9.5 Pedagogy, Professional Learning and Quality Teaching at High Tops Public

Natalie, the principal of High Tops Public showed by her allocation of SSLSES National Partnership funds to additional innovative and responsive programs that she also valued a pedagogically and technologically rich curriculum with broadened experiences for students. She stressed the importance of students being engaged and excited by their school experiences. She too was concerned that they experience learning that ensured their equity of access across the education system. This was due to a lack of early experience in the basics and in socialising

with other children resultant from their experiences within the social housing area of High Tops. Chris, one of the executive says:

[Australian standard] literacy and numeracy are strong needs here. Many of the parents are illiterate and so students come to school with no prior learning in language and poor socialization skills. Younger students begin well behind. They have a limited vocabulary and this applies especially to science e.g the names of equipment and basic ideas [in Science] (Chris: AP, High Tops public).

While it may have been enticing to focus on a curriculum that compensated for what seemed like a range of deficits, and provide pedagogies focusing on basics, Natalie chose in counter-conduct to narrow SSLSES National Partnership requirements, to focus on innovative and creative pedagogies which made learning exciting and opened up “possibilities” for students. As indicated in Chapter 7, Natalie commented that in collaboration with university academics they chose enriching programs that specifically met the needs of High Tops Public students:

What we especially wanted to do with the National Partnership Program was to examine how we could use the opportunities and additional funding support provided by the program to open up more possibilities for our students and teachers, and we explored those fully. (Natalie: High Tops principal).

Thus, the school instituted programs like Digi Ed which involved the use of visual literacies and technology to help students animate plasticine and clay figures using innovative story lines. Students accessed computers in a purpose-built technology laboratory. She also instituted Murder Under the Microscope, a science research program, that helped students investigate the local environment. Fast For Word enabled students to interview well known guest speakers and develop civic awareness. An AP explained how important the democratic understandings were when students submitted a sustained written piece about various guest speakers, noting that:

...the group of students who experienced it were very successful in further learning and language at high school. They also became [more] aware of world issues (Chris: AP High Tops Public).

The goal of all the programs was the engagement of students in deep and problematised learning that would equip them for participation in the high school and broader social settings. Natalie’s vision for equity clearly underpinned the rich pedagogical focus operating across the school. In interviews, staff noted the importance of the success of students at high school because of their experiences in these programs.

They also prepared impromptu speeches, speaking for a specific time limit as part of the public speaking skills development throughout 2013. School leaders were seen to be an example. As a result, 2 [of our] students in Year 7 at High School have become involved in the high school's Public Speaking team (Aleisha: Technology Teacher High Tops Public).

At High Tops Public, similarly to Cottonwood Central, Natalie ensured that the dimensions of quality pedagogy outlined in the NSW Quality Teaching model were incorporated into all teaching programs to ensure that the dimensions remained the focus of teachers' work. However, at High Tops Public the emphasis was accompanied by extensive professional learning in all programs implemented by the school including those designed to improve literacy and numeracy teaching such as Accelerated Literacy. Natalie additionally retained a focus on quality teaching in basic skills while noting that a focus "on such narrow reform areas of literacy and numeracy... and even innovation" falls far short of the richer pedagogies needed for High Tops Public students. She said the school needed to accommodate all pedagogies:

Students also have extremely low language skills and suffer from a deprived language background. Many have little or no experience of reading stories, or of hearing nursery rhymes, before coming to school, so it is so important that we do develop students' language as well as their self-esteem. The school's role is to focus on the job of student learning –to fully educate students so that they can take advantage of all opportunities. That is always pre-eminent in what we do- although we try to make sure that in the process, students' other needs are dealt with, so they are free to learn. We also do not accept misbehaviour. We focus on learning and emphasise that children are here to learn (Natalie: High Tops principal).

There was also a major focus during the SSLSES National Partnership, on individualising programs, to ensure that students' basic needs for food and clothing were also met. Natalie said that whilst the school's main task was engaging students in their learning, there was much also done behind the scenes to make participation possible. The school therefore, ensured the availability of breakfast programs, cultural awareness programs like Beginning School Well for refugee students and VIBE sport for Aboriginal students. Warm shoes and clothing were allocated, parents were welcomed as participants at the school and students' wellbeing was followed up.

While researchers helped to evaluate innovative programs, the teachers also prided themselves on the success of students that they recommended for the leadership and special academic programs in Year 7 at the local comprehensive high schools during the transition to high school. The tracking of students' success at high school was an important measure in the school's

evaluation of the success of its curriculum and pedagogies for ensuring equity and hence the competitiveness of High Tops Public students among all other High Tops students.

Evaluation of the NAPLAN results was also undertaken by the school, but in ways that were not used to judge or categorise students or teachers in counter-conduct to its intended, and sometimes unintended, use (Darling-Hammond, 2013). Natalie explained that they checked results diagnostically against class testing and Progressive Achievement Tests (PAT) instead of the SMART data package.

Natalie valued highly the collegiality and unity of focus of her staff in SSLSES National Partnership program implementation. Elements of counter-conduct were constantly in evidence as Natalie countered competitive discourses with collegial conduct. She refused to implement the performance management programs linked to the APSTL and results in standardised tests, in counter-conduct with these SSLSES National Partnership accountabilities. When she accredited new teachers, she preferred supportive collegial processes which assisted teachers' use of the NSW Quality Teaching model as the basis of their pedagogy and teachers' promotion of student wellbeing. She refused to use the social language of the 'quality teacher' embodied in the SSLSES National Partnership Discourse model, and in so doing, spoke out, using *parhēsia* about the damaging competitive and disciplining discourses it implied:

The TARS/EARS system continued in the way that it has always worked here. We made it work with what we wanted to do. The reporting data we have prepared has continued to record that positive things have happened and teachers' programs have included the innovations and attention to the NSW Quality Teaching (Framework) added emphases (added emphases) (Natalie: High Tops Public principal).

Natalie fully appreciated the rich pedagogies and collegiality provided in classes and saw them as the only normative influence needed for judgement. Many of Natalie's teaching staff had been at the school for many years and like Natalie had also remained abreast of pedagogical changes with constant contact with staff from a nearby university. They maintained self-management due to collegial practices and a love of learning. They modelled these technologies of the self for students. Natalie herself continued to lecture at the university and invite academic scrutiny of their progressive approaches.

Natalie's practices remained counter to conduct that she saw as reductionist and insistent on unnecessary performativities for staff. She emphasised collegial Discourse mode, saying that she "made" existing processes work. She emphasized only the "positive" and "innovative" evidence provided by staff practices that she knew worked.

Of most significance in Natalie's case, was evidence of her resistance to aspects of the SSLSES National Partnership imperatives in quality teaching and its norming of the quality teacher. She, like Marjory, only implemented programs which provided evidence of successes that they were seeking for students' growth and achievement. Only when programs were sampled and shown to be relevant for student engagement and equity, were they implemented into the school's changing structures. Evidence of equity ensuing from the quality of the school's pedagogical approaches was therefore sought not only from researched evidence but from students' successes within the mainstream of the local high schools where High Tops Public students were forced to compete with all other students from High Tops at the common transition point. Similarly to Don at Southern Girls High, evidence of success came from student feedback and data showing their engagement in their education rather than judging teachers against a set of standards which Natalie saw as superfluous for the quality of teaching in her school.

9.6 Pedagogy, Professional Learning and Quality Teaching at Colborne High

Boyd's practices at Colborne High demonstrated how he instituted relevant pedagogies for equity for Colborne High students but also took account of newly emerging teaching accountabilities using the APSTL. Boyd's approaches centred on implementing pedagogies to enhance student engagement in their learning. This accorded with his understandings about quality teaching pedagogies for equity. He also embraced governmentalities designed to create quality teachers able to accommodate the coming necessity of pursuing their own learning goals in a rapidly changing professional environment. Restructured personnel practices required all teachers to actively pursue required qualifications as part of their technologies of the self, according to the newly implemented APSTL framework. It was also important that teachers applied current pedagogical and curriculum changes so that that students themselves remained competitive in the transition from school into work and higher education.

Boyd had been an English and History teacher and academic prior to becoming principal at Colborne High. As noted previously in Chapter 8, he was also a member of educational committees associated with the implementation of the APSTL and changes to the ways in which teachers are to be employed by the NSW DEC which accounted for much of the professional learning focus he undertook at the school. Like Marjory, he chose to lead professional learning for quality teaching and improvements in pedagogy. He also chose to lead professional learning based on his own implementation of a school systems analysis

separate to that undertaken by the previous principal. In particular, he chose to emphasise the quality of assessment practices in combination with challenging pedagogies after surveying the executive about pedagogical needs. He stated that:

I also worked hard to change pedagogical practices. I based the direction very much on promoting the High Challenge/High Support¹¹ model for improved performance and tried to improve pedagogy for the whole school... We used the National Partnership funds to publish all assessment tasks on the school website (Boyd: Colborne High principal).

The process involved the standardisation of assessment formats across faculty areas based around the concept of ‘Big Ideas’. Boyd said that he especially wanted teachers to use data from assessments to drive their teaching and subsequently “to differentiate the curriculum for students.” The quality teaching focus was embedded within the school’s professional learning practices with Boyd ensuring whole school and faculty workshops to build teachers’ skills to develop quality assessment tasks.

Similarly, to the other case principals, Boyd also offered a broad creative and experiential curriculum, as well as expanding the base of technological access at Colborne High. He sanctioned access to a broad range of extra-curricular and curricular activities via excursions and relevant multi-cultural experiences. Experiences were all published on a newly designed school website using new interactive technologies also purchased with the SSLSES National Partnership funds. Richer more responsive pedagogies and broadened curricula, as part of the quality teaching focus, were designed to improve equity for students as well as improve the quality of teaching:

We have also been able to expand our curriculum through into Stage 6 to include Dance, Retail Services TVET, SBAT courses, and Sports Coaching. These have helped us with retention of students and improved our attendance. Students get genuine curriculum choice and we are able to support them to Year 12 where they have a better chance of getting work or getting into higher education (Boyd: Colborne High principal).

However, Boyd subsequently aligned these pedagogies with the APSTL using Colborne High’s revised performance appraisal processes. As indicated in Chapter 7, he applied the reform governmentalities to make teachers assessable in their teaching and learning practices. The school’s TARS and EARS processes required teachers to meet certain performance criteria to

¹¹ The High Challenge: High Support program, based on the development of Big Ideas and also incorporating new technologies was outlined in Apple (2011). The program also emerged from the notion of Rich Tasks developed by the Productive Pedagogies processes in Education Queensland’s New Basics model of education (1999).

demonstrate their understandings within the school's quality teaching focus. In so doing, Boyd involved his teachers in the standardising and norming of practices in accession to the SSLSES National Partnership processes for measuring the quality teacher:

The reform agendas through the Australian Teacher Development Performance Framework (with AITSL) is to be the basis of the upcoming TARS and EARS process. I want to see teachers being able to annotate students' work samples in TARS. I want to see evidence of explicit and systematic teaching and High Challenge and High Support curriculum teaching and differentiation of assessment tasks... I have been involved in trying to use the reform agenda to focus on improvements in pedagogy and pull all of these strands together for the benefit of students (Boyd: Colborne High principal).

In these ways teachers were encouraged to enrich their pedagogies but within the national standardising framework. The High Support: High Challenge pedagogies (Apple, 2011) associated with the revised assessment processes were specifically mediated for Colborne High's teachers against the broader conceptualization of the APSTL. Boyd understood that teachers seeking promotion would need to accede to this system and would be involved in exercising self-management or technologies of the self to shape their performance to meet required criteria (Foucault, 1997, Gillies, 2013). He believed that teachers who had been resistant to the changes needed to be made cognizant of upcoming system changes and understand the disciplining processes of the standards that would be applied by all principals. Such processes can be likened to the "examination" in Foucauldian terms with aspects of teaching normalized by much of the process (Foucault, 1980). Of the future direction for the quality of teachers and the system wide measurement of teachers using the standards for promotion, salary increases and accreditation Boyd noted:

For those schools who have been on the National Partnership - the application of Standards will not be a surprise but for those who have not, they will be a surprise. If you want Lead Level now you will have to be involved in a Lead Project. ... The Lead Projects are important roles. This will change the way schools will run. Potential leaders will be wanting to have a go at some of the opportunities. It will be in the interests of many staff to work on additional roles and projects to obtain the next level on the pay scale. You will have an additional \$7,000 because you are a Highly Accomplished Teacher and have taken up some of the opportunities available, and you will want a job. This has been signed off by Federation. There is a new pay scale. These changes will distribute the leadership across the school in 10-15 years' time. People will want jobs at the various levels and will need to subscribe to the standards to get there (Boyd: Colborne High principal).

Under the new guidelines of the GTIL policy, the principal as the Teacher Accrediting Authority (TAA) would determine the quality of teachers at the school according to their conceptualisation of quality teaching and the ability of the teacher to meet various quality teaching benchmarks. At Colborne High, Boyd's professional development program for High Challenge: High Support pedagogies provided underpinning criteria against which teachers could undertake 'lead projects' and be judged. Whilst suggesting that he was "just the messenger" to rebellious Colborne High staff during the SSLSES National Partnership, he knew the processes cited by the reforms for ensuring "best practice performance management" in the SSLSES National Partnerships (COAG, 2009) were to herald a 'tsunami' of change for personnel management practices with the future NSW Department of Education and had applied SSLSES National Partnership reforms to peremptorily prepare teachers. There was the expectation of technologies of the self to prevail in staffing practices as teachers accrued the capital needed for sought-after remuneration.

Finally, Boyd says of his contribution to the quality of pedagogy and the quality of teachers at Colborne High:

I now expect that teachers will be planning collaboratively backward from Assessments. I expect to discuss student Work Samples in our TARS and EARS meetings. [Lesson] Registration will be Work Samples. Then we will annotate them against the syllabus outcomes. That's enough for the moment... Then, I'll probably retire ... It's interesting but it is punishing. The next lot of changes will also be hard. The role of principal is getting tougher and tougher.

The significance of Boyd's response to the quality of teaching discourses of the SSLSES was his mediation of the reforms not just for equity but as preparation for further disciplinary changes heralded by greater policy governmentalities (Darling Hammond, 2015). Boyd saw that the time was fast approaching when the principal as the TAA would use the teaching and leadership standards to assess, recruit and sort staff according to their view of the quality teacher. The process may not incorporate the associated professional learning seen in most SSLSES National Partnership case study schools. Together with the expected evidence from student examinations and standardized test results extending into HSC provision, the application of the APSTL would impact significantly and perhaps in unexpected ways on the conceptualisation of quality teaching and staffing provision in NSW public schools. Boyd concluded that some targeted staff may even be found redundant. Boyd concluded that in the future, "Obtaining the quality of staff necessary will be an exercise in the quality of leadership".

9.8 Pedagogy, Professional Learning and Quality Teaching at Southern Girls High

Don had been an English teacher and consultant who had been involved in contributing to changes in the secondary curriculum prior to becoming the principal of Southern Girls High School. He, like other case principals, focused on instituting a professional learning program which improved the quality of pedagogy in the school. Like Marjory, he saw the quality of teaching as marketable capital. He believed that the school's professional learning strategy should provide teachers with responsive and rich pedagogies suitable for students in the 21st century. This belief also underpinned his vision for equity. Unlike other case principals he was interested in these pedagogies being researched and developed by teachers themselves adopting a "researcherly disposition" (Lingard & Renshaw, 2010, p. 27) in response to specific student feedback rather than being delivered by external "experts" and consultants from the 'top down'. His approach, therefore, was action research oriented (Reason & Bradbury, 2007), with data being contributed by the school's own evaluations and the research process comprising professional learning.

Don's school plan direction was determined by the SSLSES National Partnership systems analysis which was augmented by additional student and staff surveys and Don's "gut instincts" as indicated in Chapter 8. The initial data gathered was important in the initiation of the professional learning direction as the data provided by students contradicted teachers' perceptions of the quality of the school's pedagogies. Having collected information initially from student surveys, the data being used to drive the pedagogical direction was generated from the school's evaluation system and generated from Individual Learning Programs and Faculty Reviews. All of these internal evaluation, monitoring and learning processes were funded by the SSLSES National Partnership program, but not necessarily driven by the reform Discourse model's notion of quality teaching.

Pedagogically, Don's evaluations identified the importance of changing the culture of teacher participation in, and discussions about, teaching pedagogies. The key reform area initially identified for implementation was the development and shared nature of each staff member's discourse about pedagogy. He saw it as the "buzz" of interaction by staff in sharing responsive pedagogies using a common metalanguage. He applied counter-conduct to top-down hierarchical models recommended in the implementation documents for the SSLSES National Partnership (Australian Government et al., 2012) To expedite these conversations, he initiated specific structural technologies aligned to the processes he wanted. He saw that quality

teaching emerged from “teachers talking about teaching and learning and working together... as part of a professional learning team” (Don: Southern Girls High principal).

Even though Don met some initial resistance about the formation of cross faculty professional learning teams involved in school research areas, he was very happy with the turn-around in teacher engagement in their professional learning by the end of the year. He was, however, careful to continue to fund school time for meetings and have teachers continue to use student and evaluation data to help determine the direction of their learning. He believed that the cross-faculty structure better facilitated mentoring by older teachers and challenged older existing pedagogical perspectives. The provision of common meeting time from the timetable contributed also to his later attempts to align innovative curriculum structures with newly acquired pedagogies.

By the end of the year, we had teachers talking with each other who had never talked to each other about that stuff [teaching and learning]. We mixed them so as to have some of our older teachers being mentors... It really got it right and it created lots of talk. Suddenly after the first year of the National Partnership's funding, the silos broke down and people started talking about teaching and learning (Don: Southern Girls High principal).

Don employed two innovative Head Teachers to lead the school's professional learning teams. The imperative for Don was the institution of professional learning which not only helped teachers to take up positions in an increasingly standardised and competitive workforce using the appropriate social languages and situated meanings but also enabled teachers to contemplate responsive pedagogies from the viewpoint of their students, using the benefits of action research processes. Both Head Teachers created a professional learning program that facilitated teachers examining and discussing their practices and taking responsibility for their own professional learning direction, using technologies of the self. In subsequent years of the SSLSES National Partnership both Head Teachers engaged teams in action research learning including “project based learning”, “cooperative learning” techniques, and innovative technology teaching.

These projects were also accompanied by changes to the school structures which aligned with teachers' projects, funded by the SSLSES National Partnership. Traditional classrooms were redeveloped into breakout learning spaces better housing technology hubs. Timetabling was adjusted for the incorporation of more project-based and experiential learning experiences. Don explained the importance of not only incorporating the technology or the innovation into the curriculum but that he had to have “the [associated] professional learning development in teaching. And you also need the structures and everything to go with the innovation”.

By the end of the SSLSES National Partnership, teachers had implemented responsive research-based practice, a few funded to also research pedagogical models from Ontario in Canada, and in Finland. At the end of each year teachers presented their findings at School Development Days and through Instructional Rounds¹². Arrangements were also made for staff to attend other schools and educational conferences to showcase their learning. This facilitated staff being able to conceptualize new learning for other audiences using the relevant pedagogical conversations. None of these gains appeared in SSLSES National Partnership Reports because of predetermined templates but were key to successful implementation of change at Southern Girls High School. Caty, the Head Teacher (Technology Innovation) explained how the process worked:

I run four learning teams of cross KLA teachers, different faculties. They have the opportunity to discuss on a fortnightly basis what are they doing in class, how technology can assist them in the teaching and learning process, and evaluate the positive things they have been able to implement together; They have been developing class assessment tools for team work... The Deputy Principal and her team is looking at this in the Canadian model for teaching. We have a research team looking at educational issues around the world. We have a numeracy team, we have a cooperative learning team and we have a literacy team [looking at technology as innovation] (Caty: HT (Technology and Innovation) Southern Girls' High).

By the third year of the SSLSES National Partnership, positive findings from teachers' investigations into improving teaching were being applied across the school. For instance, Year 7 became involved in a project-based learning process that had a partial on-line assessment component. Links had already been forged with feeder primary schools. The school had also forged links with a technology retailer to purchase 200 Chromebooks while the school was to utilise the Google Chrome learning apps and tools in a sponsorship deal. The Chromebooks were to form the basis of the technological innovation process for 2016 and beyond. Don said the school had spent approximately \$100,000 of SSLSES National Partnership funding on the technology. There was obviously a focus on involvement in innovation but on also ensuring that all students had equitable access to technology and a device. Refurbishment of many of the rooms accompanied this focus on technology with rooms re-modelled on the tutorial rooms at various university campuses.

Finally, while Don facilitated evidence based pedagogical innovations to improve quality teaching, he additionally engaged in significant micropolitical and innovative leadership

¹² Instructional Rounds are visits made to peer/ team teachers' classrooms in order to view innovative or newly researched pedagogies (City, Elmore, Fiarman, & Lee, 2011)

practices to align staff and student assessment pedagogies with the APSTL. In order that his executive and interested staff could become accredited against the standards for promotion to further leadership status, he employed “coaches” who helped accredit the specific Learning Team projects according to the APSTL. Staff similarly were involved in learning various aspects of applying research skills to their ‘lead projects’ and in understanding how these met the APSTL. For instance, staff learned how to utilise student and program data as evidence of success in order to monitor their progress in ways parallel to the use of student assessment data. He explained the positive outcomes for staff trained in these ways. The processes of research-based learning and development were the key to his micropolitical management and counter-conduct rather than his re-culturing the school with additional and more compliant staff as was the case with principals like Boyd and Alison. It required all staff to apply technologies of the self to take control of their learning with an in depth understanding of the standards. Don added:

One of the hard things here now is that lot of the people have been promoted to other schools... so I'm really proud that it's working... Our staff come here and when they apply [for promotion] they usually get promotion quickly... so we've done well... but I keep losing my key people!

The TARS process was also applied in ways counter to the competitive disciplinary ways of the SSLSES National Partnership performance management. At Southern Girls High, assessments were applied in a collegial way between supervisors and staff but also referencing the standards. Don says the TARS is:

...more about giving feedback and having a professional conversation and it's ongoing. Some of the Head Teachers have TARS meetings with one of their staff every few weeks so they might go to a coffee shop (Don: Southern Girls High principal).

Don's micropolitical skills have been critical to improving teacher's rich experiential pedagogies for equity at Southern Girls' High, and for understanding the innovative learning processes that might be applied in classrooms. He mediated the implementation of the APSTL by accrediting staff as action researchers of ‘lead projects’ or professional learning team projects. These projects were evaluated regularly by students themselves and by program reviews. The teaching standards were applied to staff in authentic learning circumstances for a deep understanding of student engagement and equity. All projects, and programs like ILPs and the faculty reviews were critical to supplying the data against which teachers' skills could be developed and evaluated. Evidence from National Tests and other participation measures were never applied as a measure of teacher performance. Whilst Don built a normalising

process for school pedagogical practice, it was driven from the “bottom up” by student learning needs, and by using research with rich teacher learning experiences. The APSTL were used for guiding and providing feedback for authentic researched projects. Don also tried to include emerging conversations about the new syllabus outcomes and HSC discourses as part of researched projects and pedagogies for staff.

With an ongoing reputation for innovation, Don continued to build the school’s credibility as an innovative provider of both student and teacher pedagogies in the education market place. He continued to attract sufficient ongoing Resource Allocation Model (RAMS) funding with which to continue his innovatory practices supplemented by sponsorship. His mediation of SSLSES National Partnership accountabilities and standards attracted ongoing interest in his school’s practices. The school’s curriculum and pedagogies continued to undergo rejuvenation through action research and school evaluation processes. Don concluded that in comparison with the governmentalities of the SSLSES National Partnership:

... I think that now we have such a rigorous evaluation system ...if you look at the website and the [school] plan... You would have seen our new report and how comprehensive it now is! Each year our annual report gets bigger [and more comprehensive] and that's because of the work of the [school] evaluation team which reports on the growth and new direction of our programs across the school overall.

9.9 Discussion.

The terms ‘quality teaching’ and ‘equity’ were prevalent in the SSLSES National Partnership Discourse model, as important values underpinning Australian educational policy (MCEETYA, 2008) but became subject to evolving social language and situated meaning shifts as part of their conceptualization, as the discourse analysis in Chapter 5 indicated. The concept of quality teaching in NSW schools subsequently became a site of contestation discursively shaped by effective teaching concepts linked to NAPLAN measures (Skoudoumbis, 2014), and the more recently implemented APSTL where quality teaching was intertextually subsumed into notions of the quality teacher in SSLSES National Partnership discourses. Hence notions of quality teaching became dominated by increasingly centralised governmentalities which attempted to specify the quality of pedagogies in disadvantaged schools and reduced possibilities for responsive professional judgement for teachers and their principals (Skourdoumbis & Gale, 2013) In addition, quality teachers’ practices and behaviours were normed to teaching standards and made subject to the competitive pressures of the market place and accountabilities driving principals’ supervisory practices. The view of schooling for

productivity and efficiency became entwined with achieving targets which could be used to benchmark teachers, the principal and the school.

The notion of 'equity' was similarly contested, so that it too came to be seen increasingly in terms of technicist measures of student performance in standardized tests (Lingard, Sellar & Gorur, 2013) and was undermined as an important factor for parity of participation in society. Significantly, the quality of school pedagogies has been shown in the research as one of the most important factors influencing equity (Smyth & Wrigley, 2013) and at the time of the SSLSES National Partnership principals' practices were influenced by several studies promoting quality teaching frameworks or productive pedagogies. Studies by Gore et al., (2003, 2005) and Hayes et al. (2005), among others, proposed models of quality pedagogy that were understood subjectively by teachers and case study principals and contributed to practices. Many of the principles underpinning such models were also reflected in subsequent NSW Institute of Teaching standards while the NSW Quality Teaching model proposed by Gore et al. (2003), enjoyed support by the NSW DEC during the early years of SSLSES National Partnership. Studies by Griffiths, Amosa, Ladwig and Gore (2007) undertaken using the NSW Quality Teaching model also tested its application for equity, whilst the model influenced other researchers of quality pedagogies for Aboriginal students such as Donovan (2009) and Yunkaporta (2008).

Whilst case study principals' subjectivities incorporated various promoted and changing pedagogies and quality of teaching discourses in Australia, they were also made responsive to SSLSES National Partnership reform governmentalities. This study examined the quality teaching pedagogies supported by case principals' practices for enhancing equity during the implementation of the SSLSES National Partnership reforms, as well as examining the professional learning practices promoted by case study principals who experienced the tensions between promoted Discourse models. This chapter interpreted principals' leadership practices in the light of these 'systems of formation' (Foucault, 2010), where the neoliberalisation of education policies such as the SSLSES National Partnership potentially constrained the professional relationships between teachers and principals, and also re-defined the nature of teaching itself (Power & Whitty, 1996). As a consequence, this chapter analysed the nature of principals' oversight of quality teaching, professional learning, and quality of pedagogies for equity in their schools under the SSLSES National Partnership.

Significantly, all principals implemented extra-curricular and professional learning programs to enrich the quality of teaching pedagogies for improving student engagement and learning for equity. Natalie and Don implemented rich evidence based and locally researched programs

like Digi -Ed and Fast For Word to provide responsive and rich learning opportunities for students. Marjory and Boyd implemented targeted professional learning programs such as A4L based on Hattie (2003) and Marzano's (2003) work, and High Challenge: High Support (Apple, 2011) assessment processes for enriched pedagogical practices. Alison and Stuart incorporated extensive extra-curricular opportunities that enabled students to experience equitable opportunities, whilst ensuring that teaching was based on models of teaching such as the NSW Quality Teaching framework, Yunkaporta's 8 Ways Learning and authentic experiential learning. All principals similarly utilized SSLSES National Partnership funding to modernize technology access to "level the technological playing field" for students (Marjory: North Plains principal) and ensure that staff became skilled in applying modern technological knowledge.

All seized opportunities to implement complex and rich learning experiences rather than accept a narrower approach to learning for improved literacy and numeracy results and a competitive position on My School League tables. None utilised NAPLAN results for evaluating teachers' performance but, instead, gathered comprehensive evidence of student needs which drove the school's pedagogical approach. SSLSES National Partnership funding was utilized to fund extensive professional learning for each school's teaching staff so that the desired pedagogies were applied across classrooms. These responses were counter to the conduct indicated by policy SSLSES National Partnership Discourse model where situational analyses and planning templates had focused on literacy and numeracy targets for the school's quality teaching approach. Notably, principals did accede to governmentalities demanding administration of mandated literacy and numeracy programs. Even when Stuart was required to accede to policy discourses he sourced funding for his technological reforms and matrix excursions from the community. His case study additionally demonstrated the damage that narrow school accountabilities and demands for reductionist pedagogies (Smyth, 2013) can cause in disadvantaged contexts. The case study principals have all overridden appropriated technologies of the self to counter governmentalities with ethical subjectivities and important pedagogical knowledge borne out of previous extensive experiences in schools as teachers themselves.

In contrast to the exercise of ethical subjectivities for equity, most principals in the study seemingly applied the SSLSES National Partnership's performance management processes to benchmark and norm the quality of their teachers. Alison, Stuart, Marjory, Boyd and Don all aligned existing school TARS and EARS processes with professional learning outcomes and with the APSTL or ITPSTL. In these ways, many teachers were made subject to the gaze of disciplinary practices which normed and examined them in the light of performativities

designed to impose competitive technologies of the self. Don and Natalie however, did not apply the APSTL standards in disciplining ways, preferring to enable teachers to exercise collegial self-management practices rather than create competitive systems of practice. Don facilitated his staff's access to the GTIL personnel practices by securing the services of a 'coach' to help evaluate and give feedback on 'lead (research) projects'.

Whilst it seemed that principals like Boyd and Marjory have acceded to best practice performance management practices to norm staff practices to the APSTL, they too were able to micropolitically mediate teachers' "best practice" performance management against the standards. They applied the evidence of the enriched and productive pedagogies in classrooms generated by their school wide professional learning when applying the standards to teachers. They thus applied aspects of their ethical mode of subjection for equity, such as counter-conduct, and self-management, to their implementation of the standards. The standards were mediated by moulding and re-configuring the school's pedagogies and professional learning in a 'bottom up' response to ensure local student engagement...instead of the 'top down' directives of the SSLSES National Partnership. All have thus ensured that teachers' professional development enabled them to meet the APSTL in ways which were authentic and contextually relevant for their own learning and for their schools. The standards were locally re-interpreted and mediated for each school's clientele by principals.

Noticeable was that earlier SSLSES National Partnership cohort principals linked their performance review processes to their notions of quality teaching for equity which mostly involved the use of the NSW Quality Teaching model. Later cohort schools utilised other available researched models such as A4L or collegial action research projects. Some principals like Alison and Boyd re-cultured their school by employing teachers already demonstrating quality pedagogies for equity. In Marjory's case, as with other rural schools, the availability of staff on transfer was problematic leaving her to more often utilize the performance improvement processes than other principals, but still reliant on the school's quality pedagogy direction.

Thus, all case study principals used the SSLSES National Partnership reforms to mediate pedagogies to those which engaged students in their schools and especially engaged students for equity. Significantly, all utilized counter-conduct to institute more wide-ranging evidence about student needs and achievements and action research processes to underpin their professional learning programs-instead of the narrow evidence sourced from required systems analyses and literacy and numeracy data. All principals utilised their deep understandings of

the importance of pedagogy for equity in schools and their need to mediate the conceptualization of ‘quality teaching’ and characteristics of the “quality teacher”.

Additionally, principals’ professional learning goals promoting evidence-based rich pedagogies enabled specific opportunities for technologies of the self to operate for teachers’ educational skills building. Subsequently, principals noticed that their quality pedagogy professional learning programs also contributed to frequent staff turnover because staff were consequently promoted. In this study, principals’ leadership of quality rich pedagogical change in spite of reform Discourse models, contributed to increased pedagogical capacity building. The need for ongoing professional learning and school research processes for rich, quality pedagogies therefore would seem to benefit from the ongoing injection of the additional professional capital (Fullan & Hargreaves, 2012) for this multiplier effect across the system, in counter-conduct to neoliberal reform governmentalities which contribute to narrow the educational and societal outcomes achieved by many students (Skoudoumbis & Gale, 2013; Connell, 2013; Greenwell, 2017; Gittins, 2017). Foucault described such governmentalities as “a sort of apparatus of uninterrupted examination...it is the examination which, by combining hierarchical surveillance and normalising judgement, assumes the great disciplinary functions of distribution and classification.” (Foucault, 1977, p.186).

An examination of the case study principals’ leadership of quality teaching and pedagogies under the SSLSES National Partnership enabled mediation of reforms using ethical rationalities counter to normalising judgements and demonstrated the importance of subjective freedoms exerted by case study principals implementing a program such as the SSLSES National Partnership for equity. Each principal, in variable ways, seized underlying opportunities to secure agency over enhanced pedagogies for the benefit of both students and teachers and which mediated program accountabilities for this purpose.

Chapter 10

Conclusion

Ethical self-formation, “defines [a person’s] position relative to the precept [they] will follow, and decides on a certain mode of being that will serve as [their] moral goal...This requires [them] to act upon [themselves], to monitor, test, improve and transform [themselves]. (Foucault, 1990, p.28)

The six principals studied in this thesis shared thoughtful insights about their implementation practices for equity during the SSLSES National Partnership. Responses demonstrated complex micropolitical educational and leadership understandings during ongoing significant policy reform, implemented despite anomalies and tensions affecting practices. Principals’ skill in mediating the perceived tensions impacting on their practices has been the focus of the study. Their experiences have been analysed to shed light on their policy enactment for equity against a neoliberal policy backdrop. In concluding the thesis, the contribution made by the study’s findings to the proposed research questions is provided. A further section summarises the contribution that the thesis has made to the field of leadership study in the face of normalizing but evolving policy imperatives. Following this, limitations of the study are indicated, together with suggestions for further work in the field.

10.1 Neoliberalism, leadership and mediating the SSLSES National Partnership reforms

During the operation of the SSLSES National Partnership, economic rationalist approaches to public education in NSW impacted on education systems and relationships between and within schools and personnel in ways which resulted in a reorientation of school leaders and their communities against commonly assumed paradigms. Understood values of collegiality, community and of equality were impacted by evolving governmentalities of the marketplace which promoted competition, discipline, and self- responsibility as well as entrepreneurialism and innovation (Connell, 2013b). It seemed that these changes reflected an evolving economic rationalist discourse within which equity, social justice and democratic purposes of schooling, were subsumed by political, economic and social governmentalities (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010).

Principals were positioned by policy discourses as disciplined subjects exercising conduct of themselves and others according to governmentalities. In this study. principals were subject to systems of formation evolving with neoliberalism itself, which challenged them to operate in

equitable but entrepreneurial and governable ways simultaneously. School contexts studied were varied and manifested by regional, remote and metropolitan locales. Principals' translation of policy accountabilities reflected their diverse leadership experiences ranging from Stuart's neophyte understandings to those of Don and Boyd who drew on extensive leadership experiences as well as those as policy contributors. In consequence, the study established many of the complex ways in which principals were able to mediate selected governmentalities for student equity by examining the interplay between education policy discourses, their localized interpretation, and additional complex considerations dictating implementation.

The literature suggested that the link between principal's practices for equity under neoliberalised regimes of practice was a potentially rich area for further research (Niesche, 2011; Niesche & Keddie 2015; Ball et al., 2012), given the relatively small number of empirical studies of principals' work undertaken in the light of a rapidly evolving neoliberal regime. Thus, one of the study's purposes was to generate additional empirical evidence of principals' leadership practices for equity across diverse contexts at a time of evolving neoliberal governmentalities. It also aimed to analyse the SSLSES National Partnership Discourse model for understandings about its governmentalities and its discursive impact on principals' practices. The research questions subsequently included: *What is the nature and intent of the SSLSES National Partnership equity program in NSW disadvantaged schools? How do principals implement the SSLSES National Partnership policy? and; How do principals mediate equity program discourse for equity?* The study via its underpinning research questions extracted further analyses of "nuanced and diverse accounts of heads' everyday work ... [for] an understanding of the day to day realities and pressures" faced (Niesche, 2011, p. 458), together with their mediation of governmentalities in key domains.

10.2 The Discourse model

The first question about the nature and intent of the SSLSES National Partnership program was examined by means of a discourse analysis using Gee's (2005) conceptual framework. From an analysis of the SSLSES National Partnership Discourse model encompassing texts associated with policy implementation (Chapter 5), it seemed that principals in SSLSES National Partnership schools were positioned by many policy governmentalities, their situated meanings and social languages. Important policy concepts were contested and re-defined in evolving discourses. Thus, terms like 'equity', 'transparency', 'quality teaching', and even 'leadership' itself, were re-articulated in often narrowing and technicist ways. Tensions and anomalies for principals' practices were exacerbated by a number of reductionist expectations,

narrow targets, and competitive and marketised regimes. Deficit social language associated with the SSLSES National Partnership Discourses model positioned some principals, school communities, their students and staff in negative ways which contributed to further tensions for equity and acknowledgement of the school's quality educational provision in its community. The schools' narratives were influenced by policy governmentalities which further impacted on the ways in which principals acceded to accountabilities. Marjory, the principal of North Plains High, for instance, purposefully did not acknowledge receipt of the SSLSES National Partnership program among her community, thus mediating the effects of the deficit language associated with the program's focus on disadvantage and narrow targets.

Further examples of deficit discourses impacting on principals' leadership in this study included the set requirements for literacy, numeracy and student participation targets in planning and templated/tabulated program documentation requiring specific metrics describing the quality teaching and comparative data required. This compared with each case study principal's narrative describing quality pedagogies, positive learning opportunities in the creative and performing arts and responsive experiential learning for students. Evidence produced by schools to market to their own niche market was in terms of data valued by their communities. Thus, principals like Natalie, Boyd, Alison and Marjory promoted opportunities for their students in post-school transitions, rich creative arts programs and excellent HSC results in mediating discourses.

Slated reforms also positioned principals as more authoritative, technicist and administrative leaders via 'best practice' models and simplistic evidence-based strategic planning templates and accountabilities. Inter-personnel relationships were reconfigured as reforms sought greater interpersonal and interschool efficiencies through competition whilst best practice performances were benchmarked against school data and professional standards. Examples of governmentalities included template completion, tight time frames for achieving reform accountabilities and use of standards for normalising teaching and leadership behaviours. Performance management and devolving employment practices undermined an existing more protective government school staffing agreement and contributed to the institution of an increasingly temporary and casualised workforce compelled to apply new technologies of the self in the competitive education marketplace. Existing staffing disadvantages for regional and remote schools like Cottonwood Central, Parkeview Central and North Plains High were exacerbated by unavailable systemic responses.

10.3 Mediating principals' practices for equity

All principals in this study approached equity policy implementation with their own conceptualisation of equity for students. This was important in view of the SSLSES National Partnership program's vague meaning. Principals' appropriation of the reform Discourse model for their own conceptualisations of equity in implementation was key to understanding their practices. Contestation and challenge ensued however, when understandings about equity incorporated assumptions about the different purposes of schooling. It therefore became apparent that involvement in the SSLSES National Partnership program engaged principals in a range of leadership practices involving complex and varied agendas that tested equity subjectivities within their school contexts. All principals, in fact, subscribed to more than a productivity view of schooling, and utilized the program to better facilitate students' greater parity of participation in society using conceptualisations of equity grounded in ethical rationalities (Foucault, 1997). This created many tensions for principals' practices when implementing the SSLSES National Partnership governmentalities for equity. Principals' responses to these tensions assisted with answers to research questions two and three in the study.

All participating principals, recognized that their students needed additional support in specific areas in addition to literacy, numeracy and participation targets, and subsequently mediated program accountabilities to facilitate these needs. Support included the provision of health and wellbeing programs, food and appropriate clothing to better enable students to access their educational experiences as well as the individualization of academic support and transition programs. Equity practices enabled students to more successfully move through subsequent educational and societal stages. Principals also recognized that their students needed equitable access to modern technologies as well as inclusive, rich and relevant pedagogical experiences that enabled them to access all available educational experiences. SSLSES National Partnership funds were therefore allocated to such programs as breakfast programs and modern technology infrastructure as well as improved pedagogical program delivery. Techniques such as freeing up global budgets with targeted SSLSES National Partnership spending, reallocating and rebadging SSLSES National Partnership funds to provide additional resources, involvement of interagency teams, and extra-curricular experiences for students illustrated significant attempts at mediation of reform governmentalities for equity during the SSLSES National Partnership program. Some of the principals, including Alison at Cottonwood Central and Marjory at North Plains High were also careful to invest in building further school capacity

for program sustainability, understanding that equity provision and its resourcing needed to be ongoing.

10.4 Foucault's conceptual tools.

The analysis of principals' practices in this study has been undertaken to ascertain the extent to which each principal has been able to mediate the tensions associated with policy governmentalities and expected compliance, in view of equity needs of students. The study examined Principals' practices in the light of their ethical stance for equity by using several of Foucault's conceptual tools from selected works to understand the ways in which they achieved this. The study has utilized Foucault's concepts of subjectivity, power/knowledge, governmentality and ethical self-conduct, to especially reveal counter-conduct measures as well as parrhēsia, and self-management as key concepts with which to examine principals' ability to mediate key domains of practice (in Chapters 7-9).

Each principal in the study pursued opportunities, exhibited capacity for contestation, resistance and mediation of a number of governmentalities designed to standardise their practices, but seen to be at odds with their school vision for equity in their school context. Foucault's notions about power relations, ethics and resistance were important to show where and how principals operated to conduct the conduct of themselves and others and operate counter to the conduct expected. Notions of micropolitical acuity were also helpful (Ryan, 2012) to analyse how principals were able to negotiate and mediate the SSLSES National Partnership policy governmentalities within an often uncompromising education system. The study also demonstrated how policy governmentalities were able to be appropriated in ethical ways to implement reforms and where principals used ethical rationalities and appropriate technologies of the self, to mediate policy effects in implementation.

Thus, principals appropriated SSLSES National Partnership discourses in ways which revealed the extent to which their subjectivities prevailed. A brief account of findings in each of the contested domains of accountability and marketisation, leadership and quality teaching follows. Principals' mediation of reform governmentalities includes examples from the study of ways that illustrated both care of the self and of others for equity.

10.5 Mediation of Accountabilities and Marketisation

Principals were required to strategise reform targets using templated guidelines and discursive supervision, and were made comparable and measurable by means of publicised program and NAPLAN measures on the My School website. Program governmentalities were also seen in the use of school achievement data to make schools comparable and marketable.

In case studies, all principals ultimately ensured that they fulfilled administrative accountabilities for setting school targets and providing standardised test measures through appropriate discursive conduct. The appropriate completion of templates and forms and involvement in supervision was seen as important by all principals and was tied to their final receipt of resources and financial support. This enabled principals to acquire power/knowledge over their planned agenda. All principals (except Stuart initially) understood and applied the relevant social language and situated meanings of the reform discourses to comply with administrative requirements and associated practices for these endeavours. Mandated literacy and numeracy programs were also implemented as was the sourcing of additional staffing to assist with SSLSES National Partnership reforms. Evidence of a deep understanding and application of much of the social language of the reforms could be seen in principals' reflections.

However, all case study principals mediated reform governmentalities based on various ethical rationalities. Elements of counter-conduct and *parrhēsia* can be seen in strategies applied to complex, evidence based and action-researched professional learning undertaken by Marjory at North Plains High, and Boyd at Colborne High. Natalie at High Tops Public and Don at Southern Girls' High similarly developed robust evidence-based research to measure the impact of specific programs implemented for the SSLSES National Partnership in addition to NAPLAN evidence. Data generated by principals with university researchers provided a more comprehensive interpretation of the complex environment operating for the benefit of students' learning and wellbeing needs compared to the use made of NAPLAN data. None of this data was ever sought for the My School website nor SSLSES National Partnership reporting templates despite Reforms 3 and 4 (COAG, 2008, p.5) suggesting possibilities for innovative practices. Principals' practices were therefore illustrative of their deep knowledge and application of counter-conduct in the face of the often simplistic and narrow measures of reform implementation for student equity. Similarly, principals strategised and funded additional niche curricula, pedagogically rich learning programs, needed technological upgrades and building/grounds refurbishments, in addition to, and in counter-conduct to, narrower mandated strategies.

Whilst compliant with NAPLAN testing and the literacy and numeracy emphases, most principals were silent about the appearance of NAPLAN results and rankings on the My School website. Most also exercised forms of ethical counter-conduct when required to operationalise diagnostic reviews of NAPLAN results, preferring alternative measures such as PAT tests, the NSW DEC Literacy Continuum (NSW DEC, 2013, 2014), or school based measures which

gave a more realistic and timely review of students' skills. Stuart at Parkeview Central noted the NAPLAN's use as required capital for between-school and sector competition and its negative impact for equity. This is why its existence was ignored as a mode of subjection by most principals in the study. Instead, most principals in the study exercised *parrhēsia* to market their school's own strengths, such as the quality of pedagogy and experiential programs, while they maintained a palpable discursive silence about the My School website.

10.6 Mediation of Leadership

Educational leadership, as a key concept within this study was similarly a site of contestation in the SSLSES National Partnership Discourse model. Leadership as an evolving concept was discursively shaped by effective schools' leadership literature, by the SSLSES National Partnership policy itself, the APSTL leadership standards and by the discourses of principals themselves in "systems of formation" (Foucault, 1972, p. 73). Expected leadership was shaped by certain governmentalities, and included capabilities and standards outlined in the APSTL, and comparative judgements of leadership abilities with similar schools on the My School website (Gorur, 2013). The SSLSES National Partnership Discourse model seemed to situate leaders as technicians of SSLSES National Partnership processes so that they 'measured up' against reform performativities. They were thus made disciplined and assessable subjects. This study has attempted to interpret principals' leadership practices in the light of these systems of formation, and engaged with the SSLSES National Partnership discourse as well as empirical practice for understandings. Foucault's work suggested that the language used in various social practices changed in line with "struggles" over the power/knowledge relationships that were generated between policy imperatives and principals' practices in the study (Foucault, 2010, p. 75).

The study has also argued that principals, in practice, have been involved in struggles at several levels as they have attempted to exercise their leadership for the achievement of both equity and reform outcomes in their schools. They were made responsible in new ways by overt audit requirements and were required to re-examine their relationships with themselves and others. However, each principal in the case studies exercised his or her leadership of the SSLSES National Partnership reforms in complex and individually responsive ways because of subjective leadership experiences and local contexts. Practices were shown to be far more conceptually multifaceted and sophisticated than the one-size-fits-all performativity processes required. Principals drew on complex leadership repertoires honed by earlier higher executive experiences in unique disadvantaged contexts to re-invent and re-apply their leadership,

conceptualized in ways which illustrated their need to adjust existing systems of formation and to exercise ethical rationalities.

The principals examined, envisaged and applied their leadership in ways which best accommodated school circumstances; some, in ways counter to the technocratic and autocratic conduct required by the SSLSES National Partnership. Some, like Boyd at Colborne High, minimally resisted the SSLSES National Partnership's leadership discourse by establishing strong hierarchical power across the school. Marjory exercised and aligned pedagogical power to execute governmentalities across her community for equity and felt compelled to discipline staff unable/unwilling to adapt to pedagogical changes because of system staffing anomalies. For others, like Don at Southern Girls High, and Natalie, at High Tops Public, leadership engendered more innovative co-operative and collegial relationships. For another, like Alison, it involved the appropriation of disciplinary power to sustain appropriate funding. All chose how they were to be 'responsibilised' and discursively shaped by the reforms. Power/knowledge in each case was exerted by active but selective production of educational reform and visionary leadership for equity.

All acceded to strong ethical subjectivities to lead equity visions by engaging individual support agencies and processes. This was counter to the technocratic leadership envisaged by the SSLSES National Partnership. They exercised leadership of quality pedagogies for student engagement, and reorganised relationships with both themselves and others in various ways in order to do so. Most led processes for inclusivity and secured specific programs and support for individual students and established inter-school relationships within which students might progress. All recognised the role of the NAPLAN testing to sort and normalise disadvantaged students in competition with their peers and ensured that their leadership practices mediated those effects with counter-conduct and ethical modes of subjection.

In particular, the study argues that principals as leaders, in mediating disciplinary power were also empowered as ethical subjects (Foucault, 1997a). In the light of governing discourses, the outcome of principals' struggles with ethical self-formation for appropriate leadership in their context was that they gained control over the reform agenda. The freedom won from these struggles enabled principals as leaders to become autonomous creators of power/knowledge for equity in their own right. In turn, principals' ethical understandings for equity facilitated relevant choices of compliance, resistance or mediation in their school context.

10.7 Mediation of Quality Teaching

The SSLSES National Partnership Discourse model also saw the re-articulation of notions of 'quality teaching' and its discursive transition into notions of the 'quality teacher'. Subsequently, the quality of a teacher's performance could be normed, measured and controlled against student test results and the APSTL so that through reform governmentalities, principals were assigned a controlling 'gaze' over teachers' performance. Quality teaching for equity was similarly co-opted using the governmentality agenda for its own ends under the existing teacher effectiveness agenda (Skourdoumbis, 2014).

Again, principals' practices illustrated evidence of struggles over pedagogical systems of formation (Foucault, 2010), where educational leadership of the SSLSES National Partnership reforms involved re-definition of professional inter-relationships and the re-conceptualisation of teaching itself. Each principal's case study subsequently examined the nature of their oversight of quality teaching, professional learning, and quality of pedagogies for equity in their schools.

Significantly, all principals engaged in ethical modes of subjection to implement rich extra-curricular programs and experiences, with associated professional learning to enrich the quality of teaching pedagogies for equity. All mediated the narrow instrumentalist view of quality teaching implied by the SSLSES National Partnership, by exercising counter-conduct rationales of practice. Thus, principals like Don at Southern Girls High, and Natalie at High Tops Public implemented detailed evidence-based locally researched pedagogical programs like Digi -Ed to institute rich learning opportunities for students. Others implemented targeted professional learning programs such as A4L based on Hattie's (2003) and Marzano's (2003) work, and High Challenge: High Support assessments for enriched pedagogical practices (Apple, 2011). All principals incorporated extensive extra-curricular and authentic experiential learning that enabled students to access equitable learning opportunities, whilst ensuring that teaching was based on researched models of teaching for equity such as the NSW Quality Teaching framework (NSW DET et al., 2003), or Yunkaporta's 8 Ways Learning (2008). All exercised educational leadership subjectivities for quality pedagogies to enhance student equity.

However, most case study principals (except for Natalie at High Tops), acceded to the institution of best case performance management reforms and the application of the APSTL to discipline the conduct of the 'quality teacher'. Boyd, Alison, Stuart and Marjory all implemented performance management regimes linked to their professional development programs which were subsequently benchmarked to the APSTL. In so doing, they not only re-

engineered the collegial relationships between staff, but they instituted a disciplinary examination processes to norm and standardize quality teaching and submit teachers to revised competitive personnel processes, linking readily to coercive performance management regimes. Only Natalie at High Tops Public and Don at Southern Girls' High retained collegial quality teaching processes, preferring to institute counter-conduct measures and parrhēsia to retain strong communities of practice and mutual support among staff.

Notably however, whilst most case study principals like Marjory, Boyd, Don and Stuart complied with standardising quality teacher governmentalities, regimes were mediated by richer locally interpreted school-based experiential pedagogies which were also applied to teaching practices. Underpinning the APSTL standards applied to personnel in these case studies were the rich exemplars of quality pedagogy that had been explored in collegial professional learning. Therefore, the standards applied were steeped in localized richer pedagogies supporting equity provision. As indicated already (in Chapter 9), Marjory, at North Plains was exultant after their School Development Day's presentations of professional learning:

Faculties had to come up and present what they had learned over the time... and they had to use A4L language... You should have seen the presentations! It was just gobsmackingly good! I just about cried with pride at the quality, and how far the teachers had come.

Thus, in undertaking an analysis of principals' practices in selected domains of 'accountability and marketisation', 'leadership' and 'quality teaching', it is evident that power relations and governmentality operated on and through principals to create them as disciplined subjects who were largely compliant to specific governmentality pressures and shifting discourses. However, the study's importance stems from its findings that in selected key domains of accountability, pedagogy and leadership, principals did not choose to be always disciplined by policy accountabilities, market competition or discursive supervision. They were instead, educational leaders exhibiting complex pedagogical understandings, with strong ethical stances, who accommodated and led the reforms in view of the contingencies of their local contexts for student equity.

10.8 Limitations of the Research.

In view of the small number of case studies examined, this research is not generalisable across the NSW public education system, nor indeed, across other educational systems. Even though attempts were made to examine case study schools with similar tools using some replication logic, these cases have generated varied responses because of the diverse contexts and

situations that principals experienced. For example, one principal instituted the SSLSES National Partnership program in an already failing school; others assumed leadership of schools where previous principals had exerted dissimilar styles of leadership, and still others needed to accommodate issues of staffing availability. The variability of contexts also included the age range of clientele of each school as well as its location. This variability while not enabling the generalisability of the research was a strength as it highlighted the many ways in which principals could adapt policy governmentalities to meet the specific equity needs of their students. It highlighted the complex knowledge and depth of understanding that experienced principals could bring to bear on their specific circumstances. The leadership discourses constructed by each principal are specific to that school's context at the time and place that the research was conducted.

Additionally, domains of practice in quality teaching, in leadership and for accountability and marketing, also depended on the principals' experiences, practices and discourses at the time. Each case study is bounded by time and place of its examination of principals' practices in response to the SSLSES National Partnership policy imperatives and serves as a set of circumstances illustrating the different ways in which variables such as context and equity vision may be applied across a range of different contexts in NSW.

Nor can the impact of neoliberalism on a single educational policy, such as the SSLSES National Partnership, be generalised into similar effects for all educational policies, even in the same educational jurisdiction. Neoliberalism or market rationalism can itself be regarded as chameleon-like in its application to the political, social and economic policy agendas, with certain features emphasised in specific circumstances. This study has tried to identify the specific policy effects by means of both an analysis of its Discourse model and an examination of principals' practices as they attempted to apply its principles to their implementation of the SSLSES National Partnership program in NSW government schools. The discourse analysis demonstrated that its situated meanings and social languages were also determined by the temporality of its application in the Discourse model. Its situated meanings could be seen to undergo seismic discursive shifts, with contestation of social languages in response to policy intent. Thus, terms like 'equity' and 'quality teaching' were seen to be in a discursive relationship with evolving educational policy (Levinson et al., 2009). Principals' practices showed that they too faced different manifestations of its impact via governmentalities impacting on them. Thus, for example, Stuart was the only principal who was required to strictly apply literacy and numeracy discourses to his practices (in Chapters 7 and 8). Other

principals seemed less strictly bound by policy discourses, enabling them to more freely apply ethical counter- conduct rationalities.

Finally, the Foucauldian conceptual tools used to examine the principals' practices for equity have guided the study's chosen epistemological and methodological principles to understand ways in which ethical tensions faced by principals might be mediated. The findings that were reached in this study may have been alternately shaped by other scholars like Pierre Bourdieu (1930-2002) who could similarly have assisted the study to identify areas of injustice and inequalities stemming from the universalising narratives of politico-social and economic movements like neoliberalism. At the time this study was conceived, substantial research using Bourdieu's work to examine leadership practices was available (Eacott, 2010; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010; Thomson, 2005), and it was thought that the use of Foucault's conceptual tools may have additionally addressed a gap in the research and extended the research's 'gaze' over principals' mediation of tensions. In addition, Foucault's emphasis on the discourse/power/knowledge matrix assisted the study's discursive focus and choice of discourse analysis processes, so that Foucault's conceptual tools were more cohesively deployed to examine policy governmentalities and related discourses with Gee, (2005).

10.9 Contribution of the Study

In conclusion, the study has examined the impact of the SSLSES National Partnership education policy; one inspired by neoliberal rationales of practice on principals' practices for equity. Researchers and principals alike have noted the effects of its governmentality agenda on equity with despondency as its standardising and reductionist principles are understood to impact negatively on student equity. This negative relationship has become a familiar theme in the literature (Connell, 2013b; Smyth, 2010) and is reflected as a declining trend in often cited indicators of educational equity and excellence such as achievements in PISA tests of reading (OECD, 2016, p. 154). The neoliberal agenda is seen similarly, to serve predominantly productivity and exclusionary purposes of schooling, thus affecting equity provision and democratic principles in education (Brown, 2015).

By means of the governmentality discourses of the SSLSES National Partnership, all schools were made auditable, and hence accountable via program imperatives, supervisory practices of the NSW DEC, and administrative requirements of the SSLSES National Partnership program itself. Principals were rendered performative against each of the six reforms through supervision and provision of evidence. Principals were also seemingly made responsive to the discursive shifts of evolving social languages and situated meanings.

In examining principals' ethical rationalities, subjectivities and appropriation of relevant discourses in this study, it was evident that principals' use of micropolitical skill enabled them to locate policy interstices to exercise freedom for mediation of key governmentalities. They disrupted many of the governmentalities designed to standardise their practices, but which were in tension with their vision for equity. The study also demonstrated how policy governmentalities can be appropriated in ethical ways to secure leadership of reform. The study's importance stems from both its discourse analysis and governmentality approaches which examined how principals were discursively shaped, but also demonstrated that in key domains, they were not always technocratic enactors of policy accountabilities. They were instead, educational leader subjects capable of careful and selective mediation of complex imperatives and normalising expectations. They were also capable of ethical practices as co-producers of complex educational reform in the competitive marketplace. Their power came from their focus on their vision for equity.

The contribution of this thesis is therefore not to suggest different models of leadership under neoliberal conditions but to demonstrate that principals are themselves capable of deconstructing complex reform discourses and applying nuanced responses to the ways in which they engage with policy imperatives. The study has illuminated the complexity of their work, the depth of their understandings, and the intricacy of decisions that need to be made every day to lead their schools for equity. This study has problematized principals' work in the light of many inhibiting factors and evolving discourses and subsequently highlighted the various ways principals have mediated the SSLSES National Partnership policy for their particular circumstances according to the specific time and place.

10.10 Conclusion and Future Directions

Throughout the final analysis, understandings and issues that operated to further normalize, stultify and subjectify principals' practices for equity have been illuminated in passing. These areas constitute areas for further study. Further directions for research might be the conduct of additional empirical study of the issues that continue to impact on principals' practices for equity that don't additionally impact on principals' workload. These include issues particularly faced by principals in rural, and isolated schools and those catering for Aboriginal students under ongoing reform governmentalities in more restrictive and less well serviced contexts. Thus, for example, flexible staffing practices introduced during the SSLSES National Partnership in NSW contributed to additional staffing shortages for rural schools which further impacted on student access to curricula and learning opportunities. The effects of increasingly

competitive and flexible staffing practices on teacher availability, employment, workloads, well-being, and leadership, would also benefit from further research.

This study also noted the impact of increasingly competitive performance management practices on the richness of some schools' pedagogical practices, staff availability, and staff/principal wellbeing. In the discussion, it was noted that the use of the APSTL for progression and remuneration of teachers and the current application of the GTIL policy would continue to impact on principals' practices and interpersonal relationships in schools. It was already impacting on workloads and the wellbeing of some principals. The quality of pedagogy remains important for equity so that further scrutiny of the impact of the standards both on pedagogical quality, and its professional practice is relevant. The application of the standards and quality assurance techniques also, would benefit from further insights.

Ongoing evidence-based policy reform in NSW using NAPLAN tests needs ongoing critical research. This is especially the case in NSW, Australia in the light of recent policy changes to HSC accreditation (NESA, 2017; NSW DEC, 2016). Students' progression along transition pathways through the Higher School Certificate (HSC) to higher education and society appear to be subject to disruption by plans to require Year 9 students to achieve a Band 8 in the NAPLAN before receiving an HSC. In this study, it was noted that the Year 9 cohort average achievement was Band 6 -7 on the My School website (ACARA, 2016), thus seemingly making it necessary for most students in schools in this study's Year 9 groups to continue their engagement with high stakes NAPLAN testing into Years 10-12. Investigation of other SSLSES National Partnership schools showed similar achievement levels for their Year 9 cohorts. Additionally, all student results in the NAPLAN tests demonstrated little/no change under the SSLSES National Partnership reforms despite required literacy and numeracy targets and strategies to improve the numbers of students meeting benchmarks (Centre for Research on Education Systems, 2012). The uses made of standardized tests like the NAPLAN continues to need evaluation as evidence of the quality of learning for students from specific cohort groupings (Lingard et al., 2016). Further evaluation of the effects of this policy change on student equity will be important for equity and the progress of disadvantaged students through senior schooling.

In conclusion, the thesis has illuminated the ability of principals in this study to mediate policy governmentalities for equity. The complexity of principals' practices was illustrated, as was their ability to promote richer school narratives to their communities in view of the more normative policy settings of the SSLSES National Partnership reforms. The use of Gee's (2005) and Foucault's (1980) conceptual tools in the examination of empirical work has

afforded a fresh gaze on principals' practices and ethical transformations in policy implementation. Principals have most critically seized power to exercise their professional knowledge to mediate normative policy settings for equity to promote their school's positive narratives about student learning.

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Equity program principals: Policy mediation for equity.

Appendices

Janice Morrison: PHD Candidate. Western Sydney University

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Appendix 1.

1.1 Information Package (Questionnaire) for Principals.



Research Project

Equity program principals: policy mediation for equity.

Researchers: Dr Katina Zammit, Ms Jan Morrison, Associate Professor Susanne Gannon

PHASE 2 QUESTIONNAIRE (only) PRINCIPAL INFORMATION STATEMENT.

Dear [PRINCIPAL],

Your school is being invited to participate in the research project identified above which is part of Ms Janice Morrison's PhD studies at the University of Western Sydney, supervised by Dr Katina Zammit, and Associate Professor Susanne Gannon from the Faculty of Education.

Why is this research being done?

The aim of this research is to investigate principals' practices in implementing the Schools in Partnership program and the Smarter Schools Low Socio-economic School Community National Partnership program. In particular the study seeks to understand how principals implement these equity programs in collaboration with their teaching and school communities to ensure social justice for Aboriginal students and other student groups in their schools, taking account of various systemic and policy imperatives. This research is aimed at investigating existing and emerging programs, processes and initiatives that have been established as part of your school's equity programs management which particularly secures social justice. The research does not require the school to implement or manage any additional programs other than those already in place.

Who is being invited to participate in this research?

Your school is being invited to participate, as it has been involved in implementing the SSLSES National Partnership ; which requires significant responsibility for its successful implementation in your school.

What choice do you have?

Participation in this research is entirely your choice and only principals who have provided explicit consent will be included in the study. Even though you may agree to your participation, you may withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason. A decision not to participate or discontinuation of involvement in the study will not jeopardise your relationship with the University of Western Sydney or the Department of Education and Communities.

What is involved in this study?

Your participation will involve completion of one on-line questionnaire about your implementation of the Schools in Partnership Program and the Smarter Schools Low Socio-economic School Community National Partnership program. The questionnaire will seek to gain information about your understandings and practices related to social justice outcomes for Aboriginal students, and other student groups, as well as some of the school's demographic information. The questionnaire will also seek to gain information about your leadership and management practices in relation to the implementation of these equity programs.

Who will be responsible for conducting the research at your school?

Ms Morrison will undertake the research. She will make contact with you by email, to coordinate the completion of the survey/questionnaire, which can be completed on-line in about 40 minutes within a seven day turn-around period.

What is the timing for this research?

The research will be undertaken over the period of Terms 1-3 in 2013, and will involve your accessing the survey/questionnaire through Survey Monkey in an email.

What are the risks and benefits of participating?

While we do not anticipate the research will cause you to experience any distress or discomfort, if this does occur, any survey that might be in progress can be discontinued. If you feel a need for further support, we recommend the services provided by Lifeline (phone: 131114) or Employee Assistance Program (1300 32 4932). We are also happy to help you get in touch with anyone you might like to talk to at such a time.

How will the information collected be used?

The data collected from this research will be used for the purpose of completing the requirements of Ms Morrison's PhD program. There will also be opportunities for journal publications and conference presentations. Data may also be utilised in follow-up studies. These will seek to inform future educational policies and principal practices where they are involved in large scale equity programs for social justice.

All other details gathered as part of this research will remain anonymous, and will not be shared with anyone else, other than in a synthesised form in the research thesis, in research publications, presentations or any follow-up studies.

How will privacy be protected?

Any information that you contribute to the research will be de-identified in research reports and publications. If we include any contribution you make to this project in our reporting of this research, we will not directly disclose your identity. However, please note that there is a possibility that people who know you or know of you might recognise you if you provide statements or artefacts that other people might recognise. We will do our best to maintain your confidentiality and will give you an opportunity to review your contribution to the research to confirm your consent before it is included as research data. An acknowledgement will be made in all reporting of the research that data remains the cultural property of participants. If that acknowledgement potentially identifies a particular community or language group, participant members of that community will be given the opportunity to review the reporting of that data before it is included in any report of the research.

The data will be used for research and educational purposes only. To maintain confidentiality, the University of Western Sydney research team will ensure that it alone has access to the raw data. Paper copies, audio files and other digital files kept on hard drives with a secure password, will be stored in locked filing cabinets. Any identification codes will be stored separately. Data will be stored for five years after the successful completion of the thesis, after which it will be deleted and/or destroyed. Pseudonyms will be used in any publication of results.

Confidentiality of participants will be secured by ensuring that the data and the pseudonym code key are stored separately in secured locations. The provisions covering the privacy and management of materials gathered from research participants are set out in the University of Western Sydney's *Research Data and Material Management Policy*. This document can be found on the University website.

What do you need to do to participate?

Please read this *Information Statement* and be sure you understand its contents before you consent to participate. If there is anything you do not understand, or you have questions about the research, please contact one of the three people listed below. In the first instance, please contact Ms Janice Morrison, who will manage contact with schools and also conduct all of the school and Aboriginal community interviews.

If you would like to participate, please complete and return the attached consent form in person, via facsimile or email before **April, 2014** This will be taken as your informed consent to participate.

Thank you for considering this invitation.

Sincerely,

JAMorrison

Dr Katina Zammit
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Please return the attached consent form in the enclosed envelope or email (j.morrison@uws.edu.au) BEFORE 1st April, 2014

This project has been approved by the University's Human Research Ethics Committee, Approval No. H- 2012-0395 and the NSW DET SERAP Approval number is 2014049 Should you have concerns about your rights as a participant in this research, or you have a complaint about the manner in which the research is conducted, it may be given to the researcher, or, if an independent person is preferred, to the Human Research Ethics Officer, Research Office, The University of Western Sydney Locked Bag 1797 Penrith NSW 2751 Australia, telephone: 02 4736 0493 email human-ethics@westernsydney.edu.au.

1.2 Questionnaire and Case Study Information Package for Principals



Research Project **Equity program principals: policy mediation for equity.**

Researchers: Dr Katina Zammit, Ms Jan Morrison, Associate Professor Susanne Gannon

PHASE 2 and 3: QUESTIONNAIRE AND CASE STUDIES PRINCIPAL INFORMATION STATEMENT **[ENTER SCHOOL NAME]**

Dear [PRINCIPAL],

Your school is being invited to participate in the research project identified above which is part of Ms Janice Morrison's PhD studies at the University of Western Sydney, supervised by Dr Katina Zammit, and Associate Professor Susanne Gannon from the Faculty of Education.

Why is this research being done?

The aim of this research is to investigate the school's implementation of the Smarter Schools Low Socio-economic School Community National Partnership program. In particular, the study seeks to understand how principals implement this equity program in collaboration with their teaching and school communities to ensure social justice for Aboriginal students and other student groups in their schools, taking account of various systemic and policy imperatives. This research is aimed at investigating existing and emerging programs, and initiatives that have been established as part of the equity programs' implementation by the principal and Aboriginal community which particularly secures social justice. The research does not require the school to implement or manage any additional programs other than those already in place.

Who is being invited to participate in this research?

There are two phases to this project. You are being invited to participate in both phases. Phase 2 involves the Smarter Schools Low SES School Community's National Partnership program principals being invited to complete an online questionnaire about their implementation of the program. Phase 2 of the study involves schools being invited to contribute to a case study about their implementation of the two programs.

What choice do you have?

Participation in this research is entirely your choice and only schools where principals have provided explicit consent will be included in the study. Even though you may agree to your school's participation, you may withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason. A decision not to participate or discontinuation of involvement in the study will not jeopardise your relationship with the University of Western Sydney, the NSW AECG or the Department of Education and Communities. Similarly, teachers, students and community at your school will be included in the study only after the teachers, students and community have signed a consent form on their own behalf. If teachers, students or community initially agree to participate, they can choose to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason. An opt-out form is provided so that you can withdraw your school's participation in the research at any time.

What is involved in this study?

Your participation, as principal, will involve (i) completing an online questionnaire (which should take approximately 40 minutes);(ii) participating in an audio-recorded interview of approximately 40 minutes; (iii) the collection of relevant artefacts (listed below) selected by you for the school case study; and (iv) allowing the researcher to observe you at work for one or two days, including observing any meetings that you think might be relevant to the development of your school's case study. The study will seek to gain information about your understandings and practices related to social justice outcomes for Aboriginal students, and other disadvantaged student groups in your school, and the nature and impact of the specific equity programs on your school. The study will also seek to gain information about the balance between equity programs requirements and your practices in securing social justice.

In addition to the interviews, we would like to collect samples of any of the following material selected by you as being relevant during our field visits at your school:

- samples of recent Annual School Reports (not available on-line);
- school policies which both broadly and specifically relate to Aboriginal education and the school's partnership with its Aboriginal community (e.g. Curriculum programs, curriculum pathways);
- school policies and practices manuals relevant to Aboriginal priorities and low SES student priorities and student well-being (e.g. student welfare practices, literacy and numeracy priorities);
- a copy of a Parent Information or Enrolment Pack;
- samples of subject selection and subject information booklets (secondary);
- newsletters and other relevant communication /documents with parents and community that you believe may be of interest to the researcher;
- information about school accountability processes; and/or
- photographs suggestive of the school environment and culture, in particular Aboriginal artwork, cultural gardens, murals, etc. (but not including photos of students or members of staff).

If agreeable, additional interviews with staff, students, the AECG and /or the community will be carried out in the school in small focus groups. Please be aware that comments made in focus groups will be evaluative of the school's implementation of the two equity programs. Comments will be sought using consensus techniques. The timing of interviews will be negotiated between the community, AECG, school staff, and the researcher in the knowledge of appropriate employment awards. The collection of relevant artefacts, such as teaching programs or localised curricula, may also occur as an outcome of interviews with staff, pending their individual consent.

Finally, if Ms Morrison is invited to attend a school meeting or event, she may take notes of things said or done at the event. She will seek your explicit written permission to refer to your contribution to the meeting or event before it is included in the school's case study.

Who will be responsible for conducting the research at your school?

Ms Morrison will undertake the research. She will make contact with you, coordinate the collection of data, and ensure that the agreed protocols are followed in line with what has been agreed.

What is the timing for this research?

The research will be undertaken over the period of Terms 1-4 in 2014, and will involve data collection twice during this time. It is planned that the research will proceed through the following phases:

AECG , school principal and community questionnaires and interviews	Term 3, 2014
Additional and follow-up teacher, principal, student and community interviews	Mid Term 4, 2014
Initial data collection finalised	End 2014
Initial feedback to AECG, schools and communities	End 2014

What are the risks and benefits of participating?

While we do not anticipate the research will cause you to experience any distress or discomfort, if this does occur, any interviews that might be taking place will be discontinued. If you feel a need for further support, we recommend the services provided by Lifeline (phone:131114) or Employee Assistance Program (1300 32 4932). We are also happy to help you get in touch with anyone you might like to talk to at such a time.

How will the information collected be used?

The data collected from this research will be used for the purpose of completing the requirements of Ms Morrison's PhD program. The data will also be compiled as a report and provided to each principal as a summary of the implementation of the targeted equity programs in their school (if requested). This report may be useful for inclusion in the school's Annual School Report. There will also be opportunities for journal publications and conference presentations. Data may also be utilised in follow-up studies. These will seek to inform future educational policies and leadership of equity programs for social justice. All other details gathered as part of this research will remain anonymous, and will not be shared with anyone else, other than in a synthesised form in the research thesis, in research publications, presentations or any follow-up studies.

How will privacy be protected?

The data will be used for research and educational purposes only. Confidentiality of participants will be secured by ensuring that the data and the pseudonym code key are stored separately in locked, secured locations. Data will be stored for five years after the successful completion of the thesis, after which it will be deleted and/or destroyed. Pseudonyms will be used in any publication of results. The provisions covering the privacy and management of materials gathered from research participants are set out in the University of Western Sydney's Research Data and Material Management Policy. This document can be found on the university website

Any information that you contribute to the research will be de-identified in research reports and publications. If we include any contribution you make to this project in our reporting of this research, we will not directly disclose your identity. However, please note that there is a possibility that people who know you or know of you might recognise you if you provide statements or artefacts (such as teaching and learning resources) that other people might recognise. We will do our best to maintain your confidentiality and will give you an opportunity to review your contribution to the research to confirm your consent before it is included as research data.

An acknowledgement will be made in all reporting of the research that data remains the cultural property of participants. If that acknowledgement potentially identifies a particular community or language group, participant members of that community will be given the opportunity to review the reporting of that data before it is included in any report of the research.

What do you need to do to participate?

Please read this *Information Statement* and be sure you understand its contents before you consent to participate. If there is anything you do not understand, or you have questions about the research, please contact one of the people listed below. In the first instance, please contact Ms Janice Morrison, who will manage contact with schools and also conduct all of the school and Aboriginal community interviews.

If you would like to participate, please complete and return the attached consent form in person, via facsimile or email before **xxx 2014** . This will be taken as your informed consent to participate.

Thank you for considering this invitation.

Yours sincerely,

JAMorrison

Dr Katina Zammit
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This project has been approved by the University's Human Research Ethics Committee, Approval No. H- 2012-0395 and the NSW DET SERAP Approval number is 2014049. Should you have concerns about your rights as a participant in this research, or you have a complaint about the manner in which the research is conducted, it may be given to the researcher, or, if an independent person is preferred, to the Human Research Ethics Officer, Research Office, The University of Western Sydney Locked Bag 1797 Penrith NSW 2751 Australia, telephone: 02 4736 0493 email human-ethics@westernsydney.edu.au.

1.3 Consent Form and Opt-Out Form for Questionnaire



Research Project

Equity program principals: policy mediation for equity.

Researchers: Dr Katina Zammit, Ms Jan Morrison, Associate Professor Susanne Gannon

PHASE 2 QUESTIONNAIRE (only) PRINCIPAL CONSENT FORM

I agree to my school's participation in the above research project and give my consent freely. I understand that the project will be conducted as described in the Information Statement, a copy of which I have retained. I understand I can withdraw from the project at any time and do not have to give any reason for withdrawing.

I consent to:

- participating in an online questionnaire on-line regarding my school's implementation of the *Schools in Partnership* and *Smarter Schools (Low Socio-economic School Community)* National Partnership Equity Programs.

I understand that, unless I give written consent otherwise, my personal information will remain confidential to the researchers, except as required by law. I understand that my details and my school's details will not be identified or published in either the thesis, any other subsequent journal publications, or provided except in a synthesised form to follow-up studies. If you agree for you and your school to participate in this research project, please complete the details below.

<i>Name</i>	
<i>Signature</i>	
<i>Date</i>	
<i>Email address</i>	

Sincerely,

JAMorrison

Dr Katina Zammit
Director of Academic Programs
School of Education

Ms Janice Morrison
School of Education
University of Western Sydney

Associate Professor Susanne Gannon
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*Please return this consent form in the enclosed envelope or email (11167554@student.uws.edu.au) **BEFORE April, 2014.***

Research Project

Equity program principals: policy mediation for equity.

Researchers: Dr Katina Zammit, Ms Jan Morrison, Associate Professor Susanne Gannon

PHASE 2 QUESTIONNAIRE (only) PRINCIPAL OPT-OUT FORM

- I withdraw my consent to participate in the project named above.
- I withdraw my consent before 23rd December, 2014

I understand that any information I have provided researchers will be withdrawn from the study and will not be used in any publications resultant from the research.

<i>Name</i>	
<i>School</i>	
<i>Signature</i>	
<i>Date</i>	

Many thanks for your involvement to date.

Sincerely,

JAMorrison

Dr Katina Zammit
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Associate Professor Susanne Gannon
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*If you choose to withdraw from the study, please return this opt-out form in the enclosed envelope to the researcher or via email to (11167554@student.uws.edu.au) by **23 December, 2014***

1.4 Consent forms and Opt-Out forms for Questionnaire and Case Studies



Research Project

Equity program principals: policy mediation for equity.

Researchers: Dr Katina Zammit, Ms Jan Morrison, Associate Professor Susanne Gannon

PHASE 1 QUESTIONNAIRE and PHASE 2 CASE STUDY PRINCIPAL CONSENT FORM

I agree to my school's participation in the above research project and give my consent freely. I understand that the project will be conducted as described in the Information Statement, a copy of which I have retained. I understand I can withdraw from the project at any time and do not have to give any reason for withdrawing.

I consent to:

- completing a 40minute on-line questionnaire about my implementation of the *Smarter Schools (Low Socio-economic School Community) National Partnership* programs.
- supporting the researcher to observe a small number of school activities as outlined in the Information Statement as I see appropriate;
- participating in a 40-60minute interview regarding my school's implementation of the *Smarter Schools (Low Socio-economic School Community) National Partnership* equity programs; and
- provide the researcher with any relevant artefacts that might contribute to the research (e.g., teaching and learning policy)

I understand that, unless I give written consent otherwise, my personal information will remain confidential to the researchers, except as required by law. I understand that my school's details will not be identified or published in either the thesis, any other subsequent journal publications or provided except in a synthesised form to follow up studies.

.If you agree for you and your school to participate in this research project in any of the ways listed above, please complete the details below:

<i>Name</i>	
<i>Signature</i>	
<i>Date</i>	
<i>Email address</i>	

JAMorrison

Dr Katina Zammit
Director of Academic Programs
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Please return this consent form in the enclosed envelope or email (j.morrison@uws.edu.au)
BEFORE July, 2014.

Research Project
Equity program principals: policy mediation for equity.

Researchers: Dr Katina Zammit, Ms Jan Morrison, Associate Professor Susanne Gannon

PHASE 1 and 2 PRINCIPAL OPT-OUT FORM

Document Version 5: dated 14th May, 2013.

- I withdraw my consent to participate in the project named above.
- I withdraw my consent before 1 December, 2014

I understand that any information I have provided researchers will be withdrawn from my school's case study and will not be used in any publications resultant from the research.

<i>Name</i>	
<i>School</i>	
<i>Signature</i>	
<i>Date</i>	

Many thanks for your involvement to date.

Sincerely,

JAMorrison

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Appendix 2

2.1 Principal Questionnaire

Questionnaire (Page 1)

Questionnaire for Principals Implementing Equity Programs

Equity program principals: mediation for social justice

This questionnaire is for Principals participating in the "Smarter Schools Low SES School Communities National Partnership" Program

The study seeks to obtain detailed understandings about the ways in which principals mediate the educational policy environment with students' equity needs to achieve both social justice and targeted educational reforms.

Providing Consent.

Before providing consent, please take a moment to read the Information Package for this project.

I agree to participate in this research project. I give my consent freely. I understand that my personal information will remain confidential and that my details and my school's details will not be identified or published in any reports, journal publications or thesis except in a synthesised form.

I consent to:

Participating in an on-line questionnaire and will complete details below.

(I understand that I can withdraw from the project at any time by emailing the opt out form supplied)

1. I give my consent to participate

School:

Name:

Online signature:

Date:

Phone:

Questionnaire for Principals Implementing Equity Programs

Equity program principals: mediation for social justice

Thank you for agreeing to be part of this research project.

2.1.2 Principals' Questionnaire (Page 2)

This on-line survey will explore your experiences and understandings as principal of a school which has implemented the "Smarter Schools Low SES School Communities National Partnership" equity program in your school.

The 4 sections of the questionnaire are:-

SECTION ONE: Demographic information.

SECTION TWO: Equity program strategies and the extent they contribute to meeting equity needs

SECTION THREE: Vision for equity in your school

SECTION FOUR : Balancing equity needs with Equity Program accountabilities

Completion should take about 20-30 minutes.

Please provide any additional information in the spaces provided

PLEASE NOTE: This Questionnaire is fully confidential. All identification is de-identified by means of a code. However, some demographic information is necessary for analysis but will be finally aggregated into grouped data.

Questionnaire for Principals Implementing Equity Programs

SECTION ONE: Demographic Information

2. The location of my school is:

Urban

Regional

Remote

3. My school type is:

Primary

Secondary

Central

College

2.1.3 Principals' Questionnaire (Page 3)

4. The number of pupils at my school is:

- 10-100
 100-250
 250-500
 500-1000
 Greater than 1000

5. What is your gender?

- Male Female

6. What teaching qualifications do you have?

- Graduate
 Postgraduate
 Professional Accomplishment (NSW Institute of Teachers)
 Professional Leadership (NSW Institute of Teachers)
 Australian Professional Leadership Standards Accreditation (AITSL)

Questionnaire for Principals Implementing Equity Programs

7. What percentage of students in your school are from low SES background?

percentage

8. What percentage of students in your school are Aboriginal students?

percentage

9. How many years have you been the principal of your current school?

Years

10. How many years have you been an executive in a school receiving equity grants?

Years

2.1.4 Principals' Questionnaire (page 4)

11. During which years were you involved in the Smarter Schools Low SES School Community (SSLSES) National Partnership program?

- 2009-2011
- 2010-2012
- 2011-2013
- 2012-2014

12. Please specify which other equity programs operated in your school between 2009 and 2013

- Priority Schools Program
- Smarter Schools Quality Teaching National Partnership
- Smarter Schools Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership
- Priority Action School Program
- Schools in Partnership Program
- Connected Communities School
- Country Area Program

Questionnaire for Principals Implementing Equity Programs

SECTION 2 : A Definition of Equity for My School

This section will ask you about the equity needs of your school

13. The Vision I have for equity in my school is:-

14. Three strategies that my school implemented which most assisted my school to improve equity for students were:-

1.
 2.
 3.
- Comment

2.1.5 Principals' Questionnaire (Page 5)

15. Three strategies which presented barriers to achieving equity for our students were:-

1.	<input type="text"/>
2.	<input type="text"/>
3.	<input type="text"/>
Comment.	<input type="text"/>

Questionnaire for Principals Implementing Equity Programs

SECTION 3: Equity Program Strategies

The following section asks you to rate the importance of the SSLSES National Partnership program strategies according to how you see their contribution to improving equity in your school.

The scale is Strongly Disagree; Disagree; Agree; Strongly Agree; Not Applicable

Each of the statements below are strategies associated with the implementation of the National Partnership Agreement for Low SES School Communities (COAG,2009).

16. To what extent do you agree that each of the following have been important for their contribution to equity for students in your school?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Additional equity funding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
NAPLAN literacy and numeracy targets	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student participation targets	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
System support of strategies (e.g. L&D, casuals)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teacher Appraisal Schemes (e.g. TARS)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
School Improvement Cycle	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attainment of Professional Leadership Standards (from NSW Institute of Teachers)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

2.1.6 Principals' Questionnaire (page 6)

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Situational Analysis (for the SSLSES National Partnership)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Highly Accomplished Teachers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teachers' Evaluation using Teacher Standards	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
SMART Data Package	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
School-Community Sponsorships	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Regular Evaluation measures of reform achievement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Personalised Learning Programs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Flexible staffing arrangements	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Collegial school culture	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
DEC staffing processes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Accountability focus	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Greater school self-management (Local Schools: Local Decisions)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Specified literacy and numeracy programs (eg "Focus on Reading", "Taking off with Numeracy")	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
School governance with community representation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
"My School" website	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Evidence based school culture	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
NAPLAN testing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
NSW Quality Teaching Framework	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student Engagement Strategies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

2.1.7 Principals' Questionnaire (Page 7)

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Community identified programs(eg Aboriginal LOTE)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Professional learning plans for teachers (My PL@edu)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Innovative programs (e.g. Learning Centres)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Competitive school culture	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

17. Additional comments about the effects of reforms on your school

Questionnaire for Principals Implementing Equity Programs

SECTION FOUR: Balancing Tensions

The following questions explore principals' mediation of possible tensions caused by the various expectations of "SSLSES National Partnership" program strategies.

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements and make any additional comments that you wish to make.

The scale is Strongly Disagree; Disagree; Agree; Strongly Agree; Not Applicable

18. Principals of disadvantaged schools are easily able to source the quality of teachers needed to ensure equitable opportunities for students

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree N/A

19. Principals of disadvantaged schools find it difficult to provide the level of training and development of all staff indicated by SSLSES National Partnership Program reforms

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree N/A

20. There is tension between maintaining a collegial culture whilst operating competitive processes such as teacher performance management.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree N/A

2.1.8 Principals' Questionnaire (Page 8)

21. There has been tension between the need to be more competitive among other schools whilst ensuring student equity

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree N/A

22. School leaders can maintain the motivation of their teachers whilst implementing "best practice" performance management schemes.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree N/A

23. This school is able to balance the need to reach literacy and numeracy targets with reaching other KLA learning outcomes

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree N/A

24. It is difficult to reach school plan targets with available school resources

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree N/A

25. Principals find it difficult to meet all the administrative demands of their role as well as the educational leadership demands

National Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree N/A

26. School leaders can balance the need to be competitive with other schools and the need for collegiality with fellow school leaders

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree N/A

27. Principals are able to balance the need to target improvement in NAPLAN results with attaining other learning goals in the school

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree N/A

28. The information on the "My School" website has been regarded positively by my community.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree N/A

29. NSW DEC staffing policies have assisted me with the staffing needs of my school

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree N/A

30. There is tension between the decisions I make to ensure equity and those that I make as part of my accountability for the "SSLSES National Partnership" program implementation.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree N/A

2.1.9 Principals' Questionnaire (Page 9)

31. The "My School" website is at odds with the equity needs of my students

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree N/A

32. I will retain the SSLSES National Partnership reform agenda even after the program has ended because I believe the program improved equity across my school

Highly Disagree Disagree Agree Highly Agree
 N/A

33. After the SSLSES National Partnership program has finished my school will continue to need additional funding and training resource support to improve the equity for students

Highly Disagree Disagree Agree
 Highly Agree

34. Please provide any additional comments about strengths and /or anomalies of the reforms of the "SSLSES National Partnership" program in your school context

Questionnaire for Principals Implementing Equity Programs

Expression of Interest as a Case Study

Thankyou for completing this questionnaire.

If you would like to discuss any aspect of the questionnaire further, please contact Jan Morrison at j.morrison@uws.edu.au.

Expression of Interest for Involvement in Further Case Studies

If you were a principal involved in the SSLSES National Partnership for the majority of the time it was operating in your school, and you now would like to be involved further in this study as a case study school, please Indicate "yes" or "no" below

35. I am interested in my school being a case study school

Yes No

Appendix 3

3.1 List of SSLSES National Partnership Public Schools

List of SSLSES National Partnership schools (excluding Special SSP Schools) in each of the 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 cohorts (Australian Government et al., 2009)

2009 Government Schools

Alma Public School, Ashford Central School,

Baradine Central School, Bingara Central School, Binnaway Central School, Bogan Gate Public School, Boggabri Public School, Bourke High School, Bourke Public School, Bowen Public School, Brewarrina Central School, Broken Hill High School, Broken Hill North Public School, Broken Hill Public School, Bundarra Central School, Buninyong Public School, Burke Ward Public School, Buronga Public School, Burren Junction Public School,

Canobolas Rural Technology High School, Canowindra High School, Canowindra Public School, Capertee Public School, Carroll Public School, Condobolin High School, Condobolin Public School, Coerwull Public School, Coolah Central School, Coonabarabran High School, Coonabarabran Public School, Coonamble High School, Coonamble Public School, Cowra High School, Cowra Public School, Cullen Bullen Public School, Cumnock Public School, Curlewis Public School,

Dareton Public School, Deepwater Public School, Delungra Public School, Dubbo College Delroy Campus, Dubbo North Public School, Dubbo West Public School, Dunedoo Central School,

Emmaville Central School, Enngonia Public School, Eugowra Public School,

Forbes North Public School,

Gilgandra High School, Gilgandra Public School, Glen Innes High School, Glen Innes Public School, Glen Innes West Infants School, Glenroi Heights Public School, Goodooga Central School, Gooloogong Public School, Gravesend Public School, Grenfell Public School, Gulargambone Central School, Gunnedah Public School, Gwabegar Public School,

Hermidale Public School, Hill End Public School,

Inverell High School Inverell Public School, Ivanhoe Central School,

Jennings Public School,

Kandos High School, Kandos Public School, Koorawatha Public School,

Lightning Ridge Central School, Lithgow High School, Lithgow Public School, Lyndhurst Public School,

Macintyre High School, Mandurama Public School, Mendooran Central School, Menindee Central School, Morgan Street Public School, Mumbil Public School,

Narromine High School, Narromine Public School, Nyngan High School, Nyngan Public School,

Peak Hill Central School, Pilliga Public School, Portland Central, Quambone Public School, Quandialla Central School, Railway Town Public School, Ross Hill Public School,

Spring Ridge Public School, Stuart Town Public School,

Tambar Springs Public School, Tenterfield High School , The Henry Lawson High School , The Sir Henry Parkes Memorial Public School, Tibooburra Outback School of the Air, Tingha Public School , Tooraweenah Public School, Tottenham Central School, Trangie Central School, Trundle Central School , Tullamore Central School, Ulan Public School, Walgett Community College - High School , Walgett Community College - Primary School, Walhallow Public School, Wallabadah Public School, Warren Central ,Weilmoringle Public School, Wellington High School, Wellington Public School, Wentworth Public School , Werris Creek Public School, Wilcannia Central School, Willow Tree Public School , Willyama High School, Windeyer Public School, Wollar Public School, Woodstock Public School , Yeoval Central School, Yetman Public School, Zig Zag Public School,

2010 Government Schools

Adaminaby Public School, Alexandria Park Community School, Ardlethan Central School,

Banksia Road Public School, Bankstown North Public School, Bankstown Public School, Bankstown South Infants School, Bankstown West Public School, Barellan Central School, Barraba Central School, Barrack Heights Public School, Bass High School, Bega Public School, Bendemeer Public School, Berala Public School, Berkeley Public School, Birrong Boys High School, Birrong Girls High School, Birrong Public School, Bowning Public School,

Cabbage Tree Island Public School, Casino High School, Casino Public School, Casino West Public School, Cassilis Public School, Cessnock East Public School, Cessnock High School, Cessnock Public School, Cessnock West Public School, Chatham High School, Chatham Public School, Chester Hill High School ,Chester Hill Public School, Chifley College Bidwill Campus, Chifley College Dunheved Campus, Chifley College Mount Druitt Campus, Chifley College Shalvey Campus, Condell Park High School, Coopernook Public School, Cootamundra High School, Cootamundra Public School, Corrimall High School, Cringila Public School,

Drummond Memorial Public School,

E A Southee Public School, Eden Marine High School, Eden Public School, Elands Public School, Frank Partridge VC Public School, G S Kidd Memorial School, Glebe Public School, Gloucester Public School, Goonellabah Public School, Goulburn North Public School, Goulburn Public School, Green Square School , Greenacre Public School, Gunnedah High School, Gunnedah South Public School, Guyra Central School ,

Hampden Park Public School, Harrington Public School, Hebersham Public School, Hillvue Public School, Hunter River High School,

Illawarra Senior College, Iluka Public School, Irrawang High School, Irrawang Public School,

Karuah Public School, Kempsey East Public School, King Park Public School, Koonawarra Public School, Kyogle High School, Kyogle Public School,

La Perouse Public School, Lake Heights Public School, Lake Illawarra South Public School, Lidcombe Public ,Lismore South Public School,

Macksville High School, Macksville Public School, Maclean High School ,Maclean Public School, Martindale Public , Mathoura Public School, Matraville Sports High School, Medlow Public School , Melville High School, Merriwa Central School, Millfield Public School, Mogo Public School, Moorland Public School, Moruya High School, Moulamein Public School, Mount Druitt Public School, Mount George Public School, Mount Lewis Infants School, Mount View High School, Mount Warrigal Public School, Murrurundi Public School, Muswellbrook South Public School,

Nabiac Public School, Nambucca Heads High School, Nambucca Heads Public School, Narrandera East Infants School, Narrandera High School, Narrandera Public School, Nowra Public School, Nulkaba Public School,

Old Bonalbo Public School,

Pacific Palms Public School, Parkview Public School, Paxton Public School, Peel High School, Port Kembla Public School, Prairiewood High School, Premer Public School, Primbee Public School,

Queanbeyan South Public School, Quirindi High School,

Raymond Terrace Public School, Regents Park Public School, Rouchel Public School,

Sefton High School, Sefton Infants School, Smithfield Public School, South Grafton High School, South Grafton Public School, St Marys North Public School, St Marys Public School, St Marys Senior High School, Stockinbingal Public School, Stratford Public School, Stuarts Point Public School, Sussex Inlet Public School,

Tamworth West Public, Taree High School, Taree Public School, Taree West Public School, Towamba Public School, Tuncurry Public School, Ulmarra Public School, Ungarie Central School, Urbenville Public School,

Villawood East Public School, Villawood North Public School,

Wakool Public School, Warilla North Public School, Warrawong Public School, Weethalle Public School, Windang Public School, Wingham Brush Public School, Wingham Public School, Woodenbong Central School, Wooli Public School,

Yagoona Public School

2011 Government Schools

Airds High School, Albert Park Public School, Aldavilla Public School, Aria Park Central School, Arthur Phillip High School,

Bankstown Senior College, Barkers Vale Public School, Barmedman Public School, Baryulgil Public School, Bega West Public School, Bellambi Public School, Bellbrook Public School, Belmore Boys High School, Belmore North Public School, Berkeley West Public School, Bidwill Public School, Blackett Public School, Blairmount Public School, Bomaderry Public School, Bonnyrigg High School, Boree Creek Public School, Bradbury Public School, Briar Road Public School, Busby West Public School,

Cabramatta High School, Cabramatta Public School, Cabramatta West Public School, Callaghan College Waratah Technology Campus, Campbellfield Public School, Campbelltown East Public School, Canley Heights Public School, Canley Vale High School, Canley Vale Public School, Carramar Public School, Carrington Public School, Chester Hill North Public School, Chifley College Senior Campus, Chullora Public School, Claymore Public School, Cobargo Public School, Comboyne Public School, Copmanhurst Public School, Coraki Public School, Cudgen Public School,

Dawson Public School, Delegate Public School, Doonside Public School, Dorrigo Public School, Drake Public School, Dundurrabin Public School,

Edensor Park Public School, Emerton Public School, Eungai Public School,

Fairfield Heights Public School, Fairfield High School, Fairfield Public School, Fairfield West Public School, Fairvale High School, Fairvale Public School, Fennell Bay Public School, Fern Bay Public School, Fingal Head Public School, Frederickton Public School,

Ganmain Public School, Green Hill Public School, Grevillia Public School, Grong Grong Public School,

Harrington Street Public School, Hume Public School,

James Busby High School, John Warby Public School, Junee High School, Junee Public School,

Katoomba North Public School, Kemblawarra Public School, Kinchela Public School, Kitchener Public School, Kurri Kurri High School, Kurri Kurri Public School,

Lakemba Public School, Lansdowne Public School, Lansvale East Public School, Lansvale Public School, Laurieton Public School, Lethbridge Park Public School, Lowanna Public School,

Madang Avenue Public School, Marrickville High School, Marsden Park Public School, Merewether Public School, Millbank Public School, Moorebank High School, Morisset Public School, Moruya Public School, Murwillumbah East Public School, Murwillumbah South Infants School,

Nimmitabel Public School, Noumea Public School, Nowra East Public School, Numeralla Public School, Nymboida Public School,

Oxley Park Public School,

Pelaw Main Public School, Plattsburg Public School, Plumpton House School, Punchbowl Boys High School, Punchbowl Public School, Quaama Public School,

Rappville Public School,

Sanctuary Point Public School, Sarah Redfern High School, Shalvey Public School, Shoalhaven High School, Sir Joseph Banks High School, Spencer Public School, St Johns Park High School, St Johns Park Public School, Stanford Merthyr Infants School,

Tabulam Public School, Tarcutta Public School, Tarro Public School, The Entrance Public School, The Meadows Public School, Tighes Hill Public School, Toronto Public School, Toukley Public School, Tregear Public School, Tucabia Public School, Tunttable Creek Public School, Tweed Heads South Public School, Tyalgum Public School, Uki Public School, Ulong Public School, Urunga Public School,

Wamoon Public School, Wardell Public School, Warrawong High School, Wauchope Public School, Weston Public School, Whalan Public School, Whitton Public School, Wiangaree Public School, Wiley Park Girls High School, Wiley Park Public School, Willawarrin Public School, William Baydon Public School, Willmot Public School, Windale Public School, Woodberry Public School, Woodburn Public School, Woodland Road Public School, Wyndham Public School, Wyoming Public School, Wyong Grove Public School, Wyong Public School,

Yennora Public School, Yerong Creek Public School.

2012 Government Schools

Ashcroft High School, Ashcroft Public School, Ashmont Public School, Auburn Girls High School, Auburn Public School, Auburn West Public School,

Ballina Public School, Balranald Central School, Batlow Technology School, Berrigan Public School, Blaxcell Street Public School, Boggabilla Central School, Bonalbo Central School, Bowraville Central School, Braddock Public School, Brungle Public School, Busby Public School,

Cartwright Public School, Coffs Harbour Public School, Collarenebri Central School, Currabubula Public School, Curran Public School, Darlington Point Public School,

Gillwinga Public School, Granville Boys High School, Granville East Public School, Granville South High School, Granville South Public School, Griffith Public School, Guildford Public School, Guildford West Public School, Guise Public School,

Heckenberg Public School,

James Meehan High School, Jerilderie Public School,

Kempsey High School, Kempsey South Public School, Kempsey West Public School,

Lake Cargelligo Central School, Liverpool Boys High School, Liverpool Girls High School, Liverpool Public School, Liverpool West Public School, Lurnea High School, Lurnea Public School,

Manilla Central School, Manning Gardens Public School, Marsden Road Public School, Merrylands High School, Miller High School, Miller Public School, Moree East Public School, Moree Public School, Moree Secondary College Albert St Campus, Moree Secondary College Carol Ave Campus, Mount Austin High School, Mount Austin Public School, Mount Pritchard East Public School, Mount Pritchard Public School, Mungindi Central School, Murrumburrah High School, Murrumburrah Public School,

Narrabri West Public School, Nimbin Central School, Nundle Public School,

Oaklands Central School, Old Guildford Public School,

Sadleir Public School, Somerton Public School,

Tolland Public School, Toomelah Public School, Tyalla Public School,

Urana Central School,

Warwick Farm Public School, Wee Waa High School, Wee Waa Public School, Westdale Public School, Westfields Sports High School, Westport Public School, Windsor South Public School,

Young North Public School,

3.2 Semi-structured Interview Questions for Case Studies



Research Project **Equity program principals: policy mediation for equity.**

Researchers: Dr Katina Zammit, Ms Jan Morrison, Associate Professor Susanne Gannon

Phase 2 Principal's Semi-Structured Interview

Interview details

Record your name, the name of the school/code, the interviewee, the date and the time.

This is (name) **at** (name of school) **on** (date) **at** (time) **interviewing** (interviewee's name/pseudonym) **who is a** (role, e.g., Year 7 teacher, Principal).

Interview Questions:

The questions below indicate the main topics of discussion with the principal.

1. The principal's background; understandings about social justice; and emphases for the school.
2. The school, its context, culture and demographics; the implementation of the strategies from the SSLSES National Partnership equity programs
3. The students' needs, achievements.
4. The staffs' achievements and development
5. The school's relationship with its community.
6. Tensions

Probes: The questions below indicate possible probes and areas of discussion in each area. Mostly principals will be involved in a discussion where these main points are elaborated.

Part 1 About yourself:

1. Tell me about yourself- your employment background, why you applied for this school, what you want to achieve here?
2. How many years have you been teaching?
3. How many years have you been a school principal of a disadvantaged school? Have you been previously been involved with implementing large scale equity programs?

4. How did you become involved in the SSLSES National Partnership program? Were you able to attend any professional learning associated with equity support processes that you were to be involved in?
5. What do you understand by “social justice” or equity for students?
6. Has professional support been ongoing for you?

Part 2.

A. About the school context, culture and demographics:

1. Can you please give an overview of this school's context and demographics? What do you think needs to be done to improve social justice for students in your school?
2. What are the school's equity needs?
3. What is the background and needs of teachers?; students?; the community?
4. What interagency and business groups operate in the community? What links does the school have with the various bodies?
5. Do you have a School Advisory Board and AECG? What is their role?

B. Implementing the equity programs: strategy and planning.

1. Please tell me a about the emphases (or strategic direction) that you and the school community have set for this school? What is important about these emphases for social justice?
2. Do the community (School Advisory Board and staff) share these emphases?
3. How do you manage the community and staff subscription to a common and shared direction for this school?
4. Can you talk me through school planning processes where you set the shared targets and strategies?
5. How does being involved in SSLSES National Partnership programs impact on this process and the strategies and targets you set? How do you manage both centralised and local demands in this process?
6. What do you feel have been key emphases of the equity programs- the SSLSES National Partnership?
7. Have the SSLSES National Partnership emphases aligned with your school's direction?
8. Please tell me how you have been able to implement your school plans in order meet all the needs expected and to reconcile any tensions if any?

C. Implementing the equity programs: curriculum, pedagogy, and community relations for social justice?

1. How have you developed your school's curriculum structures to contribute to all student needs for access to workplace and HE?
2. Have you found that you can offer breadth of curriculum? How do you manage this?
3. Please tell me about classroom teacher programs which especially contribute to inclusion?
4. Please tell me about the quality of pedagogy across the school?
5. How have you developed the quality of the pedagogy of teachers to better engage your students?

6. What strategies have you for developing high performing teachers? How do your high performing teachers operate?
7. Can you talk about the processes which have assisted school and community relations (to improve say social capital building)?
8. Which SSLSES National Partnership reforms have helped you to implement inclusive curriculum, quality teaching and productive school and community relationships?
9. Have there been any significant differences between the emphases of the two programs impacting on the school?
10. How else have the and SSLSES National Partnership program helped you with strategies to improve social justice? What other innovative programs and flexible arrangements have you instituted (from equity program strategies)?
11. Can you please tell me about some of the most successful strategies from the equity programs? What programs have you particularly implemented with the additional resources and support?
12. Have you any reservations about the effects of either equity program strategies- about negative effects?
13. Have you any artefacts, teaching programs or school policies which perhaps reflect the success of some of your programs?

D. Implementing the equity programs: accountability, NAPLAN targets, school participation.

1. What has been the impact of implementing accountability regimes (indicated in the SSLSES National Partnership program particularly) across the school?
2. How have you determined accountability regimes? How has this impacted on the quality and performance of teachers? On ensuring equity for students?
3. Can you please talk about the equity programs' focus on improving literacy and numeracy achievements (and improving school participation?)
4. How has target setting and implementation of associated program strategies in these areas particularly contributed to equity for students in your school?
5. Have any emphases on NAPLAN created any tensions for the school, community or students?
6. Can you please describe your school community's reaction/response to NAPLAN results; the Annual School Report; the *My School* website?
7. What is your staff's response to the SMART data analyses?

E. Implementing the equity programs: school data.

1. Can you please talk me through the information evident in your school data?; Any data trends?
2. Can you please talk me through evaluation processes you/DEC have carried out for your school's implementation of the SSLSES National Partnership programs? What was the result of your evaluations?
3. How did evaluations impact on your subsequent programs and strategies?
4. How did evaluations reflect on your strategies for improving equity?
5. Have you thought that some of the equity program strategies may have been contradictory to one another in their effects? How did you manage any perceived tensions?

6. Have you ever wanted to implement specific programs and strategies to support your plans but been unable to source the resources you needed or had no control or authority over factors? (for instance obtaining appropriate professional learning or training?) How did you manage these factors?
7. Has there been anything else that has impacted on your ability to attain the outcomes you wanted for equity in your school?
8. Can you please describe the ways in which you have tried to develop the capacity of your school for the benefit of students?

Part 3. More specifically about students:

1. Tell me about the students in this school – their needs and strengths?
2. What are their equity needs?
3. What do you feel is particularly important for this school to help achieve social justice/equity for students here? (pedagogies? student welfare? curriculum? cultural celebrations? School organisation?)
4. Do you feel you have the necessary control over all of the factors to enable you to achieve equity for your students?
5. How did the SSLSES National Partnership program especially assist you to help students meet outcomes for social justice and equity?
6. Do any of the equity program strategies inhibit your ability to meet student needs?

Part 4. More specifically - about staff:

1. Tell me about the staff in this school- their needs and strengths.
2. How are you developing teachers' skills for social justice and equity in the school?
3. How do staff show that they care about social justice for the students? How does being an equity program school impact on their views and actions? Do you think the demands of the equity programs help or hinder their actions?
4. Have you felt that you have the necessary authority to impact on staff motivation, skill and attitudes?
5. How prevalent is quality pedagogy across classrooms? How important is pedagogy for your school's achievements in literacy and numeracy and other equity program targets? Can you help me with any artefacts which reflect the quality of teachers' pedagogy?
6. Have you high performing teachers employed? (HATs)- or other high performing teachers? How have you developed high "performance" across the school?
7. What is the prevalence among staff who adapt the curriculum for their classes? Look after the wellbeing of students? Utilise technology to motivate students? Ensure equity? How do you continually develop staff?

Part 5. More specifically about the school community.

1. Do you feel there is a good relationship between the school and its parents, the Aboriginal Education Consultative Group and Aboriginal Elders?
2. What strategies have helped to enable this school to develop effective partnerships its community and help build trust amongst parents? How do you manage any effects of high mobility of staff?
3. What is the role of Aboriginal Education staff in the school and community? How important have they been in developing school/community partnerships?
4. Have members of the community and/or AEW's contributed to building reciprocal knowledge amongst the school community?

5. What is the role of the school community in school governance?
6. Can you please talk about the School Advisory Board, and the way it works?
7. Do you believe the community feels that the school is providing equity of opportunities for their children?
8. How do you think they view the school's implementation of equity program strategies? How do you resolve any tensions between the school and community views about appropriate strategies?
9. Do you and your staff feel welcome in the community? Do you think community members /AECG feel welcome at the school?
10. Do you have artefacts or areas which reflect the culture of inclusion and partnership at the school- (to be photographed- with permission)?

Part 6. Equity Program Implementation Fidelity: the balance between program/policy expectations and school and community needs.

1. Which equity program strategies have best aligned with your school needs for social justice?
2. Have there been any tensions between the expectations of the strategies of the SiP program and those you and the community felt were important for the school?
3. Have there been any tensions between the expectations of the strategies of the (SSLSES) National Partnership program and those you and the community felt were important for the school, and wanted to implement?
4. Can you please discuss any ways in which any equity program requirements may have contributed to possible tensions and how you have resolved any of these? For Instance:
 - Balancing your responsibilities in the school compared to your need to be involved in the local community to build relationships?
 - the priority given to measures of literacy and numeracy achievements in NAPLAN and used to measure school effectiveness and on *My School*?
 - Your ability to source all the resources you needed to implement strategies (such as staffing, casuals, wellbeing support, professional learning)
 - the need to market the school in order promote competitiveness.
 - balancing the increased emphasis on managerial and administrative requirements of the equity programs (budgeting, planning, evaluation etc) vs educational programs.
5. Has being a "disadvantaged" school on equity programs impacted on your enrolments?
6. Accountability regimes: What do you feel you are most accountable for in this school? How has the need for an accountability framework impacted on the school?; in terms of targets and programs set up?; School decision making?; Relationships with community?; Relationships/collegiality with staff and fellow principals?
7. Do you feel that what you are accountable for through PARs aligns with your own values and emphases?
8. Do you feel you have enough control over necessary school processes, personnel and resources to make a difference in the school?

In summary -What understandings and knowledge have particularly helped you to lead this school and implement the two large scale equity programs for the benefit of students and the demands for social justice and inclusion?

Have you anything else you wish to add?

Thank you so much for your thoughtful responses and the time given to this research.

ADDENDUM

Possible samples of school policies and artefacts which may be collected from each school (or any that are highlighted as being important, in collaboration with the principal).

- Teaching and Learning Policy
- School Plans (2008-12)(on-line)
- Annual School Reports (2008-12 on-line)
- Curriculum structures, and school timetables
- Student Welfare Policy
- Samples of teaching programs, assessment tasks and student work samples
- School and Community Partnerships- Agreements
- Anything suggested.
- photos of school murals, bush tucker gardens etc
- faculty /stage learning programs

Appendix 4

4.1 Start List of Codes from Case Study Data

Table 4.1: Table Showing Start List of Codes and Aggregated Themes emerging from Data

Start List of Descriptive Codes	Aggregated Themes and Simultaneous Coding	Possible significance for contribution to Key Domains
School aesthetics- (type, size, location, community)	1.School Contextual data and reforms and strategies. 'A sense of place'	School context and impact on equity practices – also use made in capital development (e.g. marketization).
Reported data (<i>My School</i> , ASR and NAPLAN data)		The principal's experiences and community context reflected in the way the data is interpreted.
Reforms instituted		Reforms emphasised in relation to local context and equity vision
Innovation		Entrepreneurialism evident
Resources		Access to additional (richer) relevant resources and experiences for students
Leadership style/type	2.Leadership for both equity and policy reform 'Mediating leadership'	Generally, a type of leadership emphasis evident - "heroic"? or "administrative"? "consultative"? "instructional" "advocacy"? accountable? Mediation of leadership expectations and equity
Principal's vision for school reform and equity		Principal's background for definition and 'operationalisation' of equity and reform
Reform management		Use made of all school data and the school data supplied to the program- alignment of data with strategies
Accountability		Compliance with school improvement practices using provided templates and strategies for required outcomes Reforms implemented

School improvement processes		Compliance with reform imperatives- e.g. school planning based on evidence based strategies; use of literacy and numeracy data and compliance with suggested literacy/numeracy strategies
Management practices		Organisational practices- school organisation for change
Administration load		The ways in which principal's work load was experienced and managed
Data and evidence (gathering)		All program evaluations and evidence gathered for SSLSES National Partnership
Tensions		The identification and management of evident tensions – say between staffing availability with quality of pedagogy.
(Oversight of) quality teaching performance		Whole School Professional Learning The management of interrelationships with school/staff
Micro politics		Micro-political management of strategies, perceived tensions
Counter conduct		Possible Resistance and mediation strategies
Collegiality/ Competition		Collegiality of intra and interschool relationships Involvement in competitive practices
District Supervision		Nature (authority) of supervision
Stress		Background knowledge/understandings
Principal's vision for equity	3. Conceptualisations of Equity and its mediation	Evidence of tensions between equity and policy reforms
Degree of emphasis on policy 'inputs' and 'outputs' and view of school purposes		The degree of emphasis on reductionist policy e.g. NAPLAN and any "counter conduct"

		Democratic/ productive leadership practices
Student equity needs.		Needs, and provision (e.g. to broadened experiences)
School needs and sourcing of "inputs" (staffing, etc.)		The need for school resources, school entitlements and principals' practices
Resources for equity		The degree of emphasis on appropriate entitlements and staffing for equity
Ethics (Foucault)		Evidence of ideas about Resistance
Quality teaching /Teacher quality and standards	4. Quality teaching, standards and curriculum" 'Mediating quality pedagogy'	The degree of emphasis placed on student engagement through quality teaching. The use made of the NSW Quality Teaching Framework and/or Teaching Standards
Teacher improvement processes/performance management		The emphasis placed on teacher appraisal and meeting targets and management of the quality of teaching
Professional Learning		Relevant professional learning for rich and quality teaching
Literacy and Numeracy		The significance of the literacy and numeracy emphasis in the school and role in accountability processes
Extra - curricula programs and curricula breadth		Significance of extra-curricular programs/experiences
Curriculum		The breadth of choice available in curriculum patterns, (e.g. HSC) teaching programs
My School website		Accountability and My School
School and Community sponsorships	5. School Community capital building and relationships 'School community capital building'	Sponsorship and/or involvement in school programs

Community relationships focus across the whole school		Student engagement in schooling which is at one with the community focus
Competitiveness		The marketing and publicity of the school's programs and unique features- for enrolments especially
Collegiality		Intra and inter school collegiality

4.2 Emergent Domains from Second Cycle Coding


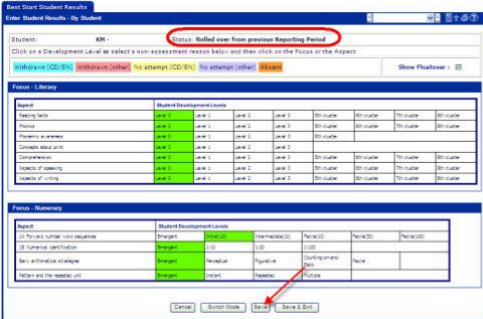

Table 4.2: Key concepts (or domains) emerging from memos and linkages from the data, and evidence of forms of mediation by leaders.

Emergent Domains	Mediation by Leaders (shown by 'X')					
	Cotton-wood Central	Parke-view Central	North Plains High	High Tops Public	Colborne High	Southern Girls High
Context	XX	x	XX	x	XX	XX
Performativity	X	x	X	XX	X	XX
Pedagogy	X	X	XX	XX	XX	XX
Mediating Competition	XX		X		X	X
Ethical values (Resistance),	XX	x	XX	XX	XX	XX
Mediating Leadership (for equity)	XX	x	XX	XX	XX	XX
Govern-Mentality/accountability	XX	x	X	XX	XX	XX
Literacy & Numeracy	X	X	XX	X	XX	XX
NAPLAN/My School importance	XX	x	XX	x	X	x

Key: x= little evidence of mediation; X= evidence of mediation; XX= stronger evidence of mediation (including use of silence)

Appendix 5

5.1 Sources of evidence for school plans – mining what exists (NSW DEC, 2012, pp. 5-7)

<p>School based assessments and reports</p> <p>A-E reporting VET competencies Report summaries</p>	
<p>BEST START assessment data</p> <p>Including judgements against the <i>Literacy continuum K-6</i> and the <i>Numeracy continuum K-6</i></p>	
<p>SMART data</p> <p>Data includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NAPLAN - ESSA - SC - HSC 	

<p>National Partnership Literacy and Numeracy data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ School Self Evaluation: Evaluation Tools Support Materials (support materials for school self-evaluation teams on conducting focus groups and interviews) ○ SSE Report Template 	
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- SSE Sample Report
- School Self Evaluation: NAPLAN School Performance Analysis (school self-evaluation tool for analyzing school NAPLAN data using SMART software)
- School Self Evaluation: Support document for modifying the school plan and setting targets (support materials for modification of the school plan following the school self-evaluation process)
- Targeted School Self-Evaluation Improvement Team (TSEIT) Evaluation Tools Support Materials (support materials for the targeted self-evaluation improvement team on conducting document analysis and lesson observation)
- (TSEIT) Sample Report
- Attendance School self-evaluation guidelines
- Analysing school attendance
- School attendance practices
- School Self-Evaluation Report
- School Self-Evaluation Attendance

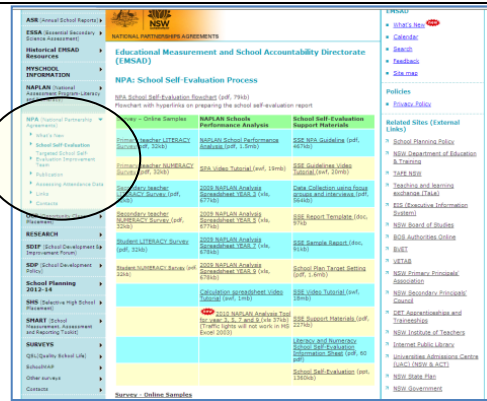


Fig 5.1 Extracts from the NSW DEC School Planning Guide showing where principals could find evidence to facilitate the School Plan.

Appendix 6

6.1 Sample of Artefacts referred to in Chapters 7-9

Colborne High School

English Faculty

Assessment Task – Year 7 English

Course	English	Year	7
Topic	Telling Stories		
Assessment Name	Short story Competition and Reflection		
Date Due		Weighting	15%

Task Information

Important Ideas Explored	Structure and language used in narratives to engage and entertain and audience
Task outline	Compose a short story using ONE of the prompts
Specific requirements	To complete this task you need to: Compose a short story, using the structural and language conventions of one genre Use the scaffold (attached) to help plan your story Use 3 lessons to work on this task. In this time you should plan using the scaffold provided. You will then complete the task at home. The final copy will be due in ONE week after the last class lesson used. Write 400-600 words Complete the reflection statement Submit the final copy of the story, scaffold and reflection on the due date
Syllabus Outcomes	EN4-1A, EN4-2A, EN4-4B, EN4-9E
Story Prompts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A stolen ring and a sinister stranger • A taxi and Valentine’s day • A party invitation and a locked cupboard • A broken watch and a hug.
Scaffold Questions	<i>What is the structure of a narrative? What is the narrative plan/map? How (and with what grammar) will you establish the setting and characterization? What verb groups may be found at the climax?</i>

Marking Criteria

Elements	Specific Criteria	A	B	C	D	E
Understands the Big Ideas	Demonstrates understanding of narrative genre structural and language conventions					
Processes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Plans and drafts well-crafted story using the scaffold 2. Uses the structural and language conventions of the genre 					
Literacy / Numeracy /ICT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses descriptive and figurative language • Evaluative language • Spelling, punctuation, capital letters and grammar correct 					

Student Feedback

Fig 6.1: Sample assessment task showing required standard format and use of differentiation and “big ideas”

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