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The professional development needs of newly appointed principals: leadership for school development

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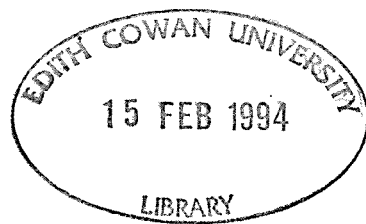
THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS OF NEWLY APPOINTED PRINCIPALS:

LEADERSHIP FOR SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT

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OCTOBER 1988

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In April 1986, the Director of the Western Australian College of Advanced Education, Dr D A Jecks, the Director-General of Education, Dr R L Vickery, and the Dean of the Faculty of Education of the University of Calgary, Professor R Lawson, came together to discuss the ways in which the three institutions, through co-operative activity, could address some of the major challenges facing education. Their meeting resulted in the formation of the International Institute for Policy and Administrative Studies within the Western Australian College of Advanced Education.

'The Professional Development Needs of Newly Appointed Principals: Leadership for School Development' was the first joint project of the Institute. This project could not have been undertaken without the continuing support and encouragement of each of these three directors and the considerable resources that they were prepared to devote to the study.

The conduct of the research study required the cooperation and participation of a large number of personnel from the Ministry. The response of these educators at directorate, branch, district and school level during a period of profound system level change was critical to the successful completion of the study. The research group is appreciative of the willingness of those educators who provided valuable advice to guide the study and of their insight into the nature of the principalship.

Special mention must be made of the principals who participated in the field study. It was a demanding task to take up a new appointment, and in addition, to make time for the reporting of their strategies, hopes and expectations to the researchers. They have been prepared to accept criticism from colleagues as part of the research. We are grateful for the way in which they accommodated the demands of the research study. We wish them well in their careers and hope that they may feel some small sense of satisfaction for their efforts. Willingness to contribute to inquiry which may lead to an upgrading of the quality of education is part of the role of professional educators. Special thanks are also extended to teachers who provided time to help the researchers understand the efforts of the principal in the school.

The members of the research group have gained much from this professional contact with practising educators. We believe that this interaction has created some permanent links between the teaching and practice of education in Western Australia.

CONTRIBUTORS

In addition to the principal researcher the following have made important contributions to the research during the period of the study.

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The Professional Development Needs of Newly Appointed Principals:
Leadership for School Development

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In April 1986 Dr D A Jecks on behalf of the Western Australian College of Advanced Education, Dr R L Vickery on behalf of the Education Department of Western Australia and Professor R F Lawson on behalf of the Faculty of Education of the University of Calgary met to discuss the ways in which the three institutions could address some of the key challenges facing education. The meeting resulted in the formation of the International Institute for Policy and Administrative Studies within the Western Australian College of Advanced Education. One of the functions of the Institute would be to develop programmes of international standing in teaching and research in educational policy development, particularly at the Masters degree level. In order to launch the Institute as a co-operative venture, the three directors agreed to identify a key research topic of importance to the development of education in Western Australia.

The professional development needs of newly appointed principals was identified as an important area for policy development and one which would benefit from research. The appointment of a cohort of new principals is a significant moment in the life of an education system. During a period of system-level change this transition is not without risks, both to the careers of promising educators and to the organisational health of the education system. Understanding of the learning experiences of newly appointed principals would provide critical information for the planning and delivery of professional development for both present and future incumbents of the role. This was especially so in the State education system of Western Australia at a time when emergent policies such as school development were transforming the nature of the principalship.

A research study was undertaken to investigate the ways in which newly appointed principals responded to the organisational demands and the culture of the school. The focus was on a process-oriented view of professional development. Special attention was given to how the

principal applied administrative knowledge and skills. The research design was a time-series multiple case study of 10 primary, district high and senior high school principals in their first year of appointment during 1987. Their learning experiences were referenced against a number of contexts: system-level educational reform, the cycle of the school year, the category of school and the meshing of principal characteristics with the organisation and culture of a particular school. The main policy recommendations for agencies with responsibility for the professional development of principals in Western Australia are now listed according to the themes of the data.

Recommendations

Anticipating the Appointment

1. Time and travel assistance should be available so that all principals designate have opportunities for extended contact, including specific purpose visits, with the school and school district. They should be able to visit the school in which they will take up appointment while it is still under the control of the outgoing principal. This enables collection of information about the pattern of school operations from continuing staff. Special attention should be given to understanding the role of the outgoing principal in the management of school culture, and of what this means for building collective views of the school. There may be expectations for the new principal to take up the style of the outgoing principal.
2. Principal induction programmes should be limited in scope so as to avoid information overload. The focus of induction programmes should be on organisational problem solving in particular types of schools rather than on information giving.

School Development Days at the Start of the School Year

3. Principals should have the opportunity to plan the school development days with continuing school staff and other school administrators. This is to ensure the relevance of the activities to school staff, and to prevent the newly appointed principals from taking a marginal role in these activities.

Developing a Network of Influence

4. Principals need to be provided with the opportunity to develop interpersonal skills so that they have sensitivity to the reactions of staff concerning their new administrative style. School staff may be reluctant to provide information as to how the principal is viewed until reserves of trust and respect have accumulated. Some new principals may have an inaccurate impression of how their administrative styles are perceived. This leads to the 'honeymoon' period where the principal receives little negative feedback.
5. Principals need to be able to critically analyse the policy process within the school and to assess whether it has sufficient legitimacy to obtain commitment from staff and parents. The implicit policy process of schools may tend toward the development of dependence in staff, rather than the cultivation of responsibility for decision-making about school affairs.
6. Principals should be given the opportunity to develop skills in conflict resolution and team building. This will allow the separation of people from the issue and enable the principal to build on the positive working relationships that exist among senior staff. Sectional groups should not control policy-making in the school.

Confronting Administration

7. Immersion in a complex of administrative demands at the start of the school year can lead to non-cumulative decision making by the principal. Principals should be given the opportunity to develop coping strategies relating to the seeking and filtering of information, delegating and establishing the priority of demands. This will lessen the development of non-cumulative decision-making.
8. In order to get beyond reactive management, principals have to make time to develop their thinking about the medium and long term future of the school. This requires the withdrawal of effort from day-to-day school operations. Principals should have capacity to identify the goals of the school, to diagnose the culture of the school and to devise a strategy for the achievement of these goals.

Taking up School Development

9. Principals require both capacity for and commitment to organisational problem solving in order to promote or initiate school development successfully. The principal should provide leadership which focuses the attention of school participants on the need to find solutions to whole-school problems.
10. Principals require capacity to conceptualise the school-level change process. A time-line is by itself an inadequate implementation plan. Strategic planning is required to identify a process for working toward agreement about school priorities. Principals must make a realistic assessment of the readiness of staff to undertake each task, so that preparations can be made to improve the chances for the successful completion of the task. Human resource development within the school is central to the management of school development.
11. Principals require capacity to establish an effective working relationship with external change facilitators. The brevity, variety and fragmentation of the daily workload of the principal is not conducive to both the detailed planning and implementation of school development. Principals should encourage the emergence of second internal change facilitators.

Managing External Relations

12. Principals need the opportunity to develop skills which will enable them to articulate and to promote systematically a corporate image of the school which generates community support.
13. Principals should have an awareness of the extent to which the preferred 'models' and the emerging policies of the district, especially as they relate to school development, will serve to strengthen or weaken school culture.

Accessing New Professional Knowledge

14. Principals require a number of frameworks of professional knowledge as they undertake organisational problem solving. It is not

satisfactory for principals to rely on intuition when they are required to give attention to human resource development, staff supervision and appraisal, school development and programme evaluation.

15. Principals should be given every encouragement to develop as instructional leaders in their schools. In primary and district high schools emphasis should shift away from the control of teachers by requirements for programming and the testing of student achievement toward the communication of values which encourage staff to adapt and devise more appropriate teaching strategies and curriculum components. In the senior high school there is a need for principals to exercise instructional leadership so as to create greater coherence across subject departments in the teachers' perspectives of the secondary curriculum.

Accommodating System-Level Reform

16. Principals should be kept informed about emergent policy initiatives so that they can promote understanding among school participants. This is particularly important during periods of profound educational change. The failure of the principal and other school participants to understand the educational 'megatrends' during a period of policy turbulence leads to resistance, withdrawal or at best shallow attempts to comply with what are seen as externally imposed policies.
17. The sequence of phases of educational restructuring at system level creates a demand for principals to adopt new mixes of administrative competence, e.g., from cultivating commitment to the proposed reforms to the reskilling of school staff to audit and review. Agencies with responsibility for the professional development of principals should attempt to anticipate these changes.

The Planning of Professional Development Experiences

18. Principals designate undergo 'emergency professional development' as they attempt to compensate for perceived deficits in their

professional knowledge. The significance of 'emergency professional development' prior to taking up appointment as a component of the professional knowledge base should be reduced.

19. There is a need to upgrade the professional culture of education so as to promote continuing professional development. The early identification of promising educators who aspire to the principalship, the use of career planning, and explicit specification of the additional administrative skills at each promotional position in the career pathway could improve skill acquisition prior to taking up appointment.
20. The short term maintenance role of the deputy principalship and senior master/mistress needs to be broadened to provide adequate preparation for the principalship. As part of normal school operations principals should provide these staff with opportunities to become involved with the 'invisible' aspects of the principalship, i.e., strategic planning, assessing the interactions and the long term effects of current school activities, linking the school with the community and the educational bureaucracy.
21. Newly appointed principals must make opportunities to reflect on their own practice and to establish their own agenda for continuing professional development. Some new principals may require the assistance of a consultant who is not part of the politics of the school district to help with this activity, especially if the practitioner experiences professional isolation.
22. Newly appointed principals should set their professional development agenda with respect to the development activities which are current or anticipated within their school. Meaningful continuing professional development - whether through district structures, principals' associations or higher education - requires that the practitioner has control over the agenda.

Capacity to service adequately the professional development needs of beginning principals is a critical indicator of the worth of human resources policy in any administrative unit of an education system. In a

period of declining public sector resources but increased demand for the level of performance of principals, the activities of competing professional development agencies need to be coordinated. This in turn creates a need for all professional development opportunities to be underpinned by a common set of values about the nature of the principalship. Progress in getting agreement between agencies will facilitate the provision of opportunities for systematic professional development to newly appointed principals.

CHAPTER 1

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This study contributes to the identification of the professional development needs of newly appointed principals. Traditionally, this category of principals has been neglected in the research literature. Based on theoretical considerations a research framework is proposed to guide the collection of data about the learning experiences of beginning principals. From this information policy recommendations are made for the professional development needs of these practitioners in the context of Western Australian education.

In this introductory chapter, the background to the study and reasons are given for the significance of newly appointed principals as a target for inquiry. A description then follows of the aims of the study and the research questions. The choice of a theoretical perspective to guide the empirical phase of the study is given together with an overview of the research design. Comment is then made on the structure of the report.

1.1 Background to the Study

During early 1986, discussions between representatives of the Western Australian College of Advanced Education (WACAE), the Department of Educational Policy and Administrative Studies at the University of Calgary (EPAS) and the Education Department of Western Australia (EDWA) led to the establishment of the International Institute for Policy and Administrative Studies (IIPAS) within the School of Education, WACAE. The changes that were unfolding in Western Australian education provided a special opportunity for a research study of mutual interest to be jointly sponsored and undertaken by the three institutions. Throughout the eighties the nature of the principalship has undergone progressive change in a climate of increasing expectations for the professional performance of these practitioners. The study was intended to generate information for each institution about the professional development needs and other support that are required by principals in the current era. The study should also contribute to the research literature in an area of education. In fulfilling these

purposes the study would inform practitioners engaged in research and professional development activities and therefore practice.

In the eighties a new complex of contextual factors has brought profound change to the operations of the education systems and schools of Australia. Federal intervention programmes have opened schools to the influence of the community and have encouraged school-level collaborative planning. The 'great reports' have yielded new curriculum designs which required operationalisation at school level. The 'inclusive' curricula were intended to broaden the focus of school activities so that all categories of students would have access to worthwhile learning. This included new groups of students who would attempt to complete a full secondary education. The restructuring of the bureaucracies of many State education systems according to functional, flexible and cost effective designs has led to administrative decentralisation and the loss of much specialist support capacity to schools (Chapman, 1986). Declining levels of resources for education have brought new demands for financial accountability to schools. Collectively these demands for school level accountability and collaborative school management imply the emergence of a more responsive school that has required a new administrative style (Thomas, 1986). Many of these pressures for change are evident in education systems beyond Australia.

From the early eighties, school development began to emerge as a significant activity in the schools of some EDWA administrative regions. School development¹ occurs when there is collective and sustained effort by school staff, possibly with community involvement, to make informed judgement as to the worth of existing programmes and practice. From here priorities are developed and there is a systematic attempt to plan, implement and review practice which contributes to these priorities. School based programme development was taken up by increasing numbers of schools as it had proven potential to increase staff morale, student achievement and organisational effectiveness. This initiative, more than any other, made explicit the way in which the nature of

¹ In many education systems this initiative is known as school improvement.

the principalship was undergoing transformation in Western Australian schools. No longer could the principal serve only as a conduit for the transmission of centrally determined policy. In promoting school development the principal increasingly became a facilitator and resource person who would coordinate teacher and parent initiatives in school-level policy-making relating to programme planning, implementation and review.

To deliver policy-oriented research findings it was essential that the study consider the future of the principalship in Western Australian schools. It was therefore appropriate that the study should give some attention to the way in which principals promoted school development. During the conduct of the study the Better Schools (1987) report proposed the restructuring of EDWA into The Ministry of Education (Western Australia) (MEWA). The release of the report in January, 1987 formally authorised school development as the 'premier' education policy of MEWA (Harvey, 1987a). In December 1987 the schools were issued with guidelines to prepare school development plans and to establish school-based decision-making groups. This marked the onset of the era of mandatory school development in Western Australian education (Harvey, 1988, p.96).

A research proposal was prepared through input from staff in each institution. (See Hyde, et al., 1986) The proposal centred on the identification of the professional development needs of newly appointed principals. A research steering committee was established to oversee the conduct of the study. (See Appendix A (i)) This contained representatives from the three State school principals' associations and the teachers' union, as well as representatives from each of the participating institutions. The study was undertaken between June 1986 and December 1987. During this time twenty staff representing each of the participating institutions contributed to the management and conduct of the study. (See Appendix A (iii))

1.2 The Significance of Inquiry into Newly Appointed Principals

The appointment of educators to their beginning principalship or to their first principalship in a school of greater complexity is a

demanding career transition. Firstly, from the time of taking up the appointment the new principal has the formal authority and responsibility to oversee the totality of school operations but has only a limited knowledge of the specific activities and people. Secondly, the newly appointed principal must develop an understanding of the complexities of a more demanding role. Over time the new principal has to find a way to combine his or her personal knowledge, administrative skills and judgement with the stream of scheduled and spontaneous activities which emerge from the rhythm of the school year. Little is known about the minimum levels of competence which are required of beginning principals. Even less is known about the time periods which may be required for new principals to reach optimum levels of comfort and efficiency in various types of schools.

For the new principal the appointment represents a significant professional development experience. The appointment is not without risks to the career of the educator. Typically, education system position papers, job descriptions and professional performance appraisal procedures define high standards, and do not distinguish between new and experienced principals. (See Alberta School Trustees' Association, 1981) Some new principals will find that the magnitude of the career transition is too great to enable the experience of success during the first appointment. Other new principals receive appointments to schools where they may end up being the scapegoat for inherited school problems. From the point of view of the careers of educators it is important that the problems and issues relating to the new principal are identified. There is a need for knowledge about the developmental stages of educators as they aspire to and then assume a sequence of principalships in order to assess the administrative skills and knowledge which are required. It is from this starting point that the design of more appropriate professional development programmes becomes possible.

The appointment of a cohort of new principals is also part of the process of maintenance and renewal of an education system. Reviews of school effectiveness research show the potential of the principal, whether new or continuing, to influence the quality of

the school environment. (See Purkey and Smith, 1983; National Institute of Education, 1985; Mulford, 1986) It is recognised that much research is required to establish the way in which action by the principal is related to school effectiveness and to the learning outcomes of students (Russell, et al., 1985). The principal has great potential to influence what goes on in a school. The progress of an education system is very much related to the rate at which each cohort of new principals is able to make judgements as to how to pick up the administrative tasks of a particular school. The inability of significant numbers of new principals to come to terms with the demands of the role puts the reputation and effectiveness of the education system at risk.

Although all principals in Western Australian State schools are now in a situation of redefining roles, the beginning principals are a group who require special attention. It could be argued that new principals are exposed to a greater risk of 'failure'. In the current Australian situation, education system field support units, including regional or district offices, and principals' associations are the main groups that attempt to provide support for new principals. This report recognises the importance of the way in which newly appointed principals take up a demanding role. The level of success experienced by promising educators during this critical transition has consequences for the careers of individuals who have been identified through merit promotion procedures as the most promising educators. The failure of an education system to give adequate support to newly appointed principals would represent a substantial wastage of human resources. Similarly the collective success of each new group of appointees has implications for the organisational health of the educational system. The capacity of education systems, principals' associations and higher education to target educators who will take up the principalship is an indicator of the adequacy of human resource development policy in any administrative region.

1.3 The Aims of the Study

The study attempts to identify and to explain the significant learning experiences of newly appointed principals during the

current era. From this the professional development needs of the principals can be established for the on-the-job learning and investigation of 'what principals should do'. Analysis of information relating to this services the needs of the participating institutions in the following ways:

IIPAS

- o inform the design of units of study in Educational Policy and Administration for BEd and MEd courses, especially for educators who aspire to the principalship;
- o provide information that enables the development of strategy for the delivery of professional development experiences which meet both the immediate and the long term needs of educators who aspire to the principalship, as well as newly appointed and experienced principals.

Department of Educational Policy and Administrative Studies, the University of Calgary:

- o as above for IIPAS;
- o facilitate research relating to an important aspect of the principalship;
- o undertake a comparative study of principals in Western Australia and Alberta.

The Ministry of Education (Western Australia):

- o provide information that will assist the Human Resources Policy Branch (previously the Teacher Development Branch) in planning the content and delivery of inservice activities for principals;
- o provide policy recommendations relating to the provision of additional support for principals with respect to current policy initiatives.

The study had multiple goals. There was a demand from the client institutions for both policy-oriented research as well as basic research. The worth of the policy-oriented research would be dependent upon the extent to which the recommendations served as a guide to practice in the school system. The achievement of all or part of the above purposes would be dependent upon the quality of interaction and communication among staff from each participating institution.

1.4 The Research Questions

The study was guided by three general research questions and a number of sub-questions to each. The first questions focus on the empirical phase of the project, while the final question centres on the provision of professional development programmes and supports for principals.

- 1.0 How do newly appointed principals in a period of significant educational change establish themselves in a school situation and demonstrate administrative skills, especially where this promotes school development?
- 1.1 What are the characteristics of the current educational situation in Western Australia as they relate to the role of the principal in implementing school development?
- 1.2 What are the attributes and intentions that newly appointed principals bring to their schools during the first year?
- 1.3 What are the administrative skills that new principals demonstrate during the first year of appointment?
- 1.4 What are the administrative skills that new principals are observed to acquire during the first year of appointment?
- 2.0 What are the professional development needs of newly appointed principals in a period of significant educational change?
- 2.1 What do newly appointed principals (now in their first year of appointment) perceive to be the administrative skills that are required in the current school situation?
- 2.2 In what ways do principals perceive that these qualities may be best acquired?
- 3.0 What are the implications of the findings concerning newly appointed principals for the professional development experiences and other supports offered by the WACAE and the MEWA?
- 3.1 What kinds of professional development experiences can best be provided by the WACAE?
- 3.2 What kinds of inservice professional development can best be provided by the MEWA?

1.5 A Research Perspective

An extensive body of research highlights the inadequacy of existing knowledge about the role of the school principal. This has resulted from the overuse of normative theories based on questionnaires and surveys. In this research emphasis is on variable analysis using input-output models to establish the relationship between principal characteristics and school organisation characteristics. This approach portrays principals as being reactive rather than proactive and does not capture the differences which exist among practitioners. At a general level there is a lack of correspondence between the theory and the practice of being a principal. Substantial empirical research is needed to develop more powerful explanations of principals' actions.

Observational, descriptive and interpretive studies now challenge the once dominant normative paradigm. These studies attempt to discover 'what principals do' in order to develop 'grounded theories' of school management. (See Morris, *et al.*, 1984; Willis, 1985; Dwyer, 1985; Hyde, 1985) Collectively the descriptive studies are more sensitive to the powerful school context and process factors, including the school culture, which influence the strategic decision-making of the principal. These studies have greater potential than the normative studies to show how newly appointed principals orient themselves to a school and how their choice of action is related to the demands of school administration, including school development. A field study of the way in which newly appointed principals establish a presence in fully operational schools would contribute to a process in context-oriented explanation of professional development.

1.6 Overview of the Study

The promotional structure of the State education system of Western Australia involves three significant points of career transition where beginning principals could be expected to undergo significant changes in their work role. The research would focus on the following career transitions:

1. Deputy principal Class 1 and 1A or principal Class 3 primary school to principal Class 2 primary school, i.e. from a principal of a school with 2-5 teachers to principal of a school with 6-16 teachers.
2. Senior master or mistress high school or senior high school or principal Class 2 primary school to principal Class 2 district high school, i.e. from senior subject (faculty) area teacher or principal of a primary school with 2-5 teachers to principal of a school with 5-10 primary teachers and 4-6 secondary teachers;
3. Deputy principal high or senior high school to principal high or senior high school (45 to 80 teachers).²

The PS2 and DHS principals still retain a half-time teaching load. DHS principals assume responsibility for either a primary or a secondary programme for which they have no previous experience. In each school there is a broadening of the range of responsibility. It was expected that beginning principals not only have to find a way to influence school operations but will have to modify their repertoire of professional knowledge and administrative skills. Principals who take up appointment in the three categories of schools represent key target groups for the identification of the professional development needs of new principals.

The main component of the empirical phase of the research was a time-series case study of ten new principals during their first year of appointment. The single frame of reference was the way in which principals attempted to influence school operations. A conceptual framework was used to map the motives and strategies of principals as they applied professional knowledge to the cycle of administrative demands during the school year. Collection of data commenced in December 1986 prior to the taking up of the appointment. The mapping of principals' actions and perspective continued until December 1987.

A second strand of empirical research activities was undertaken during September-December 1986 to orient the researchers to the

² The school types will be designated as PS2 - Class 2 primary school; DHS - district high school; SHS - senior high school.

role of the principal and to provide IIPAS with early information for course development. The first activity was an investigation of the emergent EDWA policy on school development as a contextual factor which influenced the role of the principal. Interviews were conducted with seven policy actors who had responsibility for the support of school development. The second activity was a workshop with 20 principals and deputy principals who were identified as being successful in facilitating school development. The focus was on the identification of principals' actions which facilitated school development. The third activity was a phone interview with 19 beginning principals at the end of their first year of appointment.

A final research activity was to be a questionnaire survey of both new and experienced principals to establish whether the major professional development needs that would emerge from the field study of newly appointed principals were to be found among other categories of principals. The research steering committee advised that this activity was no longer appropriate owing to the workload which principals would face in the final school term. The activity was deferred.

A conference was planned as an integrative activity to highlight the issues relating to both the content and delivery of professional development for principals. Consequently a National Conference for the Delivery of Professional Development to Principals was scheduled for August 1988. The research design is shown in Figure 1.6.1.

1.7 The Structure of the Report

The next chapter, Chapter 2, describes the conceptual framework and research procedures. Chapter 3 is an investigation of the evolution of school development as a contextual factor influencing principals up until the commencement of the study. Chapter 4 reports on the second strand of research activities which were undertaken to guide the conduct of the multiple case studies. The next set of chapters, Chapters 5 to 10, treat themes which emerged from the perspectives of the newly appointed principals.

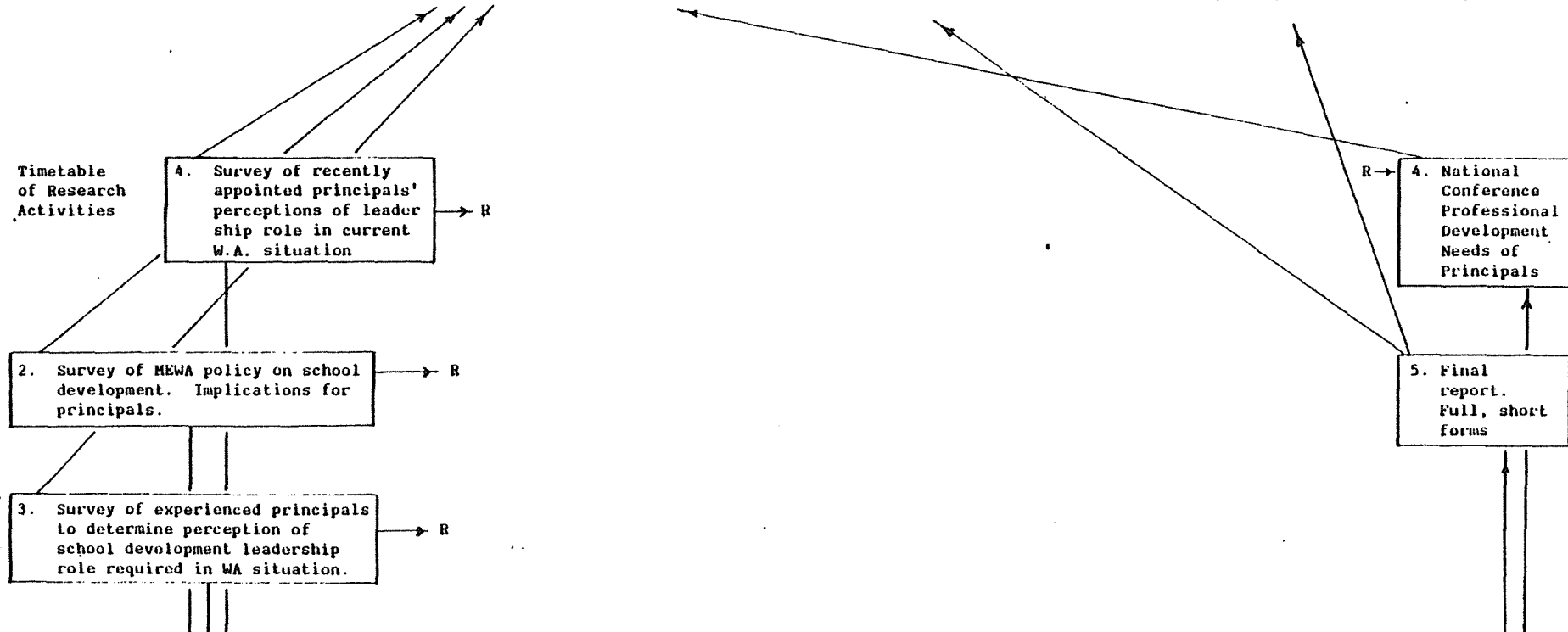
Demands on Project

1. Inform ILPAS re course development for principals

2. MEWA Human Resources Policy Branch

3. MEWA: Policy recommendations relating to inservice and support for principals, school development.

Timetable of Research Activities



Field study: Time series case study of 10 newly appointed principals.
 Focus: How beginning principals assume presence, demonstrate administrative skills, influence school development

1. '86 Dec	'87 Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
	*Establishment of working relationship	*Planning and implementation of school development days		*Review of establishment during term one		*Investigation of school development initiatives, planning		*Investigation of school development planning implementation				*Identify intended, unintended outcomes
	*Career profile data	*Management of problems early term		*School, community profiles								

Chapter 11 is a summation of the learning experiences of new principals. In Chapter 12 the professional development needs of newly appointed principals are identified. Attention is also given to the implications of the findings for the provision of professional development by MEWA, the principals' associations and the WACAE. Appendix E is a summary of all findings and recommendations.

CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH CONSIDERATIONS

2.0 RESEARCH CONSIDERATIONS

This chapter provides an outline of the theoretical perspective which emerged from the review of the literature. The conceptual framework and the research procedures which guided the conduct of the field study of newly appointed principals are then described. Further information about the detail of the research activities is given in Harvey and Simpson (1987).

2.1 The Research Literature on the Principalship

The newly appointed principal is a neglected topic for research. Only a small number of case studies are available (Dwyer, 1984; Lloyd, 1986). However, there are some related surveys about the 'arriving principal' (Thomas, 1987) or 'the succession' in schools where appointees have prior experience as principals (Hoy and Aho, 1973). In all of these studies change is expected by the staff of the school and the arriving principal must give attention to the issues of 'How much change is appropriate?' and 'How soon this should be undertaken?'

The most substantial study of newly appointed principals is a study by Weindling and Earley (1987). This is based on interviews with 47 secondary principals during their first year of appointment. Of these, 16 were interviewed in their second and third years, and the remainder were surveyed using a questionnaire. Comparisons were made with a sample of experienced principals. Important areas of focus are the working relationship of the principal and the senior management team, staff morale, the management of change, the professional isolation of principals and relations with local education authorities. The findings highlight the need for improved professional preparation and induction of principals. In each of the above studies the success of the career transition is related to the quality of the working relationship which develops with other school participants.

Greenfield (1984) reports that, despite a massive research effort, there remain large areas of the principalship about which little is known. The once dominant normative paradigm based on survey and questionnaire research has been replaced by descriptive and

interpretive studies which get closer to explaining the complexity of day-to-day activities. Crowson and Porter-Gehrie (1980) identified the 'coping strategies' of 10 principals relating to the use of time, simplifying decision-making, maintaining the authority of the principalship and limiting conflict. Morris, et al. (1984) used observation and interviews to study the use of discretionary decision-making in maintaining good working relationships both within and beyond the school. Martin and Willower (1981) and also Willis (1980) have used structured observation to assess how principals use their time. They have found that verbal interaction with a single other person is a major use of time. Gronn (1983) shows how much of the work of administrators is accomplished through talk. Specifically talk can be used to tighten and to loosen administrative control. Taylor (1986) has analysed extracts of strategic dialogue to identify the way in which the principal accomplishes school improvement. Attention has been given to the metasense-making process as the principal attempts to influence the actions and commitment of others.

The interpretive research tradition reveals the culture of the school. Schein (1985, pp.6-7) reserves the term culture for the deeper-level basic assumptions, values and beliefs which are collectively learned by organisational participants. It represents the taken-for-granted responses of participants for the internal integration of the organisation and its survival in the external environment. School participants become organised through their shared assumptions, methods of solving problems and perspectives. The principal exercises influence by directing the attention of school participants to certain meanings, or to the reworking of these meanings. This implies that the culture of the school is dynamic and subject to modification, especially by individuals who exercise leadership. Conflict results when assumptions about organisational reality are not shared.

Increasingly theoretical treatments of leadership tend to recognise the non-rational characteristics of schools as organisations. As non-rational organisations schools pursue multiple goals, the issues that receive greatest attention are those which are most urgent and there is no compelling picture of the one best way to organise the school (Patterson, Purkey and Parker, 1986). In

loosely coupled organisations managing the cultural dimension of the school becomes an important aspect of leadership. The meanings of the actions of leaders are more important than the behaviour and events themselves (Sergiovanni, 1987, p.116). Leaders must have capacity to focus attention on aspects of culture and to promote the reshaping of organisational culture. Watkins (1985) recognises the presence of multiple leaders in the school. The presence of multiple actors leads to power relationships that underly attempts to define and control organisational reality. Management of the micropolitics of the school is an important task for any principal who attempts to re-shape school culture (Ball, 1987; Hoyle 1987). All of the above phenomena come together as the collective imaginations of organised people who share values and meanings which guide their actions. Duignan and MacPherson (1987) identify educative leadership as an attempt to negotiate what is important and morally right in the school.

Contemporary perspectives of leadership in business organisations place emphasis on visioning, goal setting and team building activities which empower staff (Bennis and Nanus, 1984; Wynn and Guiditus, 1986; Hickman and Silva, 1986). The exercise of leadership by the principal depends upon the use of communication to articulate fundamental values and procedures which comprise a collective view of where the school is going. Leadership becomes effective when school participants wish to participate in shaping the future of the school. The demonstration of administrative skills by the principal can generate commitment by others to school priorities.

2.2 Conceptual Framework

The newly appointed principal brings a repertoire of administrative knowledge and skills to the school. It is assumed that the principal will use judgement in mobilising these qualities so as to intervene in school operations. The single frame of reference for the field study is principal influence which is defined as:

any action of the principal (overt or covert) and related incidents or sequences of incidents which contribute to the operation of the school.

This definition refers to both the intentional and unintentional interventions of the principal. It is possible that in many situations the principal will have a closed or only a partial awareness of the impact of the stream of interactions with others. This framework takes account of the influence which other school participants exercise on school operations. It is recognised that in large schools the newly appointed principal may have inadequate contextual knowledge and power to influence school operations. Principals may choose to exercise influence in a direct manner, or to work with others in collaborative planning and review activities which lead to the establishment of a working consensus. The study of the process of influence was guided by a simple conceptual model. (See Figure 2.2.1)

The model identifies a number of discrete but interactive phenomena which channel the dynamics of principal influence. These are the professional knowledge characteristics of the new principal, the characteristics of the education system which support the school, the organisational and cultural characteristics of the school and the community in which the school is situated. The interactions of the principal with other school participants has consequences for stability and change in the school, both in the short term and in the long term.

Each new principal brings to the school a base of professional knowledge which has potential to guide action. In order to understand the dynamics of influence it becomes important to conceptualise the principal as an actor. From this viewpoint the principal does not simply react to school situations. Instead the principal has the capacity to mobilise personal knowledge, to construct images of the problems and opportunities in a school, to make judgements and to choose courses of action. Adequate conceptualisation of demonstrated administrative qualities requires recognition of the discretionary power of the principal (Morris, et al., 1984). Such discretionary decision-making may be oriented toward not only achieving worthwhile school outcomes but also toward the enhancement, or at least protection, of the principal's own sense of self. Over time attempts by the new principal to intervene in the operation of the school may lead to.

ACTORS

**CONTEXTUAL
FACTORS**

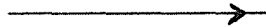
**SCHOOL
OPERATION,
SCHOOL
DEVELOPMENT**

Principal with
Existing, Acquired
Leadership
and Management
Qualities

INFLUENCE



Other School Actors
Goals, Strategies



Interactions of Principal and
Others taking account of:

1. Education System
Policy, Priorities.
2. School Culture.
3. School Organisation
Characteristics.
4. Student Characteristics.
5. Community Characteristics

CONSEQUENCES

(Stability,
Change)

Short and
Long Term
Outcomes



Figure 2.2.1 A Simple Conceptual Model for the Demonstration of Influence by Principals.

adaptation and change in making choices about the way in which the principal can contribute to school affairs. Reflection on participation in school affairs leads to the maturation or progressive development of the principal's perspective. The principal profile should therefore contain a heuristic device to map the personal knowledge which guides principal action. The universe of personal knowledge can be mapped by conceptualising the principal's use of knowledge and the content of the knowledge as orthogonal dimensions. The perspective of the principal can be located in a matrix of socially constructed knowledge. (See Table 2.2.1)

In the matrix three categories of knowledge use can be identified, these being motives, strategies and explanations. Motives refer to the perceived concerns, needs and purposes which serve as catalysts for action. Here the actor develops a strategy or plan for action. Included are methods for choosing from among alternatives and the experiencing of contingencies which influence decision-making. Explanations emerge as a rationale to justify the resulting course of action and the perceived effects of one's behaviour. Explanations, including excuses, of one's performance in a particular event have potential to modify perspectives and action in future situations.

For the purposes of this study the content dimension of the principal as an agent of influence will be confined to the principal's self concept and working knowledge of the school to which an appointment is to be made. The self concept refers to the actor's view of his or her self as a principal. This includes information about a preferred style and of how the actor would like to be perceived by others.

On taking up the appointment the new principal requires a working knowledge of the school. A major study of the professional development needs of Australian principals by Duignan, *et al.* (1984) identified four areas of school knowledge. Firstly, there is administration or the routines which comprise the operational procedures of the school. Secondly, issues relating to the curriculum and the mosaic of instructional activities are a major

Table 2.2.1: Heuristic Device to Map Personal Knowledge which Guides
Principal Action (Influence)

USE OF KNOWLEDGE

	MOTIVES (Level of concern, needs, purposes, activators, catalysts)	STRATEGIES (Preferred actions, plans, contingencies)	EXPLANATIONS (Rationales for outcomes, excuses, justifications)
K N O W L E D G E	SELF CONCEPT (View of self as principal)		
	1. Preferred style		
	2. General conception of principal role, main facets of role		
C O N T E N T	SCHOOL (Perception of school)		
	1. Site administration		
	2. Instructional leadership		
	3. Interpersonal relations		
	4. Environmental relations		

focus of the principal's attention. This included information relating to curriculum management and staff development. Thirdly, interpersonal relations centres on information about staff relationships and expectations. Fourthly, the principal requires knowledge of the environmental relations of the school. Collectively these areas represent the principal's working knowledge of the school. From the time of receiving notification of an appointment it is expected that the principal will develop an increasingly sophisticated stock of socially constructed knowledge about the next school. It is acknowledged that principals bring significant knowledge and preferred management styles to their school of appointment. Further experience in the school will lead to the ongoing revision and re-organisation of the principal's personal knowledge and level of professional development.

A principal profile is a descriptive device which recognises the combination of objective status and performance characteristics as well as the subjective experiential knowledge which a new principal brings to a school. The model of the actor contained in the profile is one which recognises the capacity of the principal to perceive an opportunity structure for the demonstration of leadership qualities. The style of influence refers to the pattern which emerges from the way in which the principal responds to the organisational demands and the culture of the school. Over time the principal will display typical responses to ongoing school operations. The pattern can be described using a variety of criteria, e.g., collaborative-hierarchical, proactive-reactive. The elements of a principal's style may have been adopted either by choice or by default.

2.3 Research Procedures

A multiple case studies research design was chosen as being appropriate to investigate the process whereby newly appointed principals establish a presence in a school. Following Adelman, et al. (1976) the research process was considered to be a bounded system. For analytical purposes, the frame of reference was the influence which had to be exerted by each principal in order to establish a presence in the school. The study thus explored

interactions among the perspectives and actions of each principal and the significant factors which made up the context of each school. While the conduct of the study (i.e., the data gathering and preliminary analytical phases) recognised the uniqueness of each school setting, the use of multiple case studies enabled constant comparative analysis of the commonality or variability of types of principal influence across sites. The analysis also considered the relative power of personal or contextual factors. The heuristic device to map the professional knowledge of principals guided longitudinal data collection and analysis at all sites. Ten case studies were set up and data collection took place from December 1986, prior to the new principals taking up appointment and through until December 1987, the end of their first year in office.

The selection of principals for a multiple case study was a resultant of factors requiring either a larger or smaller sample size. A larger number of principals was desirable in order to assess the variability of the contexts in which influence was demonstrated. Conversely, the cost of data collection and the problems of co-ordinating the activities of a team of researchers created pressures for a smaller sample. With these considerations in mind an optimum sample was seen as comprising 10 principals.

The final selection of principals was constrained by a number of circumstances. Firstly, very few new principals were appointed for 1987 in each category of school by comparison with the previous year. This substantially reduced the number of principals, especially female principals, who could be considered. Secondly, a requirement of EDWA was that the sample should be drawn from not more than two administrative regions. The metropolitan and country regions with the greatest number of new principals were chosen. Thirdly, 10 principals were invited to participate in the study. (See Appendix B) Eight of these principals agreed to participate. A further SHS principal was asked to participate. However, no additional DHS principal was available in either region. A DHS principal from a third region indicated that he would like to participate in the study. Approval was obtained for his inclusion in the sample.

Of the principals in the case studies four were appointed to PS2, three to DHS and three to SHS schools. Six of the schools were in country districts. Nine of the principals were male and only two had occupied non-teaching or non-administrative facilitator positions in education. Their ages were between 36 years and 55 years. Two principals had completed courses in educational administration. One principal took up appointment from the commencement of Term 3.

A data collection procedure was required that would yield telling information about the pattern of principal influence. The conceptual framework specified the collection of information relating to the demonstration of influence by the principal, the professional knowledge of the principal, the significant contextual characteristics at the school site and the outcomes of principal influence. In reality this required the construction of a continuous record of the daily stream of dialogue and actions of the principal across the school year. Staffing of the project was intended to provide a research presence of at least 10 days at each site. It was expected that data collection would take place every two or three weeks. The commitments of both principals and researchers led to variations.

The frequency of visits ranged from as much as twice per week to once per school term (10 weeks). Some data collection for country schools took place when principals visited the WACAE campuses, or through phone interviews. The frequency of data collection is summarised in Table 2.3.1. Visits to school sites lasted between 90 minutes and two days.

Table 2.3.1 Frequency of Case Study Data Collection

School	1986		1987			TOTAL
	Term 3	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4	
SHS 1	1	7	5	4	3	20
SHS 2	1	6	4	3	3	17
SHS 3	1	3	1	1	1	7
DHS 1	1	4	3	3	3	14
DHS 2	1	6	4	3	3	17
DHS 3 ¹			1	3	2	6
PS2 1	1	6	4	3	3	17
PS2 2	1	1	2	2	2	8
PS2 3	1	3	3	3	6	16
PS2 4	1	9	8	1	4	25

¹ The principal at this school did not take up the appointment until Term 3.

To meet the requirement of informational adequacy it was essential that thick description be made of a sample of critical incidents where the principal exercised influence. Limitations in the time that both principals and researchers could devote to data collection meant that a value judgement was made as to which were the most important and telling actions of the principal during the period since the previous data collection. Events where the principal provided clarification of school policy to groups of school participants or the whole school staff would appear to be acts of influence. In another sense a serious exchange of views with a single member of school staff which brought about an accommodation of viewpoints is also clearly a critical incident. A strategy of data triangulation was adopted to reduce the problematic nature as to what were the significant acts of principal influence. Data was obtained from a number of sources:

- o Unstructured interviews with the principal. Here interviews were organised around the principal's choice of a selection of incidents as recorded in a personal diary or the school journal.

- o Interviews with two members of the continuing school staff who had worked in the school under the previous principal. In some schools this was extended to parent representatives and students on a less regular basis.
- o Review of school documents which provide traces of principal actions, e.g., meeting agendas, minutes, newsletters.
- o Observation of the principal in action by the researcher, e.g., staffroom, staff meetings, Parents and Citizens' Association meetings.
- o Structured interviews with the principal to obtain further information about critical incidents of principal influence which had become evident during data collection.

The interviews with principals were tape-recorded, transcribed and returned to the principal for review. Data collection focused upon the discovery, description, conceptualisation and explanation of initial incidents of principal influence using multiple sources of evidence. Overall, data collection activities generated approximately 800 pages of field notes.

The success of data collection was dependent upon the quality of the working relationship that was established between the principal and a single researcher. The collection of quality information required access to sensitive data that were in some instances potentially damaging to the credibility of school participants, including the principal. Some principals were not comfortable with disclosure of their concerns about school operations to others, especially to school staff. This concern had to be respected by the researcher. Most were more outgoing, even to the extent of welcoming opportunities to discuss school events with the researcher, who did not have a vested interest in the micropolitics of the school. During the course of data collection the working relationship of principals and researchers matured, especially as the principals came to have confidence in the researcher. At this stage the researcher began to act as a sounding board for strategy and policy initiatives.

A 'Guide to the Working Relationship of Researchers and the New Principals' was established. (See Appendix C) This recognised the principal, rather than other members of the school staff or the education system, as the principal client. The guide specified the conditions under which data would be collected and used. The

research steering committee also functioned to preserve the interests of the principals. (See Appendix A (ii)) At all times the presence of the researcher was to create minimum disturbance to the school. This meant that investigation of principal influence and some critical incidents could not be pursued with designated school staff because of possible disturbance to the micropolitics of the school. A confidential file of chronologically ordered field notes was maintained for each principal by a single researcher. The principal had a duplicate copy of the file. It was the responsibility of the researcher to control the use of this file by other members of the research group.

Three forms of data analysis were applied. Pattern-matching and time-series analysis could be undertaken with each case. (See Yin, 1984) Firstly, on each visit the researcher was guided by the categories of the principal profile and the need to obtain information about the current state of school organisation, the school community and the education system. This led to the identification of some major acts of principal influence, and the interactions with contextual influences. The categories of incidents were labelled in the field notes. Secondly, the collection of data across time enabled the researcher, who had knowledge of the history of the case study, to commence the mapping of the action of the principal against the dynamics of the school year. In addition, the chaining of the regularities in the critical incidents enabled identification of the style of influence that was characteristic of a principal in a particular school. The actions of a principal in different settings could be compared. Thirdly, the comparison of incidents, themes and styles across case studies enabled greater theoretical saturation of the various manifestations of the forms of principal influence. The reporting of the data indicates the themes which served as organising centres for the analysis of the data.

CHAPTER 3

SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT AS A CONTEXTUAL FACTOR
INFLUENCING PRINCIPALS IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

3.0 SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT AS A CONTEXTUAL FACTOR INFLUENCING PRINCIPALS IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

In the State education system of Western Australia school development emerged as a significant contextual factor which contributed to the re-definition of the role of the principal. Since the late seventies school-level programme development and policy-making have become an integral part of the principalship. During this period school development represented a 'leading edge' of activity which would facilitate the gradual devolution and decentralisation of the State education system. As a result each successive group of new principals took up appointments in a climate of increased expectations for the qualitative upgrading and the expansion of the range of administrative skills required for the role, including the capacity to work collaboratively with school and specialist support staff. This chapter documents the form of the emergent EDWA policy of school development.

Data on school development were obtained from interviews, documents and attendance at regional meetings. The interviews were conducted with a cross-section of seven policy actors from head office and some of the administrative regions who had responsibility for school development activities. The data were collected during September-November 1986. The interviews were recorded, transcribed and validated. (See Appendix D (i) for the interview schedule). Eighty pages of transcript was generated.

Information was obtained relating to:

- the origins of school development;
- the meaning of school development;
- some reasons for school development;
- strategies of school development;
- promoting school development;
- implications for principals;
- postscript: Better Schools.

The following is a summary of the findings. A full analysis of the data is contained in Harvey (1987b).

3.1 The Origins of School Development

A complex of environmental pressures had accumulated in Australia during the eighties to erode the legitimacy of centrally controlled education systems. This included:

- o the onset of international recession created a public demand for 'better value for money' from public sector services, efficiency and effectiveness becoming the meta-values of public sector policy makers during a period of declining resources for education;
- o increased public concern about 'big government' and the capacity of large state bureaucracies to respond to the needs of individuals, which in education was manifested as a drift of parents and students toward the independent schools;
- o the increased involvement of the legislative arm of government in the administration of education.

In Western Australia, the State Government became a driving force of change in education as evidenced by:

- o the Beazley (1984) and McGaw (1984) inquiries into the operation of the education system, the former inquiry generating 16 recommendations that required the implementation of development activities in schools;
- o the re-election of the State Labor Government in March 1986 which produced a log of 131 requests for improvement of the school system;
- o the release of the Government white paper, Managing Change in the Public Sector (1986), which proposed a corporate management style for all public sector departments, the accompanying regulations provided guidelines for the evaluation of all government organisations according to effectiveness and efficiency measures, especially with respect to the allocation of resources;
- o the investigation in 1986 of the EDWA bureaucracy by a Functional Review Committee with a view to recommending a leaner, more cost-effective structure.

Overall a complex of environmental pressures had placed the senior administration of the EDWA under siege. The relative tranquillity of the educational world of the seventies had evaporated. The political agenda in Western Australia now focused on matters which could lead to system-level change in education. The expectation of the Government was that public schools would raise their standards of achievement, be more responsive and accountable, and demonstrate

greater efficiency and effectiveness.

Up until the seventies a highly centralised system of administration had been established to ensure efficient operation of all schools in the large state systems. From the early seventies a number of events changed the traditional pattern of operation of the EDWA bureaucracy. This created greater opportunities for school-level decision-making:

- o An era of reform and renewal of Australian schools came with the establishment of The Australian Schools Commission in 1973 (later the Commonwealth Schools Commission). The Priority Schools Program¹ (PSP) (1973-87) and the Innovations Program (1973-78) provided 'seed money' which enabled school staff, sometimes with assistance from community representatives, to identify school level priorities and to devise programmes which more adequately met student needs. This became the theme of a string of reports from the Commonwealth Schools Commission - Schooling for 15 and 16 Year Olds (1970), Participation and Equity in Australian Schools (1983), Quality Education in Australia (1985), Educational Leadership for Responsive School (1985) and In The National Interest (1987).
- o The establishment of 13 administrative regions in 1978 brought some policy-making closer to schools.
- o From this time the three major principals' associations were given substantial funding to enable the conduct of professional development activities of their own choosing. This had the effect of upgrading the role and significance of the principal.
- o In 1980 the Office of the Director-General authorised a policy supporting school-level curriculum development.
- o Some of the efforts of the Research Branch and the Teacher Development Branch were directed toward the support of school development. A Research Branch project titled 'Evaluation of the Impact of the Priority Schools Program in Eleven Priority Schools' showed the power of diagnostic data to enable school staff to identify student needs and so make quick but effective changes. In 1984 the Research Branch commenced working up a set of instruments relating to student achievement, attitudes toward self and school, organisational climate and community. This was to become known as Project Baseline.

¹ In Western Australia the Disadvantaged School Program was retitled to remove the suggestion that some schools were less effective. For a similar reason by 1984 the term 'school improvement' was replaced by 'school development'.

- o In April, 1984, there was change to the triennial inspection procedure for primary schools. It was recognised that external inspection of school operations once every three years reduced the capacity of school staff to monitor and improve their own activities. This made possible a move away from external school inspection toward internal school development.
- o Pockets of teachers who were engaged in priority schools, alternative upper school programmes and some open area primary schools had demonstrated the potential of school-level decision making for both curriculum development and professional development in the most educationally disadvantaged schools. In at least two regions school development became a priority activity.
- o In 1985 the Primary School Development Task Force began to monitor the different approaches to school development. Attempts were made to find practical procedures for engaging in school development and to disseminate ideas about how quality data could be used as a starting point for development.
- o The creation of a field officer service provided a new level of support for secondary schools. From 1982 the Secondary Schools Support Unit had co-ordinated the Transition Education Program (1979) and the Participation and Equity Program (PEP) (1984).

By 1984 school development had come to take the form of a school based 'educational movement' which brought a shift in the thinking of many practitioners and policy makers. As a movement school development was unevenly spread across regions. Initially it emerged in the regions with large numbers of specific purpose programmes and target schools. The spawning of pockets of school development depended upon the presence of teachers and principals who experienced satisfaction from curriculum planning at school level.

Regional staff quickly recognised the potential of this 'leading edge' of activity which had been unleashed in some of the most educationally disadvantaged schools. The coalescing of the enthusiasm of school and regional staff was critical to the emergence of school development as an educational movement. Similarly, many principals and staff, even within the most active regions, did not have an awareness of or feel a need to understand school development. In these regions there would be at a later stage attempts to get all principals to consider the worth of school development programmes. Regional efforts to promote school development demanded significant resources and the involvement of many interest groups from the educational bureaucracy.

The emergence of school development as a movement was not influenced by school effectiveness research. Instead it grew out of regional attempts to encourage staff to bring about school improvement through specific purpose programmes. Opportunities for new approaches to school operations emerged with the movement away from external school inspection as a means of monitoring the level of school effort. The success of these activities attracted the attention of more principals. Eventually the spread of development initiatives beyond target schools was to become a considerable drain on EDWA resources. Consequently some effort was made to standardise and hence legitimise school development in the EDWA bureaucracy.

Historically, over a long period of time EDWA gradually moved away from a hierarchical pattern of school operations, toward the support of a more collaborative style of school operations (Harvey 1988). (See Table 3.1.1) Underlying this shift in how things are done has been the acquisition of greater power by regions. This was facilitated by the administration of many specific purpose programmes through the regions. Since the early eighties a group of departments, branches, support units and regions have acquired an interest in school development. Some of these stakeholders controlled groups of schools while others had access to resources and field officers, often tied to specific purpose programmes, or supports which were needed for the assessment and review of school activities. Considerable debate took place as to whether resources should be either centrally or regionally based to support school development. This raised questions about the relative importance of school-level as opposed to administrative priorities.

Policy relating to school development was still at a formative stage. Examples can be found where interest groups, or coalitions of groups, were trying to mobilise support so as to enable authorisation of a particular approach to school development. There was considerable debate as to which groups within EDWA were best placed to administer, monitor and support school development activities. Meanwhile, in some regions school development was a priority. A variety of sophisticated approaches to the promotion and support of school activities was evident. In one sense attempts to produce a Departmental policy on school development

Table 3.1.1 Types of Australian Schools (from Harvey, 1988, p. 77)

<u>DIMENSION</u>	<u>HIERARCHICAL PATTERN</u>	<u>COLLABORATIVE PATTERN</u>
Educational clients	Elite students	All categories of students
Curriculum		
Aims	Socialisation (preparation for social, economic roles) selection	Developing critical consciousness, students have responsibility for learning, career planning
Content	Strong classification, subject centred	Thematic, applied, interdisciplinary, focus on problem solving
Methods	Emphasis on teacher structuring content for transmission	Emphasis on experiential learning
Evaluation		
Student	Norm referenced testing	Criterion referenced testing
Programme	Summative evaluation	Formative evaluation
School Organisation		
Timetable	Rigid	Flexible, long blocks of time
Student grouping	Homogeneous	Heterogeneous
Curriculum choice	Limited, teacher placement	Unit structure to enable choice
Teacher relationships	Independent	Team teaching
Source of teacher authority (discipline)	Positional, knowledge of subject	Interpersonal, whole-school discipline policy
School policy making	Hierarchical (senior staff meeting)	Collaborative, negotiated, collegial, committee structure
School-community relationship	Community involvement	Community participation
School improvement process	School effectiveness, deficit models	Culture building, management
The principalship	Articulator of system level policies	Facilitator, resource person, entrepreneur. Focus on school level initiatives

were an effort to legitimise and control some regional initiatives. The recognition, sanction and further support of school development served to generate further momentum for the devolution of some aspects of policy making to regions and schools.

3.2 The Meaning of School Development

Most interest groups maintained a broad conception of school development. There was a reluctance to provide a specific definition of the phenomenon or to be prescriptive. This reflected the diversity of the opportunities and constraints which could be found in any school situation. The fact that the meaning of school development was not clearly defined and the absence of firm guidelines may have created a situation where school-level staff mistakenly believed that they were engaged in school development. The history of attempts to renew schools contains many examples of worthwhile approaches which foundered because the goals were only vaguely understood by school-level staff. Those with authority to oversee school development faced a dilemma as to the level of specificity which was required to enable school staff to establish procedures which lead toward school development, as opposed to other types of school changes.

A number of perspectives of school development emerged from the interviews:

- o Many of the major EDWA committees had the devolution of decision-making and the empowerment of schools as an overriding background philosophy. Although not a formal policy it was part of the style of operation of many important committees within the educational bureaucracy.
- o The interviewees saw that it was possible to have school development even if the style of the principal was autocratic. This perspective was at variance with textbook descriptions of school development. It was recognised that many principals had the capacity to unilaterally diagnose school priorities unilaterally and to carry staff with them in meeting objectives. Other interviewees qualified their support for a school development process where the principal was the main decision-maker.
- o An evolutionary sequence of types of school development was evident. This ranged from the acquisition of physical and material resources to assist the delivery of the teaching programme, to the school which promoted its own corporate image and filtered or brokered Departmental services and objectives.

- o Models of school development typically centred on a cyclical process of review, planning and implementation. For example:

School development takes place when a school's staff collectively (and possibly with community involvement) engages in an informed consideration of aspects of existing policies and practices and action is taken as a result of these deliberations. (Primary School Development Task Force, working paper, n.d., p. 3).

- o The collection and interpretation of a wide range of information relating to the school was a critical phase of the process. From this broad goals and key priorities could be established to facilitate planning. This required the marshalling of resource and skill acquisition activities for staff. Review procedures were necessary to monitor the progress of the activities. Considerable leadership capacity was needed to coordinate and implement these activities across time.
- o School development should be a liberating rather than a constraining activity for school staff.
- o Rigorous evaluation was the least developed facet of the process. The tradition of school development which emerged was preoccupied with encouraging teachers and principals to become involved, rather than one of monitoring the quality of the programme that evolved.
- o A number of categories of indicators of school development could be recognised:

Artefacts: needs assessment data, school development plan, implementation plan, timetable for decision-making, staff development activities, statement of corporate policy.

Infrastructure: school-based decision-making group, subcommittees, networks of linkage among participants.

Process: needs assessment activity, data collection, data interpretation, monitoring of the educational experiences of students, review, planning, implementation, leadership, facilitation.

Culture: high morale of staff, clear directions and priorities, corporate identity, critical perspective of school operations that invites comment from the school community, openness.

School development referred to a constellation of elements which gave staff the capacity to influence the direction of school affairs. The diffuseness of school development meant that it was relatively easy for staff involved in implementing the policy to focus on a particular sub-set of elements with only partial

understanding of the concept.

It was clear that educators had differing perceptions of this constellation of elements. Consequently school development meant different things to different people. In the light of the history of the education system, school development was seen as a desirable initiative which functioned as a slogan to generate support. It was essential that EDWA support staff continued to recognise the diversity of local circumstances which characterised schools.

By the end of 1986 school development had not been authorised as a policy within EDWA. Instead, school development was a common denominator of many other policies. It was a set of expectations or a style of operation which supported decision-making by school-level staff. School development was a procedural policy rather than a substantive policy with specific goals or end points. In terms of Harman's (1984) stages of the policy process, staff in some branches of EDWA were still developing an awareness of the official agenda of the senior Departmental officers. The relatively small number of Departmental officers who were responsible for policy-making in EDWA had given directives relating to school development but had at this stage not authorised a formal policy statement. In some regions school development already had been declared as a priority and regional plans for school development were being prepared. Here a substantial policy initiative was under way in the form of a set of expectations and activities to provide greater support for school-level decision making. The Primary School Development Task Force was an arena where alternative approaches were explored. Efforts were made to provide a framework which would encompass the various regional and specific purpose programmes. Over a period of 18 months the Task Force functioned to work up agreement about the needs, values and issues to be addressed in a formal policy. Unlike the rational textbook descriptions of the policy process, school development centred on accommodating various programmes which had emerged in many schools. Once the momentum of this initiative was recognised then a deliberate attempt was made to authorise policy. By the end of 1986 the scale of school development activity that was underway in the schools of many regions made essential the authorisation of a policy.

3.3 Some Reasons for School Development

School development had always been present in some EDWA schools. In the late seventies school development had become an educational movement. The pressures of the political and social climate of this period made it necessary that systematic attempts were made to harness this leading edge of activity to Departmental priorities.

School development enhanced the motivation and professionalism of school staff. A sense of ownership brought higher levels of commitment. Also, there were limits to the change which could be imposed from outside of the school. There were crucial unique things which principals alone could initiate within a school. The school was the only site within which change could be comprehensible to many teachers. Schools had become so complex that principals had to seek assistance from other staff in the administration of the school. Collaborative decision-making also enhanced the accountability of the school to the community.

3.4 Strategies for School Development

The interviewees recognised a number of approaches to development activities in schools. Their perception and description of school development took account of a range of phenomena. This included the method of establishing principal and teacher interest, the activities of school staff, the institutionalised nature of the planning process and the substance and scope of the programme, as well as the importance of school development to the life of the school. Rough description of the approaches was possible. It is recognised that any one school could be described by more than one type. Some types could be further subdivided or combined according to the level of inquiry.

1. Whole school approach to a particular area of concern, e.g., PEP, Managing Student Behaviour.
2. Cyclical model involving needs assessment, e.g., PSP.

3. Collaborative school management, after Caldwell and Spinks Policy Making and Planning for School Effectiveness (1985).
4. Monitoring and tailoring student and school characteristics, e.g. Project Baseline.
5. Individuals as 'energisers'.
6. School councils and school advisory groups.
7. The unit curriculum.

These strategies for school development result in various change processes by which school management was transformed. Some schools experienced an evolutionary change process. Here school development resulted in an embellishment or exaggeration of the structure and substance of existing activities. Other schools add on a qualitatively new programme to the existing activities. Staff retained their original duties but also came to accept extra responsibilities. A final process of change came from the acceptance or imposition of new priorities. A new structure was developed to replace prior activities which were seen as being no longer appropriate.

Over time, groups of staff had emerged with experience of particular strategies for school development. In some cases these individuals were concentrated in particular branches, departments and regions within the educational bureaucracy. It was to be expected that school staff had preferences and a commitment to particular strategies for school development which were grounded in their experience of schools. Any school development activity should be grounded in the characteristics of the school rather than an externally imposed model. Successful school development required that school-based staff assume ownership and control of the activities.

3.5 Promoting School Development

State education in Western Australia had been characterised by heavy centralisation of the initiative for decision-making. Even with the emergence of regions, the development of a field officer service and reassessment of the triennial inspection for primary schools, there was in most schools little experience in school-level policy-making. By contrast, successful school development

required considerable acceptance of responsibility by school staff. With hindsight the pattern of school development to date represented a phase of transition as State education moved toward devolution and administrative decentralisation. There had not been a militant demand by school staff for control of policy despite a long-held position by the State School Teachers' Union for increased democracy in the management of school affairs. School development could not be achieved by administrative fiat; instead, school development had to be nurtured. Attention had to be given to processes which were appropriate to the circumstances of each school if worthwhile outcomes were to emerge. The success of school development activities depended largely on the manner in which teachers were encouraged to participate.

The following are some of the characteristics of regional efforts to promote school development:

- o Where the enthusiasm of regional staff was high some principals may have been under pressure to take up school development, or to follow the example of 'early adoptor' principals.
- o In some regions school development was linked with formal school evaluation.
- o Many regions promoted a 'preferred model' of school development or were preparing a regional approach to school development.
- o One region used the concerns of principals as a source for inservice activities to promote school development.
- o The schools of any single region had differing levels of readiness for school development. Large schools and schools with high staff turnover may face additional problems when initiating and maintaining a development process.

At the time of data collection the Western Australian system was in a period of transition. The era of direct supervision of schools was passing and was being replaced by an attempt to promote school development through consultancy and the provision of supports for data collection, document preparation and inservice. This required a mix of initiatives from both the region and also from within the school. In this period there was evidence of some imposition on principals by regional staff of the nature, scope and the approved process of school development. Similarly, many principals embarked upon school development with regional support, having little

knowledge of where the process would lead.

School development required a delicate mix of initiatives from both within the school and also from the region. Since the level of readiness of schools within any administrative grouping varied significantly, this presents special problems in providing adequate supports. If there was a concern for getting as many schools as possible to initiate a development process, then it should have been tempered with a recognition of the level of readiness of the school. Unless supports for school development were tailored to the specific needs of particular schools, then what was taken for school development could lead to a tragic waste of time and effort. If 'models' were imposed with little regard for school characteristics, and the pace of school development was forced, then schools would move along a path which eventually reduced the motivation of staff and the potential for change.

It was evident that EDWA had undergone a giant 'learning experience'. Much had been done to re-negotiate roles and to accumulate resources to promote school development. The period of transition revealed a paradox of school development. Essentially the review and planning process was a school-level phenomenon but for many schools the stimulus had come from beyond the school. In this period of transition external agents were needed to promote school development. A field officer service was established, its task being to facilitate problem-solving rather than to identify or provide answers to school-level concerns.

In two ways the promotion of school development functioned as a means of control over school staff rather than as a means for empowering the school community to find solutions to problems. Firstly, there was the dilemma of whether to link school development with the formal evaluation of the school, and hence of the performance of staff. Formative and summative evaluation were necessary ingredients of a school development process. A concern with formal evaluation and accountability criteria may have generated the wrong kind of motives in staff as they undertook development activities. Secondly, if principals were under pressure to adopt school development then they may lack understanding of the importance of choosing a change strategy which

was compatible with the culture of the school. Preserving the integrity of the 'model' which was adopted should not become as important as enabling school staff to direct the change process in the school. Principals had to use judgement as to the delicate mix of external support and internal initiative which was required to promote development in each school.

3.6 Implications for Principals

The principal was a critical actor in the management of school development. Initiating and maintaining school development required the principal to have a base of professional knowledge, a set of skills and capacity for judgements. Many of these qualities were not evident in the current administrative stereotype of the principal. Here the principal had little responsibility, for decision-making as policy was relayed to the school from a central or regional authority. The changing context of education and the response of the educational bureaucracy created new expectations for a particular style of leadership. For some principals this was simply an accentuation of aspects of their preferred style. For others it required significant professional development and the acquisition of new qualities. School development had special implications for the strategic aspects of the principalship. The principal had to make judgments about the appropriateness of school-initiated activities in relation to school characteristics and the availability of supports from the educational bureaucracy during the course of the school year.

This review of the school development initiative suggests that principals required new levels of competence with the following administrative skills:

Leadership and Human Relations

- o Team building, conflict resolution;
- o motivating staff, cultivating interest in school problems;
- o oral and written communication;
- o building an organisational culture which supports open communication, and a critical perspective;
- o staff empowerment, staff development.

CHAPTER 4

FURTHER PRELIMINARY RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

Curriculum and Instruction

- o Providing insight into school problems;
- o promoting discussion of educational values, goals which are achievable;
- o creating a vision of a curriculum for all categories of students;
- o promoting a model of school development which is compatible with school culture;
- o obtaining human and material resources to support the teaching programme;
- o formative and summative programme evaluation procedures.

Management

- o Knowledge of the power structure of the school community;
- o capacity to conceptualise the change process;
- o controlling the pacing and timing of school development activities;
- o coordinating the activities of different groups, accessing resources;
- o deployment of staff to support school development.

External Accountability

- o Linking school development with Ed.W.A. policies;
- o filtering regional and head office expectations for preferred development processes, assessing the worth of the 'models';
- o communicating a corporate image of the school to the community;
- o obtaining community input into school development activities.

School development transformed the role of the principal.

Principals displayed a number of orientations to school development:

- o Acceptance, early adoptor or a new principal who would firstly observe and then join in an ongoing development programme;
- o tacit approval, then withdrawal from school development activities leaving other staff to accept responsibility, laissez faire;
- o overt or covert resistance.

3.7 Postscript: 'Better Schools'

Following the completion of the Functional Review Committee report the Minister for Education announced the establishment of a new Ministry of Education, Western Australia. In January, 1987, MEWA released Better Schools in Western Australia : A Programme for Improvement, which proposed a decentralised administrative structure with school districts and new directions for school management. Emphasis was given to:

responsiveness and adaptability to the needs of the community and to government priorities;

flexibility in the use of resources to meet these goals; and

accountability to the Government and the community for the standard of service and funding.

(Better Schools; 1987, p. 1)

The Better Schools initiative passed through a number of phases. (See Table 3.7.1) Some of these phases created special expectations for principals, including newly appointed principals. The report legitimised much of the school development movement but placed it within a central framework. During the conduct of the field study school development emerged as the 'premier' education policy of MEWA (Harvey, 1987a). At the end of 1987 principals were asked to prepare school development plans and to establish school-based decision-making groups for the 1988 school year. (See Ministry of Education, 1987) In a future stage of educational reform the focus of school development could shift from concern with a process to the nature of the product in line with the performance contract of the Government white paper Managing Change in the Public Sector (1986). Although the final choice of a set of indicators of school effectiveness would be a controversial process, it is a task that could be achieved relatively quickly by researchers. By comparison the accumulation of a culture which sustains school development takes a long period of time. Historically, principals have paid attention to what is reported upon and evaluated. The new accountability requirements may have a potential to inhibit 'school driven' development activities if principals concentrate on formal school development plans which may be little more than artefacts of the school development process. In the future there is likely to be a closer linkage between school development and school evaluation.

Table 3.7.1 Some Phases of the Educational Restructuring in Western Australia (after Harvey, 1988, p. 99)

1. March 1983 - June 1986. Build-up of a demand for educational reform. Preparations in the political arm of government for reform of the public sector: Financial Administration and Audit Act, Managing Change in the Public Sector, concept of functional review authorised. Focus on signalling the educational policy makers of the need to restructure the educational bureaucracy.
2. June 1986 - January 1987. Functional Review Committee commences investigation of educational bureaucracy. Formulation of a plan for flexible, functional and cost effective public education. Release of the Better Schools report authorises guidelines for school development, self determining schools, principals as managers. Focus on contestation of new and old ideas for the administration of the education system.
3. February - November 1987. The drive to obtain support for the new organisational design of the educational bureaucracy and the new management style. Contestation, political brinkmanship, withdrawal and incorporation among the educational stakeholder groups. Focus on gaining commitment to the new structure.
4. December 1987 - Appointment of permanent staff to the new structure. Strategy for implementation of the school development plan, school-based decision-making group. Awareness by school practitioners that change is required. Attempts to make operational aspects of Better Schools, modification of some aspects of policy, formative evaluation. Staff gain confidence with new era competencies and management style. Definition of roles, clarification of working relationships. District development to support schools. Era of mandatory school development begins. Focus on human resource development, changing the practice of school and district staff.
5. July 1988 - Era of increased accountability for new elements of organisational design, new management style, success in the preparation of a school development plan. The centre and the middle of the educational bureaucracy reassert their presence over the schools. Focus on audit of school, district, head office operations.

The principal has now become even more central to the vitality of the school. This is especially so in the period of transition, when only some aspects of the Better Schools programme will be in place, including a reduced supervisory role of the district superintendent and the presence of only fledging school-based decision-making groups. When implemented it remains to be seen whether this brings real devolution of policy-making, or simply administrative devolution and a form of the 'new centralism'. Regardless, it is evident that more is expected of principals in their capacity to manage an education programme. Finally, it should be acknowledged that school development involves taking risks. Even where it is possible to deliberate and exercise care in the preparation of an action plan many unknown factors remain which could threaten the success of the programme. In the coming era of mandatory school development it is expected that those with authority for the supervision of principals and schools recognise this. Failure at senior levels to support ambitious activities in the schools will inevitably lead principals to manage a conservative and ritualised approach to school development.

Increasing levels of policy turbulence meant that newly appointed principals require capacity to scan and comprehend the contextual factors that are reshaping the nature of the principalship. Newly appointed principals no longer have the luxury of learning to define a viable role in a benign educational environment. During 1987 Better Schools met considerable resistance from teachers and the Western Australian State School Teachers' Union. Beginning principals were expected to take positions about Better Schools so as to prepare teachers and parents for change. Success in this activity required contextual awareness of the forces that were reshaping Australian education.

3.8 Findings

Educational reform places special demands on the principalship. Review of the emergence of school development as a MEWA policy initiative during a period of structural reform provides guidelines for the professional development of newly appointed principals.

3.8.1 Meaningful school development requires action at a number of levels:

- o the production of artefacts, e.g., school development plan;
- o the establishment of infrastructure, e.g., school based decision making group;
- o the facilitation of processes, e.g., review, planning, implementation and monitoring;
- o the management of a supportive culture, e.g., cultivation of a shared perspective of school operations.

Principals have a responsibility to oversee the investment of staff effort in activities at each level.

3.8.2 Principals should have an awareness of the extent to which the preferred 'models' and the emerging school development policies of the district will strengthen or weaken school culture.

3.8.3 During a period of profound educational change principals require contextual awareness in order to comprehend emergent policy initiatives, such as school development, so as to promote understanding among school participants. The failure of the principal and other school participants to understand the educational 'megatrends' during a period of policy turbulence leads to resistance, withdrawal or at best shallow attempts to comply with what are seen as externally imposed policies.

3.8.4 During a period of educational change environmental scanning can be used by principals to analyse what is happening, or what is about to happen in the school's environment.

Principals require capacity to collect and process information relating to:

- o the macro environment
- o the educational environment
- o the stakeholder environment
- o the internal school environment.

3.8.5 The sequence of phases of educational restructuring at system level creates a demand for principals to adopt new mixes of administrative competence, e.g., from cultivating commitment to the proposed reforms to the reskilling of school staff to audit and review. Agencies with responsibility for the professional development of principals should attempt to anticipate these changes.

4.0 FURTHER PRELIMINARY RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

In addition to the review of the emergent policy of school development two further activities were undertaken prior to the field study to sensitise the researchers to the scope of the experience of newly appointed principals.

4.1 Principal Leadership Qualities for School Development

A one-day workshop was conducted using 20 principals and deputy principals who were acknowledged by EDWA field officers as being successful in the facilitation of school development. The workshop is reported in Simpson (1987) 'Leadership for School Development'. A major part of the activity was the identification of personal qualities which promote school development. This was an attempt to get beyond textbook descriptions of 'what principals should do' so as to sample the intuitive knowledge of successful school administrators. The following categories emerged from discussion:

Motivator

- o Engenders professional self improvement among staff;
- o encourages others;
- o challenges staff to think about their actions;
- o is optimistic.

Goal Orientation

- o Supports and helps teachers to identify goals for the school;
- o shows commitment to school goals;
- o has a concern for educational or instruction issues.

Human Relations Orientation

- o Has good interpersonal skills;
- o is approachable;
- o has respect for the views of others;
- o gives positive feedback, recognises excellence;
- o sets a climate which develops trust and confidence;
- o is sensitive to the build up of stress;
- o works toward consensus;
- o is fair.

Manager

- o Delegates authority;
- o keeps a balanced view between competing pressures;

- o has concern for organisational effectiveness;
- o has understanding of administration;
- o has theoretical knowledge of management;
- o has up to date information;
- o resolves conflicts;
- o aggressively pursues resources, entrepreneur;
- o is seen to get things done;
- o has a knowledge of the community;
- o can make sound political judgements;
- o evaluation skills;
- o makes judicious decisions.

Communicator

- o Awareness of public relations;
- o has public speaking skills;
- o a persuasive speaker.

The most frequently listed skills were in the human relations area. This is consistent with the need for principals, and other leaders, to promote ownership and commitment from school staff. The administrative skills that were seen as being critical to school development were similar to those which have emerged in the school effectiveness research literature, especially as it relates to effective schools and effective principals. (See Purkey and Smith, 1983; Mulford, 1985; Duignan, 1986). The workshop did not pursue the interactions of these skills and of how principals should combine these skills.

In the final phase of the workshop an attempt was made to understand how experienced practitioners operationalised selected skills. Techniques identified were support for teachers to help them identify school goals, personnel appraisal, organisational effectiveness and entrepreneurship. The listed strategies showed the resourcefulness of these practitioners. Their understanding of school cultures became more evident. What emerged was a sense of what was possible and of what were suitable ways to solve organisational problems. There was evidence of problem analysis and strategic planning. In this activity the practitioners came closer to the 'new age management skills' that place emphasis on visioning, goal setting, choosing strategies that are compatible with organisational culture and team building. (See Bennis and Nanus, 1984; Wynn and Guiditus, 1986; Hickman and Silva, 1986)

4.2 Survey of Beginning Principals at the End of the First Year of Appointment

A phone interview survey of 19 beginning principals was undertaken at the end of the first year of appointment in PS2, DHS and SHS schools. (See Simpson and Harvey, 1986) An open-ended questionnaire was prepared to enable respondents to reflect on their experiences prior to data collection. (See Appendix D (iii) for questionnaire) A number of organising centres emerged from the interviews.

One factor which handicapped the effectiveness of the newly appointed principal in the early part of the school year was their limited knowledge of the pattern of school operations. Some principals reported that they '...went in cold', relying heavily on their general knowledge of schools. Further analysis showed that knowledge of one's previous school as it was immediately prior to their departure, was likely to be the reference point from which the new appointee attempted to make the new school 'understandable'. Often new appointees did not appreciate how different from their previous school the new school could be. When this was combined with a shift to a rural community, then some new principals had to undertake prolonged learning in order to regain their confidence in the school. Many principals designate were very resourceful in collecting information about the school, staff and community of their next school. Most principals employed a variety of strategies:

- o Developing an 'open line' communication with the outgoing principal;
- o school visits;
- o knowledge obtained from an informal network of peers and colleagues who had first-hand experience in the school;
- o a 'handover file' containing essential information for the start of the school year;
- o country appointees generally took up residence in the town shortly after the new year in order to familiarise themselves with the school and community.

Despite their efforts most principals were, with the benefit of hindsight, able to identify additional knowledge which could have improved their performance at the commencement of the school year.

In 1985, before taking up appointment the DHS and SHS principals attended a centrally organised three-day intensive induction programme. Some positive aspects of this professional development experience were:

- o meeting senior Ed.W.A. personnel and becoming informed about current initiatives and trends;
- o being informed about financial accounting procedures;
- o the use of problem solving approaches, simulation activities;
- o discussion of strategies for solving problems with peers;
- o talking with a panel of experienced principals.

Some perceived inadequacies were also noted:

- o too much information too quickly;
- o little opportunity to exercise choice between activities;
- o lack of consideration of the differences between schools, e.g. city and country;
- o contradictions among speakers;
- o too much emphasis on problems such as 'What could occur?' i.e. 'horror stories'.

Although appreciative of the programme, some participants reported that they were overwhelmed by the one-off experience. The programme brought home to some how underprepared they were for a demanding career transition. Consequently, some practitioners became preoccupied with their 'deficits'. It is evident that a continuing programme of professional development which focused on organisational problem solving would have been more suited to the needs of many principals designate.

Using hindsight many principals could see that they had made errors of judgement or strategy. One principal reflected on his attempt to inject professional development into the school development days.

P.SHS¹ The other thing that I tried to do was to bring them out of the backwoods by talking about Beazley and McGaw (education reports). They all fell asleep. They were all that far behind that it was a futile exercise. At my previous school we had operated a 'think tank' and we were in constant touch with the Department about the problem of unitisation of the curriculum. The pupil-free days at the beginning of the year are ludicrous. One directive said they are professional development days. I wouldn't dream of using them as such in a school like this. A big percentage of the staff don't want to hear about what is in Beazley and McGaw. Instead they want to prepare for teaching. They could only see as far as preparing to teach. I misjudged them.

Here the principal imposed a professional development activity on a staff who had not yet developed an awareness of their own professional development needs in the context of the school. A principal, coming from a large metropolitan school with a strong tradition of school development similarly misjudged the staff.

P.SHS I started the year with an open-door policy. I had the idea that if one was approachable and friendly that this would get me through thick and thin. I found with such a young staff that perhaps this may have been seen as a weakness, I'm not sure. If I could do it over again probably I would be firmer with staff... Although the staff have worked well I have found that when it comes to something that you want to happen, then you have to spell it out very clearly. You can't just assume that these people know how to write a report. They must be told to remember this or to do that. You can't just assume they can do it as in a big city school where people have been writing reports for a long time.

This principal came to resent having to shift from a collegial to a more directive style with the inexperienced staff in a country school. Here professional development meant accepting responsibility for the basic training of inexperienced teachers.

Some principals also changed their style.

¹ P denotes principal, DP deputy principal, T teacher, C community representative, I interviewer. Other information denotes category of school.

P.SHS My role changed about mid year. In the first half of the year I was waiting and watching and casting a bit of an image. I was working with low-achieving students and getting a feel for that sort of thing. I was getting the message across that we were good at caring for lower achievers. Our school was successful in helping high achievers. I spent a lot of time with small groups, but about mid year I had enough feel of it to back off and get into the organising and delegation side of it. Now I am more in the management situation. If I could have my time over again I would do my watching through other people's classes so that I am free.

This principal had made a re-assessment of the adequacy of his style. Other principals had to learn about facets of the role that were previously 'invisible'.

P.DHS There was another facet of administration with which I had to come to grips which I did not have to do before in my role as a senior master. This was my relationship with the office staff. They are totally dependent upon you to define their workloads. I was involved with the hiring of non-teaching staff. This was some of the paperwork which I had to do: advertisements calling for applicants, selecting staff, checking probation... Replacing these staff is hard when you don't know people in the town. Now it is easier because I know when people are to leave and who could be a likely replacement. Things happen more smoothly but at the start of the first year you don't know much about the town and are not always the first to hear about things.

In some schools management of support staff took inordinate amounts of time, in relation to the principal's perceptions of the school goals.

The characteristics of communities were a source of problems for some principals.

P.SHS I did not know enough about the new school. The town was a mining town and as such was very typical of other country towns. The social mix of the town, the transiency of the students and the Aboriginal students make it a different situation... I had no significant experience with Aboriginal students... I came from the secondary system and I had no idea of the primary component. The deputy was a primary appointment and I relied on him heavily... The company subsidises secondary education and so most of the students go away to high schools in other parts of the state. The bulk of the parents send their kids away to either private colleges or other schools in the State. Consequently we are left with the bottom ten percent of the students that is, we are left with the kids whose parents don't care about education. This influences the type of support the parents give the school.

Often newly appointed principals were not at first prepared to manage the corporate image of the school or to strengthen school-community links. Despite the small number of female principals that were surveyed it was evident that these principals face additional problems which are not usually experienced by male principals. These problems have their origins in the extreme prejudice which is to be found in some communities. Special attention should be given to the identification of problem-solving and assertiveness skills, which better equip female principals to cope with the varieties of sexism that are to be found in some communities.

4.3 Findings

The perspectives of principals in a workshop and phone interview provided information about the current professional development needs of newly appointed principals.

- 4.3.1 To accomplish school development principals require both capacity for and commitment to organisational problem solving.
- 4.3.2 Ongoing professional development over time, especially where the clients have a choice in the selection of the activities, is likely to be a more effective model for the planning of professional development than one-off programmes. Where possible professional development activities should be planned as a sequence of cumulative experiences, rather than discrete activities.
- 4.3.3 An attempt should be made to identify the assertiveness and problem solving skills that are needed by female principals who take up appointment in schools where the community is characterised by prejudice to female professionals.

CHAPTER 5

ANTICIPATING THE APPOINTMENT

0 ANTICIPATING THE APPOINTMENT

The findings of the time series field study of newly appointed principals are now considered. The focus is the learning experiences and the administrative skills that are required as a newly appointed principal assumes a presence in a school. The demands of the principalship are viewed here in relation to the rhythm and momentum of the school year, although discussion of the principalship in the literature on the role is often detached from the annual cycle of events which generate opportunities and problems in the school. Emphasis is given to the first term of appointment, which represents a non-repeatable status passage in the career of the principal. It is at this stage that the new principal's credibility is established in the eyes of others in the school. By the end of the first term a relatively stable perception has developed, and this in turn becomes a factor which affects the future success of school management.

A number of organising centres emerged from the data. These are: anticipating the appointment, the school development days, establishing a network of influence, the demands of administration, undertaking school development and managing external relations. The first of these topics is the substance of this chapter. The following chapters treat each topic in order. Each chapter concludes with a statement of findings and some discussion of implication for professional development.

The beginning of the 1987 school year was characterised by exceptional circumstances. A decision had been taken in 1986 to commence implementation of a major system-imposed school development activity. The principals of all DHS and SHS schools would be responsible for the working up of a unit curriculum. For some time school development had emerged as a contextual factor about which the role of the principal in Western Australia was being redefined (Harvey, 1987b). Immediately prior to the start of the school year the Better Schools (Ministry of Education, 1987) report was released. The report implied that principals should adopt a new style of school management (Harvey, 1987a). The administrative structure of the Ministry was reorganised along functional lines. A new district structure and system of school

support was put in place. A period of political brinkmanship followed. For a time the State School Teachers' Union placed a work ban on the implementation of the proposed changes.

5.1 Acquiring a Working Knowledge of the School

The principals designate first obtained knowledge of their new appointments in terms two and three of the 1986 school year. Initially the reaction was one of surprise and excitement. Many saw the appointment as a reward for past effort. Those who would have to shift to a new country location had some concern as to what it meant for their families. After the initial surprise most appointees closed off their thinking about the next position and immersed themselves in the 'busyness' of their work. With the settling of appeals against their appointment they employed a variety of strategies to acquire a working knowledge of their new school.

An initial strategy was to develop an open line of communication with the outgoing principal, who was encouraged to consult with the new appointee about initiatives that would carry across into the next school year. However, caution was taken not to be 'too pushy', or to be seen as interfering with school operations before taking up the appointment.

Appointees visited the school during the final school term in order to meet people who had knowledge of school routines. Depending on geographic proximity, they made between one and four visits. Where time and cost made only one visit possible the appointee attempted to make the most of the visit. The experience of the initial visit is evident in the following:

P.DHS When I was driving out there I deliberately tried to capture an impression of the town and the school before I entered the school. I wanted to make sure that I had got this so that I could come back to it afterwards. There is always a certain amount of nervousness following one's entrance into a new school with which you are not familiar.

I used the viewpoint of a new parent when entering and moving around the school to develop impressions. Overall I developed a favourable impression of the staff. I was able to go into all pre-primary and primary classes and meet the students. I did not meet the secondary students... I have

reservations about the 1987 timetable. It is too full and is discriminatory in the way options are offered. It has boy-girl splits in what is offered. To me that is going to be an issue. I have come across this issue in the work that I have been doing (this year). It may say something about how the community is or is not involved in the school.

In this case an aspect of school operation was seen to be at variance with the personal values of the appointee. There was no disclosure of this concern to the continuing teachers for many would leave at the end of the year. Effort would be given to reorganisation of the timetable on arrival at the school next year.

Most appointees enter the school seeking certain basic information about the nature of school operations. This goal is not achieved from a single visit for interaction with continuing staff requires that interest is given to their concerns.

P.DHS It was amazing how once I got there my agendum was not coinciding with other people's agenda. It was more important that they tell me where the basketballs were kept, and of the problems with a particular class of students. They told me of the issues they were facing. By the end of the day I was overloaded with information which eventually turned out to be the 1,001 questions I originally wanted to have answered. That was a bit depressing but I shrugged it off with my work on returning.

A single visit can result in information overload. Staff who would continue at the school were keen to meet the principal designate and share their accumulated knowledge of the school, including their own areas of interest. Geographic proximity enabled other principals to make additional visits in order to acquire specific information.

P.PS2 On the second visit I came specifically to see the staff; they were going to have what they call a verandah meeting. They have a half hour or three quarters of an hour verandah meeting, where the classes are all working and they sit on the verandah in the middle and control the classes at the same time. I had prepared specifically to ask them 'what direction they wanted the school to go to in the beginning of the year?' so that I could make up my agenda for the first two days, based partly on what they wanted to do, where they wanted to go, if they had any areas that they wanted specifically to discuss, music and maths came out of that.

I Were you happy with that meeting?

P.PS2 Yes, it was quite a good friendly meeting. I think we got time to understand each other at that meeting. Another time I came specifically to meet the parents and see the children at an assembly so I came on the Friday morning, and the other meeting was only a brief meeting to pick up some policy documents to study and have another chat with the principal. That was about it.

This appointee made a good start as he was able to observe the school in operation and to become known to continuing staff. Not all appointees had this opportunity.

The SHS appointees were invited to the school to participate in important meetings which focused on the planning of the school development days, unit curriculum implementation or the ongoing projects of school councils. These situations provided opportunities to exercise of influence and to obtain information about the qualities of the key players who comprised the current group of leaders.

One principal designate was appointed to a school with values and operating procedures which differed significantly from those of his previous school. This appointee was sensitive to the culture of the school.

P.SHS I can see that it is a conservative school, and I am not using that in a negative sense. They value academic achievement to a greater extent than any other school that I have worked in. They have a tradition and they are proud of it... My previous school had a profile of excellence in curriculum development and innovation but X (school) has a more traditional view of excellence... the dress of X (school) students is impressive. It is easy to give up on these things. I respect them for maintaining those standards. As a new principal I am very aware of the need to preserve the good things and at the same time tune in to staff opinion and change.

The policy process within the school cut across the appointee's preference for broad and direct staff participation in school policy development. The principal designate's formative experience had been in a school with a sophisticated committee structure.

P.SHS The decision-making structure is concentrated on the senior staff. Several times in a desultory way, I have probed

democratic decision-making. The feedback that I have had is that, although it is not trendy to have senior staff as the decision-making body, it works very well at X (school). There is tremendous rapport and communication between senior staff and teaching teams. Again, why change it if it is working very well. It has been proposed for the unit curriculum that the senior staff be the management committee. I said 'Shouldn't we throw in a few wild cards, such as up-and-coming energetic staff?'. The response was that the senior staff are the acknowledged and trusted leaders. 'We are shielding staff from meetings and they are a tremendous waste of time. We can use other staff in sub-committees'. Again, I have no desire to impose a new system on the school. The deputy has told me what exists and I believe that he is a very efficient and competent person, well accepted on the staff. He has told me what they have got and that staff morale is excellent. I am not changing anything for the sake of change. Senior regional staff have warned me that I am already making choices by having only senior staff on the Unit Curriculum Management Committee. However, already I have my loyalties to the team and the school style. A superintendent might say that but he does not work in the school. I have to have a happy deputy and have good morale in the team. I can't ignore concrete advice from the home front. So at this stage, I roll along with it.

Already, the appointee had been asked to approve, in principle, an approach to a major school development programme for the coming year with only a limited appreciation of the school culture and of the appropriateness of the proposed strategy for solving problems. Conflicting advice had been received from regional (district) as opposed to school staff. The appointee chose to take the advice of the school administrative staff, for a close working relationship with senior staff was a priority for the coming year. The visits served to raise the appointee's awareness of possible value differences with senior staff.

P.SHS I see a need to get to know the deputy principals on a personal level, to see how they react to my style. To use an example, when we were preparing the handbook it listed the duties of deputy principals. The male deputy principal was to manage discipline. I said 'Do you think that we could start rethinking that right now, because as you know, I am not really into that? The female deputy should have some responsibility here.' However, I could see that this did not meet with approval. They noted how conservative the community was. Now I have to work out whether this is a fact. Points of view on discipline are traditional. I have to feel my way on things like this. I have not pushed this issue because I can't afford to have a lot of senior staff who are uptight when there is such a long way to go. For the time being I am happy to de-focus my values.

Opportunities to exercise influence may place the credibility of the principal designate at risk. The advice of continuing staff should be valued if the groundwork for a productive working relationship is to be in place for the start of the school year. To push the issue without certainty of resolving the problem could permanently disturb the embryo working relationship that was being forged with other staff. Strategic suspension of the principal's preferences may be an appropriate mode of operation at this stage of taking up the principalship. At a later stage of the appointment more favourable opportunities for change might emerge.

All principals designate shared a determination to make a success of their appointment. They were aware of the considerable effort that would have to be made to acquire a working knowledge of the school and of the preparations for the start of the next school year.

P.DHS There will be an expectation that the school will be open on a Wednesday and run like clockwork from day one.

In order to build up a working knowledge of the school appointees gave priority to collecting information about school participants, school problems, resources, school routines and policies. From this principals were able to develop priorities for action at the start of the school year. The appointees varied in the extent to which they were sensitive to school culture and also in their capacity to validate their priorities against the opinions of continuing staff. These preferences for action often implied development or refinement of current school operations. One appointee was predisposed toward providing leadership that would result in change. Information had been received from district office staff that the school was 'run down' and in need of 'strong leadership'.

P.PS2 Well, I know that the school has been through a problem time. It has had problems with principals and there has been a fair bit of upset, especially with the senior staff at the school. Really, direction only came back into the school last year.

Most appointees had developed priorities but were cautious about initiating change in the first part of the school year.

For those appointees in senior teacher and deputy principal positions their preparations also involved attempts to define a preferred style of performance of the role. This involved examination of the way in which they would combine the formal authority and responsibility of the position with their assessment of the school and their own professional knowledge and skills.

5.2 Defining the Role

Some appointees came to realise that they knew very little about the breadth of responsibility and the authority which accompanied the position, despite having had close proximity to principals in their present and previous positions. Others believed that they had been preparing for the principalship for a long time, but now it was important to establish both realistic preparations and realistic expectations for one's performance of the role. Most attempted to develop a clearer picture of the duties and tasks of the principalship, the style of delivery and the skills that would be required. This involved critical analysis of the once-taken-for-granted actions of other principals to identify how they reacted to various school situations, especially involving the control of other staff or public speaking. When opportunities emerged some appointees underwent short periods of emergency professional growth in order to compensate for perceived deficits in their professional knowledge.

The principal induction programmes toward the end of the school year served to focus the attention of the appointees on their coming role. They appreciated the programme, but some were overwhelmed by the experience.

P.DHS That feeling of depression came back when I went to the principals' induction course, where the same mistake was made by the people organising the programme. The course gives the idea that the principal's job is a large one. The people running the course have no experience of running a school. They may have run departments. Coupled with the implementation of the lower secondary programme, what they tried to do in three days was enormous. So I had that same feeling again over that three days, that all sorts of problems would occur before the start of school... To me that does not seem to be an approach to induction. It has to be thought out and has to be spaced. You have to explore issues which lead you to information about your 1,001

questions. There was a touch of this in the principal induction programme. They had extracted something from a principal management programme but had tried to fit it into a half hour slot at the end of a day. Now, to my way of thinking, that problem-solving approach is the way the principal induction programme should have gone. You need to find the sign posts which tell you where to get information rather than the other way around.

Diversity in the professional backgrounds of the principals and in the characteristics of the schools to which they were appointed made it difficult to provide a programme which met the needs of all participants.

By the end of the school year, the principals designate, who had not previously been principals, had tried to obtain greater clarity of their own perspective and of the approach which would be adopted. Typically, it involved an 'open door' policy to keep the appointee in contact with staff opinion. Some had not yet developed ideas as to how they could facilitate open communication with staff. Being a good listener was seen as a desirable quality. However, there was also a need to have ideas and to be decisive and to make decisions. Some had made resolutions to go out and meet the students. Appointees who already held principalships in small primary schools, saw that their present approach would be appropriate in the next school.

The appointees would bring a perspective of the 'good' principal to their next school. For example:

P.PS2 He has to be a leader. He has to be progressive in his thinking in education. He has to be an approachable person. Someone who you can go and talk to. A leader is the one you look up to so, therefore, that's part of the leadership characteristics. He has to be someone you can depend upon and someone you can go to if you do have a problem, who will give you a good ear. I think he has to be a listener, not only for problems but for ideas. A listener willing to listen to ideas and implement ideas that others have.

P.DHS I would like other people to trust me. I have this vision of being open. Hopefully, this will make others open as well. I am very keen on supporting people with all sorts of different ideas. People come to schools with different energies. We all serve children in a way which taps into our talents and abilities. There is no single formula which you can follow or prescribe. I believe that if you demonstrate genuineness and openness through your own

operation, then hopefully that modelling will encourage others to act in a similar way. I think you get better decision-making when people are treated in a way where what they have to contribute is valued. I certainly don't see myself as someone who will sit on a pedestal. However, I recognise that there will be some other people who will look to the principal for leadership in different areas. I think that you can provide leadership without sitting on a pedestal.

Differences of perspective provided indications of how administrative skills would be applied to influence school operations. Some principals designate had only started to give attention to finding a style which would enable control without being directive. The appointees knew that in some way their actions would serve as an example for the school staff.

All principals designate sensed the magnitude of the task which awaited them in their next appointment. The DHS and SHS appointees were aware of the demands which the unit curriculum would make on their administrative skills. The appointees varied in their sensitivity to the culture of the school. Many had been receptive to the advice of the outgoing principal and had decided not to make changes. Some principals designate had identified targets for change in the organisation of their next school. Others had encountered continuing staff who held different perspectives of school activities. This sensitised the principal designate to the need for thought about strategies for change.

With hindsight, the principals came to see that there were many important aspects of school operations which had been overlooked. Essential information relating to school finances, timetables, the staffing establishment of the school and the locations of resources was not available when the principals took up their appointments in the week prior to school. Although these principals were experienced, many had not adequately scanned the operations of the school in their preparations for the start of the next school year.

5.3 Findings

To prepare for the appointment principals designate need to use their initiative to obtain a working knowledge of basic school operations prior to the commencement of the new school year.

Beginning principals also need to reflect on the nature of the principalship and the style of influence that is to be used on taking up appointment.

- 5.3.1 Principals designate should establish an 'open line' contact with the outgoing principal of the school to which they have been appointed during the final term of the school year.
- 5.3.2 To obtain information about the school to which they have been appointed principals designate require skills to access a school data base, including the school development plan. The new principal should then attempt to identify the constellation of assumptions and values which underpin ongoing school initiatives.
- 5.3.3 Time and travel assistance is needed so that all principals designate have opportunities for extended contact, including specific purpose visits, with the school and school district. They need to be able to visit the school in which they will take up appointment while it is still under the control of the outgoing principal. This enables collection of information about the pattern of school operations from continuing staff.
- 5.3.4 Where possible the principal designate should become known to key people in the school, community and the school district office before taking up appointment.
- 5.3.5 Principal induction programmes should be limited in scope so as to avoid information overload. In order to improve the confidence of principals designate there should be focus on organisational problem solving in particular types of schools rather than on information giving.
- 5.3.6 Typically principals take up their appointments lacking certain basic information about school operations. Principals designate require a framework for systematically scanning the school environment so as to assess priorities for a style of influence that is to be used at the start of the new school year. Principals designate should have the

capacity to progressively modify their emerging perspective of the school with the acquisition of further information.

5.3.7 Some principals designate have opportunities to intervene in school operations before taking up appointment. In this situation the principal may make judgements with limited knowledge of school characteristics and of the acceptability of a chosen strategy of action to other stakeholders. There may be little opportunity for the principal designate to judge the quality of the information which is provided by continuing staff to assist decision making. Principals designate should exercise caution in identifying and expressing priorities for the school prior to taking up appointment.

5.3.8 Principals designate have differing degrees of sensitivity to the culture of the school and of how it:

- (i) provides emotional reassurance to continuing staff, and;
- (ii) has potential to hinder strategies for the demonstration of influence. Principals designate should begin to discover the basic assumptions of problem solving, cooperation and survival in the school.

Principals designate require capacity to diagnose school culture.

5.3.9 The principal designate needs to understand the role of the outgoing principal in the management and the manipulation of school culture, and of what this means for trying to re-build collective views of the school. Some continuing staff may expect that initially the new principal will take up the style of the outgoing principal. Analysis of the contribution of key continuing staff to school culture may be necessary.

5.3.10 Some beginning principals have not given sufficient thought to their style and of how this will be judged by members of the school community. Principals designate have to make choices relating to the following aspects of their style:

- o How to promote stability and continuity as opposed to change when demonstrating principal influence.
- o Whether the principal promotes personal values or those drawn from the school culture.
- o Should principals of senior high schools become involved in some day to day operations or should they become a chief executive to monitor, facilitate and coordinate?
- o How to delegate without controlling.
- o How to provide social support as well as giving priority to task achievement.
- o Centralising or broadening participation in decision making.
- o Giving information to colleagues or accepting advice from colleagues.
- o Accepting where the school is at, as opposed to the use of a critical perspective of school operations. The latter raises the issue of how much of the principal's critique should be made public.
- o Emphasis on site administration as opposed to curriculum and instructional leadership, i.e., defining the broadness or narrowness of the role.
- o Identifying the scope of action that is required to provide instructional leadership.
- o How the principal would prefer to be seen by staff, i.e., the degree of social distance.

Progressive resolution of many of these choices with reference to the school will assist the principal designate to develop a greater level of comfort with the role. Principals designate should be encouraged to think about these aspects of style prior to taking up appointment.

5.3.11 The duties of the outgoing principal need to include responsibility for promoting a smooth transition for the principal designate.

CHAPTER 6

THE SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT DAYS

6.0 THE SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT DAYS

On taking up the appointment in the weeks prior to the opening of the school, the orientation of the principal includes not only the collection of information about the school but also the management of activities which enable a trouble-free start to the year. In the Western Australian situation, the two scheduled school development days prior to the admission of students provide a unique opportunity to plan, organise, motivate and control the work effort and the disposition of the teaching staff. This is the first time the principal addresses the entire staff. It represents an initial non-repeatable opportunity to establish guidelines for the start of the school year and to foreshadow significant school activities. The principals were aware that first impressions count and much effort was given to the quality of their input, and in some cases to the format of the first school development days.

6.1 Commencement of the School Year

The school development days were first introduced at the start of the 1985 school year. In many schools there has not been full understanding or willingness to recognise their purpose. The days are intended to allow staff to review, plan and monitor aspects of school operations so as to enhance staff motivation and interest in whole school activities. The format and the part played by the new principals varied. A number of patterns emerged which indicated aspects of the principal's perspective of the role.

One approach in the PS2 and DHS schools was characterised by the strong presence of the principal in the conduct of discussions with staff. An agenda of topics was prepared by the principal. This may have been developed from consultation with the deputy principal or senior assistant and some other staff, if the opportunity was available. In some schools, the outgoing principal had left a file of items which required review during the school development days. Here principals selected agenda items from the materials. The items in the first part of each day were intended to provide staff with information about the principal's expectations for their work effort.

Typical inputs from the principals referred to the way the school would run. This included reference to professional standards of planning and preparation, daily work pads and programme formats, test dates and record keeping, the timetable, school calendar, the use of equipment and support staff and the need for open communication. In this situation, communication was mainly between principal and individual teacher. In other sessions, the principal still controlled the discussion but more interaction of staff emerged as they considered selected school policies. An attempt was made to review some policies or to identify those which would be considered in future staff meetings. About half of the time was spent on school issues and the remainder as classroom and lesson preparation. In some schools, the strong presence of the principal highlighted the lack of staff participation in policy-making and of their dependence on the principal for leadership. The principal who knew that the school was 'run down' decided that strong direction was appropriate. He believed that the staff were looking for clear statements of policy. It was relatively easy for the sessions to focus on 'information giving' by the principal. The perspectives of the continuing staff may not emerge in this situation. Over the two days, the time would be divided equally between these activities and lesson and classroom preparation. A variation on the above was where the principal had only minimal input and almost all time was given to classroom and lesson preparation. Very little effort was spent on collaborative activities which focused on school wide issues.

P.DHS I was able to acquaint the staff with the philosophy of the leadership role and give a quick sketch of programming, testing and curriculum selection. It was not too definitive.

On these days the principal chose to impose his own purpose or responded to the needs of staff for time with classroom preparation and programming. Some principals may see this preparation for teaching as the best use of limited time at the commencement of the school year. The approach was also related to a view that 'teachers are not responsible for the administration of the school'. Other principals needed time in the school development days to cope with the demands of administration. Hence their preference for 'minimum input'.

In the SHS, the other administrative and senior teaching staff and various committees may have had claims for school development day activities. Here there was a risk that the input of the principal would become a marginal part of the activities. Principals reported having to justify some aspects of their intended input. In some cases they had to negotiate time relating to the unit curriculum and the entry of speakers. Again in SHS schools there was pressure on the school development day planning group to allow maximum time for subject teaching preparations. A new principal who knows little of staff expectations is poorly positioned to argue against advice that certain activities will not be well received by staff. In one SHS, nearly all of the first day was given to exploration of a Managing Student Behaviour Programme which had come into operation at the end of the previous year. This was to induct new staff into the programme. However, some continuing staff expressed opinions that this was a waste of time. Again this indicates that the focus of the sessions was on information giving rather than collaborative inquiry into school operations. Others showed disappointment because the principal did not deliver a 'philosophy'. Instead the frame of reference was the 'professionalism of staff' which referred to getting things done on time.

The SHS principals were satisfied that they had '... made an impact' on staff from what may have been limited opportunities. Using hindsight one principal could see that little attention had been given to school-wide issues and forward planning.

P.SHS The school development days are very significant in the life of the school. I know that I did not do a very good job. I felt like an intruder. I have become a little bit more comfortable with that since then. The principal can monopolise the school development days in the middle of the year but at the start of the year it makes sense for the teachers to be flat out to get themselves organised for teaching. It is more important to get the subjects organised. At the start of the year they can't afford to have the principal leading them through workshops on goals and objectives, policy-making and so on.

There was an acceptance that a focus on school review and planning activities during the first set of school development days would be an error of judgement.

A different approach to the school development days emerged in a DHS with a large staff changeover. Of the continuing staff, most had only limited teaching experience. The purpose of the school development days was to signal to the staff that the principal would promote inquiry into the process of school development. By implication it meant that the principal would facilitate change. The proposition had been put to the new deputy principal at the end of the previous year. Three quarters of the time went to school-wide issues. Staff were encouraged to build up an awareness and appreciation of the setting within which they worked. Activities were scheduled to establish something about the setting. Six community representatives were invited to the school to provide teachers with information and perspectives about the people, the town and the opportunities for young people. A 'visioning' exercise was undertaken to encourage staff to think about possible futures for the school and what could be realistically achieved. The principal was pleased with the overall response of the staff. The pattern used differed from previous school development days both in emphasis and time use. The inexperience of most teachers and an absence of preconceived expectations facilitated their participation in the activity. Some uneasiness was shown by an experienced teacher who was now a part of the local community and knew 'where the school was at and where it was going'. A compromise was negotiated and some time was made available for classroom and subject teaching preparations.

In this school development activity the principal provided leadership by focusing staff attention on school culture and the need for change. The teachers were encouraged to become conscious of their role in culture building rather than continuing as consumers of a taken-for-granted culture. The activities were structured so that teachers gained experience and success in collaborative work. The principal was a co-participant in the activity, and was interested in the contribution which staff could make to deciding on the direction that the school would take. There was sensitivity to the discovery and development of the human resource potential of the school staff.

Regardless of the school, the principals' contributions revealed some of their personal goals. For some it was the first time that they had had to advocate school policy. A long-term view of the school was needed to know what was best for the school. Meticulous preparation was evident for some principals. There was a need to discover and articulate one's own values and preferences. Some principals sensed that isolated comments could be taken out of context. Staff seemed to note even incidental behaviour in order to obtain insight into their new principal. Attempts by staff to make a new principal understandable were assisted by access to knowledge about the principal's reputation. In some cases the reputation of the principal had preceded the arrival of the new appointee. Where the principals knew that their reputations may have been incongruent with the culture of the school, caution was taken not to confirm these expectations. Many continuing staff were looking for signs that the new principal would recognise and continue the patterns of school activity which they had helped to construct. Self-presentation and performance during the school development days was important in enabling the principals to establish a credibility with staff. Although first impressions count, typically experienced staff would reserve making a final judgement about the principal until later in the term.

The school development days provide a special opportunity for the principal to contribute a clear sense of purpose to staff. The typical frames of reference were student needs for a positive learning environment, student discipline, professional standards and school routines. The principals were reluctant to promote comprehensive and detailed educational philosophies. Instead the focus was on school procedures. Some principals had given an indication of whether they were prepared to take unpopular decisions, such as putting student interests before staff interests or looking at ways of working toward establishing a school council. With hindsight, some principals saw that their contribution to the school development days should have been more focused. The principals had a significant influence in determining whether the school development days centred on either information giving or on culture building through collaborative activities. The school development days were undertaken at a busy time of the school year and the pressures of a range of other administrative

tasks interfered with the participation of principals in the scheduled activities.

Staff were aware of the executive power of the principal to decide on school policy and practice. There was an expectation that the new appointee would at some stage promote change. The perspective was especially strong in a school where previous principals had given long periods of service, as well as schools which served as staging points for 'tearaway principals' who would innovate in order to enhance their prospects for further promotion by merit. Their period of service could have a destructive effect on the indigenous school culture. In all schools, staff had an expectation that change was inevitable; it was simply a matter of how long before the new principal would reveal and actively promote these initiatives. Some staff were of the opinion that beginning principals had to be seen to be making an impact. Hence there was cynicism toward announcements about new initiatives at the start of the year.

Inevitably the newly appointed principals did signal new direction for the school. However, at the start of this particular school year the source of change was clearly attributed to the highly visible Better Schools report. The uncertainties which this report created for staff at the start of the year overshadowed whether the newly appointed principal may have signalled a rapid take up of some aspect of the new initiative.

6.2 Mid Year

A second set of school development days was scheduled for the start of Term 3. In general the principal's role in the planning and delivery of the second set of school development days contained lower levels of risk. By this stage a working relationship had emerged which was based on understanding of the priorities of other staff. The collective experience, especially from Term 2, had generated agenda of whole-school activities in which significant numbers of staff had an interest.

6.3 Findings

In Western Australia the two scheduled school development days prior to the admission of students at the start of the school year provide a unique opportunity for the new principal to establish a presence in the school. Motivation of the teaching staff and the coordination of their efforts become priority activities.

6.3.1 Some principals may not have the opportunity to plan the format of the school development days in collaboration with, or using the input of, continuing staff. This creates a risk that the days will not address the concerns of continuing staff. Alternatively in some senior high schools the new principal has given control of the planning to continuing staff. In this situation the principal becomes marginal to the activities of the school development days. Principals designate need to use their initiative to consult with continuing staff in the planning of the first set of school development days.

6.3.2 New principals require a framework for planning the format of the school development days. Planning involves making judgements as to how much attention should be given to:

- (i) information about school administration,
- (ii) critical inquiry into school operations, and
- (iii) preparations for teaching.

Strategies are required to encourage staff involvement in whole-school issues during the first set of school development days.

6.3.3 Principals should establish a general framework of values that will guide the actions of school staff. The details of the operationalisation of this philosophy can be worked out at a later stage.

6.3.4 Principals require confidence and capacity to demonstrate influence in order to focus the attention of staff on school-wide problem solving as opposed to classroom or subject area preparations. Choice has to be made as to

whether attention will be given to culture building and team building as opposed to information giving activities.

- 6.3.5 The school development days represent a non-repeatable opportunity to influence staff. First impressions count. It is important that the principal can communicate a direction for school activities, with the assistance of other staff. Revelation of attempts to introduce change should be tempered with reassurances of stability in other areas of school operations. Strategic suspension of some initiatives may be needed to provide emotional reassurance for continuing staff. The exercise of leadership is dependent upon the capacity of the principal to articulate school priorities for the start of the year. The principal should give attention to the interpersonal dynamics of the school staff during the first days of school.
- 6.3.6 The school development days should be used to identify the collective view of the school that is held by staff. This provides the principal with a significant information base from which to start thinking about strategies to establish the direction of the school.
- 6.3.7 Time needs to be spent by the principal during the school development days in getting to know school staff. Acquisition of information about staff preferences is needed to foster collaborative decision-making during term one.
- 6.3.8 Principal inservice programmes should assess the purpose of the school development days at the commencement of the school year. Constraints and opportunities to engage in culture building and goal setting should be explored with reference to the school. Strategies are required to encourage school staff to engage in school development activities.

CHAPTER 7

ESTABLISHING A NETWORK OF INFLUENCE

7.0 ESTABLISHING A NETWORK OF INFLUENCE

On taking up appointment in a school, principals place high priority on meeting staff. Many of the continuing staff are a valuable source of knowledge about school routines. Of more immediate importance are other staff in promotional positions, who had responsibility for school administration. It is from these relationships that principals meld their formal authority to the power structure of the school and the policy process. The action of the principal is now considered in each category of school.

7.1 Delegating Responsibility

For principals coming from the smallest primary schools to a PS2 school there is now the opportunity to delegate some administrative responsibilities to a senior assistant. One principal had become used to retaining control of all school operations in a three-teacher school. He was at first uneasy about assigning special duties to some other staff.

P.PS2 Deep down I still have a sense of guilt that I should be doing everything. I still check up to see if they are doing it. I think this comes from having to run a small school by myself... I think that it is hard to break away from this pattern.

In each PS2 school the teachers acquired responsibility for managing school resources and programmes.

P.PS2 At the beginning of the year, you see, they all volunteered for different jobs. Someone is in charge of the reading. Another one is in charge of sport, X (teacher) discipline and the setting up of assemblies. You know, they have all got some sort of a job. X (teacher) does the Ashton Scholastic books. They all have a job and I don't interfere with these jobs.

In this school teachers were expected to volunteer for special responsibilities. An attempt was made to lighten the workload of the continuing deputy principal.

P.PS2 I'm not going to pass the buck to X (senior assistant). He has had the buck passed to him for too long... I have got to earn my keep somehow.

Here there was also a concern that delegation should not proceed to a stage where the principal was seen as being only a figurehead. This principal believed that to some extent the power of the principal rested on visible involvement in school activities. Judgement was required to establish an appropriate degree of delegation while retaining a presence in day-to-day operational activities.

The formal authority of the position enabled the principal to define the nature of the working relationship with teachers and parents.

P.PS2 Looking at the way things are now I doubt if I will have to come down heavily on staff. There may be some people who do not want to change, and this may be a problem in the future. I feel in myself that I can probably get around it if it comes to laying down the law. I will then say, 'This is a directive.' I do not feel worried about delegating tasks. This is the first school where I have actually had almost a legal directive to say that I could delegate. I have delegated in other schools, but it has always been on a voluntary basis; whether people have accepted it, I don't know. I feel that if I am too free with the staff they will get to a point where they will override me. I am working on an open relationship but I also want their respect for me as a principal. I have a social distance - I am always invited to join the staff for drinks on Friday evening. I would tend to only go when I wanted to. I feel that this is a time for them to talk about me if they want to. There is also a social distance situation that was already here. This was created by past people. I suppose at this stage, it has not got to a stage where it worries me. I guess if it did, I would probably not talk to them as much. I cannot see any problems from the P & C or parents, as long as we have all our facts and figures and can give an honest answer. I feel it is my duty, as does X (deputy principal), to give an honest answer.

Four weeks into the term this principal was at ease with the task of delegation and the element of social distance that accompanied the authority of the position. This pattern of influence had been established by the previous principal. The new principal would have preferred more open communication but was accepted staff perspectives about the principalship.

In three of the schools used for this study a bond quickly developed between the principal and senior assistant. In one of these schools there were sometimes differences of opinion but these

were never made public and were afterwards negotiated behind closed doors. Formal policy-making depended upon the initiative of the principal. Typically the principal would discuss problems with individual staff and the senior assistant, then a policy statement would be considered at a staff meeting. The open-door policy contributed to the belief of the principals that staff were active participants in policy-making.

P.PS2 The door is open all the time. Staff should feel free to walk in here and say what they want. This creates harmony. I want everybody to get on in the staff; it should be a place where we work together.

The principals quickly became the fulcrum of policy-making. The willingness of the teachers to accept this could be easily mistaken as a sign that they did not have an interest in matters of policy. The start of the year is a critical time in which to set the pattern for the policy process of the school.

7.2 Managing Interpersonal Relationships

The principals placed a high value on having a close working relationship with staff. The principals used different strategies to obtain a more satisfactory working relationship. One principal was faced with a secretary and some staff who were supporters of the previous principal and his controlling style.

P.PS2 The new administration will be expected to take up the main developments from last year ... The school has high achievement standards, school uniforms and high parent expectations ... I feel the pressure on me that everything must be well organised so that no one can get at me in any way.

This principal used a non-confrontationist approach and placed a high value on avoidance of open conflict. The school was to be above all a 'happy place' for both staff and students. In this situation the principal progressively worked at exposing the teaching practices of some staff to the need for change in order to win them over. Paradoxically, his efforts to consult were not perceived to be an appropriate style of leadership by some supporters of the previous principal. In another school a capable teacher showed initiative to provide support services for other

staff. The delivery of these services sometimes created problems and the principal would then confront the teacher:

P.PS2 ... so this morning was the culmination of it and the door was shut and we had a discussion. She had her say and I had my say, but really deep down inside she doesn't (have her say). She is very much like me. I'm very brash and to the point and you might say things that you don't really think you're hurting someone but it (the actions of the teacher) disturbs the whole staff. I mentioned a few things to her. Look I said 'I'm not perfect. I'm like you are and I've got to be careful what I say and I've got a bad temper and I've been able to hold my temper for a couple of years' but it's very, very difficult to hold temper when I'm bashing my head against a brick wall.

This difficult working relationship would remain throughout the year. The frustrated principal described it as a 'festering sore'. The style of conflict resolution became an institutionalised part of the school. In another school the principal inherited a gardener who would not recognise the authority of the principal to decide on grounds policy. Inordinate amounts of the principal's time were taken during the first weeks of the school term in trying to gain political support from the educational bureaucracy to establish the authority of the principal to control work in the grounds. The gardener also took the initiative to lobby key staff in the educational bureaucracy. Meantime a difficult working relationship remained in existence at the school.

In district high schools the principals had experience in only primary or secondary education. A typical sharing of duties was for the principal and deputy principal to each take responsibility for the teaching programme of one sphere of school operations. A close working relationship was likely if both administrators were newly appointed to the school. Again differences in the principals' perspectives of school administration were responsible for particular patterns of influence. One principal consulted with staff and brought policy proposals to staff meetings for consideration. There was a concern not to impose decisions on staff. However, this met with little response by staff. Another principal attempted to empower staff by encouraging them to be critical of school policy and to participate in policy initiatives. The climate of expectations for student achievement and worthwhile

education that was promoted by the principal was important in building 'teacher driven' school development. Principals varied in the extent to which their influence over staff was related to their social adjustment and morale. It was a question, too, of whether this was linked with expectations for the teaching programme.

The senior high schools provide a different organisational landscape in which the principal must establish influence. In each of the senior schools a coherent working relationship among senior staff was not present in the early part of the school term. Weindling and Earley (1987) report similar findings. One principal had resolved not to act like a deputy principal by directing and controlling others.

P.SHS I have a much broader outlook on what is going on now. I have had to consciously stop giving instructions to staff and I have been criticised for this - that is, criticised for not giving instructions. I have had an approach from one of the deputies to be more instructive, more leader-like. I told this person that I did not want a high profile. I want to feed information to the staff and let them come to a consensus so long as they get the information early enough. We can do this, without them feeling that there is a little Hitler running around, dictating.

Initially there was lack of understanding between the principal and deputy principals. The principal had not delegated and defined all responsibilities. When it became evident that there was lack of communication and gaps in their coverage of the administrative duties the working relationship was renegotiated. With shared experience this group of administrators developed into a very cohesive group with trust and respect for the qualities of each person. It became evident that the principal had valuable expertise as a manager and facilitator.

P.SHS I communicate my expectations to staff mainly by pointing out any constraints there may be on a particular request and also go on to point out alternative ways of doing whatever it is. Most of the staff here seem to have contacts with people in other schools and ideas are coming in at regular intervals from these people. This prompts my staff to review their decisions constantly. It has not been necessary to tell them what to do, but I told them what I expected, e.g., the Counselling Committee came to me and I told them I expected a broad plan of attack.

Another principal sought a close working relationship with the deputy principals. Differences in perspective of the school and administration sometimes led to situations where the principal would take action to overrule the deputy principal, or the deputy principal would take action without consulting the principal.

P.SHS The deputy and I had a very bonding meeting where I really communicated to him, in as open a way as I could, the dilemma that I needed his support and good-will. I said that unless I feel a gut-level good-will and non-negotiable support flowing from you to me, I'm absolutely unnerved. He is a key man in administration support and is seen to be a key man by the staff, and I felt there was a lack of rapport between us. The deputy principal felt the same.

We had a few decisions, starting with my desire for the students to be seated in forms at the assembly, rather than segregated into sexes. It is like all these minor things. It is an iceberg of hidden traditions, and issues and values. So that was perhaps one of the issues in which I felt that the deputy principal and I had developed a rift.

I had not planned a meeting. We were both at school early one morning and I told him I was unhappy about the way things were going. We talked for about 45 minutes. I told him of my needs and he responded in the same vein, so it was a great turning point for us. He saw it as a power struggle ... I feel that he felt my praise of him was patronising. The interpersonal thing, the human dimension of management is very important.

Despite value differences, the strong expectations for academic achievement and emphasis on the need for tight administrative procedures enabled the development of mutual respect between the administrative staff. In another situation where there was a dispute between senior teachers and administrators about the goals of the unit curriculum, the field notes reveal the close working relationship among the administrative staff.

I.SHS The deputy principal and the guidance officer took positions on the issue and this dispute carried into the school. X (deputy principal) attempted to take the line of finding 'What is best for the students and for the staff?' The principal adopted a neutral role and in doing so acted as a neutral go-between rather than as a member of the administration and a confidant of the deputy principal. 'In private we administration discuss personalities ... The administration know that we are allied'. In public the principal did not play up the significance of this informal membership and loyalty to the administration group.

Here the principal did not publicly have to declare support for the deputy principal when previous decisions were questioned. The principal's support on this issue was taken for granted by the deputy principal. Coherence of the administrative team has been achieved when there is mutual concern for the viewpoints of the other administrators during interactive situations with other members of the school community.

In the senior high schools the 'territories' of the subject senior staff are an important limitation on the influence of the principal. Some principals experienced difficulties in getting staff to give priority to school-level issues. In another school the principal was unable to obtain complete support from the senior staff. The constant need to shore up support or to be cautious about provoking division limits the effectiveness of a principal. When principals perceive inefficiency in the deputy principals they are faced with a dilemma. Should they tolerate the ineptitude in order to maintain the confidence of their colleague or should they drift toward taking on some of the responsibilities of the deputy principal?

In each high school it was difficult for the principal to establish a satisfactory working relationship with all staff. At the start of the school year it cannot be taken for granted that a coherent senior staff management team will emerge. Principals give special attention to developing an appropriate working relationship with senior staff. Not always is this to be achieved during the first term of the school year. In the high schools that were considered, policy-making centred on the senior staff meeting. One principal made an early decision against the advice of many senior staff to broaden the representation. Another principal who was strongly committed to participative decision-making decided not to change the hierarchical decision-making structure. Instead an effort was made to have policy matters taken back to staff before final approval by senior staff. As chief executive the principal attempted to get problematic issues 'on the table' so that policy could be formulated.

P.SHS I feel that the school is functioning well and one should not tangle with a winning formula. The senior staff have a rapport with their staff. Until I get evidence to the contrary I am going to stick with the senior staff being the decision-making body. I would like all staff to have minutes of senior staff meetings. You see there are mechanisms there for democratic involvement of all staff in decision-making with regard to the community.

Stepping into the principalship brought with it considerable power and authority. It took SHS principals some time to know how to use their authority so as not to be either too directive or too apologetic.

P.SHS There is the dilemma of not being aware of the power of your role and how to actually speak to people. I'm still mentally a deputy and a teacher and feel I must negotiate and rely on people's goodwill. I've felt over the past week or two that I should be more bloody-minded and say 'Well, that is what I want specifically. I am asking for this; please do it', without being nasty about it. This is not a way I have ever operated before.

Here there is evidence that the new appointee is starting to take up the mindset of the principal.

In taking up the role many principals experienced for the first time professional and social isolation in a school job. For some this was unexpected. Many staff felt uncomfortable at any attempt by the principal to close the distance and to develop a more egalitarian, peer-oriented relationship. In representing the interests of the school the principal had to be above the politics of the interest groups and be seen as impartial to all groups.

P.SHS At the moment I have not become socially involved with any staff members. I haven't as yet been to have a drink or come down and have a game with them so far. I hope that they will see me as approachable. Feedback will eventually flow through. I feel that senior staff will be forthcoming with comments about what is not pleasing them.

Similarly some principals now found that it was advisable to remain separate from staff in order to limit unnecessary opportunities for teacher influence in school policy-making.

7.3 The 'Honeymoon' Period

One of the consequences of the isolation of the principal was that it became difficult for principals to obtain feedback on how they were doing in the new position. Some principals were unsure whether they could accept staff responses about school operations at face value. The authority of the position prevented some staff from providing open and honest reaction. The lack of feedback presents a significant problem for a principal who is learning a new role. It also may create a false impression that the style of influence adopted by the principal is working. Early in the school year principals require great sensitivity to acquire information about the impact of their style on school staff. Weindling and Earley (1987) refer to this as 'the honeymoon period'.

Unfortunately, it may be a period where there is a build-up of undetected resentment to aspects of the principal's style. The problem only becomes apparent after the start of the school year has passed. The principal believes that there has been no change of style and finds it difficult to accept that what once appeared to be an effective form of influence is no longer appropriate.

A further cause of the honeymoon period came from the new view of the school that was promoted by the beginning principal.

TPS2 When he (the principal) first came into the school I felt he wanted to be more involved (than the previous principal). I think that he came in with this 'lovely new school' attitude, full of idealism and enthusiasm which the previous fellow did not have because as I said, I think that he (the previous principal) was already burnt out. Initially the other teaching staff thought he was a lovely man. I think I was the cynic. I have been around nearly as long as X (principal), so in comparison to the other staff I am more experienced. Also my years as a support teacher developed a certain cynicism. I have also met and dealt with a lot of principals, so I am aware of how they conduct themselves. So when what I called the 'honeymoon' period finished, they were in a greater state of shock than what I was, because I had expected this and I did not have such high expectations of X (principal), as the other teachers did. When the 'honeymoon' period finished then there was quite a deal of disillusionment.

Eventually the new positive view of the school that was promoted by the principal could no longer be accepted by staff. The collapse

of this view led to a reassessment of the worth of the principal. In cultivating influence principals require capacity to make realistic predictions as to what can be achieved. The commitment of the teachers, like other workers, cannot be sustained over a long period of time by views of the 'goodness' of the school which lack validity. Hence a principal's view of the school is initially a source of influence. The collapse of the principal's view diminished the principal's credibility in the eyes of the staff. This revision of the status of the principal then became a factor which constrained further attempts by the principal to influence school participants.

In attempting to influence staff it is important that principals go beyond the provision of 'support'. It appeared that staff respect for the principal was related not only to their interest in the welfare of staff but also to their projection of ideas, information and advice in social networks both within and beyond the school. The principals who had obtained greatest respect were those with expectations about educational values or management procedures which were effectively communicated and known to staff. In some schools staff were deliberately encouraged to become co-producers of the culture of the school.

7.4 Findings

The new principal needs to develop a network of influence in the school in order to shift the basis of respect from the formal authority of the position to understanding of the principal's competencies and perspectives of the school.

7.4.1 The principal develops this network of influence through ongoing communication and interaction with members of the school community, as well as participation in decision making and the policy process. To acquire credibility the actions and the perspectives of the principal must be judged by others as having significance for the school. To achieve this standing the principal should promote values, exercise judgement, demonstrate skill and interact with others so that support is forthcoming from school participants.

- 7.4.2 The worth of the principal may be judged by teachers and parents according to only a small range of competencies. The principal should develop awareness of the frameworks which school participants use to make judgements about the competence of principals. There may be a need to take action to reduce the bias which is evident in the personal frameworks of some school participants.
- 7.4.3 The demonstration of instructional leadership by the new principal from the start of the school year provides a general strategy for the establishment of a network of influence. By consulting with staff about issues relating to teaching practice, curriculum improvement and the quality of student learning the principal can work with staff to formulate ideas which take account of where the school is at and the current concerns of staff. Such actions facilitate understanding of the views of the newly appointed principal.
- 7.4.4 Principals require sensitivity to the reactions of staff concerning their new administrative style. School staff may be reluctant to provide information as to how the principal is viewed until reserves of trust and respect have accumulated. This leads to the 'honeymoon' period where principals receive little negative feedback. If the principal maintains an 'open door' policy it can promote the mistaken belief that staff are supportive of the principal's style. The failure of the principal to live up to the initial high expectations of staff creates additional problems for the newly appointed principal. To avoid this situation the principal's early vision for the school should be grounded in a realistic assessment of the possibilities for changing elements of the culture of the school.
- 7.4.5 Some appointees need to be prepared for the professional isolation, and in some cases the social isolation of the principalship. They need to recognise that, by being consistent and not taking sides, that the authority of the position may hinder the development of close relationships with colleagues.

- 7.4.6 Principals need to conceptualise the policy process within the school and to assess whether it has sufficient legitimacy to obtain commitment from staff and parents. The implicit policy process of schools may tend toward the development of dependence in staff, rather than the cultivation of interest in decision making about school affairs.
- 7.4.7 Principals should interact with staff so as to communicate a climate of expectations which serves as a framework within which teachers make choices. This may involve collaborative exploration of school culture and articulation of a collective view of the school.
- 7.4.8 Principals require frameworks for analysis of the quality of the working relationships among staff. Strategies are required which enable separation of the people from the issues so as to resolve conflicts and difficult working relationships among staff. In secondary schools it is not to be expected that a close working relationship will characterise the senior staff. Sectional rather than whole school interests may influence policy making.

CHAPTER 8

CONFRONTING ADMINISTRATION

8.0 CONFRONTING ADMINISTRATION

The research literature has long recognised the brevity, variety and fragmentation of the work role of the principal. Starting up the full range of school activities at the commencement of the school year places even more extreme demands on the principal and other staff who share responsibility for school administration.

8.1 The Demands of Administration

Principals are continuously immersed in a broad range of concurrent activities. A large number of administrative tasks confront the principal during the first weeks of the school year:

1. Clarifying the staffing establishment of the school and covering for teachers who had yet to take up duties at the school.
2. Timetable changes to optimise the use of staff expertise.
3. Re-organisation of electives on offer to secondary school students.
4. Repairs and maintenance to school facilities through the Building Management Authority.
5. Preparation of stock requisition for the next school year.
6. School filing system. Trying to locate information from the previous year.
7. Organising the duties of secretarial staff, support staff, grounds staff. Determination of the various conditions of service, including leave arrangements.
8. Preparation of information requested by head and district office.
9. Preparation of a school budget.
10. Induction of beginning teachers, new staff.
11. Staff counselling.
12. School bus organisation (some country schools).
13. Developing links with the community.
14. Developing a working relationship with consultants.

The PS2 and DHS principals also had a half-time teaching load around which administration was scheduled. Significant time was also required to prepare for teaching:

P.DHS I have a primary (school) background. I have had to help out with Year 8 Science. A lot of learning and preparation has been required. It is important that I am well prepared for teaching. I have tried to go beyond the curriculum to develop student interest in Science.

Multiple tasks accumulated and principals felt powerless to control the flow of events.

P.DHS Census forms and statistics have taken me hours. I took more than a week of my holidays to get the feel of the place and do things as a preliminary to the school starting, so it could start smoothly and I think I have been successful in that respect. I get here at 6.45 a.m. and leave between 4.30 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. and I have got nothing to show for it. It has been mainly reactive management. I have not had time to get a master plan. I have only been able to talk to staff spontaneously; there has not been a master plan, or a systematic approach. I have had five things going at once. For example, the newsletter has to be ready by Tuesday, to go out Wednesday. It is virtually a newspaper and is important to the community.

The newsletter alone took up to a day of the principal's time. Similarly in another school:

P.DHS I felt the full bombardment to all the various combinations of staff, teaching, non-teaching, student enrolment, in particular Education Support, guidance, fees - a complete smorgasbord of administration matters. I spent the week trying to find the forms for such things as bus contracts, returns for regional office, etc. It was a bit repetitive; I felt the week was spent responding to administrative matters.

There were also a whole lot of unexpected things, or oddities, e.g., post Year 10 work, 'I want to further my studies'. Kids are enrolled at school doing Year 11 work. The difficulty comes from the implication of having Year 11 on the side; for example, in conduct, do they become part of school decision-making with the same rules? What are the school's expectations? ... What type of supervision can we provide for them when we are effectively teaching on a fairly full timetable load? All of these sorts of things crop up whether this is only one or two students, or a fuller complement. I suppose as time goes on if the numbers increase then there is some provision to have additional staffing appointed, to provide some extra supervision.

At the moment we are left with extra tasks and extra supervision to do that we are not necessarily anticipating.

Another principal had the feeling that '...effort had been spread all over the place'.

P.DHS I have felt uneasy about not being able to develop a sense of purpose in my administrative style. I have been quite uncomfortable about it. The day's activities would be planned. While I was working on a task a matter would crop up and I would have to leave it. I could be doing three things simultaneously. The end result is that for a long time that no task was brought to a satisfactory conclusion. There have been some very busy weeks. Some matters have been left... Then you try to pick them up again.

Non-cumulative decision-making and inability to bring tasks to a successful conclusion can undermine the confidence of the principal.

In the senior high schools there were other staff with administrative responsibilities who could manage nearly all the day-to-day operations of the school. Some principals saw that it was important to have a high level of involvement in day-to-day operations. There was a need for capacity to react to a variety of situations requiring the mobilisation of a special viewpoint.

P.SHS On the day that I had a visit from the parent of the Year 9 girl (suspected pregnancy) whom I previously referred to, I also had a visit from the mayor and his wife. They had come for a social chat. This visit had been arranged. This all just goes to show what a bizarre life a principal has. I had to talk with parents about the problems with their daughter, then there was the emotional Greek father challenging my discipline decision and then there was the mayor in the background.

In this acute state of overload, I jumped into my car to go as prearranged to the student counsellors' camp. I had volunteered to give a workshop on assertiveness. As I was trying to leave the school running an hour late, I had the misfortune to find the Year 9 student previously mentioned running away from school. She had run away from home the previous night and she was doing it again. I had to pick her up and come back which made me even later. Then I went to the camp. I had a mud-map of how to get there, which was totally useless. I ended up in a maze of forest and spent half an hour looking for the camp. I felt very frustrated. I decided to abandon the camp but as I was leaving I found another road which I decided to take and I did find the camp. Although I was bit down at the time, I did run a very good workshop. It was a great ending to a very strange week.

In other situations the principal would be overwhelmed by the need to master an enormous amount of information.

P.SHS Information overload can be a problem. Even a simple thing like going to the first board meeting at the hostel - that was a massive meeting which started at 9.30 am. At 1.30 pm. I had to excuse myself to come and run a school assembly and the meeting went on after that. I was staggered at the amount of detail that went on at that meeting. They have a budget of nearly \$500,000 and I am a co-signatory for all the cheques that go through. These sorts of things I had not quite anticipated. Bit by bit I am discovering what sort of meetings I should be going to. I am not really worrying; it is just that there is a terrific amount of information to absorb and I realise I should not rush too fast.

All of the principals became immersed in an extended period of reactive management at the start of the school year. The principals were unable to control the pacing and timing of the flow of school activities. For some it was a period of extreme stress which visibly affected their confidence. The confidence of the principal was further affected if there was also the associated problem of professional and social isolation. In this situation of extreme overload it was easy for principals to adopt a perspective that the school was a maze of problems, rather than of challenges which provided opportunities for their own professional development. Some principals even questioned why they had aspired to the principalship. These thoughts were quickly put aside as there was the realisation that the strain of starting up the year was also evident in staff. There was no option but to maintain a positive public stance. It would be some of these minor events where help was given to an individual teacher, parent or student that would enable the principal to find extra reserves of effort. In maintaining a public presence the principals had to cut down on spontaneity in order to be seen as 'consistent'.

Yet in this difficult period principals could gain important insight of the potential of the school.

P.SHS I have observed the school for four weeks and I have come to the decision that form teachers are an untapped resource. I have got the confidence for this decision from actually going out into the form rooms, not as often as I would like

as I have not had the time. These sorties I have made into the form rooms have led me to seeing that we have got a great staff who have a good attitude to their forms and we should use them more by involving them in everything that I can involve them in. I will pursue that a bit more.

Such insights served as a foundation from which the principal would undertake forward planning. The short periods during the term in which the principal was able to test hypotheses and think about the future direction of the school were central to the development of a sense of control over the demands of administration.

P.DHS ... but it has been the pace at which first term has gone that has reduced the amount of thinking time that has gone into it. So I have been accepting, and not become too frustrated. Going back to 'phases' and 'adjustments', I can recognise times where I have been able to do intermittent thinking about 'pro-active pursuits'. I have not had a free-run to look long, hard and deliberately at a set of approaches that I would like to test out. I would call them all intermittent thinking spots that are spaced over the term and they are part of the 'ideal' as opposed to the 'reality' agenda of 'the bus has broken down'. Tempering enthusiasm is attached to this so I can get a grip of the reality, at the same time, keeping some ideas on the boil. This has allowed me to think that I am developing hunches, or making observations, but I still have not got to that formal writing stage about them. I have deliberately run concurrently a strategy to sell more of myself and the school, to the community. I have deliberately been trying to foster this right from the outset, without necessarily making a fanfare of it, or even disclosing this to the staff, but constantly being positive about it and encouraging interaction between the community and the school.

This principal had managed to accommodate the pressures of administration. In addition some effort has been given to laying the foundation for an as yet undisclosed school development initiative.

In the example above the principal did not succumb to the constantly breaking waves of administrative demands. It is relatively easy for a principal to be 'seduced' by the priorities of day-to-day administration. These activities bring visibility and promote the belief among staff that the principal is doing the job. By contrast forward planning appears to be a non-essential task in the short term, and may be perceived by practitioners to centre on unproductive meetings which have potential to disturb the interests of the stakeholders of school activities to varying

degrees. Some of the principals in the study had capacity to manage day-to-day administrative demands in addition to investing time and effort in concurrent planning about the future of the school. It is considered that these principals had developed coping strategies for containing the demands of administration.

8.2 Developing a Sense of Direction

From the fourth week of the school term the stream of administrative demands began to slacken. Equipped with new insight many principals had by now established some directions for the future and were able to exercise influence in accordance with their goals.

P.DHS Most of the term has been a period of reactive management. At the end of March (week 8) I am now able to initiate some moves of my own. Attention is being given to the unit curriculum. I am getting ideas about my teaching area. Now-a-days I can look at things which I believe are important. I now have a clearer picture of what it will be like at the start of the next term.

It was not until the new principals developed a sense of direction of where the school could go or were able to see connections between the school and their vision of what could be realistically achieved during the term of their appointment that they could establish control over their work. Some experienced stress because tasks were not being carried through to completion or the many decisions of the day did not relate to a view of the 'good school'. Principals may also have felt deficiencies in their capacity to communicate and gain support for a collective view of the school.

A number of coping strategies were used to improve their sense of control over school activities.

P.PS2 When you start off as a principal you have a tendency to try and do everything immediately. I think that you have to have the sense that some things have to be put down while others have to be handled immediately.

The principal above developed priorities which were seen as being attainable. This meant that some priorities for the school would

be addressed later in the year. For another principal it was a matter of tempering ideals and reality, as well as working on priority tasks.

P.DHS Another aspect within the area of 'crisis management' is dealing with one's agenda of 'ideals versus reality'. So it is tempering one's own ideals, with the reality of the situation. 'Crisis management' to me, is being reactive and it also has a connotation of almost helplessness. I did not feel 'helpless' all the way through. I did feel that these matters took up more time than I had anticipated or really wanted to devote to them, but they demanded attention. Some of these matters were self selecting, e.g. the swimming carnivals. The pool closed at a certain date so there was a natural constraint there. My approach with returns to head and regional offices, however, was flexible within a few days, so these had a lower priority. Attending to any needs of staff were higher priority than other administrivia, as were issues relating to students and discipline around the school.

Again the needs of staff and students are seen as being more important than the demands of district and head office.

On coming to the school principals deliberately sought information and encouraged people to provide advice. Eventually the demands of administration create a situation where the principal can no longer afford to take long periods of time to collect comprehensive information. One solution is to be more selective in seeking information.

P.SHS Facing dilemmas and making judgements is an ongoing issue for me. I am continually assessing information and evaluating its worth. There is no doubt that some people give better information than others. You find yourself putting all the opinions in the old peabrain in such a way that you get information overload. Then there comes a gel point where you believe that you have enough knowledge to say something that will help resolve the situation. I don't believe that I have made any major mistakes so far (relating to errors of judgement).

Midway through the term this principal became, in his words, 'more surgical'. By this stage relatively little time was spent in seeking information for many issues. Decisions were now made after consultation with relatively few others who had been identified as sources of 'best information'.

A major strategy for relieving the administrative burden was to delegate.

P.SHS There is a time constraint on what I am doing. The emotional strain of this job does not seem to be as great as it was as a deputy. Maybe I have been doing the deputy's job too long. Maybe I had become a little cynical in the job. What is going on now is for me an entirely new challenge. Although there is strain, it is a stimulating strain.

I have learned to delegate. I do not know whether I am successful yet, but as a deputy I was hesitant to delegate. I always feel 'so and so has already got a lot to do', so I would carry the load myself. This left me with between 15 and 20 hours work in a day sometimes rather than to delegate. Now, when work comes across my desk, I delegate the jobs, to various people, and then I follow it up afterwards to ensure that it is being done.

Developing competence with the task of delegation took time.

P.SHS The dimensions of the role are unknown. This morning, when a parent brought her child back after a suspension, I automatically started to conduct them down to the year leader's office, and then I thought that was not the right thing to do. But then I feel that I am imposing on the deputies if I go into their office and say 'Show these people down to the year leader's office'. Then I remembered that that is how X (mentor principal) always used to do it. The other point is sheer time and energy. I don't have the time, but I'm also aware of the pressure on the deputies. There is a knack to delegation and in being clear in your instructions to other people. I must sum up by saying 'You are going to do that'. I'm having a bit of trouble in being directive.

A further survival strategy of this principal was to visualise what a mentor principal would have done in the same situation.

Even after principals had passed beyond reactive management there was the possibility that failure to consult about decision-making would cause conflict. There was a tendency to implement decisions concerning aspects of school operation in which the professional knowledge base of the principal was strong or where experience provided special insight into the problem. Some principals mistakenly believed that other staff would see the reason for the decision and that there were no other options. The following principal surprised staff by announcing a unilateral policy decision at a staff meeting at a time when much had been done to encourage staff to participate in decision making.

P.SHS Probably the only time I have made a decision like that was at the staff meeting yesterday - to advise the staff that until one of the photocopier mechanics comes through there will be card counters put on each machine. Each department will have card counters because we are losing on the main office machine. Forty four per cent of the copies being done are not being recorded by the staff. This means the admin. is picking up the departments' costs, and over 50 percent on the library machine. This has meant a loss to admin. of between \$900-\$1,000 a month in photocopying charges.

Not all decisions could involve broad participation. Analysis of the problem was needed to assess the consequences of the decision. To do this principals needed the capacity to conceptualise the organisational dynamics of the school in order to assess the impact of decision-making on staff interests. Principals were sometimes surprised by the lack of acceptance of their decision. Considerable skill was required to identify which decisions should involve other staff.

By the end of term all principals could look back and see that some of their efforts had influenced school operations. Some were resentful that effort had been wasted in contributing to day-to-day school activities rather than to forward planning. Although involvement in day-to-day activities diverted effort away from planning it was these activities which made the principal visible to staff. Respect for the principal was likely to flow from a visible presence in school activities at the start of the year. With hindsight they could see that much of their time had been spent in the office. Not enough time had been given to mixing with the students and working with teachers. Even the principals who did not wish to make changes in the first half of the school year could see some evidence of innovation. Usually this had come from the discovery of a deficiency in existing practice such as dysfunctional communications, the loss of money to finance an excursion or the need for additional teaching resources. In addition to the demands of administration the principals also had to give attention to the management of new and ongoing school development activities.

8.3 Findings

Starting up the full range of school operations at the commencement of the school year makes extreme demands of the new principal.

- 8.3.1 Immersion in a variety of administrative tasks in the early part of the school year can lead to non-cumulative decision making. Coping strategies relating to the use of time in seeking information, delegating, establishing the priority of activities that require attention and changing (or lowering) expectations can increase the principal's level of comfort with the role.
- 8.3.2 In order to get beyond reactive management, principals have to develop plans for the medium to long term which indicate what can be achieved in the school. The formulation of an embryo vision requires the withdrawal of time and effort from concern with day to day school operations. The demands of day to day administration should not be allowed to consume all of the principal's time. A special effort has to be made to find and to use intermittent thinking spots so that the principal has an ongoing involvement in planning, even during the most demanding times of the school year. The confidence of the principal is further improved if action can be taken to gain support for the priorities in these plans.
- 8.3.3 In order to avoid the stress of non-cumulative decision making prior to the development of a vision of the school at the start of the school year, principals require anchor points for decision making. Knowledge of 'good' school management practice and school effectiveness research could be used to guide decision making.
- 8.3.4 The transition to the principalship involves the use of judgement about when to consult, when to delegate and when to administer in accordance with school policies and procedures. Newly appointed principals require capacity to make judgements about the priority of organisational demands and of ways to solve these problems.
- 8.3.5 The transition to the principalship of a bigger school requires acquisition of competence in the art of delegation. Principals should use strategies for delegation to staff so as to avoid being either apologetic or too directive.

CHAPTER 9
SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT

9.0 TAKING UP SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT

Nearly all schools were characterised by significant school development activities during Term 1. Newly appointed principals were unlikely to be well positioned to oversee reorganisation of complex school activities. Early in Term 1 they were still struggling to develop a vision of the future of the school and the worth of current objectives and strategies for change. Many principals had not been able to make a deep analysis of the characteristics of the school environment and an assessment of the human and material resources of the school. Similarly there was only limited awareness of the opportunities for change and the threats to possible strategies for school development activities. Managing purposeful school change would be an extreme test of the leadership qualities of the new principal.

9.1 The Unit Curriculum

The unit curriculum was a complex externally imposed innovation with a substantial philosophy which required replacement of existing teaching, curriculum and administrative practices with qualitatively new activities. In 1987 all DHS and SHS principals would manage the operationalisation of the broad guidelines so as to maximise the existing strengths of the school. A collaborative planning process was essential to ensure commitment by staff to the new structure. During Term 1 most activity centred on the initiation phases rather than the implementation and institutionalisation phases of school change (Fullan, 1982). From Term 2 school staff were preoccupied with implementation, or putting the change into action. The initiation phase refers to the formulation of a plan about how to proceed with the development of the unit curriculum. The influence of principals varied between schools. This was also related to the readiness of the staff to participate in school-level change and the extent to which the school culture supported collaborative activities.

One principal cultivated 'teacher driven' school development on a broad front. At the school development days staff were exposed to visioning exercises and group problem-solving experiences. Later a

start was made on a school profile and a statement of school goals. Staff were encouraged to think critically about school activities. In Term 1 the unit curriculum received only incidental attention. Instead staff were encouraged to make contributions to identify priority activities for school development. Here the principal saw school development as a part of normal school operations. During Term 1 the unit curriculum was not an important aspect of school development. There was a concern about the staff being ready to participate in school development.

P.DHS The time line comes when you start to be more specific. You appreciate time which is involved in a process which is essentially to move their (the teachers') line of thinking and to try and discover the range of alternatives that might exist. You cannot pinpoint people and activities to all these specifics until such time as you have got some momentum going, and you have to get some people starting to take up the possibilities. They must recognise that there are some shortcomings in what is happening and so are therefore prepared to think about some alternatives.

A time line was seen as being inappropriate until the teachers had moved away from a commitment to the existing structure. The influence of the principal was guided by a sophisticated knowledge of school change processes and a capacity to analyze the organisational dynamics of the school.

A variation on this approach occurred where the principal attempted to bring new perspectives to bear on thinking about the unit curriculum. The school development officer was used as a source of information and as a facilitator at many senior staff meetings. One of the deputy principals also played an important role in establishing guidelines for the way in which planning would proceed. This was directed at preserving the strong features of the existing programme and of ensuring productive use of staff effort. At times the principal took action to ensure that new ideas were brought into the planning arenas.

P.SHS We have sent delegates to pilot schools to look at the unit curriculum. That has been my attempt to get a wider team of staff involved in unit curriculum decisions. However, an important managerial point in this is that 'the initial structure you set up is more important than any little "fiddle" you do later'. Before I became principal here the

said that the management committee for the implementation of the unit curriculum would be senior staff. I am from a democratic school background, and I believe in involving rank-and-file staff in important school decisions. I am finding that the hierarchial decision-making model is entrenched in the school. These efforts to involve staff are like locking the door after the horse has bolted.

There was a concern that a premature crystallisation of the view of the unit curriculum did not take place. The principal accepted the organisational culture of the school, and was instrumental in establishing a School Goals Committee in order to provide direction for the change process. The goals initiative emerged only after planning was under way. By this time there was a realisation that the unit curriculum should be guided by values rather than procedures. The quality of interaction of the principal with staff was critical to getting agreement about the change process.

One principal developed a timeline in conjunction with senior staff.

P.SHS I have always had a timeline at other schools I have been at. I worked out the dates with the deputies and senior staff and gave them a week to change any dates. My role in the unit curriculum is mainly advisory. I am not prepared to tell the staff which way to go, unless I have to. I would rather they work it out, so I guide. I do not want to be a deputy principal. It is very easy to feel 'at sea' with the role of principal, because it is so confusing. Doing the deputy's job is an escape mechanism. I am working very hard. What you are supposed to be doing as a principal is being ignored, because it is complex and not definite.

Relatively little attention was given to the direction of change, emphasis was on the process. The principal was also concerned that the collaborative activities of staff should be geared to the discipline of the timeline. The experience of the staff in previous collaborative school development activities enabled the direction to emerge from committees. The principal acted as an advisor and persuader-dissuader to committees. Other staff were encouraged to become advocates for the change process.

In another school the principal concentrated the attention of the senior staff on the unit curriculum. In anticipation of the difficulties in mobilising staff attention to the process of

working up the unit curriculum effort was diverted away from other school activities.

P.SHS As things are the non-negotiable Ministerial demand is that I have to oversee a significant, even a radical alteration to existing structures and procedures for 1988. There is no way that I am going to make alterations of any significance at all before then - except in preparation for it - unless there is something quite wrong and detrimental to the welfare of students here ... and I haven't seen any such facet of the personnel or programme here yet. It is an easy school to run because it has been running itself for years. Next year it has to change, hopefully without trauma, anxiety or stress for students or staff ... and change it must. To change for change's sake before then would be petty.

Early discussions of the planning group did not establish agreement on a process. The members did not take up unit curriculum philosophy. Attempts to educate the planning team did not lead to a consensus position. In order to maintain momentum the timetable was introduced before getting agreement on goals and procedures. From the beginning a political climate had surrounded planning and decision-making so that staff responded from the point of view of defending their subject interests. It was difficult to get staff to give priority to school as opposed to subject department interests during planning sessions. The use of a strong personal presence to promote enthusiasm through the stream of daily events may have been more effective than detailed written communication in winning support for the initiatives of the principal. The principal had to devote considerable time to lobbying so as to obtain support in planning group meetings.

The demands of administration did not allow another principal to give sufficient time to planning the process.

DHS.3 All I have been able to do is to look at the material which has been sent to us. Then, in handing it to the different subject groups, saying 'Something is coming in on the unit curriculum. See what you can do about integrating it with the programme you had in mind'.

Although there were regular meetings a plan for implementation did not emerge. The principal experienced difficulty in piecing together the contents of documents which were progressively released by the Ministry to obtain a holistic view of the unit

curriculum. A close working relationship with the school development consultant did not develop.

Some principals were not able to link school based curriculum planning to the MEWA policy on the unit curriculum, i.e., school goals to be public, increased curriculum flexibility, clear teaching and learning goals. This may have resulted from inability to articulate a series of releases of discrete information about the substance of the unit curriculum. District high school principals with a primary school background first had to acquire knowledge of the secondary curriculum to provide leadership for the unit curriculum. In one school the principal wanted to have the staff make the decisions about the structure of the unit curriculum.

The broad patterns of principal influence have some correspondence with the principal styles of initiator, manager and responder reported by Hall, et al. (1985). The change facilitator styles centre on the extent to which priority is given to school-level rather than system-level goals or whether teachers work within clear guidelines or whether the response to teacher needs is according to district guidelines. Many principals had difficulty in establishing agreement about a strategic plan for the process by which school development would be undertaken. Some principals placed emphasis on a direction for the school and an audit of values while others were concerned with obtaining agreement about initial planning information within a specific time period. The influence of the principal required significant interpersonal and communication skills. School culture was a factor which influenced choice of a strategy for change. In many schools the facilitation of team building and human resource development should have been a priority, but the pressures of an external time-line prevented this.

9.2 Other Initiatives

Another form of school development was the establishment of school councils. New principals had been informed of the possibility that school advisory committees or school councils would become mandatory in the near future and some had decided to take action. In three schools the principals took the initiative to open negotiation with the executive of the Parents and Citizens'

Associations about the possibilities for a Council. In some cases the initiative was against the advice of the staff or even Association representatives. The rate of development of interest by the parents was related to communication of how this innovation would improve the school. Information was released in order to raise parent awareness of the possibilities for an advisory group. The principal also had to communicate a strategy with achievable outcomes at each stage. As with the unit curriculum momentum was lost on occasions as the purpose of meetings was not clear. It became essential that participants saw concrete results for their efforts. Some principals had success in getting community representatives to assume leadership and to function as change agents who took ownership of the initiative. One principal was less fortunate in that the few parents with motivation and capacity were already over-extended through involvement in community activities.

A final form of school development was the Priority Schools Program in PS2 schools. Action was required in Term 1 to review existing activities. For the new principal there was the risk of becoming preoccupied with administration. The principal then became marginal to the activity. Consultants and teachers who had responsibility for programme development then by-pass the principal. Where principals did play a central role in preparations for review of the existing programme there was a risk of insensitivity to the forward planning and collective knowledge of the continuing staff.

9.3 Working with External Change Facilitators

The take-up of school development provided opportunities for newly appointed principals to work with field officers from district, and to a lesser extent, head office. The field officer service commenced in 1984 and represents a major innovation in Western Australian education. Although there is now considerable research on the role of external change facilitators, little is known about how the principal develops a working relationship with the consultant (Hyde, 1987).

The role of the field officer centres on a number of functions:

- o linking practice with broader policy issues;
- o analysing, reflecting, clarifying;
- o brokering - locating acceptable services for the school;
- o group facilitator in planning and problem solving;
- o interpersonal support for the principal and staff.

Some of the principals did not know how to make best use of the consultants. Although the field officers made an important contribution to school development activities they were an underutilised resource in most schools. In many of the schools used for the study the field officers were effective for only a part of the school year. Typically the working relationship between the principal and the field officer would reach a stage where the principal believed that nothing further could be gained from the presence of the field officer. The following extract is the principal's recollection of the contribution of a school development officer at a recent unit curriculum meeting.

P.DHS The meeting was really a rehash of previous meetings. X (the field officer) did not have any new information for us. He (the field officer) is far too theoretical. In fact the staff felt that it was a waste of time. The staff put up questions but they were not answered. What it boils down to is that the staff will go to inservice meetings. They will then decide upon things after they go to counselling sessions. It is a bit of a misnomer calling X a school development consultant when he is concerned only with the unit curriculum. We request X's attendance at meetings. Now that things have settled down a bit X will not be coming back until July (10 weeks away).

Some of the principals in the study had unrealistic or mistaken expectations about the role of the field officers. In one school there was an initial expectation that the field officer would undertake the detailed planning of the unit curriculum.

The working relationship of the new principal and the district school development officer varied. An effective working relationship was evident where:

- o the new principal valued the consultant's knowledge of the emerging MEWA policy on the unit curriculum, as well as knowledge of progress with implications in other schools;
- o there was a need to unfreeze and overcome school inertia if new practice was to be adopted;
- o the new principal was to some extent professionally isolated within the school;
- o the district superintendent built up the significance of the field officer consultancy service.

An ineffective working relationship was influenced by the following factors:

- o Failure by the principal to understand that the externally imposed innovation consisted of broad guidelines which could only be operationalised at school level. In the early part of the school year some principals expected centrally determined practice to be transferred to the school without modification from powerful cultural and contextual factors.
- o Emphasis of the consultant on the unit curriculum policy (issues and values) rather than practice. These consultants were seen as being 'too theoretical'.
- o Meetings of staff and consultant that did not have productive outcomes. 'A rehash of the previous discussion'. School staff who chaired meetings did not have a strategy to ensure progress.
- o The perceived failure of the consultant to understand school administration issues, e.g., timetabling issues. The consultants lacked administrative experience.
- o The unwillingness of principals to relinquish control over school operations to low status staff from district office.
- o Some consultants believed that they knew all of the answers. Here the principal became preoccupied with cutting the consultant 'down to size', e.g., rivalry over timetable proposals.

The field officer consultancy service is still an innovation in Western Australian education. New principals should take the initiative to ensure that the knowledge of consultants is used to promote an effective school development process.

9.4 Some Change Facilitator Styles

A variety of styles were evident among the six principals in district high and senior high schools in the way they attempted to initiate and implement unit curriculum. The following are some of the elements of the style that principals used to promote

significant school level change. Each element is conceptualised as a bi-polar construct. The elements are not necessarily independent.

o Narrow front - broad front concentration of effort:

Refers to an attempt by the principal to focus staff effort. In one school it was assumed that the unit curriculum implementation would consume all available resources and that optional or special activities should be deferred. In another school the principal was concerned that staff should still have capacity to undertake their own curriculum initiatives. Here staff were to maintain effort on a broad front of school operations.

o A 'problem' - part of normal school operations:

Refers to the extent to which school development was an institutionalised and accepted facet of school operations. In some schools the implementation of the unit curriculum was seen as an externally imposed and unwanted disturbance to school operations.

o Premature crystallisation - incubation of school priorities:

Refers to whether the principal developed priorities about what was good for the school prior to taking up appointment or whether a genuine attempt was made to develop priorities from progressive understanding of the culture of the school.

o Getting away to an early start - strategic planning:

In some schools the principal and other senior staff attempted to obtain early decisions on the structure of the unit curriculum. A different approach required investing effort in trying to get agreement about the process of change. This included identifying values for planning, acquiring information about the school and in some cases establishing school goals or trying to negotiate agreement as to where the school could go.

To some extent the former orientation indicates a bureaucratic approach to curriculum planning. Here there is an attempt to comply with the expectations of change agents external to the school. By comparison one principal deferred taking action until second semester. This courageous decision to delay initiation and implementation was to enable staff to develop an awareness of school characteristics and to acquire familiarity with school development processes.

o Decision-making by senior staff - decision-making by committees:

Refers to the willingness of senior staff to allow for or to demand the participation of junior staff in curriculum planning. In one school where collaborative policy-making was evident junior staff emerged as the informal leaders and internal change agents. The decision elsewhere not to ask for participation by junior staff was based on a recognition that staff were not interested in policy making or that it would direct effort away from teaching.

o Interpersonal - political:

An indicator of the quality of the social relationship between the staff and the principal during curriculum planning. The former refers to a style where there is consultation with individuals and groups. The latter occurs where the principal must try to obtain the support of various interest groups in a political decision-making arena. Here the principal must resort to lobbying and the management of a power base.

o Manager - leader:

The extent to which principals gave priority to setting objectives, resource management staff supervision and timelines as opposed to obtaining the commitment of staff to curriculum planning and the development of a sense of direction. As managers principals display varying degrees of effectiveness. Other principals combine both leader and manager characteristics while one principal displayed a visionary leader style. Here the focus was on the development of a collective view of what could be achieved at the school.

o Risk taking - safety seeking:

Refers to the degree to which the principal responds to the opportunities or problems that arise in the school situation or the extent to which the actions of other schools and principals are used as a basis for decision-making.

A number of global styles were evident in the way principals attempted to implement the unit curriculum. Bureaucratic managers controlled planning and implementations by establishing timelines for decision-making. Other principals had sensitivity to the level of readiness in the school community. Principals attempted to respond to teacher needs so as to retain political support within the school. Some principals attempted to initiate activities which would raise staff awareness of factors that should be recognised in decision-making. In many of the schools a 'consigliere' or second internal change facilitator emerged to provide leadership for school development. (See Hall and Hord, 1987) The emergence of the second change facilitator was sometimes fortuitous. When this happened, one effect was to reduce the administrative workload of the principal.

9.5 Findings

Newly appointed principals are expected to maintain existing school development activities or to facilitate new programmes of school level change from their first term of appointment.

- 9.6.1 Initiation of school level change requires that the principal is able to conceptualise the organisational dynamics of the school. Ability to see the school in terms of a flow chart of activity is an indicator of this competence. Any school development initiative should take into account not just the expectations of stakeholders but also the deeper level assumptions behind decisions and actions that underpin culture.
- 9.6.2 Commitment to school level change by staff and parents comes from the management of a process whereby key members of the school envision its future and develop the necessary procedures to achieve that future. This requires that the principal has capacity to communicate a set of expectations to school staff so as to focus attention on the advantages of school development. The principal should provide leadership which develops commitment to inquiry about school problems, and facilitate team building through attempts to find solutions to school problems.
- 9.6.3 The strategy that is to be used for school level change should be compatible with aspects of school culture in order to maximise opportunities for ownership by school staff. Before commencing school development, it may be necessary to promote culture building activities in order to neutralise antagonistic school phenomena which represent threats to collaborative planning.
- 9.6.4 Human resource development of school staff is central to the management of school change. Forward planning is required to encourage staff to acquire competencies prior to the scheduling of specific school development activities. Permanent change requires inservicing of staff at the worksite. The principal should have a visible involvement in inservicing activities within the school.
- 9.6.5 Principals require capacity to conceptualise the school level change process. A time-line by itself is an inadequate implementation plan. Principals should have understanding of the readiness of groups of staff to

undertake particular tasks, so that preparations can be made to improve the chances for the successful completion of the task.

9.6.6 In order to promote school development, principals need to be able to work with other change facilitators. The working relationship of principals and external change facilitators can be improved. The brevity, variety and fragmentation of the daily workload of the principal is not conducive to the development of strategy and the detailed planning of school change. Where possible the principal should encourage the emergence of a second internal change facilitator. It is important that the principal has meaningful communication with any internal change facilitators.

CHAPTER 10

MANAGING EXTERNAL RELATIONS

10.0 MANAGING EXTERNAL RELATIONS

The principal has major responsibility for mediating the linkages of the school with both the Ministry of Education and the parents and community. For the principals who had come from senior teacher and deputy principal positions much of this task was new.

Principals have considerable discretion in the way they can mediate these linkages (Morris, et al. 1985). The principal is called to report on school activities, to manage the corporate image of the school and to obtain resources which enrich the school. There are other circumstances when action is taken to reduce the disturbance effects of either parents or Ministry policy on the educational programme. During the period of the study some principals tried to insulate their staff from the 'bewildering' changes in the Ministry. On taking up appointment most principals had already made contact with Parents and Citizens' Association representatives and district office staff.

10.1 School Community Relationships

The first Parents and Citizens' meeting is an important opportunity to establish links with parents. A large attendance can be expected as parents wish to observe and meet the new principal. In the following example the principal had to explain a non-sexist sport policy which was introduced during the first weeks of the school year.

P.PS2 I knew what was going to happen. I presented a principal's report. I always have a copy typed up and distributed. That side of it was O.K. I was a little apprehensive about the changing of sport, that it would stir up some fire which it did. Everyone remained composed. The senior assistant and the phys. ed. teacher were there. The sport programme is one of the duties of the senior assistant. He spoke very well. One area I would like to encourage this year is that staff come to P & C meetings. It was good with myself and two other staff to answer questions. The staff were able to answer the questions of the parents and say "Well, when I did it the kids responded like this". This helped to convince people, I think, and that was a success because it showed people that what we were doing was a positive thing.

We got \$400 and \$400 for one meeting is pretty good. We got our priorities ... That is the goal we are looking for.

In this case the principal had taken precautions to ensure that a new policy was communicated to parents. His approach was to try to establish 'open and honest relations' with the Parents and Citizen's Association. Another principal attempted to get parents not only to raise questions but to be more assertive about education. He did not accept the ritual of the meeting and attempted to establish an educative relationship. The first meeting was used as a starting point from which to try to wean the parents away from dependence upon the principal.

P.DSH There was an interesting method of dealing with accumulated correspondence. Basically some reference was made to 'junk mail'. I intervened at this point and rescued a copy of the Minister's Booklet Better Schools. Also, the Commonwealth School's Commission guidelines for programmes in schools was rescued. I did this because I felt that if the other mail was going to be dealt with superficially, I needed to highlight the importance of these two documents ... There were 11 people present, a few of whom I had met before. The President of the P & C approached me before the meeting to ask if I was going to give a report. I said I was happy to do this and would take the previous structure into consideration. At the meeting I told them there were a variety of ways I could respond to the suggestion of giving a report, but that not all the information I might give would be of particular use, or interest to people. So I turned the question around and asked them what they would like to hear. This was so I did not repeat information they might have already had. They gave me ideas and then I set forth. It eventually came around to such things as the Minister's booklet and the subject of PCAP. I was directing attention ultimately as well as trying to fathom out from the assembled people what their minimum expectations were.

I think their attendance was more for school business rather than just to satisfy their curiosity about me.

Contact with parents provided opportunities for testing propositions about the way that the principal's efforts would be judged by the community.

At the commencement of the school year conflict between parents and the new principal can result from any reorganisation of the teaching groups. Adjustments to the curriculum offering or to form groups become necessary when projections about student numbers prove to be inaccurate. Reorganisation of any teaching groups after the start of the school year in order to optimise the use of staff is likely to bring a response from some parents.

P.DHS The deputy principal suggested moving some of the students to even up the classes... What has happened is that I had a delegation of parents here the day before yesterday wanting to know why their children were shifted. What it boils down to is that these children were in a known, experienced teacher's class and they were shifted into a class where the teacher had only one year of experience. That is really what they were on about and they did not like that idea. They were quite blatant about the fact that they wanted their children to stay in that class even though there was an imbalance of numbers. Every parent of the six children who was going to be moved came in. There must have been some collusion. They were quite adamant that they wanted their child to stay in that room even though it would create an imbalance of numbers. I put it to them, would they like to see another readjustment of classes simply to satisfy their expectations? They saw this movement of their Year 4 children going into a Year 3/4 class as a demotion. The reality of it was that they knew the experienced teacher. She is a local person who had just come off accouchment leave. The other lass is a young inexperienced teacher who is only one year out of training. I did not convince them. They wanted me to leave the imbalance in class size. If I had moved someone else, it would have also displeased those parents. I informed the district superintendent that there would be something coming down the line. The bank manager mumbled something that 'We will see about this. We will get in touch with the Department'.... I couldn't convince them that we need to maintain reasonably even class sizes. This is Departmental policy.

The unexpected arrival of a parent delegation created a situation where the principal had to drop other responsibilities so as to justify school practice. Parents must then be informed about the values and procedures which underpin school policy and practice. The capacity of the principal to project the corporate image of the school will be tested in any interactive group.

Some principals created opportunities out of adversity in situations of potential conflict. Complaints about teachers were used as situations in which parents could begin to see the perspective of the staff. The principal encouraged all kinds of parent-teacher contact in order to project the image of the school. One principal saw that many of the school's problems came from a lack of community interest in the school. An attempt was made to identify resource people in the community, even when they were opponents. At one Parents and Citizens' meeting:

P.DHS There was opposition from one person but I can now identify a pattern of how this person operates. So far this person has not made any positive offerings to the school about what

the school is doing or could be doing in the future. This person is well-educated and articulate and I would dearly love to tap into this resource, to help us out in the future. It is a matter of redirecting the negative energy.

In another situation this principal sought parental input on the substance and format of a work experience programme for Year 10 students. Teachers, parents and students collectively worked on refining the purpose of the programme. Incorporation of parental ideas in the programme led to greater understanding and acceptance of school activities by parents. Some principals had sufficient confidence in their professional knowledge of community participation to take issues and problems to the parents. There was a realisation that community participation and review provided legitimacy to school activities. Some principals held attitudes which promoted community involvement rather than community participation or power sharing.

P.PS2 I would like to keep an open office so that parents feel that they can come and talk about problems or whatever they want to talk about at any time. I feel that is the duty of a principal to have an open office, but that at all times the principal should stick by his own ideas and the Education Department's policy of how a school should be run. But in the same way not to browbeat parents but to listen to what they have to say, and as diplomatically as possible steer them away from difficult situations where they might differ from what is normal for schools. I like to have the parents involved in the activities of the school. I feel that part of the principal's duty is to get the parents involved in hearing reading in classrooms, helping in the resource centre, helping with lunches or special days, helping in other group ways in various classrooms, in activities that the children do. I like to get the parents involved as much as possible in as many aspects as possible in the school curriculum.

In schools where principals acted as gatekeepers the school culture tended to support the action of the principal. Teachers expected the principal to insulate them from the demands of parents.

T.PS2 Really you can't be their (the parents') friend in an effective school. The principal is the head of their child's school and X (principal) is definitely the principal which I really like.

In another school the principal was under pressure from parents to allow the establishment of a school council.

P.PS2 The P & C want a school council. I would love a school council, but at the moment my hands are tied because of this industrial thing (Better Schools), although some schools were forming school councils before this.

The parents challenged the reasons given for closing the school off to greater community influence. It is evident that during an era of decentralisation and devolution principals have to be competent communicators. They must have expertise in negotiating effective working relationships with people in the community.

The principals had to project and defend the corporate image of the school. Considerable effort was given to the preparation of newsletters, monitoring the appearance of the school grounds and defining professional standards for school reporting of student progress to parents. Despite these efforts there were in some schools specific aspects of the corporate image which attracted criticism from parents.

P.SHS There is a group of people in the town who do not hold teachers in high regard. They would be looking at our teachers here from the point of view of their transience. Some of the teachers leave town every weekend; some have not even moved their homes here. Also, from the point of view that we don't control the kids - in that the answer is no longer a belting every time a kid steps out of line because things have changed. Not every kid at school wears a uniform. To the parents, that is a lack of discipline. Yet the Minister says we shall not enforce uniforms. We have got the Student Council encouraging school uniforms. I have made an announcement regarding 'inappropriate dress'.

Defending the image of the school was for many a new administrative task.

P.SHS I feel under more pressure from criticism, in that if I hear a parent or an adult in the town criticising the school, I react to this, more than I have in the past. I feel more responsibility for the school. I feel that this is my school. If they are saying something wrong about it then why have I not done something to rectify the matter?

Most of the principals of schools in country districts made a significant effort to participate in certain community activities. This was a deliberate strategy not only to find purposeful social and leisure activities but also to establish contacts with people who were members of the local community.

One PS2 principal found that the previous principal had given great attention to marketing the school in the community. Activities such as open days and evenings, displays of work in classrooms and school-wide competitions and drills were highlighted. Parents had come to believe that the school was very effective. The newly appointed principal was cautious of the corporate image of the school.

P.PS2 I have discovered that things are different from what I had anticipated. On the surface the school looked extremely efficient to the public, to most people, but when I started delving into certain areas, e.g. administration, I do not think it is up to scratch.

Closer examination by the new principal and new senior assistant revealed neglect of students with learning problems, a tail of low-achieving students in two classes and the need for a comprehensive reading programme. The principal was faced with communicating to parents the need for improvement in the school. Revelation of areas requiring improvement was not without risk to the reputation of the principal. This was especially so as the new principal had a less pretentious and less public style of operation than the previous principal.

P.PS2 ... I have had to do things differently here. At this school I am more in the public eye; the principal is more someone in the community that people look to. In the small country towns (previous schools) everyone knows you as a town personality, whereas here I have the 'headmaster' image. Here people are more open in their criticism, rather than do this behind my back, which often occurs in small country towns. This means I have to be prepared to back up my decisions, to answer questions from parents at P & C meetings. Also, because I have a bigger staff I lose duties that I had to do in other schools. I have not changed my style considerably. I feel that the expectations of me are different from what they were in other schools. Now, I do not think all the expectations are what I first thought they were going to be. I thought I may have to change in some areas, this was more of a veneer, the public relations aspect to be a 'Mr Smooth'. This has not arisen and it is perhaps because the community has become more accepting of me as a person. There are still people who do not like my approach.

Most parents eventually became used to his style of operation. During the first term of the school year a number of the new principals had to live in the shadow of the previous principal.

Some parents, and staff, continued to expect the new principal to have the same administrative style as the previous principal. For some prominent individuals in these schools this reference point for judging the principal continued until the end of the first school term.

Many events reported by the researchers to a greater or a lesser extent undermined the corporate image of the schools that was held by their community. There were many incidents where the principals had only a partial awareness of the possible effect of these events on community opinion. This may have been due to the pressure of other administrative demands. The unfortunate reality that faces many principals is that parents make judgements about the school according to only a narrow range of school activities. Many of the most visible aspects of the school - school sports days and the behaviour of students on the way home from school, the actions of teachers and the principal in the community - have little direct relation to the quality of the educational programme. In this situation even newly appointed principals have to accept responsibility for programmes which enable parents to make a more accurate evaluation of the quality of the educational programme.

All principals quickly developed a concern for the size of the enrolment. Student numbers directly influenced levels of staffing and hence forward planning. Principals were anxious to retain their initial staffing establishment and to avoid losing staff early in the term through a shortfall in the expected enrolment. Some schools were in a position of strength to attract students as a result of the availability of space on school buses and the range of offerings in a senior high school. Other schools were at a disadvantage as a result of population decline and poor community perception of the school and staff. Consequently principals had to negotiate agreement with the principals of adjacent schools as to the conditions under which students could cross catchment area boundaries. Overall the principals in this study were from schools that attracted students. They had to be able to develop a working relationship with other principals who tenaciously resisted the loss of even a single student.

10.2 Linkage with the Ministry of Education

In their relationship with head and district offices the principals generally accepted the support service available to them. During the year some moved closer to a brokering relationship and requested specific services at a rate which corresponded with the momentum of internal school development activities. One district superintendent, on the first visit to a school, attempted to persuade the principal to use a model for a particular strategy of school development. The principal had already embarked upon a search for a strategy of school development that was compatible with the school culture. There was a reluctance to subject the school to the discipline of a flexible but arbitrary model.

I How does your approach to school development fit with district policy?

P.PS2 The superintendent has experience in the old X region. Therefore this particular approach seems to be the way he would like me to go.

I Do you think the superintendent is aware of your experience in this area?

P.PS2 I don't think that he does. I put it to him that I am familiar with the diagram and that I have been involved with specific purpose programmes. His acknowledgement was fairly superficial. I feel fairly frustrated. I feel that one and a half hours could have been for some mutual learning rather than revision.

Principals need to know what is best for the school and to be prepared to argue for more than a standard service from the new district structures. Principals must use judgement to decide whether what amount to 'district development' initiatives are in the interests of the particular school to which they have been appointed. At a later stage of the year most principals had opportunities to contribute to district initiatives for professional development.

The release of Better Schools created a situation where new administrative functions would be progressively passed to schools. During Term 1 principals consulted with district staff on the procedures which should be used to manage a school grant and to devise procedures for the management of school staff, especially as

this related to the assignment of work loads to support staff and the assessment of teachers for permanency. The functions of the new districts were not yet clear and temporarily the principals were responsible for the operation of their school without close supervision from district office. In this new era of the school system the principals had to be able to interpret Ministry policies and to use judgement in order to establish school-level practices.

During the period of political brinkmanship between the State School Teachers' Union and MEWA, principals were aware of the need to maintain the level of staff effort. Commitment of the staff to the school was at risk during this period. One strategy for reducing conflict among staff was for principals to distance themselves from Better Schools or not promote discussion until more accurate information was available.

10.3 Findings

The principal has major responsibility for mediating the linkages of the school with the educational bureaucracy and the school community. For most school staff this is an 'invisible' aspect of the principalship. The acquisition of artistry in this facet of the role is a major learning experience for newly appointed principals.

10.3.1 Principals require greater capacity to articulate and promote a corporate image of the school which generates support from the community.

10.3.2 Principals require capacity to promote better working relationships among school staff and members of the community. At the same time principals will need to be assertive when confronted by community interest groups which make demands on the school. In this situation the principal must be able to identify and project the strengths of the instructional programme.

10.3.3 In some schools principals need to act as facilitators in order to revitalise the operations of parent advisory groups.

10.3.4 During a period of declining levels of resources principals need to be able to identify resources in the school community which can enrich the teaching programme.

10.3.5 Principals need the skills to represent the interests of their school when there is competition for educational resources within the educational bureauracy. Principals should evaluate emergent district policies to ensure that they are supportive of school level initiatives.

CHAPTER 11

PRINCIPALS AND CONTEXTS: AN OVERVIEW

11.0 PRINCIPALS AND CONTEXTS: AN OVERVIEW

This report considers the learning experiences of newly appointed principals so as to identify their professional development needs as they establish a presence in a school and attempt to provide leadership for school development. The study is bound to a number of contexts: the nature of the school administrator role during a particular phase of educational reform; the cycle of activities of the school year; appointment to selected categories of schools; and finally the meshing of the principal's specific repertoire of administrative skills with the special mix of organisational and cultural characteristics of a school. The actions of principals in these contexts are now referenced against school effectiveness research (Purkey and Smith, 1983; Mulford, 1985; Duignan, 1986), perspectives of schools as cultural organisations (Sergiovanni, 1984; Deal, 1987; Duignan, 1987) and research from business organisations which suggests management strategies for the 'new age' (Bennis and Nanus, 1985; Hickman and Silva, 1986; Wynn and Guiditus, 1986). These contexts are now analysed to identify 'what principals should do'. This analysis will enable the identification of a process-oriented and context-bound view of the professional development needs of newly appointed principals. Some career transitions are also identified

11.1 Educational Reform

The passage of the State education system through a profound period of reorganisation creates special demands for the professional development of cohorts of newly appointed principals. Each phase of an educational restructuring generates a need for principals to respond to a new mix of administrative tasks. During the conduct of the field study the focus was on gaining understanding and acceptance of the Better Schools proposals. Principals had a responsibility to promote discussion of the new organisational design for education among the teaching staff and the school community as information became available. There was a need for teachers to be linked to the new professional expectations of the educational policy makers. Not all principals chose to accomplish this task.

T.SHS I am not happy that the principal has adopted a cynical attitude toward the Department over Better Schools. This does not encourage support and interest from the staff.

The politically charged context of education at that time created risks for the principal who would attempt to articulate the main ideas. Without initiative from the principal to systematically promote inquiry about the meaning of the report, the capacity of the school staff to respond to change at a later stage would be reduced.

Comprehension of the forces driving educational change required that the principal had environmental scanning skills relating to the public sector, the MEWA and the stakeholder environments as well as the micropolitics of the school. Contextual awareness enables early identification of the real changes that would progressively take place in schools. All principals were aware of the coming changes, but some focused on only a particular facet of the new organisational design, e.g. computers to assist with school administration, the school grant. The period of the study did not extend long enough to assess whether principals acted as initiators or responders to external change.

The main administrative task which was decentralised during the period of the study was the responsibility of the principal for the supervision and evaluation of staff-on-probation who sought permanent status. This required principals to upgrade their knowledge of the formal evaluation of staff.

The implementation phase of the unit curriculum was undertaken in DHS and SHS schools during the period of the study. This complex, externally imposed innovation further transformed schools from a hierarchical to a more collaborative style of operation where committees controlled policy-making. The principal became more of a facilitator and co-ordinator of the pacing and timing of change. Collegial working relationships were needed with other administrators, and parents in order to harness their energy to school-level initiatives. In this pattern of school operations effective interpersonal and communication skills were required of the principal. Planning, management, organisational problem solving and evaluation skills are essential for school development

activities. The exercise of leadership came from management of the expectations, goals, values and work practices that were articulated in the culture of the school. Leadership by the principal and others becomes partially indirect.

The set of administrative skills implicit in this section of the report were anticipated in the analysis of the evolution of school development as a contextual factor influencing the role of the principal in Western Australia (See Section 3.6).

11.2 The School Year

The administrative demands faced by the newly appointed principal are in part determined by the cycle of the four-term school year.

The first term experience centres on the process of establishing a presence in a school. Beginning principals have experienced both challenge and stress and have drawn on their repertoire of administrative skills and knowledge to influence the operation of a school. They have exercised caution not to make changes that will diminish support, or to promote consciously their own values in the school. However, principal-initiated changes took place in all schools. Each principal made a concerted effort to understand where the school was at and to pick up ongoing activities. A substantial part of their choice of action could be attributed to the accumulated values, skills and knowledge which they brought to the school. The principals varied in their capacity to scan and to develop sensitivity to a new school situation. Some of their actions resulted from a reading of the new organisational and cultural circumstances which demanded more effective responses from staff and students. The principals differed in their capacity to gain insight into the causes of problems.

Typically the new principals were overwhelmed with information concerning current school initiatives, resources and environmental factors. Paradoxically it was difficult for the principals to obtain and interpret feedback which established the degree of acceptance by staff of their pattern of influence. At this stage staff were not sure as to how the authority of the principalship would be used and whether the expectations that were conveyed to

staff were to become the manifest operating procedures of the school. Similarly the principals did not know many staff sufficiently well to be able to read the response of staff to the pattern of principal influence. During the term a process of mutual alignment took place as suggested by Ball (1987, p. 84). The principals were prepared to adjust certain aspects of their emerging or preferred style, while school staff and parents progressively acquired new modes of accommodation. However, not all continuing teachers felt secure that the new principal would acknowledge and pick up the main themes of school organisation.

Special effort is needed to prepare principals more adequately for the start of the school year. It is important for the effectiveness of the school as well as for the confidence of the principal that there is progress beyond the reactive phase of management. A broader range of experience within their previous schools would help principals who come from senior teacher and deputy principal positions. Familiarity with the work conditions of all types of staff, school filing systems, school budgeting procedure and the preparation of various statistical returns represent skills and knowledge which could be acquired from training packages prior to appointment. Ideally, aspiring principals could be given opportunities to observe or to perform 'invisible' aspects of the principalship, such as the linking of the school with the community, long before they receive an appointment. Overall some degree of administrative efficiency is required in planning, setting and revising priorities, written communication and the capacity to react to unexpected events. Competence in the art of delegation and the capacity to filter information are needed in this phase of the school year.

From the time of taking up the appointment there is a high demand on the principal's time by what could appear to be a variety of unrelated activities. It becomes important that the principal has a reference point for day-to-day priorities and decisions. This is to prevent drift into a pattern of non-cumulative decision-making. Understanding of one's own perspective of the process of learning or knowledge of the school effectiveness research may serve as critical anchor points for decision-making as more accurate knowledge is accumulated about the characteristics of the school.

Aspiring principals should have substantial ideas about education and school organisation and have the confidence to articulate and justify these beliefs. Principals require frames of reference relating to student learning, professional standards and teacher morale. (See Taylor, 1986) If the principal is to be able to mobilise administrative skills, these values need to be progressively linked with the emerging perception of a new school context. A necessary but not sufficient condition for the transition from reactive management is the acquisition of a view of the future of the school from which achievable goals can be defined.

Term 2 is a phase of the school year where there is a concern with the review of ongoing school development activities, and preparations are made to set goals for the preparation of future programmes. The principals varied in their capacity to develop and implement strategic plans so as to provide direction for the school and agreement about the process for moving the school forward. Differences were evident in their development of a holistic view of the school, the conceptualisation of the dynamics of school organisation, the depth of analysis of the threats and opportunities to new school activities and the considered choice of alternative courses of action. In addition the principals varied in their efforts to communicate with staff so as to encourage participation in the planning process.

The most telling problems to impact on the principal were the quality of the working relationship with other administrators, senior teachers and teachers who comprise the school staff. Principals require frames of reference for analysis and repair of the intense interpersonal dynamics of the work situation. When difficult work relationships emerge there is a need to be able to separate the people from the issues. The working relationship of the senior staff is critical to many aspects of school operations. It is not to be expected that a new principal will fit into the previous working arrangement of senior staff. In fact, it may be some time before the principal receives feedback as to how much disturbance of this arrangement has taken place. Principals need frames of reference for improving the working relationships among members of the school community. In addition they need to know how to exercise influence without resort to the formal authority of

their position. Finally, it was found that some principals experienced degrees of professional isolation and even social isolation. This creates problems for a principal if it restricts opportunities for the attainment of knowledge about school operations, and also it limits feedback which can improve the confidence of the new principal.

A critical test of the principal is whether influence can be brought to bear to facilitate the emergence, clarification or maintenance of a collective view of the way the school should be. Current perspectives of leadership place great emphasis on goal setting, leadership by consensus, and team-building exercises (Bennis and Nanus, 1984; Wynn and Guiditus, 1986; Hickman and Silva, 1986). Effective schools research highlights the need for schools to be characterised by both a sense of mission, instructional leadership, staff development, communication of high expectations for achievement and a valuing of parental input to the school. Newly appointed principals should endeavour to pick up these themes. Judgement has to be used as to the level of readiness of staff to accept responsibility for aspects of school planning and policy-making. Some principals were not able to give attention to these themes of school effectiveness. Other principals attempted to initiate staff into critical inquiry about school operations through educative leadership.

Principals need frames of reference for human resource development. Many reservoirs of human potential among school staff remained undetected. Principals have to offer more than 'support', the 'open door' policy, an expectation that staff are 'professional' and the opportunity for staff to 'volunteer' for positions of responsibility. According to school effectiveness research and current views of cultural leadership, staff should be challenged to reaffirm or to reshape the collective view of the school through inquiry and collaborative policy-making. Despite the demands of administration some new principals were able to promote or to maintain these initiatives. The principal has to make time to be with teaching staff so as to promote consciousness of how individuals contribute to school development. This is a difficult task in large schools.

In the current situation it becomes important that newly appointed principals have strategic planning skills for managing change. Exposing staff and parents to information is not enough. Planning groups need to have agreement on the change process and the progress that has to be made in order for interest to be maintained. Principals require the capacity to analyse school dynamics as well as to have a detailed knowledge of what is happening. Information is required about the threats and opportunities which exist for various courses of collective action. The scheduling of meetings, the control of conflict among committed staff and the orchestration of effective collaborative practices require high levels of interpersonal skills throughout the change process.

In Term 3 the principal prepares returns on staffing and resource levels for the next school year. This forces decision-making about the allocation and management of human and material resources for the coming year. During the whole course of the year it is likely that teaching staff will become concerned about some aspects of decision-making and the policy process.

In many schools there was evidence that some blocks of staff had limited confidence in the decision-making process of the school. Below are some of the problem situations:

- o The principal did not see the participation of staff in the policy process of the school as being important.
- o Staff meetings were infrequent and ineffective. They served either to legitimate the policy of the principal, or the principal was powerless to influence the discussion when speaking from the floor.
- o Decision-making depended upon informal contacts, i.e., decision-making elites or 'administration over coffee at morning tea'. Later in the year, staff become more tolerant of the decision-making process, but continue to be indifferent.
- o Productive meetings among senior staff did not eventuate. When staff were given opportunities to participate, they did not contribute to the discussion.

Upgrading of the interpersonal skills of school staff was needed to enable them to take advantage of policy and discussion forums. Some principals made policy without consultation when they believed

that they had expert knowledge relating to the policy issue, e.g. discipline timetabling. Many principals experienced a backlash from staff about inappropriate decision-making, often on what seemed to be relatively unimportant topics, e.g. smoking policy, use of the photocopier, the duty roster. Although these topics do not relate to the substantive goals of the school, they infringed on the daily routines of teachers. It is to be expected that staff will recognise the implications of any changes to their routines and will demand input into policy-making. Newly appointed principals face dilemmas concerning decision-making:

- o Whether to broaden or narrow staff participation in decision-making.
- o Knowing which issues should require consultation with staff, which issues should be made without consultation. (Staff also expected to have things both ways. They expect to be consulted, but also expect the principal to be decisive.)
- o Being able to filter and select the most important issues which emerge from meetings. There is insufficient time to consider all issues in depth.

During term four the principals had to work hard at keeping the professional effort of staff at a high level. By now the demands of teaching had worn down many teachers. Significant effort was given to the management of the end-of-year student testing and reporting, as well as preparations for the following school year. This included organising and updating information booklets for incoming staff and students. Other staff had applied for transfers and were now oriented to the work routine of a new school. In some cases teachers made a conscious decision to leave as the school had taken on a new character.

T.SHS I believe that the style of policy-making in the school is now wrong. There is now a severe communication problem among the senior staff. Some senior staff are waiting for the end of the year when they will leave the school. They are not prepared to fight for open decision-making. Also, many staff are withdrawn from the unit curriculum and are accepting of the way things are.

Although the new principal cannot be accountable for all the changes which emerge in the school, some staff recognise the

presence of a new administrative style. In choosing to go to another school they hope to experience a decision-making style that is more compatible with their own views of administration.

During the year two of the newly appointed principals won promotions to a new position. Initially this was followed by a public recognition of their effort.

C.SHS The quickest way to destroy a school is to appoint a headmaster for only twelve months, following on from a headmaster who has been here for many, many years. It is of great concern to me. My boys have said to me that it is a pity that she is going, not because she has fitted in extremely well since she came, but everyone had that anxiety. 'Gosh! It is a woman that is coming. What the hell is going to happen?' She fitted in and they really like her, and all of a sudden she is whipped away.

From this point some members of the school staff were influenced by the knowledge that ongoing policies and projects would be coordinated by another principal in the coming year. By Term 4 these principals made preparations for their withdrawal from the school. This centred on bringing ongoing school development initiatives such as the planning of the unit curriculum or the establishment of a school council to a stage of closure. One principal believed that new programmes should not be initiated which would have to be taken up by the incoming principal.

11.3 Type of School

The 10 schools in which the beginning principal took up appointment represented a number of types. These are now considered according to the category of school as well as whether the school had a city or a country location. The types have implications for the identification of particularistic as opposed to generic administrative skills that are required of the newly appointed principal.

In this study three categories of schools were considered. These were:

The Class 2 primary school (6-16 teachers), the Class 2 district high school (14-25 teachers) and senior high school (40-80 teachers). By comparison with the other schools, senior high schools had the following characteristics:

- o A larger staff.
- o Additional layers of organisation resulting from the departmental and year level structure.
- o A broader curriculum, involving different pathways for special categories of students. The complexities of the timetable.
- o Teaching staff were less likely to share common methods, resulting from their subject oriented backgrounds. Teaching staff were likely to be more assertive of their interests and have a stronger commitment to the Teachers' Union. More decisions had to be negotiated.
- o Larger physical plant and specialist facilities.

In the SHS the non-teaching role of the principal and the subject department organisation and culture discouraged principals from exercising leadership with curriculum and teaching issues. By comparison PS2 and DHS principals or deputy principals would intervene to restore preferred practices. The newly appointed primary school principals had experience of teaching in nearly all year levels. This enabled direct supervision of teachers' programmes of work, teaching methods and testing procedures. This closer supervision of teaching activities contributed to the greater dependency of primary teachers on the principal. Overall the SHS principal had less opportunity to use direct influence over staff. This means that influence on the teaching programme must be established through the heads of subject departments and through the shaping of the school culture. In many schools there appeared to be insufficient executive professional leadership, especially instructional leadership.

The city or country location of schools had implications for the administrative skills of the newly appointed principal. Country schools are characterised by a higher than average component of teachers-on-probation. A significant proportion of the principals' time is needed for the basic inservicing and supervision of inexperienced teachers, as well as the evaluation of teachers for

permanency. In country schools principals have to accept greater responsibility for the welfare of staff and their families. Attention had to be given to representing staff in disputes about housing, salaries, leave and community prejudice. Some country principals have responsibility for bus routes. Significant amounts of time must be allocated to ensure the safety of students and the management of community based disputes about the organisation of the service.

11.4 The School

The way in which the newly appointed principal mobilises a distinctive repertoire of administrative skills from interaction with the unique characteristics of a particular school has been the focus of the study. The principals showed variation in the extent to which they interacted with the new context and tailored their style. Some principals were fortunate in that they inherited a substantial collaborative infrastructure that was already institutionalised in the school without having to pay attention to team building and visioning activities. Other schools were characterised by political environments where the newly appointed principal was not able to establish an adequate power base. Although newly appointed, some principals demonstrated competence in the problem-solving strategies attributed to experts. This included use of metacognitive processes and they were highly flexible in their planning. (See Leithwood and Stager, 1987) Some principals did not tailor their preferred style to provide executive professional leadership.

In order to highlight the professional development needs of some principals two vignettes are presented. They are composites and serve to highlight problem situations relating to the delegation and exercise of authority.

1. The principal supervises teacher programmes and test results, and invests considerable effort in consulting with staff on an individual basis. However, there is limited executive professional leadership in facilitating staff to collectively develop a proactive stance to school problems. The teachers have a high level of respect for the principal as a result of the freedom which they experience. The school staff have a good working relationship but many of

the programme and corporate image difficulties of the school are not addressed. Emphasis was placed on routine maintenance activities rather than reformulation of the teaching programme.

2. The principal is relatively powerless to influence school operations. Subject heads have control of the operations of the teaching departments and the associated resources. These staff approach school policy-making from the perspective of preserving sectional interests. There was insufficient cohesion in the working relationship of the principal and other administrative staff. The capacity of the principal to manage conflict among staff was limited. Decision making centres on the preservation of existing practice, rather than the development of a collective vision for the school.

The principals also varied in the extent to which their leadership was situational depending upon the expertise of other participants, or whether they exercised the same degree of control over all areas of decision-making.

A final difference centred on the extent to which they saw a need to 'lead by example' or whether to draw back from day-to-day operations.

P.PS2 I do feel that my role is that of initiator of ideas and I present them to the staff and get some sort of reaction from them. Sometimes I will initiate an idea not thinking that the rest of the staff are going to accept it, and they do.

By comparison other principals preferred a less direct style.

P.SHS Principals should draw back from day-to-day operations and adopt a non-confrontationist approach to managing staff.

The newly appointed principals demonstrated a number of coping strategies during the course of the year:

- o Discussion of issues and problems with senior staff.
- o Reduction of information overload through consultation with a small number of advisors whose opinion is valued.
- o Delegation of tasks to other staff.
- o Assignment of priority to demands on time, e.g., at the commencement of the school year, matters relating to students

and staff are of greater importance than district and head office requests for information.

- o Concentration of effort into a limited and manageable number of facets of school administration.
- o Giving priority to the most pressing demands, e.g. focus on the short term.

11.5 Career Transitions

The first year of appointment is a short time over which to consider career transitions. Experienced practitioners might claim that it takes perhaps three years for the principal to come to understand the 'deep structure' of the school and make the necessary adjustments to one's knowledge and skills. However, the first term of the appointment may be of great importance in helping the principal to make a successful long-term adjustment to a school.

The transition from Class 3 to Class 2 principal did not appear to bring significant change in style. Principals reported that they could use the same techniques of communication and policy-making as for the smaller schools. There was an awareness that more formal procedures would be required in the next category of school and with the Better Schools requirements. The Class 2 schools used in the study were not large for this category. It may be that the similarity in size between the former and the present school delays the realisation of the need for change.

New principals who have progressed from principalships of Class 3 schools (2-6 teachers) have to:

- o shift from informal discussion by staff about school policy to formal staff meetings to consider policy;
- o promote a corporate image of the school which centres on school policy rather than the credibility of the principal as a member of the school community;
- o come to recognise the contribution that can be made by other members of school staff to school administration.

Coming from the role of deputy principal Class 1 to principal Class 2 involved picking up new responsibilities for the external relations of the school. On becoming a principal it was necessary in particular to shift from the relatively short-term perspective of a deputy principal engaged in a series of specific tasks to the longer term leadership perspective which considers whether proposed initiatives from whatever sources are likely to be in the overall interests of the school. Taking up the principalship in district high schools and senior high schools was a very significant change in job responsibility. On becoming a principal it was necessary to take a long-term perspective of whether proposed initiatives were in the interest of the school.

New principals who have progressed from the deputy principalship have to consider the following:

- o The shift from a short-term, task-oriented, responding role to an orientation which requires critical reflection on the long-term consequences of a variety of school operations.
- o They have to develop strategies for linking the school to the community and to district office; develop competence in projecting and managing the corporate image of the school; and demonstrate confidence in public relations.
- o As new principals they tend to view school culture and the expectations of school participants from a short-term perspective.
- o During the course of the year there is a shift from the advice of continuing administration and senior staff toward giving greater attention to staff, student and parent opinion.

One SHS principal showed a clear shift of perspective during the year. A stage was reached where there was withdrawal from heavy involvement in day-to-day operations. A non-confrontational approach to managing staff was adopted during Term 3.

P.SHS I just blundered in at the start of the year with false confidence. Very quickly I was swamped with work and found myself flowing along with daily routines. I am now drawing back from things that I once did.

Analysis of the deputy principal SHS role shows that by itself this may not be an appropriate preparation for the principalship. (See Weindling and Earley, 1987b)

11.6 Recommendations

The school administrator role is performed in a variety of contexts. These are: the phase(s) of educational reform, the cycle of the school year, the category of school to which the appointment has been made, and the special characteristics of a particular school. Each of these contexts has implications for the principalship.

11.6.1 Educators who aspire to the principalship should be given opportunities to view and to participate in the 'invisible' aspects of the principalship long before they apply for appointment. Induction of deputy principals into the principalship could be a part of normal school operations. This would enable beginning principals to develop an improved level of knowledge and comfort with these facets of the role during the first term of appointment.

11.6.2 Educators who aspire to the principalship should be encouraged to undertake specific short professional development activities to remedy perceived 'deficits' in their style, before applying for the principalship.

11.6.3 Principals who experience professional isolation would benefit from the development of an ongoing collegial relationship with a senior principal who does not have a vested interest in the school or district.

11.6.4 Principals should give greater attention to human resource development. Improving the capacities of staff, including their participation in decision making and policy making, ultimately improves the quality of school organisation.

11.6.5 School-level programmes of human resource development should be linked to the review, planning and implementation of school development.

11.6.6 Review of the administrative demands which confront principals at the start of the first school term is needed to see whether:

- (i) school based administrative systems can provide information for quicker decision-making and report preparation (for statistical returns, reorganisation of the timetable, workloads).
- (ii) some of these activities can be delayed until later in the school year.

- 11.6.7 To get the principal beyond reactive management attention should be given to medium and long term planning. Working toward these goals requires investment of effort in strategic planning. This refers to the development of agreement about realistic processes which can be used to obtain achievable goals in the context of a school. Strategic planning skills are also critical to the management of school development.
- 11.6.8 Principals require a number of frameworks of professional knowledge as they undertake organisational problem solving. It is not satisfactory for principals to rely on intuition when they are required to give attention to human resource development, staff supervision and appraisal, school development and programme evaluation.
- 11.6.9 There should be an upgrading of the quality of instructional leadership of newly appointed principals. In primary and district high schools emphasis should shift away from the control of teachers by requirements for programming and the testing of student achievement toward the communication of values which encourage staff to adapt and devise more appropriate strategies and components of the curriculum. In the senior high school there is a need for principals to exercise instructional leadership so as to create greater coherence across subject departments in the teachers' perspectives of the secondary curriculum.

CHAPTER 12

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS: SUMMARY

12.0 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS

In this chapter there is a statement of the general professional development needs of newly appointed principals which emerged from the preliminary research activities and the field study. The implications of the findings for the delivery of professional development experiences are considered, and then the issues relating to the delivery of professional development. Some proposals for further research about newly appointed principals follow, together with an assessment of the significance of the research study.

12.1 Some General Professional Development Needs

A process-oriented inquiry into the professional development experiences of 10 newly appointed principals shows how they respond to the organisational demands and the culture of the school during a particular phase of educational reform. The results of the field study are compatible with the learning experiences that were obtained from analysis of the school development policy initiative and the implications for principals (Section 3.6), the administrative skills identified by practitioners who had experienced success with school development (Section 4.1), and the learning experiences reported by beginning principals at the end of their first year of appointment (Section 4.2). The research study has identified some general professional development needs of newly appointed principals. The multiple case study design and the small sample of participants who provided data for the study does not allow conclusions as to the incidence of professional development needs among a cohort of beginning principals. However, the research study does identify a range of context-bound professional development needs that are characteristic of newly appointed principals during a period of educational change. The use of case studies to investigate a process in context has produced findings which go beyond the researchers' initial conceptions of the principalship.

The following is an assessment of the administrative knowledge and skills that are required of newly appointed principals as they contribute to the organisational effectiveness of the school.

The set of administrative qualities includes skills which are required to promote school development.

School Management

- o Knowledge of the power structure of the school and community, sensitivity to the culture of the school, e.g., core values, beliefs, conventional methods for solving problems, organisational procedures. Principals quickly grasp the routine of administration but do not have full awareness of the 'deep structure' which supports school practices. The management strategies of the principal should take account of the micropolitics of the school and the interests of stakeholders.
- o Coordination of the administrative work of all staff in promotional positions. In some ways the administrative role of the principal is a residual of tasks which cannot be undertaken by other school staff.
- o Strategies for management and organisational problem-solving. Having capacity to conceptualise the nature of the problem in relation to where the school is going. Developing strategies for overcoming the problem, e.g., timelines, marshalling resources, coordination, monitoring, decision-making in the light of school goals.
- o Personnel management. This includes defining the work duties and being cognisant of possible efficiencies for the deployment of teaching, secretarial, technical and grounds staff. The principal should recognise the contribution which these staff make to the operation of the school.
- o Human resource development. The constantly breaking demands of routine administration delayed or prevented systematic appraisal of the contribution that teaching staff could make to school priorities. In some schools 'talented staff' or 'problem staff' were given special opportunities, but the potential of other staff was not geared to the future development of the school. The provision of inservice activities for staff which serviced school priorities was neglected.
- o Industrial relations. Knowledge of the work conditions and the conditions of employment of all categories of staff.
- o Decision-making and the policy process. Principals must use judgement in knowing when to make decisions or when to activate committees to make decisions. Quality decision-making is dependent upon the possession of accurate knowledge of the current state of school operations, and change in the education system and community, as well as knowledge of the perceptions of stakeholders. This also includes delegating responsibility to teachers and parents in approved policy-making forums.
- o Capacity to set meeting agenda, chair meetings, generate participation to obtain resolutions, follow up decisions with action.

- o Coordination of the operations of policy-making forums to promote collaborative decision making. In the micropolitics of some SHS schools it may not be possible to achieve consensus policy-making. Here the goal is to maintain a viable working relationship among the protagonists.
- o Harnessing the management of the physical resources of the school (buildings, facilities, equipment and grounds) to priority activities of the educational programme.
- o Acquisition of accurate information about school finances. Prepare a budget that supports school programmes.
- o Supervision of staff. Develop a procedure for the formative and summative performance appraisal of probationary staff.
- o Accurate knowledge of the functional reorganisation of the MEWA and the expectations for the new approach to school management, i.e., collaborative policy making in a self-managing school.

Leadership and Human Relations

- o A clearly thought-out view of the teaching-learning process and of the purpose of schooling. A personal view of the process of education should be grounded in research-based knowledge as well as accumulated experiential knowledge. This knowledge base enables the identification of school-level priorities and facilitates movement into purposeful and cumulative decision-making.
- o Identification of the values which are implicit in a variety of school activities. Capacity to select and authorize key values which underpin school operations.
- o Cultivating staff interest in whole-school problems so that there is commitment to school development. Reduce the teacher preoccupation with classroom problems and promote team building.
- o Facilitate staff to develop a collective view of the kind of educational programme that best meets the needs of all groups of students. This may involve strategies to formulate a vision of where the school is going, the identification of school goals and obtaining agreement about the nature of the curriculum.
- o Capacity to conceptualise and manage a school-level change process. This requires the careful selection of a strategy for change that takes account of the level of readiness of the staff, and is compatible with the culture of the school.
- o Effective oral and written communication with staff so that the principal's views and contribution to school operations are known to staff and the members of the school community. Members of the school community must understand the reasons for the principal's choice of action. Effective communication bestows legitimacy on the actions of the principal. It is essential that the principal does not become socially and

professionally isolated from the school staff and the school community.

- o Demonstrate a credible public presence, e.g., capacity to present and justify school policy in a public forum.
- o Recognition of when staff experience stress, conflict and dilemmas. These problems have their origin in unsatisfactory social relationships which result from contradictory expectations, work overloads or lack of recognition of staff expertise and ownership. Although the principals were constantly monitoring staff morale, not all could accurately diagnose the needs of particular staff for support from the principal.
- o Capacity to resolve conflicts among a variety of school participants through active listening and negotiation. It is important that some protagonists do not emerge as 'losers' and that all parties have a clear picture of their contribution to school operations.
- o Encourage and assist staff to make use of opportunities for their own professional development.
- o Encourage non-promotional staff to take an interest in school administration and, where possible, to delegate responsibility and to assist teachers to also exercise leadership in particular areas of school operations.
- o Encourage and assist staff to make use of opportunities for their own professional development.
- o The principal has to be able to give priority to competing demands on his/her time and energy. It is important not to succumb to the demands of routine administration. Time must be given for continuous effort with forward planning.
- o Encourage teachers to develop more positive attitudes to the Parents and Citizens' Association and to school councils.

Curriculum and Instruction

- o The demonstration of instructional leadership. Provide a framework to guide the way in which teachers undertake curriculum planning, programming, instruction, evaluation and reporting to parents. This centres on management of the climate within which teachers will make decisions. The establishment of a process which facilitates the participation of teachers in the shaping of the curriculum. SHS principals should be prepared to accept greater responsibility for the instructional leadership of teachers in each subject department. DHS and PS2 principals need to demonstrate instructional leadership which creates autonomy, rather than dependence in teachers.
- o Develop an 'overall picture' of the students' experience of the curriculum. The principal should not become an advocate for interest groups which represent a particular curriculum component.

Students

- o The demands of administration should not be allowed to prevent the principal from maintaining contact with a broad range of students.

External Relationships

- o Contextual awareness of the new socio-political environment of education and the implications for educational reform. Understanding of the educational 'megatrends' which are transforming Australian schools from a hierarchical toward a collaborative pattern of operations.
- o Projection of a positive corporate image of the school into the community. Effective communication of school policies to parents.
- o Managing the status of the school for judgment by staff from other MEWA units.
- o Capacity to develop an effective working relationship with the district superintendent and external change facilitators.
- o Awareness of the extent to which MEWA policies and initiatives support school priorities and culture.
- o Accessing the MEWA bureaucracy to obtain best use of current supports for the school and staff. Identifying and shaping the availability of inservice which is compatible with school priorities. Competing and cooperating with other schools to obtain best use of limited resources.
- o Promoting community interest and commitment to a school council, school-based decision-making groups and the process of school development.
- o Providing assistance to help maintain the viability of the Parents and Citizens' Association.

The above set of skills is extensive and may well represent the professional knowledge that is required of principals in other stages of their careers. On taking up appointment it is important that the new principal does not experience an extended period of reactive management and non-cumulative decision-making. This requires that the principal is able to scan the school and develop priorities which establish a sense of purpose.

Scanning the school environment includes assessment of the human resource potential of members of the school community.

Identification of human resources should include those people who may not show a positive orientation to the new principal's style.

The principal must also show capacity for organisational problem-solving. To some extent the principal should actively seek out, rather than ignore, school problems. Engagement in problem-solving provides opportunities for the demonstration of influence. It is desirable that principals are practitioners who obtain stimulus and satisfaction from the diagnosis of school problems.

Simultaneously there is a need to develop an effective working relationship with other school participants. These relationships, especially with other staff who have responsibility for school administration, must be actively nurtured throughout the school year. The school is a social arena. The effectiveness of school staff is conditional upon satisfactory interpersonal relationships. The quality of these relationships must be closely monitored. The exercise of influence, and eventually leadership, takes place through a social medium. Success in the management of the micropolitics of the school was central to the new appointee's feeling of satisfaction with the principalship. The lowest moments in the experience of the first year came from the inability to obtain the personal and political support of other stakeholders in the school community.

At many stages of the year the new principal will require capacity to conceptualise and plan for school-level change. The management of school development represented one of the weakest parts of the professional knowledge base of the newly appointed principals. Attention must be given to the role of the principal as a change facilitator who has responsibility for shaping the value climate in which other school participants will operationalize a shared vision of the school. School development is more than a technical task that requires the management of a timeline. Successful school development involves the identification, articulation and transmission of values. Newly appointed principals must be prepared to provide leadership so that other school participants develop a commitment to school-level change. The influence of the principal is further enhanced by the cultivation of a close working relationship with other change facilitators.

Many of the principals in this study felt the frustration of having to use intuitive approaches in order to keep up with the demands of

administration. Inevitably the continuous reaction to problems had a debilitating effect on the reserves of motivation of the new principal. Wadsworth (1987) notes the need for principals to have a set of models which allow for a greater sense of control over the demands of administration. A list of frameworks which has special application to new principals would include interpersonal skills for the principal to use authority as legitimate power, goal setting, strategic planning, instructional leadership, staff development and corporate image. The newly appointed principals were forced to rely on intuitive rather than proven frameworks of professional knowledge. This situation is unsatisfactory. It is essential that newly appointed principals have a set of frameworks which can be applied to give direction to their administrative endeavour.

12.2 The Provision of Professional Development

The field study showed that the first year of the principalship was a demanding experience. It represents a professional transition since the appointee must acquire new administrative skills both immediately prior to and after taking up appointment. The newly appointed principal must then combine these skills into a style while on the job. This pattern can be described as 'emergency professional development' for it takes place when the appointment begins or shortly afterwards. Action should be taken to reduce the importance of emergency professional development during the first year of appointment as a preparation for the principalship.

Newly appointed principals require opportunities to reflect on their first-year experiences. In this study it was evident that work overload prevented many of the principals from regular review of their actions. This represented a wastage of opportunities for professional growth. The newly appointed principals varied in their level of awareness of their own professional development needs. Some principals gave little attention to any attempt to improve their repertoire of administrative skills systematically. In some cases the principals' assessment of their own professional development needs differed from that of the researchers. This could mean that some principals require assistance in diagnosing

their professional development needs in relation to the future development of the school.

For some of the principals in the case studies the researcher became a consultant who could be used as a sounding board for strategy and tactics relating to school problems. Professional isolation is a problem which is experienced by some beginning principals. The confidence of these principals can be improved by opportunities to obtain advice and to consult with an experienced practitioner who is not a stakeholder in the politics of the district or the school.

The professional development needs of each principal were different. Many of the problems of the principals could only be fully understood in their complexity against a mosaic of school-level contextual factors. It is evident that a 'standard service' approach to the delivery of professional development has limited application in meeting the needs of newly appointed principals. Newly appointed principals are likely to obtain meaningful growth and support from ongoing reflection about their own practice in a situation where they control the issues and the pacing of learning. During a period of profound education system-level change it is essential that principals engage in continuing professional development. The experiences of the beginning principal provide a meaningful context for continuing professional development.

The above suggests a need for an upgrading in the level and the linkage of professional development opportunities for newly appointed principals in the State education system of Western Australia. This has implications for a number of the institutions that have been associated with this research study.

Ministry of Education (WA)

Greater emphasis should be given to promoting a professional culture which encourages practitioners to accept responsibility for ongoing professional development activities when these opportunities become available. Promising practitioners who aspire to the principalship should be identified and encouraged to think

about the principalship from the time they progress to their first promotional position. Provision could be made for a career planning service as proposed in the Beazley (1984) report. This would require assessment of the present competencies of a practitioner against the minimum competency requirements of a sequence of promotional positions. These minimum competence requirements should be known for each promotional position. Promising practitioners should be able to chart their range of administrative experiences against those which are required of the beginning principal. During a period of educational change the job descriptions and the criteria that are used for the selection of applicants should correspond with the real duties of the job. Duty statements are required for each promotional position to assist promising practitioners to guide their own professional development. Deputy principals require special inservice opportunities to acquire experience in forward planning and in linking the school with the community.

Traditionally, district offices (previously regions) have been the major source of support for new principals. District-level staff should continue to give special attention to the needs of newly appointed principals. Currently district-based activities are a major source of professional development and support for newly appointed principals. A review should be undertaken to see if the content and the form of delivery of support can be further improved. District office staff have a key role in the identification, linkage and brokering of professional development activities to newly appointed principals. They are well placed to promote a learning community which builds administrator skills. (See Storey, 1987) Ongoing reflection about particular school problems and practice is an important part of professional development. The newly appointed principal should have control over the activities that will become the focus of learning.

The establishment of computerized school-based administrative systems in Western Australian schools provides a new opportunity for the delivery of professional development support and experiences to newly appointed principals. The linking of these systems in a network has potential to address the needs of newly appointed principals in remote schools. The facility may be a

positive contribution to reducing the degree of professional isolation of many principals in rural areas.

Principals' Associations

The principals' associations have played a significant role in highlighting the professional development needs of their members. These organisations should continue to articulate concerns about the content and delivery of experiences which prepare principals for the future. As these organisations take action to gain greater control over the provision of professional development it is important to recognise the needs of newly appointed principals. The initiative by the Western Australian Primary Principals' Association to investigate the feasibility of a principals' training and assessment centre should include the provision of advice and support for beginning practitioners. Principals' associations are well placed to assess the extent to which the professional development experiences of their members can be transferred into practice in the school.

As part of normal school operations principals have a responsibility to see that deputy principals obtain a broad range of experience in school administration before they apply for the principalship. The present group of principals should provide opportunities for deputy principals who aspire to the principalship to gain experience in some of the 'invisible' aspects of the role.

The principals' associations should continue to place new practitioners in networks of support. This provides the beginning principal with one or more experienced colleagues from which a peer-tutoring relationship may be established. During a period of profound system-level change it becomes necessary for newly appointed principals to have access to information that is available in professional networks.

School of Education/International Institute for Policy and Administrative Studies (WACAE)

The pre-service teacher education programme can make a contribution toward motivating new practitioners to accept responsibility for their continuing professional development. There is a need to

review the undergraduate course to ensure that new practitioners receive a professional preparation which enables them to participate in school development. The course should recognize the historical shift of Australian schools from a hierarchical towards a collaborative pattern of school operations. If necessary a professional development activity should be undertaken so that School of Education staff have an awareness of the expectations that are held for teachers with respect to school-wide problems and policy-making in the current era.

In this new era of increased professional expectations, educators who aspire to the principalship require upgraded professional qualifications. For post-service students who are beginning principals, courses should be designed to allow a school management problem to become the topic of the major assignment. This enables administrators to undertake studies while at the same time improving their competence in school management. The erratic workload of the principalship may not allow beginning principals to attend courses on a regular basis. There should be an exploration of ways to enable promising practitioners to undertake professional development studies without the constraint of weekly attendance. Beginning principals should be encouraged to continue professional studies in line with upgraded community expectations. There is a need to explore ways of combining short-term professional development activities with studies that lead toward a higher degree. Recent developments at graduate diploma level provide opportunities for a shorter course in educational administration to be offered. It is essential that all units in educational administration enable aspiring and beginning principals to analyse current school problems which will enhance their professional development.

Not all beginning principals will be able to undertake formal studies in order to obtain professional development from beyond the district. During the field study it was noticed that some of the principals welcomed a consultancy relationship with an experienced educator from outside the education system. Some newly appointed principals do not wish to take their problems to either the district office or the principals' association. They preferred to keep their problems out of the public arena. The School of Education through the International Institute for Policy and

Administrative Studies should consider making available some staff to provide support to beginning principals through programmes such as the I.D.E.A. Principals Inservice Course.

The School of Education in association with IIPAS should give greater attention to the delivery of professional development opportunities to practitioners who aspire to the principalship. These educators should be encouraged to make substantial progress in higher degree studies that are a preparation for the principalship before they apply for appointment. Attention should also be given to the content and the delivery of a meaningful induction programme for newly appointed principals. This programme should be conceptualized as a form of continuing professional development that comprises on-going opportunities for broadening and extending the range of experience of deputy principals to the support of newly appointed principals. The design of this programme would be a major undertaking for the School of Education. The activity would be dependent upon the availability of resources within the School of Education.

Department of Educational Policy and Administrative Studies,
The University of Calgary, EPAS and IIPAS.

The School of Education (WACAE) should seek the assistance of EPAS in the review and design of professional development activities for principals in Western Australia. A review of the University Calendar may identify units of study that have application for the Western Australian situation. Faculty with extensive experience in the design and delivery of inservice activities have much to offer. Possibilities for the exchange of visiting fellows should be explored to develop further information about the professional development needs of aspirants to the principalship and to newly appointed principals.

In a period of profound change principals require access to many sources of support. School development involves the meshing of the capacities of the new principal with the unique culture of a school. From this perspective each principal has distinctive professional development needs. Delivery of professional

development should move away from provision for the 'average principal'. Instead programmes should offer choice. Principals should be encouraged to raise their awareness of and to identify their own professional development needs. They should regularly review their professional development needs according to the context of the school, changes in the nature of the principalship and their career aspirations. However, the need for all principals to take up a new administrative style as a result of the structural reform of MEWA may require continuous inservicing.

Todd (1987) recognises three forms of planning for continuous professional development. These are:

1. Profession-wide strategies which identify programmes that address the needs of the whole professional group.
2. Organisation-based strategies. In Western Australian education this refers to district as opposed to school-level programmes of professional development.
3. Practitioner-based approaches which encourage individuals to reflect on the quality of practice and to choose desirable directions for professional development.

In a sophisticated education system each of these models may be represented by simultaneous professional development initiatives. It is possible that some beginning principals will have divided loyalties as to which modes are most promising. District offices are increasingly well placed to offer continuing professional development to newly appointed principals. There may be gains in coordinating additional professional development activities through the district office, especially if the beginning principals can control the agenda of topics. Failure to allow principals control of their agenda will result in a return to the 'standard service' approach. Principals should chart their professional development needs against the demands of current and future school development initiatives.

In the current era of increased expectations for the professional competence of principals and static or declining levels of resources for education, it is essential that there is coordination of the total set of professional development opportunities that are

available to aspiring principals and newly appointed principals. There is a need to work toward a common value framework which underpins these activities. For example, should schools be seen as 'rational' or instead as 'cultural' organisations? In the current era of limited resources it is no longer appropriate to have competing, or indifferent agencies. A content analysis should be undertaken of the experiences that are available from the mosaic of professional development agencies.

Planning for the provision of continuing professional development experiences for newly appointed principals centres on a number of choices. A set of opportunities should be available for aspiring principals, principals designate and newly appointed principals according to the following emphases:

- o short-term or long-term priorities;
- o self help or prescribed experiences;
- o learning from on-the-job experience or access to networks or courses of study;
- o the organisation of inservice using either the district structure or according to the classification and categorisation of schools;
- o the contribution of MEWA (including districts) or the principals' associations or higher education in providing professional development experiences.

The provision of professional development opportunities should recognise needs that are both generic and situational to the changing nature of the principalship. The latter derive from the meshing of specific characteristics of a principal to the special mix of organisational characteristics at a particular school.

12.3 Further Research

Conduct of the field study using influence as the frame of reference led to the collection of some data which centred on the micropolitics of the school. Newly appointed principals live in a social world and place a high value on having open, or at least effective, working relationships with other school participants. The need of newly appointed principals to have strong collegial

relationships may conflict with conventional expectations for organisational effectiveness. Micropolitics is a facet of the school which has great potential to influence the success of the newly appointed principal. Relatively little research has been undertaken in this area (Hoyle; 1987, p.149). In the case studies, decisions were taken not to investigate significant areas of micropolitical activity, because it could put the working relationship of the principal and the researcher at risk. It is clear that micropolitical factors have a big influence on decision making and policy-making within the school. Micropolitics introduces frameworks for decision-making which may be counter to those drawn from theories of school management in rational organisations. Further research about the micropolitics of the school will be of special use in understanding how a beginning principal establishes a presence in a school.

A topic which is central to the micropolitics of the school is the way in which the newly appointed principal forms a working relationship with the deputy principal(s) and other continuing staff who are the custodians of the culture of the school. Here there is likely to be a complex interplay of professional and personal preferences for the pattern of school operations (Ball; 1987, p.213). These working relationships are elaborated at a time when the newly appointed principal must consciously work at abandoning the perspective of a deputy principal or senior teacher, and of taking up the perspective of the principal. Little is known about the process of cognitive reorientation that is required to construct the mindset of the principal.

There is also a need to obtain compelling data concerning the levels of administrative skills and the specific professional development needs of beginning principals, in relation to that of inexperienced principals. Weindling and Earley (1987) report relatively few differences in a survey of the two groups. The survey component of this research study was not undertaken to test for differences relating to the acquisition of a long-term view of the school and managing relationships with the community and district office. Research is also needed to identify the periods of time that beginning principals may take to reach optimum efficiency and comfort with a new and more demanding role.

In the area of the professional development needs of principals, research is needed to establish the minimum levels of competence and preparation that are required of beginning principals. This would require development of job descriptions for each promotional level. Such information is critical to the articulation of a planned set of professional development opportunities which are sequenced with the career progression of principals.

The study does not address the special problems that may be experienced by newly appointed female principals. Anecdotal knowledge suggests that female principals face additional problems in their attempts to manage the micropolitics of the school community. Knowledge about the professional development needs of female principals is less well known than for males. Delivery of worthwhile experiences depends upon accurate knowledge of the professional development needs of all categories of aspiring principals.

12.4 The Significance of the Study

The planning and implementation of the project within IIPAS has involved professional contact and collaborative activity between staff from the School of Education (WACAE), the Department of Educational Policy and Administrative Studies of the University of Calgary and the Ministry of Education (Western Australia). A working relationship has been established between some WACAE and University of Calgary staff which should result in joint comparative studies of principals in Western Australia and Alberta. Contact with the schools and district offices has enabled WACAE staff to strengthen links with practitioners. Of particular importance have been the links which have emerged between IIPAS and the principals' associations.

The field study has enabled ten School of Education (WACAE) staff to obtain significant professional development through observation and analysis of the current school situation. Information from the study has been incorporated in some B Ed. and M Ed. units, e.g., EDU 4628 School Policy-Making, EDU 5183 School Improvement: Issues and Implications for Teachers and Administrators.

The conduct of the study under the auspices of IIPAS provided an opportunity for the School of Education (WACAE) to promote, as a priority activity the professional development needs of principals, especially as this relates to the provision of school development. Information from the field study has been used to influence course development, including the writing of units which address school development. The research study will help focus the attention of the School of Education on the current circumstances of Western Australian schools.

Most of the principals who participated in the field study have obtained a significant professional development experience. These principals have become more reflective and more aware of a range of facets of school operations. In some cases the interviewer developed a consultancy relationship with the principal.

Finally, the project contributes to an emerging international research effort focusing on the professional development needs of principals in their first appointment.

12.5 Recommendations

A number of factors should be considered in planning for the delivery of professional development to newly appointed principals.

12.5.1 For many principals the early part of the first year of appointment is a period of 'emergency professional development'. They must not only learn about the nature of the principalship, but also combine their preferred style with the special administrative demands of the school. An important part of the process of learning how to be a principal comes from receipt of feedback about staff reaction to the pattern of influence. The pressure of the 'start up' phase of the first year of appointment would be reduced if appointees could displace some of this emergency professional learning to the period of professional development prior to taking up the appointment. The significance of 'emergency professional development' prior to taking up the appointment as a component of the new principals' professional knowledge base should be reduced.

- 12.5.2 The first year of appointment provides rich opportunities for professional growth. It is essential that the newly appointed principal makes time to reflect on this experience, possibly in an ongoing collegial relationship with an experienced colleague. This could be facilitated through a collegial support programme such as the I.D.E.A. Principals Inservice Programme.
- 12.5.3 Some principals have a low level of awareness of their own professional development needs. Other principals may have inaccurate estimates of their own strengths and limitations in the role. Upgraded opportunities for principals to consult with experienced principals about their attempts to influence school operations would do much to increase awareness of alternative administrative strategies and skills.
- 12.5.4 To a large extent the success in achieving continuing professional development with principals comes from a strengthening of the commitment to personal self-improvement as a component in the culture of education. Historically relatively little attention has been given to the need for inservice education. In a period of profound system level change when institutional cultures may be weakened it is essential that educators are encouraged to strengthen their commitment to the further upgrading and broadening of their professional knowledge base.
- 12.5.5 The availability of accurate knowledge about the competencies that are required at various transitions in the career pathways of an education system provides information to guide long term continuous professional development. Awareness of career transitions acts as an incentive for practitioners to obtain new skills and knowledge prior to appointment to a new status.
- 12.5.6 In the current period of change it is important to monitor the impact of professional development opportunities on principals. Continuing professional development requires that the principal has control over the topics of inquiry.

- 12.5.7 The demands of the first year of appointment to the principalship may create a situation where principals neglect their own professional development needs. A collegial relationship with an experienced colleague or colleagues within a structured programme makes regular professional review more likely.
- 12.5.8 There should be an exploration of the possibility of using the computerized administrative systems in Western Australian schools for the delivery of inservice activities to staff who aspire to the principalship and to newly appointed principals. This facility enables school staff to attempt inservice activities in accordance with the erratic demands of their work.
- 12.5.9 The School of Education (WACAE) should review the B Ed. course to ensure that new practitioners receive a professional preparation which enables them to become competent participants in school development during their first year of appointment.
- 12.5.10 The School of Education (WACAE) through IIPAS should give attention to the planning of professional development opportunities for practitioners who aspire to the principalship. This initiative should commence with the broadening of the professional knowledge base of deputy principals.
- 12.5.11 The School of Education (WACAE) through IIPAS should seek the assistance of faculty from the Department of Educational Policy and Administrative Studies of the University of Calgary in the design of professional development experiences for aspirants to the principalship and newly appointed principals. A series of visiting fellowships should be planned to facilitate the design of professional development experiences.
- 12.5.12 The School of Education (WACAE) through IIPAS should establish within the higher degree programme a focus on research relating to the learning experiences and the professional development needs of newly appointed

principals. The research programme could include the following topics which emerge from the research study:

- o the way in which the newly appointed principal attempts to manage the micropolitics of the school, especially as this relates to the policy process within the school;
- o the process of cognitive reorientation as the newly appointed principal takes up the mindset of the principal;
- o the professional development needs of newly appointed female principals.

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14.0 APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Committees

- (i) IIPAS Research Steering Committee
- (ii) Functions of the Research Steering Committee
- (iii) New Principals' Research Group

(i) IIPAS Research Steering Committee

Membership of the Committee September 1986 to May 1987 has included:

Dr Neil Tuckwell (Chair)	Head, School of Education, WACAE.
Dr Doug Jecks	Director, WACAE (September 1986)
Mr John Miners	Secondary School Principals' Association Principal, Balga Senior High School.
Mr Eddie Flint	District High School Principals' Association Principal, Bullsbrook Primary School.
Mr Murray Randall	Primary School Principals' Association Principal, Kingsley Primary School.
Ms Jane Coulter	State School Teachers' Union of WA
Dr Phillip Deschamp	Acting Head, Research Branch, EDWA (until March 1987)
Mr Stephen Simpson	Education Officer, Research Branch, EDWA (until March 1987)
Mr Peter Dunnell	Manager, Audit and Review Branch, MEWA (until December 1986)
Mr Tony Simpson	Professional Development Team, Human Resources Policy Branch, MEWA (from October 1987)
Ms Janette Stapleton-Hill	Professional Development Team, Human Resources Policy Branch, MEWA (from October 1987)
Dr Margaret Crowley	Principal Lecturer, Director of IIPAS
Dr Michael Harvey	Senior Lecturer, Department of Education, WACAE (Coordinator, New Principals' Research Project)
Dr Murray Print	Lecturer, Department of Education, WACAE
Dr Barry Sheridan	Senior Lecturer, Chair, Research Committee, WACAE (from March 1987)
Mr Richard Fuller	Principal Lecturer, Chair, Higher Degrees Committee, WACAE (from December, 1987)
Dr Murray Lake	Senior Lecturer, Department of Education, WACAE (December 1987)
Dr Norm Hyde	Senior Lecturer (from May 1988).
Dr Jim McLellan	Associate Professor, Department of Educational Policy and Administrative Studies, University of Calgary (May 1986)
Professor Bob Lawson	Professor, Department of Educational Policy and Administrative Studies, University of Calgary (December 1987).

(ii) Functions of the Research Steering Committee

1. Monitoring of the activities of the researchers
 - o To approve the research questions, research design and the schedule of research activities. To ensure that the balance and range of activities are within the parameters of the agreement between the participating institutions.
 - o To approve changes to the schedule of research activities should this become necessary.
 - o To review the progress of the researchers in carrying out the schedule of research activities.
2. Advisory body for the researchers
 - o To provide opinion as to the worth of procedures in the various research activities.
 - o To identify resource people who have knowledge that will strengthen the research project.
 - o To review the findings for the various research activities and to provide advice on the dissemination of the findings.
3. Accountability of the researchers
 - o To ensure that due process is achieved in the conduct of research activities and that the rights of the participants are protected.
 - o To ensure that the researchers do not exceed the budget.
4. Planning of the seminar for the identification of the professional development needs of new principals.
 - o To advise on the format of the seminar.
 - o To identify additional institutional resources that might be used in the conduct of the seminar.
5. The linking of institutional developments which are related to the research project.
 - o To coordinate institutional demands and responses to the research project.

(iii) New Principals' Research Group

Membership of the research group has included:

WACAE

Dr Margaret Crowley	Department of Education Studies
Mr John Grimley	Department of Education Studies
Dr Michael Harvey	Department of Education Studies
Dr Norm Hyde	Department of Education Studies
Mr Wally Moroz	Department of Social Science Education
Dr Gary Partington	Department of Education Studies
Dr Alistair Peacock	Department of Education Studies
Dr Murray Print	Department of Education Studies
Ms Jan Trotman	Department of Education Studies
Mr John Woods	Department of Education Studies

U. of Calgary

Prof Paul Adams	Department of Educational Policy and Administrative Studies
Dr Alice Boberg	Department of Educational Policy and Administrative Studies
Dr Pat Klinck	Department of Educational Policy and Administrative Studies
Prof Robert Lawson	Department of Educational Policy and Administrative Studies
Prof Jim McLellan	Department of Educational Policy and Administrative Studies
Dr Art Schwartz	Department of Educational Policy and Administrative Studies
Prof Roger Woock	Department of Educational Policy and Administrative Studies

MEWA

Mr Stephen Simpson, Education Officer, Research Branch (EDWA)

APPENDIX B

Letters to the New Principals

- (i) Letter of Introduction: Director General EDWA.
- (ii) Letter of Introduction: Director WACAE.
- (iii) Letter of Appreciation: Director General MEWA.



EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

151 Royal Street, East Perth, Western Australia 6000.
Telephone 420 4111
Telegrams: "EDWA" Perth
Telex "EDUWA" AA 93153

Dear

I am writing to invite you to take part in an international research project that will examine the professional development needs of newly appointed school principals. The study will take place during 1987 and will be undertaken jointly by the Education Department, the International Institute for Policy and Administrative Studies (Western Australia College of Advanced Education) and the University of Calgary. The study will be replicated in Canada during late 1987.

A major component of the project will involve researchers working closely with eight newly appointed school principals, on a one to one basis, to obtain insights into professional development needs. The interactions between the researchers and principals will comprise regularly scheduled discussions that focus upon the principals' ongoing experiences. The scheduling and foci of these discussions will be negotiated between researchers and principals. Both the researchers and myself are aware of the increasing demands upon principals and teachers. Consequently, the study has been designed so that impositions upon school work are minimal.

I see the benefits of this project, and hence your involvement, as being two fold. In one respect, you will contribute significantly to an area which, largely, is unexplored, but one which is now very important for the Education Department. In another respect, the immediate and regular exchange of information that will occur between yourself and the researcher will provide a unique and valuable perspective with which to view your own professional development.

I do urge you to give serious consideration to taking part in this study. In the near future either Mr S Simpson (Research Branch) or Dr M Harvey (WACAE) will contact you and provide more details about the project.

May I take this opportunity of congratulating you on your recent promotion and wish you well for 1987.

Yours sincerely

L W LOUDEN
ACTING DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF EDUCATION

December 5, 1986

**WESTERN AUSTRALIAN COLLEGE OF ADVANCED EDUCATION**

PO Box 217 Doubleview Western Australia 6018 Telephone (09) 387 9211

1 December 1986

Dear

I am happy to have this opportunity with Dr Louden to congratulate you on your new appointment and to invite you to participate in this major research project to be conducted in 1986 and 1987 entitled 'Professional Development Needs of Newly Appointed Principals: Leadership for School Development'.

The project will be the first major project of IIPAS - the International Institute for Policy and Administrative Studies recently established within the Western Australian College of Advanced Education.

The Institute, whose primary purpose is the development of excellence in teaching, research, and practice in the areas of educational policy and administration, is a collaborative undertaking of the W.A.C.A.E. and the University of Calgary with the support of the Education Department of Western Australia. This project, jointly funded by all three institutions, will have practical and far reaching implications for each of them in ensuring that new principals are as well equipped as possible for the challenges which face them in a period of unprecedented social change and educational reform.

The project is a most important one for all in education and I would be grateful for your support and participation.

Yours sincerely

Dr D A Jecks
Director



OFFICE OF THE
DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF EDUCATION

Dear

In December last year I wrote seeking your co-operation and participation in a major research project entitled "Professional Development Needs of Newly Appointed Principals: Leadership for School Development" being undertaken by the International Institute for Policy and Administrative Studies and funded by the Ministry and the Western Australian College of Advanced Education.

I have been looking with considerable interest at the overall results of the study as they come through to me. They will clearly have important implications for research and policy development in this area and for the development of the high quality graduate and post graduate courses within the Western Australian College of Advanced Education.

I know how much time and effort participation in this study has meant on your part. I have also been impressed by your willingness and that of your colleagues in being prepared to openly and honestly present what has been happening with you and your schools at this critical time in your career. It is not an easy thing to do.

My most sincere thanks for all your help and assistance in the project and best wishes for continuing success.

Yours sincerely

DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF EDUCATION

November 13, 1987

APPENDIX C

Guide to the Working Relationship of Researchers and New Principals

Guide to the Working Relationship of Researchers and New Principals

Participation in the research project places responsibilities and obligations on both parties. The research requires the systematic collection of information concerning the way in which the principal manages the operations of the school. The single frame of reference is influence by the principal in the school. Five types of data collection are to be negotiated with the principals.

1. First-hand observation of the principal by a single researcher who will be known to the principal. Researchers are to obtain permission to observe the principal in action. Present levels of staffing suggest that the researchers will be able to spend up to 10 days at the school during the school year. An additional researcher may be introduced to the principal via the original researcher, in order to validate the information which is being collected.
2. Principals could be interviewed at times which are convenient. Here principals will reflect on major interventions and describe their influences on school events. Transcripts could be made from recorded interviews.
3. Principals will be asked to maintain a log of the main interventions at the end of each day. A personal diary may provide an adequate record of main interventions.
4. To reduce demands on new principals a request could be made by the researcher to use other school staff with knowledge of the school for interviews. These staff would be identified by the principal. This is to validate whether the scope of interventions generated by the principal is sufficiently comprehensive.
5. Researchers are to request access to certain school documents which indicate the scope and effect of principal actions, e.g. agenda and minutes of meetings, newsletters, school diary.

The following expectations are intended to develop the necessary working relationship that is required of researchers and new principals. These expectations may be revised or renegotiated as the research proceeds.

- o The researchers should at all times request permission to visit a school, indicating the expected length of time that will be spent at the school. The principal is to be informed of the departure of the researcher.
- o Principals are to decide on the means whereby school staff are informed of the operations of the research project. It may be appropriate that the principal asks the researcher to address staff. The principal will have responsibility to decide on the way in which school staff will be made aware of the data collection activities.
- o For each school the principal will have access to all data that is collected. Information from designated school staff is to be anonymous. The findings of the researcher are to be known to the principal before release.

- o At all stages the privacy and the confidentiality of the principals are to be respected. Reporting of the study will preserve the anonymity of the schools and participants.
- o The researchers have a responsibility to ensure that the information which is obtained is not used for purposes of formal professional (summative) evaluation. Case-study files are not to be sighted by any person who may be an agent in the professional evaluation process.
- o New principals have a responsibility to make known any concerns about the operation of the research project in a particular school to the researcher. This is to ensure that action is taken to retain a viable working relationship of the researcher and new principal.

APPENDIX D

Preliminary Research Activities

- (i) Survey of EDWA Policy on School Development: Implications for the Role of the Principal
- (ii) Leadership for School Development Seminar
- (iii) Survey of Principals at the End of the First Year of Appointment

SURVEY OF EDWA POLICY ON SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT
IMPLICATIONS FOR THE ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL

The following is a set of open-ended questions which relate to EDWA policy on school development. It is recognised that this is an emerging policy which will undergo further refinement. This interview attempts to document the background, nature and implications of the policy as it is in September-November 1986. A cross-section of senior EDWA staff have been asked to participate in interviews. It is likely that you will have special knowledge which relates to particular sections of the interview schedule. Collectively the responses of all interviewees will provide information relating to EDWA policy on school development as a context for principals as they exercise leadership.

A. Origins of School Development and the Factors Affecting the Policy

1. In general terms what is meant by the term 'school development' in Western Australian education?
2. In your mind does school development exist as a specific policy initiative? (High profile, diffuse, sectional, emerging)
3. When did school development emerge as a policy initiative in EDWA?
4. What policies or programmes seem to be the forerunners of school development? (Assess incrementalism)
5. From your point of view why did school development emerge as a policy in EDWA? (Identify circumstances, proactive or reactive)
6. To what extent have school-level influences such as teachers and parents played a part in shaping the policy? (Top down, bottom up)
7. What is the relationship of school development to other EDWA policy initiatives, i.e. school-community relationships, regionalisation, unit curriculum, merit promotion, priority schools programmes?
8. To what extent is school development an outcome of an educational stocktaking or assessment of where WA schools are at? Does school development represent a significant change in EDWA policy? (Watershed, evolutionary or revolutionary)
9. To what extent is EDWA using the example of other school systems - in Australia and the USA - in promoting school development? (Impact of research, other systems)

B. Perspectives of Policy Actors about the Content of the Policy

1. In your opinion what are the main documents which define school development policy? (Reports, directives, position papers) Are these documents an adequate statement of emerging school development policy? (Do documents provide sufficient guidelines for school-level staff?) How is the policy carried into schools?
2. What priorities are embraced in these documents? (Explore administrative efficiency and flexibility, participation of school staff in decision-making). What are the main intended outcomes of the policy? (System, region, school level impacts).
3. From your experience what kinds of school-level activities do you see as being central to school development? (Broad participation by school staff, opportunities for policy-making).
4. What images of the 'good school' are emerging from the school development activities?

C. EDWA Characteristics which Help or Hinder the Implementation of Development Activities in Schools

1. Does EDWA have a plan or strategy for the implementation of school development? (Explore time frame, public awareness, supports, inservice, consultants).

2. In your opinion what are the necessary pre-conditions which are needed for successful development activities in schools? (Explore organizational structures, resources and services which facilitate school development)
3. What human and material resources have been allocated to facilitate school development initiatives? (What additional resources are needed to broaden development activities?)
4. What conditions or circumstances could slow down, or counteract , development activities at school level?
5. Organisation theory suggests that attitudes are one of the critical characteristics which inhibit educational change. What action would you suggest has to be taken to encourage school level staff to adopt new perspectives and relationships?

D. Implications for Schools, Implications for Principals

1. What is the likely impact of school development on EDWA administrative structure? (Does it require an education system organised according to divisions, functions, regions, faculties?). Does widespread school development herald a shift towards a devolved autonomous school network?
2. Successful school development requires 'bottom up' participation in combination with 'top down' initiatives. Can this be obtained from a centrally determined policy?
3. Will principals and teachers gain greater power and, or responsibility as a result of school development?
4. How will the role of the principal be changed as a result of school development? (Explore - supports from region
staff development
collaborative decision-making, consultation
communication of school development plan
discretionary power
leadership
culture and climate of the school)
5. Will the nature of the principal-teacher relationship be changed by school development activities?
6. By what means are principals informed about the nature and content of school development?
7. So far how have principals responded to the demands of school development? (Adopters, imitators, delegators, resisters).
8. Will school development create or add to the pressure for increased parent, teacher and student participation in school governance?

E. Some Types of Regional and School Level Initiatives Which Have Emerged So Far

1. What are the implications of school development for the planning and coordination of resources across the whole education

portfolio? (Greater school level control of resources, responsibility for planning).

2. In what ways has the role of the regions changed in recent years? How does school development influence the role of regional staff?
3. What is the scope for school development activities in secondary education? What are the special problems of initiating school development in high schools?
4. Have plans been prepared for regional approaches to school development? Why are regional plans needed? To what extent will regional plans reduce the autonomy of school-level staff to decide upon school priorities?
5. What are some of the typical approaches to school development which have been adopted in WA schools? (Examples, strategies models of school development).
6. Explore hopes
concerns
justifications - why did it turn out this way?
- F. Other Facets of School Development which Participants See As Important

* * *

Thank you for your cooperation. A transcript of the interview will be prepared and forwarded to you for validation.

LEADERSHIP FOR SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT

PROPOSED OUTLINE FOR THE DAY - 7 NOVEMBER 1986

WORKSHOP LEADER: KEITH TAYLOR

- 8.30 - 9.00 MEET OVER COFFEE
- 9.00 - 9.15 Welcome by Dr N Tuckwell (Head, School of Education) and Dr P Deschamp (Acting Superintendent Research Branch EDWA).
- 9.05 - 10.30 A School Initiative: The Administrator's Role.
- Participants will have the chance to describe an initiative which has led to some positive development in their school and then consider their role in that initiative.
- 10.30 - 10.50 MORNING TEA
- 10.50 - 12.30 Schools Development: Different Approaches; Implications for the Administrator's leadership role.
- Different approaches to school development will be explored and the role of leadership highlighted. Participants will be able to consider the leadership qualities they have found useful in their approach to school development.
- 12.30 - 1.15 LUNCH
- Dr D Jecks, Director, WACAE and senior members of the School of Education Staff will be present.
- 1.15 - 3.15 Leadership qualities: Identification and Attainment.
- Using their own experiences, developed in the earlier sessions, participants to identify and categorize leadership qualities necessary for effective school development. Some time will be devoted to reflecting on how these qualities were acquired or how they could be enhanced.
- 3.15 REFRESHMENTS

IIPAS

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR POLICY AND ADMINISTRATIVE STUDIES

Dear

A research project is to be conducted under the auspices of the International Institute for Policy and Administrative Studies of the Western Australian College of Advanced Education in collaboration with the Education Department of Western Australia and the Department of Educational Policy and Administrative Studies of the University of Calgary. The title of the project is 'The Professional Development Needs of Newly Appointed Principals: Leadership for School Development'. The empirical phase of the project centres on the field study of ten new principals who will take up appointments in 1987. The learning experience of new principals is a neglected area of inquiry and has great potential to provide information about the professional development needs of principals in the Western Australian situation.

As a preliminary to the field study we would like to sample the experiences of principals toward the end of their first year of appointment in a new category of school. Attached is an interview schedule which attempts to identify the broad parameters of the process whereby new principals establish themselves in a fully operational school. This information is needed to sensitize researchers who will conduct the field study of new principals. During the last year you have gained current knowledge of this process. We would like you to consider the questions with reference to the school in which you are currently a principal. Shortly we will contact you to arrange a phone interview based on this schedule. The interview will take up to half an hour. The collection of quality information from this interview should identify not only the professional development needs of new principals but should also reveal the supports which are needed by principals on taking up appointments in a new school.

Yours faithfully,

Michael Harvey
Senior Lecturer
Department of Education



Steve Simpson
Education Officer
Research Branch
Education Department of W.A.

THE PERSPECTIVE OF NEW PRINCIPALS TOWARD THE END OF THE FIRST YEAR OF APPOINTMENT

Please provide information which establishes the type of school situation in which you work.

Region _____
Category of School _____

- 1. How did you acquire information about you present school prior to taking up appointment at the start of the year?

Sources of information, frequency of visits _____

Contact people from the school or region _____

- 2. Looking back, what other information about the school was needed to enable you to function as an effective principal from the start of the school year in your new school?

- 3. To what extent did you contacts with the new school influence the operation of the school before you took up the appointment at the start of the year?

Possible influence on school policy, practice.

Possible influence on expectations of staff, students, parents.

- 4. To what extent have you had to change or modify your personal qualities or your approach in the new school situation?

5. What informal means of personal preparation did you undertake prior to taking up the appointment?

6. Did you participate in a principal induction programme or a principal management course run by the Education Department? If so, what were the most useful things that were learnt from those experiences?

Principal induction programme _____

Principal management course _____

7. In which areas of school operations have you had to learn a great deal during your first year as principal?

Curriculum _____

School administration practices _____

Relationships with Departmental staff and parents external to the school. _____

Social relationships of staff and students within the school?

Other

8. What would you list as your major achievements during your first year as principal in this school?

9. What are the main problems which you have faced as a new principal in this school? Did these problems change during the course of the year?

10. How has your perspective of the school changed since receiving your appointment in 1985? Can you identify any points at which your role in the school underwent significant change?

11. In what ways did regional and head office staff support your role in school?

12. Of what importance was your principal's association in helping you in your new role?

13. What support could have been provided, and by whom, to make your first year as a new principal in this school more rewarding?

14. To what extent was the start of the school year, including the pupil free days, a critical stage of your principalship?

15. What surprises did you encounter as a new principal? How did you attempt to handle them?

16. If you were to design a course for new principals, what are the key elements that you would include?

* * * * *

Thank you for your co-operation. This information is needed to help researchers understand the experiences of new principals.

LIST OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This appendix contains a list of all findings and recommendations which appear in Chapters 3 to 12. The recommendations refer to the content and the form of the delivery of professional development experiences for beginning principals. Many of the recommendations refer to action that should be taken by newly appointed principals so that they can exercise greater control over their own professional development experiences. The recommendations have different degrees of relevance to the agencies with responsibility for the review, planning and implementation of professional development for newly appointed principals in Western Australia.

Review of the emergence of school development as a MEWA policy initiative during a period of structural reform provides guidelines for the professional development of newly appointed principals.

3.8.1 Meaningful school development requires action at a number of levels:

- o the production of artefacts, e.g., school development plan;
- o the establishment of infrastructure, e.g., school-based decision-making group;
- o the facilitation of processes, e.g., review, planning, implementation and monitoring;
- o the management of a supportive culture, e.g., cultivation of a shared perspective of school operations, a vision for the school.

Principals have a responsibility to oversee the investment of staff effort in activities at each level.

3.8.2 Principals should have an awareness of the extent to which the preferred 'models' and the emerging school development policies of the district will strengthen or weaken the culture of a particular school.

3.8.3 During a period of profound educational change, principals require contextual awareness in order to comprehend emergent policy initiatives, such as school development, so as to promote understanding among school participants. The failure of the principal and other school participants to understand the educational 'megatrends' during a period of policy turbulence leads to resistance, withdrawal or at best shallow attempts to comply with what are seen as externally imposed policies.

3.8.4 During a period of educational change environmental scanning should be used by principals to analyse what is happening, or what is about to happen in the school environment.

Principals require capacity to collect and process information relating to:

- o the macro environment;
- o the educational environment;
- o the stakeholder environment;
- o the internal school environment.

3.8.5 The sequence of phases of educational restructuring at system level creates a demand for principals to adopt new mixes of administrative competence, e.g., from cultivating commitment to the proposed reforms to the reskilling of school staff to audit and review. Agencies with responsibility for the professional development of principals should attempt to anticipate these changes.

The perspectives of principals in a workshop and phone interview provided information about the current professional development needs of newly appointed principals.

4.3.1 To accomplish school development principals require both capacity for and commitment to organisational problem-solving. The selection procedure for principals should give further recognition to this competency.

4.3.2 Ongoing professional development over time, especially where the clients have a choice in the selection of the activities, is likely to be a more effective model for the planning of professional development than one-off programmes. Where possible professional development activities should be planned as a sequence of cumulative experiences, rather than discrete activities.

4.3.3 An attempt should be made to identify the assertiveness and problem-solving skills that are needed by female principals who take up appointment in schools where the community is characterised by prejudice to female professionals.

To prepare for the appointment principals designate must use their initiative to obtain a working knowledge of basic school operations prior to the commencement of the new school year. Beginning principals should also reflect on the nature of the principalship and the style of influence that is to be used on taking up appointment.

- 5.3.1 Principals designate should establish an 'open line' contact with the outgoing principal of the school to which they have been appointed during the final term of the school year.
- 5.3.2 To obtain information about the school to which they have been appointed principals designate require skills to access a school data base, including the school development plan. The new principal should then attempt to identify the constellation of assumptions and values which underpin ongoing school initiatives.
- 5.3.3 Time and travel assistance should be available so that all principals designate have opportunities for extended contact, including specific purpose visits, with the school and school district. They should be able to visit the school in which they will take up appointment while it is still under the control of the outgoing principal. This enables collection of information about the pattern of school operations from continuing staff.
- 5.3.4 Where possible the principal designate should become known to key people in the school, community and the school district office before taking up appointment.
- 5.3.5 Principal induction programmes should be limited in scope so as to avoid information overload. In order to improve the confidence of principals designate there should be a focus on organisational problem-solving in particular types of schools rather than on information-giving.
- 5.3.6 Typically principals take up their appointments lacking certain basic information about school operations. Principals designate require a framework for systematically

scanning the school environment so as to assess priorities for a style of influence that is to be used at the start of the new school year. Principals designate should have the capacity to modify progressively their emerging perspective of the school with the acquisition of further information.

5.3.7 Some principals designate have opportunities to intervene in school operations before taking up appointment. In this situation the principal may make judgements with limited knowledge of school characteristics and of the acceptability of a chosen strategy of action to other stakeholders. There may be little opportunity for the principal designate to judge the quality of the information which is provided by continuing staff to assist decision-making. Principals designate should exercise caution in identifying and expressing priorities for the school prior to taking up appointment.

5.3.8 Principals designate have differing degrees of sensitivity to the culture of the school in respect of:

- (i) how it provides emotional reassurance to continuing staff, and;
- (ii) its potential to hinder strategies for the demonstration of influence. Principals designate should begin to discover the basic assumptions of problem-solving, cooperation and survival in the school.

Principals designate require capacity to diagnose school culture.

5.3.9 The principal designate should attempt to understand the role of the outgoing principal in the management and the manipulation of school culture, and of what this means for trying to re-build collective views of the school. Some continuing staff may expect that initially the new principal will take up the style of the outgoing principal. Analysis of the contribution of key continuing staff to school culture may be necessary.

5.3.10 Some beginning principals have not given sufficient thought to their style and of how this will be judged by members of the school community. Principals designate have to make choices relating to the following aspects of their style:

- o How to promote stability and continuity as opposed to change when demonstrating principal influence.
- o Whether the principal promotes personal values or those drawn from the school culture.
- o Should principals of senior high schools become involved in some day to day operations or should they become a chief executive to monitor, facilitate and coordinate?
- o How to delegate without controlling.
- o How to provide social support as well as giving priority to task achievement.
- o Centralising or broadening participation in decision making.
- o Giving information to colleagues or accepting advice from colleagues.
- o Accepting where the school is at, as opposed to the use of a critical perspective of school operations. The latter raises the issue of how much of the principal's critique should be made public.
- o Emphasis on site administration as opposed to curriculum and instructional leadership, i.e., defining the broadness or narrowness of the role.
- o Identifying the scope of action that is required to provide instructional leadership.
- o How the principal would prefer to be seen by staff, i.e., the degree of social distance.

Progressive resolution of many of these choices with reference to the school will assist the principal designate to develop a greater level of comfort with the role. Principals designate should be encouraged to think about these aspects of style prior to taking up appointment.

5.3.11 The duties of the outgoing principal should include responsibility to facilitate a smooth transition for the principal designate.

In Western Australia the two scheduled school development days prior to the admission of students at the start of the school year provide a unique opportunity for the new principal to establish a presence in the school. Motivation of the teaching staff and the coordination of their efforts become priority activities.

6.3.1 Some principals may not have the opportunity to plan the format of the school development days in collaboration with, or using the input of, continuing staff. This creates a risk that the days will not address the concerns of continuing staff. Alternatively in some senior high schools the new principal has given control of the planning to continuing staff. In this situation the principal becomes marginal to the activities of the school development days. Principals designate must use their initiative to consult with continuing staff in the planning of the first set of school development days.

6.3.2 New principals require a framework for planning the format of the school development days. Planning involves making judgements as to how much attention should be given to:

- (i) information about school administration;
- (ii) critical inquiry into school operations; and
- (iii) preparations for teaching.

Strategies are required to encourage staff involvement in whole-school issues during the first set of school development days.

6.3.3 Principals should establish a framework of values during the first set of school development days that will guide the actions of school staff. The details of the operationalisation of this philosophy can be worked out at a later stage.

6.3.4 Principals require confidence and capacity to demonstrate influence in order to focus the attention of staff on school-wide problem-solving as opposed to classroom or subject area preparations. Choice has to be made as to whether attention will be given to culture building and team building or to information-giving activities.

- 6.3.5 The school development days represent a non-repeatable opportunity to influence staff. First impressions count. It is important that the principal be able to communicate a direction for school activities, with the assistance of other staff. Revelation of attempts to introduce change should be tempered with reassurances of stability in other areas of school operations. Strategic suspension of some initiatives may be needed to provide emotional reassurance for continuing staff. The exercise of leadership is dependent upon the capacity of the principal to articulate school priorities for the start of the year. The principal should also give attention to the interpersonal dynamics of the school staff during the first days of school.
- 6.3.6 The school development days should be used to identify the collective view of the school that is held by staff. This provides the principal with a significant information base from which to start thinking about strategies to establish the direction of the school.
- 6.3.7 Time should be spent by the principal during the school development days in getting to know school staff. Acquisition of information about staff preferences is needed to foster collaborative decision-making during Term 1.
- 6.3.8 Principal inservice programmes should assess the purpose of the school development days at the commencement of the school year. Constraints and opportunities to engage in culture building and goal setting should be explored with reference to the school. Strategies are required to encourage school staff to engage in school development activities.

The new principal has to develop a network of influence in the school in order to shift the basis of respect from the formal authority of the position to understanding of the principal's competencies and perspectives of the school.

- 7.4.1 The principal develops a network of influence through ongoing communication and interaction with members of the

school community, as well as participation in decision-making and the policy process. To acquire credibility the actions and the perspectives of the principal must be judged by others as having significance for the school. To achieve this standing the principal should promote values, exercise judgement, demonstrate skill and interact with others so that support is forthcoming from school participants.

- 7.4.2 The worth of the principal may be judged by teachers and parents according to only a small range of competencies. The principal should develop awareness of the frameworks which school participants use to make judgements about the competence of principals. There may be a need to take action to reduce the bias which is evident in the personal frameworks of some school participants.
- 7.4.3 The demonstration of instructional leadership by the new principal from the start of the school year provides a general strategy for the establishment of a network of influence. By consulting with staff about issues relating to teaching practice, curriculum improvement and the quality of student learning the principal can work with staff to formulate ideas which take account of where the school is at and the current concerns of staff. Such actions facilitate understanding of the views of the newly appointed principal.
- 7.4.4 Principals require sensitivity to the reactions of staff concerning their new administrative style. School staff may be reluctant to provide information as to how the principal is viewed until reserves of trust and respect have accumulated. This leads to the 'honeymoon' period where principals receive little negative feedback. If the principal maintains an 'open door' policy, it can promote the mistaken belief that staff are supportive of the principal's style. The failure of the principal to live up to the initial high expectations of staff creates additional problems for the newly appointed principal. To avoid this situation the principal's early vision for the school should be grounded in a realistic assessment of the possibilities for changing elements of the culture of the school.

- 7.4.5 Some appointees need to be prepared for the professional isolation, and in some cases the social isolation of the principalship. They need to recognise that, by being consistent and by not taking sides, that the authority of the position may hinder the development of close relationships with colleagues.
- 7.4.6 Principals need to conceptualise the policy process within the school and to assess whether it has sufficient legitimacy to obtain commitment from staff and parents. The implicit policy process of schools may tend toward the development of dependence in staff, rather than the cultivation of interest in decision-making about school affairs.
- 7.4.7 Principals should interact with staff so as to communicate a climate of expectations; this serves as a framework within which teachers make choices. It may involve collaborative exploration of school culture and articulation of a collective view of the school.
- 7.4.8 Principals require frameworks for analysis of the quality of the working relationships among staff. Strategies are required which enable separation of the people from the issues so as to resolve conflicts and difficult working relationships among staff. In secondary schools it is not to be expected that a close working relationship will characterise the senior staff. Sectional rather than whole-school interests may influence policy-making.

Starting up the full range of school operations at the commencement of the school year makes extreme demands of the new principal.

- 8.3.1 Immersion in a variety of administrative tasks in the early part of the school year can lead to non-cumulative decision making. Coping strategies relating to the use of time in seeking information, delegating, establishing the priority of activities that require attention and changing (or lowering) expectations can increase the principal's level of comfort with the role.

- 8.3.2 In order to get beyond reactive management, principals have to develop plans for the medium to long term which indicate what can be achieved in the school. The formulation of an embryo vision requires the withdrawal of time and effort from concern with day to day school operations. The demands of day to day administration should not be allowed to consume all of the principal's time. A special effort has to be made to find and to use intermittent thinking spots so that the principal has an ongoing involvement in planning, even during the most demanding times of the school year. The confidence of the principal is further improved if action can be taken to gain support for the priorities in these plans.
- 8.3.3 In order to avoid the stress of non-cumulative decision making prior to the development of a vision of the school at the start of the school year, principals require anchor points for decision making. Knowledge of 'good' school management practice and school effectiveness research could be used to guide decision making.
- 8.3.4 The transition to the principalship involves the use of judgement about when to consult, when to delegate and when to administer in accordance with school policies and procedures. Newly appointed principals require capacity to make judgements about the priority of organisational demands and of ways to solve these problems.
- 8.3.5 The transition to the principalship of a bigger school requires acquisition of competence in the art of delegation. Principals should use strategies for delegation to staff so as to avoid being either too apologetic or too directive.

Newly appointed principals are expected to maintain existing school development activities or to facilitate new programmes of school level change from their first term of appointment.

- 9.6.1 Initiation of school-level change requires that the principal is able to conceptualise the organisational

dynamics of the school. Ability to see the school in terms of a flow chart of activity is an indicator of this competence. Any school development initiative should take into account not just the expectations of stakeholders but also the deeper level assumptions behind decisions and actions that underpin culture.

- 9.6.2 Commitment to school-level change by staff and parents comes from the management of a process whereby key members of the school envision its future and develop the necessary procedures to achieve that future. This requires that the principal has capacity to communicate a set of expectations to school staff so as to focus attention on the advantages of school development. The principal should provide leadership which develops commitment to inquiry about school problems, and facilitate team building through attempts to find solutions to school problems.
- 9.6.3 The strategy that is to be used for school-level change should be compatible with aspects of school culture in order to maximise opportunities for ownership by school staff. Before commencing school development, it may be necessary to promote culture building activities in order to neutralise antagonistic school phenomena which represent threats to collaborative planning.
- 9.6.4 Human resource development of school staff is central to the management of school change. Forward planning is required to encourage staff to acquire competencies prior to the scheduling of specific school development activities. Permanent change requires inservicing of staff at the worksite. The principal should have a visible involvement in inservicing activities within the school.
- 9.6.5 Principals require capacity to conceptualise the school-level change process. A time line by itself is an inadequate implementation plan. Principals should have understanding of the readiness of groups of staff to undertake particular tasks, so that preparations can be made

to improve the chances for the successful completion of the task.

- 9.6.6 In order to promote school development, principals require capacity to work with other change facilitators. The working relationship of principals and external change facilitators can be improved. The brevity, variety and fragmentation of the daily workload of the principal is not conducive to the development of strategy and the detailed planning of school change. Where possible the principal should encourage the emergence of a second internal change facilitator. It is important that the principal has meaningful communication with any internal change facilitators.

The principal has major responsibility for mediating the linkages of the school with the educational bureaucracy and the school community. For most school staff this is an 'invisible' aspect of the principalship. The acquisition of artistry in this facet of the role is a major learning experience for newly appointed principals.

- 10.3.1 Principals require greater capacity to articulate and promote a corporate image of the school which generates support from the community.
- 10.3.2 Principals require capacity to promote better working relationships among school staff and members of the community. At the same time, principals will need to be assertive when confronted by community interest groups which make demands on the school. In this situation the principal must be able to identify and project the strengths of the instructional programme.
- 10.3.3 In some schools principals should act as facilitators in order to revitalise the operations of parent advisory groups.
- 10.3.4 During a period of declining levels of resources, principals require capacity to identify resources in the school community which can enrich the teaching programme.

10.3.5 Principals should have capacity to represent the interests of their school when there is competition for educational resources within the educational bureaucracy. Principals should evaluate emergent district policies to ensure that they are supportive of school-level initiatives.

The school administrator role is performed in a variety of contexts. These are: the phase(s) of educational reform, the cycle of the school year, the category of school to which the appointment has been made, and the special characteristics of a particular school. Each of these contexts has implications for the principalship.

11.6.1 Educators who aspire to the principalship should be given opportunities to view and to participate in the 'invisible' aspects of the principalship long before they apply for appointment. Induction of deputy principals into the principalship could be a part of normal school operations. This would enable beginning principals to develop an improved level of knowledge and comfort with these facets of the role during the first term of appointment.

11.6.2 Educators who aspire to the principalship should be encouraged to undertake specific short professional development activities to remedy perceived 'deficits' in their style, before applying for the principalship.

11.6.3 Principals who experience professional isolation would benefit from the development of an ongoing collegial relationship with a senior principal who does not have a vested interest in the school or district.

11.6.4 Principals should give greater attention to human resource development. Improving the capacities of staff, including their participation in decision-making and policy-making, ultimately improves the quality of school operations.

11.6.5 School-level programmes of human resource development should be linked to the review, planning and implementation of school development.

- 11.6.6 Review of the administrative demands which confront principals at the start of the first school term is needed to see whether:
- (i) school-based administrative systems can provide information for quicker decision-making and report preparation (for statistical returns, reorganisation of the timetable, workloads);
 - (ii) some of these activities can be delayed until later in the school year.
- 11.6.7 To get the principal beyond reactive management, attention should be given to medium and long-term planning. Working toward these goals requires investment of effort in strategic planning. This refers to the development of agreement about realistic processes which can be used to obtain achievable goals in the context of a school. Strategic planning skills are also critical to the management of school development.
- 11.6.8 Principals require a number of frameworks of professional knowledge as they undertake organisational problem-solving. It is not satisfactory for principals to rely on intuition when they are required to give attention to human resource development, staff supervision and appraisal, school development and programme evaluation.
- 11.6.9 There should be an upgrading of the quality of instructional leadership of newly appointed principals. In primary and district high schools, emphasis should shift away from the control of teachers by requirements for programming and the testing of student achievement toward the communication of values which encourage staff to adapt and devise more appropriate strategies and components of the curriculum. In the senior high school there is a need for principals to exercise instructional leadership so as to create greater coherence across subject departments in the teachers' perspectives of the secondary curriculum.

A number of factors should be considered in planning for the delivery of professional development to newly appointed principals.

- 12.5.1 For many principals the early part of the first year of appointment is a period of 'emergency professional development'. They must not only learn about the nature of the principalship, but also combine their preferred style with the special administrative demands of the school. An important part of the process of learning how to be a principal comes from receipt of feedback about staff reaction to the pattern of influence. The pressure of the 'start up' phase of the first year of appointment would be reduced if appointees could displace some of this emergency professional learning to the period of professional development prior to taking up the appointment. The significance of 'emergency professional development' prior to taking up appointment as a component of the new principals' professional knowledge base should be reduced.
- 12.5.2 The first year of appointment provides rich opportunities for professional growth. It is essential that the newly appointed principal makes time to reflect on this experience, possibly in an ongoing collegial relationship with an experienced colleague.
- 12.5.3 Some principals have a low level of awareness of their own professional development needs. Other principals may have inaccurate estimates of their own strengths and limitations in the role. Upgraded opportunities for principals to consult with experienced principals about their attempts to influence school operations would do much to increase awareness of alternative administrative strategies and skills.
- 12.5.4 To a large extent the success in achieving continuing professional development with principals comes from a strengthening of the commitment to personal self-improvement as a component in the culture of education. Historically relatively little attention has been given to the need for inservice education. In a period of profound system level change when institutional cultures may be weakened it is essential that educators are encouraged to strengthen their

commitment to the further upgrading and broadening of their professional knowledge base.

- 12.5.5 The availability of accurate knowledge about the competencies that are required at various transitions in the career pathways of an education system provides information to guide long term continuous professional development. Awareness of career transitions acts as an incentive for practitioners to obtain new skills and knowledge prior to appointment to a new status.
- 12.5.6 In the current period of change it is important to monitor the impact of professional development opportunities on principals. Continuing professional development requires that the principal has control over the topics of inquiry.
- 12.5.7 The demands of the first year of appointment to the principalship may create a situation where principals neglect their own professional development needs. A collegial relationship with an experienced colleague makes regular professional review more likely.
- 12.5.8 There should be an exploration of the possibility of using the computerized administrative systems in Western Australian schools for the delivery of inservice activities to staff who aspire to the principalship and to newly appointed principals. This facility enables school staff to attempt inservice activities in accordance with the erratic demands of their work.
- 12.5.9 The School of Education (WACAE) should review the B Ed. course to ensure that new practitioners receive a professional preparation which enables them to become competent participants in school development during their first year of appointment.
- 12.5.10 The School of Education (WACAE) should give attention to the planning of professional development opportunities for practitioners who aspire to the principalship. This

initiative should commence with the broadening of the professional knowledge base of deputy principals.

12.5.11 The School of Education (WCAE) should seek the assistance of faculty from the Department of Educational Policy and Administrative Studies of the University of Calgary in the design of professional development experiences for aspirants to the principalship and newly appointed principals. A series of visiting fellowships should be planned to facilitate the design of professional development experiences.

12.5.12 The School of Education (WCAE) should establish within the higher degree programme a focus on research relating to the learning experiences and the professional development needs of newly appointed principals. The research programme could include the following topics which emerge from the research study:

- o the way in which the newly appointed principal attempts to manage the micropolitics of the school, especially as this relates to the policy process within the school;
- o the process of cognitive reorientation as the newly appointed principal takes up the mindset of the principal;
- o the professional development needs of newly appointed female principals.