NEOPHYTE LEADERS' VIEWS ON LEADERSHIP PREPARATION AND SUCCESSION STRATEGIES IN NEW ZEALAND: ACCUMULATING EVIDENCE OF SERIOUS SUPPLY AND QUALITY ISSUES

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Abstract: This paper reports the views of 28 educators in early leadership positions about their career paths and the appropriateness of preparatory and succession strategies for leaders in New Zealand schools. The provisional findings reiterate the issues highlighted by an earlier pilot involving 14 secondary principals; extrinsic motivators that help potential leaders to become aspirant leaders, sustaining engagement with career path planning, role-specific and prior skills training and mentoring, integrating skills training with higher and evidence-based learning about leadership by designation, leadership development infrastructure, and the need for national investment. These 28 educators, sampled in late July 2008 at the Extending High Standards Across Schools Conference, raised six more issues; (a) the need for district or regional systems to deliver career planning and mentoring, (b) growing demand for access to higher and evidence-based learning about executive and institutional leadership, (c) negligible preparation for teaching principalships (d) acceleration through past designations reducing role-specific leadership capacity on appointment, (d) non-systematic learning about leadership after appointment and, (e) the need for additional investment in leadership development infrastructure to deliver more comprehensive preparatory and succession leadership development strategies. In sum, the two pilots provide accumulating evidence of serious issues in the quality and quantity of leadership supply and to the need for further research into the attitudes of educators to preparing for and succeeding in leadership designations.

INTRODUCTION

This paper reports further research from the National Review of Preparatory and Succession of Educational Leaders for Aotearoa/ New Zealand.[1] The review was triggered by the alleged crisis (Brooking, 2008a, 2008b, 2008c; Daniel, 2006; Wylie, 2008) in the supply and quality of leaders for middle and senior management and institutional leadership roles in early childhood and school education, especially for the period 2010 to 2020 when the retirements of Baby Boomers will peak (Daniel, 2006; Galvin, 2006). The review was intended to project the workforce of leaders required in ECE, primary and secondary education sectors, review current preparatory and succession strategies and programmes in New Zealand and internationally, research current attitudes and intentions towards preparation for and succession into leadership roles, and thus, help provide an empirical base for a national policy review and the planned improvement and delivery of services.

The initial research (Macpherson, 2009a) reported a pilot survey of 14 serving secondary school principals. It suggested that New Zealand education relies heavily on serendipitous experiential learning at team and executive leadership levels, with some more systematic approaches being used to prepare aspiring and develop first-time principals. The first pilot highlighted the diversity of career paths without career path planning, the potential role of extrinsic motivators to help more potential leaders become aspirants, the need for skills training prior to appointment by designation and mentoring after appointment, the need to specify role-specific skills and integrate training with higher and evidence-based learning about leadership by level, the advancement of leadership development infrastructure, and the need for national investment in selected preparatory and succession strategies.

This paper reports results from a second pilot survey of the current attitudes and intentions of an opportunistic sample of 28 teachers who participated in workshops at the Extending High Standards Across Schools (EHSAS) conference in Wellington, 28 to 30 July 2008. The EHSAS project was "designed to improve student outcomes by making funding available for

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[1] This review was initiated by the New Zealand Educational Administration and Leadership Society through its award of the 2008 Konica Minolta and Dame Jean Herbison Scholarship.

schools to develop and extend their proven practice in collaboration with other schools", with an emphasis on "developing professional networks and improving the evidence base around processes and practices that contribute to improved student outcomes" (Ministry of Education, 2008a). The annual conferences of the EHSAS project have promoted distributed pedagogical leadership in collaborative district and regional networks with a view to demonstrably improving student achievement. For example, the 2007 EHSAS Conference was given early access to a systematic review of the effect sizes of various leadership interventions on student achievement (c.f. V. J. M. Robinson, Hohepa, & Lloyd, in press; V. M. J. Robinson, 2007). Similarly, the 2008 Conference was alerted to a case where English secondary students had served as 'learning detectives' (Vann, 2008) and to meta analyses that traced the effect sizes of teaching interventions (Hattie, 2008, 2009) and forms of professional development (Timperley, Wilson, Barrar, & Fung, 2008) on student achievement. It is reasonable to assume that the EHSAS participants are regarded by the Ministry as comprising a significant talent pool of neophyte leaders and that the EHSAS project is a major leadership development strategy.

This context also indicates that 28 workshop participants at the EHSAS 2008 Conference may have been unusually aware of the links between distributed and collaborative leadership services and student learning when they reflected on their own career paths and gave their views concerning the appropriateness of preparatory and succession strategies. They were given a briefing on the National Review, a description of the workforce and turnover in school education in the year May 2007 to May 2008 (Ministry of Education, 2008b) to assist with career planning, and then invited to provide their views by completing a questionnaire.

It is important to note that when these data were collected there were three main leadership preparatory strategies being used by the Ministry of Education; (a) preparatory skills short courses and networks for leaders, (b) a pilot preparatory programme for aspirant principals, and (c) competency-related induction training for first-time principals. There were two leadership succession strategies being used; (a) on-line support for practicing principals, and (b) a week-long Principals' Development Planning Centre (PDPC)

course for experienced principals. New Zealand's new *Professional Leadership Plan 2009–2010* (PLP) (Ministry of Education, 2009d) was launched in September 2009. The objectives and opportunities at each level are summarised in Table 1, as clarified at various web sites; 'Collective Agreements' (Ministry of Education, 2009a), 'Professional Development' provisions (Ministry of Education, 2009c) and 'Information for Experienced Principals' (Ministry of Education, 2009b).

Table 1: The objectives and opportunities offered by the *Professional Leadership Plan*

Level	Objectives	Scale of Opportunities
Middle and senior leaders	Middle and senior leaders are to 1. implement National Standards in literacy and numeracy 2. improve the achievement of every student with a particular focus on Maori, Pasifika, and students with special education needs, 3. embed teaching practices which are culturally responsive and based upon the evidence of what improves outcomes for diverse students.	The funded opportunities include • access to 75 one-year Study Leave awards • access to 40 (from 2009)/ 50 (from 2010) 10-week awards of paid Sabbatical Leave • access to one Konica Minolta Dame Jean Herbison NZEALS Scholarship per annum • access to within-school professional development (PD) in literacy, numeracy and curriculum • access to management units, allowances, and release time • access to leadership and management advisers • access to specialist classroom teachers • access to online tools and resources through the Educational Leaders website, and • access to professional networks.
Aspiring principals	Aspiring principals are 1. to be identified and developed for principal positions in hard-to-staff schools with a focus on developing Maori and Pasifika teachers as principals, and 2. to ensure a pool of quality applicants.	The funded opportunities include • access to 75 one-year Study Leave awards • access to 40 (from 2009)/ 50 (from 2010) 10-week awards of paid Sabbatical Leave • access to 230 places per annum on the National Aspiring Principals Programme • access to one Konica Minolta Dame Jean Herbison NZEALS Scholarship per annum • access to within-school professional development (PD) in literacy, numeracy and curriculum • paid management units, allowances, and release time, • access to leadership and management advisers • access to specialist classroom teachers • access to online tools and resources through the Educational Leaders website • access to professional networks.
First-time principals	FTPs are to be inducted in order to 1. manage school operations effectively and efficiently 2. lead change to create the conditions for effective teaching and learning for every student with a particular focus on Maori, Pasifika, and students with special education needs, and 3. engage with family and whanau to improve student outcomes.	The funded opportunities include • access to 200 places in the 18-month First-time Principals Programme • access to 75 one-year Study Leave awards • primary and area school FTPs in U1 and U2 schools - 10 days Professional Development Release Time over 18 months • access to one Konica Minolta Dame Jean Herbison NZEALS Scholarship per annum • access to regional office induction programme • access to leadership and management support • access to within-school professional development • access to schooling improvement • access to support for schools at risk • access to online tools and resources through the Educational

		• Leaders website, and • access to professional networks and management advice.

Experienced principals	Experienced principals (<5 years) are to have their knowledge and skills further developed to lead change in order to
	1. create the conditions for effective teaching and learning, with a particular focus on
	   a) those who are leading initiatives to raise Maori achievement,
	   b) achieving measurable gains for all student groups in participating schools, and
	   c) engaging with family and whanau to improve student outcomes.
		The funded opportunities include
		• primary principals - access to 80 (from 2009)/ 100 (from 2010) 10-week awards of paid Sabbatical Leave
		• area school principals - access to 3 10-week awards of paid Sabbatical Leave
		• secondary principals - access to 50 10-week awards of paid Sabbatical Leave
		• access to one Konica Minolta Dame Jean Herbison NZEALS Scholarship per annum
		• access to 75 one-year Study Leave awards per annum
		• access to within-school PD
		• access to schooling improvement
		• access to support for schools at risk
		• access to professional learning groups
		• access to online tools and resources through the Educational Leaders website,
		• access to professional networks and management advice, and
		• access to 300 places in the pilot 18-month Experienced Principals Programme.

It is evident in Table 1 that the PLP largely restructured pre-existing services into a four-step career-related process of leadership professionalization. On the other hand, each step given fresh learning objectives and opportunities with an overall aim; the development of evidence-based educational leadership intended to improve educational achievement and social justice. The PDPC was closed and the week-long course for experienced principals cancelled, and the $2 million per annum budget redeployed to fund the NAPP as part of the PLP (McGregor, 2008, paras 21-29) and to launch an Experienced Principals' Programme. No 'new money' was apparently deployed to offer preparatory or succession programmes for any pre-principal roles.The changes appear to be limited to programme realignment in a context of modest resources and 'zero sum' budgeting of leadership professionalization in New Zealand primary and secondary education, with no new preparatory and succession strategies to be introduced in the foreseeable future. The continued absence of investment in prepratory or succession leadership strategies in the ECE sector at a time of rapid expansion is inexplicable.

The findings below can now be used to examine the assumptions and scope of New Zealand's PLP, once the methodology has been explained to indicate limitations to interpretation. The following sections explore their responses, develop tentative

propositions and highlight potential policy issues for further research. These findings are provisional and indicative.

SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS AND CAREER PATHS

The 28 respondents comprised 18 female and 10 male educators. Six were currently serving in middle management, 11 in senior management, none were teaching principals, eight were non-teaching principals, and three were in non-school education system roles. Nine (32%) of the 28 were aged 30-39, 12 (43%) aged 40-49, five (18%) were 50-59 and two were over 60. This meant that they were younger than many in the education workforce (Galvin, 2006). Of the 28, 25 (89%) self-classified as NZ European/ Pakeha and three (11%) as Maori, indicating that Maori (about 16% of New Zealand's population) were under represented. With regard to their highest qualification, three (11%) had completed a teaching diploma, 14 (50%) a teaching degree, and 11 (39%) a postgraduate degree, not dissimilar to national profiles (Ministry of Education, 2008b). None had a doctorate degree. Their participation in leadership preparatory programmes was also uneven. Eight (29%) had not participated in any preparatory programme, three in the National Aspiring Principals' Pilot (NAPP), four in the Principals' Development Planning Centre (PDPC) programme, and five had accessed Leadspace, an online resource centre. Two had primarily served in ECE, 13 in primary and 13 in secondary education.

The first attitudinal data collected was their basic disposition to their role. When asked to indicate their degree of support for the proposition that 'I get a great deal of satisfaction from my current role', 19 (68%) strongly agreed, five (18%) agreed and two (7%) were neutral, none disagreeing or strongly disagreeing. They were then asked to indicate the main sources of satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Twenty (34%) of the 59 references made to sources of satisfaction were about opportunities to lead, 15 (25%) about opportunities to collaborate, 13 (22%) referred to teaching and learning, seven (12%) to capacity building and four (7%) to rewards. With regard to sources of dissatisfaction, fourteen (34%) of the 41 references were about workload and support, nine (22%) were about compliance-related

paperwork, eight (20%) referred to personnel issues, five (12%) to poor leadership, three (7%) to student behaviour and two (5%) to parents.

The value ascribed to professional collaboration in this sample is the only point of difference with the first pilot's sample of secondary principals. It will be interesting to see if this difference and the proportions of references to sources of satisfaction and dissatisfaction remain the same in more representative samples, and constant across different designations. In the interim, it appears that while leadership does bring some dissatisfaction, it also brings even more satisfaction to most, which is presumably why they were attracted to and continue to offer leadership.

The diversity of educators appointed to become principals has long been a challenge to the First-Time Principal (FTP) programme (V. M. J. Robinson, Eddy, & Irving, 2006). It is therefore interesting that the career paths of the 28 EHSAS respondents were significantly less diverse that those of the 14 secondary principals in the first pilot. None of the 28 were still designated (basic) Scale A teachers, six (21%) were middle management, that is, with 1-3 management units, 11 (39%) were senior managers with 4+ units, eight (29%) were non-teaching principals, and three (11%) were in non-school system roles. The majority, 17 (61%) can be regarded as neophyte leaders of teaching or executive teams in middle or senior management roles.

Regarding promotion velocity, ten (36%) of the 28 had been Scale A teachers for less than four years, 12 (43%) remaining in the designation for 4-9 years, three (11%) for 10-15 years and three for 16+ years. Two of the 28 had not spent any time in middle management roles, 13 (46%) for less than four years, six (21%) for 4-9 years, four for 10-15 years and two for 16+ years. Eight (29%) of the 28 had not spent any time in senior management roles, while 15 (54%) had been in the role for less than four years, four for 4-9 years and one for 10-15 years. Eighteen (64%) of the 28 had not spent any time in a teaching principalship, five in the role for less than four years, three for 4-9 years and one for 10-15 years. Eighteen (64%) of the 28 had not spent any time in a non-teaching principalship, two in the role for less than 4 years, seven for 4-9 years and one for 10-15 years. Overall, the majority of the EHSAS

sample comprised neophyte leaders that appeared to be following a standard career path through the designations with increasing velocity; accelerating through, or in some cases, jumping over, leadership designations.

The eight non-teaching principals' characteristics and career paths were of particular interest. Research in New Zealand in the 1990s (Whittall, 2001) showed that rural teaching principalships were more likely to prove a career stop than a career step. When 14 teaching principals were interviewed in 2002 and 2005 by Collins (2006), he concluded that support was still needed to help teaching principals step up to non-teaching principalships, and that time spent in teaching principalships had no discernible career advantage.

In this sample, five of the eight non-teaching principals were men, three women. Seven were in primary schools, one in a secondary. One was aged 30-39, three were 40-49, three were 50-59 and one was over 60. Seven were NZ European/ Pakeha, one was Maori. Two had teaching diplomas, three had degrees, and three had postgraduate degrees. None had doctorates.

Two of the eight had spent less than four years in a scale a position, three for 4-9 years, and three for 10-15 years. The time spent in subsequent designations then shortened considerably. One had spent no time in a middle management position, five for less than four years, one for 5-9 years and one for 10-15 years. One had spent no time in a senior management position, five for less than five years, and two for 5-9 years. Three had spent no time as a teaching principal, three for less than four years, and three for 5-9 years. Two of the eight had been non-teaching principals for less than four years, five for 5-9 years and two for 10-15 years. Two intended retiring in less than four years, three in 10-15 years and three in more than 16 years. In sum, there was no evidence found of the seven primary leadership careers being disadvantaged by time spent in teaching principalships, possibly due to recent accelerations in promotion velocity, although caution is warranted due to the size of the sample.

On the other hand, the decreasing time being spent in designations prior to non-teaching principalships suggests a pattern of accelerating advancement, to the potential detriment of the school communities. It will be interesting to see if the career paths in larger and more representative samples exhibit similar acceleration. If so, sophisticated preparatory and succession strategies will become even more crucial to guarantee leadership competence on appointment to all designations to offset the effects of accelerating 'stepping stoning.'

Since some of the responses regarding time spent in 'education system roles' duplicated time spent in other designations they were disregarded, and indicated that such service would need to be defined as 'system (non-school) roles' in future surveys.

The 28 respondents were asked what had been the main factors that informed/ will inform their decision to offer leadership as part of their career. Twenty-two (42%) of the 52 references were about being attracted by the challenges of leadership, 12 (23%) said the decision was triggered by opportunities to lead, 12 (23%) by rewards, four (8%) by professional development, and two (4%) by negative experiences. These references cohere with the sources of satisfaction noted above. A survey of more representative samples can check these patterns of satisfaction and motivation, and if verified, provide an empirical basis for realigning leader recruitment strategies.

When asked about their years to retirement, two of the 28 signalled an intention to retire in less than four years, five between 4-9 years, eight in 10-15 years and 13 in 16+ years. The main factors that have/ will inform the decision to retire were also sought. Thirty-three (51%) of the 64 references were to lifestyle issues, 28 (44%) to job satisfaction factors, and three (5%) to alternative professional commitments. It appears likely that the decision to retire will be determined largely by each respondent's view of the balance between their lifestyle options and job satisfaction.

Since these factors are both intrinsic and extrinsic in nature, respondents were asked about any plans to refocus engagement in education instead of retirement in order to underpin and refocusing strategy. Of the 30 references made, nine (30%) were to contract work, seven

(23%) to taking up new roles, four (13%) to teaching, four to further study and two to self-created projects. Four had no plans. These relatively few and diverse references suggest that knowledge about opportunities to refocus leadership services, as an alternative to retirement, is relatively undeveloped. This needs to be verified in follow up research and potentially inform the development of a new career path planning strategy that addresses retention.

PREPARATION FOR LEADERSHIP

From Potential to Aspirant Leader

The first issue explored concerning preparation was the process by which *potential leaders*, that is, teachers currently undecided about offering leadership, became *aspirant leaders*. The respondents were asked to recall the main factors that *discouraged* them from becoming an aspirant leader, when they were still potential leaders. Twelve (38%) of the 32 references were about lacking confidence, 10 (31%) were about lacking a skill base, and 10 were about role perceptions and costs. This interim finding adds weight to the impression that the supply of leaders might be being retarded by the absence of a strategy intended to give potential leaders the confidence, basic skills and a preliminary understanding of leadership service to enable them to become aspirants.

When asked about the main factors that *encouraged* them, as potential leaders, to become aspirant leaders, the responses stressed three main attractors; a personal readiness to lead (23 or 43% of 53 references), peer support (16 or 30%) and experiential learning (14 or 26%). None of the respondents reported encountering extrinsic and systemic strategies intended to identify potential leaders and to encourage them to become aspirants. This again suggests the need for a national strategy intended to offer extrinsic motivation, so that many more potential leaders are deliberately encouraged to become aspirant leaders, and thus build national educational leadership capacity and system capability.

From Aspirant to Middle Management

Respondents were asked to recall the main methods they *actually* used, as aspirant leaders prior to appointment, to prepare for leadership. The 48 methods referred to by the respondents were either forms of experiential learning about leadership (20 or 41%), or professional development and higher education (17 or 35%), or direct support from leaders through mentoring and modelling (12 or 24%). When asked how they might have prepared *better* as aspirant leaders, the respondents referred to 27 methods in the same three categories but in reverse order; professional development and higher education (16 or 50%), direct support from leaders (10 or 31%), and experiential learning (6 or 19%). These interim findings suggest the need for leadership development infrastructure that enables aspirant leaders to plan and accelerate their learning about leadership in much more systematic ways. Pending further research, this infrastructure might need to provide aspirants to middle management with career path planning, mentoring, and professional development training in basic skills that is integrated with higher learning about team leadership. There was a special emphasis on collaborative leadership in the areas of pedagogy, curriculum and assessment.

The next pair of questions explored the main methods *actually* used to prepare for service in middle management, and how each respondent could have *prepared better.* The 36 references to the main methods actually used were again forms of experiential learning (22 or 61%), professional development and higher education (9 or 25%), and direct support from leaders (5 or 14%). The 18 methods that reportedly would have helped respondents prepare better for middle management were direct support from leaders (10 or 56%), forms of experiential learning (4 or 22%) and professional development and higher education (4).

Overall, the responses to these two items suggest limited systematic support to help prepare for middle management, the heavy current reliance in experiential learning, with a strong felt need for better learning support from expert leaders. Given the scale of career path planning and mentoring implied, these interim findings suggest that a fresh career path planning and mentoring delivery system needs to be conceived as generic practice, embedded in school or network cultures, sustained as a professional norm of engagement by practitioners and

both recipients and providers, and perhaps developed, implemented and supported in consultation with district or regional experts.

From Middle to Senior Management

Respondents were asked to recall the main methods they *actually* used to prepare for service in senior management. Seventeen (46%) of the 37 references were forms of experiential learning, 13 (35%) were forms of professional development and higher education, and seven (19%) were forms of direct support from leaders. However, when these respondents were asked how they could have *prepared better* for senior management, only eleven references to methods were made, suggesting a limited appreciation of alternative preparatory options. Four methods suggested were about engaging in the NAPP and FTP programmes, acquiring deeper knowledge of administration, as opposed to leadership, and a wider understanding of management procedures. Four of the methods recommended involved support from leaders through mentoring, coaching, observing and working with others on the job. Three experiential learning methods were suggested including 'more time as HOD' and 'time not 'jumping up' the ladder so quickly.'

Overall, these response patterns suggest that none of these respondents had prepared systematically for a senior management role, possibly regarding it as a temporary 'stepping stone' prior to achieving a principalship as their career terminal appointment. These possibilities need to be checked in follow up research, along with the retrospective realization by these respondents of the disadvantages of advancing rapidly and 'learning on the job.' They had come to value role-specific skills training and deeper understandings of organizational options, functional management and executive leadership, after the fact or promotion, much as found in the first pilot (Macpherson, 2009a).

From Senior Management to Principalships

When eight respondents reported the methods that they had actually used to prepare for teaching principalships, six referred to experiential learning methods such as

'advancement through management ranks', 'became staff rep on BOT', 'sought out leadership experiences in school', 'accidental service as a teaching principal', 'quality teaching - leading a G&T class,' 'curriculum leadership' and 'none - I was thrown in the deep end.' Two noted postgraduate study, one reported being mentored, and one explained that no preparation was undertaken because the role was regarded as 'teaching with extra administration'. When asked how they could have been better prepared for a teaching principalship, only three suggestions were offered; the NAPP and FTP courses, 'more time in senior management' and being 'mentored / coached' in the role. These responses imply that teaching principals could be particularly ill prepared for their role, with serious potential consequences, as discussed below.

The eight respondents made 15 references to the actual methods they used to prepare for non-teaching principalships. Again, six references were made to forms of experiential learning such as 'evolved teaching into non-teaching', 'six years as teaching principal,' 'on the job success as teaching-principal' and 'relationships'. Five references were made to leader-supported strategies such as being mentored, modelling and networking. Five references were made to study and professional development methods including 'university study on school management', 'leadership courses through the advisory service', NAPP and 'specific training in time management'.

The key difference between preparation for teaching and non-teaching principalship was that the latter made much stronger use of leader-supported learning and structured learning of skills and deeper understandings. When asked how they could have better prepared for a non-teaching principalship, the eight respondents made six suggestions; 'PD opportunities', 'Talked more with others in our cluster', 'more HR type courses/ papers,' 'asking other principals', and 'reading recommended texts' and 'rigorous courses such as offered by PDPC which give you an opportunity to go through the challenges you face'. Two respondents countered the question, asserting that 'the small school to large school prepared me well' and 'I was happy with my development.' These responses implied that while non-teaching principals had made more systematic efforts to prepare, they may have relatively few ideas about improving preparation, possibly

because they are unaware of options, or that they may even be affronted by the suggestion that preparation might be improved. Future research might explore these options.

The next pair of questions explored the main methods *actually* used to prepare for service in education system roles, and how each respondent could have *prepared better*. Four of the five who reported replicated their responses to earlier questions, apparently confused over the category. All responses to these two questions were set aside.

Overall

The general pattern of responses regarding actual support for the move from potential to aspirant leader, and the methods actually used to prepare for leadership service in middle and senior management roles and in teaching and non-teaching principalships, suggests that these methods are heavily reliant on serendipitous experiential learning, with relatively minor support from leaders and professional development and higher education. In sharp contrast, when asked how potential leaders could be better encouraged to become aspirants, and how preparation for specific roles could be improved, the weight of respondents' suggestions suggested that leader-supported and systematic learning strategies are consistently regarded as more valuable than idiosyncratic experiential learning.

Put another way, these 28 EHSAS practitioners, who are currently and actively engaged in team, executive, institutional and networking leadership that is focussed on improving student learning, indicated that the leadership preparatory provisions they have experienced rely excessively on the vicarious experiences of 'learning on the job', with serendipitous, uneven and limited access to (a) career path planning, mentoring and other forms of leader support, (b) role-specific skill acquisition through professional development short courses, and (c) deeper and evidence-based learning about leadership via postgraduate study. These patterns need to be checked using follow up research but they are remarkably similar to those found in the pilot study of 14 secondary principals.

ATTITUDES TO PREPARATORY STRATEGIES

Preparatory strategies are defined in this project as groups of methods used to improve aspirants' role-specific capacities prior to their appointment. Eight preparatory and eight succession strategies were selected from those trialled in New Zealand, the United Kingdom and Australia (Dempster, 2007; Gronn, 2007), mindful of the advice provided by the 14 secondary principals (Macpherson, 2009a). Respondents' attitudes to these strategies were then measured by asking them to indicate the extent to which they agreed with each proposition, and to comment if they wished to explain their decision. None of the respondents took the opportunity to add any propositions. Table 1 provides the propositions concerning preparatory strategies and the frequency of respondents' ratings.

Table 1: Respondents' Attitudes to Preparatory Strategies

Proposition	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable
1. Role skills training should be available prior to each level of leadership service (classroom, middle, senior, principal)	0	0	1	8	19	-
2. Them. A National Aspiring Middle Managers' Program should be available as a preparatory opportunity	0	0	1	10	17	-
3. A National Aspiring Senior Managers' Program should be available as a preparatory opportunity	0	0	2	4	22	-
4. A National Aspiring Principals' Program should be available as a preparatory opportunity	0	0	1	4	23	-
5. Graduate status is appropriate for middle management teachers	0	3	4	13	7	-
6. Postgraduate status is appropriate for senior management and principals	1	6	5	10	5	-
7. Doctoral status is appropriate for principals and system leaders	2	13	7	3	2	-
8. A Board of Trustees should be provided with quality training and an experienced advisor to help them select their principal	0	0	0	2	25	-

The concept of skills training *prior to* service at each level of leadership was strongly supported. The proposed replication of the NAPP as a delivery vehicle for preparation at each level of leadership service was also strongly supported. One respondent explained his strong support; 'If we don't have strong middle and senior management, preparation and succession for principalship is negligent.'

The proposal that 'graduate status is appropriate for middle management teachers' was supported or strongly supported by 20 (71%) of the 28 respondents with four neutral and three disagreeing. The various positions taken on the relationship between graduate status and middle management appeared to refer to the functional relevance and limits of graduate learning. Status appears to be an irrelevant issue. Further research needs to test support for the proposition that 'Relevant graduate studies are an appropriate part of preparing for middle management'.

The proposal that postgraduate status is appropriate for senior management and principals was either supported or strongly supported by 15 (54%) of the 28 respondents, seven disagreeing or strongly disagreeing, with five neutral. The comments offered suggested that varying positions on the relationship between postgraduate status and senior management and principalship also referred primarily to the functional relevance and limits of postgraduate qualifications. Status may be irrelevant. This attitude is interesting in an international context. The Secretary of Education in England (Balls, 2008) has indicated his intention to create an 'all masters profession' in education. Postgraduate standing is normally a prerequisite for an application to lead a school in the US. Follow up research might usefully seek to explain attitudes among New Zealand teachers to postgraduate study by testing support for the statement 'Relevant postgraduate studies are an appropriate part of preparing for senior management and principalship'.

The proposal that 'doctoral status is appropriate for principals and system leaders' was supported or strongly supported by five (18%) of the respondents while 15 (54%) disagreed or strongly disagreed. The appropriateness of doctoral status for principals and system leaders was conceptualised in comments by respondents solely in terms of its functional relevance to school leadership. Since none of the non-teaching principals responding had personal experience of doctoral studies, and doctoral standing is becoming more common in US school and system leadership, follow up research might seek to explain these attitude sets. Follow up research needs to set aside the issue of

status and test support for the statement 'Relevant doctoral studies are an appropriate part of preparing for principalship and system leadership'.

It was proposed that a Board of Trustees should be provided with quality training and an experienced advisor to help them select their principal. This proposition was very strongly supported. Nine of the 28 respondents provided comments. Five raised doubts about BOTs' expertise and three about the rate of and potential for errors. One respondent pointed out that this mechanism was already in place.

Overall, the attitudes to leadership preparatory strategies revealed by this pilot research indicate strong support for the construction of fresh national policy. Particularly strong support was signalled for relevant skills training prior to service in middle and senior management, and in teaching and non-teaching principalship levels, and for the replication of the NAPP delivery model at other levels. On the other hand, it also revealed some interesting variances in attitudes towards graduate, postgraduate and doctoral studies as preparatory methods. Given international practices, refinements to some of the survey items could help reveal the bases of these attitudes.

One of the more interesting interim findings is that the EHSAS 28, with almost equal numbers serving in primary and secondary schools and with broadly equal numbers of graduate and postgraduate qualifications, appear to be advancing every five years, and progressively less, 'through the ranks' largely without prior preparation for leadership service at the next level. It appears that, soon after having achieved competency at one designation, they advance to the next, thereby spending most of their time as leaders as amateurs learning on the job. There is no standard leadership development model evident in their discourse concerning leadership preparation, more the good intentions, compounded folk wisdom and concerted pragmatism of amateurs. This supports a key finding of the first pilot study of the views of 14 secondary principals (Macpherson, 2009a); that systematic leadership professionalization was less likely than amateurism through serial incompetence.

A key policy challenge may well be to (a) understand the potential in potential, aspirant and leaders at all levels, (b) challenge the effects of serendipitous enculturation 'on the job', and to (c) encourage reflective and educationally-critically learning about leadership with integrated and 'stair cased' structures, in order to be enable team leaders to advance by many routes to more specialised management skills and to more complex levels of understanding about leadership service at each level.

ATTITUDES TO SUCCESSION STRATEGIES

Succession strategies are defined in this project as groups of methods used by systems to improve appointees' role-specific capacities after their appointment and thereby sustain the system's leadership capabilities through ongoing learning about leadership. Respondents' attitudes to seven succession strategies were measured by asking them to indicate the extent to which they agreed with each proposition, and to comment if they wished to explain their decision. Table 2 provides the propositions presented and the frequency of respondents' ratings.

Table 2: Respondents' Attitudes to Succession Strategies

Proposition	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable
1. There should be a Leader Identification Programme to encourage potential leaders to become aspirant leaders	0	0	3	12	12	-
2. There should be a Leader Recruitment Programme to encourage aspirant leaders to prepare for middle management service	0	0	3	11	12	-
3. There should be an Overseas Leader Recruitment Programme to encourage applications from appropriate personnel	0	7	9	9	0	-
4. There should be an annual Role Induction and Development Conference for each level of leadership service	1	1	8	10	7	-
5. Mentoring services should be available for the first year of service at each level of leadership	0	0	0	8	19	-
6. Mentoring first time leaders at each level should be provided by experienced leaders	0	0	0	7	20	-
7. There should be Postgrad Scholarships available to enable middle and senior managers to sustain their learning about leadership	0	2	2	11	12	-
8. There should be Doctoral Scholarships available to enable institution and system leaders to sustain their learning about leadership	0	3	6	8	9	-

The proposed Leader Identification Programme was strongly supported with three respondents neutral. Three comments clarifying agreement included 'Done in schools', 'Would need very clear criteria for selection - could lead to a 'mates rates' system', and 'Unless we will have no leaders!' There were no comments clarifying neutrality. The proposed Leader Recruitment Programme was similarly strongly supported. Two comments explaining support were 'Would need very clear criteria for selection - could lead to a 'mates rates' system' and 'Necessary because no one will want to be a middle manager soon!' The four neutral ratings were not explained. Pending follow up research, these responses suggest a broad base of support in principle for strategies that identify potential leaders and convert them into aspirants, and then encourage aspirant leaders to prepare systematically for service as middle managers.

There was considerable ambivalence over the proposed Overseas Leader Recruitment Programme. Nine respondents agreed, nine were neutral and eight disagreed. The sole comment explaining agreement stated 'If needs must only'. The sole comment clarifying neutrality noted that 'Would need to ensure they are adaptable to NZ context. If they are the best, absolutely.' The three comments giving reasons for disagreement were 'What do they know about our curriculum, culture, educational reforms? Invest in leadership PD in our country first. Support is needed now in NZ for move from middle management to principalship, especially women!', 'Should work to recruit and develop leaders from own society', and 'We need more good Kiwi teachers for Kiwi kids. I don't mean this in a xenophobic way. :-)' As with the pilot study of 14 secondary principals, some of these comments do not appear to understand that the recruitment of leaders overseas currently includes trying to attract expatriate New Zealand teachers offering leadership internationally or the extent to which the education system is already heavily dependent on overseas recruitment. Nevertheless, most of the concern appears to be driven by four values; nationalism, effectiveness, careerism, and feminism. It will be important to measure and accommodate the relative strength of these values when considering overseas recruitment strategies.

The proposed 'annual Role Induction and Development Conference for each level of leadership service' was strongly supported. One comment explained that it would be 'Good PD all round.' The proposal to have mentoring services available for the first year at each level of leadership was also very strongly supported. The sole comment suggested that it was 'Necessary for a thoughtful transition.' The proposal that mentoring first-time leaders at each level should be provided by experienced leaders was also very strongly supported. Two conditions were suggested; 'As long as they are trained in terms of being a 'mentor'', and 'If time is given but not as an additional task.' Pending further research, there appears to be a strong base of support for these three succession strategies.

The penultimate proposal was that there should be post graduate scholarships available to enable middle and senior managers to sustain their learning about leadership. Of the 27 that responded, 23 (85%) agreed or strongly agreed, with two neutral and two disagreeing. The two who were neutral made no comment. One respondent explained his strong disagreement; 'Fundamentally disagree that qualifications indicate successful practice. Gaining knowledge and reflection is essential.' These responses suggest general support for this succession strategy providing the issues of relevance and public returns to education are seen to be attended to.

The final proposal was that there should be doctoral scholarships available to enable institution and system leaders to sustain their learning about leadership. Of the 17 that agreed or strongly agreed of the 27 respondents, three commented; 'But not principals - they are needed in schools', 'Huge support would be needed. Need tangible rewards for this,' and 'I don't see this as crucial, but great for those who seek it.' None of the six that were neutral provided an explanation. Of the three that disagreed, one provided his reason; 'Not necessarily meeting needs of individuals or schools.' Again, the issues qualifying general support for the proposal are effective methods of ensuring relevance to education and an appropriate balance of public and private returns from investment.

Overall, the first impression gained from these patterns of responses is that the respondents were encountering ideas about how improve appointees' role-specific capacities after their appointment and help sustain the system's leadership capabilities for the first time. This impression implies that leadership succession is a relatively under developed policy issue in New Zealand, compared to (say) system leadership development policy in England (Macpherson, 2009b, p. 54). The second impression is that all but two of these strategies enjoy general or strong support, despite their novelty. The third is that further research might elicit support for national investment and introduce and test support for other strategies employed internationally.

DISCUSSION AND PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS

This second pilot research project identified additional issues worthy of further research and suggested improvements to a number of items prior to a national survey being conducted. This survey, of an sample of 28 EHSAS educators, has confirmed the primary interim finding of the first survey of 14 serving secondary principals; that New Zealand education relies mainly on chance access to professional development through short courses for the preparation of its educational leaders at team and executive leadership levels, with some more systematic approaches being made available for teaching and non-teaching principals.

While the first pilot uncovered unexpected diversity in the leadership career paths of secondary school principals, and the need to restructure and extend preparatory opportunities, both pilots have highlighted the need to (a) specify and integrate role-specific skills training with deeper and evidence-based learning about leadership at each level of designation, (b) employ extrinsic motivators to convert more potential leaders into aspirant leaders, (c) further advance the development of leadership development infrastructure, and (d) invest in selected preparatory and succession strategies.

This second pilot confirmed the heavy current reliance in experiential learning reported when preparing for middle management roles, along with a strong felt need for better learning

support from expert leaders. The scale of career planning and mentoring required is beginning to suggest that a delivery system might need to be conceived as generic practice in school networks supported by district or regional experts and to be embedded through professional development as a professional norm of engagement by recipients and providers.

The possibility that *none* of the EHSAS respondents had prepared systematically for a senior management role, and that it may be regarded a temporary stepping stone, are particularly worrying, and will need to be checked by follow up research. On the other hand, it is interesting that a number of incumbents and ex-incumbents realised that the acceleration of career steps and 'learning on the job' had not been matched by access to deep learning about leadership or the acquisition of executive leadership skills. The realisation can be taken as an indicator of significant latent demand.

The negligible degree of preparation for teaching principalships appears particularly serious for the individuals concerned, the children and parents in their schools, and the education system, if generalization is found to be warranted by follow up studies. It appears that teaching principals could be less likely to succeed than leaders in any other leadership designations. It also means that the children and parents in small schools with teaching principals are more likely to have to cope with the consequences of leadership failures, in terms of student achievement and life chances. More broadly, it implies that education system leaders are more likely to have to accept responsibility for leadership failures in smaller schools, for turbulence in small schools attributable to leader turnover, and for the resultant erosion of public confidence in the state education system.

Regarding preparation for non-teaching principalships, the predominance of references to self-managed and experiential methods over access to refined knowledge and skill sets specific to institutional leadership is of concern. Follow up research needs to check if this pattern reflects the norm of actual experiences and the value given to these different forms of learning about leadership among those currently offering team,

executive, institutional and networking leadership. Such understandings will be essential devising improved preparation strategies.

Regarding the succession strategies proposed, it was noted above that they appeared novel to the respondents, and once modified, will attract strong support. In the interim, it appears that New Zealand school education does not have an explicit leadership succession policy and strategies.

This second pilot indicated accelerating progression across leadership designations. In a context of modest preparatory and negligible succession strategies, such acceleration could be increasing the chances of idiosyncratic theory, evidence-free practice and leadership failure. There is little apparently being done to encourage potential leaders to become aspirant leaders or to sustain their learning about leadership until after about a decade of serendipitous 'learning on the job' at pre-principal leadership designations. This means that leadership development infrastructure may be needed to (a) enable aspirant team leaders, middle and senior managers, and teaching and non-teaching principals to acquire the skills and understandings specific to their different roles prior to service, and (b) enable all leaders to sustain their learning about leadership so that their service demonstrably improves and adds to the net leadership capability of the state education system.

Finally, there were retrospective hints by some of the more senior and better educated leaders in both pilots that their preparation for team, executive and institutional leadership roles would have been significantly improved by blended learning at each level comprising (a) leader-supported and role-specific skills training, mentoring and networking, and (b) learning through evidence-based and reflective critique of their own practices. These hints of latent demand might be examined more deeply in follow up studies as a possible additional basis for a coherent and comprehensive framework of preparatory and succession strategies for educational leaders.

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