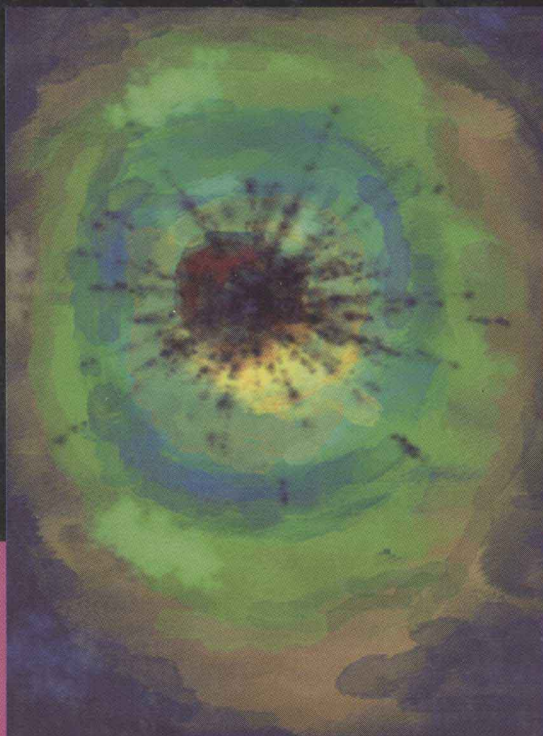


PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

series editors: Ivor Goodson and Andy Hargreaves

Developing Leadership

creating the schools of tomorrow



Martin J. Coles

Geoff Southworth



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**Martin J Coles and
Geoff Southworth**

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Developing Leadership

Professional Learning

Series Editors: Ivor Goodson and Andy Hargreaves

The work of teachers has changed significantly in recent years and now, more than ever, there is a pressing need for high-quality professional development. This timely new series examines the actual and possible forms of professional learning, professional knowledge, professional development and professional standards that are beginning to emerge and be debated at the beginning of the twenty-first century. The series will be important reading for teachers, teacher educators, staff developers and policy makers throughout the English-speaking world.

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Bob Lingard, Debra Hayes, Martin Mills and Pam Christie: *Leading Learning*

Judyth Sachs: *The Activist Teaching Profession*



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Series editors' preface

Teaching today is increasingly complex work, requiring the highest standards of professional practice to perform it well (Goodson and Hargreaves 1996). It is the core profession, the key agent of change in today's knowledge society. Teachers are the midwives of that knowledge society. Without them, or their competence, the future will be malformed and stillborn. In the United States, George W. Bush's educational slogan has been to leave no child behind. What is clear today in general, and in this book in particular, is that leaving no child behind means leaving no teacher or leader behind either. Yet, teaching is also in crisis, staring tragedy in the face. There is a demographic exodus occurring in the profession as many teachers in the ageing cohort of the Boomer generation are retiring early because of stress, burnout or disillusionment with the impact of years of mandated reform on their lives and work. After a decade of relentless reform, in a climate of shaming and blaming teachers for perpetuating poor standards, the attractiveness of teaching as a profession has faded fast among potential new recruits.

Teaching has to compete much harder against other professions for high calibre candidates than it did in the last period of mass recruitment – when able women were led to feel that only nursing and secretarial work were viable options. Teaching may not yet have reverted to being an occupation for 'unmarriageable women and unsaleable men', as Willard Waller described it in 1932, but many American inner cities now run their school systems on high numbers of uncertified teachers. The teacher recruitment crisis in England has led some schools to move to a four-day week; more and more schools are run on the increasingly casualized labour of temporary teachers from overseas, or endless supply teachers whose quality busy administrators do not always have time to monitor (Townsend 2001).

Meanwhile, in the Canadian province of Ontario in 2001, hard-nosed and hard-headed reform strategies led in a single year to a decrease in applications to teacher education programmes in faculties of education by 20–25 per cent, and a drop in a whole grade level of accepted applicants.

Amid all this despair and danger though, there remains great hope and some reasons for optimism about a future of learning that is tied in its vision to an empowering, imaginative and inclusive vision for teaching as well. The educational standards movement is showing visible signs of over-reaching itself, as people are starting to complain about teacher shortages in schools and the loss of creativity and inspiration in classrooms (Hargreaves 2003). There is growing international support for the resumption of more humane middle-years philosophies in the early years of secondary school that put priority on community and engagement, alongside curriculum content and academic achievement. School districts in the United States are increasingly seeing that high-quality professional development for teachers is absolutely indispensable to bringing about deep changes in student achievement (Fullan 2001). In England and Wales, policy documents and White Papers are similarly advocating more 'earned autonomy', and schools and teachers are performing well (e.g. DfES 2001). Governments almost everywhere are beginning to speak more positively about teachers and teaching – bestowing honour and respect where blame and contempt had prevailed in the recent past.

The time has rarely been more opportune, or more pressing, to think deeper about what professional learning, professional knowledge, and professional status should look like for the new generation of teachers who will shape the next three decades of public education. Should professional learning accompany increased autonomy for teachers, or should its provision be linked to the evidence of demonstrated improvements in pupil achievement results? Do successful schools do better when the professional learning is self-guided, discretionary, and intellectually challenging, while failing schools or schools in trouble benefit from required training in the skills that evidence shows can raise classroom achievement quickly? And does accommodating professional learning to the needs of different schools and their staffs constitute administrative sensitivity and flexibility (Hopkins *et al.* 1997), or does it constitute a kind of professional development apartheid (Hargreaves 2003). These are the kinds of questions and issues which this series on professional learning sets out to address.

How effectively teachers pursue their own professional learning depends, of course, on their own interest and initiative. But the extent and effectiveness of professional learning is also influenced by the school communities in which teachers work. The leaders of these communities create the climate of encouragement and expectation in which teachers do or do not learn how to improve professionally. Helping teachers learn well so they can help pupils

to learn well is one of the fundamental responsibilities of leadership – and one of the essential elements of professional learning among leaders themselves.

Coles and Southworth's book *Developing Leadership*, examines the significant role of leaders individually, and leadership collectively, in improving the quality of learning among everyone in the school. Bringing together some of the world's leading writers and researchers on educational leadership from Britain, America, Australia, Europe and Asia, Coles and Southworth's edited collection sets out visions for leadership learning and leadership development that focuses not merely on passing along existing leadership knowledge, but on developing the future leadership capacities that will be needed in the schools of tomorrow. Their collection deals with how to distribute learning and leadership among the entire educational community, rather than concentrating it in the hands of a few highly-placed individuals, and how to pass on leadership learning across the generations through improved processes of leadership succession. Mentoring, coaching, networking and training are all dealt with in this state-of-the-art text, along with more complex issues of how to create and sustain entire cultures of learning and leadership.

Coles and Southworth, the editors of this collection, are themselves distinguished researchers and writers in the fields of professional learning and educational leadership. They also direct the research department, and help steer the agenda of leadership research, in England's new and highly-influential National College of School Leadership (NCSL). Established by the UK National Government and opened by Tony Blair in 2002, NCSL is a unique national organization that tries to ensure that school leaders are supported, developed and have access to research and leading-edge thinking on leadership from across the world. The College organizes and orchestrates all the major development and accredited training for all kinds of educational school leaders, from emergent to advanced, through face-to-face, school-based and on-line learning, and through networked learning and inquiry among leaders themselves.

This key book on leadership and leadership learning, therefore, represents the kind of research and thinking on leadership that is most respected in one of the world's most influential institutions of leadership learning and development. Michael Fullan (2001) has argued that if the closing years of the twentieth century were marked by a focus on standards, then the opening decade of the twenty-first century is, in many ways, the decade of leadership. In this decade, the improvement and renewal of leadership is being increasingly connected to the improvement of pupil learning and achievement. Intellectually and strategically, *Developing Leaders* places itself squarely in the centre of this vital agenda connecting leadership to learning. Years of official obsession with the management of standards and

targets in tested achievement are giving way to a new era of leadership that will create learning for all in a creative and complex knowledge society. In this respect, *Developing Leaders* takes us significantly forward in understanding how teachers learn and how leaders can and should learn better still.

Andy Hargreaves
Ivor Goodson

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List of figures and tables

Figures

2.1	Planning and continuity	24
3.1	Reciprocal interdependency	41
3.2	Pooled interdependency	43
3.3	Sequential interdependency	45
6.1	A contextually sensitive approach to PPD	89
8.1	Three fields of knowledge	115
8.2	Shallow, deep, profound learning model	116
9.1	A Personal Electronic Transactor	128
10.1	Sequential aspects of organizational learning	141
10.2	Effects of transformational leadership	142
10.3	Other outcomes of schooling	143
10.4	Relationships between non-academic and academic outcomes	145
10.5	Effects of contributions from school leadership and/or organizational learning	146
10.6	Leader's use of task and/or relationships emphasis	149

Tables

6.1	Coming From (Present Personal Professional Background)	91
6.2	Going To (Future Organizational/Community Context)	92



Introduction: Developing Leadership – creating the schools of tomorrow

Good leadership is critical to a school's success. The quality of leadership can make a difference between a school which struggles and one which strives for the highest levels of attainment, between a school where pupils and staff are pulling in different directions and one where everyone collaborates and works towards a shared purpose.

Fundamentally it can make a difference between success for the few and success for everyone. But how do we develop good school leaders, able to make the schools of tomorrow the best they can be?

This book is not about prescriptions or blueprints. It is about opening up debate and describing possibilities. The idea for the book grew out of an international conference organized by the National College for School Leadership (NCSL) entitled *Learning from best practice worldwide*. The conference was designed to explore innovative and significant aspects of educational leadership and bring together international colleagues to generate new understandings. The conference brought together researchers, academics and policy-makers with practitioners and proved a dynamic forum for debate. That debate is reflected in this book.

The study of leadership as a formal discipline is a relatively recent phenomenon of course, and in the literature about leadership it is usual to suggest that as vital a notion as leadership undoubtedly is, there is little agreement around the concept:

There has been an enormous outpouring of writing on leadership since the 1940s but there is little consensus on what counts as leadership, whether it can be taught, even how effective it might be.

(Call for papers: 'Studying leadership': EIASM Workshop
on Leadership Research, University of Oxford. 16 and 17
December 2002)

But it became clear during the NCSL conference that there was a consensus of understanding around certain key themes that crossed national boundaries – themes and ideas that are integral to the different chapters in this book. This book is designed to explore this consensus, to promote our best present understanding of good school leadership, and to inform school leaders, policy-makers and other educationalists about leading edge thinking which bears on the development of school leaders.

The principal themes, which will be highlighted at various points throughout the book, are built around the concepts and practice of: professional learning communities; distributed leadership; sustainability; internship; mentoring and coaching; and strategic thinking about ICT.

Dean Fink's opening chapter, *Developing leaders for their future not our past*, considers a looming crisis in education – the recruitment, induction and professional growth of future leaders. He suggests that years of 'naming, shaming, and blaming' educators for the real and imagined problems of education have made positions of leadership unattractive to many potential leaders. This reluctance to step forward coincides with significant demographic shifts among educators and the increasing demands of a knowledge society. He argues that what is required for the future is an on-going investment in leadership potential, and develops this argument with reference to succession planning in both the private and public sectors.

Andy Hargreaves draws on his current work for the second chapter, developing ideas on *Leadership succession*. He points out that one of the most significant events in the life of a school is a change in its leadership; yet few things in education succeed less than leadership succession. In part, he says, we mismanage succession because our most basic assumptions about leadership are flawed. Drawing on evidence from a Spencer Foundation funded study in eight US and Canadian high schools, he demonstrates how successful succession depends on sound succession planning, on limiting the frequency of succession events, on preserving the idea of leadership in the face of pressures towards more management and on the successful employment of leadership knowledge which is focused as much on preserving past successes and keeping improvements going, as on change or turning things around.

Chapter Three by James Spillane and colleagues, *Developing distributed leadership*, revises and updates his previous writing on the distribution of leadership. The past decade has witnessed extraordinary efforts to improve the quality of teaching in classrooms with raised expectations for student's academic work leading to increased expectations for teacher's practice. This chapter provides evidence and examples of how schools that cultivate certain in-school conditions including shared visions for instruction, norms of collaboration, and collective responsibility for student's academic success create incentives and opportunities for teachers to improve. School leadership is recognized as important in promoting these conditions.

Chapter Four, *Developing leadership for learning communities*, describes work that Stoll and Bolam have been involved in recently to do with creating and sustaining effective professional learning communities. The chapter explores the issues around leadership in professional learning communities. What is a professional learning community? What makes it effective? How is such a community created and sustained? What is the role of school leader in these communities? Such questions imply the need for leaders who are ‘capacity builders’, promoting ongoing and sustainable learning among the entire school community.

Gary Crow has evaluated for the Department for Education and Science in England an internship programme for aspiring headteachers in schools facing challenging circumstances. The project placed experienced deputies in secondary schools facing challenging circumstances for a period of one year. This chapter, *Developing leadership for schools facing challenging circumstances*, does not describe that evaluation, but draws lessons and recommendations for preparing innovative school leaders to work in schools facing challenging circumstances, and analyses the pros and cons of internship as a leadership development practice.

Walker and Dimmock’s chapter, *Developing leadership in context*, follows up the theme of the Crow chapter. The Hong Kong Government has recently introduced a new policy to revitalize the professional development of aspiring, newly appointed and experienced principals. The chapter outlines the new principal professional development policy and highlights some of the successes and problems of the policy to date. Among the positive outcomes is the increased responsibility being taken by principals themselves for developing new and future leaders, and it is this theme which Walker and Dimmock develop.

In Chapter Seven, *Developing innovative leadership*, Ken Stott and Lee Sing Kong offer an analysis of the principles behind and benefits of another leadership development programme, the National Institute of Education in Singapore’s new Principalship Preparation Programme highlighting the intention to develop innovative leaders. With a focus on knowledge creation and innovation, the six months full-time learning experience for talented educators includes a varied menu of learning opportunities, including an overseas visit and an extensive innovation project in schools. The authors discuss the principles which underpin a programme designed to develop school leaders with the capability to operate innovatively in a complex, competitive, fast-changing environment.

Chapter Eight offers an analysis of a third leadership development programme. Launched in 2002, New Visions is a National College for School Leadership programme that supports the development of new headteachers. The programme combines a variety of innovative learning processes and uses the perspective of experienced school leaders. Participants are organized

into networks that combine peer support, problem-solving and study groups. In this chapter, *Developing beginning leadership*, Fred Paterson and John West-Burham draw upon research undertaken to explore the learning processes associated with the programme, and the climate and programme processes that influence the learning and development of the participants. A discussion of implications for future leadership development programmes is a significant element of the chapter.

Tony Richardson's chapter, *Developing leadership for e-confident schools*, describes briefly the major technological changes that have been enacted recently in the mainstream schools system and predicts some of the innovations to come. It then considers the impact of such changes upon teaching and learning from the perspective of school leaders, and draws conclusions about the implications for the development of school leaders. It also develops an argument around the potential conflict between the development of truly independent learning enabled by the sophisticated use of ICT and externally imposed constraints, which cause tensions in the agenda for leadership development.

Bill Mulford has been leading a major research project in Australia, the 'Leadership for Organisational Learning and Student Outcomes (LOLSO) Research Project', which addresses the need to extend present understandings of school reform initiatives that aim to change school practices with the intention of supporting enhanced student learning. In this chapter, *Developing leadership for organisational learning*, results from LOLSO's teacher and student surveys are used to discuss some of the project's research questions: What leadership practices promote organizational learning in schools? In what ways do school leadership and/or organizational learning contribute to student outcomes? The answers to these questions lead to implications relating to distributive leadership, development, context, and a broader understanding of student outcomes. The answers also raise concerns about transactional leadership, that is, school leadership that over-emphasizes the managerial or strategic.

Geoff Southworth's *Overview and conclusions* chapter draws together the themes and issues raised in the previous chapters, examines what they mean for practitioners and researchers and links them to the work of the National College for School Leadership in England. In very broad terms there are two themes which run across all the chapters: leadership development, and creating schools of tomorrow. It is no surprise that these are the two major themes, given the title of this book. However, it is also clear from many of the chapters that the two themes together create a third one – developing leaders for tomorrow's schools. This final chapter discusses each of these three themes in turn, identifying the range of ideas which the writers of the previous chapters have focused on and considering the issues they have highlighted.