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**Principal Support -  
a personal construction?**

**A thesis presented in partial fulfilment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Education (Adult Education) at Massey University.**

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## **Abstract**

The aim of this work was to find new approaches to supporting principals to be the 'best they can be' using individual principals' own ideas of what support for principals does, could or should look like. Reflection was used as a research tool throughout as it offers opportunities to consolidate assumptions, to change our minds and rethink our assumptions, to synthesise new ideas with existing knowledge and come with up fresh perspectives to take up, reflect upon and act or not, to produce change, or not.

The literature review having demonstrated that much is already known about what forms support for principals ought to take, this work became a vehicle for the voices of eight principals in Aotearoa/New Zealand each of whom after reflection provided accounts of their own experiences regarding support. Justified by the viewpoint that "originality" is "often buil(t) on ideas that others have already written about, extending an argument ... .. or modifying a point of view" (Clark (2007, p.12), the investigation focussed on the data presented by individual principals juxtaposed at times with existing literature to determine if individual accounts might provide new perspectives on how provision of support for principals might enhance individual wellbeing.

In concluding a number of recommendations were made for further research, both about support for principals and about collaboration between government departments to enhance services in schools.

## Acknowledgements

This work is dedicated to my brother-in-law, Keith Miles, a believer in 'going for it'.

My achievements are not mine, but the efforts of many  
"E hara taku toa he taki tahi engari he taki tini"  
(translation by D. Ratu June 2008).

Thank you to each of the participants, for your kindness and professionalism. I admire and applaud your dedication to education and pray that I have done justice to your valuable input for without it this project would not exist.

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My family whose belief in me carried me through the times of self-doubt, the times when I wanted to give up – I return your love.

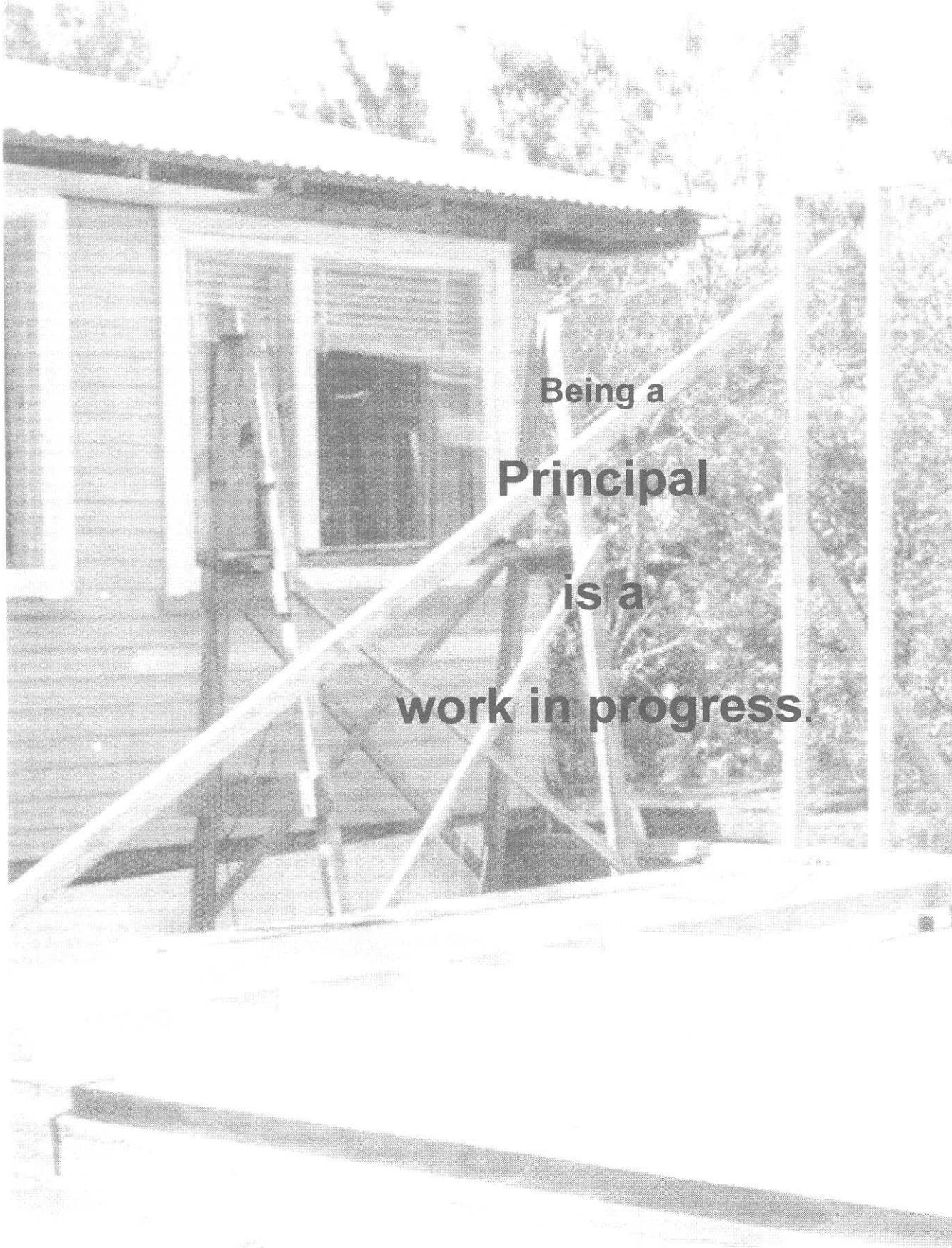
Last but not least I thank my mother's family for the great grounding in and thirst for academic knowledge. I salute you, my ancestors.

## **Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Treaty of Waitangi)**

This research being based in Aotearoa/New Zealand, the researcher acknowledges and respects the Treat of Waitangi concepts of “protection, participation and partnership” (Massey University, 2009).

“Article 2 of the English version guaranteed to Maori “the full exclusive and undisturbed possession of their Land and estates Forests Fisheries and other properties which they may collectively or individually possess so long as it is their wish and desire to retain the same in their possession”. The Maori version of the Treaty guaranteed “te tino rangatiratanga o o ratou kainga me o ratou taonga katoa”, which may be translated as “the unqualified exercise of their chieftainship over their lands over their villages and over their treasures all”. (Kawaharu, 1989).

For this reason on matters Maaori, the researcher maintained consultation throughout with David John Ratu who is of Ngati Te Ata descent, part of the Waiohua tribes whose rohe encompasses parts of Tamaki Makaurau (Auckland).



Being a  
**Principal**  
is a  
work in progress.

# Principal Support – a personal construction?

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## The Questions

An overarching set of questions about support for school principals informed this work throughout.

What is support for school principals?  
Whose conditions control how, when and by whom support occurs?  
What opportunities are there for change around provision or acceptance of support?  
Where are there connections between experiences of support, cultures that principals want to, or must, work with, and ideas in literature?

Two questions were seen as fundamental.

Do New Zealand principals feel supported in their various roles by those involved with their school and society as a whole?

Are the societal and organisational cultures surrounding principals supportive?

(Appendix A).

Over time, new dimensions appeared. For example, “Is support there **when** it is needed and sufficient to maintain wellbeing in our school principals?”; “Do government departments take responsibility for providing support to school principals, and ought they?”; “If change is needed in the way principals are supported, what would that change look like?”; “Is available support appropriate, in the **form** that it is needed? “; “Do specific cultures affect current provision of support?”.

Some questions inherent in this research presented at the outset, some changed over time, some became redundant, some questions surfaced as the research progressed. Some questions arose from or were embedded in the participant’s and their individual contexts.

## **Background**

The way each of us ‘thinks’ about or reflects upon things, depends upon our past and present, that is where we are at a particular time, the particular physical, mental and emotional context right then. So it would seem that our knowledge about anything must also alter along with context that is to say, we construct solutions, answers and meanings as we go.

Principals have many roles and responsibilities that vary as school size and population varies, as personal, local and national expectations vary. Just as with people in any job, principals’ abilities to carry out those roles and responsibilities are different at different times, as they learn new strategies and techniques, as their strengths change or are added to, as their emotional and physical health varies.

Therefore it would seem a ‘given’ that individual principals’ need to be supported, or, how they ‘see’ support must also vary along the same lines.

This project originated in concern (Soltis, 1989) for the well-being of principals in their roles as leaders of our schools, underpinned by a sympathetic consciousness (English 2008) of how difficult a job it must be at times and enables individual principal's voices to be heard on the topic of support for principals.

The main form of data gathering was via a letter from each of the principals who participated. Each letter is included in the body of the thesis (Chapter 5). Thus individual principal’s ideas of what support is; whether or not support was experienced on personal, practical, professional or emotional levels, are embedded in the thesis. This approach was taken hoping to surface ideas that might at some stage be instrumental in improving support for principals.

The statement that principals can “make or break a school” (Bradley, 2007) is simplistic. Nevertheless principals are the back bone of a school, the part that holds the body, the pupils, staff, BoT and community (Grace, 1997, p.3) in place. This is an inter-relational (Wadsworth, 1997), multi-dimensional thing, for without the support of the rest of the body the backbone might collapse. Thus if a principal feels unsupported, it follows that may affect the school as a whole, and ‘down the track’ impact upon society.

We all want the best possible educational outcomes for children. That requires,

“...educational leadership that is aesthetically and qualitatively grounded... (the) kind of foundation that provides access to moral judgement and social justice, knowledge and skill development as something more than routine managerial tasks, and the means to question and overcome ideology” (Samier, 2008).

For this vision to be achieved, with schools led by principals capable of this type of leadership, who demonstrate their values in their administration (Court, 2001), we must commit to collaboration and ongoing dialogue, sharing experiences, respecting “the views of others” (Furman, 2003, p.4).

This research embraced the commitment to the ‘we’, (Freire, 1970, Hudak, 2007), the solidarity of joining together to find answers to problems, piecing together the answers to the questions as they evolved; engaged in searching for that moment in time where, as “the “between” (is) made concrete in the issues of the truth of the matter” (Guignon, 2004, pp.164-165) we learn.

Learning is the constant, everyday, evolutionary, co-constructive process (Arlidge, 1999; Freire, 1970) where having engaged in reflection, ideas are synthesised to needs, sometimes translating into change (Hunter et al, 1997). Learning is what schools, principals' workplaces, are all about yet "...we can all learn something from someone ..." (Puketapu-Dahm, 2006, p.94). When principals (or anyone else) engage in this idea of being consistently open to new ideas, involving themselves in lifelong learning (Knowles et al., 1998) they continue to grow personally and professionally.

To learn requires support, at the very least in the form of others' ideas. This thesis being about support for principals, it was noted that there are varying ideas about what support is. In this context support may be thought of as something that is a source of strength and growth, thought of as formal or informal, gained intentionally or by chance, by personal or professional development (PD), through consultation or by a combination of these.

There is more than one way to tell a story, and  
more than one story to be told (Pagano, 1991, p.197).

In 'hearing' and 'interpreting' principal's voices concerning support and looking to understand inherent meanings, consideration was given to personal, moral, social, economical, political and historical contexts and constructs (Burbules, 2000; Moon et al., 2000). It was recognised that our thoughts about society, culture (Davies et al, 2002, p.157) and power, our individual and collective assumptions, (Marx et al., 2000; Quantz, 2007) affect the way we live, and our interpretation of the other.

Therefore, in this context, knowledge of support for principals was considered to be social "...subjective and active, individual and personal"

(Arlidge, 1999, p.107). This work sought to produce new knowledge by combining ideas from literature, the participants and the researcher's own historical, social, political and economic constructs (Burbules, 2000; Middleton, 1996, p. 19. in processes involving.

Searching for answers as to what support meant for each principal, and how that might possibly be useful in a wider context, involved a constant process reflection, questioning, analysis and synthesis (Gilling, 2010, p.162), reflecting upon and revising concepts. During the process of elaborating upon ideas, it was realised that value found might be inherent in the answers themselves, or, in the questions those answers set in train.

“ The starting point of critical elaboration is the consciousness of what one really is, and is knowing thyself as a product of the historical processes to date which have deposited within you an infinity of traces, without leaving an inventory : therefore it is imperative at the outset to compile such an inventory.

(Cited in Said, 1987, p.25).

Research is, at least in part, a form of critical elaboration. At varying stages both researcher and participants were on the “inside” of the research (Clough & Nutbrown, 2002) making processes generally subjective rather than objective.

In answer to concerns around subjectivity, and that researchers often do not “explicate their.... relations with their subjects” (Scott and Usher, 1999, p.18) Appendix B contains insight into the researcher's background to assist clarity.

## The Research Processes

The research progressed through obsessions (Leslie, 2010, p.150) in a stop/start fashion. Initially a literature review looked to focus on clear ideas of the scope (Gash, 2000, Meloy, 2002) of perceptions around support for principals, to identify values, pros and cons “**what** has been done, **how** (**why** and **where**) it has been done” (Gilling, 2008).

Then there was an obsession on considering data gathering strategies. Amongst those explored was ethnography (Glesne, 2006), a tool used to describe “a group or culture” (Fetterman, 1998, p.11), “...understand members’ taken-for-granted assumptions and rules” (Charmaz, 2006, p.4) or uncover a “gap of representation” (Bochner and Ellis, 2002, p.88). Ethnography may describe a real-life personal account of “experiences and actions, (Neville-Jan, 2003, p88) “display(ing) multiple layers of consciousness, connecting the personal to the cultural” (Ellis and Bochner, 2000, p.739). It is a constructive approach to research now well accepted in academic circles (Kearney, 2005, p.21). Ethnography showing the “relationship between private experience and the wider society” (Robertson, 1982, p. 5 citing Mills, 1959) seemed to fit the needs of the research. Upon reflection however, it was recognised that the researcher’s resources would prohibit face to face interviewing, so ethnography was eliminated.

Thus a decision was made to approach individual principals for their input in letter form. Approval being gained to do so (Appendix C), information and consent forms (Appendices A & D) were formulated and the process of

approaching participants began with a preoccupation around being unsure if there would be 'enough' participants.

Having succeeded in gaining participants, at intervals their input began arriving. The researcher was humbled by the honesty and richness of their contributions.

What followed was a period of highs and lows over data analysis looking to identify:-

- what each principal thought support was:
- what was seen as not supportive:
- sources of support:
- what opportunities individual principals would like to see offered in the future in the way of support.

The ideas surfaced during the analysis were then elaborated on considering

- **what** mechanisms principals saw as being involved in support:
- **what** was seen as conditional to receiving support:
- **how** individual principals felt about support currently available:
- gender based discrimination:
- a different slant on mentoring:
- the difficulty for principals where boards lack necessary skills:
- implications of principals dealing with child abuse or neglect on a regular basis:
- **where** connections were between various ideas.

There followed a period of anguish over the difficulty of presenting the whole as a flowing argument to do (it was hoped) justice to the participant's contributions

In drawing conclusions the researcher looked to affirm existing avenues of support; where support practices were currently shown to be not as fully supportive as they might be, to suggest variations; and to suggest innovations in line with recommendations from principals.

### **Overview of Thesis Structure**

Whilst exploring support for principals, the following literature review concisely discusses how it is important to be mindful of the contexts they operate in and presents a synopsis of principals' leadership traits and roles. It is acknowledged that principals are also managers and some of the implications of changes to the way property is managed since the introduction of Tomorrow's Schools (1989) are considered.

This is followed by a brief analysis of "support for principals"; some reasons why principals may need to be supported; forms support may come in; where support might come from; who may control the funding involved in provision of support.

Chapter 3 'Rationale' firstly discusses why individual principal's viewpoints on research were canvassed; the possible initial value to them in taking part in the research; how value might accrue to provision of support for principals as a result of the whole and on a minor note, the value to the researcher in doing the research.

Then a discussion about the methodology of the research takes place, discussing why

- a qualitative approach was decided upon:
- constructivism was part of the research:
- the postmodern idea of reality being thought of as socially constructed is ensconced in the research:
- the terms 'culture' and 'society' are connected to ideas about principal support:
- lifelong learning and reflection were seen as central to the project and support for principals:
- and elements of a grounded theory type of methodology were employed.

In Chapter 4 the methods utilised are examined;

- triangulation:
- reflection:
- literature:
- the sample, how, when, and where it was found, what was involved, and who was in the sample:
- why individual accounts were sought and the criteria for inclusion of each participant's contribution in the body of the work:
- and explanation for the approaches chosen in data coding and analysis are discussed.

Finally in this chapter, what is involved in being ethical, and the ethical considerations involved in the work are shown.

Chapter 5 features participant's contributions in their entirety, since their ideas constitute much of the value in this work. Also this approach enables the reader to make personal interpretations leaving no stone unturned in extracting value from them.

Chapter 6 evolves into a complex offering of analysis and discussion, elaborating on the various points raised in the analysis; considering possible underlying factors; looking at responsibilities and possible solutions to dilemmas.

Chapter 7 concludes the work showing findings and recommendations for further inquiry.

## Literature Review Principals and Principal Support

Being a principal is a process of “personal and professional”  
development occurring over time

that is assisted by an inquiring state of mind.  
(Browne-Ferrigno and Lindle, 2007, p.175).

In looking at support for principals this project originated in compassion for them in their demanding roles. However, the underlying interest was in seeing schools led by principals who are supported to be the best they can be, as “ effective heads will lead effective schools, and effective schools are what educators have a keen interest in developing and maintaining” (Daresh and Arrowsmith, 2003, pp.3-4).

Patience and human-kindness are prerequisites to becoming a principal and in maintaining one’s position as a leader.

Kahore he tarainga tahere I te ara

You cannot make yourself a bird spear as you go  
(Orbell, 1998).

It requires patience firstly to become a teacher and patience in the years working up to becoming a principal. Then, being a principal requires patience and human-kindness with children, with staff, with parents. It requires patience in dealing with authorities. Above all though, it is suggested principals should be kind to, and look after, themselves. This is a concept fundamental to being supported and thus being in a position to give support to others as an effective

principal must be. Unfortunately, the need to be kind to oneself is all too easily forgotten or pushed aside in the hubbub of daily life in a school, in the fifty to seventy hours principals usually work in a week (Wylie, 2008, p.4). To be able to accept and engage in support one must feel safe to do so, if one has not looked after oneself, one may not feel safe.

Principals are educational and people leaders in their school and community, a leadership that is “inextricably intertwined with its larger environment” (Dimmock and Walker, 2005, p.3), that has many perspectives and many roles including curricular, moral, social, situational, and political (Moon et al., 2000). These contexts affect when, where, why, how, how often and by whom each principal may feel the need to be supported, implying that how support is thought about may be a personal construct.

One may consider leadership from many angles. The effective principal (Sergiovanni, 2001) may have a broad-based leadership, one that utilises different styles of leadership, different techniques, tools and strategies on different occasions, within different environments to suit particular situations.

As leaders, principals require foresight, dedication, courage, competence, honesty, discipline, the ability to inspire and take inspiration, and the ability to focus on goals (Naik, 2011). They need determination, the ability to negotiate and to keep the peace, and the patience to tolerate ambiguity.

As effective leaders, principals may strategise; they may provide guidance and they ought to be role models. Principals reinforce self-esteem in their staff and pupils and they encourage personal choice and structure in learning. They are passionate about positive contributions and able to enthusiastically encourage implementation of ideas inherent in those contributions. Principals may intentionally engage in critique and criticism, questioning and dialogue in

order to strategically plan for themselves, their staff and their pupils. In carrying out their roles they utilise the political, “intellectual, administrative and technical” resources that surround them (Latchem and Hanna, 2001; Mezirow, 1991).

Principals’ leadership “embraces problems as opportunities; marries opposite conceptions; looks for allies in every direction, [sometimes] reach[ing] out to ‘outsiders’ to support internal change (Latchem and Hanna, 2001, pp. 236-238).

The leadership style of a principal may be at any one time, transformative, participative, distributive, directive, authoritarian, permissive, laissez faire, democratic, facilitative, hierarchical, pace setting, visionary, collaborative or bureaucratic (Apps, 1994; OECD, 2009; Rajeev, 2011; Kulkarni, 2011), or a combination of any of these to suit particular circumstances.

Principals may lead from in front, beside or behind or all of these. To be at their most effective whilst leading, principals also need to be supported by role models in front of them, and by people or organisations who walk beside them, or behind them.

Principals are educational leaders. Schools are busy places and often it is difficult for a principal to have the time and space at school for doing “the thinking that is needed for educational leadership” (Wylie, 2008, p.6), particularly if they have an ‘open door policy’; so this part of the job is often done at home, in their own time. This is not conducive to a work/life balance, an important concept when looking at support.

In carrying out their roles as leaders by “planning, organizing, leading and monitoring” (Lunenberg, 2010, p.1) principals construct knowledge in a way that allows for change or reinforcement of viewpoints, values and beliefs and as well creates new opportunities for agents of change (Lambert, 2003, pp. 5-6).

Principals as educators often wish to, or are required to employ new theories or new tools, variations on themes. Current concepts of what works alter along with research, with social change, with new needs arising. Different ideas suit different principals.

Implementation of a new idea may be espoused because it resonates with personal values or educational values, in which case, provided all those around the principal, staff and BoT share the vision involved, stress is likely to be at normal levels and unforeseen support unlikely to be needed. Where BoT and principal work well together, strategising in advance of needs, things like, for example, extra funding for administration help during the implementation, will be in place.

On the other hand, implementation may occur unwillingly and under pressure because, for example, there are changes in government policies, changes occur in the school population, or perhaps, because a lack of resources dictates the necessity.

Power is inherent in the principal being a leader, though many prefer to share (Blase and Anderson, 1995) or distribute it where possible working in collaboration with others. As with when they were teachers, the choices a principal makes may have the power to enhance or on the reverse side, to diminish others' choices. Sometimes others have power over principals, for example it has been known for communities to undermine a principal. Then there is the power that ultimately government policy has over principals.

In the 1989 education reforms known as Tomorrow's Schools, governance of schools was turned over to BoT. Each BoT was composed of parent elected trustees, one staff trustee and the principal. Since then, principals as well as being educational and people leaders must also operate as chief executives

(Education Review Office, 1996) and middle managers, managing the school staff, being responsible for school finance and being "... accountable to ... boards of trustees and the state for the implementation of educational policy in schools" (Court, 2001, p.7).

The legislation on these reforms stated in section 75 that

- Except to the extent that any enactment or the general law of New Zealand provides otherwise, a school's board has complete discretion to control the management of the school as it thinks fit.

And section 76 stated

- (1) A school's principal is the board's chief executive in relation to the school's control and management.
- (2) Except to the extent that any enactment, or the general law of New Zealand, provides otherwise, the principal—
  - (a) shall comply with the board's general policy directions; and
  - (b) subject to paragraph (a), has complete discretion to manage as the principal thinks fit the school's day-to-day administration

The effect of these two sections was that the BoT is the employer, but generally the principal is delegated responsibility to manage the employment of all but senior staff. The important point here is that the BoT is the employer and has a legislated responsibility to be a 'good employer'. Among many other things that entails the need to minimise stress in the workplace. One way of principals being supported is for BoT to strategise to find solutions to lessening stress in the workplace. Wylie (2008) in discussing "principal stress levels and wellbeing"

(p.1) stated on page 6 that principals already do many of things that may lessen stress,

- “try to manage their workload,”
- “share leadership responsibilities,”
- “try to keep things steady, so that there are fewer unexpected events, e.g. by working on student behaviour.”

However, principals are less likely it seems to “close the door” (ibid.) and financial restraints may often mean that they employ fewer administrative staff than they really need.

With regard to property, prior to 1989, under the Department of Education, Education Boards were the controlling authority for primary, intermediate and area schools; secondary schools had Boards of Governors. Property was owned by the Crown and maintained by the teams of architects, site engineers and building supervisors employed to do so. Principals had little need to be involved with property other than lifting the phone to notify the appropriate person whenever there was a problem.

Since 1989, MoE is now the landlord, and the Crown holds the BoT accountable for care and maintenance of school property. The BoT delegates day to day operational responsibility to the principal. Effectively this means that where BoT do not have the skills to do this, then responsibility falls back on the principal.

Principals begin their careers as teachers constantly reflecting upon situations involving the students, the curriculum, strategies for teaching, how to work with parents, how to get along with other staff members and their place within the whole. In a well run school a teacher is well mentored and supported

in a systematic approach where what that particular teacher wants is considered (Philp, 2007).

In discussing support for principals it is important to take into account “the diversity and characteristics of context” (Dimmock and Walker, 2005, p.205) the myriad collection of individuals, cultures and systems (Quantz, 2007) that they work in. Some systems that principals work within are formally recognised, for example national or local government regulations, or ministries and their dictates, other systems may arise informally to fit particular circumstances but may become formal later.

A key system that principals may be said to work within is the Ministry of Education (MoE) as amongst many other things, MoE are charged with providing support for principals and with implementing government policies on education. Also, the MoE or those they contract out to, control the majority of the funding for principal support.

Everybody needs a shoulder to lean on, even when you're the boss  
(South 2010)

It has been found that supportive leadership helps to retain teachers in schools far more than financial incentives do (Anderson, 2010). It is therefore suggested that this is also likely to be true of principals, and, that principals who are themselves being well supported would be more likely to be able to be supportive leaders.

There are numerous reasons principals may need support, including when societal change brings with it deteriorations in student behaviour, or security concerns; when there are pressures from special interest groups; with shrinking

budgets; with technical advances; when there is political change; when legal issues arise (Harris- John, 2011) .

Further to these ideas, there is the fact that principals are the “center of school life ...the critical decision makers in their schools ...(thus) isolation is likely to be a common characteristic in all principals’ lives” (DeMoss et. al., 2007, p.164).

Principals as the day-today operational managers of schools may need support with human relationships. Principals need to be able to trust and respect their staff (Latchem and Hanna 2000, p.236), but who is there for them if their staff do not respect them? Principals need to be patient (ibid.) and be expert in change management as they cope with diverse people and environments, but who is there for them while they are coping with staff issues or with change?

Then, it is recognised that “women have been heavily under-represented in school leadership positions during the last decades...in Australia...the United Kingdom...the U.S. and in Aotearoa/New Zealand” (Court, 2001, pp.11, 495), though they make up a high percentage of the teachers in New Zealand, so perhaps this is an area where support of a different nature may be needed.

Support for principals may come in many forms. Support may come from sharing the leadership for example as with co-principalship (Court, 2001), collaboration with staff, or distributive or participative leadership. Support may be in written form, for example from mentors, by peer review or through personal appraisals; from principals personal journals; through staff appraisals or from PD material distributed by the MoE, principals’ or leadership organisations .

Agencies of support include the Ministry of Education (MoE) and other Ministries such as Ministry of Social Development; Principals Associations; mentors; New Zealand Educational Institute Te Riu Roa (NZEI); university

courses; individual BoT or New Zealand School Trustees Association (NZSTA); Independent Training Organisations (ITO's); collegiality with other principals or with teachers; critical friends; mentors; friends; family; school population; wider community.

This country being a democracy, principals are not compelled to accept training, or be part of any formal support mechanism though it would seem vital that principals are supported given the importance of the job that they do. Becoming a principal is usually a hierarchical process, but teachers do not have to be a DP before becoming a principal.

In contrast, for example, in Singapore becoming a principal is a hierarchical process. Further, there, from 1984 to 2000, vice principals who exhibited potential for principal-ship undertook a one year full-time Diploma in Educational Administration (DEA) “at the National Institute of Education (NIE) of the Nanyang Technological University (NTU)” (Lim, 2009, p.163). DEA was a collaborative effort between NIE, MoE (Singapore) and schools, a combination of university instruction with two periods of school placements where the future leader was paired with an existing principal who mentored whilst providing opportunities for “real life” experiences (ibid.). In Singapore principals have supervisors, those supervisors choosing principals who they see as good role models to become ongoing mentors for new principals, thus ensconcing mentoring throughout the system in an ordered, intentional fashion.

The MoE does provide expert support for principals both online and in person, on many levels and under diverse ‘headings’ ranging through special needs, curriculum, property, finance, forms, to name but a few, and also as professional development (PD).

Currently this occurs as a 'Professional Leadership Plan' designed and delivered regionally by a number of institutions in which the Experienced Principals Development Programme (EPD) complements the Aspiring Principal's Programme (NAPP) and First-Time Principals Programme (FTPP) (Auckland University, 2009; Education Gazette, 2010; MoE website, 2010). Throughout these programmes there is ongoing research "to find out how to design and deliver a national development programme for experienced principals that would add value to their work" (University of Auckland, 2010). MoE also have teams in each region that are specifically charged with supporting schools.

Other avenues of support include principals' organisations; with principals finding their own support mechanisms; through NZEI; through PD and by mentors; by teamwork and through collegiality, both with peers and as shared decision-making (Lee et al., 1993; OECD, 1990; Southworth, 1994).

Thus the literature has shown that being a principal is an ongoing process that varies with and may be personal to, the individual and their contexts. Principals have been presented as being both managers and educational leaders. Both of these roles are complex, therefore principals require many different traits in order to effectively carry them out. Further, it has been demonstrated that principals' styles of leadership may be different in different situations. Support has been shown to be available to principals in many forms including professional development aimed at principals. However, it was noted that at this time, it is not compulsory for principals in New Zealand to engage in professional development.

**Rationale**

Ontology is the study of what is, or how something or someone exists (Resca, 2009). Schools mirroring overall societal and political norms (Dimmock and Walker, 2005, p. vii) yet vary in the ethnic, socio-economic and political makeup of their staff, boards, students and local communities have a contextual diversity. Ontologically this diversity influenced the decision to examine what individual principals in their own contexts deemed significant perspectives on support they felt they either had, or had not received in their various roles.

If we agree with Resca (2009) that epistemology discusses “how we know what we know”, then the epistemology supporting this research was utilising existing literature and the “insider knowledge” (Hill-Collins, 1990) that each principal possessed around support.

Though providing an undocumented dimension, it was proposed that the initial value of this research might be experienced on a personal level as each principal engaged in the self-reflection that is a necessary precursor to narrating one’s stance on any topic.

Reviewing literature demonstrated much was already known about support for principals. Notwithstanding this, the perception was that research might uncover or provide new perspectives, see room for improvement in present systems; signpost ways to develop and expand current understandings instigating ways forward.

Further the researcher being inquisitive enjoys investigating things in search of new knowledge agreeing with Kavan, (2009), that “the quest for knowledge is up there with love, loyalty, and other immortal experiences”.

In a postmodern vein this work sought “local, contextualized, and pragmatic conceptual strategies” (pp.165-166) around principal support with new perspectives on knowledge seen as “provisional, incomplete, and perspectival” (Seidman, 2008, p.164). In contrast to the postmodern however, there was no seeking for metanarratives (English, 2008, p.2), rather co-construction was sought – a piecing together of participants experiences and ideas from literature in a patchwork that may, or may not be pleasing as a whole, but it is hoped that at least pieces will resonate with the viewer as either challenge or confirmation.

## **Methodology**

The methodology of any research mirrors the researcher’s identity and values and is a result of decisions made concerning a question about which it is felt that “... doing something is better than doing nothing” (Conteh, 2005, pp. 97-98). The term methodology is employed here to discuss the epistemology of the research, or reasons why particular approaches have been taken and particular tools utilised (Robertson, 1982).

## **Qualitative Research**

Both the “scientific and positivist” or quantitative; and the “naturalistic and interpretive “, or qualitative approaches to research have their legitimacy (Cohen et al, 2000, pp.3-17).

However, in looking to understand individual principal’s perceptions of what support means, their experiences of support, and the cultures or “webs of significance” (Geertz, 1973, pp.4-5) surrounding principals that impact upon support, the researcher utilised qualitative techniques as they allowed discussion of “choice,...[and] individual and moral responsibility” (ibid).

This stance allowed focus on examining principal's experiences around support from their individual subjective perspectives (Burns, 1998, p.11), their knowledge of support seated in personal understandings of the contextual composition of each individual's professional, personal, political or practical environments (Mason, 2002). The qualitative lens gave opportunity to "uncover the as yet unknown nature" (Glaser, 1992, p.12) of how these principals viewed support.

Qualitative research may often be more subjective than objective. In this research subjectivity was demonstrated (Conteh, 2005, pp. 97-98) in obtaining individual principals' ideas in the desire to be instrumental in improving support for principals.

Constructivism (Harris and Jimenez, 2001, p.86; Cohen et al., 2000, p.9) was evidenced as elements of an overall grounded theory methodology (Chapter 4.2) employed as the research looked to produce new theoretical approaches to provision of support for school principals in New Zealand, 'suited to (the) supposed uses' rather than corroborating existing knowledge (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p.3).

From inception grounded theory methodology has been an evolving concept that continues to draw argument as to precisely what constitutes it. Though this research employs elements of various grounded theory texts no particular author's point of view is emphasised nor does the research claim to follow a complete grounded theory methodology as espoused by any of the authors consulted (Babchuk, 1997; Charmaz, 2003, 2006, 2007; Denzin and Lincoln, 1998; Flint, 1978; Glaser, 1978, 1992, 1998; Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Ribes, 2009; Stern, 1980 and Strauss and Corbin, 1998).

Conceptually, rather than a hypothesis leading the research and data being sought that underpinned that hypothesis, in this grounded theory methodology data itself was the instrument that shaped the progression of the research and the results. Thus being “principally a theory building methodology, rather than a theory testing one” (Ribes, 2009, p.1) the attraction of grounded theory was that it precluded advance assumption of answers to the questions initially raised.

Since the author had little first-hand knowledge-hand of the topic, this approach fitted the needs of the research allowing new perspectives to emerge, focus to change, narrow or expand as the research progressed and patterns in interpretations of the data emerged (Charmaz, 2006, Denzin and Lincoln, 1998). As Stern (1980, p.20) suggested “the strongest case for the use of grounded theory is ... to gain a fresh perspective in a familiar situation”. In this research that translated to looking for fresh perspectives in the little researched sub-theme of individual principal’s perceptions of support in the search for emergent theoretical bases (Flint, 1978).

Qualitative research commonalities (Mason, 2002) include emphasis on understanding and interpreting particular societal constitutions or contexts, and utilising methods of data collection, analysis and interpretation that are potentially thick and rich (Geertz, 1973) with detail. However differences exist in philosophical foundations and possible designs and methods. In looking at philosophical foundations to this work, culture, society, postmodernism and constructivism were explored.

Believing that no theory holds all the answers, that social acceptance of educational theories changes with the times, and theories change social ideas of what is important (Ross-Gordon, 2002, p.3), this research wove strands of various educational theories or theoretical stances throughout, as explanations

of complexities, possibilities or purposes, or, as foundation for or interaction with the data.

An underlying theme of this research was to consider whether the societal and organisational cultures surrounding principals were supportive. Thus the following paragraphs define 'culture' and 'society', talking briefly about the connections between those terms and principals and principal support.

## **Culture**

Culture is about the ways in which people live and learn in relation to one another, the beliefs, values, attitudes, power structures and language that underpin all of the above (Herskovits 1955, p.4; Metge, 1990, p.6). Culture also may be used to describe the overall atmosphere or functioning ability within an organisation, such as a school.

Culture is also about group norms (Dimmock and Walker 2005, p. vii), the ways in which we are comfortable existing (Reeves, 2002, ch.2). Within groups, such as principals as a group, the experience and significance of the group culture may vary from individual to individual.

Inherent in group norms is power, power over and power with group members (Talmadge, 1999). In the case of principals, power over them might perhaps be seen to exist in their relationships with MoE, Boards of Trustees, staff, parents; power with the members of the group might be seen in the way they function, work to increase each others' growth, or their ability to stick together in and speak out from their local or national organisations.

All cultures are evolving things, this evolutionary nature of culture rendering it "inherently imperfect" (Puketapu-Dahm, 2006, p4). In this context the

imperfection might include possible gaps in support for principals or opportunity for positive change in provision of support (Moodian, 2009).

## **Society**

Culture is also about society and the relationships within society, many layered, often difficult to ferret out, easy not to pay too close attention to or investigate too closely (Dimmock and Walker, 2005, p3). This relational concept between culture and society was the rationale for inclusion on the information sheet given to principals of the following questions.

“As a principal do you feel supported in your various roles by your school and society?”

“Are the local and national organisational cultures that surround principals supportive?”

Openshaw (2005, p.235, citing New Zealand Department of Education, 1962) shows that schools as microcosms of society, tend to exhibit the tensions prevalent in wider society (Dimmock and Walker, 2005, p.185) mirroring current societal expectations and values, by reason of their population and stakeholders; not least those stakeholders in positions of power both locally and nationally. Considering support for principals, stakeholders in positions of power (in no particular order) might include Ministry of Education and other government ministries, Principals' Associations, NZEI, NZSTA, Parent Teacher Associations (PTA's), ethnic groups, Independent Training Organisations (ITO's), parents, students, Boards of Trustees (BoT's) to name some.

Power was also inherent in this exploration of principal support, in how it was decided what was important to be included, in other words, what was true.

A foundational concept of this work was that the reality or truth of support for principals was “socially constructed” (Tolich and Davidson, 1999, p.26), and varied with individual’s contexts and cultures (Bochner and Ellis, 2002, p.88). Early proponents of reality being socially constructed were Hastorf and Cantril (1954), an idea continued by among many others Sternberg (1990) and Valsiner (2000).

### **Postmodern borrowings**

In line with these ideas is Flynn’s (2002, p.11) postmodernistic idea that “recognize(s) truth as contingent and provisional rather than absolute and determinate”; an idea that permits and acknowledges that there are potentially many understandings of what is real (Bochner and Ellis, 2002; Reed-Danahay, 1997). This places an emphasis on difference, as it ascribes to the belief that reality is seated in personal cultural (Davies, 2007 pp.10-15) understandings (Bochner and Ellis, 2002, p.88), thus it is acknowledged that the interpretation of other’s experiences must be coloured to some extent by the researcher’s cultural background (Bochner and Ellis, 2002; Reed-Danahay, 1997).

The worth of borrowing from the post-modern ethos was that it allowed voice to be given to individual principal’s varied perceptions around support; acceptance “of differences, ambiguity, uncertainty, and (even) conflict” (Seidman, 2008, p.165). Emphasising difference was a tool to allow any disadvantaged, perhaps by gender or politics to be heard (hooks, 1984). Looking to understand differences is a core function of research.

## **Lifelong learning**

Though theories about lifelong learning (Knowles et al., 1998), and reflection have been around for some time, they are still socially acceptable and relevant. Prerequisites to lifelong learning are self-direction, flexibility, focus, creativity and openness to new ideas (Candy, 1991, Knowles, 1990, Stevenson, 2000).

A key idea inherent in this research was that life-long learning (Grace, 1998, p236, Knowles et al., 1998) was accepted as a given for the researcher, the participants and in provision or maintenance of support for principals. Reflection and reflective analysis were the genesis of the research, and informed principals' voices.

From early on lifelong learning has been discussed as taking place in response to needs (Blanden et al., 2010, Evans, 2003; Knowles et al., 1998). This project was about learning what was not yet known (Standen et al., 1998) about principals' support needs from individual principal's perspectives. For each principal the learning may have occurred whilst reflecting upon how they felt about the questions on the information sheet before putting their ideas down in concrete form.

The idea of "...situated cognition...(where) learning is what is constructed by the interaction of people in a particular situation..." (Elias and Merriam, 2005, p.41) is a core concept in considering support for principals. Principals' need of support must occur as a result of interactions with people, either directly or, indirectly. A key component of learning is reflection.

## **Reflection and reflective analysis**

When one reflects it allows opportunity to think about things that may previously have been overlooked thus expanding learning from either one's own, or others' experiences; permits insight into how events that one formerly thought were unrelated, actually had related processes inherent in them; may present new ways of using options; or may provide ways of giving meaning to experiences.

Reflection may be thought of as looking back on things so we can try to make sense of them, gain insight into why things happened in the way that they did or come up with ideas to alter outcomes in future (Weick, 1979). Written reflection on "lived" experience (Hill-Collins, 1990) such as provided by the participants in this research, can be an enlightening resource, both for the writer and for subsequent readers.

Reflection and reflective analysis as a process of learning were pivotal to the methodology of this research. Being engrossed in reflective analysis provided focus, absorption, attention to minutiae (Boxer, 1985).

An early initiator of discussion about reflection as part of the learning process was Kolb who spoke of cognitive learning and development being divided into concrete/abstract or active/reflective stages (Kolb and Fry, 1975). Later Boud et al., (1985) suggested it is how we turn experience into learning, how we analyse and synthesise knowledge, a multifaceted thing involving rational knowledge and feelings, that can occur before, throughout, at various intervals, or immediately following particular events.

Conscious reflection allows us to "learn from all our experiences – thinking, physical, social, emotional and spiritual" thus reflection is "an ideal self-development tool" (Zepke, 2003, pp. 18 -19). During reflection, the emotional

culture or cultures in which things happen is sometimes recognised, enriching understanding of whether those cultures enhance or limit one's own or group performance, there may be greater understanding of consequences of actions, one may gain a stronger appreciation of one's own values, one's part in the processes and how one may utilise experience.

If we accept that we are socially constructed beings, then both the act of reflection and any 'thing' that we put into practice as a result of reflection must also be socially constructed, thus our individual social, cultural and political interests may affect or effect reflective analysis (Kemmis, 1985).

Reflective analysis may therefore be considered a deconstruction approach to understanding how and why outcomes occurred and what happened leading up to those outcomes. Reflective analysis requires strength of mind and perseverance. As professionals, principals may reflect in a structured way, looking for answers to particular issues; or in being determined to appreciate things from others' perspectives, to think about what would happen if things were done or approached differently (Boxer, 1985).

Where reflective analysis is a written process, this may enable a distancing of self from the emotions involved, again permitting new perspectives on activities (Boxer, 1985).

In reflecting about support for principals, both principals and researcher drew on such things as their knowledge of theory, practice, cultures, diversity, social mores, history, noticing patterns, options, making their own sense of things (Boxer 1985). Making one's own sense of things does however allow room for others to be critical of this utilisation of reflection since "our memories of experiences vary" and in wanting "...to achieve specific purposes..." the "reflections[s] can [not] be" wholly " ...trusted as accurate" , further individual

principal's professional mores may have influenced what they "... reflect[ed] on" (Zepke, 2003, p.25).

Reflection on support for school principals gave rise to the idea of soliciting personal communications from participants by way of email or letter. It was hoped that giving principals voice by utilising their communications, comparing and contrasting their experiences (Hill-Collins, 1990; Puketapu-Dahm, 2006; Said, 1987) might assist with understanding what has happened and why; inform future decision making and as others read about it, set in train thought that might encourage "ongoing social change" (Conteh, 2005, p.97) around the provision of support for principals. Answering those who may consider these ideas lacking in rigour, Kearney (2005, p.21) shows such approaches are now widely accepted and suggests they "...can be useful and indeed healthy."

This chapter elaborates on the procedures used in this work beginning with an explanation of the different methods combined to produce results. Then there is a description of the places of reflection, literature and elements of grounded theory in those procedures. Next, the processes involved in obtaining participants are then clarified. This is followed by presenting information about the methods used to code and analyse the data and the chapter closes with an explanation of the ethical considerations involved.

### **Triangulation**

Triangulation was achieved by an initial literature review around principals and principal support; by collecting firsthand data from principals by way of free response to the information sheet (Appendix A); by continued consultation of literature; and by analysis of the data that resulted in ideas being surfaced that suggested where the onus of being supported might lie, demonstrated areas principals are well supported in, suggested areas for innovation in support, and where existing support mechanisms might be improved.

### **Reflection as a Research method**

Reflection and analysis informed the constant process of change throughout the research.

“...the kernel of any research project...lies in a peculiar amalgam of long-term obsessions and random happenings, which crystallise the central problem in specific and concrete ways...a chance

meeting...a sentence in a book ...our reaction to government policies or initiatives.... Such moments force us into action against some perceived injustice – or fill us with a desire to puzzle something out. They situate us personally and politically ... the seeds of what we are thinking, right now, at this moment, were planted long ago. The questions that bother us now are not new” (Kearney, 2005, Ch. 2. pp.21- 22).

### **Literature as a method**

Initially reviewing literature was valid as a method as it provided background information at the outset, examining existing knowledge around support for principals, identifying types of support currently available in New Zealand and by way of contrast in other countries, whilst endeavouring not to be blinded by “faulty logic”, “problematic facts” or “questionable assumptions” (Zepke, 2001, pp. 40-41). During the research literature was constantly referred to, to give reinforcement to participant’s contributions; to yield strategies or comparisons for analysing participant’s input or coming to conclusions; to strengthen research ideas and processes (Clough and Nutbrown, 2002).

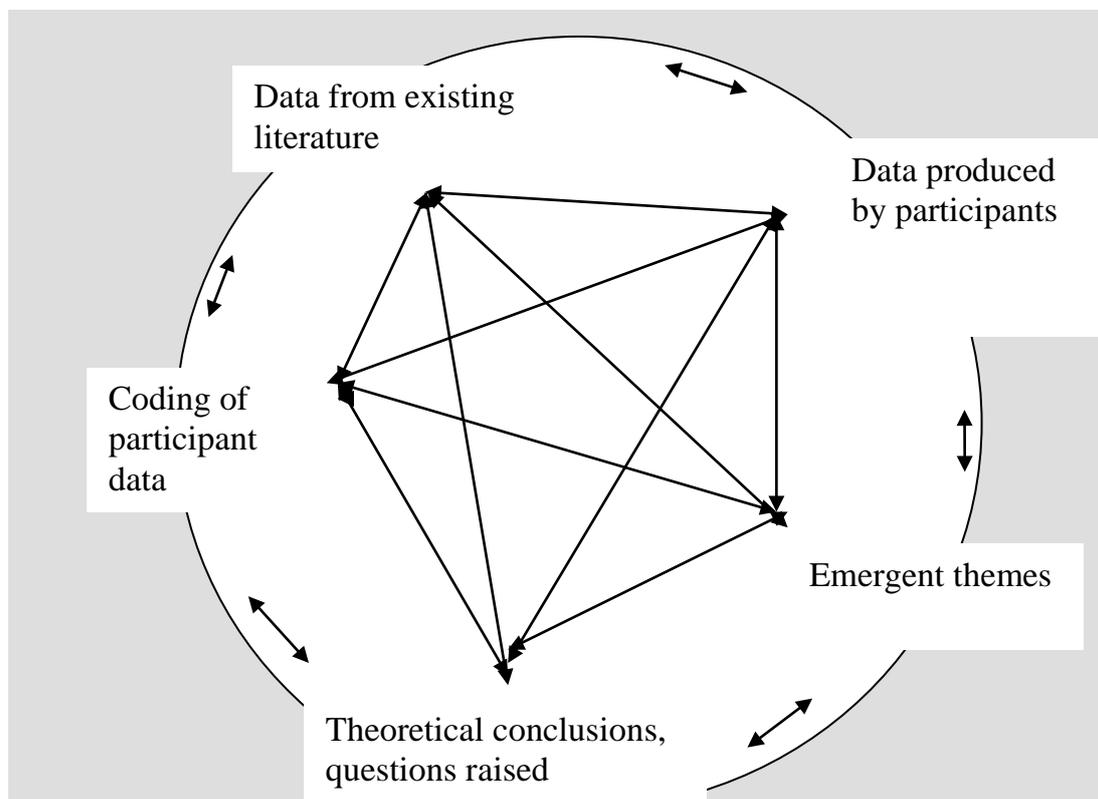
### **Grounded Theory elements used as a method**

Grounded theory elements used as a method functioned in a constant, circular, yet tangential interaction (Fig. 1) occurring between data from existing literature, data from participants, analysis of data, emerging themes and results; ideas constantly surfaced, were revisited, changed or evolved.

Each participant principal supplied a letter (Chapter 5). Explicit and inherent ideas in these principals' contributions were analysed (Appendices G-H). The ideas from the analysis were then combined with ideas from literature and emergent themes were explored, until conclusions were arrived at or unanswered questions were raised for further exploration. The theme of support can be complex, emotive, involve multiple ideas and intricacies, management of this was provided by constant comparison (Charmaz, 2006) to determine what confirmations, questions or issues there were.

In the original research design that the MUHEC Low Risk Application (MUHEC 2009) was based upon, approval was not sought to return to the principals later with queries regarding their input. This precluded further amplification of some of the important ideas surfaced by interviewing –thus all aspects of grounded theory methods were not followed.

**Figure 1. Grounded theory elements as utilised in this context**



**The Sample.** “how, who, which, what, when, where and why” (Wadsworth, 1984).

The following paragraphs are included to enable the reader to understand **how, when and where** the sample was gained and **what** was involved.

It is acknowledged that schools and their staff are both busy and saturated with requests to assist in research.

In the first instance the intention was to obtain input from a number of principals from primary, intermediate, secondary, Special schools or Maori immersion schools to get a wide range of contexts. Resources limited toll-calls and travel which impacted upon the processes. The recruitment method was a combined random/snowball approach where initial approaches were made to principals through the Ministry of Education’s list of schools, then those principals asked for an introduction to further participants. Early in the recruitment phase, attempting to have a representative sample from throughout New Zealand, eight approaches were made to South Island schools, five by telephone and three by email with no responses. From that time further approaches to participants were made at random from the Ministry of Education’s North Island alphabetical list of schools. Time was set aside on various days to make approaches by email and telephone, each approach a different school picked at random from a different page of the list.

Initially contact was made by telephone or email to schools and took place over three months. When telephoning schools, secretaries were the first point of contact, followed by two to five days later the researcher being advised as to whether an initial introductory meeting with the principal might occur. Of seventy-eight schools contacted thus, seven principals initially agreed to participate, two later withdrew. When emailing it was the principal who was contacted. In this

case out of twenty-one principals five initially agreed to participate, two later withdrew.

One principal provided a long list of other principals out of which just one 'worked'; primarily as many were either currently out of the country or about to be so. On checking contacted lists with MoE data later it was found that fifteen secondary schools were contacted, one initial meeting was granted and that principal participated; five intermediate schools and five Maori medium schools were contacted with no uptake.

### Who

At the close of data gathering there were eight participants, four male, four female, a statistic occurring purely by chance; seven participants were from primary schools, one from a secondary school, two schools were rural, the other six urban. Those participants who provided details regarding age and ethnicity specified themselves as in the following table.

**Table 2. Participant age and ethnicity as specified**

Age	48	50	50	43	60
Ethnicity	NZ'er	European	European	NZ European	European

**Table 3. Decile ratings of participant's schools**

<b>Decile Rating</b>	1	2	4	5	8	9	10
<b>No.of schools</b>	1	1	2	1	1	1	1

In the context of this small sample, it would appear that the decile rating of a school has no bearing on whether a principal is likely to participate in this type of research.

**Table 4. Number of pupils in each school in ascending order**

demonstrating a reasonable range regarding school

size

<u>67</u>	<u>93</u>	<u>183</u>	<u>262</u>	<u>385</u>	<u>419</u>	<u>501</u>	<u>1387</u>
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Principal's years in the role varies, in numerically ascending order being 2, 6, 6, 7, 11, 19, 28, 31.

### **Why**

“Rich data are detailed, focused and full. They reveal participants’ views, feelings, intentions, and actions as well as the contexts and structures of their lives.” (Charmaz, 2006, p14).

Charmaz’ comments above were the inspiration for desiring individual principal’s accounts around support for principals in their contexts. Though in a grounded theory methodology one usually interviews (Allan, 2003), in this instance free responses were obtained to the information sheet.

Criteria for participant’s communications to be included in the work were that they responded in the affirmative to initial approaches, read the information sheet (Appendix A), consented in accordance with the consent form (Appendix B) and participated by the due date with provision of a letter or email. Each participant’s contribution is published under a pseudonym with reference to particular schools removed to protect participant’s identities. All non-identifying data obtained from each participant was deemed significant and included in the body of the thesis.

The way that the data was sought was inspired by Vygotsky’s (1987) suggestion that the very words that individuals use in narrating or explaining their circumstances and experiences are representative of their world views.

## **Information about Data Coding and Analysis**

In utilising a grounded theory type of approach, the method that produces the shift in understanding from having a set of data to producing a theory or theories, or ideas that may be relevant for further research is the coding of the data (Charmaz 2006). Ideas were coded by specific words or phrases or by inferences. Analysis began with placing words from the raw data under headings, proceeded with searching for commonalities in ideas and continued with attempting to tease out “taken-for-granted assumptions and rules” (Charmaz, 2006, p.4). Alongside this the analysis looked to reveal possibilities hitherto uncharted (Geertz, 1973; Charmaz, 2006, pp12-14), to discover ‘what is there and emerges’ (Glaser, 1998, p. 4) looking towards original thinking (Clark 2007, p.12), that might promote “ongoing social change” (Conteh, 2005, p.97).

Whilst recognising there was personal investment in the research, the researcher tried not to confuse personal perspectives with those of the participants attempting to minimise misinterpretations during the processes of analysing, comparing and interpreting the data (Geertz, 1973, pp. 9-10). Nonetheless, analysis of the data was subjective in that whilst the researcher has some understanding of principals’ worlds, the researcher’s own “language, gender, social class, race and ethnicity” (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003, p.30) must have affected interpretation of the data to some degree.

The analysis was founded in Leslie’s (2010) ideas that “... all communications are social constructions and part of a very long chain of events influenced by countless perspectives” (p.140) and that there exist “... multiple individual, relativistic viewpoints” (p.141). The discussion evaluated and compared (Charmaz, 2006 p.18) the multi-dimensional data received from principals alongside the literature.

The researcher acknowledges that (ibid.) “nothing is ever truly consistent” so that conclusions drawn from the research will be true in some cases only. Analysis of the data being combined with ideas from the literature enabled the researcher to view the data “not in isolation, but as part of an intricate web of social relationships” (Zaharlick, 1992, p.117), depth being achieved by focussing understandings both towards and away from those held at the outset (Denscombe, 2003).

**Ethics: Informed Consent: Confidentiality: Minimisation of Harm:  
Truthfulness: Social Sensitivity: Te Tiriti o Waitangi**

Acting ethically means considering possible benefits and burdens for all involved (Wilkinson 2001, p.14), responsibly minimising risk of unnecessary physical, psychological, social, or emotional harm to participants, institutions and groups (Bogdan and Biklen, 2007; Massey University, 2009). Data compromising to participant safety may omitted (Gregory, 2003), but the researcher should maintain vigilance not to thus compromise the quality of findings (Oliver, 2003, p.32).

Research involves the academic, social and political communities of participants and researcher. Massey University Human Ethics Committee (MUHEC) provides guidelines for and oversees a number of ethical principles, parameters for participants’ safety (Snook, 2003) explained below.

- Participant’s rights include anonymity; confidentiality of identity and data; (Anderson, 1995, Burgess, 1984, p.10) being fully informed (Burns, 1998)

as to the advantages and dangers, purpose and parameters of the research, the obligations of all concerned (Appendix A, Information Sheet).

- Participants must not be pressured to participate and given full and real opportunity to decline to do so (Cohen & Manion, 1998; Appendix C, Low Risk Application Confirmation) to minimise issues of power (Scott and Usher, 1999, p.18).
- Social and cultural sensitivity (Hunter et al., 1991) must be maintained considering "...gender, culture, religion (and) social class" (Massey University 2009, p.4). This means having respect for one's own values, culture and heritage and those of the 'other'. Inclusion of the principal's letters in the body of the thesis assisted in maintaining the importance of their socio-cultural contexts (Oliver, 2003).
- Research must have value, in the information gathered, in interest piqued or with the intention of things learnt being applied and there must be honesty as to why the research is being carried out.

In signing the Consent Form (Appendix B) participants agreed that they understood the information provided and were comfortable agreeing to take part in the study.

By not exposing individual's vulnerabilities, imbuing others with the researcher's values or suggesting rationales for 'other's' educational 'best practice' (Denscombe, 2003; Hill-Collins, 1990) this work endeavoured to maintain the wholeness of all involved.

## **Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Treaty of Waitangi)**

This research being based in Aotearoa/New Zealand, the researcher acknowledges and respects the Treaty of Waitangi concepts of "protection, participation and partnership" (Massey university, 2009).

### Introduction

A desire to leave 'no stone unturned' was the rationale for principals' letters being reproduced in this chapter. This was an intentional strategy to encourage the reader to make personal interpretations, and reflect upon the ideas inherent in the letters, it being thought unlikely that all inferences would have been seen by the researcher and discussed in Chapter 6.

The letters were received from the participants in response to the questions asked on the information sheet (Appendix A) and all were received as emails.

The letters are reproduced here under pseudonyms and with identifiers removed. Apart from this, the communications are as they were received as the very words that are used may define the messages each wished to impart (Davies et al, 2002, p.5). Further, no errors of spelling or grammar have been corrected. This approach acknowledges the difficulty around each principal finding the time to contribute to the work; allowing the sincerity of each person's input to show through.

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#### Notes

- |            |   |
|------------|---|
| Appendix D | List of Maori/English translations. Meanings of acronyms. |
| Appendix F | Article by Stephanie Philp referred to in Aroha's letter  |
| Appendix J | Information about SWiS workers in schools                 |

## Aaron

Hi Gillian

You may have guessed I like to get things done. Please provide me with some feedback. My thoughts and ideas based upon my experience. See attached

Kind regards

Aaron

My thoughts and ideas based upon my experience:

### **Do NZ Principals feel supported in their various roles by their school and society as a whole?**

I have been a principal for 19 years and have taught at three schools from a two teacher through to currently a 24 teacher school with 500 students. During this time my levels of support have varied hugely depending on the people and the BOT and staff I had with me. My base for support has always been my family. The Ministry and outside agencies have been largely useless in providing support as they treated you as a one off situation with no ongoing commitment. Even agencies that provide professional learning have had minimal impact and support as they have not been able to build strong enough relationships to be involved in effective professional learning conversations where ideas can be unfiltered and a high level of trust can occur.

Many colleagues can provide management support which is technical ideas and systems but few are able to be true mentors or life coaches so they are able to grow the principal as a person as they support them through the conflicts that occur in a living and growing organisation.

I believe principals have paid a huge personal cost to their school because of the need to be emotional engaged in their school to be effective. Systems go only so far before the true leader needs to come out and stand on the values they hold and engage people in conversations which are difficult and emotional in order to establish effective long term change. This cost is largely unseen by those around the principal because it is seen at home and by those close to him or her. Often marriages fall apart and partners become alienated because of the emotional toll that schools can take. Principals need good support people around them because no one can operate alone as a leader because a lot of the time it can be a lonely place.

The MOE, the media and parents have a lot to answer for in not giving principals the support they need to be at the top of their game. We are often given negative feedback and blamed for many of the social illnesses that exist in today's society. By making us more accountable through appraisals is a total waste of time and makes us spend time more on being a performing seal than truly allowing ourselves to grow. (It is a pity politicians are not appraised by their electorate). I am fortunate enough to have an outside mentor who walks and talks with me closely so through the conversations I have I am able to reflect and grow as a leader and as a person.

The recent axing of PDPC and the recent development of the EPD are examples of the Ministry recognising the need to support principals. The MOE see it as needing to give training but the reality is many of the aspects of the EPD I do anyway and what I need is the opportunity to work with experienced principals on a **leadership** level and not simply come up with more systems to support management. What about funding a committed trained mentor, life coach to support principals in such a way they become more effective through effective relationship and conversations. They become better at listening and allowing those around them grow to their potential. Is this not what we want for our children and not more systems to manage and manipulate them?

**Are the local and national organisational cultures surrounding principals supportive?**

The local systems are there for when you hit the wall and are ready for drastic action. This is far too late and what we need is for principals to be given the time to find a buddy / mentor / confidant that they can trust and work closely with to grow and develop their practice. Principals with today's view of education are force to be competitive rather than collaborative and we know it is through collaborative new and effective learning can take place while competition kills this off. Parents need to move into the 21<sup>st</sup> century and support schools in developing well socialised children and allow teachers to teach. We have a growing social curriculum in our school which requires a great deal of emotional energy on behalf of the principal. We are not all equip to take on this role of being the emotional and empathetic principal to all our community social issues. So where are the SENCOs in every school and where are the effective Personal assistants for principals so they can get on with the job of teaching and learning instead of looking at the latest financial account.

We have a long way to go to build a supportive and collaborative network of principals who are able to work together to advance the learning outcomes for their students.

**Aroha**

Hi there Gillian

Actually I spent some personal time giving this a lot of consideration.... I had to choose something that was dear to my heart and write down my ideas... So here it is - it is very personal - but I feel very worthwhile - I would like nothing better than to see this implemented this into some schools.

Have a great one

Aroha

### **Target**

Principals

Whether you are an old or young Principal, male or female, we all have the same intention which is to provide the very best education to all the children who pass through our school

### **Problem**

Schools are not achieving due to the possibility of Principals stuck in out-dated leadership styles

When schools are under-performing the spotlight is normally focused on the leader- the principal.

When Principals are found to be underperforming, they feel threatened, close ranks, get sick and retreat.

The underperformance is exacerbated.

An immediate result of this is that the school gets a bad name.

Teachers in the school go through a range of negative emotions and feel trapped, resentful and frustrated.

It becomes difficult to get another job because of their school's reputation, thus stunting and frustrating their career ambitions.

This is often a long term situation because reputations don't change overnight.

As in the business world, the leader of the school creates the culture – but how many principals have been educated in how to create a great school culture?

What do you do if the school is failing?

Many Principals haven't and therefore feel threatened when things turn to custard.

When schools are underperforming, the buck stops with the

Principal.

The results affect children's learning and achievement and will have damaging effects on their future entering the work force and an inability to achieve their goal in life.

The social consequences associated with these outcomes are well known.

This impacts on whole communities, - you don't have to look very far to see the generational effects of substandard education.

This contributes to the low standing of teachers in society, and must present recruitment problems in future.

Society tars all principals with the same brush and principals generally feel the impact of this.

It is a pity that in this process the good schools don't get any recognition because people enjoy bad news.

Principals' energy goes into covering their own inadequacies instead of creating a great school culture.

In good organisations a performance improvement plan will be developed for an underperforming staff member and he/she will be provided with encouragement, support and where necessary training and mentoring to achieve the required performance. Only after extensive attempts to improve performance will disciplinary action be taken.

In the education system, principals are left to flounder without any support despite early warning signs in many schools.

It is only after an ERO report that problems are taken notice of and support put in place.

This can be 2 / 3 yrs after the initial symptoms occur. How much difference would it make if when the initial symptoms appeared, someone looked for a cause and did something to heal the problems?

Even with new Principals, it is assumed that they will pick up skills as they go along instead of recognising that building and maintaining relationships is THE most important skill of leadership.

An article written by Stephanie Philp of Metamorphosis Ltd summarises this point very well:

## **Solution**

I show Principals how to turn their schools around  
When I work with Principals to turn the school around:  
Build self esteem  
School morale  
People want to get their kids into the school  
Communities thrive  
Teachers feel good and reputation is enhanced  
Chn get a good education and go on to be fully contributing  
members of society  
Achievement is raised  
Standards of teaching and learning are improved  
Communication between the school and other agencies is better  
The P feels they have a new direction  
The P knows how to develop a school culture  
The p knows how to communicate with his staff and BOT  
Reporting to the BOT and community is improved  
Delegate effectively  
Grow their staff / community

## **Objections**

1. Safety, listened to
2. I don't want to e seen to be failing
3. The Principal doesn't have time to do this
4. I don't understand
5. You are too young
6. Women are a threat
7. How would you know—you have never been a mother

## **Risk reversal:**

You have got nothing to loose

## **Testimonials**

well I had this problem and I thought this might happen but it  
didn't

## **Uniqueness:**

Safety

## **Objections:**

1. **Safety and Listening**

My most important skill as a mentor is being able to listen with an open mind and without judgement. This creates a 'safety zone' encouraging openness and honesty,

## **2. I don't want to be seen to be failing**

Principals do the best that they can with the knowledge and experience that they have at the time. If it is pointed out that they are under performing, they are likely to feel threatened and this is where the flight or fight response kicks in. I understand this response and have proven skills and experience in building rapport with even the most resistant Principal to help them retrieve their self respect and turn around their school . The most important thing is maintaining integrity by ensuring confidentiality in the relationship.—this ensures mutual respect , safety and complete honesty and openness. These things are essential to effective skill development and improved performance

## **3. The Principal doesn't have time to do this**

Most Principals are very busy and can often get bogged down in the day to day running of a school.

And believe that there is no time to identify ways to improve. I have felt that way myself at times. But sometimes you have to make time to save time. And by that I mean you have to invest the time to learn different ways of doing things so that long term things run more smoothly.

For example / to use an analogy

there are many shortcuts you can adopt when using your computer. If you don't invest the time to learn what these are, then each time you use your computer you have to do the task the 'long way' -over a year this time adds up where investing a few hours in learning the programme will save vast amounts of time over the year.

## **4. I don't understand**

In my 31 years in the education profession I have taught in and or been Principal of a variety of schools from Decile 1-10. I turned an underperforming school into a High performing school in 4 years. Recently I have taken a school that is performing well into a high performing school.

I have only achieved this by constantly learning, building relationships and being willing to take on board feedback from all

the people involved in schools.

### **5. You are too young**

I was teaching in a decile 1 school when I was 20, Each day I was being challenged and constantly learning from the chn and the situations in my classrooms, I also learnt from other teachers, parents and the community, some of whom had less experience than I had—I was always looking for what I could learn from everybody cos I knew I do not have all the answers,,,, but I now know that together people can come up with solutions to problems. That individually we might not arrive at

I have great mentors, who challenge my thinking, support and encourage me. They have influenced my thinking and have contributed to my personal and professional growth.

In turn, I am proud to mentor both more and less experienced colleagues. Many of these were not open minded to the process to start with but they now welcome the relationship we share. They now recognise that investing time in developing relationships pays off with a vast improvement in school culture.

### **6. Women are a threat**

Women have traditionally had a role in developing and maintaining relationships and keeping the family together and more and more these skills are being recognised and valued in business as the glue that holds cultures together.

### **7. How would you know – you have never been a mother**

I have never been a mother

I do not have children of my own. But, I have helped countless Mothers , Fathers and families in my role as teacher and Principal. Three or four times a week, Parents ask me for guidance in developing relationships with their children, particularly as the children get older. When people say to me ‘you wouldn’t understand because you are not a mother’ I take it as a personal affront implying that I don’t care about the 1000s of chn that have been in my care and the chn that I am now responsible for every day.

## Haimona

Gillian

I have attached a letter outlining my experience of support as a tumuaki. I hope this is the sort of thing you were looking for.

Regards

Haimona

Tenakoe Gillian

As a tumuaki within Aotearoa Zealand I have felt, and feel wonderfully supported. This is on a number of levels, governmentally, collegially and locally within my community.

Within the governmental level I would identify a number of supports. Firstly, as a first time principal seven years ago I was eligible to attend three, 4 day induction / professional development courses. These were superb. They had high profile educators, administrators and employees of the Ministry of Education (MOE) walking us through a wide range of professional matters. It was a first rate induction programme to principalship. As part of this programme a mentor was assigned to me to provide one to one support within the context of my school.

The Ministry of Education also funds several other supportive mechanisms for principals. Through Victoria University a senior principal has been employed to be available to provide advice and guidance to new principals, or principals simply seeking an opinion. The Ministry of Education funds a contract, administered through the New Zealand School Trustees Association (NZSTA), for two support telephone contacts. One is for general trustee enquiries and the other for industrial and personnel concerns. The support at the end of the telephone is excellent. Alongside this I receive regular email updates from an NZSTA industrial advisor. While I feel that the political agenda within the NZSTA is meddling and not supportive of schools, and my school chooses to not be a paying member of NZSTA, I do feel supported by these separate help lines, available to all, regardless of NZSTA membership.

Within the MOE itself there are numbers of support people available for support with property, staffing and financial matters. All are a phone call away. The MOE has established a website 'Leadspace' dedicated to support leadership within schools. I have not personally found it very useful, nor incidentally and anecdotally do the colleagues I am associated with. It may be as much to do with our preference to have a person answer our queries, as much as it is to do with anything. As the helpdesks described above do this, I find I rarely use the website.

Collegially I have a range of sources of support. Firstly I am a member of the New Zealand Principals' Association (NZPF). This is an excellent source of support through regular information emails, professional development conferences and professional opinion at the end of a phone. As part of my subscription to NZPF I also pay an additional amount to secure the services of legal support, should there be a time when I require it. When I say I pay, it is my school that pays the subscription to NZPF and for the legal fee.

The New Zealand Institute of Education (NZEI) is another source of collegial support. As a tumuaki I receive excellent advice and guidance should I have any competency or

industrial related concerns. NZEI also provides leadership on significant educational matters, for example at this time they are spear heading professional concern at the recently imposed National Standards testing regime. I personally pay the subscription cost for being an NZEI member as the Institute bargains my collective employment contract, on my behalf. Their bargaining has ensured ever improved remuneration for tumuaki's, teachers and support staff within the sector.

A further collegial support is my local principal's association. I meet with these colleagues twice termly, for a morning. Once a year we organize and attend a conference for members of the association. There are about twenty colleagues, both secondary and primary, who belong. The professional conversations and camaraderie are high quality and collaborative.

Yet another source of collegial support is a group of tumuaki's I meet with twice a year in Wellington. This group sprang from the First Time Principals' professional development opportunities. A group of fifteen colleagues have met yearly, for the first three years, and now twice yearly for the last two years, in at the office of NZPF in Wellington. These principals come from Whangarei, North Shore, South Auckland, Rotorua, Taranaki, Hamilton, Marton, Tauranga, Wellington and Invercargill. Our commonality is being principals of schools ranging between 200 – 600 students, beginning principalship at the same time and being passionate about education. We always have time to share celebrations and dilemmas, and to hear from Wellington based professionals i.e. Ministry of Education, New Zealand Council for Educational Research, New Zealand Teachers' Council etc.

Alongside these formal associations I have several close colleagues whom I contact should I have a question, dilemma, uncertainty and want a second opinion. For my own professional development I have attended a wide array of conferences, both locally and internationally. I am currently completing my Masters of Educational Leadership and Administration. I attend courses relating to the various components of my job being as varied as legal responsibilities, curriculum delivery, staffing, first aid training etc.

At a community level I feel very supported by my Board of Trustees and senior management team. I have a high level of autonomy and work within a culture of high trust. I have been able to work collaboratively to significantly change and improve the culture, learning and physical infrastructure within my school.

In short Gillian I feel very supported in my role as a tumuaki. As you can see I have a wide array supports. Due to my engaging with these supports I don't feel isolated in my job, in fact quite the opposite. It would certainly be possible to be isolated and on the fringes, but I feel this would be due to my choosing to not proactively take professional responsibility for creating professional supportive networks. There are many opportunities available.

I hope this has been of some assistance.

Kind regards

Haimona

Tumuaki

## Jocelyn

Hi

Finally got a free afternoon to sit at a computer and reply to your request – I'm going to just go for it and hope that you glean from my ramblings what you need. Good luck with collating everything – if you have a chance to share your findings please pass them on to me – it might help me with my study 😊

Firstly something about how I know what I know:

I have been a teacher for 17 years in the primary sector at big schools in a city then in small rural primary schools. I was made a Deputy Principal in 2000 and became a U1 Principal in 2004 at a school where I stayed for two years, I then moved to a U2 school in 2006 and have been there ever since. I absolutely love the job of Principal. In its purest form it is the best job, lots of learning, loads of challenge. It is also impossible to do in a small school.

When I first got my job as a teaching Principal I was in a school way out in (the back blocks). I had a two year old son and have never been or have any wish to be married. I had no training for the job of Principal except that I had been teacher for a long time. The school house was not insulated and water ran down the inside walls. The school was over the paddock and it was my job to maintain the property, the grounds, fix the computers, clean if the cleaner didn't come and do most of the paperwork. Fun!! What a challenge.

Over the course of the next two years I was part of the First Time Principals' Programme (offered to beginning Principals) which consisted of three conferences held in Auckland, Christchurch and Wellington. Although we were reimbursed for our travel and accommodation I was told off once for being late because I had to wait for the lady who I had paid to attend with me to pick up my son.

We had a long distance mentor with whom to communicate.

We were treated like Kings and Queens but most of the speakers talked about theories of leadership (great stuff but a far cry from running Pet Days and closing down the school when the road was flooded and the bus was already halfway to school). None of the speakers really had ever been in tiny rural schools although they make up more than half the schools in NZ. We learnt about Charters, policies, staff management, the NAGS and NEGS and latterly about implementing the revised NZ Curriculum. I found it very inspiring.

The pay was fantastic and my rent was really cheap. I managed to find a local lady to look after my son in her home and he was happy. I made a network of close friends who were in similar schools to mine and we kept in contact (mainly to let off steam).

The reason I left the job was that most of the Principals around me were men, and took their children to work with them (this was seen as sweet by the local community) but if I was to do it then I was "working the system". My son never came to work with me except for once on a trip, and one of the 10 or so parents who came on the trip with me commented that I shouldn't have brought my son.

I had moved this school from being on an ERO review to being put back on the normal cycle within a year, and I decided at that point to leave. Despite being on my own in the middle of nowhere for two years, mainly teaching 21 children from 5 to 13 years old in one classroom for four days a week, I absolutely loved the

job and missed it when I left, and I felt very well supported. The theories of teaching under a Labour Government resonated with my theories on education, and I could always find help when I needed it.

In 2006 I moved to a rural school that had 60 pupils. The school house was equally dire. I felt that I could do the job as I understood what managing a school consisted of and I felt that I had the experience to manage staff now. I was warned at the outset that the community was a difficult one – largely wealthy dairy farmers and their workers.

To begin with everything went very well – there were some issues with staff but my Board Chairperson was a very reasonable man and we got along. There were a couple of women on the Board who disagreed with everything that I said and this stressed me. I have a very democratic and equitable take on my politics and philosophy of education, and I believe that all children in schools should be treated as economically equal, and there were several instances when these women showed themselves to believe that some of their children were entitled to different treatment than others at the school and continued to challenge me on my decisions around these issues every time they arose. There is no support for Principals in these situations as the Board is their employer, and it is not appropriate to escalate every minor disagreement to a union issue every time they arise. So the Principal has to fight these battles on their own. I have managed to do so.

As my son attends my school my childcare issues have all but disappeared although it has been interesting how the local women have managed to disapprove of my hours of work – I get to work at 8.15 and usually work until 5.00pm. I also work either Saturday or Sunday every week – my son comes with me. Apparently I arrive too late – although there is another teacher who likes to start early.

I have had some support from my appraisers (usually a retired Principal who I have hired to appraise me) and often these people become as much a mentor as anything else although it is not in their job description to do so. We had a successful ERO Review in the second year that I was at the school and our roll grew from 50 to 75.

In my third year after an extensive tendering process the Ministry of Education (through their agent Multiserve) reallocated the bus routes of all the local schools and removed half of ours (even though we had enough eligible children for one of the routes). This resulted in masses of conflict. There was fighting amongst the local schools over the routes (we were almost working collegially despite competing for students amongst ourselves – 7 small schools and two big ones in not a very big town), there was fighting amongst the community between those who had routes and those who did not, there were articles in the newspaper and nasty emails sent to me and the Board.

I was accused by both sides of favouritism and miscommunication and eventually fought a horrible battle with Multiserve (who played very dirtily) until it all settled down (to a point – but we have reapplied to get a route back as our roll has grown again and it will happen all over again. We lost 12 children to the large local school – the students didn't want to leave but they had no bus and they were largely the poorer and browner members of our school. I was not at all supported (although my Board did not make my life any more difficult). I nearly handed in my notice but decided as the community kept their children coming to

the school and it was still seen as a desirable school to attend to keep going. I still have serious gaps in my knowledge about financial management (and have never received training) and find the Property Management side of the job sometimes overwhelming but I always manage to get it done – heating installed, networking done, new forecourt concreted in the last three years.

The staff at the school are loyal and hard working and we have a lot of laughs and good get togethers. The Board have grown closer over the years and the more difficult women are moving on.

I guess what has kept me in the job is that I have always wanted to serve and I felt that I was contributing to the community. I felt good because there was a moral purpose to my work. The Ministry of Education, although making some economically distasteful decisions (i.e. the buses) had largely supported the teachers and Principals in their wages and working conditions. Although in rural schools there is an expectation that the Principal will open the school at 7.30 in the morning and look after the students until someone collects them and that they'll clean the pool and maintain the water supply and keep the grounds tidy and all the other jobs that aren't covered by actual personnel in larger schools, that's partly what makes the job interesting. Although there is a whole feminist side to that which is completely unrealistic in terms of being a happily unmarried woman with a child but I've chosen to never fight that battle).

And then along came National Standards. At first I was horrified that some of my Labour voting teaching friends were voting for National!! (WHY? Because it's time for a change"). I knew that my community would vote National – they were all dyed in the wool National supporters. But there seemed to be no awareness of the implications of this policy in teaching circles, and if there was, no outcry until it was too late. I have implemented them in my school. Why? Because it's the law and my community voted for them.

Many of my friends now are disgusted that I should have made this decision but they didn't understand what they were in for before the government was elected. This is the nature of democracy. But I have no stomach for my job now.

I have applied for several jobs in larger schools over the last couple of years and have come second. Everyone knows that women do not get hired for jobs in larger schools over men. It seems the career path that I imagined for myself does not exist except rarely. I am small, blonde and pretty and have no testicles. I did not know they were part of the job description. I have an exemplary behaviour management record and I coach soccer.

In the last three years I have inducted three new teachers into my school and our way of doing things, 2 beginning teachers, and one teacher returning to the workforce after a 10 year absence to raise children. I have implemented the revised New Zealand curriculum, including writing a new Charter and creating a new school curriculum. We have had professional development in Numeracy, Music, Health and PE, and latterly ICT. I have completed three papers towards a Masters degree as I see my only way forward is through higher education, paid for by myself.

We have just finished an ERO review. Although we are on a three year cycle, we are not one of the lucky schools on a four-five year cycle. I'm not sure what the criteria for this is. The emphasis now seems to be on Numeracy and Literacy and teacher competency. There is talk of performance pay.

I don't know how to end this. I really want to emphasise how great this job is – and how rewarding – teaching children and being so involved in the life of a community has been one of the greatest privileges there is. I can't imagine doing anything that I will love so much (although I am loving my study). But teachers have no voice and the smaller the school, the more feminised the workforce, the more invisible we are.

Am I supported by my Board? To the best of their ability.

Am I supported by my community? Largely, but they have no understanding of my job really, and society more and more sees teachers as the enemy.

This is political whether we like it or not, and we would be naïve to not see it as such. Many people in isolation say “I take my hat off to teachers” but don't understand modern teaching pedagogies. Most small schools can't afford to do the flashy PR that large schools can and so are gradually falling behind, lead by disposable women who have been imprisoned in those schools by a glass ceiling that everyone knows about.

Kind regards,

Jocelyn

## Melanie

### *Principal Melanie*

*I began as a First Time Principal (FTP) two years ago. While there is an Aspiring Principal's program, I had never been involved in it in the lead up to me becoming a principal. I had, however, had a good grounding in budgeting curriculum areas, managing curriculum development within and across school's and in appraisals etc. & a raft of other things through my DPship. My role as a DP in a couple of schools had me quite well prepared to deal with relating to students in a pastoral care capacity (as opposed to just teaching and day-to-day issues) , also in relating to teachers as a leader and to parents with regard to behaviour, initiating learning support & so on. I had, had lots of exposure to dealing with the 'human relationship' side of life as a DP.*

*What my experiences and study had not prepared me for was the phenomenal amounts of paperwork, much of it seemingly bureaucratic BS. How normal human beings can be expected to read, digest, process, implement change, review etc. is beyond me – especially in a small school. In a small school there are far fewer people to share the load and the thinking.*

*There are so many changing legislations & MoE documents that it can be hard to keep up & reflect the expectations appropriately in the school context.*

*The First Time Principal's Programme (FTTP) is an absolute 'must' for new principals. I began the program in the holidays preceding me commencing as principal. This is run through the Auckland College of Education & is headed by John Locke. It consists of two separate conferences over several days, plus some module work, and a mentor whom the FTP's meet with most terms over an 18month period. The mentor also visits the FTP's school on several occasions.*

*The Waikato Principals' Association is an extremely strong & well networked group. We meet once a term & the day is PD for Principals. They are well organised & well attended. They also provide an email once a week that keeps us in the loop about educational matters e.g. charter development, National Standards & right down to recognition of someone's award or the passing of a dedicated member.*

*The School Support Services, run out of Waikato University is also a strong group that offer 4 modules a year specifically for Principals. There are also two other principals of similar size schools within a thirty minute drive. We work well together & share ideas & advice. We also have developed the*

*opportunity to have sports days between our schools for some competition, plus a Science Fair and Wearable Arts.*

*The property manager and the finance/staffing manager at the Hamilton MoE office are excellent . They know their work inside out & are able to express guidance in a way that the fledgling Principals can understand.*

*Group Services Education (GSE) now called Special Education (SE) based in Thames are very approachable with regard to finding support for behaviour/learning problems, offering guidance & finding us other avenues of support.*

*Online TKI , Leadspace, Enrol no called .... ? Leadership (I think), Multiserve, MoE onlines are all fantastic tools & resource areas for a multitude of support i.e. forms, up-to-date news, guidance, examples of most things. It is great to have all this information at hand & available all the time & knowing it's up-to-date. This is probably an area that new principals could do with inservice in, in the early stages of principalship.*

*I believe principals are extremely well supported with regard to having access to almost everything required. There are also many skilled people to be approached about any educational matter. I have never had a problem or question that could not be answered by someone. It may not have been the first person or place approached but the answer was always there somewhere.*

*The only issue I have is the absolutely ludicrous & impossible amounts of paperwork, data & documentation we are expected to process & implement.*

*I am happy for you to phone me about any of this.*

## **Nigel**

Nigel's ramblings

### Professional and Personal Support

I was first appointed Principal at the end of term one 1999. Luckily for me at the high school where I was DP all the SMT attended board of trustees meetings and I had also made the decision to attend BOT property committee meetings. This proved to be invaluable when I went to my next school. It gave me a much better understanding of the differences between management and governance.

Arriving at this next school I had a very experienced BOT chair who gave me both professional and personal support. We met regularly and his chairing of BOT meetings made my role quite clear to the staff, board and community. When he resigned the next chair continued in the same vein. From this time I developed my own support network amongst Principals using three of them as a sounding board. In my first year I also attended a first time principal's course which was useful. In 2003 I went to *The 2003 Institute for Educational Leadership* and then the following year attended the Principals' Development Planning Centre for an experienced Principal's course. These were both excellent support for me professionally.

After five years I headed for a high school where once again I had a very experienced and competent BOT chair. She supported me totally but also made accountable for the performance of the high school. She was both a professional support and became a personal friend. Going to this high school meant I became part of a coalition of nine decile one high schools. The Principals of these schools have become both my professional and personal support base. They have been a sounding board for all my ideas, a tremendous support when the gang issues were at their peak, a source of inspiration and basically without them I would not have made it past the second year. People with a commonality of problems provide wonderful support for each other.

In 2009 I took my sabbatical and during it attended a course for experienced Principals at Harvard University. It was great to see that so many of the things that I believed in had a theoretical base to them and I have returned to my school refreshed and determined to continue down the same path for some years to come.

There is one form of support which is missing and should be provided by the MOE and that is after a Principal is appointed one of the MOE financial advisors should do a short report on the current financial situation the school is in. This needs to be done in simple language and not just a restatement of

the balance sheet. For example having a surplus is not much use if the plant is completely run down. How long it takes and how difficult it is to eliminate large deficits needs to be explained. Also the biggie that overstaffing is extremely hard on budgets needs to be pointed out. If I think of anything else I will contact you again.

## Susan

Hi Gillian

I've made a small contribution- sorry I have run out of time.

I accept the research conditions outlined in your letter.

I've written below about some of the ways I feel supported in my principal role and some of the ways reasons for feeling unsupported. Please excuse the lack of framework- it is hurriedly done with the ideas in no particular order- and I couldn't resist finishing off with a few recommendations- a principal always!

I have derived support from the following:

- a cohesive senior management team- we share a common vision and passion for the school and students, work hard together and derive a huge amount of professional and personal support from one another
- outside appraiser – particularly one with principal experience
- the students – their responsiveness and appreciation for all that we do for them. They are my continual source of inspiration and joy
- the board generally and the chairperson specifically– support with challenging personnel issues. I appreciated the hands on support of board members who were willing to roll their sleeves up and help out at working bees and school events. The election of a competent chairperson reduced my workload significantly but there are still issues around our school having parents with the skills to make a contribution in the array of areas required- e.g personnel, finance, property, strategic planning.
- Outside partnerships- e.g local church, business partnership with ASB. These partnerships bring people into the school who can help us to move forward to achieve our vision – they bring energy and inspiration and enable us to feel linked into a wider community.
- close partnerships with principal colleagues who provide advice and support when needed.
- My family and friends who have got in behind my dream to build a successful school and helped with both practical ( organising sausage sizzles, working bees, volunteering to work regularly with small groups of students, financial donations and emotional support when the going gets tough.
- The local NZSTA advisor who has always been available to provide professional, prompt advice and support. His depth of experience in the role enables him to quickly sum up situations and provide helpful advice to move tricky situations forward. The Helpdesk is also a great support. The emergency staffing scheme was a disaster for our school ( i.e one person who ran it in the past)
- time to attend an international conference and to reflect on the bigger picture our school operates in

I have felt unsupported by the following:

**Inadequate and insufficient support from three agencies specifically charged to support schools and children e.g (CYF, GSE, SWiS )**

One of the most challenging aspects in my role as principal has been witnessing and dealing with the effects of high levels of child abuse and neglect within our school community. Referrals made to CYF tie me up in many hours extra work talking with students, locating and collating information for social workers, supervising distressed students and interacting with angry parents in the following days/weeks. Often investigations are hampered by CYF workers with poor levels of English or multiple social workers that necessitates repeating information several times. Communication between CYF and the school is poor and usually there is no information given to the school about the outcome of the investigation. In addition I feel that the focus of CYF 'interventions' is disproportionately on assisting the adults and the children are left to get on with things themselves... with no follow-up counselling or support.

GSE support for moderate and high needs students is also inadequate and this places stress on staff and management in low decile schools with many students with learning and behaviour needs. I have not found GSE to be supportive when we have had extremely high needs students in our school- basically there is inadequate skilled support in terms of psychologists and support workers and funding. Extremely disturbed and violent students are left to schools to manage largely on their own – often with temporary funding provided to employ an untrained teacher aide in order to get through a serious crisis. Over the last five years GSE systems have been reviewed and the department restructured yet it still appears to be dysfunctional and unable to assist schools.

I felt unsupported by the SWiS (social worker in schools) programme which operated in our school until a decision was made by our board to discontinue it. We had five SW appointed to our school over four years and not one of them was able to meet outcomes that the school determined to be critical. There appeared to be a clash of cultures between the teaching profession and the social work profession and unclear lines of management in the service leading to insufficient direction and supervision of staff. and weak accountability systems. This programme caused huge stress in our school with social workers only prepared to operate within a tight social work model that was not necessarily effective in the school setting. The system needs to be rethought and a blended model adapted to the pressing needs of low decile school communities needs to be developed. I think this programme is one of the most poorly managed and inefficient services offered to schools.

**The Ministry of Education and the National Standards debacle**

Undoubtedly the introduction of National Standards has been one of the worst conceived and poorly implemented education initiatives in my experience as an educator. The standards are flawed because they were introduced too quickly; not enough time was put into consultation with educators, the trialling process and the development of an effective professional development plan to implement them across all schools. As a principal I have been legally required to lead the

implementation of the standards in our school with poor guidelines and inadequate professional development and support. With our high levels of ESOL students (one of the five highest by % in Auckland) staff are required to come to grips with the National Standards, the Literacy Learning Progressions and the English Language Learning Progressions- a different reporting scale and system is required thus doubling the work for teachers in our school compared to other schools with fewer ESOL learners. In addition, Ministry advisers have been unable to answer implementation questions and schools have been left to figure out how to respond to the spectre of published league tables.... High stakes reporting!!!

I have found that the rushed implementation of the NS has cut across the real development work of the NZC and the development of our local school curriculum. There are only so many meetings we can have in a year and most of these have gone to getting teachers up to speed with the NS. Research such as MECI verifies that the NS have cut across the implementation of the NZC documenting the low levels of implementation of the NZC in many schools.

The NS has also had the effect of narrowing the curriculum – the government focus on reading, writing and maths has driven everything down to the bare minimum and ignores the real world rich learning opportunities for our students in science, technology and the arts.

In addition, the implementation of the NS has incurred extra costs. We have had to pay for alterations to the SMS and for PD release days. No extra funding was provided by the MOE specifically for this- this has provided a degree of tension as we are a small school with limited funding streams- e.g we don't have international students or an effective PTA to fundraise.

### **Extra support required for low decile schools**

I sincerely believe that more support is needed specifically for low-decile schools who are dealing with the most socially and economically disadvantaged students and communities. The support needed is both financial and emotional

- Full time SENCO
- Parent programme facilitator (HIPPI, PPP or IY)
- Lower class sizes I think we urgently need more research into the link between class size and student achievement)
- Incentives to encourage staff stability - extra professional development time and MUs.
- Supervision – the provision of a skilled educator/psychologist to debrief with principal/SENCO on a regular basis. How do you rid yourself of the images/voices of badly beaten and/or sexually and emotionally abused children who recount the horror of their experience? How do we deal with this one day and be positive and ready to lead with optimism the next?

Regards,  
Susan

## Thomas

Giddy Gillian,

I am, if nothing else, consistent as this is late.

Writing about my experiences of personal or professional support received (or not received) in my roles as a principal should be easier than I am finding it. I have given it a lot of thought but have been unable to get what I consider to be a good handle on the issue.

I guess a big problem is that I have been a 'first principal' for 28 years in a range of situations. I was also a 'second principal' for five years and senior teacher for a time. The support and development assistance which I have received in all of those positions is relevant to the work I am doing today and will be doing tomorrow. Yet it is easier to recall the most recent years which would give a skewed image of what has been the most important.

My thought is to go with a series of impressions but to be clear that they may not represent the most vital of the influences which have lead to my present disposition.

I must from the beginning minimize the importance of support which relates to the administrative and the less complex of my roles. If I have needed guidance on these matters there have been many sources available and I have never had trouble accessing them. Usually the guidance on these issues is in a manual, on line or at the end of a phone line.

The other, more important support which has most assisted my development as a leader has also been easy to access but has been harder to receive. This has been support and guidance around issues such as relationship building, industrial issues and curriculum design and delivery. To access this support I have had to locate people who I have trusted and respected for their knowledge and wisdom . There have been about six people who have significantly filled this role for me over my career. None had denied me access to all that they could offer in terms of support for my development as an educator and a leader. I was free to observe and analyse and they were giving of their time with regards discussion and critique.

The challenge lay not in identifying and connecting with professionals who could contribute to my development. Rather, the challenge lay in engaging in the self development which contact with my mentors enabled and, I guess, obliged me to undertake. And here we come to my main understanding about support. It is largely an internal activity.

It is an activity of the mind. We are surrounded by the stimulation which will feed that activity but it is the individual who must take responsibility for their own development and it is development which is the only beneficial outcome from support. We should be seeking support for our growth, not for our incident management, or worse, crisis management.

I can relate the thesis I am presenting to countless situations in my work with colleagues however, selecting one example, I would relate it to principals dealing with industrial issues. I have seen many examples of good practice and many principals who have sought support from STA, (School trustees association) NZEI (New Zealand Education Institute) or colleagues, have then made and acted on sound decisions and have learnt from the experience. I have also seen a number who have acted on advice but have failed to learn from the experience and have managed to recreate the same situation on future occasions. In both situations the principals accessed support, I would argue that the second group did not really receive it as they did not complete the vital personal professional development which would have given value to the support.

So my conviction is that there is no shortage of sources of support for principals and that there is no overpowering social stigma against seeking it. On the contrary, I believe principals are actively encouraged by their colleagues and by the various agencies to seek support. If there is a deficit, it is in the mental processing which some principals do on some occasions, it is their response to their own personal professional development.

I would like to comment on another matter, related to the topic, which is the matter of Ministry of Education control of professional development money and resources. I believe that this has much more potential for harm than good in our education system. I will restrict my comment to support for principals however it could generally be applied to other groups in our system. A significant function of the MOE is to deliver the political policies of the government of the day. There is no natural link between this function and the development of effective principals. A case in point would be the provision of first time principal PD. I have been saddened by the MOE control of this resource as I have felt that it did not lead to the development of the diverse and critically thinking body of principals which our system needs. It was not PD but rather, training. And as it came from the MOE it no doubt gave the recipients a feeling of confidence that it was 'the word'. In the way I have seen many people receive it, it certainly was that it certainly came with the understanding that the recipients could leave their thinking talents at the door.

Finally I wish to comment on my faith in the professional learning group structure. There are many people running these so principals should be able to match their idiosyncrasies with an appropriate provider or group. I have been in such a group for at least 12 years and the critical friend aspect as well as the shared academic growth that this has offered me has been very beneficial.

(Friends and a time-out place are also helpful).

Sincerely,  
Thomas

## Introduction

Principals want to be supported to increase leadership capacity, to become more effective leaders and to be able to maintain a balance between life and work. 'Being' a DP prior to becoming a principal provided a good grounding in some of the necessary skills and knowledge that was clearly seen as a source of support and a 'head start' in being a leader. Figures in 2007 showed that there were still around six per cent of principals inducted in the last five years "who had to take on the complex role of the principal without any management experience, including curriculum management" (Wylie, 2008, p.10). The suggestion here seems to be that consideration might be given to DPship being a prerequisite to becoming a principal.

This chapter analyses and discusses ideas about support presented in principals' letters. Literature is employed to underpin or counterpoint those ideas.

There were many variations on **what** principals saw as support, **how** relevant to their particular situation various types of support might be, **when** they saw a necessity for support, **why** they might feel a need for support. There were not so many variations in **who** principals saw as support. **Where** principals saw support as needing to occur was dependent upon individual principal's circumstances.

Support was seen as involving mind and emotions, inextricably bound up in learning on the job, in experiences of personal and professional growth,

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Appendix F: Stephanie Philp's article referred to in Aroha's letter.  
Appendices G.1-8: Formative coding of individual principals letters.  
Appendices H & I: Formative coding of combined principals' letters.

involving individuals, both separately and within organisations. It was also seen to involve organisations as entities in themselves.

Support was defined as being about both leadership and management with the following organisations shown as being supportive in one or other of these fields

MoE; ERO; NZEI; NZSTA; ; principals' organisations; training organisations; national and international universities.

Support from these organisations was shown to occur in the following forms:

**MoE** on leadership; curricular; school support services levels; with PD and mentoring; people with expertise for advice both by phone and in person; online resources, for forms, curriculum resources, exemplars, guidance, current news; Special Education (SE) services for funding and guidance; rural school housing.

**ERO** because a review that shows underperformance in the school provides an opportunity to remedy this and grow the school: a successful review may provide an opportunity to move on and climb another rung on the promotional ladder: a successful review may mean an increase in roll numbers.

The other organisations' forms of support included leadership on educational matters, professional opinion, guidance or information around personal, competency, educational, professional, industrial, staffing or BoT matters: information around current legislation, industrial matters, current concerns, upcoming conferences and other PD opportunities;

bargaining wage rates and working conditions for principals: provision of legal insurance should it be required for the principal.

The remuneration principals receive was seen as supportive though it should be remembered that principals “make employment choices according to what's important to them...sometimes even huge salary offers are not enough to secure the best, most passionate and productive people.... These are people for whom "work" is not just a "job"” (Philp, 2007).

In educational areas and “technical ideas and systems” (Aaron) principals generally felt personal responsibility to proactively access appropriate support and felt well supported, it being acknowledged that at times this took perseverance.

Principals variously acknowledged families, friends and colleagues as sources of support, showing that friendly support was a source of strength. Collegial support, coming from close friends; colleagues; groups of principals with a commonality of problems; a cohesive senior management team; SENCO's (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator); was seen as particularly important and being useful when needing someone to talk to, to “share celebrations and dilemmas” (Susan) and PD opportunities.

The level of support a principal experienced was noted to depend upon the people surrounding the principal at that time. Thus if there was change in family, colleagues, friends, school staff, students, families, BoT, stakeholders; staff in ministries or community, so the level, and, by implication the quality of support may vary. Sadly, as well as recognising a fact, this idea of the level of support being dependent upon the people surrounding a principal may raise questions around staff competency; or, the ability of the principal to build relationships with staff; or, the ability of the principal to communicate his or her needs competently.

Note that since “...there is no requirement for the training of [principals] in supervisory and mentoring roles” (Ala’alatoa et al., p.5. 2010) it would not be surprising if at times principals have human relationship problems with their staff.

Some principals judged support to be lacking in some areas. Areas that seemed to need increases or innovations in support ranged from personal through to administrative. There were notable differences in what principals saw as important to talk about, and, in the inherent level of expressed emotion.

To develop the import of principals’ ideas about support “methodologically and analytically” it was felt imperative to consider “...the diversity and characteristics of context and culture within which [principals] function” (Dimmock and Walker, 2005, p.205), looking at the inherent “[educational], economic, cultural, moral, (and) political context(s)” (Gregory, 2003, pp.11-12, Campbell, 2005). Further, in expanding upon principals’ ideas this work attempted to understand or elaborate on the “embedded values, overlooked consequences, alternative meanings and interpretations made explicit” (Danzig and Wright, 2007, pp.268-269) in principal’s voices.

### **Values and Moral Purpose**

In considering embedded values and regarding moral purpose (Bezzina, 2007), principals saw a foundational support for themselves in their passion for the whole school; in an underpinning enthusiasm for education and commitment to “...provid(ing) the very best education (for) all the children who pass through (their) school” (Aroha). It was shown that principals benefited from seeing children learn and grow, that children’s “ ... responsiveness and appreciation for all that we do for them (was) a continual source of inspiration and joy” (Susan). Amongst the participants, this dimension of support was shown as encouraging

principals to stay in their work and enjoy it.

Moral purpose was also evident in talk around shared values and vision (Bolam et al., 2005). Where the senior management team, the staff, the BoT, the community, were of like mind to the principal in what they wanted to achieve within the school, this was seen to be supportive by enhancing the principal's purpose in being in the school. On the other hand, where some did not share the vision and values of the principal, moral purpose seemed undermined.

Values were evident in Jocelyn's reaction to the implementation of the NS detracting from her educational ethos, reporting "... I have no stomach for my job now".

Again, moral purpose was also evident in the anguish expressed by Susan and Aaron around the growing social curriculum in schools, a social curriculum that was seen as not only unsupportive in itself but also in the lack of support to address the ills involved.

### **Sub-themes inherent in principals' letters**

Some undercurrents "beneath the surface of social and subjective life" (Charmaz, 2006, pp.12-14) appeared in the letters as sub themes around feelings about what was important to discuss. Sub-themes appeared to be

- Cautiously almost sitting on the fence, not wanting to appear unprofessional by complaining, suggesting that everything is pretty much 'OK', that one should go with the flow and not be seen to be making too many waves

- being passionate enough about problems to ‘speak out’ to put the head up above the raupo as it were and risk getting shot, if only, at last, this time, notice will be taken of the ‘cause’
- ‘them and us’, a feeling of there being at times a great divide. A divide between teachers and parents: a divide between teachers and the rest of ‘society’ when Jocelyn talked of being supported by her community “... largely, but they have no understanding of my job really, and society more and more sees teachers as the enemy”: a divide between teachers and NZSTA, when Haimona talked about the political agenda of NZSTA as being unsupportive to schools, and when Susan discussed their Emergency Staffing Scheme as being a disaster when it was run by an incompetent person: and, given the necessity to deliver the policies of the government of the day, a divide between teachers and MoE.

Nevertheless, in looking to be effective leaders, principals do look to having a unified environment around them, one in which the culture is supportive of educational best practice.

### **A great school culture is a great source of support**

For the purposes of this work, some of those things that define a great school culture are covered in this and the following paragraph. This is not considered a static definition, rather one that it is hoped others will build upon. A great school culture focuses on positive values, it has a community spirit and celebrates successes, yet it “values the individual, learns from failure, values complexity, [encourages creativity, is] ethically driven, [focuses] on personal and school growth” (Silcox et al., 2003). A great school culture is also one where people have time for one another; where the staff model collaboration thus

encouraging it in children; where planning time is also modelled, thus encouraged.

In a school where there is a great school culture, as the New Zealand Principals Federation (NZPF) (2011a) posits the principal “leads from *the front, behind and within* as appropriate: [has] the ability to change how people think about their work; the ability to change how people act in their classrooms; up to date curriculum knowledge; skills in analysing and using data to ensure that evidence informs pedagogical decisions; a commitment to their own on-going professional learning – especially evidence based research; the ability to assimilate new learning within the school programme as appropriate to the needs of the school”. Last but certainly not least, a great school culture involves parents and communities in supporting learning in the school.

In thinking about why principals may need to be supported Aroha suggested that some principals may be stuck in outdated leadership styles leading them to feel unsupported with their schools not achieving as a result.

On the other hand when principals as leaders are themselves supported, they inspire staff , who feel they are “doing something they enjoy [that they are] in the right environment using and developing their capabilities, driven by their values and being lead, inspired and coached to be their very best” (Philp, 2007). In a school such as this one finds a great school culture, where there is a sense of community and people enjoy being in the school and working together. In itself this kind of environment is a source of support to a principal.

“Establish[ing] a strong, positive culture that transcends any individual or group of individuals” (Axelrod, 2007, p.4), and maintaining that culture requires “...continual emphasis and reinforcement” (O’Mahony et al., 2006, p. vii)

perpetuating the school's values within the everyday "customs, rituals, symbols, stories and language" (Stoll, 1999).

So, healthy and strong school cultures are important in supporting principals because, they make the principals own moral purpose and values explicit whilst "increas[ing] student achievement and motivation and ...teacher productivity and satisfaction" (Stolp, 1994).

As well as the principal, the people involved in creating a great school culture may vary from school to school, but will include the pupils, the staff, the BoT, and by virtue of their overriding or background influence the MoE. Things such as celebrating successes; making clear what behaviours are not acceptable within the school; having school wide goals, such as the strategic vision of the school, understood and reinforced throughout the school and local community; may be involved in creating a great school culture. When a school does not have a great culture, a principal may wish to set about changing that culture.

"The most effective change in school culture happens when principals, teachers and students model the values and beliefs important to the institution. The actions of the principal are noticed and interpreted by others as "what is important. A principal who acts with care and concern for others is more likely to develop a school culture with similar values. Likewise, the principal who has little time for others, places an implicit stamp of approval on selfish behaviours and attitudes (Stolp, 1994).

In thinking about what Stolp says, and since the lack of time was shown to leave principals feeling unsupported, it would seem imperative that ways to 'fix' this are investigated. Principals felt pressed for time:

- in dealing with organisations such as CYF:

- in competition between schools since principals spent time trying to maintain roll growth, rather than on collaborating to find ways to improve effective learning:
- in bureaucratic battles dealing with property, the vast amounts of paperwork, and with the rural bus route tendering process taking months of effort:
- where appraisals were carried out simply to 'tick boxes' around accountability:
- in being a rural school teaching principal and expected to maintain the property, the grounds, be a tech expert, clean when the cleaner does not turn up for work, as well as do most of the paperwork.

Now, let us return to the topic of a great school culture. Being able to build relationships between people in the school and people outside the school was shown to be important to a great school culture and a supportive mechanism for principals.

Teamwork was discussed as being a support to principals, it "has [also] been described by many professionals as an educationally sound and logical way of building learning cultures in which both teachers and students can benefit from the sharing of ideas and resources" (Court 2001, pp. 5-6). Similarly where the BoT and principal work together as a team, intentionally engaging in learning conversations, this models teamwork to the school as a whole and again contributes to a great school culture. Principals showed where BoT chairs and BoT's in their entirety were competent this was a source of support both personally and professionally.

Nigel experienced personal and professional support from several BoT chairs, one also making him “accountable for the performance of the ... school” as regards student achievement was concerned.

Once a competent chair was elected, Susan experienced support from that chair, around “challenging personnel issues”, also feeling supported by the BoT generally with practical help; however she pointed out that there was a dearth of parents at her school with specific governance skills such as “...personnel, finance, property, strategic planning”.

Unfortunately, some principals were part of dysfunctional BoT’s where the board were divided and disruptive. Inherent here, may be a sub theme as talked about earlier, the ‘them and us’ sub theme, emanating from the parent elected trustees, or from the principal. Jocelyn spoke of her BoT supporting her “to the best of their ability” and her community largely supporting her but said “they have no understanding of my job really”. One wonders whether principals are aware of the training available to boards; also if they would consider upskilling the board, either themselves, or by using senior staff. After all if one fully understands a topic, one is able to explain that topic in plain language so that parents might learn about curricular matters, including assessment forms. It would seem that encouraging parents to understand the whys and wherefores of their children’s school learning would contribute to a great school culture.

An inherent theme in looking at support for principals was principals’ underlying ethos being to consistently and continually improve themselves through lifelong learning and encouraging others do likewise. This desire for all to embrace lifelong learning was seen a tool to improve school culture and outcomes for their ‘whole’ school and community. Nevertheless principals recognised a number of possible impediments to doing so. Some impediments

may, dependent upon context, include emotions, families ethno-cultural background, school staff, finances, PD that does not fit needs, BoT either in the entirety or as individuals involved, and agencies outside the school.

Inside a great school culture, principalship is shown to work well where it is a “shared enterprise of the teachers, the pupils and the community” (Grace, 1997, p.3). It must however be acknowledged that the community may wish to be involved but feel diffident, prefer to leave the ‘job’ up to the professionals (a cultural thing)” (ibid.). Many ethno-cultural groups are accustomed to seeing the teacher as expert and experiencing a lecturing approach to teaching, these parents may need to be supported to understand the more holistic approach to teaching. Further, parents in economically deprived areas may be unable to be involved in the school because they work different shifts to try to make ends meet, for example mother may be at home during the day, father at night.

Finally, let it be acknowledged that where there is a great school culture it certainly involves professional development.

### **The place of professional development in supporting principals**

“Quality learning flourishes within a context of applied practice; from growing wisdom and knowledge through practical and ‘lived experience’. It is made relevant – and becomes generative – through the authentic demonstration of the intelligence existing within our intellectual, emotional and physical self. (Vesty, 2008).

A “structured, sustained... professional development program” (Wong, 2005, p.54) was seen by all principals as a great motivator and pivotal to support their

growth, and by inference improve their schools. PD was shown by principals to come from, as well as MoE, a number of sources for example local and national principals' organisations groups; The Institute for Educational Leadership in America, local and international conferences, local and international universities, in professional learning groups and in professional learning conversations.

Within New Zealand, attending FPHP and experienced principals' courses; accessing courses on things as diverse as "legal responsibilities, curriculum delivery, staffing, first aid training" (Haimona); university study; local and national conferences were seen as helpful.

In being away from the school, going overseas for PD seemed to add new dimensions of space and time for reflection and refreshment. Thus Susan valued attending an international conference for the opportunity to "reflect on the bigger picture the school operates in"; and attending an overseas university reminded Nigel that "so many of the things that I believed in had a theoretical base to them and I have returned to my school refreshed and determined to continue down the same path for some years to come".

Appraisal was also acknowledged as being able to encompass supportive PD. Specifically, it was noted that that occurred when the appraiser was themselves a principal. Appraisal "is all about perspective. An assessor's preconceptions and "personal subjective attitudes; general moral and philosophical principles; [and] theoretical leadership prescriptions" (Moon et al., 2000, p.282) may affect whether a leader is thought to be effective or not. These things may also affect whether that appraiser is able to make suggestions that will encourage principal and therefore school growth. Aaron unfortunately saw appraisal as placing too much emphasis on accountability rather than growth.

New Zealand Principals' Federation (2011.b) has the following to say about appraisal. "The process of appraisal is developed on good communication and trust – if this is lost the process is doomed. For the appraisal process to be beneficial it must be reflective in its practice and ongoing. We want this to be a development tool, not a hammer for someone else to use". It is that final phrase that ought to inform all principal appraisals, the concept of being about professional growth, being used to grow the principal and therefore the school.

Other forms of PD seen as valuable support tools were learning conversations (Candy et al., 1985) and professional learning groups. Both of these tools are best supported by being value based since a "culture of enquiry flourishes when its principles and practices are congruent with the values of the leaders who keep the flame" (Axelrod, 2007, p.4).

In again thinking about values, of interest was the philosophical approach to defining support taken by Thomas who looked at why support might be needed, suggesting that the best outcome of support was personal and professional growth, rather than support being needed for crisis management. He spoke of support as being a mental process that one must consciously engage in (Bolam et al., 2005) as a prerequisite to reaping benefit from it. He did point out however that some principals seem to be slow or reluctant to learn (Leach, 1996) and suggested that when a principal finds solutions to problems, it is that principal's responsibility to learn from mistakes made and not repeat them, to synthesise solutions to future needs.

Related to the consideration of PD and values, is an important concern that Thomas voiced, about MoE controlling PD money and resources. He was concerned because a large part of MoE's role is to "...deliver the political policies..." of each current government there being no natural connection

“between this function and the development of effective school principals ... certainly it is unlikely that a particular political notion might inform development of “effective principals”. Thomas expanded on this theme in discussing resources for FTTP that rather than leading to “the development of the diverse and critically thinking body of principals which our system needs” encourages principals to “leave their thinking talents at the door”.

This appears to tie in with Haimona’s saying that the FTTP he attended had *“high profile educators, administrators and employees”, “walking us through a wide range of professional matters”*. The first phrase appears to imply that the course was run by ‘experts’ and as such, one ought not to critique what they were saying, the second that the overall inference of the course was that principals were coming to the course in a state of ignorance and therefore ought to ‘listen up and take notice’.

Unfortunately, PD for principals was also seen as having areas where it may not be as supportive as it might be. These were

- when it is not an ongoing, connected process, that considers principals’ ongoing development:
- when it does not meet the needs of the participants. In FTTP programmes regarding understanding the needs peculiar to rural school principals; giving thought to single parents perhaps having childcare needs; standardising the mentoring as to frequency, whether it occurs face-to-face or long distance:
- when study needed for professional growth has to be paid for by the principal.

To revisit values once more, a suggestion was made that in wanting to improve educational outcomes, support for experienced principals would be

improved by opportunity being provided to work with experienced principals on a leadership level.

PD for principals may also involve mentoring, either as a mentor, or as a protégé.

### **Mentors and mentoring as a support mechanism for principals**

Unsurprisingly though importantly, having a mentor was seen as positively supportive to principals, a source of personal and professional growth, a sounding board, a skills developer and a guide. It was also apparent that those who had themselves experienced great relationships with their mentors, were happy to fulfil that role with others.

Aaron suggested that few colleagues “are able to be true mentors or life coaches so they are able to grow the principal as a person as they support them through” the challenges involved in being a principal. He did however show that he had gained professional and personal support with “an outside mentor who walks and talks with me closely”.

Mentoring involves a relationship between two people. Each of these people has to want the relationship to work . It is a bit like the old saying *you can lead a horse to water but you can't make it drink*. Principals are individuals with individual personal and professional needs that are bound up in the people and contexts surrounding them. Thus, the greatest likelihood of success with this strategy might occur if principals were to be given the opportunity and funded by MoE, to find their own mentor or life coach, even if that mentor or life coach is not a principal or from the MoE.

Aroha suggested that her “ most important skill as a mentor is being able to listen with an open mind and without judgement. This creates a ‘safety zone’ encouraging openness and honesty”.

Mentoring where it works is a splendid resource that positively enhances understanding, ability and personal growth. However mentoring may not work where there is a personality or values mismatch between the mentor and the person being mentored; when, perhaps due to a lack of funding, the relationship is unable to be of a sufficiently long term to build a working relationship; or where the mentor is at a geographical distance leading the principal being mentored to feel less than supported as Jocelyn experienced. Not being able to sit down, face to face, or to go for a walk alongside a mentor, may make it difficult to build the rapport necessary for honest communication. Without this honesty there is little point in having a mentor, since it is honesty that is the forerunner to being able to consider change and change in one form or another is what personal and professional growth is about.

In looking at ensuring “the best and most capable” (Ala’alatoa et al., 2010, p.3) teachers become the leaders in the profession it has been shown that whilst “specific learning is necessary to be an effective...mentor... there is no requirement for the training of teachers in supervisory and mentoring roles” (ibid. p.5). Thus, just because a principal volunteers to mentor other principals does not mean they have been trained to do so, or that they understand what could, or should, be involved.

“The most exciting thing about mentoring is how it changes not only the outlook of your mentee, but your outlook too” (Fletcher, 2000, p.36).

System wide mentoring for principals as suggested by Aroha does not yet occur in New Zealand, or in England where it was felt that therefore no benefits accrued to the system (Coleman, et al., 1996). In contrast, in Singapore where mentoring of principals has been system-wide for some time, mentoring principals reported that this enhanced the education system as a whole, ensuring further cohorts were more effective, particularly as ongoing collaborative learning became ensconced in the system (Chong, 1991). Should mentoring be introduced on a system wide basis in New Zealand (Lim, 2009) as was done in Singapore similar benefits may accrue, further cohorts of principals may be more effective and collaborative learning encouraged.

One last thing about mentoring, Gay and Stephenson (1998) talked about mentoring relationships suggesting there were four likely relationships in mentoring; mentor: protégé; master: disciple; craftsman: apprentice; therapist: client. It is in thinking about the last model that a note of caution might be sounded, in wondering whether mentors for principals as well as being well versed in education, might also need to consider training in counselling.

### **Female principals may be unsupported simply because they are female**

Because she was female, as a mentor Aroha was thought of as a threat by male principals. Parents suggested to her that since she has no child of her own she is not qualified to teach.

Jocelyn experienced problems because she had a child but had difficulties around childcare. As she said “the reason I left the job was that most of the principals around me were men, and took their children to work with them (this was seen as sweet by the local community) but if I was to do it then I was “working the system”.

On a remuneration and advancement note, Jocelyn spoke about “teachers hav[ing] no voice and the smaller the school, the more feminised the workforce, the more invisible we are. Most small schools...are lead by disposable women who have been imprisoned in those schools by a glass ceiling that everyone knows about”.

Court has researched school leadership extensively (1989, 1994, 2001), drawing out ways in which women are empowered or undermined and how societal norms underpin these processes, how women’s roles are tied in with the gender relations prevalent in the particular society (Peet and Hartwick, 2009).

In 2001 Court investigated women co-principalships, something that occurred in seeming opposition to the governmental and societal norms of the period (p.488), but was found to be very supportive to the women involved. Court (1989, p.163) shows how our societal norms maintain a “dominance of male perspectives and a hegemonic link between ‘masculinity’ and ‘authority’” that largely ignore “women’s viewpoints and interests”, women being shown as “still being marginalised in much of the talking and theorising about leadership”. There is a persisting association of men and masculinity with authority and leadership that has been shown to contribute to the low numbers of women in educational administration” (Court, 1994, p.15).

The 2010 statistics (Appendix J) appear at first glance to demonstrate that as far as representation goes there is not too large a gap between females and males since out of a total of 2422 principals 1193 are female or 49.25% and 1283 are male or 52.99%. However if one takes the total number of teachers into account the statistics tell a quite different story. There were 52563 teachers, 38053 female, 14510 male showing that females make up 72.39% of teachers yet only 49.25% are principals. It would seem that the “glass ceiling” talked about

by Jocelyn is very real.

To be placed in this position simply because one is female must be emotionally taxing.

### **Emotional investment in the school: and the cost**

Remembering that principals have a moral purpose (Bezzina, 2007) in being in their schools, let us now look at the ways principals may invest emotionally in their schools on many levels including

- with children and their families as a matter of course, and often this is matter of joy and involves no emotional costs. However, it is particularly poignant where abuse or neglect of children is involved:
- with CYF being unsupportive and not helpful to children, with it taking too long for referrals to work:
- with SWiS (Social Worker's in Schools, Appendix J), who are supposed to "bring together a child or young person's home and school life...help(ing) when difficult family circumstances cause a young person to struggle with education, health or social development... improv(ing) their chances of success in all areas of their life. " Unfortunately Susan's experience was of SwiS being unhelpful to children, the teaching and social work professions appearing to have a clash of cultures unhelpful to principals and "unclear lines of management in the service leading to insufficient direction and supervision of staff and weak accountability systems" She suggested that "the system needs to be rethought and a blended model adapted to the pressing needs of low decile school communities needs to be developed":
- where GSE is under-funded and under-resourced to assist moderate

and high needs students as much as they need to be:

- in staff, and particularly where difficult conversations need to be had to promote educational, pastoral or systemic change:
- in the curriculum:
- when negative feedback is received through MoE, media or parents.  
“When schools are under-performing the spotlight is normally focused on the leader- the principal. Society tars all principals with the same brush and principals generally feel the impact of this. It is a pity that in this process the good schools don’t get any recognition because people enjoy bad news” (Aroha):
- with BoT where they are unsupportive:
- in administration where it involved things like the rural bus route tendering process. Under circumstances such as occurred with Jocelyn’s school and the school bus route tendering process a competent board that understands good governance and is able to implement it would have found ways too speak as one with their principal, thus she would not have felt isolated.

“Emotional drain” (Arrowsmith and Arrowsmith 2003, p.1) showed through in many of the things principals talked about, impacts seeming to range from being exasperated to seeming quite desperate. At the seemingly lesser end of the scale things that seemed to exasperate principals were

- difficulty finding effective personal assistants who can actually handle the management side of administration freeing the principal up to concentrate on educational leadership:
- dealing with bureaucratic paperwork:
- extra costs involved in implementing the National Standards (NS):

- the work involved in property:
- the lack of an effective PTA for fundraising:
- understanding finances. If we want effective educational leaders as our principals, then the financial administration role whilst being very important to make sure the school runs smoothly, is not as important as the educational leadership of the school. Therefore when a principal is first appointed to a school, in order to bring the principal up to speed quickly and efficiently so that the educational leadership side of things might then be concentrated on, having a MoE financial advisor come to the school with a report in simple language would give the principal an initial grounding in exactly where the school is at financially. The report might show things like the school's current financial situation, point out things like the implications of current staffing levels and the best course of action if plant is completely run down and it would be helpful if the advisor discussed the implications of the report with the principal.

Feeling unsupported impacts emotionally on a principal as was the case with Jocelyn as a rural school principal being expected to live in substandard housing, and struggling to retain the mental energy necessary to teach the children on top of the large number of chores involved in being in that position.

Gregory (2002, p. xviii) stated "I fear for the future of schooling as the tentacles of the state spread to every nook and cranny of school life. The humane impulses that flowed through the schooling system in the sixties and seventies are in danger of being swept away. That a liberal society has allowed government the degree of control it presently enjoys over the nation's schooling is deeply depressing and to be deplored". The implementation in New Zealand of NS is a case of political control. Whether one agrees with the idea of having

national standards in education or not, their implementation was rushed to fit the dictates of the government of the day, a process that left Susan feeling unsupported with

“the lack of professionalism inherent in their introduction: their being flawed: with MoE staff being unable to answer questions: because her school has high levels of ESOL students it doubl(ed) the work for teachers: because implementation cut across the real development work of the NZC, narrowing the curriculum – the focus on reading, writing and maths has driven everything down to the bare minimum and ignores the real world rich learning opportunities for our students in science, technology and the arts”.

“The emotional drain” (Daresh, 1995, p.1) often involved in being a principal is concerning. Aaron said that “principals have paid a huge personal cost to their school because of the need to be emotional(ly) engaged in their school to be effective. Systems go only so far before the true leader needs to come out and stand on the values they hold and engage people in conversations which are difficult and emotional in order to establish effective long term change”. This emotional investment was described as at times taking an emotional toll on principals and their partners and families. The loneliness of the position, and gender and age based discrimination were also described as taking an emotional toll. In contrast Haimona suggested that isolation was only likely to occur if one chose “not to proactively take professional responsibility for creating professional supportive networks”.

Concern was voiced around there seeming to be no mechanism to alert MoE to an underperforming school, or where a principal is lacking leadership skills, other than ERO reports. The negative values of either of these are that

they “affect children’s learning and achievement (this has) damaging effects on their future (regarding) work and achiev(ing) their goal(s) with social consequences impact(ing) on whole communities, substandard education (having) generational effects, (also) contribut(ing) to the low standing of teachers in society, and presenting future recruitment problems”. The concern here was the time elapsing from problems occurring and support being put in place. The concern around the time lapse was that that may well mean an escalation of difficulties that might easily have been solved had someone who was in a position to help, been alerted sooner.

Susan highlighted the insufficiency of support from GSE regarding moderate and high needs students, suggesting that they are under-funded and under-resourced, though this was not borne out by Melanie. In asking why there was a difference between the two there seem to be a number of possibilities raised here as questions.

- Are there differences between regions in available support? If so
  - is this about pressures of numbers population wise?
  - is it because staff are more skilled in different regions?
  - is the funding not equally split between regions?
- Is there simply a much higher population percentage-wise of these students in a school like Susan’s making it more difficult for the service to be adequately resourced?

Regardless of the answers to those questions, it is a fact that for principals to be well supported in their work, resources, and particularly ones such as these that impact upon student learning, simply must be sufficient. Wylie

(2008) noted 2007 figures showed decreases rather than increases in resources in this field and it is fervently to be hoped that that trend has not continued.

Daresh and Arrowsmith (2003, p.1) discuss how the “effect of societal change on head teachers is profound”. Aaron spoke of “a growing social curriculum in our school which requires a great deal of emotional energy on behalf of the principal”, asking why SENCOs are not in every school. He suggested that “parents need to move into the 21<sup>st</sup> century and support schools in developing well socialised children and allow teachers to teach” suggesting that some parents are lacking in parental skills.

Principals are aware that schools “...can’t transform the life chances of young people alone” (Barnard, 2004, p.26). For example in Australia “in a school serving a tough community with low aspirations” (ibid.) collaboration with outside agencies means having professionals onsite to deal straightaway with problems as they surface. For example where a child shows signs of grief following an estrangement, having a counsellor on hand and getting “a rapid response” (ibid.) rather than waiting weeks or even months for referrals to gain assistance, means there is far less likelihood of disruptions to that child’s progress.

When children do not get help when they need it there is “...a risk of exclusion, of drug taking” (ibid.). Thus having a counsellor on hand at a school may lessen the principal’s workload and need for support as well as being far more likely than the current system as shown by Susan to help children as they need it, rather than allowing problems to escalate.

Susan specifically requested more financial and emotional support for low-decile schools who are dealing with the most socially and economically disadvantaged students and communities. Not all communities that might be

described as being severely disadvantaged on economic levels are also able to be described as severely disadvantaged on social levels.

However, in schools like Susan's where there are "high levels of child abuse and neglect within the community" this is an apt descriptor. Susan wrote of "witnessing and dealing with" the effects of child abuse. This sort of experience must be classed as traumatic. She asked "How do you rid yourself of the images/voices of badly beaten and/or sexually and emotionally abused children who recount the horror of their experience? How do we deal with this one day and be positive and ready to lead with optimism the next? "

Susan suggested that "A skilled educational psychologist is needed to be available on call to debrief traumatised staff" who have had these horrible experiences.

As well as needing the specialist support for traumatised staff, for low decile schools with a community such as hers, Susan suggested that

- Lower class sizes must be urgently investigated
- A full time SENCO is needed. Note that this was also seen as important in all schools:
- Incentives are needed to encourage staff stability - extra PD time and MUs.
- A parent programme needs to be implemented

According to their web site the Ministry of Social Development (MSW) (2011) has the responsibility to "work closely with partner agencies and service providers to help people to get the support they need, when they need it, no matter where it has to be found." The site goes on to state that the ministry is "responsible for the statutory care and protection of children and young people; the statutory care and protection of children and young people, and funding to

community service providers; the access to affordable health care for families and lower income New Zealanders; the leadership and co-ordination of social and support services; and funding to community service providers. Perhaps MSW and MoE should combine resources and find solutions that actually take cognizance of children's needs whilst underpinning the education of children by working with school staff?

On a happier note, emotional support and a lessening of stress was found in Thomas' suggestion of "a time out place" and in Susan's experiences of outside partnerships with local churches and business organisations that supported by bringing in new energy and inspiration and linking a school to the wider community. In low decile schools where the students and community are severely disadvantaged on social and economic levels, there is a greater need for financial and emotional support.

This thesis employed reflective analysis in focussing on the important issue of support for principals, recognising that the way we think about support, as with anything else we think about is personal and contextual and informed by our individual and collective past and our present.

For principals to be effective and in the best position to be the best educational leaders they can be, they must be well supported. Principals as leaders take responsibility for themselves, their staff, their pupils and at times even the wider community. This thesis queried who takes responsibility for supporting these principals as leaders, for whilst they have many avenues to turn to for support, there must be times when for whatever reason they feel unsupported.

Principals as individuals have individual needs of support for their personal and professional growth, the rationale for investigating support for principals from the perspectives of individual principals in New Zealand environments under these parameters.

- What support for school principals entails.
- Whose conditions control how, when and by whom support occurs?
- What opportunities were seen to exist for change around provision or acceptance of support?
- In the context of support, where were connections seen between experiences of support, cultures that principals want, or must, work with, and ideas in literature?

- Whether the participating principals felt supported in their various roles by those involved with their school and by society as a whole?
- Whether the societal and organisational cultures surrounding the participating principals were perceived as supportive.

Participant principals contributed their own ideas by letter in the form of email. The desired outcome of interpreting those ideas and combining them with literature, was to surface possibilities of bringing “about desirable changes at both individual and social, [or, organisational] level” (Gregory, 2003, pp. 11-12) in the ways principals are supported.

The significance of this work enabling the voices of individual principal participants to be heard on the topic was that in their own school environment each ‘lives’ (Hill-Collins, 1990) being supported, or not. Further, the research being based on the premise that “our knowledge [of anything] is a result of our own understanding in a particular place and time in a particular socio-cultural context” (Dimmock and Walker, 2005, p.vii; Marx et al, 2000) was the rationale for exploring inherent underlying social, moral, political and cultural contexts.

The initial *value* of the research was in each principal taking time out from their busy lives to reflect upon how they thought about support. That value was both in taking the time out and in reflecting upon their personal and professional needs.

It was shown that there are many commonalities in the ways principals are able to be supported. For example, by their passion for education; by the delight in seeing their pupils or staff succeed; by the parents in their school being involved in the learning in the school, with community support; through PD; by

being mentored either on a professional or personal basis; by the BoT being supportive and making them accountable for the school's performance.

In wanting schools to be led by effective principals the work set out to investigate if improvement might be made in how, when, where, why and by whom principals are supported. However improvements to anything do not occur in isolation (Glickman, 2002). It is important to remember that “the work of the past, present and future lies in negotiations that open our relationship[s] to listening/speaking together” (Campbell, 2005, p.193).

That process of mutual listening ‘to’ and conversing ‘with’ needs to occur both between individuals and across and through a number of organisations for lasting improvements in support for principals to occur. The organisations that need to ‘talk with’ one another are organisations that are involved with professional development for principals, that are involved in schools, or are involved with children who are abused or neglected. Some of those organisations are The Ministry of Social Development, CYF, The Ministry of Education, local and national principals’ organisations, NZEI and NZSTA.

In considering how principals may be supported it was shown that principals are first of all teachers, therefore we need to ensure that prior to ‘stepping up the ladder’ to principalship, teachers have been well mentored and trained in the skills they will require as principals.

As a professional body and individually school principals do continually reflect, learn and grow. They intentionally involve themselves constantly in mutual learning strategies with, in no particular order, other principals, staff, pupils, school boards, Ministry of Education and other government ministries; principals intentionally seek out tertiary qualifications; principals involve

themselves with the organisation of and attend local and international conferences.

Professional development was investigated as a source of support for principals it being shown that professional development may *assist* professional growth but does not necessarily *lead* to growth (NZPF, 2011.c). As a government department a large part of MoE 's role is to deliver each government's policies, there being no causal connection between that role and principal growth, *concern* was shown that MoE controls professional development money for principals.

It was implied that experience of First Time Principals' courses were that they did not encourage professional learning conversations that might enhance growth, also that it did not meet the needs of participants who were from 'tiny rural schools'. It must of course be remembered that these are individual viewpoints and others' experience may well be otherwise. We "must be certain that professional development opportunities for principals are relevant and go directly to the heart of issues with which they deal" (DeMoss et al., 2007, p.165).

The culture each principal operated (Dimmock and Walker, 2005, p.205) in was shown to affect the way support was thought about. For example principal appraisal was considered a waste of time by one principal as he saw it as a box ticking process to satisfy accountability, whereas another principal found it a source of growth. It was demonstrated that to serve a useful purpose, principal appraisal should be about professional growth.

It was unfortunately demonstrated that there is still gender-based discrimination in principal appointment and promotion, women being quite under-represented, but societal change must occur for this to be remedied.

Urgency was demonstrated to be needed in action over assisting school principals to be supported as they encounter child abuse and neglect, both from the principals needs and from the needs of the children involved. Government ministries must work together to address this crucial issue. It was shown that BoT have a legal responsibility as employers to minimise stress in the workplace. However, where that stress is caused by situations outside of the BoT's control such as staff repeatedly witnessing and dealing with the results of neglect and abuse of the students in their school, the BoT as a body is unlikely to possess the professional expertise to access the most effective assistance for those staff members.

In concluding, this work often did not occur in "orderly fashion" (Gilling, 2000, p.17), however it did produce insights as to how support might be added to or improved in ways that will encourage individual principal's growth either professionally or personally. The data presented by the participants confirmed that there can be no "one size fits all" solution to providing the most useful support for principals to grow with their roles and responsibilities and continue to enjoy their work, but that there are many solutions.

"Effective...support for the leaders of...schools is clearly an important priority, requiring the provision of more differentiated programmes which are relevant to specific contexts and individual needs and priorities. Equally important is the creation of collaborative support networks to break down a sense of isolation, to facilitate the sharing of problems and ideas, and to disseminate good practice." (Dimmock and Walker, 2005, p.196).

For example a mentor that 'fits' with an individual principal's personality, understands that principal's professional and personal contexts, may be a tool to

bring together the various sections of the patchwork design to make a whole that is pleasing to not just the principal but also to those who look on from the outside.

According to the principal's voices explored in this work in New Zealand today MoE support for principals occurs as PD for and with mentors being provided for a time for First-time Principals. However none of these avenues of support are compulsory to accept. In the light of the Singapore experience, perhaps this is worthy of investigation? In considering this though, it may be useful to consider how

“appropriate (it is) to transpose policies and practices of school improvement from one society to another without consideration of cultural context, also ” ... what is meant in the different countries by “... key concepts such as ‘collaboration’, ‘micropolitics’, ‘school-based management’ and ‘accountability’...” (Dimmock and Walker, 2005, pp. 185-205).

Suggestions from the research indicate that staff including principals should be able and encouraged to access psychological counselling to minimise stress where children in their school suffer neglect or abuse.

“Only when we have a community educated into a deeper understanding of democratic principles will it be possible to involve that community in a discussion that might become purposeful and effective in bringing about worthwhile social change. Thus, education for democratic citizenship is education that places a high value on the qualities of open-mindedness, tolerance of diversity, fairness, rational understanding, respect for truth, and critical judgement” (Codd, 2005).

Importantly when a major change in direction in education is to be introduced, there should be proper consultation with educators, trialling

processes and the development of an effective professional development plan, prior to implementation.

As Puketapu-Dahm (2006, p95) suggests “ This has been a reflective narrative of (individual principal’s) experience, it has ... unpacked (the) bag, of (principal support) go(ne) through what was in (the) bag, and reorganise(d) the contents inside. This tidy up ... made room in what (was) thought ... full”.

By the nature of the individual principal’s contributions to this research, and the discussion about the ideas in them, it would appear that principal support is indeed a personal construction.

### **Recommendations for further research**

1. Currently BoT as employers have the responsibility to minimise stress in the workplace. Where principals and staff are regularly exposed to children who have suffered neglect and abuse, BoT often do not have the expertise to know who would be best placed to provide support in these instances. It is recommended that skilled educator/psychologists are funded to act immediately and on an ongoing basis where needed, debrief staff placed in these positions.

2. Future research might explore a realignment of the cultures of the Ministry of Social Development and Education with the view to those ministries cooperating in order to be more effective:

- For children who suffer neglect or abuse, provide front line, same day, counselling and health services to children, in schools. Services that align with the best interests of the child, whilst

assisting the school to proactively support the child in the school environment.

- Where communities have high levels of social and economic deprivation, and, high levels of child neglect or abuse, to provision, in consultation with those communities and with the senior staff of the school involved, in school grounds, building and personnel resources to provide parent education programmes.
3. In looking for schools to be lead by the most effective principals possible, future research might investigate attendance at PD being compulsory for Aspiring, First-time and Experienced Principals. Exploration of this idea ought to include the appropriateness of this concept in this democracy.
  4. The research having demonstrated that where school boards are effective, they enhance principals' experiences in leading the school, for those boards where principals experience 'difficulty' with their boards, future research might consider pilot programmes of compulsory training for the whole board in relationship building. By definition the whole board would include the principal.
  5. Suggestions for further research around mentoring for experienced principals include:
    - An exploration of principals' perceptions of value, between those who have mentored by a mentor from a business background and

those who have been mentored by a mentor from an educational background.

- Investigating whether a dual mentoring system where a life coach and an educational coach team up to mentor together may be of value.
- An in depth survey of principals who, having been mentored themselves, now mentor other principals; to discover their experiences of the values involved in being of service in this way; and their perceptions of the importance of courage and integrity in the processes.

6. Investigation is recommended into placing a teacher with responsibility for co-ordinating special needs support within in each school.
7. An investigation should take place into providing incentives to encourage staff stability in low decile schools- extra professional development time and MUs.

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MASSEY UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION  
TE KUPENGA O TE MATAURANGA

As a Principal do you feel supported in your various roles by your school and society?  
Are the local and national organisational cultures that surround principals supportive?

**INFORMATION SHEET**

Dear

As a student at Massey University, I invite you to consider participation in a research project for my Master of Education (Adult Ed). My name is Gillian Bagnall and I hope that the project may surface ideas around support for principals that may be useful either to you as you reflect upon your experiences, or once the work is completed to people responsible for providing support to principals on formal or informal bases.

The purpose of the project is to determine whether principals feel supported or unsupported, uplifted or marooned in their various roles on personal, practical, professional or emotional levels. Some ideas of who or what might be involved in support include legalities, professional development, local or national groups, government departments, groups of people or individuals, educational theories, personal values or models of support that might be initiated, though I am sure you will have many other ideas too.

The recruitment method being used in this project is a combined random/snowball approach where the initial approaches are being made to principals through the Ministry of Education's list of schools, then those principals are asked for an introduction to further participants. There will be a maximum of twenty participants involved.

Since you are being asked to disclose only that information that you wish to, it is not expected that there will be a risk to you.

**Project Procedures**

If you agree to participate:-

- You will be asked to write a letter to me talking about your experiences of personal or professional support, or lack of it, in your roles as a principal. The letter may be of any length, about one experience or many, or a series of letters should that fit your needs and may be done by email if that suits you. To be included your input must be received by May 20 2010, please.

**Data Management**

- Data obtained will be used for the purposes of this thesis. Once published data may be used to inform subsequent ideas of the researcher or others.
- The contents of letters received, or parts of them, may be included in the thesis, therefore in the interests of each person having freedom to write as they wish, should you wish information in any part of your correspondence to be excluded from the thesis, please highlight or tag it so.
- Data will be stored in a locked cabinet and disposed of one year after publication of the thesis by shredding.
- Your confidentiality of identity will be maintained by pseudonyms and you are encouraged to choose your own pseudonym.



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COLLEGE OF EDUCATION  
TE KUPENGA O TE MĀTAURANGA

#### Participant's Rights

I encourage you to accept this invitation. If you do, you have the right to:

- withdraw from the study until the start of formal analysis;
- ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to me;
- be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded.

#### Project Contacts

##### Researcher

Gillian Bagnall  
97 New Windsor Rd, Avondale, Auckland, 0600, New Zealand  
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##### Supervisors

Dr marg gilling.  
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0272817705 [Ian\\_Alexander@franklin.govt.nz](mailto:Ian_Alexander@franklin.govt.nz)

- Participants are invited to contact Gillian Bagnall, Dr. marg gilling or Dr. Ian Alexander if they have any questions about the project.

*"This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher(s) named above are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research.*

*If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Professor John O'Neill, Director (Research Ethics), telephone 06 350 5249, email [humanethics@massey.ac.nz](mailto:humanethics@massey.ac.nz)*

Yours Sincerely,

Gillian Bagnall

## **Appendix B                      The Researcher**

A lesser font with narrower line spacing is used here denoting the researcher's lesser importance in the whole

The researcher married and had two children choosing part-time employment fitting around their timetables. Later she became the main income earner whilst her husband became chief child carer and home-maker. Thus she partially identifies with the notion of being "... constructed... within heterosexual partnerships ... based on the stereotypical roles of female full-time housewife and caregiver and male breadwinner" (Court, 2001, p.60 citing Friedan, 1963). However, whilst acknowledging that within education women often experience discrimination in employment on the basis of gender (Court, 2001, pp.60-61), she has not (yet) experienced gender-based discrimination herself.

Having graduated BEd(Adult Ed); P.G.Dip(Adult Ed), her passion now is voluntarily supporting life-long learning to help individuals grow (Kroehnert, 1994; Pont, 1996, p.i). For individuals to 'buy in' to that development however, they must first be satisfied as to why one is interested in helping and what one's interest is in assisting.

The researcher's last full-time position (now vacated) was as Auckland Regional Coordinator for NZ School Trustees Association (NZSTA) widening understanding of and acquaintance with schools. On a couple of occasions she fielded phone calls outside normal office hours, from principals who it seemed did not know where to look for support when they needed it. Thoughts set in train by the calls remained with her. She wondered if there might be principals who whilst teachers, had lacked support over some things, so might be reluctant to ask for help; or if there might be gaps in available support; or if specific cultures (see Chapter 2.1) might affect how and when support was either offered or wanted.

In wishing to be fair, ethical and maintain "integrity and independence from politics" (Grace, 1998, p.214) between herself, NZSTA and principals individually or as groups the researcher took leave of absence from the Auckland Regional Management Committee of NZSTA (the political, voluntary arm in Auckland) until the research was completed.



## MASSEY UNIVERSITY

1 February 2010

Gillian Bagnall  
97 New Windsor Road  
Avondale  
AUCKLAND 0600

Dear Gillian

**Re: Support for Principals in Multicultural New Zealand Schools: Affects and Effects of Cultures of Leadership and Power**

Thank you for your Low Risk Notification which was received on 19 January 2010.

Your project has been recorded on the Low Risk Database which is reported in the Annual Report of the Massey University Human Ethics Committees.

The low risk notification for this project is valid for a maximum of three years.

Please notify me if situations subsequently occur which cause you to reconsider your initial ethical analysis that it is safe to proceed without approval by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees.

Please note that travel undertaken by students must be approved by the supervisor and the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor and be in accordance with the Policy and Procedures for Course-Related Student Travel Overseas. In addition, the supervisor must advise the University's Insurance Officer.

**A reminder to include the following statement on all public documents:**

*"This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher(s) named above are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research.*

*If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Professor John O'Neill, Director (Research Ethics), telephone 06 350 5249, e-mail [humanethics@massey.ac.nz](mailto:humanethics@massey.ac.nz)".*

Please note that if a sponsoring organisation, funding authority or a journal in which you wish to publish requires evidence of committee approval (with an approval number), you will have to provide a full application to one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. You should also note that such an approval can only be provided prior to the commencement of the research.

Yours sincerely

John G O'Neill (Professor)  
Chair, Human Ethics Chairs' Committee and  
Director (Research Ethics)

cc Dr Marg Gilling  
School of Educational Studies  
PN900

Prof Howard Lee, HoS  
School of Educational Studies  
PN900

Mrs Roseanne MacGillivray  
Graduate School of Education  
PN900

Massey University Human Ethics Committee  
Accredited by the Health Research Council

Te Kūnenga  
ki Pūrehuroa

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## Appendix D

## Consent Form Supplied to Participants



SCHOOL OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES  
Private Bag 11 222  
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New Zealand  
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www.massey.ac.nz

Do New Zealand Principals feel supported in their various roles by their school,  
and society as a whole?  
Are the local and national organisational cultures surrounding principals supportive?

### PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM - INDIVIDUAL

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions  
have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Full Name - printed \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix E

## Maori/English Translations: Acronyms

Maori	English
Ahi ka	the people who keep the home fires burning
Aotearoa	Land of the long white cloud – New Zealand
Haimona	Listening
Tenakoe	Greetings to you (one person)
Tumuaki	Head (leader) – school principal as head of school

### List of Acronyms

BoT	School Board of Trustees
CYF	Child, Youth and Family - a service of the Ministry of Social Development charged with keeping children and youth safe
DP	Deputy Principal
EPD	Experienced Principals Development programme run regionally, funded by MoE, a research informed professional development programme for experienced principals
ERO	Education Review Office responsible to the Minister of Education - reviews schools and early childhood education services, and publishes national reports on current education practice
ESOL	English for speakers of other languages
GSE or SE	Group Special Education -The Special Education arm of MoE
HIPPY	Home Interaction Programme for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY) for children minimum of 3½ years old involving local community that prepares children for school
IY	The Incredible Years are research-based, proven effective programs for reducing children's aggression and behaviour problems and increasing social competence at home and at school.
MECI	Monitoring and Evaluating Curriculum Implementation – an MoE survey evaluating the implementation of “The New Zealand Curriculum” downloadable from <a href="http://nzcurriculum.tki.org/News/MECI-project-">http://nzcurriculum.tki.org/News/MECI-project-</a>
MoE	Ministry of Education
MU	Management unit
NAGS	National Administration Guidelines } Legislative requirements for schools
NAPP	National Aspiring Principals Programme
NEGS	National Educational Guidelines } Legislative requirements for schools
NS	National Standards– an initiative introduced by the current National government – still being rolled out - came into effect in English-medium schools with pupils in Years 1 to 8 in 2010. The standards set expectations that students need to meet in reading, writing, and mathematics in the first eight years at school. Information gathering for Ngā Whanaketanga Rūmaki Māori – the Māori medium standards – began in term one 2010.
NZ	New Zealand
NZC	The New Zealand Curriculum -launched in 2007 (revised in 2010).
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
NZSTA	New Zealand School Trustees Association – funded by MoE & school levies - provides industrial assistance: BoT support, advice, training and political
PD	Professional Development

PE	Physical Education
PPP	Public Private Partnership – in this case providing for readying children for school
PTA	Parent Teacher Association – a parents and teacher group in a school that encourages community spirit in a school and usually organises fund raising for the school – able to be an official charity and have an income tax exemption from IRD ( Inland Revenue Department)- translates to full use of funds raised.
SENCo	Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator: A teacher with responsibility for co-ordinating special needs support within a school.
SMT	Senior Management Team
SW	Social worker
SWiS	Social Workers in Schools (SWiS) – A service provided by CYF that places a social worker in school grounds (Appendix E)
TKI	A bilingual portal-plus web community providing quality assured educational material for New Zealand teachers, school managers and the wider education community

I have been fascinated to notice changes in functional emphasis at different times in recent business history. We have placed importance on getting the right machine, on time and motion studies, on information technology and systems, on financial management, on strategy, on productivity and on sales and marketing. You could track what phase a business was in by the cultural language - the "business speak".

For too long organisations have been run by people who were good at "thing" management. Good accountants; people who are good at managing finances, good engineers; people good planning and developing structures, good strategists; people good at planning future development, good marketers etc. Yet all of these functions have one thing in common - they involve people. While machines, money, strategy and marketing are all important functions, it is people that make organisations run profitably. And even people have been degraded to become "Human Resources."

The organisations that have been consistently successful are the ones that have invested time, energy and money in their people. After all, the one thing that all the other functional areas have in common is that they need people to make things run efficiently.

Senior executives in companies around the globe are realising that it takes inspired, committed people to make organisations successful. While they also know that it takes special skills to keep employees inspired, committed and performing at their best, it is only in the last few years that some businesses have begun placing emphasis on developing their leaders' people skills. The advent of coaching is now bringing these skills to the fore.

In his book Emotional Intelligence, Daniel Goleman says that 80% of achievement is dependant on a person's Emotional Intelligence (E.I.). E. I. describes an ability, capacity, or skill to perceive, assess, and manage the emotions of one's self, of others, and of groups. In other words, what are frequently called the "soft" people skills. In fact, E.I. has proven to be twice as important as any other competency in any job role. This is a significant claim and one that obviously strikes a chord at some level since the book is an international best seller. Although they're considered "soft", that doesn't necessarily mean "easy".

What does it take to lead, inspire and coach people to achieve great things?

I believe that first and foremost it takes a level of self-awareness. Self-awareness is a term talked about often enough and very infrequently explained. For me, it means having an awareness of how you are perceived by others and

the impact you have on others, having a balanced and honest view of your own personality. For leaders, self-awareness is Angry Managervital, along with the ability to flex their own behavioural style in order to get the best out of others.

I am continually amazed to find some very senior executives in large organisations who have the self-awareness of a brick. It's as if they live in their own little worlds and believe, either consciously or unconsciously, that their title of "manager" entitles them to do whatever they like or whatever it takes to get the job done. It's somehow OK for him or her to focus only on outcomes, in the process riding roughshod over staff, having emotional outbursts and showing no compassion or understanding for those who work for them. Employees are treated like disposable gloves. Even today, I was saddened to hear about the appalling treatment of some very senior people by some even more senior people in a very large corporate business.

The true test of a leader is whether you can get others to follow - right? You can't be a leader without followers! Many people who call themselves leaders are really managers; they manage people by controlling what they do or using the power behind their official title. A genuine leader uses personal influence, coaching and persuasion. Another way of testing whether you're a true leader is to ask yourself this question, "If I didn't have any 'control' over my team, (by way of a title, role or position of power etc) could I still get them to do what needs to be done?" If your honest answer is "no" then you're not a leader. Simple as that.

The true leader is able to inspire people to do their best consistently, regardless of whether or not they have an official role as leader. You've probably already gathered that it takes a lot more skill to be a leader than it does to be a manager.

So what are the people skills required of a true leader?

- ❑ Awareness of self and how you come across to others
- ❑ The ability to gain and maintain rapport
- ❑ The skill to guide and coach to improve performance
- ❑ The ability to notice subtle changes in others and to adapt accordingly
- ❑ Understanding of people different from yourself and how their environment and the systems to which they belong (team, family, social group etc) affects each one
- ❑ Asking good, insightful questions
- ❑ Understanding and using different motivational triggers to get the best from each person

- Respecting and treating people as individuals - making each feel valued
- Ability to control your own emotional state
- Being consistent in approach
- Allowing individuals the freedom to do their job and supporting them to do it effectively
- Openness to encourage, receive and act upon feedback without taking it personally
- Holding positive beliefs about people and the world at large. (See article Expectations)
- The ability to empathise and feel compassion for others.
- Ability to influence and persuade
- Openness to being influenced and persuaded.
- 

With lots of responsibilities, deadlines and activities competing for attention it's easy to put effort into the most pressing issues of the day, forgetting the people part of the job. However, do this for more than a couple of days and staff soon get the message about what's really important. Actions always speak louder than words.

Treating employees as they want to be treated, rather than treating everyone the same, is the most likely way to get the best out of them. Yet some managers can be inflexible when it comes to their people skills. It appears easier to deal with everyone in the same way than to invest time to find out how each would like to be treated. That approach is deemed too "soft" anyway. And managers don't have the time to invest in such activities. Down the track they'll have to spend days on end and huge amounts of money in the assorted activities required to recruit new staff. Even then they still don't connect that a few minutes spent practicing "soft skills" each day with the people who have since left, could have saved them this extra expense of time and money.

"I shouldn't have to pander to their every whim," they say, "after all people come to work to work."

If this were true folks would do the same job their entire lives without ever feeling the need to change. Clearly this is not the case.

People go to work for lots of reasons, only one of which is to work. Those who truly love what they do, often don't perceive it as work. When they're in the right environment, doing something they enjoy, using and developing their capabilities, driven by their values and being lead, inspired and coached to be their very best, it doesn't feel like "work."

The businesses that have invested in their people are now reaping the rewards. It's an employee's job market and New Zealand's job market is smaller than most. Word gets around quickly about who the good employers are. And those best avoided. People make employment choices according to what's important to them and sometimes even huge salary offers are not enough to secure the best, most passionate and productive people. These people want to be inspired, engaged, supported and encouraged by leaders they respect. These are people for whom "work" is not just a "job".

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**Appendix G.1.**

**Initial coding of Aaron's Input**

Aaron	Issues	Culture	Experiences/Outcomes/ <b>Emotions</b>	Requests
	levels of support varied hugely depending on the people, BOT, staff I had with me.			
my family.			base for support	
MoE and outside agencies		<i>Do what is possible within our limitations</i>	largely useless support as treat you as a one off situation - no ongoing commitment. Even agencies providing professional learning - minimal impact and support - not been able to build strong enough relationships to be involved in effective professional learning conversations where ideas can be unfiltered and a high level of trust can occur.	
Colleagues		Managerial	management support - technical ideas and systems - few able to be true mentors or life coaches to grow the principal as a person - support them through the conflicts that occur in a living and growing organisation.	life coach Mentor –
	principals paid a huge personal cost to their school. need to be emotional engaged in their school to be effective. Leader. when engage people in difficult, emotional conversations to establish effective long term change. marriages fall apart partners become alienated because of the emotional toll . Principals need good support people around them, no one can operate alone as a leader, a lonely place	Leadership Educational Moral Care	principals paid a huge personal cost to their school because need be <b>emotional engaged</b> in their school to be effective. Systems go only so far before true leader needs to <b>come out and stand on the values they hold</b> and engage people in difficult and emotional conversations to establish effective long term change. cost seen at home by those close to him or her. marriages fall apart- partners become alienated . Ppls need good support people around them because no one can operate alone as a leader because a lot of the time it can be a <b>lonely place</b>	

Aaron Coding				
Who/what	Issues	Culture	Experiences/Outcomes/Emotions	Requests
Negative feedback MOE, the media and parents		Blame	MOE, media, parents do not give principals support they need to be at the top of their game. often given negative feedback blamed for many social illnesses in today's society	
Appraisals	Not supportive	Management	making us more accountable through appraisals total waste of time - spend time on being a performing seal than growing.	
Outside mentor		Nurturing Lifelong learning	I have an outside mentor who walks and talks with me closely – through conversations able to reflect and grow as a leader and as a person.	
MoE			recent axing of PDPC and development of EPD show Ministry recognises need to support principals. They see it as needing training. reality is many of aspects of EPD I do anyway	
				I need opportunity to work with experienced principals on a <b>leadership</b> level. not simply come up with more systems to support management
		Lifelong learning Educational	They become better at <b>listening</b> and allowing those around them grow to their potential. Is this not <b>what we want for our children</b> and not more systems to <b>manage and manipulate them</b> ?	fund a committed trained mentor, life coach to support principals. that they become more effective through effective relationship and conversations.
local systems			local systems are there for when you hit the wall and are ready for drastic action. This is far too late.	what we need is for ppl to be given the time to find a buddy / mentor / confidant that they can trust and work closely with to grow and develop their practice

Aaron coding				
Who/what	Issues	Culture	Experiences/Outcomes/Emotions	Requests
Competition between schools		Political Learning Collaborative	Ppls today's view of education are force to be competitive rather than collaborative and we know it is through collaborative new and effective learning can take place while competition kills this off	
<i>incompetent</i> parents		Societal breakdown?	Parents need to move into the 21 <sup>st</sup> century and support schools in developing well socialised children and allow teachers to teach. - growing social curriculum in our school which requires a great deal of emotional energy on behalf of the principal. We are not all equip to take on this role of being the emotional and empathetic principal to all our community social issues.	So where are the SENCOs in every school and where are the effective Personal assistants for principals so they can get on with the job of teaching and learning instead of looking at the latest financial account.
supportive and collaborative network of principals			We have a long way to go to build a supportive and collaborative network of principals who are able to work together to advance the learning outcomes for their students.	

## Appendix G.2

## Initial coding of Aroha's input

Who/what	Issues	Culture	Experiences/Outcomes/Emotions	Requests
Aroha		Leadership Educational	All PPs intention to provide the very best education to all the children who pass through our school	
Underachieving schools Principal outdated leadership style	Schools not achieving, underperforming due to the possibility of Principals stuck in out-dated leadership styles school gets a bad name.	Leadership Educational	spotlight focused on the leader- the principal. When Principals are found underperforming, feel threatened, close ranks, get sick and retreat. underperformance is exacerbated. school gets a bad name.	
Teachers	school gets a bad name. Teachers ( <i>undermined</i> )		Teachers range of negative emotions and feel trapped, resentful and frustrated. difficult to get another job because of their school's reputation. stunting and frustrating their career ambitions. often a long term situation because reputations don't change overnight.	
Creating a great school culture	how many principals have been educated in how to create a great school culture?	leadership	leader of the school creates the culture Many Principals haven't <i>been educated in how to create a great school culture so feel threatened</i> when things turn to custard	
Principal	What do you do if the school is failing? underperforming	Responsibility?	buck stops with the Principal.	
	Under performing school – children's learning and achievement affected	Educational Societal	damaging effects on their future entering the work force and an inability to achieve their goal in life. The social consequences associated with these outcomes are well known. impacts on whole communities, - you don't have to look very far to see the generational effects of substandard education.	
	Under performing school – children's learning and achievement affected		This contributes to the low standing of teachers in society, and must present recruitment problems in future	

Aroha coding				
Who/what	Issues	Culture	Experiences/Outcomes/ <b>Emotions</b>	Requests
Society		Societal	Tars all principals with the same brush	Society
Media	Society tars all principals with the same brush and principals generally feel the impact of this.	Societal	in this process the good schools don't get any recognition because people enjoy bad news.	
	<i>Principal inadequate, or, stuck in outdated leadership style?</i>		Principals' energy goes into covering their own inadequacies instead of creating a great school culture.	
	education system, principals left to flounder without support despite early warning signs in many schools. Only after extensive attempts to improve performance will disciplinary action be taken. only after an ERO report that problems are taken notice of and support put in place. can be 2 / 3 yrs after the initial symptoms occur.		good organisations a performance improvement plan developed for an underperforming staff member and be provided with encouragement, support and where necessary training and mentoring to achieve the required performance.	How much difference would it make if when the initial symptoms appeared, someone looked for a cause and did something to heal the problems?
Leadership skills	it is assumed new Principals, will pick up skills as they go along instead of recognising that building and maintaining relationships is THE most important skill of leadership.	Leadership		<i>Include relationship building in FTP programme along with mentor</i>

Aroha coding				
Who/what	Issues	Culture	Experiences/Outcomes/Emotions	Requests
	<p><b>Solution</b> I work with Principals show how to turn their schools around</p>	Mentoring	<p><b>Build self esteem. School morale.</b> People want to get their kids into the school Communities thrive. <b>Teachers feel good and reputation is enhanced.</b> Chn get a good education and go on to be <b>fully contributing</b> members of society. Achievement is raised Standards of teaching and learning are improved. Communication between the school and other agencies is better.</p>	
			<p>The <b>P feels they have a new direction.</b> The P knows how to develop a school culture. how to communicate with his staff and BOT. Reporting to the BOT and community is improved. Delegate effectively. Grow their staff / community</p>	
	<b>Objections .</b>		<p><b>Risk reversal:</b> You have got nothing to loose</p>	
	<p><b>Objections:</b> <b>1. Safety and Listening</b></p>	Safety	<p>My most important skill as a mentor is being able to listen with an open mind and without judgement. This creates a <b>'safety zone'</b> encouraging openness and honesty,</p>	
	<p><b>Objection 2. I don't want to be seen to be failing</b></p>		<p>Principals do best they can with knowledge and experience they have at the time. If it is pointed out they are under performing, are likely to feel threatened and this is where the flight or fight response kicks in.</p>	<p>Mentor <i>needs</i> skills and experience in building rapport to help Principal retrieve their self respect and turn around school . maintain integrity by ensuring confidentiality in the relationship.— ensures mutual respect , safety and complete honesty and openness. essential to effective skill development and improved performance</p>

Aroha coding				
Who/what	Issues	Culture	Experiences/Outcomes/ <b>Emotions</b>	Requests
	<b>3. The Principal doesn't have time to do this</b>		Principals very busy can get bogged down in day to day running of school. <b>believe no time to identify ways to improve.</b> sometimes you have to make time to save time. invest time to learn different ways of doing things so that long term things run more smoothly.	
	<b>4. Aroha doesn't understand</b>		31 years in the education profession, taught in and or been Principal of a variety of schools from Decile 1-10. turned an underperforming school into a High performing school in 4 years. taken a school that is performing well into a high performing school. only achieved this by constantly learning, building relationships and being willing to take on board feedback from all the people involved in schools.	
	<b>5. You are too young</b>		teaching in a decile 1 school when I was 20, Each day challenged and constantly learning from the chn and the situations in my classrooms, also learnt from other teachers, parents and the community, some of whom had less experience than I—always looking to learn from everybody cos I knew I do not have all the answers,,,, together people can come up with solutions to problems that individually we might not arrive at. have great mentors, who challenge my thinking, support and encourage me. influenced my thinking and contributed to my personal and professional growth	In turn, I am proud to mentor both more and less experienced colleagues. Many of these were not open minded to the process to start with but they now welcome the relationship we share. They now recognise that investing time in developing relationships pays off with a vast improvement in school culture.
	<b>6. Women are a threat</b>	Nurturing	Women have traditionally had a role in developing and maintaining relationships and keeping the family together and more and more these skills are being recognised and valued in business as the glue that holds cultures together.	

Aroha coding				
Who/what	Issues	Culture	Experiences/Outcomes/ <b>Emotions</b>	Requests
Not a parent?	<b>7. How would you know – you have never been a mother</b>	Societal	I have never been a mother I do not have children of my own. But, I have helped countless Mothers , Fathers and families in my role as teacher and Principal. Three or four times a week, Parents ask me for guidance in developing relationships with their children, particularly as the children get older. When people say to me ‘you wouldn’t understand because you are not a mother’ I take it as a personal affront implying that I don’t care about the 1000s of chn that have been in my care and the chn that I am now responsible for every day.	

### Appendix G.3

### Initial coding of Haimona's Input

Who/what	Issues	Culture	Experiences/outcomes/emotions	Requests
Haimona 7yrs			As tumuaki Aotearoa Zealand I have felt, and feel wonderfully supported. This is on a number of levels, governmentally, collegially and locally within my community.	
MoE FTP Mentor		Respecting authority	first time principal eligible to attend three, 4 day induction / professional development courses. These were superb. They had high profile educators, administrators and employees of the Ministry of Education (MOE) walking us through a wide range of professional matters. It was a first rate induction programme to principalship. mentor assigned to me to provide one to one support within the context of my school.	
MoE through Vic. Uni			Victoria University a senior principal available for advice and guidance to new principals, or principals simply seeking an opinion.	
MoE funds NZSTA	political agenda within the NZSTA is <b>meddling and not supportive</b> of schools, school chooses not be member NZSTA	Systems? Industrial Political <i>Pleased s. Cross political</i>	NZSTA, two support telephone contacts- general trustee enquiries – industrial/ personnel concerns. support end of telephone is excellent. regular email updates from an NZSTA industrial advisor.	
MoE	Leadspace – not useful No personal contact	Societal?	MOE numbers of support people for property, staffing and financial matters a phone call away. MOE website 'Leadspace' dedicated to support leadership within schools - not personally found it very useful, nor incidentally and anecdotally do the colleagues I am associated with. may be as much to do with <b>our preference to have a person</b> answer our queries, as much as it is to do with anything. As the helpdesks described above do this, I find I rarely use the website.	

Haimona coding				
Who/what	Issues	Culture	Experiences/outcomes/emotions	Requests
Collegially		Collegial Employer?	member of (NZPF) excellent s through regular information emails, PD conferences and professional opinion at the end of a phone. As part of my subscription to NZPF I also pay an additional amount to secure the services of legal support, should there be a time when I require it. When I say I pay, it is my school that pays the subscription to NZPF and for the legal fee.	
Collegially NZEI <i>Pleasure</i> <i>Comfort</i> <i>Relief?</i> <i>Annoyance re NS?</i>	leadership on significant educational matters, e.g. spear heading professional concern at the recently imposed National Standards testing regime. I	Power/Politics?	As a tumuaki - excellent advice and guidance should I have any competency or industrial related concerns. also provides leadership on significant educational matters, e.g. spear heading professional concern at the recently imposed National Standards testing regime. I personally pay the subs for being an NZEI member as the Institute bargains my collective employment contract, on my behalf. Their bargaining has ensured ever improved remuneration for tumuaki's, teachers and support staff within the sector.	
Collegially <i>Pleasure</i> <i>reinforcement</i>		Collegial	my local ppl's assn. meet colleagues twice termly, for a morning. 1 a year we organize and attend a conference for members of the assn. about twenty colleagues, secondary and primary - professional conversations and camaraderie are high quality and collaborative.	

Haimona coding				
Who/what	Issues	Culture	Experiences/outcomes/emotions	Requests
Collegial FTP cohort			sprang from FTP PD opportunities. fifteen colleagues met yearly, for 1st 3 yrs, now twice yrly for last 2 yrs, in office of NZPF in Wellington. PPLs from Whangarei, Noth Shore, South Auckland, Rotorua, Taranaki, Hamilton, Marton, Tauranga, Wellington and Invercargill. Our commonality PPLs of schools 200-600 students, beginning at same time being passionate about education. time to share celebrations and dilemmas,hear from Wellington based professionals i.e. MoE, NZCER, NZ Teachers' Council etc.	
Collegial Close colleagues			close colleagues I contact if question, dilemma, uncertainty and want a second opinion. For own PD have attended wide array of conferences, locally and internationally. currently completing Med Educational Leadership and Administration. I attend courses re various components of my job - legal responsibilities, curriculum delivery, staffing, first aid training etc	
BoT		work within a culture of high trust. Collaborative	community level I feel very supported by BoT and SMT. I have a high level of autonomy and work within a culture of high trust. I have been able to work collaboratively to significantly change and improve the culture, learning and physical infrastructure within my school.	
Senior Management team		work within a culture of high trust Collaborative	able to work collaboratively to significantly change and improve the culture, learning and physical infrastructure within my school.	

Haimona coding				
Who/what	Issues	Culture	Experiences/outcomes/emotions	Requests
			<p>wide array supports. Due to my engaging with these supports I don't feel isolated in my job, in fact quite the opposite. It would certainly be possible to be isolated and on the fringes, but I feel this would be due to my choosing to not proactively take professional responsibility for creating professional supportive networks. There are many opportunities available</p>	

## Appendix G.4

## Initial coding of Jocelyn's Input

"Impossible to do the job of principal properly in a small school" too many chores

Who/what	Issues	Culture	Experiences/Outcomes/Emotions	Requests/Researchers ideas
Jocelyn teacher 17 yrs primary sector at big city schools then small rural primary schools. DP in 2000, U1 Principal in 2004 stayed two years, moved to a U2 school in 2006.	It is also impossible to do in a small school.	Learning? testing?	I absolutely love the job of Principal. In its purest form it is the best job, lots of learning, loads of challenge.	
<i>MoE property- schoolhouse unhealthy? Not support? Exasperation? Annoyance?</i>	no training for the job of Principal except been teacher for a long time. The school house was not insulated and water ran down the inside walls. school was over the paddock- it was my job to maintain the property, the grounds, fix the computers, clean if the cleaner didn't come and do most of the paperwork. Fun!! What a challenge.	<i>Societal Bureaucratic? Power?</i>	as a teaching Principal in a school way out in the back blocks. had a 2 yr old son and have never been or have any wish to be married.	
<i>FTPP Support and not support schoolhouse in unhealthy condition Computer expert difficult to get to go out to school? Or insufficient funds?</i>	told off once for being late - long distance mentor with whom to communicate. theories of leadership (great stuff but far cry from running Pet Days -closing down school when road flooded and bus already halfway to school). No speakers been in tiny rural schools although they make up more than half the schools in NZ.		next 2 yrs part of FTTP -3 conferences held in AK, Chch Wlngtn. reimbursed for travel accommodation. long distance mentor with whom to communicate. treated like Kings and Queens most speakers talked about theories of leadership - We learnt about Charters, policies, staff management, the NAGS and NEGS and latterly about implementing the revised NZ Curriculum. I found it very inspiring.	<i>Local or visiting mentor? No thought given to being a primary caregiver -possible to organised babysitting? Is the content FTTP relevant if facilitators have no experience of the realities faced in tiny rural schools? Add people to the team who Have experience in tint rural schools?</i>

Jocelyn coding				
Who/what	Issues	Culture	Experiences/Outcomes/Emotions	Requests/Researchers ideas
Financially Levels of pay – cheap rent		<i>Materialistic</i>	The pay was fantastic and my rent was really cheap.	
Local lady	I managed to find a local lady to look after my son in her home and he was happy.			
I made a network of close friends who were in similar schools to mine and we kept in contact	mainly to let off steam <i>Anger / frustration?</i>			
<i>Not supported by woman parent</i>	<i>Woman parent expresses undermining opinion</i>	<i>Societal (Marian Court's (2001, p. 60 referencing Friedan 1963) notion of being "... based on the stereotypical roles of female full-time housewife and caregiver and male breadwinner".</i>	The reason I left the job was that most of the Principals around me were men, and took their children to work with them (this was seen as sweet by the local community) but if I was to do it then I was "working the system". My son never came to work with me except for once on a trip, and one of the 10 or so parents who came on the trip with me commented that I shouldn't have brought my son <i>?anger? disgust</i>	
ERO normal cycle I felt very well supported. <i>Labour govt.</i>		<i>Learning Teaching</i>	I had moved this school from being on an ERO review to being put back on the normal cycle within a year, and I decided at that point to leave. Despite being on my own in the middle of nowhere for two years, mainly teaching 21 children from 5 to 13 years old in one classroom for four days a week, I absolutely loved the job and missed it when I left, and I felt very well supported. The theories of teaching under a Labour Government resonated with my theories on education, and I could always find help when I needed it.	

Jocelyn coding				
Who/what	Issues	Culture	Experiences/Outcomes/Emotions	Requests/ <i>Researchers ideas</i>
In 2006 rural school that had 60 pupils	The school house was equally dire	National? <i>Leadership?</i>	I felt that I could do the job as I understood what managing a school consisted of and I felt that I had the experience to manage staff now.	
BoT chair			warned at the outset that the community was a difficult one – largely wealthy dairy farmers and their workers. To begin with everything went very well – some issues with staff but my Board Chairperson was a <b>very reasonable man</b> and we got along.	
Not supportive <i>women on board wanting preferential treatment for some children and challenging PPL about this BoT where it does not speak with one voice?</i>	There were a couple of women on the Board who disagreed with everything that I said and this <b>stressed</b> me  <i>Aloneness Determination</i>	Philosophy of education Power Societal	I have a very <b>democratic and equitable take on my politics and philosophy of education</b> , and I believe that <b>all children in schools should be treated as economically equal</b> , and there were several instances when these women showed themselves to believe that <b>some of their children were entitled to different treatment than others at the school</b> and continued to challenge me on my <b>decisions around these issues every time they arose</b> . There is no support for Principals in these situations as the Board is their employer, and it is not appropriate to <b>escalate every minor disagreement to a union issue every time they arise</b> . So the Principal has to fight these battles on their own. I have managed to do so.	<i>Compulsory training for board chairs re keeping board members in check?</i>

Jocelyn coding				
Who/what	Issues	Culture	Experiences/Outcomes/ <b>Emotions</b>	Requests/ <i>Researchers ideas</i>
My son			As my son attends my school my childcare issues have all but disappeared	
local women - <i>stereotypical roles</i>	the local women have disapprove of my work hours – 8.15 -5.00pm. also either Sat or Sun every week – my son comes with me. Apparently I arrive too late – although there is another teacher who likes to start early.	Societal		
Appraiser <i>why not in job description – perhaps could/should be part of?</i>			some support from my appraisers (usually a retired Principal who I have hired to appraise me) and often these people become as much a <b>mentor</b> as anything else although it is not in their job description to do so.	
ERO review			Successful ERO Review in the second year that I was at the school and our roll grew from 50 to 75	



Jocelyn coding				
Who/what	Issues	Culture	Experiences/Outcomes/Emotions	Requests/ <i>Researchers ideas</i>
Staff - <i>Collegiality</i>		Fun Collegial	loyal and hard working and we have a lot of laughs and good get togethers.	
BoT mixed support			The Board have grown closer over the years and the more difficult women are moving on.	
Jocelyn what has kept me in the job is always want serve and I felt that I was <b>contributing to the community</b> . I felt good because there was a <b>moral purpose to my work</b> .	(Although there is a whole feminist side to that which is completely unrealistic in terms of being a happily unmarried woman with a child but I've chosen to never fight that battle).		MoE economically distasteful decisions (i.e. the buses) largely supported the teachers and Ppls in their wages and working conditions. rural schools there an expectation that the Principal will open the school at 7.30 in the morning and look after the students until someone collects them and that they'll clean the pool and maintain the water supply and keep the grounds tidy and all the other jobs that aren't covered by actual personnel in larger schools, that's partly what makes the job interesting.	
National Standards	along came National Standards. I have implemented them in my school. Because it's the law and my community voted for them.	Political Educational Leadership Legal	At first I was horrified that some of my Labour voting teaching friends were voting for National!! (WHY? "Because it's time for a change"). I knew that my community would vote National – all dyed in the wool National supporters. But- no awareness of the <b>implications of this policy in teaching circles</b> , no outcry until it too late. I have implemented them in my school. Because it's the law and my community voted for them. Many of my friends now are disgusted that I should have made this decision but they didn't understand what they were in for before the government was elected. This is the nature of democracy. But I have no stomach for my job now.	

Jocelyn coding				
Who/what	Issues	Culture	Experiences/Outcomes/Emotions	Requests/Researchers ideas
Women principals Promotion	women do not get hired for jobs in larger schools over men. It seems the career path that I imagined for myself does not exist except rarely. I am small, blonde and pretty and have no testicles.	Sexist Male domination of the field	I have applied for several jobs in larger schools over the last couple of years and have come second. I did not know they were part of the job description. I have an exemplary behaviour management record and I coach soccer. In the last 3 yrs I have inducted 3 new teachers into my school and our way of doing things, 2 beginning teachers, and one teacher returning to the workforce after a 10 year absence to raise children. implemented the revised New Zealand curriculum, including writing a new Charter and creating a new school curriculum. We have had PD in Numeracy, Music, Health and PE, and latterly ICT.	<i>Record of achievements do not seem to count</i>
		<i>Employer? Some employers pay for their staff to upgrade themselves Lifelong learning</i>	I have completed three papers towards a Masters degree as I see my only way forward is through higher education, paid for by myself.	
ERO	just finished an ERO review. we are on a 3 yr cycle, not one of the lucky schools on a 4-5 yr cycle. not sure what criteria is. emphasis seems to be on Numeracy and Literacy and teacher competency.			
Teachers PPLs	There is talk of performance pay.	<i>Political?</i>		

Jocelyn coding				
Who/what	Issues	Culture	Experiences/Outcomes/Emotions	Requests/Researchers ideas
Women teachers	But <b>teachers have no voice</b> and the smaller the school, the more feminised the workforce, the more <b>invisible</b> we are.	<i>Feminist?</i>  <i>Lifelong learning</i>	I don't know how to end this. I really want to emphasise how great this job is – and how rewarding – <b>teaching children and being so involved in the life of a community has been one of the greatest privileges there is.</b> I can't imagine doing anything that I will love so much (although I am <b>loving my study</b> )	<i>Passion for teaching</i> <i>Privilege</i> <i>rewarding</i>
BoT	To the best of their ability.	Societal Volunteer	Am I supported by my Board?	<i>(contextual) training? Lack of ability to understand? Perhaps community responsibility is not the total answer – should there also be professional involvement?</i>
Community	<b>society more and more sees teachers as the enemy.</b> This is political whether we like it or not,. Many people in isolation say “I take my hat off to teachers” but don't understand modern teaching pedagogies.	Political	Am I supported by my community? Largely, but they have no understanding of my job really,	<i>Can schools explain these things to their parents – would the parents want to know?</i>
Women teachers/principals			Most small schools can't afford to do the flashy PR that large schools can and so are gradually falling behind, lead by disposable women who have been imprisoned in those schools by a <b>glass ceiling Anger</b> hat everyone knows about.	

## Appendix G.5

## Initial coding of Melanie's input

Who/What	Issues	Culture	Experiences/outcomes/emotions	requests
Melanie FTP 2 yrs ago		<i>Collegial? Comfort? Well-prepared by colleagues</i>	never been involved in Aspiring Principal's Programme. I had, however, had a good grounding in budgeting curriculum areas, managing curriculum development within and across school's and in appraisals etc. & a raft of other things through my DPship. as a DP in a couple of schools had me quite well prepared to deal with relating to students in a pastoral care capacity (as opposed to just teaching and day-to-day issues) , also in relating to teachers as a leader and to parents with regard to behaviour, initiating learning support & so on. I had, had lots of exposure to dealing with the 'human relationship' side of life as a DP.	
Paperwork -	my experiences and study had not prepared me for the phenomenal amounts of paperwork, much of it seemingly bureaucratic BS. How normal human beings can be expected to read, digest, process, implement change, review etc. is beyond me – especially in a small school. In a small school there are far fewer people to share the load and the thinking. There are so many changing legislations & MoE documents that it can be hard to keep up & reflect the expectations appropriately in the school context.	bureaucracy		

Melanie coding				
Who/What	Issues	Culture	Experiences/outcomes/emotions	requests
FTPP			FTPP an absolute 'must' for new principals. I began the program in the holidays preceding me commencing as principal. run through the Auckland College of Education & is headed by John Locke. two separate conferences over several days, plus some module work, and a mentor whom the FTP's meet with most terms over an 18month period. The mentor also visits the FTP's school on several occasions.	
Waikato Principals' Association		Networking	an extremely strong & well networked group. meet once a term & the day is PD for Principals. They are well organised & well attended. They also provide an email once a week that keeps us in the loop about educational matters e.g. charter development, National Standards & right down to recognition of someone's award or the passing of a dedicated member.	
School Support Services, run out of Waikato Uni.		Supportive	a strong group that offer 4 modules a year specifically for Principals.	
2 other principals			two other principals of similar size schools within a thirty minute drive. We work well together & share ideas & advice. We also have developed the opportunity to have sports days between our schools for some competition, plus a Science Fair and Wearable Arts.	
Hamilton MoE property manager and the finance/staffing manager			Hamilton MoE property manager and the finance/staffing manager are excellent . They know their work inside out & are able to express guidance in a way that the fledgling Principals can understand.	

Melanie coding				
Who/What	Issues	Culture	Experiences/outcomes/emotions	requests
Online TKI , Leadspace, Enrol now called .... ? Leadership (I think), Multiserve, MoE onlines			Online TKI , Leadspace, Enrol now called .... ? Leadership (I think), Multiserve, MoE onlines are all fantastic tools & resource areas for a multitude of support i.e. forms, up-to-date news, guidance, examples of most things. great to have all this information at hand & available all the time & knowing it's up-to-date.	This is probably an area that new principals could do with inservice in, in the early stages of principalship.
(SE) based in Thames			(SE) in Thames very approachable re finding support for behaviour/learning problems, offering guidance & finding us other avenues of support.	
			I believe principals are extremely well supported with regard to having access to almost everything required. There are also many skilled people to be approached about any educational matter. I have never had a problem or question that could not be answered by someone. It may not have been the first person or place approached but the answer was always there somewhere.	
	The only issue I have is the absolutely ludicrous & impossible amounts of paperwork, data & documentation we are expected to process & implement.			

## Appendix G.6

## Initial coding of Nigel's input

Who/what	Issues	Culture	Experiences/Outcomes/Emotions	Requests
Nigel 11 yrs .BoT		Governance Management	where I was DP all the SMT attended BoT meetings and I also made the decision to attend BOT property committee meetings. proved to be invaluable when went to my next post. gave me a much better understanding of the differences between management and governance	
BoT Chairs			at the next post I had a very experienced BOT chair who gave me both professional and personal support. We met regularly and his chairing of BOT meetings made my role quite clear to the staff, board and community. he resigned the next chair continued same vein.	
3 other principals			From this time I developed my own support network amongst Principals using three of them as a sounding board.	
FPPP			In my first year I also attended a first time principal's course which was useful.	
PD		Lifelong learning	<i>The 2003 Institute for Educational Leadership Principals' Development Planning Centre</i> for an experienced Principal's course. These were both excellent support for me professionally.	
BoT chair		Governance	5 yrs headed for a College where again I had a very experienced and competent BOT chair. She supported me totally but also made accountable for the performance of the College. She was both a professional support and became a personal friend.	

Nigel coding				
Who/what	Issues	Culture	Experiences/Outcomes/Emotions	Requests
Other principals of decile one high schools with a commonality of problems provide wonderful support for each other.	a tremendous support when the gang issues were at their peak,	Collegial	part of a coalition of decile one high schools. PPLs have become both my professional and personal support base. sounding board for ideas source of inspiration- without not have made it past 2 <sup>nd</sup> yr.	
PD Theoretical bases to beliefs		Lifelong learning	2009 sabbatical attended a course for experienced Principals at Harvard University. great to see so many of the things I believed in had a theoretical base to them and I have returned refreshed and determined to continue down the same path for some years to come.	
Financial support re understanding	There is one form of support which is missing and should be provided by the MOE and that is after a Principal is appointed one of the MOE financial advisors should do a short report on the current financial situation the school is in.		This needs to be done in simple language and not just a restatement of the balance sheet. For example having a surplus is not much use if the plant is completely run down. How long it takes and how difficult it is to eliminate large deficits needs to be explained. Also the biggie that overstaffing is extremely hard on budgets needs to be pointed out.	MOE financial advisors should do a short report on the current financial situation the school is in.

## Appendix G.7

## Initial coding of Susan's input

Susan				
Who/What	Issues	Culture	Experiences/Outcomes/ <b>Emotions</b>	Requests
A cohesive senior management team			We share a common vision and passion for the school and students, work hard together and derive a huge amount of personal and professional support from one another	
Outside appraiser –			particularly one with principal experience	
The students		Fun	Their responsiveness, appreciation Continual source of inspiration and joy	
BoT	There are still issues around our school having parents with the required skills – personnel, finance, property, strategy		The chair specifically helps with challenging personnel issues board members who roll up their sleeves and help out at working bees and school events The election of a competent chairperson reduced my workload significantly	
Outside partnerships			Local church , business partnership with ASB. People (with the skills) to help us move forward to achieve our vision, they bring energy and inspiration and enable us to feel linked into a wider community	
Close partnerships with principal colleagues			They provide advice and support when needed	
Family and friends			Have got in behind my dream to build a successful school. Practical help (sausage sizzles, working bees, financial donations). Volunteering to work regularly with small groups of students. Emotional support when the going gets tough.	

Susan coding				
Who/What	Issues	Culture	Experiences/Outcomes/ <b>Emotions</b>	Requests
Local NZSTA adviser			Always available to provide professional, prompt advice and support. His depth of experience in the role enables him to quickly sum up situations and provide helpful advice to move tricky situations forward.	
NZSTA Helpdesk			a great support	
NZSTA emergency staffing scheme -			A disaster for our school with the actions of a person who ran it in the past	
Professional development			Time to attend an international conference and to reflect on the bigger picture our school operates in	
CYF			One of the most challenging aspects in my role as principal has been witnessing and dealing with the effects of high levels of child abuse and neglect within our school community. Referrals made to CYF tie me up in many hours extra work talking with students, locating and collating information for social workers, supervising distressed students and interacting with angry parents in the following days/weeks. Often investigations are hampered by CYF workers with poor levels of English or multiple social workers that necessitates repeating information several times. Communication between CYF and the school is poor and usually there is no information given to the school about the outcome of the investigation. In addition I feel that the focus of CYF 'interventions' is disproportionately on assisting the adults and the children are left to get on with things themselves... with no follow-up counselling or support.	

Susan coding				
Who/What	Issues	Culture	Experiences/Outcomes/ <b>Emotions</b>	Requests
GSE			GSE support for moderate and high needs students is also inadequate and this places stress on staff and management in low decile schools with many students with learning and behaviour needs. I have not found GSE to be supportive when we have had extremely high needs students in our school- basically there is inadequate skilled support in terms of psychologists and support workers and funding. Extremely disturbed and violent students are left to schools to manage largely on their own – often with temporary funding provided to employ an untrained teacher aide in order to get through a serious crisis. Over the last five years GSE systems have been reviewed and the department restructured yet it still appears to be dysfunctional and unable to assist schools.	
SWIS (Social worker in schools)	Clash between teaching & social work professions		unsupported by the SWiS programme which operated in our school until board discontinued it. five SW appointed to our school over four years, not one of them was able to meet outcomes the school determined critical. a clash of cultures between the teaching profession and the social work profession. unclear lines of management in the service leading to insufficient direction and supervision of staff. weak accountability systems. programme caused huge stress in our school with social workers only prepared to operate within a tight social work model - not necessarily effective in the school setting. system needs to be rethought and a blended model adapted to the pressing needs of low decile school communities needs to be developed. this programme one of the most poorly managed and inefficient services offered to schools.	

Susan coding				
Who/What	Issues	Culture	Experiences/Outcomes/ <b>Emotions</b>	Requests
MoE & the National Standards		political	<p>Debacle - introduction of National Standards - worst conceived-poorly implemented education initiatives in my experience as an educator. standards are flawed because they were introduced too quickly; not enough time was put into consultation with educators, the trialling process and the development of an effective professional development plan to implement them across all schools. As a principal legally required to lead the implementation of the standards in our school with poor guidelines and inadequate professional development and support. With our high levels of ESOL students (one of the five highest by % in Auckland) staff are required to come to grips with the National Standards, the Literacy Learning Progressions and the English Language Learning Progressions- a different reporting scale and system is required thus doubling the work for teachers in our school compared to other schools with fewer ESOL learners. -MoE advisers unable to answer implementation questions and schools have been left to figure out how to respond to the spectre of published league tables.... High stakes reporting!!!</p> <p>rushed implementation of the NS has cut across the real development work of the NZC and the development of our local school curriculum. only so many meetings we can have in a year and most of these have gone to getting teachers up to speed with the NS. Research such as MECI verifies that the NS have cut across the implementation of the NZC documenting the low levels of implementation of the NZC in many schools. NS also effected narrowing the curriculum – the government focus on reading, writing and maths has driven everything down to the bare minimum and ignores the real world rich learning opportunities for our students in science, technology and the arts.</p> <p>In addition, the implementation of the NS has incurred extra costs. We have had to pay for alterations to the SMS and for PD release days. No extra funding was provided by the MOE specifically for this- this has provided a degree of tension as we area small school with limited funding streams- e.g we don't have international students or an effective PTA to fundraise.</p>	

Susan coding				
Who/What	Issues	Culture	Experiences/Outcomes/ <b>Emotions</b>	Requests
				<p><b>Extra support required for low decile schools</b>  more support is needed specifically for low-decile schools who are dealing with the most socially and economically disadvantaged students and communities. both financial and emotional  Full time SENCO  Parent programme facilitator (HIPPI, PPP or IY)  Lower class sizes I think we urgently need more research into the link between class size and student achievement)  Incentives to encourage staff stability - extra professional development time and MUs.  Supervision – the provision of a skilled educator/psychologist to debrief with principal/SENCO on a regular basis. How do you rid yourself of the images/voices of badly beaten and/or sexually and emotionally abused children who recount the horror of their experience? How do we deal with this one day and be positive and ready to lead with optimism the next?</p>

## Appendix G.8

## Initial coding of Thomas' input

Who/What	Issues	Culture	Experiences/Outcomes	Requests
Admin and less complex tasks		Managerial	minimize importance of support which relates to the administrative - less complex roles. many sources available - never trouble accessing - guidance in a manual, on line or at the end of a phone line.	
Professionals who could provide support and guidance around issues such as relationship building, industrial issues and curriculum design and delivery.	harder to receive. challenge lay in engaging in the self development	Educational, Leadership, Trust , respect	important support assisted my development as a leader . has also been easy to access but has been harder to receive. - support and guidance around issues such as relationship building, industrial issues and curriculum design and delivery. To access have had to locate people who I trusted and respected for their knowledge and wisdom . - six people - significantly filled this role for me over my career. access to all they could offer in terms of support for my development as an educator and a leader. I was free to observe and analyse and they were giving of their time with regards discussion and critique.	
Support		Personal responsibility	support an internal activity of the mind- the individual who must take responsibility for their own development- only beneficial outcome from support. seeking support for our growth, not for our incident management, or worse, crisis management.	
principals dealing with industrial issues.		Life-long learning a personal responsibility	many examples of good practice and many principals who have sought support from STA, NZEI or colleagues, have then made and acted on sound decisions and have learnt from the experience. I have also seen a number who have acted on advice but have failed to learn from the experience and have managed to recreate the same situation on future occasions. the second group did not really receive it as they did not complete the vital personal professional development which would have given value to the support.	

Thomas coding				
Who/What	Issues	Culture	Experiences/Outcomes	Requests
no shortage of sources of support for principals- no overpowering social stigma against seeking it.	deficit is in the mental processing which some principals do on some occasions, it is their response to their own personal professional development.	Collegial	principals are actively encouraged by their colleagues and by the various agencies to seek support	
MoE control of professional development money and resources	more potential for harm than good in our education system	Political	restrict my comment to support for principals it could generally be applied to other groups in our system. Significant function of MOE to deliver the political policies of the govt of the day. no natural link between this function and the development of effective principals. A case in point would be the provision of FTP PD. saddened by ..MOE control. this resource as did not lead to the development of the diverse and critically thinking body of principals which our system needs. not PD rather, training. Coming from MOE gave recipients a feeling of confidence that it was 'the word'. certainly came with the understanding that the recipients could leave their thinking talents at the door.	
Good support professional learning group structure			many people running these so principals should be able to match their idiosyncrasies with an appropriate provider or group. I have been in such a group for at least 12 years and the critical friend aspect as well as the shared academic growth that this has offered me has been very beneficial.	
Friends				
Support a time-out place				

## Appendix H

## Formative coding of combined concepts from principals' letters

Support was seen as...	May involve...	Culture of
Varied – between principals; depends upon the people around the principal.	Family: Friends: Students: Colleagues: SMT: The community: Government:	
An internal activity of the mind – lack of support is a deficit in mental processing	Engaging in self-development: Acting on advice and learning from it	Personal responsibility for own growth: Lifelong learning
Regional FTPP programmes	Facilitators, mentor, phone/email support. Being reimbursed for travel and accommodation.	
Passion for teaching	Moral Purpose: Passion for teaching - Knowing all children in the school are getting the best education possible	Education
Experience as a DP	Prior experience	
Appraiser	Especially one with principal experience	
Oriented to managerial roles	Colleagues. MoE.	Responsibility Accountability
Oriented towards leadership roles	NZEI: Staff: Children	
NZEI spearheading concern re National standards:		
Mentor Forming a close relationship, achieving conversations that encourage growth both as a leader and a person	Outside committed mentor	Nurture Lifelong Learning
Learning how to develop relationships	Outside mentor: performance improvement plan	Learning how to develop relationships
A great school culture	Principal, staff, pupils, community	Education
MoE	Online Resources: Wages/ working conditions: School support services: Property section: Finance/staffing section: EPD: FTPP: Sabbaticals	Professionalism Respect for authority
Professional Development	MoE: Principal's organisations: Outside agencies: Overseas specific courses and conferences: reflection on the bigger picture the school operates in	
Collegiality	NZPF: NZEI: Local and National Principal's organisations: FTP cohort:: Close colleagues: SMT: Staff	Professional Fun Collegial
NZSTA telephone and email support	General trustee inquiries, industrial support	Governance Power

<b>Support was seen as...</b>	<b>May involve...</b>	<b>Culture of</b>
NZSTA Industrial adviser	Depth of experience to move tricky situations forward	
Experience as a DP	Prior experience	Experience as a DP
Legal support – if needed	NZPF	Power
<b>Support was seen as...</b>	<b>May involve...</b>	<b>Culture of</b>
BoT chair	Professional/personal support. A competent one	Trust
SMT	Collaboration: Cohesion: Collaborative work to improve culture, learning physical structure of school	
Professional learning group structure	Critical friends and academic growth	
Local systems when you hit the wall	Local MoE	
Financial	Pay. Cheap rent for rural schoolhouse	
Childcare	Child happy	
Network of close friends in similar schools	Chance to let off steam	
The joys involved in teaching children		
BoT	Cohesiveness	Governance
ERO	Successful review	
SE/GSE	Support for learning behaviour problems	
<b>Insufficient support was seen as ...</b>	<b>May Involve</b>	
MoE PD	MoE: Outside agencies:	
Principal lacking Leadership skills/inadequate: school underperforming	Whole school impacted: Covering up takes time from education: Children's education affected: Teacher's careers affected.	
BoT	Lack of parents with the necessary skills in personnel, finance, property, strategic planning	
No training to be a principal	Lack of necessary knowledge	
Paying for own study		
<b>Things seen as not supportive</b>	<b>May involve...</b>	<b>Culture</b>
Appraisals	Waste of time	Management: Power
Principal has outdated leadership style	School culture suffers: school underachieving	
Gender based discrimination	Expected to conform to gender-based stereotypical roles. Women under-represented as principals.	Feminist Fear: Societal norms.
MoE Online Resources	No personal contact	
Professional development	is no ongoing commitment - so impact is limited and relationships are not able to be built	

<b>Things seen as not supportive</b>	<b>May involve...</b>	<b>Culture</b>
Lack of time	Improvement 'put on the back burner'	
Too many chores at rural schools	Time away from leading learning	
Bureaucratic paperwork		
Performance pay		
School bus route tendering process	Multiserve as agent of MoE	
Waiting for an ERO report before intervening to assist where a principal is floundering	Whole school suffers, principal loses self esteem	
<b>Things seen as not supportive</b>	<b>May involve...</b>	<b>Culture</b>
FTEP Programme	Not meeting needs: FTEP Programme not having facilitators who show they know anything about the particular challenges of being a principal in a tiny rural school: The programme content does not seem to address the needs of a principal from a tiny rural school: No thought	
School property and school house run down	An unhealthy environment	
Changes in educational policy with changes in government. National Standards	Resources wasted as school spends time changing	
<b>Contextual undermining factors</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Culture</b>
MoE control of professional development money and resources	More potential for harm than good – since MoE has to deliver the political policies of each current government – no natural link between that function and development of effective principals	Political
NZSTA political agenda	Not supportive of schools	
Growing social curriculum	Takes too much emotional energy from principal	
Too many chores in a small school	Takes time away from leading learning	
Unfavourable Societal stereotyping of teachers		
Lack of PTA		
High levels of child abuse and neglect amongst pupils of school		
CYF – exacerbated by ESOL staff, multiple changes of case managers, focus on helping adults rather than children	Many hours tied up in referrals, talking with pupils, dealing with angry parents.	
High ESOL numbers	Insufficient resources	
SWiS	Clash of cultures between social	
GSE	Inadequate support for moderate and high needs students	
The emotional cost of being emotionally engaged in the school in achieving long-term change	Loss of marriage, alienation of partners	

<b>Contextual undermining factors</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Culture</b>
Negative feedback	Media: Good schools not recognised: Parents feeling they have the right to comment on hours worked by principal: Parents	
<b>Suggestions for Improvements or Innovations</b>	<b>May involve</b>	
Opportunity to work with experienced principals on a leadership level	Enhance educational outcomes	
MoE funding a committed trained mentor/life coach	Principal will become a better listener and supporter of growth in those around him/her	
SENCOs in every school	The growing social curriculum might be better addressed	
Changing some of the 'parameters' such as competition between schools so that principals are able to "build a collaborative and supportive network	The advancement of learning outcomes for pupils	
Finance	MoE simple terms report to incoming principal as to where and why the school is and the implications of that	
Extra financial and emotional support for low decile schools	Parent programme facilitator: Lower class sizes: Incentives to encourage staff stability- extra PD time and MUs. Supervision-skilled educator psychologist to debrief staff involved with abused children	

## Appendix I Condensed coding of principals' letters

Support was seen as	Things seen as not supportive
Experience as a DP	
Varied – differences between principals	Lack of time
A mental process	
Passion and joy in teaching: children	Competition between schools
A great school culture	
Developing relationships	
Close friends: Family:	Emotional cost of being emotionally engaged in the school
MoE: FPHP: PD: Local systems when you hit the wall: online resources	MoE: Waiting for an ERO report before intervening to assist: FPHP where it doesn't meet needs: School property and house run down
PD: principals' groups, overseas, university study	PD – when it is not an ongoing process: Paying for own study
Mentor	
	Changes in educational policy with changes in government
Appraiser	Appraisals
Leadership	Lack of leadership skills
Managerial roles	Too many chores at rural schools
NZEI :Principals groups: Legal support	
Collegiality	
SMT	
Professional learning group	School bus route tendering process
Pay rates: working conditions	Performance pay: Gender based discrimination
SE	GSE
Childcare	
ERO	
	Bureaucratic paperwork
NZSTA : BoT chair: BoT	BoT
<b>Contextual</b>	<b>undermining factors</b>
MoE control of PD funds/resources	Growing social curriculum
High levels of child abuse/neglect amongst pupils	CYF: SwiS
High ESOL numbers	NZSTA political agenda
<b>Suggestions for improvements/ Innovations</b>	
SENCOs in every school	MoE fund a committed long-term mentor
Remove the structures that cause competition between schools	Opportunity to work with experienced principals on a leadership level
MoE Finance expert to report finances in plain language upon induction	Extra financial/emotional support for low decile schools

## Appendix J

### Teacher Headcount by Designation (grouped) and Gender in State and State Integrated Schools, as at April 2004 – 2010

(Downloaded January 6 2011 from Education Counts Website, an MoE division)

Gender	Year	Principal	Senior Management	Middle Management	Teacher	Resource Teachers	Community Education	Guidance	Therapists	Total
<b>Total</b>	2004	2493	2948	7404	34666	911	6	93	35	48556
	2005	2437	2968	7504	35252	927	5	117	31	49241
	2006	2416	2986	7397	36194	966	5	125	36	50125
	2007	2420	3002	7655	36301	955	6	145	37	50521
	2008	2399	2947	7358	37092	962	7	144	41	50950
	2009	2411	2964	7745	37736	945	4	129	40	51974
	2010	2422	2929	8722	37322	990	2	134	42	52563
<b>Male</b>	2004	1465	844	3110	8286	143	1	33	1	13883
	2005	1422	854	3123	8466	152	1	43	2	14063
	2006	1383	852	3083	8720	158	1	38	1	14236
	2007	1373	857	3139	8744	158	1	47	2	14321
	2008	1320	849	2975	9007	155	1	50	1	14358
	2009	1319	825	2997	9043	149	1	46	2	14382
	2010	1283	828	3252	8939	162	0	45	1	14510
<b>Female</b>	2004	1028	2104	4294	26380	768	5	60	34	34673
	2005	1015	2114	4381	26786	775	4	74	29	35178
	2006	1033	2134	4314	27474	808	4	87	35	35889
	2007	1047	2145	4516	27557	797	5	98	35	36200
	2008	1079	2098	4383	28085	807	6	94	40	36592
	2009	1092	2139	4748	28693	796	3	83	38	37592
	2010	1139	2101	5470	28383	828	2	89	41	38053

Source: TPDW

## Appendix K Information about the SWiS programme in schools

### Social Workers in Schools (SWiS) – Information downloaded from the CYF website

[www.cyf.govt.nz](http://www.cyf.govt.nz) reprinted with permission 11.01.11 from Gabrielle Tully Communications Adviser

#### What is SWiS?

Social Workers in Schools (SWiS) places a social worker right in school grounds, bringing together a child or young person's home and school life.

A SWiS social worker is there to help when difficult family circumstances cause a young person to struggle with education, health or social development. By working with them in this way, we can help improve their chances of success in all areas of their life.

SWiS social workers are based in low-decile schools. The SWiS programme is run in: [Primary and Intermediate schools](#) and [Secondary schools](#)

The service is

- completely free to students and their families
- completely voluntary – it's up to the children, young people and their families if they want to talk with a social worker.

#### Find out more about:

[getting a social worker in your school](#)

[key players in the SWiS programme](#)

[toolkits and other useful links](#)

[becoming a SWiS social worker](#)

#### The way we work

In primary schools, SWiS will only work with children if they have the agreement of their family – and hopefully their involvement. They'll work with children and their families on things like:

- helping children develop good friendship skills
- helping children feel good about themselves
- working with the family and whānau to develop parenting skills
- getting families help with issues like money advice or gambling worries
- honouring the family and whānau cultural background every step of the way.

In secondary schools SWiS is more focused on the students themselves. They'll only work with families and whānau if that's what the student wants. A social worker teams up with a student to help them reject negative activities (e.g. gang involvement) in favour of activities that will help them reach their full potential.

SWiS is funded by Child, Youth and Family and contracted out to community organisations.

#### Contact us

We want to help students thrive. If you need any further information our SWiS team will be happy to help.

Phone **0508 FAMILY (0508 326 459)**

Email [cyf\\_swis@cyf.govt.nz](mailto:cyf_swis@cyf.govt.nz)