Alternative Models of ‘Principalship’

(A Sub-project within The Queensland Leadership Succession Project.)

This Sub-project was jointly sponsored by: The Queensland branch of the Australian Principals Associations Professional Development Council and a coalition of 18 Queensland Catholic Education Authorities, with coordination through the Queensland Catholic Education Commission

October 2006
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project was financially supported by a group of 'funding partners' within Queensland Catholic Education (see Appendix One) and the Queensland Branch of the Australian Principals Associations Profession Development Council (APAPDC). As well as providing financial support members of the APAPDC Queensland branch assisted in the organization of data collection and the distribution of progress reports.

The Alternative Models of 'Principalship' project was one of six sub-projects within the Queensland Leadership Succession Project. This ‘umbrella’ project was overseen by a Management Group consisting of:

- **Garry Everett** – Queensland Catholic Education Commission (QCEC)
- **Dianne Reardon** – QCEC
- **Pam Varcoe** – Brisbane Catholic Education
- **Ron Holmes** – Brisbane Catholic Education
- **John Lyons** – Rockhampton Catholic Education
- **Margaret Hendriks** – Toowoomba Catholic Education
- **Dr Gayle Spry** – Australian Catholic University

The members of this group met face-to-face throughout the life of the project as well as consistently collaborating via email and teleconference on all issues related to the progression of the research. The contribution of their individual and combined knowledge and experience, their cooperation and their willingness to make themselves available within busy schedules are all acknowledged with appreciation.

Dianne Reardon, Garry Everett and Gayle Spry are especially acknowledged for the research roles they played in conducting focus-groups and working with Dr. Bill Foster of Australian Catholic University on survey development. Acknowledgement and appreciation is also extended to Dr Foster for the analysis of survey results, to Dianne Reardon for her authorship of this report and to Dr Gayle Spry for her authorship of the Literature Review and her contributions to sections of this report.

As with all research this project would not have been possible without the people who provided the data upon which this report is built. All those teachers who participated in focus-groups across the state and those that completed surveys are acknowledged and thanked with the hope that this report reflects their concerns and solutions and will assist in improving the leadership structure of the schools about which they care so deeply.
This research project had its genesis in the concerns of Queensland Catholic Education authorities and the APAPDC that the national and international trend for the pool of well-qualified, motivated applicants for principal positions to become smaller, was being reflected in Queensland.

The project’s aim was to identify possible alternative models of ‘principalship’ that reflect the world-views of the cohorts of teachers from which future ‘principalship’ applicants are most likely to come. Thus it had the dual foci of moving towards an understanding of the views of teachers aged 25-35 years and women teachers of all ages, regarding ‘principalship’ in Queensland schools. These foci also recognize the generational and gender change occurring within the education profession as to-day’s principals move towards retirement age, and the proportion of women in the teaching workforce continues to grow. (Preston, 2001).

(The throughout this report the term ‘principalship’ [where appropriate] is placed in single inverted commas as a way of acknowledging that in future leadership models the term may represent a concept that is different to the one it represents in the school leadership structures of to-day.)

The assumption underlying the research is that these cohorts of teachers (i.e. young teachers and women teachers) may well hold views that are different from those held by current principals and system administrators about the nature of principalship, the place of principalship in their life plans, and what actually attracts, or deters them from, applying for principalship. If this assumption proved to be true, understanding these different views would provide a useful first step in addressing one aspect of leadership succession by suggesting alternative models that better matched the life aspirations of these cohorts of potential applicants.

This report reflects the findings and interpretations of a research project that involved a survey of prior research, a review of relevant literature, and the collection of quantitative and qualitative data from within Queensland government and non-government education sectors. Originally it was intended that there would be two reports, one for the government sector and one for the non-government sector. However, against expectations,
data analysis has shown that the views of teachers across sectors and across cohorts were basically in accord. Given this situation a single report has been prepared with any differences between cohorts and/or education sectors being highlighted in the general text.

PRIOR RESEARCH

Today leadership succession is a ‘hot topic’ in education worldwide. There is a growing body of research that highlights a shortage of well-qualified, motivated applicants for principal positions. In the USA, a number of reports (National Association of Elementary School Principals, 1998; Olsen, 1999; National Association of Secondary School Principals, 2001) have identified the difficulty of filling principal vacancies. In the UK, the Ninth Report of the House of Commons Select Committee on Education and Employment (1997/98) also found a declining number of applicants for headship. In Australia, researchers (Sachs & Preston, 2002) have tracked trends in principalship and teacher supply and concluded that a principal shortage is a likely future scenario.

Given these findings, the issue of leadership succession in education has received much attention in recent times. With the support of the Victorian Department of Education and Training, Lacey (2001) reports that the failure of people in middle management positions to apply for principalship, poses a serious challenge for leadership succession. She recommends that the employing authority develop a strategic approach to succession planning in order to address a range of issues including:

- The recruitment, development and retention of staff;
- The development of a workplace culture that actively encourages teachers to seek senior leadership positions;
- The provision of flexible work options; and
- Support for family and spouse relocation.

Recognising the issue of leadership succession within Catholic Education in New South Wales, the Catholic Education Commission (NSW) invited a research team from Australian Catholic University (ACU) to investigate the issue of leadership succession in NSW Catholic schools. While respondents
in this study saw principalship as an opportunity to make a difference in education, they were concerned that holding the position would impact upon family responsibilities and/or their relationship with colleagues and students. Some felt that salary differences did not match the degree of responsibility and/or saw the selection process as being too complex, flawed, intrusive or gender biased. There were also concerns that there was too much red tape and bureaucracy involved in principalship and that principals in Catholic schools were subject to onerous “religious identity demands”. For the majority of respondents the negative of principalship outweighed the positive and they had decided not to apply. (d’Arbon, Duignan, Duncan & Goodwin, 2001)

Similar research in Catholic Education in Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania collected participant suggestions regarding the role and structure of principalship that would make it more attractive and manageable. These suggestions included:

- The improvement of educational and support structures and service;
- The improvement of staffing schedules, given the increasing demands on schools;
- The re-structuring of the role of principal to reduce multiple areas of responsibility, and as a consequence the stress and time demands of the role;
- The review of the demands and expectations on principals in terms of upholding the Catholic identity of the school in a period of significant change in the Church; and
- The improvement of the selection and appointment process for principals (Carlin, d’Arbon, Dorman, Duignan & Neidhart, 2003).

While the findings from these research studies produced some insights into the issue of leadership succession and principalship, these studies do not directly identify the worldviews of younger teachers (25-35 years) or women teachers or the alternative models of principalship appropriate to these cohorts.

**PROJECT OVERVIEW**

**Theoretical framework**

In line with the purpose of this project (i.e. to construct alternative models of ‘principalship’) this research project was situated within the research paradigm of constructivism (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). This philosophy of research seeks to understand the complexity of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it in order to facilitate change.
In constructivist thinking, the mind is seen to be an active agent in the construction of knowledge. Thus human beings do not discover knowledge but rather construct or make it. Social interaction and interpretation are key components of the process of construction of knowledge. It is through interaction with others that we construct and reconstruct our understanding of the world and start to make sense of our experience.

Here it is assumed that research into specific human activities, such as principalship, will reveal multiple perspectives. These perspectives are also expected to change as individuals and groups become more informed and sophisticated in their views. These new understandings will then provide the impetus for change initiatives into the future.

**Design**

This project was conducted by a research team consisting of Dianne Reardon and Garry Everett from the Queensland Catholic Education Commission and Gayle Spry and Bill Foster as research consultants from the Australian Catholic University. The research involved three phases:

**Phase 1** involved a review of the literature in respect to the perspectives of young teachers (25 to 35 years) and women in education, on work, career and ‘principalship’. In addition, this review explored theoretical developments in leadership and principalship that are now evident in the literature. This review of the literature provided the researchers with tentative thoughts, which were later refined in the subsequent phases of data collection, analysis and interpretation. (see Appendix Two for Literature Review)

**Phase 2** involved an exploration of the research problem through a series of focus groups across Queensland and across education sectors. In 2003, as a first stage in data gathering, 83 teachers (55 women teachers of all ages and 28 teachers, men and women, between the ages of 25 and 35 years) participated in a focus-group process that engaged them in developing ‘principalship models’, the design principles of which aligned with their views of paid work in general and ‘principalship’ in particular.

The process culminated in participants giving oral and written descriptions of a preferred model of principalship. Oral descriptions were taped and the session facilitators collected written descriptions from all participants. (See Appendix 3 for an overview of the focus group process.)
At the completion of the focus-group process the above data were used to write two reports, one for each of the research cohorts. The reports were titled: *Towards an Understanding of the Views of Women Teachers Regarding Principalship in Queensland Schools* and *Towards an Understanding of the Views of Teachers Aged 25-35 Years Regarding Principalship in Queensland Schools*. Draft reports were prepared and sent to all focus-group participants for validation of content before the final reports were prepared.

Data gathered during this phase identified participants’ worldviews on work and principalship as well as suggesting ‘alternative models of principalship’ that required further investigation.

**Phase 3** involved a more detailed investigation of the alternative models of principalship. Data from the focus-group process was used to develop a survey which allowed respondents to validate and/or suggest modifications to the ‘alternative models’ identified by focus-group participants. As the second stage in data gathering this survey was sent to 3000 teachers across government, Catholic and Independent schools (i.e. 1500 to government schools; 1038 to Catholic diocesan schools; 210 to Catholic Religious Institute schools; 252 to Independent schools). Surveys were equally divided between teachers 25-35 years of age and women teachers of all ages. Nine hundred and forty-five completed surveys were returned. (See Appendix 1 for survey)

**Reporting**

Information from the three phases has been used in writing this report. However since phase 2 findings were translated directly to the phase 3 survey the major focus is on the data gathered by way of the survey.

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**FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION**

The format followed in this section of the report is to give a succinct account of the major findings from each of the project’s 3 phases - i.e. Literature Review; Focus-group Process; Survey - followed by summary conclusions drawn from all three data sources.

**Phase 1: Literature Review**

The Literature Review is presented in four parts. Part 1 focuses on recent research on leadership succession; Parts 2 and 3 focus directly on the worldviews of young teachers (25-35 years) and women in respect to work, career and principalship; Part 4 looks closely at the evolution of principalship and seeks to identify models of principalship, which may be more attractive to these groups. A summary of the review of the literature follows and a full account is provided in Appendix Two.
Starting with the assumption that many of the next generation of principals would come from the group of teachers, aged between 25 and 35 years, one of the focuses within this review was on writings in respect to the worldviews of the age cohort that is commonly referred to as Generation X. Much has been written about Generation X and their views in respect to life, work and career. Since the early 1990s, popular writers have offered negative descriptions of Generation X that emphasise their laziness, lack of commitment and poor work ethic in comparison to their older colleagues at work.

However, recent research focussing on this age cohort offers a more positive account of Generation X and has found no discernible difference in work values, attitudes and priorities to previous generations. At the same time, there are differences regarding how these work values, attitudes and priorities are operationalized across generations within the workplace.

This body of research also identifies demands from Generation X for a new work contract and suggests strategies for recruiting, managing and motivating this age cohort. These strategies include reviewing recruitment strategies, providing necessary freedom, encouraging active involvement, developing a shared vision, supporting learning and development, key recognition, empathy and direct communication. As a way forward, the literature recommends “naked management”, an approach to management that encourages managers to be inward looking in order to assess motivations; engages reciprocal processes that nurture participation; builds healthy and networked teams; and makes career management a strategic priority.

For over thirty years feminist writers have addressed the issue of women in leadership. Contemporary writing in respect to this issue suggests that obstacles to female representation in leadership remain. Older women do not see their change agency as leadership and remain insecure and vulnerable when appointed to principalship. Younger women are both well prepared and motivated to offer themselves as leaders in a context that gives legitimacy to equal opportunity, however, they experience hierarchical relationships with fewer opportunities and competitive environments that are antithetical to feminist impulses. Recent research has found covert discrimination against women in leadership.
This discrimination is reflected in the leadership styles of women not being recognised in organisational structures. It was also found that women in leadership faced an on-going struggle to retain their position and sustain their legitimacy as they engage professional power. Explaining these obstacles scholars point to the prevailing gender-neutral liberal-egalitarian perspectives in education and argue for a new critique of educational administration as a gendered construction. Following this research, feminist writers recommend linking the issue of women in leadership to wider educational debates about social inequality, educational reform and issues of social justice. As a way forward, these writers recommend an approach to shared leadership characterised by principles of subjectivity, intersubjectivity and mutuality.

In conceptualising principalship, the literature emphasises the evolution of this role. Traditional understandings of principalship are grounded in a leadership that places full responsibility on the shoulders of the principal as school leader. In the context of educational restructuring and school-based management principals face new dilemmas and challenges. In particular, they are torn between the discourses of professional, collaborative leadership and market managerialism. Recognising these new dilemmas and challenges theorists advance a variety of alternative models of leadership. These range from supported leadership, to dual leadership to shared teacher leadership. Evaluative studies in respect to co-principalship and teacher leadership support claims within the literature that shared leadership fosters school reform and innovation. However, there are warnings that the success of shared leadership depends on a commitment to a new paradigm of leadership informed by principles of mutualism, a sense of shared purpose and an allowance for individual expression.

In conclusion, this review of the literature has identified that we are currently in a moment of significant change and these changes have bought dilemmas and challenges to contemporary principalship. Recognising these dilemmas and challenges, researchers looked for alternative models of leadership and principalship. Research so far suggests that more relational forms of leadership would be more attractive to Generation X and women in the workforce. These relational forms of leadership require new organisational structures that are less hierarchical and more team orientated. Alternative models of principalship, such as supported principalship, co-principalship and parallel leadership, seem to fit this vision for structural reform. However, the literature warns against focussing...
solely on structural change. There must also be a commitment to collaborative principles of subjectivity, intersubjectivity and mutuality. Without these principles, structural change runs the risk of being just another manifestation of market managerialism.

As Generation X and women teachers had already rejected managerialism within the principalship, more of the same will not address the emerging problem of leadership succession.

**Phase 2: Focus-group Data**

Fifty-five women teachers of various ages, and 28 men and women teachers between 25 and 35 years of age participated in a focus-group process consisting of activities that engaged them in thinking about their ‘world-view’ and its relationship to their views on work in general and principalship in particular, and in designing a model of ‘principalship’ that reflected those views.

**Summary points from activities within the focus-group process**

**Words associated with ‘principalship’:**

In an exercise that asked participants to give a word they associated with ‘principalship’, although many words such as ‘responsibility’, ‘challenging’ and ‘busy’ could have either positive or negative connotations, at least 40% of words given could easily be identified as negative, e.g. ‘tough’, ‘no way’, ‘frustration’.

Negative words clustered around the 2 key ideas of: the time pressures inherent in the role at present and the nature of the work perceived to be performed within the present role. Terms such as, ‘hectic/frantic’, ‘emotionally draining’, ‘demanding’, ‘all consuming’, ‘tough’, ‘scary’, ‘headache’, ‘jack of all trades’, were used to express these concepts.

Positive words clustered around the 2 key ideas of: leadership and the relational aspects of the role. Terms such as, ‘vision’, ‘presence’, ‘communication’, ‘collaboration’, ‘diplomacy’, ‘support’, were used.

It seems that focus group participants were almost equally divided between negative and positive ‘spontaneous’ reactions to the word ‘principalship’. Positive aspects of the role focused on the opportunity to exercise
leadership and to engage with people. Negative aspects of the role focused on its perceived excessiveness in both scope and breadth.

Beliefs about ‘paid work’:

The major beliefs about paid work were that it should be fulfilling for the individual and that the employee should give ‘value for money’. Other beliefs consistently expressed were that work was only a part of life, not all of life; work was about giving service and work should be collegial. Work was thus viewed as a partnership within which employer and employee cooperated to their mutual benefit, there was to be a commitment one to the other. Employees should give of their best (e.g. “should put in more than you take out”; “requires commitment”; “demonstrate a strong work ethic”; “give 100% to the job”). Commitment to the job, however, is conditional on the job meeting the needs of the individual employee (“provide purpose”; “be challenging”; “be energising and forming”; “provide community”; “be collegial”).

Beliefs about ‘principalship’:

Put succinctly, the views of the focus-group participants on ‘principalship’ would be reflected in a model of ‘principalship’ that:

- was based on collegial leadership and reconceptualized ‘principalship’ as a ‘team structure’;
- allowed a balanced lifestyle;
- delivered just and flexible remuneration;
- surrounded the role with a network of, system provided, support services;
- offered systemic opportunities for personal and professional growth for individuals and teams involved in ‘principalship’ and for individuals interested in ‘principalship’ as a career pathway;
- ensured a selection process based on merit and processed through trained Selection Panels, the majority of whose members were professional educators;
- addressed the goals of the individual equally with the goals of the organization.

Phase 3: Survey Data

Survey response:

Nine hundred and forty-five completed surveys were received.

Cohort by sector response:

Teachers 25 to 35 years:

- Education Queensland: 231
- Catholic Diocesan: 185
- Catholic Religious Institute: 15
- Independent: 66
Women Teachers:

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<td>Independent</td>
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(The discrepancy between the total survey number and the cohort response number is because women teachers 25-35 years were recorded within both cohorts for data analyses purposes. Data analyses was carried out by Dr Foster of ACU using SPSS.)

Drawing on a collation of the ‘alternative models of principalship’ developed by focus-group participants 7 models of ‘principalship’ were developed and formatted on a survey instrument. The survey format gave a general outline of each model followed by a short list of characteristics most often associated with the model. On a continuum ranging from (1) *No Support* to (5) *Very Strong Support*, respondents were asked to indicate their level of support for the model in general, and then their level of support for each characteristic. A space to comment on each model was provided. (See Appendix 1 for survey)

The models are presented here in order from most supported to least supported. The model is described, then its ‘global’ score on the 5 point continuum presented. The Characteristics associated with the model are then presented with the score (in brackets) that each received on the continuum. Comment on the results is given when it is considered pertinent. Two thousand, two hundred and eight comments were made on the survey forms. This was qualitative data and when used has been treated as such, so should be read as indicative rather than definitive.

Models

A. The ‘Split Role’ Model, was described on the survey thus:

*The tasks and responsibilities of the role of principal are shared between (at least) two people of equal employment status. The most common suggested “split” was between finance and education. The ‘principals’ might work in ‘rotating shifts’ to cover the long hours required of the role. There would be a ‘support team’ to provide expert advice in specialist areas, e.g. facility maintenance, legal liability, business planning etc.*

This model received the highest level of support, with close to 51% of respondents giving it strong or very strong support, and 31% giving it moderate support. The mean response on the five point scale was 3.55.

Characteristics associated with the ‘Split Role’ Model:

(a) The people filling the role are of equal employment/authority status (3.89)

(b) The ‘split’ is between Administration and Education. (3.64)
(c) An ‘on call’ roster system among people filling the role of principal is used to cover duties that fall outside the normal working week (e.g. responding to night and weekend security alerts, student family crises etc.).

(d) There is a specialist “support team” with the task of providing expert assistance in areas outside the principals’ core areas of expertise.

All characteristics received majority support with means ranging from 3.55 to 4.05 on the five point scale. There was particularly strong support for characteristics (a) with 67% of respondents indicating strong or very strong support, and for characteristic (d), where 71% of people indicated strong or very strong support.

In their comments survey respondents who supported this model focussed on the ideas of: (1) sharing the work-load, e.g. “One person cannot do all tasks and responsibilities of the role of a principal, and sharing the role between two people would be beneficial”, and (2) giving the school access to two very different sets of skills that it was considered would not often be found in the one person, e.g. “In my experience, strong admin. Principals didn’t always have a creative or an interpersonal strength and vice versa.” A number of people commented that this was a model best suited to large schools. Of those who expressed concerns about the model the focus was usually the need to ensure that the two people involved worked well together and that the interdependence of school administration and educational leadership was recognized.

B. The ‘Traditional’ Model, was described on the survey thus:

One principal responsible for all that happens in a school. The principal works with a Leadership Team whose members have delegated responsibility in certain areas.

This model with a mean of 3.44 on the 5 point scale, received only marginally less support than the ‘Split Role’ Model.

Characteristics associated with the ‘Traditional’ Model:

(a) Ultimate responsibility is vested in one person. (3.22)
(b) Leadership Team members are not of equal employment status. (2.87)
Each year the whole staff (including the Leadership Team) sets goals and expectations and identifies resource and facility requirements.

(c) Responsibility within the Leadership Team is by delegation from the principal. (3.04)

Among women teacher respondents there was a significant preference for the ‘Split Role’ Model over the ‘Traditional’ Model, e.g. 52.9% gave the ‘Split Role’ Model ‘Strong’ or ‘Very Strong’ support while only 39.4% gave this same level of support to the ‘Traditional’ Model.

Given the overall support for this model, none of the characteristics received particularly strong support. In percentage terms, 42% of respondents strongly or very strongly supported (a); 31% strongly or very strongly supported (b) and 37% strongly or very strongly supported (c). Male teachers were more supportive of Characteristics (b) and (c) than were their female counterparts.

Comments indicate that support for this model basically steamed from the belief that, “One person ultimately needs to be responsible” and a “….better the devil you know” approach. Comments that expressed concerns about the model clustered around the ideas that: you had to have the right person at the top, e.g. “This is a good model if the principal is good but disastrous in some schools where everything relies on one person’s expertise”: that this person needed to know how to delegate, e.g. “Delegation is a real and rare skill”; and that there needed to be the “right” Leadership Team. Rejection of the model was usually based on the ‘size’ of the role, e.g. “Too much workload, stress and responsibility lies with one person...” Some comments suggested that the Traditional Model worked best in small schools because of the role size issue, e.g. “Ineffective in large school because the principal looses touch with the world of the classroom”.

C. The ‘Team’ Model was described on the survey thus:

There is a leadership team (matched in size to the size of the school). All team members are of equal status. All have an area of major responsibility but there is built-in overlap so that each has some knowledge of all areas. A facilitator is appointed to chair weekly meetings so that each person’s portfolio is heard. Each year the whole staff (including the Leadership Team) sets goals and expectations and identifies resource and facility requirements.

The ‘Team’ Model had a mean of 3.27 on the 5 point scale.
The characteristics associated with the ‘Team’ Model:

(a) Leadership Team members are of equal employment status. (3.62)

(b) Each Leadership Team member has a major area/s of responsibility (3.89)

(c) Overlap among areas of responsibility is structured so that all members have some knowledge in all areas. (3.83)

(d) A facilitator is appointed to chair weekly meetings of the Leadership Team. (3.59)

(e) The whole staff, annually, sets goals, expectations and budget priorities. (3.85)

There was a significant difference in male and female support for this Model. The mean response for female teachers was 3.36; for males 2.86. The mean response from teachers from Catholic Religious Institute schools and secular Independent Schools at 2.40 was also significantly below the overall global mean of 3.27.

As the figures below show all characteristics received strong or very strong support from the majority of respondents.

(a) 57%
(b) 68%
(c) 65%
(d) 56%
(e) 65%.

Comments indicate that the support for this model usually steamed from a set of beliefs about effective organizations e.g. “Team work and collaborative working environments are vital to an organization”; “(A model) that is relevant to the workplace of the 21st Century”; “A great equitable model that builds community values etc.”. People spoke of this model: “unifying staff”; “honouring (the principle of) participation”; “engendering a sense of ownership among staff”; “sharing of common goals”. Any concerns expressed usually focussed on the possibility for conflict with, “more than one person in charge”. It was suggested a few times that this model would work best in small or medium sized schools that had a history of working collaboratively or wished to work collaboratively.

D. The ‘Branch’ Model was described on the survey thus:

Each school has a manager (perhaps 2 in large schools) who is responsible for “core business” e.g. pedagogy, curriculum. There is an area or ‘cluster’ manager who takes responsibility across a set number of schools in certain areas e.g. HR, policy development/review. There is a diocesan or regional manager who is responsible across a number of school clusters for certain areas, e.g. Capital Grants, Quality Improvement processes. In this way the work and responsibility is shared and the school
“manager” can concentrate on teaching and learning and is not under stress to be "all things to all people".

This model received a mean response rate of 2.95. Only 34% of respondents gave it strong or very strong support.

Characteristics associated with the **Branch** Model:

(a) A school manager is responsible for “core business” (i.e. teaching and learning) (3.36)

(b) An area or ‘cluster’ manager takes responsibility for areas that support ‘core business’ (e.g. HR; policy development review processes etc.) (3.01)

(c) A diocesan or regional manager takes responsibility across a number of ‘school clusters’ for areas such as Capital Grant submissions; Quality Improvement processes. (2.97)

Characteristic (b) and (c) received support very close to the global mean. While characteristic (a), with a mean of 3.36, scored significantly better. This probably reflects the believe, expressed in focus-groups, the literature and the comments on survey forms, that the core of any school leadership role should be teaching and learning. Positive survey comments focussed on the capacity of this model to facilitate a focus on teaching and learning and effective management of human resources. Negative comments again focussed on the need for a school to have one leader. It was suggested that the model had a place in remote situations, with small schools and that it would be supportive of beginning principals.

E. The **Tiered Teams** Model was described on the survey thus:

*The school is lead by a team of people. One member of the Leadership Team acts as coordinator (this role rotates). Each Leadership Team member is the coordinator of a team. All staff members are members of at least one team. The number of ‘tiers’ necessary to meaningfully involve all staff will depend on the size of the school. For example in a large school one Leadership Team member would be the coordinator of the Curriculum Team. In a primary school this Curriculum Team may consist of people who represent areas of schooling such as: special education; early childhood; middle schooling;*
upper schooling. Each member of the Curriculum Team may coordinate a team within the areas they represent, e.g. Special Education Team, Early Childhood Team etc.

Twenty-eight percent of respondents indicated strong or very strong support for the ‘Tiered Teams’ model. This translates to a mean score of 2.81 on the 5 point scale.

Characteristics associated with the ‘Tiered Teams’ Model:

(a) The school is led by a team of people of equal employment status. (3.05)
(b) The role of Team Coordinator is rotated among Leadership Team members. (2.75)
(c) Each Leadership Team member coordinates a team of staff who take responsibility in a designated area, e.g. Curriculum. (3.12)
(d) Every staff member serves on at least one team. (3.08)

With scores ranging from 2.75 to 3.12, the support for characteristics was consistent with the global score.

Survey comments indicate that those who rejected this model did so on the grounds that not all staff would want to be, or would have the skills to be, involved in school leadership to this level. Some comments also expressed the view that while the rhetoric sounded good the reality had the potential to present coordination and personality-clash problems. Support for the model came from the belief that staff participation in decision making was good and that the model would offer, those that were interested, a ‘career path’ towards school leadership.

F. The ‘Board’ Model was described on the survey thus:

Directors are appointed (up to 4 in a large school). Each has an area of responsibility but they work as a team. Each Directorate has an advisory committee. The Directors form the governing board. An independent chair is appointed for a fixed term for the sole purpose of chairing meetings of the board. The board has the power to co-op members for the purpose of accessing expertise.

Three percent of respondents gave this model very strong support; 12% gave it strong support; and 29% gave it moderate support. This percentage ‘vote’ translated into a global mean score of 2.49.

Characteristics associated with the ‘Board’ Model:

(a) Directors each have a designated area of responsibility but act as a team in governing the school. (2.97)
(b) There is an advisory committee for each Directorate. (2.81)
(c) The Directors form the governing board. (2.75)
(d) An independent, fixed term, appointee chairs board meetings.  

(2.75)

(e) There is the capacity to co-opt expertise to the governing body from inside or outside the school.  

(2.90)

A few comments indicated a problem with “the corporate nature” of this model. A couple again emphasised that a school should have one leader.

G. The ‘Cluster Schools’ Model was described on the survey thus:

A number of small schools are clustered. Care is taken when selecting principals for these schools that all necessary areas of expertise are covered within the cluster. One principal then takes responsibility in his or her area of expertise (e.g. Capital Grants) for all schools in the cluster. Cluster school principals meet on a regular basis.

Only nineteen percent of respondents gave this model strong or very strong support. Twenty percent gave it moderate support. This percentage support translated into a global mean of **2.45**.

Characteristics associated with the ‘Cluster Schools’ Model:

(a) The selection criteria for principals appointed to schools within a cluster ensures that the necessary range of expertise is available.  

(2.91)

(b) Each principal within the cluster takes responsibility for at least one area across all cluster schools.  

(2.69)

(c) Cluster school principals meet regularly.  

(3.14)

Positive comments focussed on the fact that this model would allow talent to be spread across schools. Negative comments expressed doubts that a principal could be equitable in his or her treatment of other schools. This was seen as a model for small, remote schools.

**Summary ranking of the models:**

1. ‘Split Role’ Model 3.55
2. ‘Traditional’ Model 3.44
3. ‘Team’ Model 3.27
4. ‘Branch’ Model 2.95
5. ‘Tiered Teams’ Model 2.81
6. ‘Board’ Model 2.49
7. ‘Cluster Schools’ Model 2.45

While **focus-group** data was of a qualitative rather than a quantitative nature it is obvious from the transcripts of verbal and written descriptions that variations on the ‘Split Role’ and ‘Team’ Models were the most strongly supported ‘alternatives’. Support for the ‘Traditional’ model, in the focus group phase of data gathering, could at best be described as minor. In
contrast the ‘Traditional’ model received comparatively strong support among survey respondents. In focus-groups the discussion almost always gravitated at some point to the key concept of reducing the present work load of principals by ‘fixing’ the ‘Traditional’ (or present) model. It was mostly during such discussion that the role characteristics listed in Section H of the survey emerged as characteristics that would be desirable in any model of ‘principalship’. These characteristics received very strong support from survey respondents. It could be speculated that focus-group participants did not focus on the ‘Traditional’ or present model because their task was to develop ‘alternative’ models but that when it comes to specific characteristics that could be part of any model of ‘principalship’, ‘Traditional’ or otherwise, both data sources are in accord.

Section H of the survey

The focus of this project was to identify models of principalship that exhibited characteristics attractive to the cohorts from which it was thought future applicants for principalship would emerge. However, during the focus-group process participants suggested a number of characteristics that they did not ‘attach’ to a particular model, but that they wanted to see associated with the role of ‘principalship’.

These characteristics were listed in a separate section of the survey (Section H) and respondents were asked to indicate their level of support for each characteristic on the same (1) ‘No Support’ to (5) ‘Very Strong Support’ continuum used for the models.

These characteristics, as expressed on the survey, are listed below in the order from most supported to least supported.

**Characteristics:**

1. Employing Authorities offer opportunity for potential school leaders to engage in professional development events such as, ‘shadowing’, ‘mentoring’, ‘coaching’, that allow them to learn from experienced principals and at the same time ‘test’ the role before committing to it as a career choice. *(4.51)*
2. The remuneration package for principalship is commensurate with the role’s responsibilities and accountabilities.

3. Employing Authorities formally recognize and support teaching and learning as the focus of principalship.

4. Upon appointment new principals engage in two induction processes. One process focuses on system issues and the other focuses on the specific school to which the principal has been appointed.

5. The majority of members of any selection panel are professional educators.

6. The selection process is capable of being varied to suit the particular nature and needs of a school community.

7. People who are (self or system) identified as potential leaders are ‘profiled’ in terms of appropriate professional development and then supported towards their ambition of leadership.

8. Central Office support personnel, offer expert service not just advice to principals.

9. The selection process is broad and flexible, and includes strategies beyond a written application and panel interview.

10. There is a transparent process of review for unsuccessful applicants.

11. The number of support roles is increased so that principals are freed from administrative/clerical work.

12. Employing Authorities support flexible (not linear or prescribed) pathways to principalship.

13. Within selection criteria skills associated with collaboration and managing people take priority.

14. Employing Authorities provide the financial capacity for schools to access expertise, either from the system or private sources, in areas complementary to the ‘core business’ of education (e.g. maintenance planning).

15. Employing Authorities publicly support a team approach to leadership and promote its acceptance within the community.

16. All Selection Panel members have engaged in a training program.

17. A period of sabbatical and a commitment to on-going professional development, from employer and employee, is written into Principal contracts.

18. Some professional development focuses on the Leadership Team as a team.

19. The selection process values life and employment experiences beyond schools.
20. Principals regularly engage in renewal processes that require them to demonstrate ‘cutting edge’ competency. *(4.05)*

21. Responsibility as well as tasks is shared among members of Leadership Teams. *(4.03)*

22. Employing Authorities resource regional networks for principals. *(3.94)*

23. Teacher representatives on Leadership Teams (perhaps on a rotation basis). *(3.78)*

On the survey these characteristics were organized under the headings of:

**Structure; Employment Issues; Personal and Professional Development; Role Expectations**

Because it is thought that some authorities may find it useful to view the characteristics in this format they are presented again clustered in this way in Appendix 4.

Although it was not an original intention of this project to seek ways to improve the present model of principalship, the characteristics listed in Section H in fact present a framework against which to reference the development of any model of ‘principalship’, be it present or future. These characteristics were strongly supported within the focus-groups and that support was then confirmed by the teachers, from all education sectors, who responded to the survey. With only one exception, the mean of these characteristics fell between ‘4’ and ‘5’ or between the ‘Strongly Supported’ and ‘Very Strongly Supported’ positions on the continuum.

In the “Comment” space provided after Section H on the survey many respondents took the opportunity to express again their support for all the characteristics listed, e.g. “These characteristics are sound, just and open to dynamic leadership opportunities”, “Fabulous ideas and processes are mentioned above.” There was also general support expressed for the project, as it offered the potential for change, e.g. “Education has changed greatly in the past 20 years, so too must the leadership in schools”. At a more specific level, comments particularly supported those characteristics that focussed on the selection process, the refocussing of the role on teaching and learning and the provision of
opportunities for aspirants, “to know the job” before choosing principalship as a career path.

As a suit these characteristics offer a ‘blueprint’ to any School Authority wishing to develop a model of principalship that reflects a successful model, as seen through the eyes of the teachers who participated in this study.

**SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS**

This project took a positive and practical approach by having teachers design and confirm models of principalship that study participants believed would encourage aspiration to the role.

Drawing on all data sources - i.e. Literature Review; Focus-group input; survey responses - a model of ‘principalship’ that would attract the majority of young teachers (male and female) and women teachers (of all ages) who participated in this project, would have the following 4 broad characteristics:

1. **The ‘principalship’ would be conceptualized as a team role.**

   **Elaboration:**

   Members of the ‘principalship’ team should be of equal employment status and should be paid a remuneration package commensurate with the role’s responsibilities and accountabilities. (Membership numbers could range from 2 upwards.) Employing authorities should publicly support the team approach to leadership and ensure that its principles and practices are understood within school communities. Professional Development that focuses on the ‘principalship’ team as a team should be mandatory.
One clear principle should be that final responsibility and accountability is shared among team members. Practice should be that a decision made by a member of the team within his or her delegated area of responsibility cannot be appealed with a higher status member of the team. This practice was consistently highlighted by focus-group participants as a problem with the present leadership team model within which responsibility and accountability are delegated from the ‘highest status’ team member – i.e. the principal.

If a team-member’s decision is unacceptable then an appeal is invariably made to that high-status member of the team. This common practice undermined the team approach to leadership and did nothing to lessen the work-load or stress-load of principals. However it is difficult to eliminate while the principal, and others, know that ultimate responsibility and accountability rests with him or her.

Lessening the work load of the principal was the key concept behind the team approach. There was a perception among focus-group participants and within the research literature that the ever expanding and diverse range of expectations of the role of principal made it a physical, cognitive and emotional impossibility to carry out the full dimension of the role within reasonable working hours. The majority of participants in this study addressed this issue by sharing the powers, functions and responsibilities of the role.

Survey respondents gave almost equal support to the Traditional Model (where one person is the ultimate leader) as they did to the Split Role Model and the Team Model (where leadership is equally vested in more than one person). Comments and the strong support for the following characteristics:

Employing Authorities publicly support a team approach to leadership and promote its acceptance within the community.  
(4.24)

Some professional development focuses on the Leadership Team as a team.  
(4.12)

Responsibility as well as tasks is shared among members of Leadership Teams.  
(4.03)

indicate that even those that believe that there must ultimately be one person in charge support the role being enacted in a team context.

Perhaps the best summary of this issue is offered in the following quote from a survey respondent:
“Teamwork must be a central focus of whatever approach is decided on. Schools need a shared vision which is supported whole-heartedly by teachers, students, parents, admin and the principal, whatever form that role may take.”

2. An Employing Authority’s Profession Development commitment should cover a career continuum, i.e. principal aspirant; beginning principal; established principal.

Elaboration

Employing authorities should address succession planning by ensuring that those who are interested in school leadership receive every encouragement and that there is systematic provision of opportunities, both experience based and academic, that allow them to develop a repertoire of appropriate skills and knowledge. The role needs to be demystified with a ‘try before you buy’ approach that allows aspirants to experience the role in a low risk environment, perhaps through such strategies as ‘work shadowing’ or ‘job sharing’ as a junior partner.

System organized and maintained mentoring programs and professional networks could support beginning and established principals. Comprehensive induction programs for beginning principals should have the dual purpose of induction to the role of principal and induction to the role of principal at the particular school of appointment. The second purpose would be as important for experienced principals being appointed to a new school as for first time principals. Sabbatical arrangements, participation in renewal processes that require the demonstration of ‘cutting edge’ competency together with an on-going mutual (employee/employer) commitment to professional development should be written into principals’ contracts.
3. **The role would be supported by a strong infrastructure of expert services.**

The term ‘Principal’ used in the context of schooling comes from the concept of ‘Principal Teacher’ and participants in this study wanted this concept honoured. However, onerous levels of accountability, pressure from parents, the shift from managing discipline to establishing social and emotional supports for students, expectations of skilful financial and risk management, a more legitiuous society and almost ceaseless politically driven educational reform all mean that the nature of the principal’s role has shifted. The perception of study participants was that today’s school principal was likely to spend more time on management than on leading the teaching and learning enterprise.

An appropriate level of infrastructure that surrounded the ‘principalship’ with easily accessible expert services in areas of school management that facilitate, but are not embedded in, teaching and learning would allow the role to be refocussed on ‘core business’, and perhaps equally importantly, ‘core people’ i.e. staff and students. This refocussing would be aided by Employing Authorities formally recognizing through policy, employment contracts and practices that teaching and learning are at the centre of the ‘principalship’.

Authorities would also need to support this stance in practice by providing the financial capacity for schools to access expert services. This could be done either directly through the employment of appropriate personnel at Central Office level or indirectly by making the funds available to schools to purchase the services needed from outside providers. The number and nature of support roles within schools could also be reformatted to free the ‘principalship’ from administrative/clerical work. The professional support network for each school would need to be customised to complement the capacity of its leadership at any particular time.
4. The selection process for principalship would be comprehensive and transparent.

Among the teachers who participated in this study’s focus-groups there was a distinct lack of confidence in the ‘fairness’ of present selection processes. Some of the highest ratings on the survey were reserved for those characteristics of principalship that addressed selection and employment issues, highlighting the importance people place on these issues.

This perception of unfairness in a ‘merit’ system persisted despite documentation by some Employing Authorities clearly outlining the process and its ‘quality assurance’ safeguards.

Comments such as, “The job is gone before they advertise”; “Someone is tapped on the shoulder”; “The panels are stacked to get the outcome they want”, were frequent and came from the government, independent and Catholic sectors. These survey comments mirror discussions in the focus-groups on the ‘merit’ system being manipulated to perpetuate the appointment to principalship of persons of a particular kind.

Focus-group participants and survey respondents support selection processes that:

- Have a mandatory training program for all Selection Panel members;
- Use Selection Panels on which the majority of members are professional educators;
- Can be varied to suit the particular nature and needs of a school community and recognises that there is no one (i.e. prescribed) pathway to principalship;
- Are broad and flexible and include strategies beyond a written application and panel interview;
- Offer a transparent and professional development focussed process of review for unsuccessful applicants;
- Give priority to selection criteria that focus on the skills of collaboration and people management and value life and employment experiences beyond schools.
CONCLUSION

Changing an existing paradigm takes courage as there will be a price to be paid in dealing with the seemingly automatic resistance that change to the status quo evokes. However, if the reasons for this study, i.e. a reducing pool of highly qualified applicants for principalship, and the research findings that a major contributor to this situation is the perceived negative effect of principalship on personal and family life, are the reality, then it must be accepted that there will also be a price to be paid for not changing.

Interpretation of findings from this study suggests that there is not a model of principalship that fits all situations, or any one situation at all times. In seeking to facilitate leadership succession school employing authorities may need to be flexible enough to allow school communities to explore ‘principalship’ models that suit their particular context at a particular time. The principles of mutualism, a sense of shared purpose and the valuing of individual expression and action, outlined in the Literature Review (p17), the rated and ranked ‘alternative’ models and the suite of characteristics strongly supported by participants in this study, together offer a strong framework upon which to base such exploration.

The Queensland Leadership Project, of which the Alternative Models of ‘Principalship’ Project is a part, came into being because Queensland Catholic education authorities accepted the responsibility, and risk, of taking a proactive stance in regard to 6 school leadership issues, including that of examining alternatives to how the role is presently conceptualized - the focus of this particular sub-project. The following quotes from two study participants offer an insight into an attitude that will lead us forward:

“(As) education has changed ..................... so too must the leadership in a school.”

“Life is about change – change, with support to take risks”
APPENDIX ONE

SURVEY INSTRUMENT
School Leadership

An Investigation of Alternative Models of ‘Principalship’ for Queensland Schools.

2004

supported by the

Queensland Catholic Education Commission.
(QCEC)

and the

Australian Principal Associations Professional Development Council
(APAPDC)
Preamble

There is, in general, a shortage of applicants for the role of principal. It seems likely that the shortage occurs because of features or characteristics that make the role unattractive, at least in its current form. The Queensland Catholic Education Commission (QCEC) and the Australian Principals Associations Professional Development Council (APAPDC) are conducting research into the views of teachers aged 25-35 years and women teachers of all ages, regarding principalship in Queensland schools. The aim of the project is to identify possible “alternative models” of principalship that reflect the world-views of young teachers and women teachers, the cohorts from which future principals are most likely to come.

So far the research has involved a review of the literature and focus group processes involving 83 teachers who developed alternative models of principalship.

This survey stage seeks responses from 1500 teachers 25-35 years of age and 1500 women teachers of all ages. These responses will be used to confirm or modify features of the models generated through the focus group process.

Information from the two stages of data collection and from the comprehensive literature review will be used to write reports based on input from government and non-government schools respectively. The reports will be made available through QCEC and APAPDC.

All responses will be treated as confidential. Nothing will be written in the reports that could identify individuals.

Thank you for your assistance in this project, which we hope will contribute to the dialogue about, and the development of, interesting and alternative ways of leading our schools.
Set out below are the "alternative models of principalship" most frequently identified by focus group participants from both the teachers 25-35 years and the women teachers’ cohorts. Six of these models involve ‘splitting’ or sharing the role of principal. Suggested ways of sharing the role range along a continuum from simply sharing the role between two people, to complex, tiered committee systems that involve all staff. The seventh model represents the “status quo”.

The seven models are briefly described below. Each model is followed by examples of characteristics that focus-group participants most often associated with the model.

You are asked to:

(a) Read the brief descriptor of the presented model and, using the Response Scale provided, indicate to what degree you support it as a model for at least some schools. (It is recognized that not all models will be suitable for all schools and you might like to comment on the nature and size of school to which you think a model is best suited in the space provided for ‘Comment’.)

(b) Indicate, using the response scale, to what degree you would support each of the characteristics listed for the model.

Response scale: 1 No support 2 Very little support 3 Moderate support 4 Strong support 5 Very strong support 9 No opinion

A. "Split Role Model" The tasks and responsibilities of the role of principal are shared between (at least) two people of equal employment status. The most commonly suggested "split" was between finance and education. The ‘principals’ might work in ‘rotating shifts’ to cover the long hours required of the role. There would be a ‘support team’ to provide expert advice in specialist areas, e.g. facility maintenance, legal liability, business planning etc.

Please indicate your level of support for this model in general. □

Characteristics associated with the “Split Role Model”:
(Please indicate your level of support for each characteristic.)

(a) The people filling the role are of equal employment/authority status. □
(b) The ‘split’ is between Administration and Education. □
(c) An ‘on call’ roster system among people filling the role of principal is used to cover duties that fall outside the normal working week (e.g. responding to night and week-end security alerts, student family crises etc.). □
(d) There is a specialist "support team" with the task of providing expert assistance in areas outside the principals' core areas of expertise.

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B. "Team Model" There is a leadership team (matched in size to the size of the school). All team members are of equal status. All have an area of major responsibility but there is built-in overlap so that each has some knowledge of all areas. A facilitator is appointed to chair weekly meetings so that each person's portfolio is heard. Each year the whole staff (including the Leadership Team) sets goals and expectations and identifies resource and facility requirements.

Please indicate your level of support for this model in general. ☐

Characteristics associated with the “Team Model”:
(Please indicate your level of support for each characteristic.)

(a) Leadership Team members are of equal employment status. ☐
(b) Each Leadership Team member has a major area/s of responsibility. ☐
(c) Overlap among areas of responsibility is structured so that all members have some knowledge in all areas. ☐
(d) A facilitator is appointed to chair weekly meetings of the Leadership Team. ☐
(e) The whole staff, annually, sets goals, expectations and budget priorities. ☐

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C. "Board Model" Directors are appointed (up to 4 in a large school). Each has an area of responsibility but they work as a team. Each Directorate has an advisory committee. The Directors form the governing board. An independent chair is appointed for a fixed term for the sole purpose of chairing meetings of the board. The board has the power to co-opt members for the purpose of accessing expertise.

Please indicate your level of support for this model in general. ☐
Characteristics associated with the “Board Model”:
(Please indicate your level of support for each characteristic.)

(a) Directors each have a designated area of responsibility but act as a team in governing the school.

(b) There is an advisory committees for each Directorate.

(c) The Directors form the governing board.

(d) An independent, fixed term, appointee chairs board meetings.

(e) There is the capacity to co-opt expertise to the governing body from inside or outside the school.

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D. “Branch Model” Each school has a manager (perhaps 2 in large schools) who is responsible for “core business” e.g. pedagogy, curriculum. There is an area or ‘cluster’ manager who takes responsibility across a set number of schools in certain areas e.g. HR, policy development/review. There is a diocesan or regional manager who is responsible across a number of school clusters for certain areas, e.g. Capital Grants, Quality Improvement processes. In this way the work and the responsibility is shared and the school “manager” can concentrate on teaching and learning and is not under stress to be “all things to all people”.

Please indicate your level of support for this model in general.

Characteristics associated with the “Branch Model”:
(Please indicate your level of support for each characteristic.)

(a) A school manager is responsible for “core business” (i.e. teaching and learning).

(b) An area or ‘cluster’ manager takes responsibility for areas that support ‘core business’ (e.g. HR; policy development/review processes etc.)

(c) A diocesan or regional manager takes responsibility across a number of ‘school clusters’ for areas such as Capital Grant submissions; Quality Improvement processes.

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E. “Tiered Teams Model” The school is lead by a team of people. One member of the Leadership Team acts as coordinator. This role rotates. Each Leadership Team member is the coordinator of a team. All staff members are members of at least one team. The number of ‘tiers’ necessary to meaningfully involve all staff will depend on the size of the school. For example in a large school one Leadership Team member would be the coordinator of the Curriculum Team. In a primary school this Curriculum Team may consist of people who represent areas of schooling such as: special education; early childhood; middle schooling; upper schooling. Each member of the Curriculum Team may coordinate a team within the area they represent, e.g. Special Education Team, Early Childhood Team etc.

Please indicate your level of support for this model in general.

Characteristics associated with the “Tiered Teams Model”:
(Please indicate your level of support for each characteristic.)

(a) The school is led by a team of people of equal employment status.

(b) The role of Team Coordinator is rotated among Leadership Team Members.

(c) Each Leadership Team member coordinates a team of staff who take responsibility in a designated area, e.g. Curriculum.

(d) Every staff member serves on at least one team.

Comment:_________________________________________________________________
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F. “Cluster Schools Model” A number of small schools are clustered. Care is taken when selecting principals for these schools that all necessary areas of expertise are covered within the cluster. One principal then takes responsibility in his or her area of expertise (e.g. Capital Grants) for all schools in the cluster. Cluster school principals meet on a regular basis.

Please indicate your level of support for this model in general.

Characteristics associated with the “Cluster Schools Model”:
(Please indicate your level of support for each characteristic.)

(a) The selection criteria for principals appointed to schools within a cluster ensures that the necessary range of expertise is available.

(b) Each principal within the cluster takes responsibility for at least one area across all cluster schools.

(c) Cluster school principals meet regularly.
G. "Traditional Model" Some focus-group participants wanted to retain what was described as the "Traditional Model", i.e. one principal responsible for all that happens in a school, working with a Leadership Team whose members have delegated responsibility in certain areas.

Please indicate your level of support for this model in general.  

Characteristics associated with the “Traditional Model”

(Please indicate your level of support for each characteristic.)

(a) Ultimate responsibility is vested in one person.  
(b) Leadership Team members are not of equal employment status.  
(c) Responsibility within the Leadership Team is by delegation from the principal.

H. DURING THE FOCUS GROUP PROCESS PARTICIPANTS SUGGESTED A NUMBER OF CHARACTERISTICS, THAT THEY DID NOT ‘ATTACH’ TO A PARTICULAR MODEL, BUT THAT THEY WOULD LIKE TO SEE ASSOCIATED WITH THE ROLE OF PRINCIPAL.

Please indicate your level of support for each of the following suggestions. If you believe that a suggestion is already in place please still indicate your level of support for it as a characteristic of principalship. The characteristics are grouped under 4 headings.

Structure:

(a) Responsibility, as well as tasks, is shared among members of Leadership Teams.  
(b) Teacher representatives on Leadership Teams (perhaps on a rotation basis).  
(c) Some professional development focuses on the Leadership Team, as a team.  
(d) Central Office support personal offer expert service, not just advice, to principals.
(e) Employing authorities resource regional networks for principals.

(f) The number of support roles is increased so that principals are freed from administrative/clerical work.

(g) Employing authorities provide the financial capacity for schools to access expertise, either from the system or private sources, in areas complimentary to the ‘core business’ of education (e.g. maintenance planning).

Employment Issues:

(h) The selection process is broad and flexible, and includes strategies beyond a written application and panel interview.

(i) The selection process is capable of being varied to suit the particular nature and needs of a school community.

(j) The majority of members of any selection panel are professional educators.

(k) All Selection Panel members have engaged in a training program.

(l) There is a transparent process of review for unsuccessful applicants.

(m) Employing Authorities support flexible (not linear or prescribed) pathways to principalship.

(n) Within selection criteria skills associated with collaboration and managing people take priority.

(o) The selection process values Life and Employment experiences beyond schools.

Personal and Professional Development:

(p) Employing Authorities offer the opportunity for potential school leaders to engage in professional development events such as ‘shadowing; ‘mentoring’, ‘coaching’, that allow them to learn from experienced principals and at the same time ‘test’ the role before committing to it as a career choice.

(q) People who are (self or system) identified as potential leaders are ‘profiled’ in terms of appropriate professional development and then supported towards their ambition of leadership.

(r) Upon appointment new principals engage in two induction processes. One process focuses on system issues and the other focuses on the specific school to which the principal has been appointed.

(s) A period of sabbatical and a commitment to on-going professional development, from employer and employee, is written into Principal contracts.
Principals regularly engage in renewal processes that require them to demonstrate ‘cutting edge’ competency.

Role Expectations:
(u) The remuneration package for principalship is commensurate with the role’s responsibilities and accountabilities.
(v) Employing Authorities formally recognize and support teaching and learning as the focus of principalship.
(w) Employing Authorities publicly support a team approach to leadership and promote its acceptance within the community.

Comment: ________________________________________________________________
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Please provide the following information. It will enable this project to report on both similarities and differences across the wide range of teachers who respond to this survey.

Age group:
Please tick the relevant box:   20 – 25   26 - 30   31 – 35
36 – 40   41 - 45   45+

Gender:
Please tick the relevant box: Female Male

School system:
Please tick the relevant box:

Education Queensland
District: ________________________________
Catholic Systemic: Brisbane Catholic Systemic: Cairns
Catholic Systemic: Townsville Catholic Systemic: Rockhampton
Catholic Systemic: Toowoomba Catholic: Religious Institute
Independent: Church Related Independent: Secular

Thank you for your time and effort.
Please seal your response in the envelope provided and return it to your principal by Friday the 17th September 2004.
This literature review addresses the issue of finding alternative models of principalship appropriate to Generation X and women. The review is presented in four parts. Part 1 explores the issue of leadership succession with particular reference to recent research studies. These studies are of interest in that they provide some clues as to what makes principalship attractive and unattractive to the profession. Parts 2 and 3 of the review focus more directly on the views of teachers (25-35) and women in respect to work, career and principalship. These groups were chosen for special consideration, as they comprise potential aspirants to principalship. Part 4 of the review looks closely at the evolution of principalship and seeks to identify models of principalship, which may be more attractive to Generation X and women.

PART 1: Leadership Succession

Today leadership succession is a ‘hot topic’ in education worldwide. There is a growing body of research that highlights a shortage of well-qualified, motivated applicants for principal positions. In the USA, a number of reports (National Association of Elementary School Principals, 1998; Olsen, 1999; National Association of Secondary School Principals, 2001) have identified the difficulty of filling principal vacancies. In the UK, the Ninth Report of the House of Commons Select Committee on Education and Employment (1997/98) also found a declining number of applicants for headship. In Australia, researchers (Sachs & Preston, 2002) have tracked trends in principalship and teacher supply and concluded that a principal shortage is a likely future scenario.

Given these findings, the issue of leadership succession in education has received much attention in recent times. With the support of the Victorian Department of Education and Training, Lacey (2001) reports that the failure of people in middle management positions to apply for principalship, poses a serious challenge for leadership succession. Here she recommends that the employing authority develop
a strategic approach to succession planning in order to address a range of issues including:

- The recruitment, development and retention of staff;
- The development of a workplace culture that actively encourages teachers to seek senior leadership positions;
- The provision of flexible work options; and
- Support for family and spouse relocation.

Recognising the issue of leadership succession within Catholic Education in New South Wales, the Catholic Education Commission (NSW) invited a research team from Australian Catholic University (ACU) to investigate the issue of leadership succession in NSW Catholic schools. While respondents in this study saw principalship as an opportunity to make a difference in education, they were concerned that this position would impact upon family responsibilities or their relationship with colleagues and students. Some felt that salary differences did not match the degree of responsibility and/or saw the selection process as being too complex, flawed, intrusive or gender biased. There were also concerns that there was too much red tape and bureaucracy involved in principalship and that principals in Catholic schools were subject to onerous “religious identity demands”. For the majority of respondents the negatives of principalship outweighed the positives and they had decided not to apply (d’Arbon, Duignan, Duncan & Goodwin, 2001).

Similar research in Catholic Education in Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania collected participant suggestions regarding the role and structure of principalship that would make it more attractive and manageable. These suggestions included:

- The improvement of educational and support structures and service;
- The improvement of staffing schedule, given the increasing demands on schools;
- The re-structuring of the role of principal to reduce multiple areas of responsibility, and as a consequence the stress and time demands of the role;
- The review of the demands and expectations on principals in terms of upholding the Catholic identity of the school in a period of significant change in the Church; and
- The improvement of the selection and appointment process for principals. (Carlin, d’Arbon, Dorman, Duignan & Neidhart, 2003)
While the findings from these research studies produced some insights into the issue of leadership succession and principalship, these studies do not directly identify the views of younger teachers (25-35 years) or women in education.

**PART 2: Teachers (25-35 years)**

It is expected that the next generation principals would come from the group of teachers, aged between 25-35 years. However, this review was unable to find literature that directly explored the issue of designing alternative models of principalship that would appeal to this age group. As discussed in Part 1 research in respect to leadership succession provides some clues in this matter. Consequently this review looked more broadly within the literature to consider design possibilities. Here research and literature in respect to the worldviews of Generation X proved enlightening.

Teachers (25-35-years) fall into the age cohort that is commonly referred to as Generation X. Although there is some variation within literature, the term *Generation X* usually refers to those born in the period 1965-1979 (Loomis, 2000). Commentators have labelled Generation X as being different from other generations in the workplace (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002). This perception of difference was based on negative descriptions of Generation X in the popular literature and first hand experience of this generation in the work place. Within a few short years, this generation has been labelled as lazy, lacking commitment and contributing to an erosion of the work ethic. However, more recent research (Jurkiewicz, 2000; O’Bannon, 2001) has questioned the validity of this negative labelling given the current context of generational change in the workplace.

**Generational change**

In the contemporary workplace, Generation X works beside two other generations, namely, “Traditionalists” and “Baby Boomers” (Thomas, 2002). These two older generations have different life experiences than Generation X and as a consequence they come to the work place with different worldviews. For example:

*Traditionalists* (born 1935–1945) as children of Depression and the Second World War are socialised to support the status quo. These employees hold senior management positions and support a hierarchy and bureaucracy. They
are loyal to the firm and they take pride in its history, size and accomplishments.

Baby Boomers (born 1946-1964) experienced post-war prosperity and the cultural revolution of the 1960s. Given their numbers this cohort is the most competitive generation. This was the first generation at work to focus on work entitlements and to challenge authority within the workplace. This generation also looks for self-fulfilment at work and ‘workalcoholism’ is a badge of honour.

In comparison, Generation X (born 1965-1979) experienced the media explosion, the technological revolution, and the fragmentation of community. This is the first generation with natural technological ‘savvy’ and they are more confident and resilient than the previous generations. This cohort, having grown up in a multicultural and less discriminatory society, is more likely to be inclusive of diversity in the workplace. But they are the most sceptical generation and not impressed with tradition. They are also less likely to stay for any length of time in one job or with one employer.

Different work values

Here it is argued that different work values make generational clashes in the workplace inevitable (Hanesford, 2002; Lancaster & Stillman, 2002; Thomas, 2002). As an initial step in addressing generational clashes at work, researchers investigated work values across generations and, subsequently, described the work values of Generation X in terms of:

Life/work balance. Work is not the only priority for Generation X and they are commonly involved in furthering their education, social activities, hobbies and families. As a consequence, Generation X demand flexible working hours that accommodate their lifestyle.

Learning and development. Generation X’s view their jobs as places in which to grow and develop and they value organisations that will invest time and money into providing training and learning opportunities. They expect to have access to the newest technology and latest information on the job.

A sense of value and contribution. Generation X wants to feel that they are valued members of the team and are allowed to make a contribution to the organisation. They want to participate in challenging projects and like to juggle projects and tasks.

Teamwork. This generation are prepared to spend time on developing personal relationships within the organisation. They prefer to work in teams within the workplace and they want managers who will treat them as colleagues, listen to their ideas and include them in the decision-making process.
Interestingly, this research has found that the work values of generation X are not so different from those of previous generations. Generational clashes within the workplace are more likely due to how work values are operationalized by each generation rather than being due to fundamental difference. Baby Boomers are beginning to appreciate the importance of a life/work balance but find it difficult to control work commitments without guilt. They see Generation X’s commitment to life outside work as hedonistic and hence label their younger colleagues as “slackers” without career drive and ambition. Given this difference, the relationship between employers and Generation X has changed dramatically with the Generation X’s demanding a new work contract (Table 1) that is radically different than that negotiated by previous generations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Old work contract</th>
<th>New work contract</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If you</td>
<td>If you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Are loyal</td>
<td>• Develop needed competencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Work hard</td>
<td>• Apply them effectively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Do as you are told</td>
<td>• Live our values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We will</td>
<td>We will</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Give you a secure job</td>
<td>• Listen to your needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Offer steady pay increases</td>
<td>• Create an enabling work environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide financial security</td>
<td>• Support your self-development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Recognise your contribution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Pay you fairly and enable you to share in our success.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: New work contract (Corley, 1999)

**Recruiting, managing and motivating Generation X**

Based on this understanding of a new work contract, researchers (Muchnick, 1996; O’Bannon, 2001; Hanesford, 2002) have identified a number of strategies to recruit, manage and motivate Generation X at work. These strategies include:

**Recruitment:** Making a commitment to inclusive employment practices (ethnicity, gender, age) and looking for leadership potential in untraditional packages and head hunt talent.
Necessary freedom: Building an organisational climate that welcomes and values Generation X’s contribution and giving them the autonomy, latitude, trust and sense of entrepreneurship they need to be productive and fulfilled.

Active involvement: Emphasising the need to make Generation X’s full partners in the quest to achieve outcomes for mutual benefit. Promoting and establishing an inclusive organisational culture that is respectful of difference and allows people to contribute fully to the organisation.

Visioning: Developing an inspiring, shared vision for the future and link work with this inspiring vision of a preferred future. Nurturing a sense of belonging by helping individuals and teams to situate projects within the organisational vision and mission.

Learning and development: Providing opportunities for learning using formal and informal modes and linking this learning to current projects, organisational priorities and career management. Giving high priority to maintaining capability in the current role and employability for future roles.

Key recognition: Offering a cafeteria-style approach to incentives. Assuming that one size does not fit all. Maintaining salary and status as for previous generations but also investigate providing non-financial rewards such as time off, flexible working hours, and educational support.

Empathy: Strengthening the working relationship between supervisors and Generation X’s by promoting a culture of understanding, caring, and genuine interest in each other’s problems and viewpoints. Customise the employee/manager relationship and support employees by recognising and celebrating commitments beyond work.

Direct communication: Making interactions between Generation X’s and their supervisors clear, concise, expressive and immediate. Coming together as colleagues and emphasising face-to-face informal conversations about problem solving/work issues. Encouraging constant, two-way feedback based on outcomes and link comments with specific action steps.

In identifying these strategies, researchers warn that these activities cannot be done in a fragmented and half-hearted fashion. They require change at three levels - the personal, interpersonal and organisational. At a personal level they need to engage “naked management” (Muchnick, 1996). The concept of naked management (“getting naked”) means looking inward to honestly assess attitudes, agendas and personal commitment to establishing a true partnership with employees. It requires “reciprocal acceptance” which means that this process is shared in which employees and management are active participants. At an interpersonal level, they need to develop team building skills that lead to proactive, healthy and networked teams through engagement, involvement and effective communication (Barker, 2002, pp.10-11). Finally, at the level of the organisation they need to review all policies and practices in respect to making career management a strategic concern. Organisational
discourses and structures should facilitate a positive “career outlook” (Day, 2001) for Generation X employees by offering a well-articulated career pathway and career development options.

**PART 3: Women**

Women’s place in educational leadership today grows out of an historical development of beliefs, events, and expectations about women’s right and ability to lead schools and society. Australian education was established as a benevolent patriarchy (Blackmore, 1999, pp.24-27). Here leadership was the prerogative of the male administrators as administration was ‘hard’, requiring male rationality, toughness and authority. In contrast, teaching as a ‘soft’ activity required the feminine qualities. Women leaders did emerge within this patriarchy. However, these women were mostly, single (or within Catholic education, religious women). Moreover, the influence of these women in leadership was limited in that they were seen to have qualities appropriate to young children and adolescent girl’s education and lacked the natural authority required for boys’ education.

Equal opportunity (EO) legislation, in the latter part of the 20th century, challenged this patriarchy and removed many of the barriers to women in leadership. As a consequence, the contentious issue of whether women should be leaders has subsided and new questions are now being raised. One of these questions focuses on why women are not taking up the opportunities for leadership within the educational hierarchy.

**Women in principalship**

The voices of women, collected in research after 1990, have told us much about the experience of women in principalship (Blackmore, 1999; Power, 2001; Power, 2002). This body of research found that career was only one of a number of competing life concerns for these female principals. Their decision to aim for the principalship was often taken when seeking a new challenge in their teaching career. The support and encouragement of peers and leaders within teaching was crucial. Some diminution in family responsibilities was frequently a catalyst for change. In deciding to apply for principalship, the pattern was to limit their applications to schools which were geographically accessible to their home and which were seen as compatible with
their educational philosophy. The current ambitions of the female principals were related largely to a desire to see their school as successful.

This research has also highlighted the multi-faceted demands and pressures for women in the principalship. In particular, this body of research identified the resentment felt by many female principals at what are perceived to be managerial demands antithetical to educational leadership. While respondents espouse a participatory style of leadership, the nature of the principal's job increasingly required a more autocratic management style. A majority were positive about the principal's role, although they were wary of the ever-increasing workload and critical of certain role demands linked to a more competitive educational climate. A desire and struggle for balance between the public demands of the job and the private sphere of personal life is a constant theme in the data.

For many women, taking on formal positions produced a constant state of insecurity and a sense of fragility. Leadership was perceived to require doing things differently, as different from teaching and previous change work. Whereas leadership is often constructed as heroic work, women read these contradictions and 'discomfort' as 'not coping' rather than normal. (Blackmore, 1999, p.77)

Significantly the women who sought and gained principal positions in the 1990s were members of the Baby Boomer generation. However, younger women teachers, born in the cohort of Generation X, are due to seek and gain leadership positions. Interestingly research has also found that:

Women teachers, in their 20s and 30s, have different histories and investments in feminism than the Baby Boomer generation. One consequence of feminism is that many now aspire early in their careers for leadership... [Moreover] they are politically astute and aware of the strategies required to construct themselves as ‘leaders’: to record and document their work, to write good curricula vitae, to work strategically and across a range of tasks so as to get both breadth and depth in their experience. They drew upon the common-sense knowledge often circulating in schools about feminist practice, leadership styles, and professional development activities and acted upon them. They took up postgraduate courses to improve qualifications and opportunities in acting positions. They tapped into networks. (Blackmore, 1999, pp.79-82)

This generation of women in education is both well prepared and motivated to offer themselves as leaders in a context that gives legitimacy to equal opportunity. Unfortunately, their stories also speak of obstacles to these aspirations (Blackmore, 1999; 2002; Power, 2002) and many young women teachers are finding that:
The rhetoric of gender-neutral discourses of procedure, performance indicators, and structures and practices also camouflage more hierarchical relationships with fewer opportunities in performance-oriented professions...Leading teachers now work in a highly competitive environment that required teachers to be seen to perform outside as well as inside the classroom, increasing not decreasing the demands of time and energy for those seeking promotion...language of competitive individualism [found in the policy and practices of economic rationalism] as antithetical to the collective impulses of feminism and education and do not wish to play the game. They expressed disillusionment, and frustration that their skills and knowledge were being ignored, even devalued...The opportunity structures of the more democratically organized schools in the 1980s were fast disappearing in the competitive culture of the 1990s...‘Being principal is not the be all and end all’...Quality of life, pleasure and work satisfaction were important, and achievement as defined by status or authority, but also passion and improvement. (Blackmore, 1999, pp.80-81).

The stories of these women of both generations suggest that despite the rhetoric of equal opportunity all is not well in respect to women in leadership. Recognising this gap between rhetoric and reality, feminist researchers continue to address this issue and theoretical development in genders studies and feminist leadership has sought to explain this experience.

**Theoretical developments in gender studies and feminist leadership**

In the 1970s and 1980s, early feminist writers, influenced by a liberal-egalitarian perspective challenged male dominance in educational administration (Schmuck, 1996). A “liberal-egalitarian perspective” offers a gender-free and gender-neutral view that focuses on the primacy of the individuals, supports social equity and encourages an assimilation strategy for those who are different (Kerfoot, & Knights, 1993). Feminism informed by a liberal-egalitarian perspective fought for equality of opportunity and promotion by merit and denied gender difference in the workplace. In line with this thought, employing authorities stopped discriminatory actions against married women, women gained equal pay for equal work and legislative activity promoted equal opportunity based on principles of merit rather than gender. Well-qualified women teachers supported industrial action and engaged in other forms of educational activism. Women for the first time rose to key policy positions within educational bureaucracies (Blackmore, 1999, pp.32-38).

In the late 1980s, there was a shift away from the liberal-egalitarian gender-free or gender-neutral position as “transformative-essentialist perspective embraced the concept of gender and gender difference” (Schmuck, 1996). New gender studies
accepted “gender polarities as an unquestioned truth” (Collard, 2002) and a strong male and feminine ‘paradigms’ of educational leadership were developed (Gray, 1989). Here women were described as “caring, creative, intuitive, sensitive to diversity, non-competitive, tolerant, subjective and informal”. Conversely, men were represented as “regulatory, conformist, disciplined, normative, competitive, evaluative, objective and formal”. A feminist critique (Adler et al., 1993) portrayed male leaders as inherently authoritarian, bureaucratic, isolated and utilitarian with female leaders being depicted as collaborative, organic and relational. In short, there is a stereotypic expectation that women lead in an “interpersonally oriented style” and men in a “task-oriented style” (Eagly, 1990).

However, these gender polarities were soon questioned. While there is some truth in these stereotypes, practitioners in the field will be well aware that they are a gross simplification. Contemporary research found examples of “women who lead like men” (Marshall & Rusch, 1995; Wajcman, 1998), while male leaders were demonstrating compassionate and relational qualities, which feminists defined as essentially feminine (Bate, 1990; McConville, 1993). To some researchers this contradiction suggested that the leader’s gender is not the all-determining variable when it comes to leadership style. Intrigued by this thought, they conducted a series of grounded studies (eg. Ribbens, 1996; 1999; Henry, 2000), that identified a number of contextual variables (eg. class, ethnicity, organisational history, structural variables and culture) that influence educational leadership. In addition, they found that life histories and experiences contribute to the way individuals engage leadership. Such research enriched the discourse of women in educational leadership by illustrating how complex economic, cultural and social forces interact with gender to produce multiple femininities and masculinities in educational leadership.

As a consequence of these data, theorists in the 1990s advanced a “social constructionist perspective of gender” (Schmuck, 1996) that moves away from providing explanations from observed differences by sex as an attribute of the individual to gender-constructed roles in society. In short, a social constructionist perspective of gender draws attention to gendered relationships within a hierarchy of roles (eg. superintendent as ‘pop’ and female principal as ‘mom’) (Collay & Lamay, 1995). This perspective also explains “the insecurity and fragility” (Blackmore, 1999, p.77) that many women feel in the role of principal.
The social construction view posits that women (and minorities) because of their minority and marginal status as administrators in public school simultaneously find themselves as 'insiders' and 'outsiders' in school organizations. Thus, as 'insiders' they adopt the roles, norms, behaviours, and expectations of the role they occupy as principals or superintendents. But because of the conditions of social gender roles demand it, they remain 'outsiders' because they do not reflect the cultural expectations of the role of leaders as male. (p.355)

Despite this theoretical development in gender studies, gender-free and gender-neutral liberal-egalitarian perspectives continue to dominate and transformative-essentialist and social constructionist perspectives on gender remain on the margins in educational policy. For example, the liberal-egalitarian perspective informs the popular metaphor of 'leader as visionary'. Here it is argued that good leaders are entrepreneurial, strong and visionary but also people managers (Gerwirtz et al, 1995). This image of leadership holds much promise for women in leadership. The popular view of women’s caring and collegial leadership style gains credibility in this context. “Women traditionally depicted as possessing good people management skill, are seen as an untapped resource” (Blackmore, 1990, p.38). However, once appointed female principals face covert discrimination (Blackmore, 1998, pp.466-467). While many female principals have been appointed for their caring attitudes and democratic styles of leadership, once appointed “they find they lack the power and the resources to implement change in a consultative and collaborative way”. Moreover, the pattern has been for women to be appointed to high-risk schools with “high ethnic, socio-economic and racial diversity”. Finally, female principals continue to fight traditional, societal views of women and leadership, which “associate authority, rationality and entrepreneurship with particular models of male leadership”. To address the issue of discrimination, contemporary feminist scholars (Blackmore, 1999) argue that employing authorities must move beyond simply recruiting women into educational leadership and/or embracing a woman’s natural caring and democratic style. Instead, they need to initiate more fundamental structural reform based on a critique of educational leadership as a gendered construction.

To support such structural reform, feminist researchers (Blackmore, 1999; Enomoto, 2000) have conducted a limited number of research studies to discover how gender discrimination actually occurs. In particular, these researchers have also studied the biographies of men and women to discover how gender constructions operate in specific cultures. Beyond these individual case studies, researchers have also attended to the institutional norms and processes that establish and sustain the
preparation and practice of educational administration. Finally, they have explored the conceptualisation of gender as confounded by socio-economic, cultural and political contexts. Amongst other factors, this recent research has found that there are diverse leadership styles of women in principalship that are not recognised within organisational structures. In addition, they also found that women in leadership faced an on-going struggle to retain their position and sustain their legitimacy as they engage professional power. While women in leadership might naturally engage “power with others” (Enomoto, 2000), to be successful they also need to engage modes of power commonly associated with men, such as “power over others” and “personal power”.

Following this research, Blackmore (1999) argues that feminists in educational administration look beyond the issue of women and leadership, “to contextualize it and politicise it by linking leadership more transparently to wider educational debates about social inequality, educational reform and issues of social justice (p.222)”. New alliances and strategies across different genders, ethnicities and classes would promote an educative process and structural reform at the level of the institution, culture and the person. This will create a broad framework within which issues confronting girls and boys, women and men in education may be addressed. Moreover, as women in leadership achieves a critical mass, on-going research may point to new feminist understandings, which, in turn, may contribute to a more socially justice society and a democratic citizenship.

Extending this thought, feminist scholars advance the concept of shared leadership as a logical next step in gender reform. In particular, they identify the need for structural reform in support of subjectivity or self-awareness and self-expression. Moreover, they highlight the need for an inter-subjectivity and mutuality that acknowledges the importance of positive inter-personal relationships and achieving collective goals and aspirations. Mutuality and inter-subjectivity are understood as ‘pre-condition’ for subjectivity and community.

**PART 4: Principalship**

Traditionally, the principalship has remained firmly grounded in a paradigm of leadership that inextricably links leadership to positional power. In short, the principal
has been given the authority within the hierarchy to exercise leadership: to plan, organise and control school life. However, the importance of the principal's leadership role grew significantly in the decade of the 1990s. At this time, education in Australia was ‘caught up’ in the discourses of economic rationalism and managerialism resulting in demands for educational restructuring and reform (Haynes, 2002). Within this context, the principal as school leader was seen to play a significant role in the provision of quality education.

The advent of restructuring, and in particular school-based management of a central aspect of it, has had significant reverberations on the role of principals...At no previous time in the history of public provided formal education has so much attention been paid to the principalship. Restructuring policies aimed at transferring more functions and responsibilities to schools, at improving their performance, at holding them to account for that performance have focused attention on the importance of leadership at school level, and, in particular, leadership provided by principals. Principals are seen as the fulcrum on which the quality of restructured school depends. (O’Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998, p. 14)

Today, principals face new tensions and dilemmas in respect to balancing the professional, collaborative aspects of their role with the demands of school management (Cranston & Ehrich, 2002; Wildy, 1998; Wildy & Louden, 2000). In particular, three dilemmas are conceptualised: the accountability dilemma that principals are accountable for decisions made by or with others; the autonomy dilemma that principals maintain authority while working collaboratively; and the efficiency dilemma that principals share decision making while using resources efficiently. Furthermore, it is claimed that principals espouse two opposing clusters of values – an ethic of care expressed in collaborative decision-making and an ethic of responsibility expressed in accountability, exercising authority, and using resources efficiently. Thus principals are torn between two opposing discourses; a professional collaborative discourse and market managerialist discourse. Levels of satisfaction within the role seem to depend on the ability of principals to address both discourses and somehow mesh the ethic of responsibility with an ethic of care.

A relational approach

Recognising the dilemmas and challenge of contemporary principalship, writers point to the need to make social changes and advance a relational approach to leadership. Here it is argued that society is in a moment of social transformation (Drucker, 1993). As a result of this moment of social transformation, “we are moving from a
mechanistic world view in which objectivity, control, and linear causality are supreme to a relational approach, a world view that recognises more contextual, holistic, complex, and relational aspects of the natural world in which we function” (Shriberg, et. al. 2002, p.212). This shift from a “mechanistic worldview” to a “more contextual, holistic, complex and relational” view, has led to the advancement of a “relational approach” to leadership rather than an individualistic focus. Influenced by a mechanistic worldview leadership:

... has an individualistic focus because it asserts that only great leaders practise leadership; it is dominated by a goal achievement sense of purpose; it promotes a self-interested outlook on life; it accepts a male model of behaviour and power (known as a leadership style); it articulates utilitarian and materialistic ethical perspectives; it is grounded in rational, linear and qualitative assumptions about how the world works, and it asserts a managerial perspective as to what makes organisations tick. (Shriberg, et.al, 2002, p.213)

In contrast, a relational approach to leadership describes leadership as “an influencing relationship among leaders and their collaborators who intend real change that reflect their mutual purposes” (Rost, 1991, p.7). This definition highlights the relational aspect of this activity with the leadership relationship being based on influence rather than positional power. Leaders and their collaborators practise leadership. They intend to make real difference with aspirations that reflect their mutual purposes. In recent times, writers (Barker, 2002) have identified the importance of beliefs, values and ethics as essential elements of leadership. The underlying premise is that leadership (whether good or bad, successful or ineffective) is a reflection of the beliefs, values and ethics of the leader. Like it or not the leadership journey has deep personal internal and emotional dimensions (Sarros, 2002). Exploring and developing these personal dimensions, and learning to align these dimensions with the needs of others and organisational imperatives, is the challenge for leaders of the Twenty-First Century.

Aligned to this relational approach to leadership, the literature offers a “continuum of leadership” models (Court, 2001). These models range from sole leadership, through to supported leadership, dual leadership and shared leadership:

In sole leadership, one person, as the real or titular head, has the dominant voice and leadership is not shared. Supported leadership (characterised sometimes as the ‘patron’ approach or consultative leadership) exists where the recognised single leader draws on and acknowledges input and advice from a wide range of people. Dual leadership involves a partnership between two people, both recognised as leaders. Shared leadership is diffuse “becoming an
holistic property shared to some degree by all persons and groups involved in the collaboration" (Kagan, 1994, p.53). Kagan suggested that in fully shared collaborations, some individuals or groups may “rise to prominence” temporarily leading in a particular situation, but this will not destroy the distribution of leadership throughout the organisation. (p.1)

While the literature provides few practical examples of these alternative models of leadership, there have been some experiments. These experiments have included dual leaderships or task specialised roles where individuals hold different managerial/leadership functions; job-share or alternative co-principalship that involve an integration of managerial and leadership responsibilities in the work of both co-principals. Unfortunately, there are few longitudinal evaluations of these experiments with evaluative studies of co-principalship conducted by Court (2002) and Paynter (2003) being the exception. The co-principalship allows overburdened principals to share responsibilities but this may not translate to more time to devote to the instructional program because of the time required to reach consensus and keep all parties informed. The model does appear to encourage more academic risks and quality decisions but this is largely dependent on the synergy, shared values, and trust between the co-principals as well as a collaboration rather than competition. Motivations are seen to be important and co-principals must want to create and protect a vision of a democratic school. In short, these studies suggest that co-principalship, shared by well-matched leaders, may offer a model that fosters school reform and innovation.

Beyond this concern for relational leadership within the principalship, there have also been proposals for sharing or distributing leadership throughout the school community. These proposals grew out of an on-going concern for student outcomes. A growing body of research (Hallinger & Heck, 1998) has found that, at best, the principal can only exercise an indirect influence on school effectiveness, school improvement, school restructuring and, ultimately, on student outcomes. It seems teacher leaders\(^1\) are more influential in achieving whole-school success than previously thought (Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Moller & Katzenmeyer, 1996). Given this new understanding it is considered foolhardy to place so much emphasis on the role of the principal in education.

\(^1\) Teacher leaders may be formally appointed to middle management positions or positions of added responsibility (eg. department heads or team leaders). Teacher leaders may also be informal leaders who naturally emerge from the group as trusted and respected catalysts of change.
In light of these challenges, there has been a renewal of interest in finding a “more fitting model of educational leadership” that enabled a complementary relationship between principal leaders and teacher leaders (Donaldson, 2001; Sands, 2000; Duignan & Marks, 2003). To advance this thought, researchers Frank Crowther, Stephen Kaagen, Margaret Ferguson and Leonne Hann collaborated in a five year research project entitled *The Teachers as Leaders Research Project, 1996-2000*.

Publications based on this research advanced “parallel leadership”, a model of educational leadership that refers to building school capacity by taking a relational approach to school leadership (p.38). This model of principalship rejects traditional notions of school leadership that put the principal at the centre of school effectiveness, school improvement and student outcomes. Instead, teacher leaders take responsibility for pedagogical development and principal leaders are responsible for strategic development. Stimulus ideas run between both categories of leaders and the focus is on enhanced school capacity and student learning.

... parallel leadership engages teacher leaders and administrator leaders in collaborative action while, at the same time, encouraging fulfilment of their individual capabilities, aspirations, and responsibilities. It leads to strengthened alignment between the school’s vision and the school’s teaching, learning and assessment practices. It facilitates professional learning, culture building, and school-wide approaches to pedagogy. It makes possible the enhancement of school identity, teachers’ professional esteem, community support, and student achievement. (Crowther, et al, 2002, p.42)

Here the focus in the principal’s role moves away from operational functions like program implementation, staff supervision and conflict management towards a greater concern for strategic development contributing to student learning. Here there is a claim that school capacity will be built as principals and teachers take responsibility for school-based learning. Teachers as leaders take responsibility for pedagogical development and principals for strategic development.

In particular, parallel leadership recognises the five functions of a new role of the principal. These functions include:

- **Visioning** links developmental work in schools with an inspired image of a preferred future, making obvious the connection between innovation and collective creation of the school’s future.

- **Identity generation** promotes the creation of cultural meaning.


Alignment of organisational elements fosters the holistic implementation of school-based innovation.

Distribution of power and leadership encourages teachers (and community members) to view themselves as important in shaping the school’s direction and values and in exercising influence beyond the school.

External alliances and networking allow schools to collaborate with other schools and with the broader community while keeping for themselves activities that reflect their distinctive competencies. (Crowther, et. al, 2002, pp.50-51)

Parallel leadership embodies principles of “mutualism, a sense of shared purpose and allowance for individual expression and action” (Crowther, et. al, 2002, pp.39-42). Mutualism, in the form of mutual trust and respect between administrators and teachers leads to collective action for mutual benefit. Shared purpose involves aligning system/school vision and mission with teachers’ preferred approaches to teaching, learning and assessment. Individual expression and action assumes strong, skilled and autonomous individuals (“individuality” rather than “individualism”) who engage teamwork to get the job done. Without doubt this thinking is closely aligned to theoretical development in feminist leadership and research findings in respect to the worldviews of Generation X (Table 3).

Conclusion

This literature review has been presented in four parts. Part 1 explored the issue of leadership succession and identified some clues in respect to what makes principalship attractive and unattractive. Parts 2 and 3 of this review focused more directly on the perceptions of teachers (25-35 years) and women on work, career and principalship. These groups were chosen for special consideration, as they are regarded as potential aspirants to principalship. Part 4 of this review looked closely at the evolution of principalship and sought to identify models of principalship, which may be more attractive to Generation X and women.

This literature review revealed that leadership succession has become a ‘hot topic’ both nationally and internationally. Recent reports have identified a shortage of quality applicants for principal positions. As a consequence, policy makers have initiated a limited number of research projects with the intention of identifying factors that encourage and discourage applications to this position. Participants in these
studies saw principalship as an opportunity to make a difference by influencing and shaping others. At the same time, there was concern that principalship would impact upon their family life responsibilities and that they would lose contact with students and colleagues. Some also felt that salary differences did not match the degree of responsibility, while others saw selection processes as being far too complex, flawed, intrusive or gender biased. There were also concerns in respect to the amount of red tape and bureaucracy involved in becoming a principal. For the majority of participants in these studies the negatives of principalship outweighed the positives and they had decided not to apply. With these findings in mind this review of the literature focussed more directly on Generation X, women in leadership as well as the principalship.

Much has been written about Generation X and their views in respect to life, work and career. Since the early 1990s, popular writers have offered negative descriptions of Generation X that emphasise their laziness, lack of commitment and poor work ethic in comparison to their older colleagues at work. However, recent research focussing on this age cohort offers a more positive account of Generation X and has found no discernible difference in work values, attitudes and priorities to previous generations. At the same time, there are differences regarding how these work values, attitudes and priorities are operationalized across generations within the workplace. This body of research also identifies demands from Generation X for a new work contract and suggests strategies for recruiting, managing and motivating this age cohort. These strategies include reviewing recruitment strategies, providing necessary freedom, encouraging active involvement, developing a shared vision, supporting learning and development, key recognition, empathy and direct communication. As a way forward, the literature recommends “naked management”, an approach to management that encourages managers to be inward looking in order to assess motivations; engages reciprocal processes that nurture participation; builds healthy and networked teams; and makes career management a strategic priority.

For over thirty years feminist writers have addressed the issue of women in leadership. Contemporary writing in respect to this issue suggests that obstacles to female representation in leadership remain. Older women do not see their change agency as leadership and remain insecure and vulnerable when appointed to principalship. Younger women are both well prepared and motivated to offer themselves as leaders in a context that gives legitimacy to equal opportunity,
however, they experience hierarchical relationships with fewer opportunities and competitive environments that are antithetical to feminist impulses. Recent research has found covert discrimination against women in leadership. This discrimination is reflected in women’s leadership styles not being recognised in organisational structures. They also found that women in leadership faced an on-going struggle to retain their position and sustain their legitimacy as they engage professional power. Explaining these obstacles scholars point to the prevailing gender-neutral liberal-egalitarian perspectives in education and argue for a new critique of educational administration as a gendered construction. Following this research, feminist writers recommend linking the issue of women in leadership to wider educational debates about social inequality, educational reform and issues of social justice. As a way forward they recommend an approach to shared leadership characterised by principles of subjectivity, intersubjectivity and mutuality.

In conceptualising principalship, the literature emphasises the evolution of this role. Traditional understandings of principalship are grounded in a leadership that places full responsibility on the shoulders of the principal as school leader. In the context of educational restructuring and school-based management principals face new dilemmas and challenges. In particular, they are torn between the discourses of professional, collaborative leadership and market managerialism. Recognising these new dilemmas and challenges theorists advance a variety of alternative models of leadership. These range from supported leadership, to dual leadership to shared teacher leadership. Evaluative studies in respect co-principalship and teacher leadership supports claims within the literature that shared leadership fosters school reform and innovation. However, there are warnings that the success of shared leadership depends on a commitment to a new paradigm of leadership informed by principles of mutualism, a sense of shared purpose and an allowance for individual expression.

In conclusion, this review of the literature has identified that we are currently in a moment of significant change and these changes has bought dilemmas and challenges to contemporary principalship. Recognising these dilemmas and challenges, researchers looked for alternative models of leadership and principalship. To this end, researchers have sought the perspectives of Generation X and women in leadership. These and other data lead to calls for more relational forms of leadership within organisations including schools. The congruence between the worldviews of Generation X and women in leadership and emerging theories of leadership is
illustrated in Table 2. These relational forms of leadership require new organisational structures informed by a professional, collaborative discourse. Alternative models of principalship, such as supported principalship, co-principalship and parallel leadership, seem appropriate. However, the literature warns against focussing solely on structural change. There must also be a commitment to collaborative principles of subjectivity, inter-subjectivity and mutuality. Without these principles, structural change runs the risk of being just another manifestation of market managerialism. As Generation X and women teachers had already rejected managerialism within the principalship, more of the same will not address the emerging problem of leadership succession.
Table 3: An Overview of the Literature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership Succession</th>
<th>Generation X</th>
<th>Women in leadership</th>
<th>School leadership</th>
<th>A new paradigm of principalship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Encouragers</strong></td>
<td>Naked management</td>
<td>A gendered construction</td>
<td>Relational approach</td>
<td>Collaborative principles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to make a difference</td>
<td>Inward looking to assess motivations</td>
<td>An issue of social justice</td>
<td>Supported leadership</td>
<td>Mutualism;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discouragers</td>
<td>Reciprocal processes &amp; active involvement</td>
<td>Shared Leadership</td>
<td>Consultant support</td>
<td>A sense of shared purpose;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact on family life</td>
<td>Healthy/networked teams</td>
<td>Subjectivity</td>
<td>Dual leadership (co-principalship)</td>
<td>Allowance for individual expression.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lose of contact with students and colleagues</td>
<td>Career management</td>
<td>Self awareness &amp; expression.</td>
<td>Task specialised job-share</td>
<td><strong>Functions of Principalship</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary and employment conditions</td>
<td></td>
<td>Inter-subjectivity</td>
<td>Shared leadership</td>
<td>Visioning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection process</td>
<td></td>
<td>Positive inter-personal relationships</td>
<td>Teacher leaders in pedagogical dev’t.</td>
<td>Identity generation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bureaucracy and red tape</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mutuality</td>
<td>Principal leaders in strategic dev’t.</td>
<td>Alignment of organisational elements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Collective aspirations and goals</td>
<td></td>
<td>Distribution of power and leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>External alliances and networking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Bibliography


APPENDIX THREE

OVERVIEW OF FOCUS-GROUP SESSION
OVERVIEW OF FOCUS-GROUP SESSION

1. WELCOME;
   REFLECTION;
   INTRODUCTIONS;
   BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH

2. TOWARDS AN UNDERSTANDING OF PARADIGMS/WORLD VIEWS

3. APPLYING INDIVIDUAL PARADIGMS/WORLD VIEWS TO NOTIONS OF ‘PRINCIPALSHIP’

4. IDENTIFYING ‘ATTRACTORS’ AND ‘DISSUADERS’ AND THEIR ‘ENABLERS’ IN RELATION TO ‘PRINCIPALSHIP’

5. GENERATING ALTERNATIVE MODELS OF ‘PRINCIPALSHIP’
APPENDIX FOUR

CHARACTERISTICS FROM SECTION H OF THE SURVEY ORGANIZED UNDER THE HEADINGS OF:

- STRUCTURE
- EMPLOYMENT ISSUES
- PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
- ROLE EXPECTATIONS.
CHARACTERISTICS (SECTION H OF SURVEY) CATEGORIZED

Structure:

(a) Responsibility, as well as tasks, is shared among members of Leadership Teams. (4.03)
(b) Teacher representatives on Leadership Teams (perhaps on a rotation basis). (3.78)
(c) Some professional development focuses on the Leadership Team, as a team. (4.12)
(d) Central Office support personal offer expert service, not just advice, to principals. (4.29)
(e) Employing authorities resource regional networks for principals. (3.78)
(f) The number of support roles is increased so that principals are freed from administrative/clerical work. (4.27)
(g) Employing authorities provide the financial capacity for schools to access expertise, either from the system or private sources, in areas complementary to the ‘core business’ of education (e.g. maintenance planning). (4.26)

Employment Issues:

(h) The selection process is broad and flexible, and includes strategies beyond a written application and panel interview. (4.28)
(i) The selection process is capable of being varied to suit the particular nature and needs of a school community. (4.37)
(j) The majority of members of any selection panel are professional educators. (4.42)
(k) All Selection Panel members have engaged in a training program. (4.19)
(l) There is a transparent process of review for unsuccessful applicants. (4.27)
(m) Employing Authorities support flexible (not linear or prescribed) pathways to principalship. (4.27)
(n) Within selection criteria skills associated with collaboration and managing people take priority. (4.26)
(o) The selection process values life and employment experiences beyond schools. (4.07)
Personal and Professional Development:

(p) Employing Authorities offer the opportunity for potential school leaders to engage in professional development events such as ‘shadowing’; ‘mentoring’, ‘coaching’, that allow them to lean from experienced principals and at the same time ‘test’ the role before committing to it as a career choice. (4.51)

(q) People who are (self or system) identified as potential leaders are ‘profiled’ in terms of appropriate professional development and then supported towards their ambition of leadership. (4.30)

(r) Upon appointment new principals engage in two induction processes. One process focuses on system issues and the other focuses on the specific school to which the principal has been appointed. (4.42)

(s) A period of sabbatical and a commitment to on-going professional development, from employer and employee, is written into Principal contracts. (4.15)

(t) Principals regularly engage in renewal processes that require them to demonstrate ‘cutting edge’ competency. (4.05)

Role Expectations:

(u) The remuneration package for principalship is commensurate with the role’s responsibilities and accountabilities. (4.46)

(v) Employing Authorities formally recognize and support teaching and learning as the focus of principalship. (4.43)

(w) Employing Authorities publicly support a team approach to leadership and promote its acceptance within the community. (4.24)