

APPENDIX FOUR

Management and Administration Training Strategies for Schools

In chapters seven and eight of this report we described four core functions for the educational technology network proposed in this report:

- Content acquisition and dissemination;
- Communication;
- Administration and management;
- Network rollout and maintenance.

For each of these functions we illustrated how an educational technology network could support different aspects of South Africa's education system using examples of schools, a mass literacy campaign, telemedicine and distance education providers.

We have used schooling as an example to give expression to the ideas of the educational network. And we have seen supporting administration and management processes in schools as one of the core functions of such an education network. We therefore thought it important to explore some of the issues relating to training and capacity building for the management and administration of schools. The following report has been compiled for SAIDE by Owen Roberts. His report is presented with minor editorial changes. It has helped to shape our conception of how an educational technology network could be used to support management and administration in schools. It has also been useful background information to anticipate the some of the professional development functions that would need to be integrated into the implementation, should a network focusing on schools be developed.

INTRODUCTION

As we have described in chapter two and appendix one of this report, there are many factors which make schools dysfunctional: the lack of facilities, materials, resource material, qualified staff, parental support, an unsuitable curriculum, maladministration, undisciplined and poorly motivated learners, and so on. Nevertheless a good teacher under a willow tree can do a remarkable job of enthusing and educating learners hungry for knowledge. Why is it that in our education system there are schools side by side, which produce remarkably different results? Experience shows the key factor is found essentially in the quality of educational leadership and resulting administration and motivation of learners and teachers.

One of the biggest problems confronting South African schools is the lack of training in the leadership of schools. This results in management and administration problems which are symptomized by:

- poor planning...timetables developed weeks into the school year, syllabuses not completed,...a general wastage of academic time with learners sent home whilst teachers mark scripts, do reports, last minute examination time tabling, etc
- poor organization due mainly to a breakdown in communication....no staff meetings, no fax/tel/e-mail, inadequate duplicating facilities

- poor discipline of both learners and teachers as there are no apparent effective controls...learners sent home early due to teacher absenteeism, attending to their own needs in school time.
- poor leadership with only exceptional principals able to influence teachers and learners
- little advancement as principals spend most of their time in the survival phase...putting out fires, dealing with uncooperative Unions and Departmental bureaucracy.

Once the leadership capacity is developed it will then be a lot easier to establish a culture of learning presently found in only a few of our schools.

How does one learn educational leadership? We do not have to reinvent the wheel but merely need to expand upon the training available and used by principals of successful schools. This should be many faceted, and tailored to individual needs.

Some suggested ways of building this capacity follow. This is drawn from my personal experience from both work in both state (ex House of Assembly) and independent schools, and through my sharing these past 7 years in workshops with 17 Kwazulu-Natal schools most of which are in rural disadvantaged schools.

TRAINING PRINCIPALS IN ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT COURSES

All teacher training is directed at classroom teaching. When promoted to deputy teachers find themselves in unfamiliar territory with no real management training. There are presently excellent one week courses run by firms to train their middle management in the very basics of management...plan, organize, lead, control, advance. Principals would be immediately be able to apply this to their position and would feel far more comfortable though still under skilled.

EXPERIENCED PRINCIPALS AS MENTORS

There is no better way to learn than by adopting a mentor who is experienced in the skills required. Young deputies and principals should seek and make regular contact with more experienced and successful colleagues. A quarterly get together in which they share problems, solutions and ideas increases confidence.

TERTIARY TRAINING IN EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT

There are good part-time courses run by the Teacher Training Colleges such as the Further Diploma in Educational Management (F.D.E. Management) to add to post graduate degrees and diplomas. The modules deal specifically with the principles of management as applied to schools and should prove invaluable. On completing the course the principal is rewarded with a salary increase.

NEW PRINCIPALS' INDUCTION COURSE

On being appointed, principals should attend a week's the holiday course before taking office. This course is run by the Education Department with experienced and successful principals seconded to run it. They share their experience in a very practical way with talks, workshops, role plays and much informal discussion and sharing. All principals are then given a comprehensive manual on the management and organization of schools. This is a pragmatic and bureaucratic document dealing with every aspect of running a school. If followed schools are managed efficiently but little scope for innovation is allowed.

SCHOOL INSPECTIONS

Whilst many principals and staff dread the extra work involved, these inspections proved of great benefit in that a team of friendly inspectors appraised the school leadership, staff, estate, finance. No stone was left unturned but the report identified strengths and weaknesses with recommendations given as to the way forward.

SELF-EVALUATION TOOLS

There are many of these available. The Scottish Education system uses a tool entitled "How Good is Our School?" which enables a school to evaluate any part or the whole in a fairly simple way. It is a very flexible non-threatening approach but does require considerable training and expertise in its successful usage. There are many similar tools available both internally and externally.

PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

It is vital to have a performance analysis programme in operation where each staff member is asked to do self-evaluation and set future goals. It is the duty of every Principal to train future principals from their own management teams.

PRINCIPALS' CONFERENCES

These are held annually locally and every 4 years internationally. They are not that useful to new principals in teaching the basics but are vital in keeping up to date with local and international trends. They are also reassuring in their collegiality and sharing of similar problems.

CLUSTERS OF PRINCIPALS MEETING MONTHLY AND SHARING

The group of 17 principals in our area try to get together once or twice a quarter to share expertise and experiences. The initial intention was to meet at a different school each time but this soon floundered with the others preferring to meet at the most resourced school. Through this grouping we soon became aware of the lack of leadership training amongst ourselves. We identified areas of need and have been running seminars on various aspects of school leadership for the past 7 years.

SCHOOL SEMINARS FOR NEW AND ASPIRING HEADS

Experienced and successful principals have been asked to deliver papers and run workshops which have proved very successful. There have been two national seminars and one local one in the last 3 years each lasting 3 days.

INTERNATIONAL EXAMPLES IN DEVELOPING EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

BRITAIN¹

Tony Blair's determined policy to improve schooling can be summed up as follows:

- all schools are assessed and placed in various categories in a public league table.
- those assessed as being dysfunctional are given a certain time to put things right.
- failure to do this results in the closure of the school which is then reopened with a new staff and Head.
- resources have been developed to assist schools to improve
- every school is expected to be a learning organization striving for improvement
- recognition has been given to the pivotal role played by the Principal and the management team
- Leadership Colleges have been opened country wide to train these people. It appears that soon a person will have to have a qualification from one of these Colleges to be eligible for Headship.

AUSTRALIA²

Leadership Colleges have been set up in the different states to improve the quality of educational leaders as again it has been acknowledged that their role is crucial.

These Colleges are staffed by highly competent and experienced educational leaders who are seconded there from the schools and tertiary institutions.

Self evaluation is preferred to full school assessment.

NEW ZEALAND³

Schools have been given greater autonomy and accountability.

The Government, the Ministry of Education and tertiary institutions are working together to ensure principals and aspiring principals have access to training and development.

The Education Review Office audits the operation of every school with reports made available to the public.

¹ John Dunford (1999) *Accountability to All...*a paper presented at the Helsinki International Confederation of Principals' Conference

² Pat Heehan (1999) *International Principals: Merchants of Hope or Fear...*paper delivered at the International Confederation of Principals' Conference in Helsinki.

³ Nola Hambleton (1999) *The New Zealand Way...*a paper delivered at the International Confederation of Principals' Conference in Helsinki

THE USA⁴

Here the schooling system is decentralized with total autonomy given to states and to local authorities for the development of their schools. As a result schools and school leadership varies enormously depending on the socio-economic area.

A feature of their schools is the partnerships established with donors and local industry. A culture of giving is prevalent and is aided considerably by tax laws that encourage this.

In the independent sector principals are appointed on a one or two year contract with accountability the key factor. There is little place for ineffective leaders.

SINGAPORE

Educational development moved from:

- survival....access to all with language and values decided
- efficiency...cost effectiveness to cater for diversity
- ability....to allow each child to develop to their full potential

After the survival phase, the importance of educational leadership was recognized to the extent that all schools and universities were closed to students for a period (a full year?) whilst the leaders were trained in the basics of management and administration so schools could operate efficiently.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE TRAINING OF SOUTH AFRICAN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

There are really three key issues to be tackled:

- an acknowledgement by Government, Educationists, and Business that the success of our schooling system will depend on the training of educational leadership...not just the change in curriculum and methods of delivery, assessment, etc
- who should train leaders, where, when and how?
- what should the training be on.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE NEED FOR TRAINING EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

International acceptance of this priority must be brought to attention of the powers that be. One cannot deal with the problem until there is the admission that it exists.

The principals that I work with state categorically that before anything else happens they need to be able to establish their leadership in their schools. Presently they have little real influence over their teachers or pupils and team work is limited. They must put this right before attempting to introduce curriculum 2005, Outcomes based Education and so on.

⁴Information gleaned from the International Confederation of Principals Conference held in Sydney 1995.

The Minister of Education must be made aware of this. Once he is convinced he then needs to convince Government. Business will be the easiest to convince as the non delivery of many schools makes this obvious.

WHO SHOULD TRAIN, WHERE, AND WHEN, AND HOW?

Who:

I have little doubt that the success of the venture will depend on the quality of the trainers. Experienced and successful educational leaders from schools and other educational institutions should be paid to do the job. Retired leaders and interested overseas educationists could also be involved.

Where:

Training needs to be done countrywide perhaps using schools, teacher training colleges, and the other tertiary venues. Centres need to be set up in every area. There are many schools in the country who are world renowned for their educational excellence. While many of these schools are considered privileged and often model C or private schools, there are numerous examples of well-functioning schools from historically disadvantaged areas. The model C and private schools should not be ignored as they often have the expertise, facilities, materials, structures and good ethos. Their methods have proved successful and should be shared. This whole concept is encouraged internationally with the schools referred to as *Lighthouse Schools* in that they can light the way for others less fortunate by sharing their systems and success formulae. This whole concept of using successful *Lighthouse Schools* as centres of best practice is an exciting possibility.

Ultimately Leadership Colleges need to be set up in each province. There are already Colleges at Wits and University of Natal though they need to be more focussed on *educational* leadership.

When:

There needs to be a short one week or two week course to be followed by mentorships, leadership diploma courses, in service courses for new and aspiring principals, annual Conferences, clustering of schools led by a *Lighthouse*, etc...a lifelong process

How:

The initial course should be very engaging and practical it could involve a lot of workshops, role plays, etc. Back up material needs to be available through publications, computer software, video, etc. There is much good material available already but resources need to be pooled and duplicated for all, with availability through the Internet.

WHAT SHOULD THE TRAINING BE ON?

The Crash Course

We need to develop a curriculum specifically for the training required. There is already excellent material available locally. I would avoid international thinking at this stage. It needs to be kept simple, and broken down into modules with each module taking 2 days. This crash course should last 10 days to 2 weeks.

The suggestions that follow are based mainly on my personal experience (Module 1) and on the material produced by Sacred Heart College R&D (Modules 2 to 7.)⁵.

Module 1: An Overview of School Management and Administration

This must not be too theoretical and should concentrate on practical applications to the school situation:

- Plan....long term, annual, termly, weekly, daily....time management
- Organize...structure or framework, school policy document, allocation of staff and resources, Delegation, timetabling, extramural,academic
- Lead....Leadership styles; Motivation of staff, pupils, parents; Establishing accountability, responsibility, urgency; Communication; Building management teams; Running effective meetings; Decision making and implementation.
- Control...Codes of conduct for Staff and Pupils; Measurements and feedback; Ensuring decisions are implemented; academic control through lesson plans, marks, books; Performance Analysis, Self and School Evaluation
- Advance...strategic planning, visions, necessity of change

Module 2: Leadership in a Self Reliant School

- New approaches to School Leadership and Management
- The School as an Organization
- Roles and Responsibilities

Module 3: Human Relationships

- the formal and informal relationships between the principal, staff, learners, parents, and officials.
- motivating through thanking, praising, coaching
- building successful teams
- positive leadership through example
- mentorship programs
- role modelling

Module 4: School Development and Policies

- strategic planning....the concept of jointly developed and shared values and strategies
- establishing a vision
- setting annual and long term goals
- developing a dynamic school plan
- developing a school policy,,,,code of conduct, curriculum, assessment

Module: 5 Managing the Curriculum

- setting up a balanced curriculum
- the national core curriculum
- assessment strategies
- monitoring progress

Module:6 Communication

- setting up communication channels
- upward and downward communication

⁵ ISBN 0-620-23718-X

- running effective meetings
- written and spoken communication
- communicating with learners/teachers/parents/officials/the community
- using technology effectively...Internet/fax/ phones/e-mail

Module: 7 Financial Management

- formulating a budget
- understanding a simple balance sheet....income and expenditure
- controlling expenditure
- collecting all income
- sensible buying

MENTORSHIP

Each Principal should be urged to find a mentor from the schools in his area.

The Light house schools could play a key role in this regard by ensuring that each Head is teamed up with a Colleague and arranging termly gatherings similar to those I run with the Valley Principals.

Topics covered would be by agreement but might include practical issues like Discipline, Delegation, Filing, Time Management, Delegation, Communication, Performance Analysis, etc.

F.D.E. IN EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT

This part-time course should be offered by the Leadership Colleges set up in each province. It might be possible to do it through distance education. The Curriculum should be based on international standards concentrating on modern educational leadership. The course should not be killed by an overemphasis on theoretical pedagogy and the history of education, etc Courses should also be offered for Heads of Department and Deputies.

NEW PRINCIPALS' INDUCTION COURSES

Attendance at these must be compulsory. Simply a repeat of the initial crash course held annually in January before taking up the new post.

SCHOOL ASSESSMENT

I feel strongly that Departmental teams should assess schools at least once in 7 years. This assessment should be a positive experience for all concerned. However, schools not meeting the required standards must be put on the danger list, given time to put things right and then revisited. Failure to improve should result in closure and reopening as with the British model

Self evaluation using a simplified version of the Scottish "How Good is Our School?" tool should be encouraged if not made mandatory. The Catholic Schools have already modified the document to make it more user friendly. Regional courses could be run to explain how to use it effectively.

CLUSTERING OF SCHOOLS

The whole concept of clustering using Lighthouse Schools would prove invaluable. This would enable leaders to continue to gain leadership training on a day to day basis. Principles of Best Practice would soon become the norm. In fact, it might be an idea to only subsidise those Independent Schools who show evidence of regular meaning contact with the other school in their immediate area.

ESSENTIAL RESOURCES TO BE MADE AVAILABLE TO ALL SCHOOLS

Assuming that Leadership and administration is the main problem confronting S.A. schools, then every endeavour must be made to ensure every school has the following:

- An administration package. There is software available from several companies dealing with pupil, teacher, and parent records; a marks and report system; disciplinary codes and procedures; timetabling; financial records.
- Every effort should be made to ensure every principal has a computer...PC, Laptop, or Palm top...capable of running these programmes and printing from them
- Every Principal should have a phone...cell phones, or radio phones could be supplied by Businesses manufacturing these.
- An administration manual covering all aspect of school administration. This must be user friendly
- Documentation for a Performance Analysis programme.

A CONCLUDING RADICAL SUGGESTION

In my opinion the success or failure on the new South Africa depends primarily on our sorting out the education system so that we can re-establish a culture of learning, and the professionalism amongst the teaching fraternity. This depends almost exclusively on the training of our leaders in schools and in provincial education departments.

I would like to propose a similar program to that adopted by Singapore*⁶ when all schools were closed for a period (a year?) whilst capacity was built amongst teachers and educational leaders. This is a radical move but I do believe that it would not be that hard to sell to the public, to business, and to parents. It would also gain financial and educational support from most other countries.

Training Centres could be set up country wide in school clusters to help build capacity at all levels of from the junior primary teacher, to the H.O.D., to Deputies, Principals, to Educational Administrators and Officials in provincial offices who also lack the expertise in many instances. The mistakes being made now lie in trying to introduce curriculum and assessment changes without first dealing with the real problem first.