# Understand school leadership & governance in the South African context

**Advanced Certificate: Education**
(SCHOOL MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP)

education

Department:
Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**Department of Education**

**Understand school leadership and governance in the South African context**
**A module of the Advanced Certificate: Education (School Management and Leadership)**

**© Department of Education 2008**

**Creative Commons License**
The copyright for this work is held by the Department of Education. However, to maximise distribution and application, the work is licensed under the Creative Commons License. This allows you to copy, distribute, and display the work under the following conditions:
By **attribution**. You must attribute the work in the manner specified by the Department of Education.
For **non commercial use**[1]. You may not use this work for commercial purposes. Profit-making entities who charge a fee for access to the work are not permitted to copy, distribute and display the work.
By **attribution, share-alike**. Should this core material be supplemented in any way to create a derivative work, it is expected that the derivative work will be made available to the Department of Education to post onto the Thutong website for others to access and adapt as needed.

For any reuse or distribution, you must make clear to others the license terms of this work.

Any of these conditions can be waived if you get permission from the Department of Education.

Department of Education
Sol Plaatje House
123 Schoeman Street
Tshwane
South Africa

Tel: +27 12 312 5344
Fax: +27 12 323 0134

**http://www.education.gov.za**

© Department of Education 2008

[1] How does the Department of Education define commercial use? A commercial use would involve the assessment of a direct or indirect fee by a for-profit entity for use of the Department of Education Creative Commons (CC) materials, or any derivation or modification of the Department of Education CC material, or any other commercial exploitation of the Department of Education CC materials.

# Understand school leadership and governance in the South African context

Advanced Certificate: Education
(School Management and Leadership)

# Table of Contents


Acknowledgements ..... 6
General Introduction ..... 7
Who is this programme for? ..... 7
What is the purpose of this programme? ..... 7
How is the programme structured? ..... 7
What are the strengths of the programme? ..... 9
Acronyms and abbreviations used in the programme ..... 10
Introduction to the module ..... 11
What is the purpose of this module? ..... 11
What is covered in the module? ..... 12
How does this module relate to the rest of the ACE? ..... 12
How will this module be assessed? ..... 13
What are the learning outcomes of this module? ..... 13
Learning time ..... 14
Teaching and learning ..... 14

UNIT 1: YOU AS FUTURE PRINCIPAL ..... 17
1.1 Introduction ..... 19
1.2 Self Analysis – my own personal journey ..... 20
Reflecting now – reflecting back ..... 22
Reflective practice and Africa ..... 23
Empathy at school ..... 24
1.3 So you want to lead ..... 27
1.4 Your Values System ..... 32
Reflecting now – reflecting back ..... 34

UNIT 2: YOU AND YOUR TEAM ..... 35
2.1 Introduction ..... 37
Learning outcomes ..... 38
2.2 Standards for School Leadership ..... 39
2.3 Leadership and management ..... 42
2.4 African models ..... 54
Principles of African Leadership ..... 58
2.5 Distributed Leadership ..... 60
2.6 School Functionality ..... 63
Reflecting now – reflecting back ..... 63

UNIT 3: YOU AND YOUR CONTEXT ASSESSMENT ..... 65
3.1 Introduction ..... 67
3.2 What is a School? ..... 68
3.3 Legislation/policy – a brief historical perspective ..... 72
3.4 The Context of Schooling – a South African reality ..... 84
3.5 Sustainability – a practical challenge for principals ..... 89
3.6 Conclusion ..... 97
Bibliography ..... 98

READERS & TEMPLATES ..... 101
**Reader** ..... **103**
Text 1: The South African Schools Act, No 84 of 1996 ..... 103
Text 2: The South African Constitution, Act No. 108 of 1996 ..... 103
Text 3: Web Sites of Important Acts: Norms and Standards for School Funding ..... 103
Text 4: *Ubuntu* and school leadership ..... 104
Text 5: Draft Standard for School Principals ..... 105
**Templates** ..... **116**
Template 1 – T1 – Values ..... 116
Template 2 – T2– Quality indicators for schools ..... 116
Template 3 – T3 – School Functionality Index ..... 119

# List of tables

Table 1: Leadership impact ..... 50

# List of figures

Figure 1: Overview of draft standards for school leadership ..... 40
Figure 2: Styles of leadership ..... 51
Figure 3: Maslow's hierarchy of needs ..... 87

# Acknowledgements

This material is the product of a collaborative endeavour involving representatives of the following organisations and institutions:

Cooper King
Department of Education – Education Management and Governance Development Directorate
GMSA Foundation
Management of Schools Training Programme (MSTP)
Matthew Goniwe School of Leadership and Governance (MGSLG)
National Association of Professional Teachers of South Africa (NAPTOSA)
National Association of Teacher Unions (NATU)
Pauline Matlhaela and Associates, Skills Development Services Pty (Ltd)
Regenesys
South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU)
South African Institute for Distance Education (SAIDE)
South African Principals' Association (SAPA)
Shuttleworth Foundation
Ukukhula Projects
University of Fort Hare
University of South Africa (UNISA)
University of Stellenbosch
University of the Free State
University of the Witwatersrand
Zenex Foundation

as well as a number of individual consultants, and reflects feedback from personnel from all the Higher Education Institutions involved in developing this course.

# Foreword

## General Introduction

Welcome to the ACE (School Management and Leadership).

## Who is this programme for?

The ACE (School Management and Leadership) programme is aimed at empowering school leaders to lead and manage schools effectively in a time of great change, challenge and opportunity.

The programme is aimed at School Management Team (SMT) members who aspire to become school principals. This means that Deputy Principals and Heads of Department are the focus for the programme. It is hoped that your engagement with this programme will benefit you by providing guidelines, insights and tools that you can use to meet your immediate challenges and needs as school leaders and prepare you for the challenges ahead when you eventually become a principal.

## What is the purpose of this programme?

The programme seeks to provide structured learning opportunities that promote quality education in South African schools through the development of a corps of education leaders who apply critical understanding, values, knowledge and skills to school leadership and management within the vision of democratic transformation.

It seeks to empower/enable these educators to develop the skills, knowledge, and values needed to lead and manage schools effectively and to contribute to improving the delivery of education across the school system.

The programme aims to achieve the following:

- Provide leadership and management to enable the school to give every learner quality education
- Provide professional leadership and management of the curriculum and therefore ensure that the schools provide quality teaching, learning and resources for improved standards of achievement for all learners
- Strengthen the professional role of principalship, through strengthening the competency level of SMT members
- Develop future principals who are able to critically engage and be self-reflective practitioners
- Enable aspiring principals to manage their departments and schools as learning organisations and instil values supporting transformation in the South African context.

## How is the programme structured?

The ACE (School Management and Leadership) is a programme that has been registered on the NQF at NQF Level 6 with an exit level at REQV14.

The programme has been built up from existing unit standards and like all registered qualifications has three components:

- Fundamental learning
- Core learning
- Elective learning.

The programme will normally take two years of part-time study to complete.

Each component of the programme comprises a number of modules as summarised in the table below.

| COMPONENT | MODULE | RELATED UNIT STANDARD | NUMBER OF CREDITS |
|---|---|---|---|
| Fundamental | Develop a portfolio to demonstrate school leadership and management competence | 115438 | 10 |
| | Lead and manage effective use of ICTs in South African Schools | Unique to this programme but subsuming 115433 | 10 |
| Core | Demonstrate effective language skills in school leadership and management | 115440 | 10 |
| | Understand school leadership and management in the South African context | 115441 | 10 |
| | Manage teaching and learning | 115436 | 20 |
| | Lead and manage people | 115437 | 20 |
| | Manage organizational systems, physical and financial resources | 115434 | 20 |
| | Manage policy, planning, school development and governance | 115439 | 20 |
| Elective (Optional – alternative electives may be required by different HEIs in line with changing national, provincial priorities) | Lead and manage subject areas/learning areas/phase | 115435 | 12 |
| | Mentor school managers and manage mentoring programme in schools | 115432 | 12 |
| | Plan and conduct assessment | 115753 | 15 |
| | Moderate assessment | 7977 | 10 |

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) may be gained for the fundamental ICT module, based on the requirements of the institution with which you are registered.

In order to gain the qualification, you will need to have:

- successfully passed or gained RPL for both fundamental modules
- successfully passed all seven core modules
- successfully passed one or more elective modules.

## What are the strengths of the programme?

The programme focuses on leadership and management development in three main ways:

- reinforcing critical learning principles
- adopting a developmental assessment approach
- pursuing a transformational agenda.

### Critical learning principles

The following learning principles underpin the teaching and assessment of the programme:

- Directed and self-directed learning in teams and clusters
- Site based learning (dependent on the content)
- Variety of learning strategies i.e. lectures, practice and research portfolios amongst others
- Parallel use throughout of individual and group contexts of learning
- Collaborative learning through interactive group activities e.g. simulations, debates
- Problem-focused deliberation and debate in group contexts
- Critical reflection on group processes, group effectiveness
- Critical reflection and reporting on personal growth and insights developed
- Research and experimentation.

### A developmental approach to assessment

The assessment strategy includes a variety of options to demonstrate and provide evidence of practice, based on the anticipated outcomes and against the assessment criteria. Depending on the institution and circumstances, this could include activities such as case studies, problem solving assignments, practice in simulated and in real contexts, projects, written and oral presentations.

The assessment is focused on applied competence. The assessment evidence should include:

- Assignments and/or examinations, providing evidence of the ability to apply knowledge to practice
- Oral Presentations, which should be observed in context to observe ability to communicate with comprehension
- Two or more work based projects to demonstrate the application of the learning and insights from preferably the core modules
- A portfolio of practice evidence, which will support all modules

- Evidence of self-, peer-, tutor assessment as well as on-site verification of leadership and management competence.

As you work through the programme, you will keep a reflective journal and prepare a portfolio of evidence of your growth and achievements. This evidence will contribute towards your final summative assessment.

### A transformational agenda

The programme is offered through a practice-based part-time mode so that you can work and learn at the same time. You will find that about 50% of the work that you need to do for the programme comprises activities that you will plan, execute and evaluate at your school. By the time you have completed the programme, it should be possible to provide evidence that your participation has helped to change your school for the better.

## Acronyms and abbreviations used in the programme

| | |
|---|---|
| AC | Assessment Criteria |
| ACE | Advanced Certificate: Education |
| AGM | Annual General Meeting |
| CCFO | Critical cross-field outcome |
| CHE | Council on Higher Education |
| DoE | Department of Education |
| DSG | Development Support Group |
| EMD | Education Management Development |
| ETQA | Education and Training Quality Assurance body |
| HEQC | Higher Education Quality Committee |
| INSET | In-service Education and Training |
| IQMS | Integrated Quality Management System |
| NCS | National Curriculum Statement |
| NLRD | National Learners' Records Database |
| NQF | National Qualifications Framework |
| OBA | Outcomes-Based Assessment |
| OBE | Outcomes-Based Education |
| PGP | Personal Growth Plan |
| PoE | Portfolio of Evidence |
| RPL | Recognition of Prior Learning |
| SACE | South African Council of Educators |
| SAQA | South African Qualifications Authority |
| SAUVCA | South African University Vice-Chancellors' Association |
| SDT | Staff Development Team |
| SGB | School Governing Body |
| SGB | Standards Generating Body |
| SMT | School Management Team |
| SO | Specific Outcome |
| US | Unit Standard |

# Overview

## Introduction to the module

This module gives an overview of what management and leadership is about in a school setting. As an aspiring principal it begins a process of developing understanding about the challenges that face principals on a daily basis and allows you to also explore your own realities and decide on new and better action. In addition, you will look at some of the international trends in management and leadership and will compare what is happening in the South Africa scene to others.

As a student on the ACE programme you will be actively involved in a learning process aimed at developing or improving your competence in respect of a range of areas relating to your management and leadership role in the school system. You will also be continuously assessed through a variety of formal and informal assessment methods. The main purpose of these assessments will be to gather evidence of your achievements against the outcomes described in the exit level outcomes of the qualification (see Text 1 in your Portfolio module). At the end of the programme all the results from these assessments will be considered in deciding whether you have met the requirements to be awarded the ACE qualification.

If you have already been involved in school management or leadership for a number of years, it is likely that you already have many examples of such evidence, e.g. project plans and budgets you developed, procedures you established in your school, minutes of disciplinary hearings, and other records of actions you took to improve school administration. Therefore, you will have historical evidence from previous work, as well as current evidence, which you will be developing as part of the ACE programme. You will also have evidence that you generate in your daily work in the school while you are in the programme.

The question is then: How do you ensure that all the evidence you have (that reflects your competence in areas covered in the ACE programme) is considered during the formal assessment? How do you compile all this evidence in a way that assessors will be able to use in determining whether you should be awarded the qualification? This is where the portfolio comes in, and you will be given guidelines on how to select and present the necessary evidence in the fundamental portfolio module. However, as this is one of the first core Modules you will tackle there will be reference to the portfolio and exercises you will have to submit. Treat your portfolio in the same way that you expect learners in your school to collect evidence. Ultimately, your portfolio will be a collection of evidence from diverse sources that you put together and submit to assessors who will use it to assess your competence against the requirements specified in the ACE qualification.

## What is the purpose of this module?

The main purpose of this module is to give you an understanding of some of the debates around leading and managing schools and to frame these debates within three scenarios, namely: a reflection of yourself as a future leader within the

realities you have to face on a daily basis, a reflection of yourself as a team player but also a leader and manager of the school and finally a reflection of your work as a present day manager within the context of the broader educational field.

In completing this range of reflections you will be learning a skill to help you complete your learning journal and your portfolio. This will in turn set a benchmark for your work and for the way that you continue to work when completing the other modules.

The module should enable you to complete successfully the unit standard which is included in the ACE qualification.

## What is covered in the module?

This module comprises an introduction and three units as follows:

- This introduction, which gives a broad overview of the module and how it relates to the rest of the ACE qualification
- Unit 1, which asks you to look at your personality profile and your path to principalship within the realities of challenges you face on a daily basis;
- Unit 2, which looks at your role as a SMT member within your school, and also your leadership and management styles;
- Unit 3, which explores the context of South African education and what that means for you as an individual and a team player/leader.

## How does this module relate to the rest of the ACE?

The five unit standards described as the 'core exit level outcomes' of this programme are:

- Lead and manage people (ID number 115437)
- Manage organisational systems and physical and financial resources (ID number 115434)
- Manage policy, planning, school development and governance (ID number 115439)
- Manage teaching and learning (ID number 115436) (ID number 115440)
- Demonstrate effective language skills in school leadership and management ID number 115440).

These five unit standards are addressed directly by individual Modules and this introductory Module links into each one, with the module on language linking cross all others.

For example, Unit 1 requires you to look at yourself and your role as manager and aspiring principal in the school and to reflect on your strengths and weaknesses. Gaining insight will help you to lead others and manage systems, especially that of teaching and learning. It also requires you to look at what type of school you are part of and what this means to you in the way that you lead and manage.

Unit 2 is about your role, responsibilities and accountability as a member of the SMT. In this Unit, aspects of leadership and management theory and practice will be given that will set a foundation for you before you begin the module on

Lead and Manage People and later the module on Policy, Planning and School Development and Governance.

Unit 3 begins the debate around the context (socio economic) of schooling and so leads into all the other modules. By looking at what a school is about and the policies that guide performance in a school, you will have a greater understanding of how to lead and manage not just people, but also classroom activities and the school as an entity.

## How will this module be assessed?

Only a small part of this module will be assessed on its own while you are completing this module. The main assessment of the portfolio will happen throughout the programme, with the final summative assessment being conducted at the end of the programme, i.e. towards the end of your second year. The reason for this is provided in the range statement of the portfolio unit standard that specifies that the portfolio must provide "evidence of applied competence in terms of the core exit level outcomes of the ACE (School Leadership)".

This means that you will use the portfolio to record all the evidence that is relevant to the core exit level outcomes of the ACE qualification.

The ACE qualification (under 'Moderation options') states that providers offering this programme may use their own qualified staff as assessors. They may also use the services of tutors, departmental advisory staff and fully qualified educators acting as mentors, as well as outside assessment agencies. It furthermore states that "All of these [external] assessors should be registered with the relevant ETQA and/or the accredited provider".

The qualification (see 'Integrated assessment' in Text 1 of the Portfolio module) also makes allowance for the use of other forms of assessment, such as self-assessment, assessments by peers and tutors, as well as on-site verification of practical management competence by an authorised verifier.

The Department of Education has developed an 'Analytic rubric' for assessing all the modules in the ACE programme. The rubric that all assessors will use to assess the evidence produced for the Portfolio, including evidence from this module, is attached as Text 3 in the Portfolio module.

## What are the learning outcomes of this module?

At the end of this module you will be able to provide evidence of achievement of the following main outcomes:

- Demonstrate a basic understanding of what is involved in school management and leadership in South Africa
- Make an assessment of your own abilities in management and leadership in terms of current notions of competence and relevance in South Africa in relation to management and leadership.

## Learning time

This module carries 10 credits. It should, therefore, take the average student approximately 100 hours to complete the module successfully. The 100 hours includes contact time, reading time, research time and time required to write assignments. Remember that about half of your time in this programme will be spent completing practice-based activities in your school. This will often involve you in discussions with your colleagues. A more specific indication of time to be spent on each of these activities will be provided in each of the units that make up this module.

## Teaching and learning

This module, like the whole of the Advanced Certificate, involves part-time study while you are working. Much of what you learn will therefore be dictated by your own effort and commitment. The most successful students are not necessarily the cleverest or the most experienced but rather the ones who are most disciplined, most organised, most willing to reflect critically on their own learning and most able to apply theory to practice and manage time efficiently.

However, this Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) is also practice-based. This means that it does not only require you to read and write but also to **apply** what you have learnt, to **reflect** on the success or failure of the application and to learn from your mistakes so that you can **improve**. Learning is, therefore, not simply a theoretical exercise but also a practical, experiential one.

To help you in this endeavour, the module comprises three different parts – a Learning Guide, a Reader and a set of Templates. Each of these components serves a very specific purpose.

- The **Learning Guide** acts as your teacher/lecturer, providing you with information, guiding you through activities and stimulating you to ask questions, find answers and share what you learn with your colleagues and/or fellow students. It is informed by the assumption that learning is a process rather than an event and that students and lecturers need to accept joint responsibility for its success. The information in the Guide is, therefore, not a sufficient source of learning in and of itself. You, the learner, have to complement the information contained in the Guide by reading, researching, discussing/debating and reflecting on the issues and challenges raised in the Guide. Only then will your learning be an enriching experience.
- The **Reader** contains various texts. Some of these form the basis of the activities; others serve as exemplars of the kind of tasks that you are required to perform during the course of this and possibly other modules.
- The **set of templates** are provided for you to use in the application of what you have learnt and afterwards when you conduct workshops, do research, develop policies, write reports, etc. In this sense they serve as resources that should assist you in managing your institution in an effective and efficient way.

The following icons are used in the Learning Guides throughout the programme in an attempt to provide you with clear signals of what is expected of you.

STOP AND THINK

Whenever you see this icon, you should reflect on the issues/challenges presented, preferably in writing, and file it in the Reflection section of your Learning File/Folder.

**ACTIVITY**

When you see this icon, you will know that you are required to perform some kind of activity that will indicate how well you remember or understand what you have read or that will help you assess how good you are at applying what you have learnt.

**TIME ALLOCATION**

This icon is typically followed by a suggestion on the time the average student would need to complete a specific activity. If you are inclined to work either faster or more slowly than the average student the time given should be treated as a rough indicator only.

**OUR COMMENT**

This icon precedes the writer's comments or tutorial advice on a particular activity or text. The comments should never be read before you have completed the preceding activity since your opinion may be completely different from the writer's and still be correct. The writer is simply providing you with his/her informed opinion.

**KEY POINTS**

The points following this icon are regarded as crucial to your success. Not only do they serve as a very brief summary of what has gone before but they also highlight the things that it is essential for you to know, understand and be able to apply.

Details of administrative procedures, such as the names and contact details of lecturers, dates of contact sessions, handing in of assignments, tutorial support and library services are provided in the tutorial letters of the higher education institution at which you have enrolled. Please study these letters carefully as they also provide you with the names and contact details of the lecturer/s responsible for this module.

# You as Future Principal

unit 1


Introduction 1.1

Self Analysis
my own personal journey 1.2

So you want to lead 1.3

Your values system 1.4

LEARNING GUIDE
unit one

1

# You as Future Principal

## 1.1 Introduction

Unit 1 has three sections, after this introduction, which require you to explore yourself and your aspirations from many angles. These sections are:

- Self Analysis – where are you on the path to principalship? A look at what is happening in your life right now.
- So you want to lead - the challenges ahead in terms of management and leadership and what this could mean for you; the type of school that you could lead and how this impacts on leadership style;
- Your values systems – a look at the values that drive you and the way that you work.

By working through these sections, you should achieve the following outcomes:

- Be able to analysis your own personality profile and set self-development plans in order to move effectively towards being a principal
- Be able to recognize and interpret some of the aspects around management and leadership in schools and how they impact on you in your daily life
- Identify your own dominant leadership and management approach and the context in which you operate
- Understand the importance of shared values as an underpinning concept in quality education and the role that values play in creating the school as a centre of excellence, within a South African context
- Be able to use reflective practice as a process for increasing self – awareness.

# 1.2 Self Analysis - my own personal journey

This section asks you to look at your personality profile, your strengths and weaknesses and why you want to be a Principal. It offers you an opportunity to reflect and to think back as to what motivated you to become an educator and to work with children, and why you are still an educator today. As a Deputy Principal or Head of Department you have obviously made choices in the past and these choices have taken you to where you are now. One aspect that seems to be common with all good educators and leaders is a passion for teaching and making a difference in the lives of children.

Passion is defined as "any kind of feeling by which the mind is powerfully affected or moved.' (Oxford English Dictionary, 1989). Do you have a passion for teaching? Are you passionate about schools, children, and classrooms in general, despite having to face challenges of an educational system in transformation?

Christopher Day, when researching passionate and effective school leaders in the UK, observed:

> "….Passion was associated with enthusiasm for achievement, caring, collaboration, commitment, trust, inclusivity and courage which are themselves key characteristics of effectiveness in teaching.
>
> Passion was also associated with fairness and understanding, qualities constantly named by students in their assessment of good teachers, and with the qualities that effective headteachers displayed on everyday social interaction…."

Let us examine some of these qualities in more depth:

### A passion for achievement

Good educators and leaders tend to see possibilities in all children and set their standards high yet achievable for each individual child. A child can achieve in academic, or non-academic subjects, or in sports or cultural activities. The point is that the educator believes in each and every child's potential and his or her ability to achieve.

### A passion for caring

Successful school leaders and educators really care about children and 'go the extra mile' for them. They feel comfortable talking with children and finding out about their backgrounds and present realities. They treat children as individuals and listen actively to what they say and how they act.

### A passion for collaboration

Educational leaders who collaborate actively promote risk-taking, teamwork, networking, ongoing skills development through courses and studies and participation through cultures of trust and support.

> "We work really hard at supporting each other and watching each other learn, modelling lessons and saying. 'What did we think of this?'….But you can't do it unless you've got a team of people who are willing to go

along with you….People who share the view that standards really do matter. (Headteacher of a primary school) *(Day p.82)*

### A passion for commitment

School leaders who are truly committed accept the challenges of the system as they arise and find ways to cope and flourish. They have a set of values that guides them and keeps them focused on their work, regardless of what they have to cope with on a daily basis. They are able to adapt and move on in changing circumstances.

Consider once again what factors Day says committed and passionate school leaders exhibit:

"

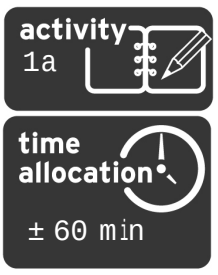
1. A clear, enduring set of values and ideologies which inform practice regardless of social context.
2. The active rejection of a minimalist approach to leadership (to just doing the job).
3. A continuing willingness to reflect upon experience and the context in which practice occurs and to be adaptable.
4. A sustained sense of identity and purpose and an ability to find room to manoeuvre by managing tensions.
5. Intellectual and emotional engagement with all stakeholders." *(Day, p.84)*

### A passion for trust

Building a culture of trust whereby the principal allows his/her educators to do what is needed, to do things without infringing on their responsibilities, is central to passionate and good school leadership. Where there is trust there is a strong obligation towards and responsibility for each other within the school. There is a supportive, professional relationship.

### A passion for inclusivity

The school community is seen by passionate school leaders as the real context in which they work. They actively involve parents, guardians and other stakeholders in the school's activities – not just through the SGB but in all aspects of the school's life. These school leaders spend a large amount of time engaging with the broader community to inform them how they run their schools and the path they are following. The community is seen as a partner and also an integral part of the school.




Are you a passionate leader? Referring to the six descriptors of passionate schools leaders, analyse you own style and your strengths and weaknesses in leading/managing in your school against each descriptor. Describe ways in which you and others in your school could improve the level of passion around teaching and learning. What do you think you will have to change in the way you lead when you become a principal and why? Explain your answer in depth.

*Being passionate about what you do is an important part of everyday life. If one has passion for education then going to work is something to look forward to.*

*The values systems that guide your work and approach to teaching come from several sources, namely from your family, or your faith, or your commitment to social justice, or indeed from all three. These values, together with a vision that all schools in South Africa can succeed, is enough to create the passionate leadership that is needed. Even when one feels emotionally drained and not able to give any more, it will be your values system that underpins your personal emotional resilience that will see you through. To survive in emotionally draining situations and to maintain your passion for teaching, surround yourself with people who have the same values systems, use a support network of family and friends and in addition, keep a balance by engaging in other interests beyond teaching that refresh the soul and enable you to see 'a world elsewhere'.*

## Reflecting now – reflecting back

One of the ways that a leader can see if s/he has learnt from the past is to reflect back on what has happened in his or her life and to see what positive learning experiences there have been. The essence of looking back and recalling is called *reflective practice* and there is a lot of evidence to show that this helps to shape performance in the future. In your first exercise, you were asked to reflect on what makes a passionate teacher. You may not have been aware of the processes you used in doing so but what we do know is that an individual is able to learn from past behaviour and should be able to make better informed decisions about what to do in the future.

USE REFLECTIVE PRACTICE TO RENEW YOUR LIFE, ENHANCE YOUR LEADERSHIP ROLE, AND PROMOTE SUCCESS FOR YOUR SCHOOL! IS THIS WHAT YOU WANT?

In 1987, Donald Schon introduced the concept of reflective practice as a critical process which could help refine one's profession, and working life. Schon recommended reflective practice as a way for beginners in a discipline to look for connections between their own practice and that of recognised successful practitioners. In teaching, this is akin to observing a successful educator and then thinking about how one's own performance could be improved by adopting some of the other person's techniques or mannerisms. As defined by Schon, reflective practice involves thoughtfully considering one's own experiences in applying knowledge to practice while being coached by professionals in the discipline (Schon, 1996).

After Schon introduced reflective practice as a tool to improve performance, many schools, colleges, and departments of education began designing teacher education and professional development programmes based on this concept. There were sceptics around who decided that reflection was not needed but in recent years, there have appeared again a growing number of individuals who are practising and promoting reflective practice as a way of understanding self and therefore behaviours.

Reflective practice has also been defined in terms of action research. Action research, in turn, is defined as a tool consisting of continuous feedback that targets specific problems in a particular school setting (Hopkins & Antes, 1990). As such, it has become a standard concept in teacher education programmes.

The teacher educator as researcher and role model encourages young educators to put theories they've learned into practice in their classrooms. The novice teachers bring reports of their field experiences to class and analyse their teaching strategies with their mentors and colleagues. This collaborative model of reflective practice enriches personal reflections on work and provides the new educators with suggestions from peers on how to refine their teaching practices (Syrjala, 1996).

As you reflect on your day, what can be learned about your teaching and leadership practice? It is suggested that you create time during the week to reflect with your colleagues, on the successes and challenges of the week. Reflective practice – individually and with others – counteracts the effects of professional isolation and instils a sense of meaning, renewal, and empowerment in the hectic lives of educators. Insights gained through reflective practice improve leadership practices and result in better school conditions for educators and learners alike. Think about this!

*Having time to reflect on activities in order to learn what worked and what did not is most essential in a school setting. After all, the way that educators work in classrooms must be based on what works well for the benefit of the learner. Many authors are now saying that success in a work situation is about understanding and working with not only your rational intelligence (IQ) but also with your emotional intelligence (EQ) which is discussed in the module Lead and Manage People. For educators, these can be new areas to consider but you are encouraged to read further about what they mean and how important they are in understanding yourself, your colleagues and your learners.*

## Reflective practice and Africa

Reflective practice is not new to the African landscape. The history of sitting together and telling stories is entrenched in African belief systems and family practices. How often have you sat with your grandmother or someone else's Gogo and listened to stories of famous ancestors or just stories about family members? Stories become intertwined with others as you tell and retell them. In this way you are reaffirming yourself, your people and your history.

Reflective practice writing is a form of story telling and is what you are required to do and submit as part of your portfolio. It is a way of expressing and exploring your own and others' stories, crafting and shaping to aid understanding and development. These stories are your data bank of mistakes and successes, your knowledge and experience, your skills and ideas. The difference between listening and telling stories and writing them down is that when you write them down there will inevitably be some form of analysis. When you re-read the stories you will again be analysing and going over ideas in your head. This is an essential part of reflective practice.

As school leaders, you are required to do a lot of listening to stories, be it with parents, learners or colleagues and your role is to listen and hear exactly what is being said. It is well documented that leaders who listen are considered to be more approachable and easier to take direction from.

Part of the requirement for this ACE programme is to keep a Learning Journal which is a particularly personal and unstructured form of reflective practice. You will be required to keep notes on events in your school and how you see things differently because of these events; in other words, what learning did you develop because of new situations and new challenges? As an aspiring leader this journal will give you insight into how your own leadership style and collegial manner impacts on the efficient and effective running of the school. In your position as a member of the School Management Team (SMT) you need to be able to think through your actions carefully as you are a manager of adults and a teacher of children – which requires you to be reflective all the time so that what you do and say is appropriate.

Think about the last time you had a difficult conversation with a colleague or child. Were you listening or were you leading the conversation? Was it the appropriate approach? Having reflected, would you now do anything differently?

Reflective practice helps improve three very key aspects of interaction with colleagues, learners and others. They are central in the development of leadership. The three aspects are: empathy, social expertness and personal influence. Let us consider each one further.

## Empathy at school

Empathy is the ability to understand how others are experiencing and seeing a situation or event. It is said that empathy is one of the key factors that creates trust in a leader. When there are low levels of empathy between the follower and the leader, then the follower believes that you do not respect him or her or have little understanding of the emotions s/he is going through. Being empathetic is less likely to happen in a situation where the workplace is rushed or under stress than in a workplace where there is some time to reflect on actions. Some schools can be so busy that educators and leaders are emotionally exhausted most of the time and then there is little opportunity to show real empathy with someone else's plight.

To improve your empathetic response as a school leader, try one or more of the following suggestions:

- Identify the emotion underlying what a person is saying when addressing you
- Anticipate how staff will react in a team meeting or other work situation
- Listen well to others and ask for clarification of feelings behind a point
- Ask how you can help in relevant situations
- Express thanks for work completed
- Reflect all the time about situations when you have jumped to the wrong conclusions about someone
- When in conversation, remind yourself to ask what the other person is thinking and feeling.

Empathy gives people a sense of importance because they feel understood. Name the people you interact with at school on a regular basis. Think about how much importance you have given to each one by the number of times you have engaged in an empathetic interaction with each person. What could you do to increase their sense of importance through your interactions with them? (Lynn, 2005)

## Social expertness at school

Developing bonds with others at work will help to make the workplace a better place to be in. As a leader, it is not advisable to develop the same depth in your bonds with everyone but certainly you will find that bonds develop where there is trust and mutual respect between individuals. More often than not, bonds develop more easily between people who perform at the same level. In a staff room, you will see high performers bonding with other high performers. The depth of the bonds relates to how much information and knowledge you are prepared to share.

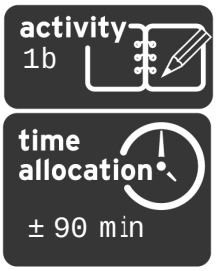
Think of all the people you interact with at school. How many of them would you be willing to ask for help? What type of help would you ask? Do you have a strong support team at school? Do you feel alone or supported in what you do? How can you help others? What do you need to do to gain greater support at school? (Lynn, 2005)

## Personal influence at school

People with a high level of personal influence are able to motivate others, have a greater morale and are more adaptable. In addition, they are more resilient in times of stress, address challenges in a flexible and creative way and confront issues, rather then avoiding them. A person with strong personal influence has an internal sense of power and a good sense of where he or she is coming from. This personal power influences others and often this person is followed by others. In a school situation leadership can be seen at many levels and certainly the person with strong personal power is able to influence and create followers.

Think of five people in school that you have influence over. How do you influence them? What methods do you use? Whom do you go to when you need to feel up-lifted and motivated? Why is this person important to you and what behaviours does he or she show that you find are positive?

Reflective practice can help to improve your empathy, social expertness and personal power. Through keeping a learning journal over a period of time you are able to see trends in the way you work with people and the way you respond to them. You read and re-read your journal entries and through analysis you are able to change the way you operate. The journal will help you to clarify thinking; allow you to express feelings about events and people; help you to sort out what were misunderstandings, and show patterns between how you reacted in the past to the present.




The following questions are posed so that you can begin a process of deep inward reflection. It is suggested that you answer the questions on your own and then debate your answers with a colleague. Write down what conclusions and answers you have and use these in your portfolio as resources for your personal growth plan. This is the first of two main activities for this section.

1. In our classroom, learners are asking for meaning and for answers to many questions. How do you in your school ensure that enough time is given to unpacking meaning for learners? Explain your answer.
2. Have you been accepted as the leader of a group (not appointed to a position)? How did this make you feel? Explain why you believe others chose you.
3. Can you always find, despite the difficulties, the deep energy needed to deal with an emergency in your school or community? Give an example and explain why and what happened.
4. Are you willing to stand up and be counted for what you believe in and value even if this means you may not be accepted by others? Give examples of when this happened.
5. How can you introduce reflective practice into your school to give educators more meaning in their work and what processes will you follow to do so?
6. Are you a self-aware leader? Explain your answer.

   And finally,
7. Think about what steps you have taken to become an educator and now a manager and why you think you will make a good principal. Write down all your thoughts in logical steps.

# 1.3 So you want to lead

As a school educator aspiring to become a principal, you are aiming to be in the centre of the school as a leader of educators, learners and the school's larger community. You will be asked to make decisions which require you to reflect and make judgement either on your own or after consultation. There will be easy and difficult decisions to make and all of this will add up to you being assessed either as a good or a not-so-good leader.

Brighouse and Woods (1999) say that managing energy is the key to creating an environment or school that moves. They identify three types of people in a schooling system, energy creators, energy neutral and energy consumers. Their characteristics are as follows:

### Energy Creators

- Are enthusiastic and always positive
- Use critical thinking, creativity and imagination
- Stimulate and spark others
- Practice leadership at all levels
- Are able and willing to scrutinise their practice and willing to make their practice accessible to others
- Wish to improve on their previous best.

### Energy Neutrals

- Competent, sound practitioners
- Willing to tackle the task
- Good at 'maintenance'
- Sometimes uncomfortable accepting examination of their practice by others
- Capable of improving on their previous best.

### Energy Consumers … tend to

- Have a negative view of the world
- Resent change and practice blocking strategies
- Use other people's time excessively
- Not feel good about themselves
- Be unable and unwilling to critically examine their teaching practice
- Appear not to want to improve on their personal best.

In schools, there are examples of many different energy levels but it is important that the principal and senior staff are energy creators as this is what creates moving and successful schools.

The underlying reason that makes some people to be energy creators is to do with the person's self worth and value system. Michael Fullan (1993) goes further and says that it is about having Moral Purpose. He sees this as an overarching value that is evident in all good and effective school leaders. Fullan states that leaders of schools with a strong moral purpose:

- Have a commitment to improving standards, no matter what, and ensuring that the gap between all students narrows when it comes to achievement
- Treat people ethically – with respect and concern – be it adults or children
- Are committed to improving the system as much as their individual school.

This requires energy and focus. Focus that is consistent and well honed is essential.

But to have energy, commitment and focus you need to understand your school and where you school is in relation to the context in which your school operates. Your school can be in a township, in a leafy urban area, in a city, or near an informal settlement. These different physical contexts mean that the challenges faced by you and other educators in the school are different and therefore your responses to situations will also be different.

However, it is not just the physical differences that separate schools but also there are differences in the profile of learners. These differences are no longer along racial lines as they were before 1994 but are because of the arising socio-economic conditions in the country and the ravages of the pandemic HIV AIDS .

Consider some of the factors that could be affecting your learners, namely:

- The increase in substance abuse and gangsterism/violence in many schools;
- The diversity of learners in one class and their different educational needs;
- The possibility that many children in your school are orphaned and come from either child-headed households or homes where there is abuse by an adult;
- The material wealth exhibited by some learners in the clothes they wear and the cell phones they use;
- The learners who are working after school, as domestic helpers or in spaza shops, in order to find money for basics such as food;
- The psychological challenges of learners who come to school hungry;
- The needs of learners who are traumatised by home life and see school as a place of refuge and support.

Then think about fellow educators who could be:

- Under-qualified and struggling with the new curriculum;
- Often late and sometimes absent because of personal problems;
- Disillusioned by the overload of administrative work;
- Struggling to control unruly classes;
- Unwell because of sickness or a dread disease such as HIV AIDS;
- Using substances such as alcohol or drugs to help them cope with every day life;
- Stressed because of the amount of work they have to do.

Finally, consider the parents of children in your schools who could be:

- Under- or un-educated because of the legacy of apartheid education;
- Affluent and maybe demanding;
- Poor and unable to pay school fees;
- Very involved in school affairs;

- Totally disinterested in their children's education;
- Grannies or Aunties as parents are absent or dead;
- Scared to enter the school premises.

All of these factors whether considered singly or collectively bring to the fore that the context in which a school operates is central to understanding how to teach and how learners learn.

Consider the following case study taken from a research paper prepared for the South African Institute for Distance Education (SAIDE) (names of school and principal have been changed) (Marneweck et al 2008):

### A School with a heart

Maria Shongwe Intermediate School is located in a semi urban area with the atmosphere of both rural village and urban township. The school is neat and well maintained with a good fence. Two large gardens dominate the grounds at both ends of the school. The school has running water, electricity and a number of computers for administration, but no e-mail. While the school has a library, it does not have a computer laboratory. Extra mural activities like soccer, netball and volleyball are run on the fairly good sports grounds. The principal describes the School Governing Body (SGB) as being 'very good and active'. They run the school finances with a vigilant eye and oversee the maintenance of the school buildings.

The school has a total of 34 teachers with two of them being paid for by the SGB. Maria Shongwe is a quintile one, no fee, school with 1 223 learners, but only 192 of these learners are officially considered to be orphaned and vulnerable children (OVC). The principal, Mr. Molete estimates that there are about 72 learners who are affected or infected by HIV and AIDS. A School Based Support Team – including learner representatives – looks after the interests of OVCs in the school. The team identifies problems that learners face outside the classroom and conducts some home visits.

When Mr. Molete became principal ten years ago he acknowledged the challenges faced by the community and his learners. For example, many learners come to school hungry, many were unhealthy and quite a number demonstrated behavioural problems consistent with abusive backgrounds. The principal felt that he needed to assist the learners to lead healthier lives. He also wanted to feed learners who were always hungry and to source assistance from government departments. This led Mr. Molete to look outside the school and the Department for help.

Mr. Molete initiated several contacts for assistance resulting in a number of organisations and local businesses now working with the school to offer a range of different services to the learners. Save the Children (UK) run a programme called 'Caring Schools" which requires the school to sign a contract for each year securing the support of the organisation. The contract is quite explicit about what each of the partners must do to create a school that cares for its learners by offering them certain services. Mr. Molete also initiated contact with Thusanang in 2007. The organisation began working with the school in 2008 on rights and responsibilities. The principal is responsible for maintaining liaison with the organisation through the School Based Support

Team (SBST). The Roman Catholic Services were also approached and they offer money for food, train kitchen staff and maintain a food garden. This organisation was brought on board by the principal to supplement the nutrition programme offered by the Department of Education. Another organisation that has offered its services to the school is the Soul Buddies programme. This partnership, initiated by a teacher, runs the aftercare programme.

Apart from making the initial contract with external organisations, Mr. Molete's leadership style is evidenced through the way he manages these external projects. As part of Save the Children's (UK) programme, READ became involved in Maria Shongwe as one in a cluster of three schools. It also trains teachers. The principal is mainly responsible for the liaison in the programme.

This is one school in which the impact of HIV and AIDS is fairly openly acknowledged. The principal acknowledged the role of the life skills programme as being crucial to addressing the stigma and discrimination.

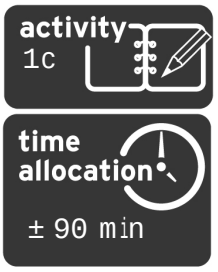
The role that the principal is playing at Maria Shongwe is not one that that just focuses on academic responsibilities but is a more embracing role where the health and welfare of the children are considered to be more important, and seemingly the first priority. There is not doubt that the principal is an empathetic person and an energy creator. But is what is happening in Maria Shongwe what schooling is about? How does this relate to your situation and your learners? Maria Shongwe has gone through a reform process where the contextual conditions have created the need for a response, a reform strategy, which is 'out of the box'.

Michael Fullan (2000) cites examples of educational reform: the first is when the school takes on this role on its own (inside reform); the second is when the school seeks out outside help (known as inside-out reform) where Fullan says that school leaders have to carefully define their role in relation to the outside support body; and finally outside-in reform where an outside body enters the school and actually runs the reform process. There are cautionary tales around each of these reform stories. Schools often go outside of their comfort zone and engage with external parties to help their schools, as they are too busy or lack the necessary skills, but they can lose control over what is happening and how ultimately the reform process pans out. This is not the case at Maria Shongwe school where the principal has actively sought out help and in doing so has defined his role very clearly.

What is also apparent is that the principal has considered the context in which his school is operating and has adapted his approach and leadership priorities accordingly. For example, there is evidence of a leadership focus within the schools on supporting the basic needs of children with the SBST taking a key role, partnering with Save the Children (UK), yet led by the principal. The principal has developed other partnerships with external bodies and so have educators under his guidance as witnessed in the Soul Buddies programme. In doing so the principal has not operated in an ad hoc manner but has looked at what his learners need and then has moved into action. The support that learners require has been identified clearly as has the right external organisation to partner with.

The HIV AIDS pandemic has forced schools to re-evaluate their role and what one is seeing are schools developing networks of support, around areas such as nutrition, after care and counselling, as well as playing traditional roles in teaching and learning. This is certainly the case in Maria Shongwe school which is taking on the responsibility of government in part, as action must happen now, not in years to come.

So how does this match with where you are? Complete the following exercise and assess your thoughts around how your school is or should be reacting to HIV AIDS and similar reform challenges.




Answer the following questions;

1. Describe the context in which your school works and the challenges that face you and learners on a daily basis in terms of poverty, HIV AIDS, vulnerability, and trauma.
2. Describe the way your school is responding to the challenges of poverty, HIV AIDS and vulnerable children. If no significant action is happening, explain why.
3. Who is leading and making decisions around issues of support for your learners in terms of nutrition, after school care and counselling? How are these decisions taken?
4. Does your school have an internal, or inside-out, or outside-in, attitude to school reform? Give examples and reasons.
5. What role could you or would you like to play in responding to the contextual challenges of learners in your school?
6. Does your school have energy creators, energy neutrals or energy consumers when it comes to supporting learners? Explain your answer.

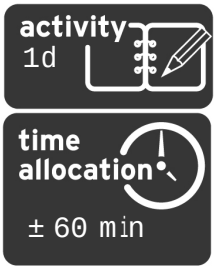
This is the second part of the assignment that has to be completed for Unit 1 and is to be included in your Portfolio for assessment.

For many educators and leaders in South Africa the role of the school is changing and subsequently the role of leadership is also changing. In the third Unit you will be asked to reflect on what a school is in today's society, in relation to the bigger picture of educational transformation in our country.

## 1.4 Your Values System

Values underlie everything you do. You work and play according to your values systems. This is very apparent in a school where how you work and interact with colleagues and learners will give off signals about your beliefs and what you think is important. It will be present in the way you run your classroom. If for example, you highly prize integrity as a core value then this will come through in your work and the way you interact with others. If achievement is a central value for you, then your behaviour will show this. You will want the best for yourself and for others.

However, we are not always consciously aware of how our underpinning values affect the things we do and say. In this section therefore you will be asked to look at your values and to consider how these influence your behaviour now and in the future.




Finding out what really matters to you and what your values are is an important part of looking inwardly at yourself and understanding what makes you 'tick'. It will help with establishing focus.

Complete the exercise labelled **T1** in your **Templates** to assess your personal values or what is important to you. The list of values is adapted from the course *Managing Personal Growth* by Blessing and White.

The values exercise can be most useful if colleagues in your school also complete it and you spend time, sharing and discussing what you have identified. It is suggested that you do this and then write a Journal entry recording what was discussed and the insights you had as a group of educators. This will help develop collaboration and increase the level of understanding and support you can give one another. If you feel that this exercise cannot be shared with your colleagues, you should ask yourself why and what barriers there are in the school that are preventing this level of disclosure.

One useful way of exploring these common values further is then to re-visit the school's *Vision and Mission Statement* and as a group compare what you have found about yourselves as educators and leaders and see what this means in the day to day work of the school. Open discussion will help in this regard.

Studies undertaken in the UK by Day et al (2000) on the performance of 12 successful head teachers identified common threads that resonate with the South African situation. What is apparent from this UK study is that good school leadership leads to a good school. It was found that the 12 chosen head teachers were very resilient under changing and stressful conditions and did not 'give up'. They were also very ethical in their approach to the work situation and confirmed the findings of Grace (1995 pg. 55):

> "Leadership in general must maintain an ethical focus which is oriented towards democratic values within a community. This has to do with the meaning of ethics historically – as a search for the good life of a

> community…Ethics here refers to a more comprehensive construct than just individual behaviour; rather it implicates us and how we as a moral community live our communal lives."

In South Africa, the ethical approach is embraced and in fact is sought after. Witness the work of Wilmot James (2000) which highlighted 6 values that underpin the work of the education system. These are equity, tolerance, multilingualism, openness, accountability and social honour. These values show how the government sees the role of education as one that can strengthen the democratic platform of the nation.

Day et al (2000) suggested that there are six core characteristics of effective school leaders, as follows:

- Leadership means having a clear personal vision of what you want to achieve.
- Effective leaders are in the thick of things, working alongside their colleagues.
- Leadership means respecting teachers' autonomy, protecting them from extraneous demands.
- Effective leaders look ahead, anticipate change and prepare people for it so that it doesn't surprise or disempower them.
- Effective leaders are pragmatic. They are able to grasp the realities of the political and economic context and they are able to negotiate and compromise.
- Effective leaders are informed by, and communicate, clear sets of personal and educational values which represent their moral purposes for the school.

It is the last statement that was the one that was so apparent in the 12 successful head teachers who were studied. It is clear that success for these head teachers is based on their own personal value system and what they believe is right for the school. This means that even though there are policies and legal frameworks guiding the work of the school, the actual operations on a day-to-day basis are guided by the leader's belief system and a sense of what is right and wrong. We feel that this must hold true in any country in the world as working from personal belief and a sense of moral justice is relevant to all good transformation processes. What do you think?

"In rapidly changing times, technical-rational approaches to leadership may be beguilingly attractive, yet in reality are unlikely to result in improved schooling unless accompanied by both a professional and moral dimension." Day et al. (2000)

With a colleague, discuss this statement and consider what it means to you as a prospective principal in a South African school. Now identify the implications of this understanding for the kind of evidence you need to include in your Portfolio.

*The policies of South Africa are built on a value system that starts with what was set out in the Constitution and what has subsequently been written into other documents and policies since then. There is evidence in all policies that democratic practice and equity and redress are paramount in creating a school*

*that is appropriate for South Africa today. Fullan's argument that Moral Purpose is central to the way a school improves and sustains improvement reinforces and shows that South Africa is aligned with thinking in other parts of the world.*

In each of the modules that you will study in this programme there are statements of values and purpose. These values can be traced back to our Constitution and what we as South Africans hold central to our daily lives. Within schools, it is imperative that the values we show our children are what we truly believe in and want for us all. Pam Christie[2] says that we need to build an ethical framework to guide educators and school leaders in the task of improving teaching and learning outcomes for all children. This framework would be as follows:

- *Systemic teaching and learning* may be framed in terms of an ethics of commitment to intellectual rigour.
- *Active participation in the world* may be framed in terms of an ethics of civility in building the conditions for a democratic public space.
- *Individual development* may be framed in terms of an ethics of care for self, for others, and for the world we share.

What do the above mean? Well firstly, an ethics of commitment to intellectual rigour implies that schools and educators should be constantly striving for new understanding, new knowledge and generally pushing the boundaries in teaching and learning. An ethics of civility "challenges South Africans to give attention to what is shared and common in a country where there are people of many languages and cultures living side-by-side, in greatly different conditions of wealth and poverty." (Christie, p.215). An ethics of care requires the learner to be considered as a whole person who needs support and understanding and that we as the human race should consider our role when we live and work with others. It implies valuing and nurturing others and the school environment is indeed a place where this should and could happen.

## Reflecting now - reflecting back

This first Unit has asked you to explore aspects about yourself – your passion for teaching, your ability to be empathetic, and your role as an energy creator; your values and how you are reacting to the HIV AIDS pandemic that is affecting all schools in South Africa. In exploring these aspects you are developing an understanding of the pathway that you are taking as an aspirant principal and what is motivating you. As stated before, it is through reflection that deep understanding occurs about why you act in certain ways. It is now time to reflect on how you engage with your role as a management team member.

[2] Christie, P. (2008) *Opening the Doors of Learning*, Heinemann Publisher (Pty) Ltd.: Sandton, South Africa

# You and Your Team

unit 2


Introduction 2.1

School Standards for Principalship 2.2

Leadership and Management 2.3

African Models 2.4

Distributed Leadership 2.5

School Functionality 2.6

LEARNING GUIDE
unit two

2

# You and Your Team

## 2.1 Introduction

At present, you are a manager in your school as a head of department or as a deputy principal. This means you are aware of what is required for the effective running of a school even though you do not have the ultimate accountability. However, you do have accountability for certain functions as you are part of a team and if your school is being run in a democratic fashion you are part of a devolved management structure.

Take a moment to reflect on how your SMT is operating. Do you work well as a team of managers? Is there a sense of common purpose in what you do? What communication barriers are there, if any, in your team?

In this Unit you will be exploring how you operate as a member of a team with specific leadership functions to undertake. Understanding yourself and how you engage in a team situation will give you insight into how you will perform when you become a principal of a school.

To start this process, you will first look at the Standards for Principalship which show you the key competency areas that you have to develop and demonstrate when a principal. Understanding these is only one aspect, as in addition you will be asked to think about your own values and personal attributes that will assist you to fulfil the demands of the Standards.

This will lead to reflecting on how leaders lead and managers manage and the work of Clarke (2007:1), a retired school principal, will give some food for thought. The interconnectivity of being a leader and a manager at the same time will be explored. You will also be asked to identify the differences between management and leadership and to look at some of the African models that have emerged and how these are manifesting themselves in our schools. Further work in this area will be found in the Module: *Lead and Manage People*.

African models of leadership will show both autocratic and democratic influences but common to all will be a concern for consensus and debate. This will lead to discussion around distributed leadership and how this is a strong influence in schools today. We will argue that distributed leadership is found in SMTs that run smoothly and efficiently.

Finally, you will be asked to rate the functionality of your school, as a manager, and to make suggestions as to the way forward. You will need to honestly reflect on how you operate in your context, be it either a rural setting or an urban one, and the challenges you, as a leader, face on a daily basis. This section is about being honest and true to yourself and about what actually is happening in your

school. It requires deep insight into your reality and how you cope. We acknowledge that changing and diverse contexts mean that optimising leadership effectiveness poses a continuous challenge rather than a single response or event (Gunter 2001; Fullan 2003).

## Learning outcomes

By the end of the unit, you should be able to:

- Explain the Draft Standards for School Principalship and see their relevance to the school team
- Demonstrate a basic understanding of what is involved in school leadership and management in South Africa, as a member of the SMT;
- Articulate how African models of leadership influence the way you operate in your school;
- Demonstrate distributed leadership as a tool for strengthening the work of SMTs;
- Assess your school's functionality and suggest a way forward to improve the school.

## 2.2 Standards for School Leadership

You are on the road to principalship so as a starting point consider the Draft Standards for School Leadership set out in the diagram that follows. This is a diagram of the various aspects of leadership that a principal has to develop, deal with and build on, on a daily basis.

The Draft Standards are built upon a definition of the core purpose of school leadership that underpins the principal's school leadership and management practices.

There are six interdependent areas that together constitute the generic role of the principal in any school context but they are focused on the priorities of the South African schooling system. Within each of these six key areas are illustrated some typical *Actions* which a principal needs to take. The relative importance of these actions and knowledge may vary from context to context.

These elements, taken together, provide answers to three fundamental questions related to the professional work of any principal. These are:

- WHY does a principal take particular courses of action?
- WHAT are the main functions of School leadership?
- HOW are the main functions fulfilled effectively?

Competent principals should be able to provide and justify answers to these questions within their specific work contexts. They should be able to demonstrate an ability to achieve the core purpose of School leadership by carrying out effectively the key areas of School leadership, drawing upon appropriate values and applying relevant personal and professional attributes.

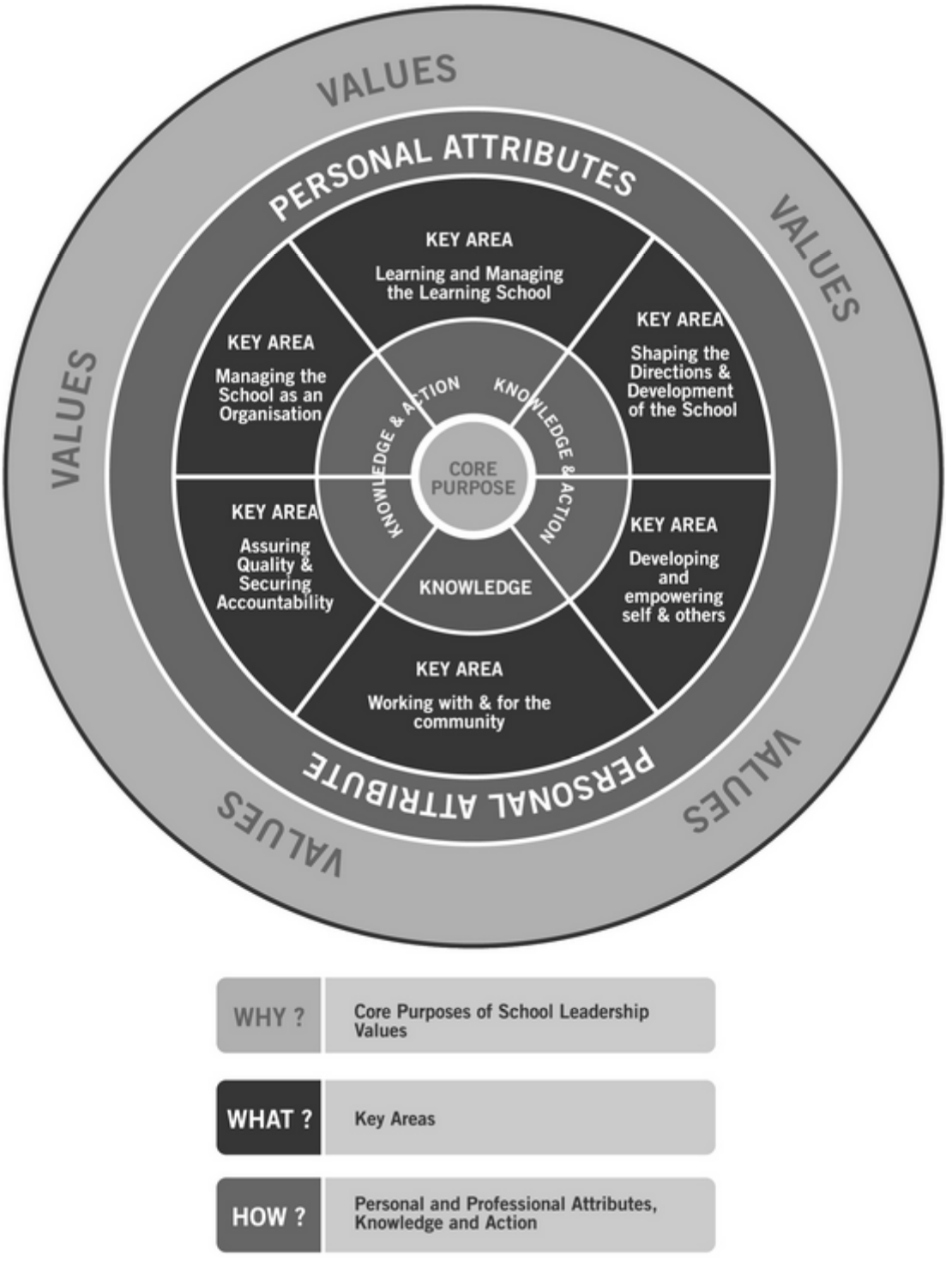
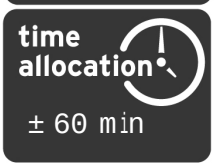



*Figure 1: Overview of draft standards for school leadership*




1. With colleagues from your SMT, discuss the Draft Standards for principalship as they apply to your school today. Refer to Text 5 for a comprehensive overview of the Standards.
2. For each key area, list and comment on what you presently do as a team and as an individual and the roles that your principal plays that are different from or are aligned with the team. Comment on how you can strengthen your teamwork in order to meet the Standards as defined.
3. Further comment on how your personal values/attributes and those of your school (espoused in your Mission statement) influence the way that you work as a team. (Look back to Unit 1 for ideas)
4. Submit all your answers in your Portfolio.

*The diagrammatic representation of the Draft Standards provides a clear visual picture of areas in which a school principal and his or her team has to focus. It shows clearly that personal values underpin how you will approach the work of building and defining your school for the betterment of children. Central to the diagram is knowledge. It is accepted that knowledge is increased through the judicious use of data. Schools that collect data on their learners and their communities are creating a bank of knowledge from which action plans can be drafted and developed. You will be looking at planning and the use of data in the module: Policy, planning, school development and governance as well as using data to inform your school's teaching and learning approach (see the module: Managing teaching and learning). Collecting appropriate data and interpreting it is a central activity for a principal. The beginning point for this will be the completion of the Functionallity Index of your school which is required later on in this Unit.*

# 2.3 Leadership and management

One of the first things to learn is the difference between managing and leading. In a school setting the functions of managing and leading overlap but it is useful to start with some idea about the basic definitions. Cuban (1988) in Bush (2008) gives some clear definitions:

> "By leadership, I mean influencing others' actions in achieving desirable ends. Leaders are people who shape the goals, motivations, and actions of others. Frequently, they initiate change to reach existing and new goals … Leadership ….takes….much ingenuity, energy and skill. (p.xx)
>
> Managing is maintaining efficiently and effectively current organisational arrangements. While managing well often exhibits leadership skills, the overall function is toward maintenance rather than change. (p.xx)"

Bush further broadly defines leadership by saying that management is about implementation and leadership is about purpose. The logical conclusion is that leading is about setting and driving a vision for schooling that should mean aiming to be the best.

South African schooling involves a devolved management system whereby the management of the school is vested not just in the principal but in the broader based SMT (and to some extent in the SGB) and this sets up a variety of groupings and matrices of decision-making. (This will be explored further in the module ***Policy, planning, school development and governance***). As a leader/manager in your school you already have decisions to make, around how your department will work, around administration, around timetabling and most importantly how you will work as a team. You are responsible for these decisions and the consequences of decisions you make. You are also accountable to the principal for the work that you do and the way that you do it.

### Management Challenges

Consider some of the management challenges you face on a daily basis. Clarke (2007) in his book *The Handbook of School Management* which is about how to manage in a South African school says there are four strategies managers use to ensure operational effectiveness, namely:

- **Planning and Budgeting:** creating systems for operational efficiency;
- **Organising and staffing:** making sure that everyone knows what is expected;
- **Controlling and problem-solving**: making it happen;
- **Predictability and order:** stability from everything working well so that teaching and learning happens with maximum impact

Clarke was principal of a High School in the Western Cape, recognised as a very successful government school with many resources and good staff. The strategies he used apply to all contexts and can be used by principals from poor, under-resourced schools to more affluent schools. The four strategies when applied to a school setting cover a wide ground and in this course you will learn more about some of these issues in the module called, ***Lead and Manage People***.

However, let us consider one of these aspects in more detail now – **planning and two major school plans, the Year Plan and the Timetable** – and consider the management challenges that can arise.

Planning in a school pivots around these two major documents. The Year Plan will list school and public holidays, religious holidays, examination dates and times, parents meetings, SGB meetings, sports fixtures, choir events and any other important school event. The bigger the school, the fuller the Year Pan will be. It is a summation of proposed activities and events and as such should not be tampered with, if possible, as there will be a ripple effect across all other events. For example, consider the disruption that can occur if the performing of the school plays is rescheduled and there is a clash with say a major sports activity. There will be children who are in the plays and also in the sports event that will wonder what to do and what the priority is; educators will be sparring with each other for time and competing for learners to attend their specific event. It could cause resentment and possibly a lack of cooperation between various sectors of the school.

So planning is not just a key management issues, it is also about creating a framework of order and control, of cooperation and delivery.

The second major planning document is the Timetable. It is the plan that sets out how educators and learners proceed through the year and is central to teaching and learning. The Timetable is usually completed by the Deputy Head of a school and educators who have good mathematical and planning ability. However, before completion it has to have input from all Heads of Departments and the Principal. In this way, planning of the Timetable becomes a 'collective experience', and as a result the Timetable is collectively owned.

As with the Year Plan, once set the Timetable should not be altered or changed at all as it is key in the daily process of how the school runs and organises itself.

Think about how your school operates. Is planning central to how your school operates? What processes and procedures do you go through to ensure that planning happens in a constructive and controlled way? What roles do the principal and SMT members in your school play in ensuring that the two major planning documents are developed and presented on time? What are the common barriers you have to overcome to create the Year Plan and Timetable and how do you overcome them?

The management challenge that presents itself with planning in a school is around getting oneself and others organised to work together to develop the necessary documents. There are many planning and procedure documents that all schools should have in place so that there is an efficient response to events and activities. Look at the following list of planning, policy and procedural documents and assess your school by placing a Y or N (meaning Yes or No) as to whether you have these documents. By doing this you will have an idea as to the management efficiency of your school and possibly some thoughts as to what to do next.

| PLANNING DOCUMENTS | Y/NO | | Y/NO |
|---|---|---|---|
| Year Plan | | School timetable | |
| **Policy & Procedure Documents** | | **Policy & Procedure Documents** | |
| Absentee register for staff | | Library use policy | |
| Absentee register for learners | | Maintenance policy (major) | |
| Absentees | | Maintenance policy (minor) | |
| Admission policy | | Orientation of new staff | |
| Budgeting | | Passing requirements | |
| Computer use policy | | Safety policy/procedures | |
| Discipline policy | | School day times | |
| Drugs and alcohol policy | | School fees | |
| Duties of class representatives | | School money | |
| Duties of class educators/tutors | | School rules | |
| Duties of Grade Heads | | School uniform | |
| Duties of sport and society heads | | Sport policy | |
| Duties of Subject Heads | | Staff absence | |
| Duties of RCLs | | Staff duty list | |
| Examination policy and procedures | | Staff substitution policy | |
| First aid policy and procedures | | Subject change procedure | |
| Guidelines for new parents/guardians | | Telephone use policy | |
| Guidelines for new learners | | Textbooks and stationery issuing policy | |
| HIV/Aids policy | | Programme for first & last week of term | |
| Homework policy | | Programme for first & last day of term | |
| Inventory | | School vehicle use | |

Getting the school to run efficiently, through having the right management procedures and policies, is what underpins the school operations and when in place it allows the principal of the school to lead more effectively and to direct his/her staff. Often one hears educators talking about excessive paperwork in a school but without policies and procedures the school will not be able to run efficiently and effectively. There is no other way.

Planning human and physical resources and also financial needs is the starting point, on an annual basis, for the principal and indeed any head of department when considering what direction the school will follow during that particular school year. There will be priorities that have to be addressed and these will relate to the needs of the learners. Good planning ensures that everyone knows what to do and when to do it. Through the planning process the principal of the school can set and share his or her vision for the school. Planning is the major management challenge of a school leader.

Aligned to planning is budgeting and **getting the finances right** – it is a major management challenge and obviously is critical for all schools. The context of the school will play an important role here as the poorer schools have a greater challenge of finding the necessary financial resources under very dire conditions. Discussion about finances will be found in more detail in the module ***Manage organisational systems and physical and financial resources***. However, it is worth you starting to think about some of these issues now and whether your school has the necessary financial controls in place. This is another major management challenge. Consider what Clarke (p.292) has developed as an essential checklist for financial controls, and tick what your school has in place:

| | SCHOOL FINANCIAL CONTROLS CHECKLIST |
|---|---|
| | The school has a written description of all its financial systems and procedures |
| | The descriptions of financial systems and procedure are updated regularly |
| | Staff involved in school finance are trained in the use for the school's financial systems and procedures |
| | There is a system in place to ensure that financial controls are maintained in the event of the absence or loss of key staff. (This would involve ensuring that every staff member involved in financial transactions has a person who is able to substitute for them in the short term.) |
| | At least two persons are involved in financial administration |
| | The people involved in financial administration check each other's work |
| | These work checks are fully documented, e.g. by signing and dating work that has been checked |
| | Income is banked regularly |
| | Cash is stored securely |
| | The amount banked is reconciled with the amount recorded n the cashbook and supported by receipts |
| | Bank records are regularly checked to ensure income is secure |
| | The school has a financially sustainable staff structure (fro school who employ additional staff) |
| | Payments made to staff are properly authorised |
| | Changes in staffing structure are informed by budget, staff costs and student (learner) number projections |
| | There is a clear delegation of responsibility for staff issues and authority to make changes to staff conditions of service, including salaries |
| | Governing body decisions to authorise staff salary reviews and changes to conditions of services are correctly and accurately minuted |

| | |
|---|---|
| | The school maintains proper accounting records, and the records are retained for at least five years |
| | Al financial transactions are traceable from original documentation to accounting records, and from accounting records to original transactions |
| | Any alteration to original documentation (e.g. invoices and orders) is clearly made out in ink (or other permanent medium) and is legibly initialled so the person responsible for the alteration can be identified |
| | All accounting records are kept secure (normally in a fire proof safe or strongroom) when not in use |
| | Only authorised staff have access to the school's financial records |
| | Funds donated for specific purposes are used for the purposes for which they were donated |

This is quite an exhaustive list but the reality is that if all the correct financial procedures are in place then efficiency and effectiveness are easier to aim for and achieve. The challenge in putting these procedures in place is acknowledging that they are best developed by a team, such as the SMT, with the help of the School Governing Body. It is time-consuming to ensure that there is input from all the players but the school principal will consolidate and develop his or her team to full potential if the consultation process is thorough. By doing so, collective ownership of the procedures and processes for planning and financial control are ensured. Teamwork is essential to meet those four management criteria for organisational effectiveness as set down by Clarke:

- Creating systems for operational efficiency through planning and budgeting;
- Making sure that everyone knows what is expected, through organising the staff;
- Making it happen by controlling and leading;
- Creating stability from everything working well so that teaching and learning happens with maximum impact.

Consider your assessment of what school policies/procedures you have in place as well as financial controls and answer the following questions:

1. Are there any other policies /procedures that are not on the list that should be considered? If so what are they and why are they necessary for your school?
2. Are there any policies on the list that you consider are not necessary for your school? If so, which ones are they and why?
3. In what way do you as a school manager use your school policies and procedures to make your department and/or school more efficient?
4. How can you, as a member of the SMT, improve the financial controls in your school? Prioritise what needs to happen and comment on why the controls are not as good as they should be. If your controls are excellent comment on how this has happened and over what period.
5. Comment on how efficient your school is in management terms looking again at Clarke's four criteria for an efficient school.

Discuss your answers with a colleague and where appropriate try to initiate changes in operations.

Implementing policies and procedures is about management of the school and it is what you are involved in every day but the real challenge is around leading others to do what you want them to do. As a school manager you lead your team but when you are a principal you will lead the whole school and this requires a multi-faceted approach.

## Leadership Challenges

Despite a range of challenges some schools are able to make a difference and to create conditions in which children succeed against the odds. Why is that?

Rosenholtz (1989) said in general there are two types of schools, stuck and moving. The stuck schools are schools with lower levels of learner achievement where the educators work alone (seldom asking for help) and there is little to no evidence of leadership. In a moving school, there is evidence that educators work more collaboratively and this includes the principal of the school who helps educators achieve goals and consequently learner achievement improves. Moving schools do not necessarily have all the equipment and resources but with a teaching force that works together to solve problems, many obstacles can be overcome. Moving schools have principals who lead and educators who also lead in terms of their classrooms or departments. There is a collaborative approach to leading, evident in all parts of the school.

Is your school stuck or moving? How do educators collaborate and work together, if at all? What role does leadership play in creating a collaborative workforce?

*Undoubtedly, schools that use a collaborative approach to solving problems are better positioned to making the schools develop and move forward. Unpacking what makes educators want to work together and to tackle the challenges of the schooling system requires leadership that can align others to a common set of values and vision. The principal has to do that by creating an environment of energy and drive.*

*Consider what Bhindi and Duigan (1996) say: authentic leaders breathe the life force into the workplace and keep the people feeling energised and focused. As stewards and guides they build people and their self -esteem. They drive their credibility from personal integrity and 'walking' their values.*

*We believe that authentic leaders create moving schools.*

Leadership comes in all forms and sizes and it is difficult to define what is the correct leadership approach for a certain situation. We say that leadership has to change to accommodate different scenarios and different schools. The style of leadership needed for example in a school where staff are disgruntled and examination results are poor compared to the style of leadership needed in a school where everything is running smoothly is very different. The leader of the school changes his or her leadership style according to circumstances. Consider the following:

## Leadership Styles

Reflection on oneself is important, as is reflection on what is happening around you. Here are some examples of leadership and management situations seen in schools in South Africa, which illustrate two very distinct leadership styles.

**School A:**
Mr. X is a principal of a high school in a rural area. He runs a 'tight ship', or so he likes to believe, where everyone works well and together. In his weekly staff meetings, he does not waste time but has an agenda that he draws up for the meeting. In the meeting, he presents his points of view and gets decisions taken as to what has to happen in the school for the next week. There is very little debate in the meeting and his staff follow his lead. Things 'happen' in his school and it runs well. Parents are keen for children to go to the school, as the discipline is strong. (Although he knows it is not in line with government policy, Mr. X hits children if they do not do what is needed and parents approve of this.) The matric pass rate is the best in the District.

**School B:**
Mr Y is a principal of a school in a small town. He believes that he should consult with everyone before a decision is taken and this means that the school holds many staff meetings, usually in the afternoons. The school has a moderate to good matric pass rate and Mr. Y is keen that this improves even further. One of the problems is around matric learners who leave the school as and when they wish. They are often seen outside of the school, loitering at the local shopping centre during break time. There is not enough time to buy food and get back to class on time, so the Grade 12 learners arrive back late or not at all, or so he has heard. This situation has been discussed several times with the staff but no final decision as to how to solve the problem has been taken. Mr Y has also tried to discuss this with the learners but there is little change in behaviour. The staff are behind him in solving this problem but he cannot get everyone to agree to the 'same way forward' in the time allocated for the staff meeting. The item has been discussed for four weeks running. This week Mr. Y will get a final decision from all – a committed and confirmed decision that will be followed by the whole staff. That is what he believes.

Which style of leadership of the two principals mentioned in these small scenarios do you relate to more and why? Which is closest to your own style?

*Different leadership styles are needed in South African schools, as the contexts in which they operate are very different, from rural to urban, from small farm school to schools that take 3000 learners. There is not one right answer but there are generally accepted ways of working.*

*For example, Mr. X may lead a school that runs well and efficiently but it appears that the teachers do not have a say in how the school operates. This goes against the general principles of collaboration and democratic decision-making that the new policies encourage and require schools to follow. Certainly, corporal punishment of any kind is not allowed in the schools and Mr. X needs to stop this immediately (even if parents want it). Leadership that*

*stifles involvement and debate is not good leadership. It is the leadership of the past and because it resonates with many parents who went through a system that required a child to sit and not talk, there are those who still believe that this is the right way. Having said this, there are times when the leader of the school has to be decisive and take decisions, especially when consultations would not be appropriate. Urgent safety matters could be one such time.*

*On the other hand, Mr. Y is encouraging debate but does not seem to get everyone to a final decision in a timeous manner. This style of leadership can be seen as very loosely under a mantle of democratic decision-making but there is not the necessary 'movement forward'. However, by involving everyone in the decision-making process, or dialogue, there is increased awareness and a collective understanding of what is needed. This approach resonates well with the type of leadership that is encouraged in government policy, and feted as being the most appropriate for South African schools. But Mr. Y seems to be very inefficient in getting decisions made.*

The leadership styles discussed above are not ideal for the situation presented and in each case a better leadership approach can be adopted. Leithwood et al (2006) says that successful school leaders:

> "……are open-minded and ready to learn from others. They are also flexible rather than dogmatic in their thinking within a system of core values, persistent (e.g. in pursuit of high expectations of staff motivation, commitment, learning and achievement for all), resilient and optimistic. Such traits help to explain why successful leaders facing daunting conditions are often able to push forward when there is little reason to expect progress."

What is certain is that school leadership is an evolving and changing function, which is influenced by people, the context and broad economic circumstances. The change in the way schools operated in the 1970s to today shows this very clearly. We have seen a move away from autocratic leadership to a more inclusive and collaborative approach.

Wilson et al (1994) in *School Leadership for the 21st Century* (Davies and Ellison, (1997 p.148) illustrates this clearly and shows how a plethora of leadership styles and approaches has evolved over the years and suggests that there are five levels of leadership that are apparent in our schools today. Each one of these levels of leadership would have a parallel management style and approach to running the day to day activities of the school. These levels are explained in Table 1 and illustrated in Figure 2.

You need to ask:

- Which diagram really represents what is happening in your school?
- What the diagrams are illustrating and relate them to your role as a leader in a team and the role that the principal of your school is playing.

Some people would argue that the primary distinction is only between autocratic and participative approaches. What do you think? Do you find Wilson et al's five level classification useful?

***TABLE 1: LEADERSHIP IMPACT***

| STYLE OF LEADERSHIP | IMPACT IN SCHOOL | MY SCHOOL |
|---|---|---|
| *Autocratic* | • *Principal in charge of all decisions;*<br>• *Educators follow and do not question.* | |
| *Central* | • *Principal in charge of all decisions;*<br>• *Educators cluster around principal and give suggestions but principal's word is final.* | |
| *Transitional* | • *Principal is central to all decision making process but allows some key members of staff to take decisions and have control in specified areas.*<br>• *Educators cluster around principal for most decisions. Small team that works with principal is formed.* | |
| *Partnering* | • *Principal allows the group to make decisions and partners with key staff members so that policy and vision are followed according to plan;*<br>• *Educators are able to take control and work as a team. Principal works with one or two others in a collegial fashion* | |
| *Empowering* | • *Principal acts as mentor to the staff who have decision making power although accountability lies with principal;*<br>• *Educators work as empowered and self led teams.* | |

A further classification can be made where the five styles are sub divided into three categories, namely: autocratic, participative and high involvement. These categories are illustrated below. In our schools, the government is encouraging school leaders to move towards the high involvement stage as this is where all members of the management team and the principal are working in the most supportive and collaborative manner. When the empowering stage is reached the SMT is making major decisions and feels capacitated to do so, with the principal in a supportive role; still accountable for decisions but having delegated the responsibility for action. To get to this stage the principal has to lead his or her team through the other stages so that there is confidence that the SMT members can do what is needed. Many principals get stuck at the participative stage and can not make that ultimate move to hand over responsibility to others.

Is this the case in your school?

Ask yourself the following questions:

- Is the principal empowering you and others to take greater responsibility for running the school? If yes, how does this happen? If no, what is stopping the principal doing so?
- What role does the SMT play in working with the principal to getting all managers to a stage of empowerment?

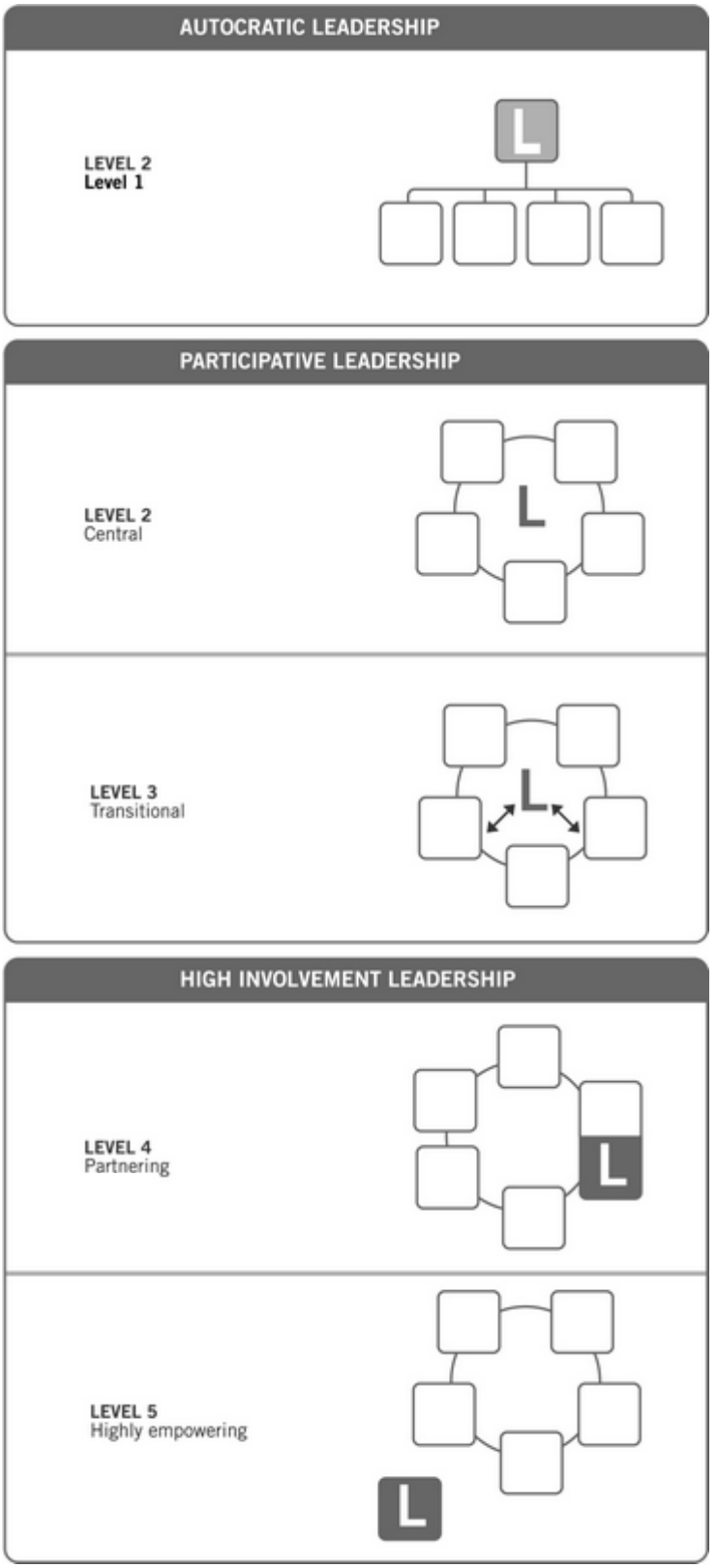



*Figure 2: Styles of leadership*

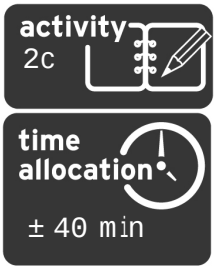
*(Adapted from: Wilson, J. M., George, J., Wellins, R.S., and Byham, W.C. (1994) Leadership Trapeze: Strategies for Leadership in Team-Based Organisations, San Francisco; Jossey-Bass.*

The challenges of leadership appear to be greater than the challenges of management and that seems true in most schools. Management is a very measurable activity and there are results that can be seen and acknowledged. Leadership relies on the personality of the leader and how he or she interacts with others, alongside how a platform for change and improved school performance is developed. The success rate is therefore less predictable. One can therefore say there are inevitable tensions in the way leadership unfolds and performs in a school.

Day et al (2000 pg.135 - 146) identify seven common tensions in leadership, which are:

1. **Leadership versus management** – we have talked about the challenges of leadership and management separately but in fact there is a tension between the two. How does one balance the demands of management, seen in the administrative load that has to be covered, versus spending time on achieving a vision, problem solving for quality delivery and developing collaborative activities with staff, using a variety of different styles and approaches, in order to improve school conditions? It is a challenge for most principals today.
2. **Development versus Maintenance** – every school has to maintain activities especially around teaching and learning. The school timetable is inevitably packed with activities and educators are fully involved every spare minute of the day. When is there time to consider new ventures and new activities? – a cry heard from many principals especially with the paperwork increasing.
3. **Internal versus external change** – "the growth in the external scrutiny and monitoring of schools has created its own set of tensions. Headteachers now find themselves positioned uneasily between those outside schools instigating and promoting changes and their own staff within school who will ultimately have to implement them." When demands for change are consistent and persistent the principal is facing a situation where the pressure to lead his or her staff in such a situation is almost unbearable.
4. **Autocracy versus autonomy** – we have discussed the move that principals are making towards an empowering state where educators are also leading. However, there is a tension here, as the principal has to decide how far the boundaries of autocracy and democracy coincide. "On the one hand they have ultimate authority to make decisions because of their positional and referential powers." On the other hand, it is now generally acknowledged that a collaborative leadership style reaps huge benefits.
5. **Personal time versus professional tasks** – with the increase in external demands, more paperwork and a focus on results-driven teaching, it is inevitable that successful principals are sacrificing personal time in order to meet professional demands. This creates a tension between home life and school life and balancing such is essential.
6. **Personal values versus institutional imperatives** – research has shown that principals that do not sacrifice their personal values in any situation in their professional life are the most effective. Usually, these principals have clear, strong values that positively influence the direction of the school. Staff who work well with the principal inevitably share the same values.
7. **Leadership in small versus large schools** – principals in small schools usually have a teaching load as well as leading and managing the school.

This creates a tension around priorities and organisation of workload. This is most common in small rural schools. However, the paperwork required by the districts does not diminish and the time scales for return of the administrative work is the same whether one is in a small or a large school.




Consider the seven tensions of school leadership above and reflecting on what happens in your school, give an overview of the leadership challenges facing you and some idea of how the principal and SMT are working or should be working to overcome these.

Write your thoughts down and submit these in your Portfolio

We have explored some of the management and leadership challenges facing a principal but these are the same challenges facing you as a member of the SMT. It is clear that where the SMT and principal work as a collective then the challenges of leading and managing have a better chance of being overcome. Some suggest that deepening the skills of leading and managing in the SMT is good preparation for your future role as principal.

In summary, consider the following tasks that a school leader and manger should be tackling. The list below is taken from the module: *Understand School Management and Leadership in a South African Context* offered as part of the Matthew Goniwe School of Leadership and Governance ACE programme.

**Task List:**

- Ensure that all resources are used effectively and efficiently to support learning;
- Ensure that all stakeholders in the school are committed to the vision and mission of the school;
- Ensure that the school is a learning organisation by ensuring that educators and learners model good learning practices;
- Establish sound quality assurance systems that include evaluation and performance management in accordance with current legislation and policies;
- Ensure systems of accountability in reporting to the School Governing Body, the parents and the department of education;
- Ensure that the school governing body, parents, learners and educators have a clear understanding of the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities to sound education in the school.
- Promote a positive ethos and culture that supports quality education;
- Motivate and provide support systems for educators.

It is not an exhaustive list but does provide a starting point for further discussion in your SMT. All of these aspects will be discussed further in the Module: *Lead and Manage People*.

## 2.4 African models

Many of the most well-known models of leadership and management come from research work carried out in America, the UK and other developed countries. Their influence on the South Africa education scene is marked with the Department of Education following international trends, for example, by implementing models that relate to devolved management and the use of Outcomes Based Education. There is nothing wrong with this, but as local culture will always influence how models are implemented what is emerging are specific African styled scenarios. We are beginning to see African models emerging as hybrids of international educational models fused with African culture, norms and values.

For instance, consider how a meeting between colleagues in an African setting develops. Dialogue is the essence of that meeting, based on a history of what dialogue means and how it occurs in African life. Creating dialogue is a part of African tradition; always present when a Lekgotla happens. A Lekgotla is when villagers sit together and talk. The talking could seem random and not focused but the Lekgotla has a purpose and a process that is followed.

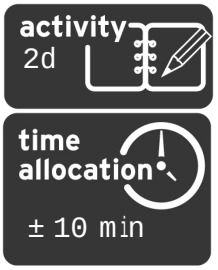
The seSotho word ***Lekgotla*** means 'meeting circle' or 'tribal management', and is founded on the African concept of 'Ubuntu' - meaning 'I am because we exist'.

Look at the steps or principles of a Lekgotla meeting (de Liefde, 2003):

- Everyone has the right to attend the ***Lekgotla***
- Everyone's voice counts
- There is trust in dialogue
- There is respect for others
- Stories are a means of communicating with others
- Everyone shares the truth
- People listen observantly
- A decision is always taken.

In a traditional ***Lekgotla***, everyone sits in a circle and the chief is seated in a central place as he occupies the highest position in the tribal structure and takes the final decision at the end of the deliberations.

Sharing the truth is at the heart of the Lekgotla system. There are no negative consequences for those involved. Fear of losing face is no longer an issue. Sharing the truth creates the possibility of being sincere. No one points fingers. Everyone's contribution is aimed at clarifying what chain of cause and effect has caused the problem. Sharing the truth in the Lekgotla is a way of simultaneously developing collective energy and human passion. In this way the often paralysing functioning of a hierarchical structure is changed. Usually a hierarchical structure means that a person's function determines how much others value what he or she says. (de Liefde, (2003) p.60, 61).




Now consider how staff meetings are held in your school and rate how they function in terms of the principles of a *Lekgotla*.

| PRINCIPLE | AGREE | SOMETIMES AGREE | DO NOT AGREE |
|---|---|---|---|
| Everyone has the right to attend the Lekgotla (staff meeting); | | | |
| Everyone's voice counts; | | | |
| There is trust in dialogue; | | | |
| There is respect for others; | | | |
| Stories are a means of communicating with others; | | | |
| Everyone shares the truth; | | | |
| People listen observantly; | | | |
| A decision is always taken. | | | |

In assessing what happens in a staff meeting, you are in fact looking at aspects of leadership and management. The essence of participation and democracy, written into SASA, can be seen implicitly underpinning the above list which is based on a cultural norm and is essentially African. In other words, you should be agreeing with all of the above statements if you are following the essence of SASA.

Are the characteristics of a *Lekgotla*, listed above, about leadership or management or both? How can the role of the principal influence a school *Lekgotla* or in this case a school staff meeting, or any other meeting such as the SGB meeting?

*This is an example where the concepts of leadership and management intertwine. It is leadership that allows a meeting to hear the voices of everyone and leadership that builds trust and mutual respect with staff complement. However, it is good management that enables realistic decisions, through a defined meeting structure/agenda and set time limit, to be taken. Management is certainly more measurable than leadership.*

- *The balance between leadership and management is a delicate one and is one of the biggest challenges facing a school principal and the SMT. It is about weighing up the consequences of allowing free participation versus the need to get to a timeous decision (remember Principal Y's dilemma?). It would be naïve to suggest that all decisions will be reached through consensus using this method but this approach underpins the ways schools should operate and is essentially an African approach.*

## But what about African Leadership?

Is there a special African leadership style that would be appropriate in your school? Is it the leadership as shown in how a chief runs a *lekgotla*? The principles of a *lekgotla* could be seen as forming the basis of how a school should operate in that everyone has a say and a decision is always the outcome of a meeting. The leader of the *lekgotla* is the *kgosi* or chief. In African culture the *kgosi* should adopt an approach that inspires trust in the decision-making process of the leader.

Consider the words of de Liefde (2003, p.69 -72)

> …The kgosi is expected to possess persuasiveness, compassion and vision. The most essential thing is that a kgosi's authority is based on the esteem in which the tribe holds him…. A leader who operates on the basis of a natural belief in humanity, who gives without expecting anything and listens without prejudice, creates a climate of trust. Trust is the basis of inspiration, motivation and creativity…If a leader trusts his people, the people will repay this trust through hard work and by being inventive….

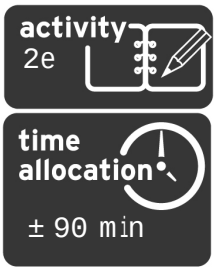
How would you feel if your school was run by someone who demonstrated the characteristics of a *kgosi*? (Maybe this is already happening.) It sounds very appealing. Indeed, it is the basic style that former President Mandela used, following the African dictum: 'I think because we are.' The true African leader believes in the community and the power of *Ubuntu* (togetherness and commitment to each other – we are who we are through others).

Below is a list of the characteristics of a typical *kgosi*:

- listens to everyone's voice, but stops interminable discussions
- spells out the reality
- asks questions
- is sensitive to his (her) surroundings and has vision
- has sufficient time for education and relaxation in nature
- generates trust on the 'shop floor' through encouragement and motivation
- creates real commitment
- takes decisions
- keeps the community together.

How would or do these skills manifest themselves in your school and would they be appropriate in a situation where you are required to produce paper and lists and records of assessments? Would these skills be suitable in a community which has many demands and needs?

The following activity will explore these questions further within the real context of South Africa today.




Reflect on the skills of the *kgosi* and the other leadership styles you are familiar with and complete the following exercise using the Case Study of a primary school in Cape Town (see further on). The following steps must be completed:

- Work with at least two others in your school to answer the following questions about the Case Study. Identify the people you have asked and explain why you have asked them to assist you.
- Read the Case Study about a primary school in Cape Town.
- Identify the challenges that are facing the school and list these.
- Consider what style or styles of leadership are needed to help this school succeed and explain why. Relate the styles you have chosen to the challenges listed.
- How does the scenario facing this school compare to your everyday reality? Explain your answer.

Complete this exercise and submit it as part of your portfolio.

## A school in Cape Town

Someone once said: "Those who can do and those who can't teach." I suppose that might depict the majority of us currently in the profession as no-hopers and failures. However, this is hardly the case as the demands on a teacher today are simply enormous and stressful. As our communities have changed and adjusted under the pressures of the modern world, so too have our children and their families. Teaching, today, is not for the faint-hearted. Our school draws most of its learners from the local communities and more particularly, from the overcrowded nearby informal settlement. Many learners are from single-parent families or are looked after by their grandparents. Unemployment is high while others are employed as labourers or as domestic workers. Poverty levels are high. Evidence of this is seen in schools with the high number of learners being fed daily.

While we are aware of the high HIV infection rates, we are still unaware of any learners in our school who may be HIV positive or who may have Aids. This is just one of the many challenges that face our teachers -- how to make a meaningful connection with a learner who bears the burden of his/her sick mother or sibling, how to inspire this learner to work and be motivated in school when the most pressing issue for him/her is whether a loved one will still be around by the end of the year.

In many communities where poverty levels are high, parents struggle more to maintain contact with their children who are often left unsupervised for hours until they return from work. What inevitably happens is that children spend much of their time walking about. They seldom complete homework or spend sufficient time studying for their tasks or tests. We have had countless instances where we have had to call in parents because of the repeated poor behaviour and performance of children. Parents mostly look to us to tell them how to monitor and set boundaries for their children. Problems are more acute among boys than girls, who mostly have to complete house chores after school. This powerlessness results in the teacher having to play parent to a greater degree than before.

Teachers are often at their wits end trying to maintain control and discipline around constant disruption and disrespectful behaviour. It does not help at all that only a few learners have breakfast -- porridge, cereal or bread -- or prepare a school lunch-pack before leaving on the bus. For a few cents they rather buy a few packets of cheap chips -- saturated with salt and food colorants. It is no wonder that they "bounce about" uncontrollably in the first part of each session after break. Such hyperactivity from a group in a class of about 40 learners is a monumental challenge to a teacher.

The past realities of apartheid have left their mark on our teachers. Except for one teacher, no one on our staff can communicate even on a basic level in Xhosa, the home language of our learners. Our life- orientation teacher speaks Zulu so what he overhears from learners as they talk among themselves can be introduced into life skills and life orientation lessons. The traditional and cultural issues they wish to discuss strike a chord with him as he is equally knowledgeable about cultural affairs, albeit among the Zulus.
In closing, that teaching is stressful is a given. It is admirable that the South African Catholic Education network has dedicated 2006 to be the Care of the Teacher Year. In the mission of both church and school, it is important to support and nurture teachers who will help in the long run to achieve the objectives of creating schools that work lovingly among our vulnerable children. Our small school has a group of loving, patient and dedicated teachers who, despite the odds and difficulties, continue to work tirelessly and try to remain faithful to their mission as teachers.

## Principles of African Leadership

Having established that there are some key and central aspects of African leadership, we can safely say that there must also be African principles that underscore and define the style of African leadership. What are these principles? We have already mentioned ***Ubuntu***. Let us explore this a little further.

(The following extract is adapted from the ACE material of the programme offered to principals and school leaders by MGSLG.)

> ….A principle that underlies African leadership and management is called UBUNTU, which is a saying that means, "A Person is a Person through other human Beings" or "Umuntu ngumumtu ngabantu" in Xhosa. Khoza (2005) says that too often Africa sees itself as an outpost of America or Europe and that this is seen clearly in the way business behaves. He argues that in the corporate world the Eurocentric business practices are seen in:
>
> - Decision-making informed by power relations rather than consensus;
> - Institutional conflict as a result of power positions; and
> - Managerial designs that include strategy, organisational structure, systems, financial and other controls

He further argues that these practices are necessary for business to compete globally but are improved if operating in a supportive environment. This supportive environment is characterised by ***Ubuntu***……

It is often argued that the pressure for completing paperwork in schools does not allow enough time for educators to meet and share and for a supportive environment to flourish. But there are many examples of schools which foster a caring and loving atmosphere in which children learn and are supported. It all depends on the leadership approach and style of the principal. If we think back to what was said previously that effective leaders are collaborative and create opportunities for their staff to lead and become empowered then this fits well with the principle of *Ubuntu*.

*Ubuntu* is about caring and recognising that the feelings and thoughts of others have merit. There is a connection between *Ubuntu* and emotional intelligence as people with a heightened level of emotional intelligence are better able to see the needs and recognise the talent of others. Covey (2005) says:

> ..*Emotional Intelligence (EQ)* is one's self-knowledge, self-awareness, social sensitivity, empathy and ability to communicate successfully with others. It is a sense of timing and social appropriateness, and having the courage to acknowledge weaknesses and express and respect differences…

Expanding this further we can say that African leadership principles can be further expressed as being about respect for others, concern for the well-being of those near and acknowledging intuition as what informs the thinking mind where to look next. Developed emotional intelligence seems central to African principles as Daniel Goleman (1998) states:

> …For star performance in all jobs, in every field, emotional competence is twice as important as purely cognitive abilities. For success at the highest levels, in leadership positions, emotional competence accounts for virtually the entire advantage….Given that emotional competencies make-up two-thirds or more of the ingredients of a standout performance, the data suggest that finding people who have these abilities, or nurturing them in existing employees, adds tremendous value to an organization's bottom line….

Read the article titled *Ubuntu and School Leadership (Msila)* (Text 4) and answer the following questions in your SMT:

1. As a school leader, how have you or how would you build an atmosphere of *Ubuntu* in your school?
2. What barriers are there to building an *Ubuntu* culture in your school and how do you or have you overcome them?
3. Are the principles of *Ubuntu* essential for the development of good management practice in South African schools? Explain your answer.
4. Identify examples of where *Ubuntu* has been applied in leadership practice in your school.

## 2.5 Distributed Leadership

Building on the concept of African leadership which involves a caring and sharing approach we will now reflect on the international work on Distributed Leadership. The school of thought on the importance of Distributed Leadership has emerged from debates around democracy and devolved management practices in schools. This sits well with our ideas around African models of leadership. The principle of working together (distributing tasks and responsibility) and creating a school where there is a sense of ownership and acknowledgement of each other is apparent in schools where there is good leadership both at principal and SMT level – which has been a constant theme in this Unit. In the module ***Lead and Manage People*** you will explore in greater depth the overall concept of leadership and will look particularly at your own situation. To set this scene, consideration is now given to the concept of distributed leadership and what it means to you.

It is argued that schools that are well run and have happy staff members are like that because the leadership is distributed. But what is understood by this term? Certainly it is not about everyone leading at the same time, as this would no doubt bring about chaos. Neither is it about sharing out tasks in an unplanned way. Harris (2008) says distributed leadership:

> "……is a collection of roles and behaviours that can be split apart, shared, rotated and used sequentially or concomitantly. This essentially means that at any one time, multiple leaders can exist in a team, with each leader assuming a complementary leadership role. Unlike leadership substitute approaches, where attempts are made to reduce or eliminate the need for a leader, the distributed leadership model emphasises the ***active cultivation and development*** of leadership abilities within the organisation. The core assumption is that each member has leadership capabilities that will be needed by the group at some time."

In practice, this means that the principal is the gate-keeper to distributed leadership practice in the school and has a powerful and real relationship between him or her self and the other managers of the school, who take leadership roles as they emerge. Harris (p.72) states further that there are some common principles to distributed leadership, namely:

- It is a broad-based leadership
- It requires multiple levels of involvement in decision-making
- It focuses primarily on improving classroom practice or instruction
- It encompasses both formal and informal leaders
- It links vertical and lateral leadership structures
- It extends to students and encourages student voice
- It is flexible and versatile (non-permanent grouping)
- It is fluid and interchangeable
- It is ultimately concerned with improving leadership practice in order to influence teaching and learning.

This form of leadership accords well with the ideas of democratic practice and consensus building. It also relates well to ideas around shared dialogue and reflecting together, as distributed leadership encourages both. However, it is the principal's ability to trust others to make the right decisions and to lead that is key

in ensuring distributed leadership takes place. Certainly, the principle of *Ubuntu* will be present when distributed leadership is working well.

Grant (2008) looked at the reality of distributed leadership in a small sample of schools in KwaZulu Natal and concluded that in practice distributive leadership and teacher leadership was not something that the whole school embraced. Elements of distributed leadership were found in the SMT structures but in most cases this did not extend to all the educators. She concluded that for most the cultures of schools were based on an acceptance of the ultimate authority of the principal and that this was a factor that inhibited real distributed leadership.

From this preliminary research one could conclude that in a South African scenario the concept of democratic decision-making, the principle of *Ubuntu* and the development of collaboration may be at a rhetorical level only and that what is happening is still very much a practice where 'top-down' decisions are the norm. In other words, is democracy and all that accompanies it just a value written into policy documents?

Grant (p.92) used six leadership roles of educators as a basis for her analysis. She focused mainly on classroom practice because that is where Distributed Leadership should be identified, as it is in the classroom that support between educators is most needed. These roles, from the work of Devancy (1987, in Gehrke, 1991) are:

1. Continue to teach and improve one's own teaching;
2. Providing curriculum development knowledge;
3. Leading in-service education and assisting other teachers;
4. Participating in performance evaluation of teachers;
5. Organising and leading peer reviews of school practice; and
6. Participating in school level decision-making.

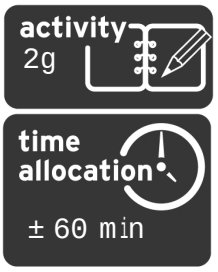
There was evidence that educators did work on improving their knowledge, either on their own or with other colleagues and when there is a professional development activity organised by say the District with the cross exchange of ideas having an impact on how teaching and learning develops. This implies that leadership roles 1 to 3 are evident in part but 4 to 6 are not. Point 6 is what happens when the SMT and educators have a substantial say in the running of the school.

How do you as an educator collaborate with others in your school? Do you share ideas around what you are teaching and new ways of developing knowledge? Do you share lesson plans and talk about classroom successes? Are you part of decision-making at school level?

Distributed leadership does not end at the school gates. It can also be found **between** schools and **outside** schools. For instance, when schools are formed into clusters, they can decide to share leadership roles, say around raising funds or resources, and then the leadership would be defined as a shared activity between schools. When schools cluster and offer support to the local community through setting up social centres or places to look after orphans and vulnerable

children after school time, then we see distributed leadership as an **outside schools' activity**.

Distributed leadership is about creating networks of support and collaboration. It can only occur when the principal has empowered his staff to take responsibility for their own decisions and actions.




In a SMT meeting, discuss the concept of Distributed Leadership and how it can help improve classroom practice. Think of practical ways that you and your team can improve literacy levels and mathematical ability in the classrooms through Distributed Leadership practice. Write down a plan that shows who will do what and for how long and with what intended outcome. Show the levels of decision-making.

If you are already using distributed leadership to improve classroom practice, explain what is working and why and if there are problems explain why you think these are happening.

Submit your answer as part of your Portfolio.

The introduction of more paperwork and greater levels of accountability within schools has created a situation where an educator can no longer sit in his or her classroom alone and ignore other educators. To share the administrative load and to create better teaching and learning overall there is a need for leadership to become more flexible and in doing so to devolve decision-making across the whole staff. This is Distributed Leadership. This is not about abdication of authority but about creating opportunities for improving classroom practice and learning standards.

Distributed Leadership, now recognised as a practice to be encouraged and supported, shows how schools have moved from being centres of autocratic leadership where educators felt intimidated to challenge principals, to now where collaboration is becoming more normal, Supported by the appropriate policies and procedures, the school has evolved into a new entity. The new role of the school will be examined further in Unit 3.

The opportunity for you and your school colleagues to develop the structures for Distributed Leadership practice is there. Are you willing to taking this challenge on?

# 2.6 School Functionality

Before considering changing leadership practice, it is important to assess whether the school has basic systems in place that create a functional organisation. Working as a team player and leading from the SMT can place you and your colleagues in a powerful position to change practice in general within your school. But you firstly need to know – change from what to what? It begins with understanding where the school is at present and what has to change and who can do what to make a difference. In other words, look at the functionality of your school as a starting point.

The Functionality Index that is included as a tool (seeT3) for you to assess the performance of your school is different from Whole School Evaluation. It gives you a brief but informative glimpse on areas that can be improved, especially as a leadership team. Applying this tool will give you an overall picture, or baseline, of what is happening or not in your school.

Answer the questionnaire and fill in the required information in Template T3.

Ask two colleagues from the SMT also to complete T3.

Compare your answers with the colleagues and submit both with yours as part of your portfolio.

Also, draw up a short plan that shows how you will try and improve four identified major weaknesses over a period of a year. Explain why you have chosen these points and give details about what you will do.

## Reflecting now – reflecting back

In this Unit you have explored how you as a member of a school team have managed and also led aspects of the school. When you become a principal, these same management and leadership functions will still be your responsibility but now you will have to monitor others who will make it happen. Creating the right atmosphere for delegation and support will be one of your greatest challenges but remaining part of the team is even greater. Truly successful leaders are seen as team players and are not sitting in judgement on others. Successful leaders know how their schools operate and can talk about levels of functionality, weaknesses and strengths. They empower others to work with them to create a school that is focused on the all-important task of teaching and learning.

# You and your context

unit 3


| | |
|---|---|
| Introduction | 3.1 |
| What is a school? | 3.2 |
| Legislation/policy – a brief historical perspective | 3.3 |
| The Context of Schooling – the South African reality | 3.4 |
| Sustainability – a practical challenge for principals | 3.5 |
| Conclusion | 3.6 |

LEARNING GUIDE
unit three

3

# You and your context

## 3.1 Introduction

This unit will explore the contextual realities of your school and the consequent challenges you face as a school manager and member of the SMT. It is important to note that whatever your reality, education legislation and policy will define how you operate and react in your school to certain conditions. In this way, there are common ground rules for all schools and these are the threads that weave through every school, be it in a deep rural area or in a cosmopolitan centre. Consequently, discussion on some of the main Acts and policies is used in this module as a starting point for understanding what is similar about the context of our schools. This will be developed further in the module *Policy, Planning, School Development and Governance*.

South African schools have a range of contexts in which they operate. There are few countries where schooling is so diverse and different because of the structure of the economy and the legacy of the past. Unlike many other developing countries, South Africa has what is termed a first world element and a third world element which is used to describe the huge differences in infrastructure and economic buying power between urban and rural areas. This manifests itself in the education sector with schools on one end of the spectrum being fully equipped with access to sophisticated technology, libraries, extra mural and sporting facilities, to the other extreme where the school does not have the basic number of classrooms, nor running water, nor electricity. With such a difference in contexts, there is inevitably a difference in the way educators and school leaders operate and cope. Some of these aspects will be explored in this unit and will commence with a discussion about what we really understand is the main purpose of a school.

By working through the various sections in this unit, you should achieve the following outcomes:

- Be able to identify and debate the purpose of schooling in South African
- Be able to understand and articulate the relevance and usefulness of educational policy as it relates to you as a school leader and how it can be applied in different contexts
- Be able to analyse what contextual issues impact on your school
- Provide leadership in solving school problems.

## 3.2 What is a School?

We will start with re-looking at what schooling is about as this allows us to examine if our different contexts influence how we run and prioritise what our schools are doing. If you work in a rural area does the context in which you work mean that the purpose of your school is different from the school manager working in an urban school? Or are schools all aiming for the same outcomes?

When you ask school principals and leaders about what is the purpose of schooling you are often confronted with an array of answers, such as: it is a place to study and pass exams; or it is a place to learn socialisation skills. What is certain is that schooling in Africa was an imposed structure from colonial times whereby Africans learnt basic skills such as reading and writing but this did not give them equal opportunity nor access to wealth. Christie (2007, p.14 -16) gives several views on why societies have schools and how they came about:

> "…….If we look at the history of schooling in different societies, we see that schools developed at the same time as societies were changing from being 'traditional' to being 'modern'. Mass schooling developed alongside industrialisation. It served two main purposes. First, as traditional social structures were breaking down schools were agents of socialisation. They taught the cultures and values that were once taught in families and kinship groups. Second, as economies were changing, schools prepared people for different forms of work. They taught the skills and knowledge necessary for participation in modern economies.
>
> In serving both these purposes – social cohesion and preparation for work – schools at the same time sorted and sifted students. Those who completed only a few years of schooling were prepared to do the less skilled, less valued work in society. Those who stayed longer were prepared for clerical and white collar jobs. And those who completed schooling could go onto university and to higher paid professional or managerial work.
>
> When western powers colonised other countries, they introduced schooling. Often, this role was taken on by missionaries who were keen to spread their religions. Schooling disrupted traditional social patterns, and imposed the worldviews, values and skills of colonisers. It prepared most colonised people for subservient roles and often gave them a sense of inferiority. But it opened doors for a small group of people who formed the elites of their societies. Access to education has been part of independence struggles in many countries, and education has been important in the formation of postcolonial states. It is an important signifier of modernity. ."

For what purpose are you educating your children? Is it for blue-collar jobs, white-collar jobs or for professional jobs? Or for all three? Are all of your learners given an equal and fair chance to succeed in life?

Often schools send out subliminal messages about what their learners can achieve. For example, if your school is in a poor area where perhaps there are lots of learners from informal settlements do you believe they can do as well as learners from better-resourced homes? What expectation do you have of these learners in terms of achievement and performance?

Consider this second perspective on schooling by Christie:

> "……schools ……..have a particular structure of learning. They teach written symbol systems (such as reading, writing, arithmetic); they teach abstract, coded, systems of knowledge; and they do so in particular ways. Material to be learnt is sorted and sequenced; category systems are used; and students practice mastery through repetition and recitation. Classroom language tends to follow the same pattern, called 'initiation – reply – evaluation', where a teacher gives feedback on the response ….. Schools use formal modes of expression and tend to exclude everyday experience. They focus on formal and abstract thinking, and develop certain kinds of problem solving. In short, there is such a thing as 'school knowledge', generally understood, and school-based forms of thinking (or cognition. Put simply, the purpose of schooling is to teach 'school knowledge' and ways of thinking. Whether or not this has application outside of schools, or brings personal advancement and social change, are matters of considerable debate. "

Is your school educating children with knowledge that is not relevant for outside of the classroom? Through schooling are your learners aware of their culture and social context? Is the knowledge you are teaching applicable to all learners in South Africa?

What can be seen in most schools is that the presentation of general knowledge is influenced by the cultural norms of the society that the school serves. Traditions of the society from which the children come colour how children receive knowledge. For school knowledge to be retained it has to be relevant to the context and family circumstances of the child. This is where the role of the educator is so important, as he or she has to translate knowledge and create learning opportunities for the knowledge to be absorbed by children. When knowledge does not have meaning for learners it is retained at a superficial level and is generally not used outside of the classroom. Contextualising knowledge is the challenge for all schools. It is why Outcomes Based Education as a concept is critical, as this is a vehicle that provides opportunities for school knowledge to be presented in several ways with an emphasis on learner-centred application.

Consider how schooling was introduced by missionaries. Their main purpose was to promote religion and convert people to a faith, using the medium of the written word, the Bible. But as most communities visited by the missionaries, at the time, could not read and write formal schooling became the main vehicle for teaching these skills and thus ensuring they had access to the information in the Bible. The concept of faith was presented as school knowledge with accompanying school-based rituals to embed that knowledge. However, in many cases the school-based messages were at odds with the traditional messages in the broader community and it was only when the missionaries gave their

message to the broader community and it was accepted that there was some sort of balance between school-based knowledge and outside reality. Today, religious groups have schooling that is faith-based and exclusive to that faith. Parents can choose to send their children to such schools and usually the community and home life from which the children come is in balance with the school knowledge that is presented.

To summarise Christie says:

> "To understand schools, we need to start by looking at human beings and how they learn. The human mind develops biologically as part of the body, but it also develops through social contact with others. We experience a physical world, but we make sense of the world through our interactions with other people. Human conscious thinking requires language, and language is part of culture. Culture provides us with shared meanings, language and symbols, through which we understand the world and communicate with others. Different languages and cultures provide different understandings of the world. Human understanding is 'culturally mediated', that is, it takes place within culture. Thus human beings experience a 'double world': a natural world, and a cultural world of human making."

Perhaps this overview gives us some understanding as to why the eleven official languages of the country are important to maintain and why learning in one's language is part of embedding culture and giving different people a sense of where they belong

So what is the purpose of school and whose purpose is it? Are we interested in what learners, or parents, or educators, or the government see as the purpose?

Christie (p.21) highlights the following five purposes of schooling, for debate:

- The primary purpose of a school is to provide an environment where teaching and learning take place.
- An important purpose of schooling is to prepare people for the world of work beyond school
- Nation-building and citizenship – political goals – are the key purposes of schooling
- In a democracy, public education – schooling – is one of the major vehicles for teaching the values of a society to children and young adults
- Education is about the development of the individual.

Let us look at these purposes in more depth.

### The primary purpose of a school is to provide an environment where teaching and learning take place

This is the mandate for every school in South Africa and schools should be creating possibilities for all learners to understand their world and ways to change it. This means that the 'school knowledge' that is offered should be relevant and applicable. Teaching and learning will also be influenced by a political mandate, values and ethics. Can classroom learning also be influenced by the socio-economic background of the child? Research is conflicting in this area but

international findings indicate that there are patterns of performance that link home background and socio-economic conditions which raises concerns around social equity and fairness and what must be done to help the poorer child learn.

### An important purpose of schooling is to prepare people for the work of work beyond school

This is an obvious statement, as we know that the longer you stay in school, the opportunities for better-paid jobs when you leave are increased. But is this always the case? Consider how many matriculants and university graduates are now without employment - the reason for this is that they do not have the right 'school knowledge' for the fields of need in the economy. In this context, their qualifications are meaningless. For example, if the economy needs electricians and schools are focusing on producing learners without the right level of skills in science and mathematics then the schooling system has failed the learner. Similarly, if the economy needs people with degrees in IT and there are only graduates with degrees in the Arts then the economy cannot grow and productivity which stimulates job growth will decline. So are you providing the best 'school knowledge' for learners to be become economically productive?

### Nation building and citizenship – political goals – are the key purposes of schooling

Governments are responsible for setting up and maintaining the education systems. Often the school becomes a centre where social problems can be solved. For instance, the government has introduced the structure called a School-Based Support Team (one per school – made up of concerned educators) to help children facing social challenges. There is also a move for schools to become centres of care and support to assist the increasing number of Aids orphans in our schools. Certainly, governments around the world use schools to provide social cohesion and in South Africa's case to create unity amongst its diverse and unique people.

### In a democracy, public education – schooling – is one of the major vehicles for teaching the values of a society to children and young adults

In Unit 2 you explored your value system and also were made aware of the values that underpin the way education is run today. However, can education really teach values? What happens when the values of educators are different to each other and to society as a whole? Does this impact on what you teach in the classroom? Consider the history of education in the apartheid era when the concept of 'separate but equal' was propagated and separate development was a basic philosophy. In other words, politics and education are intrinsically intertwined. Consider what Christie (p.33) says: "Social institutions and cultures are imperfect, but they are constantly formed and transformed through human activity. Reflecting on action in ethical ways and engaging with change are important tasks for critical educationists."

### Education is about the development of the individual

Giving each child the best opportunity to succeed in an education environment must be a focal point for schools. It is why having the best teachers and the best resources is so important. There is a large emphasis by all schools on getting children through the National Senior Certificate in line with each individual's

talents and needs. But are we ensuring that what is offered to each child is just and fair and stretching each child to their learning limit? It is a question every educator must ask every day when in the classroom.

Consider the five possible purposes of a school discussed above and with the rest of your management team, including the principal,:

1. Decide what purpose or purposes your school is advocating and explain why this is.
2. Does the context in which you work affect the way you see the purpose of your school? Explain your answer.

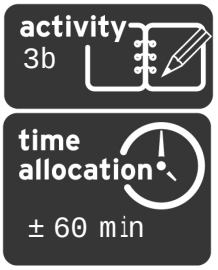
## 3.3 Legislation/policy – a brief historical perspective

The purpose of schooling is further defined in legislation and policy documents. These overarching pieces of paper provide a framework in which schooling operates. This section looks at how education policy since 1994 has shaped thinking around schooling and the way schooling has developed since then. This will be discussed more fully in the module *Policy, Planning, School Development and Governance*.

We will start by looking at the Acts and policies that are in place and how these are applied in the context in which you work. Central to this is an understanding that the government has had to introduce new policies very quickly after it came to power in 1994. There has been a 'policy overload' in a short time span and all school leaders are required to read and know what is important to their *modus operandi*. The government has had to restructure and redefine the whole system, to achieve the major aim of quality education for all. On reflection, you can say that the initial way the task was addressed was positive, holistic and put up-front the values of equity, access, transparency and democracy. On the negative side, the explosion of paper and new Acts has caused many school leaders to feel overwhelmed but without policies there is no direction and common vision for the future.

How schools implement these policies can be very different, as the schooling context will define a different approach or process. Consider the difference between the SGBs in rural and urban areas. In many cases, the level of skills of parents on the SGBs will be very different and therefore how they manage funds or develop school procedures will be influenced by their own experiences. The policy will be the same across all schools but implementing policy will be influenced by context.

In what ways have education policies helped you as a leader in your school? Are there challenges for you, as a school leader, in implementing policy? If so, what are they and how can they be overcome? Are the values of equity, access, transparency and democracy being addressed in your school through the application of legislation and policy?




Write down what you understand by the terms 'legislation' and 'policy'. Write down a list of all the legislation and policies that impact on your school, including your own school policies. Now list the processes that a school has to go through to create and establish a school policy. Is this different from the way that provincial departments create policy and legislation? Explain your answer. (It is suggested that you talk to colleagues, district and provincial people and where possible visit government web sites to gather information.)

These notes could inform a baseline analysis in your Portfolio for use when you study other modules. It will complement the work you have already done in Unit 2 on school functionality.

*Education law is formed when Parliament ratifies legislation that has been drawn up through a consultative process. Once this happens, it is non-negotiable in terms of interpretation and implementation. There are major repercussions if you do not follow education legislation, or Acts, because to do so is to break the law. In the education arena, there are Acts, such as the South African Schools Act of 1996 (see Text 1 reference in your Reader), which set out the framework for the ways schools should work and perform. These have a direct impact on behaviour changes of educators and learners alike, and guide schools towards a desired way of working.*

*You will be familiar with this Act because each school has its own copy but it is suggested that you re-read it and look especially at the introduction where the intention of the Act is set out.*

*Policies are different. They can be drafted at a national, provincial or school level and can change according to input and opinion. However, national and provincial policies carry a lot of weight. Policies attempt to make schools function effectively. A policy is drafted and followed; then adjusted in line with what happens in practice. Policies are the product of consultation and debate and should not be the work of an individual.*

As a leader, your day-to-day school work is mostly concerned with applying school policies. School policies (e.g. the learner code of conduct, language and admissions policies, HIV/Aids policy) are drawn up by the various constituent groups of the school and are specific to a particular situation. They exist in order to help manage, govern and resource schools in an effective and efficient manner. A school policy needs to be developed in an organised and consultative way and will be used by the school stakeholders to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the school and especially the performance of the learners. (Reflect back on the last Activity – were your school policies drawn up in an organised and consultative manner?)

On the website for the Department of Education, (go to www.education.gov.za) there are documents which refer to schools. Included in these documents are:

- Acts (passed through Parliament and which are law)
- Bills (passed through Parliament and which are precursors to Acts)
- Government Notices (statements of intent to do something which are binding on schools).

These legal documents guide the ways educators and others operate in schools, colleges and educational institutions in general. It was necessary to write and pass through Parliament many pieces of legislation after 1994 to redress the gender, racial and class inequalities of the past and drive societal transformation.

All laws previous to 1994 that were perceived as contentious or undesirable were repealed and new legislation was put in place. It is suggested that you familiarise yourself with legislation and policies that relate to operations in your school.

## The building blocks of legislation and policy

South Africa became a democratic society in April 1994 and in 1996 the South African Constitution became an Act. The values, sometimes called the building blocks, which are enshrined in the Constitution, are:

- Human dignity, the achievement of equality and the advancement of human rights and freedoms
- Non-racism and non-sexism
- Supremacy of the Constitution and the rule of law
- Universal adult suffrage, a national common voters' roll, regular elections and a multi-party system of democratic government, to ensure accountability, responsiveness and openness.

The Constitution is the supreme law of the Republic. It protects, amongst other things, the sovereignty of the eleven official languages and promotes equal recognition of these. In addition there is provision for development and use of Khoi, Nama, San and sign language. Language is a cornerstone of education and giving equal status to all languages must be a consideration of any educational institution, be it a school or a college or other kind of institution.

In the Constitution there is a chapter devoted to the Bill of Rights where there is an affirmation of the values of human dignity, equality and freedom as well as very clear statements about children and education. Consider the following extracts from the Constitution (the full text of the Constitution can be downloaded from the reference marked as Text 2 in your Reader, and is a text which you are encouraged to read – to remind yourself that there are very few countries in the world that have such a comprehensive guiding Act in place):

### Children

[Section] 28.

1) Every child has the right
   a) to a name and nationality from birth;
   b) to family care or parental care, or to appropriate alternative care when removed from the family environment;
   c) to basic nutrition, shelter, basic health care services and social services;

d) to be protected from maltreatment, neglect, abuse or degradation;
e) to be protected from exploitative labour practices;
f) not to be required or permitted to perform work or provide services that
   i) are inappropriate for a person of that child's age; or
   ii) place at risk the child's well-being, education, physical or mental health or spiritual, moral or social development;

…

2) A child's best interests are of paramount importance in every matter concerning the child.
3) In this section "child" means a person under the age of 18 years.

**Education**

[Section] 29.

1) Everyone has the right
   i) to a basic education, including adult basic education; and
   ii) to further education, which the state, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible;
2) Everyone has the right to receive education in the official language of their choice in public educational institutions where that education is reasonably practicable. In order to ensure the effective access to, and implementation of, this right, the state must consider all reasonable educational alternatives, including single medium institutions, taking into account
   i) equity;
   ii) practicability; and
   iii) the need to redress the results of past racially discriminatory laws and practices.'

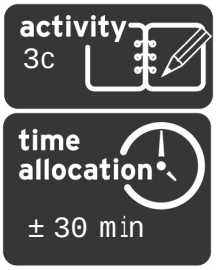
The Bill of Rights is clear and unequivocal about areas concerning children and their rights. In practice, you may see there are contradictions especially when you examine the conditions under which some children live. There is documented evidence of children being used for child labour practices in some provinces. Many AIDS orphans are living on the streets. There are children who still do not attend school because they do not have money to pay school fees and buy school uniforms. Solving these problems is a long-term challenge for the South African government. The Bill of Rights is the benchmark against which all South Africans must measure their actions, to see if challenges are being met and overcome. It sets the criteria against which your work in school is measured. It is the starting point for you to ask: are you running a school that meets the needs of children, at all levels?

Read the extract from the Constitution about the rights of children. What do you think are the areas where South Africa still needs to do work? Relate this to your school and education in general.

Without doubt, there is a need to do more work to ensure that children are protected and cared for. South Africa is a country in transition and transformation is the primary driver. Education is the backbone of the country and the foundation for creating competent citizenship.

With this is mind, one of the major Acts to be promulgated since the advent of democracy is the South African Schools Act of 1996 (see again Text 1). The

values or building blocks that underpin this Act are participation, democracy and transparency. This Act sets out the way a school should be governed and managed and gives a large amount of power to the School Governing Body (SGB) which at the time was considered a radical move. This was because the previous government had always retained a high degree of centralised power. The SGB is set up as a central, accountability structure through which the voice of the parent is heard very distinctly. The Chairperson of the SGB must be a parent and the principal, although a member of the SGB, is not allowed to run the SGB. SASA is legislation and therefore must be followed, as it is a legal document.

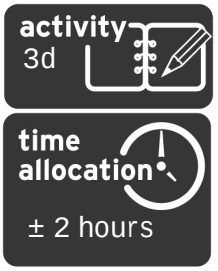



Refer to the full text of SASA, a copy of which you should have in your school, or access it via the website link referred to in your Reader (Text 1), and re-acquaint yourself with what is in the Act. Now answer the following questions, quoting from relevant paragraphs in the Act to support your answers:

- How old must a learner be to attend school and when is the first time that the learner can leave if he or she needs to do so?
- Are there any circumstances under which a learner may not attend school full time?
- Can a learner be refused admission to a school because the guardian or parent is unable to pay fees? Explain your answer.
- Can a learner who is Muslim be denied access to a school that is predominately Christian and if yes under what circumstances?
- Is it true that a learner who steals from other learners can be suspended from school by the SGB? If so, under what circumstances?
- Why and for what purpose is a constitution required by every school?
- What is the role of the SGB in the development and approval of the School Development Plan and the School Improvement Plan?
- Who prepares and approves the school budget? Who monitors and controls expenditure and for what items?
- What powers does the RCL representative have on the SGB?
- Who owns and controls farm schools?

Your responses can inform the baseline analysis you are developing in your portfolio.

The SASA stands as an example of an Act that in essence devolves decision-making powers to the school but in doing so has possibly created greater gaps between the wealthy and poorer schools. This is the unintentional by-product of creating a devolved, democratic system which asks parents to take greater responsibility for their children's schooling. It is inevitable that the parents of poorer children are themselves poor, both in financial and educational terms. This leaves them at a disadvantage when it comes to making decisions about the allocation of school resources and fundraising for extra-mural activities; also, they are not necessarily knowledgeable about policies around language choices and how classroom activities should be rolled out. Often, parents with low levels of education defer decision-making to the principal and/or educators; believing this is the right way to improve conditions for their children. This may not be the case, as the principal and others may abuse their power base and make decisions that are not in the best interests of the parents and children. What happens in your school?




Call a meeting with three colleagues and analyse what has been happening in your school, specifically considering the role and responsibilities of the SGB, with regard to:

- Participative decision-making
- Power sharing between the principal, educators and parents (include learners if you are in a secondary school).

Give examples where you believe the SGB has worked well and examples where the SGB has not helped the effective and efficient running of the school.

Identify the group members involved and add the notes to the baseline analysis in your Portfolio.

*Overall, the introduction of new educational legislation and policy has been good for the country, in our opinion, with clear statements of intent as to what the government will do to improve access and quality education for all. From experience, the implementation of legislation and policy will always be a challenge as it involves change and people are always nervous about changing what they know, especially if it involves something they are comfortable with. It can be seen from the discussion around the role of SGBs and how they operate in school decision-making processes that the legislation, such as SASA, cannot cover and recommend action to meet all the social demands within South Africa, from an education perspective. In this regard, policy and legislation* ***guide*** *and schools make decisions appropriately.*

As a school manager, you must acquaint yourself with all the relevant policies and these are listed in the Reader for you to consider. You will find them listed under Text 3, with references to web sites where you can download the whole text of key policies. These policies include:

- Norms and Standards for School Funding (1998)
- National Curriculum Statement (2005)
- Employment of Educators Act (1998)
- Employment Equity Act No 55 of 1998.

Read these Acts and get to understand your role as a leader in ensuring this legislation is followed. In addition, consider what is needed with the roll out of the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS). (This is addressed in the core module *Lead and Manage People*.) This system provides an important tool to assess whether a school is performing according to set standards and expectations. As the name implies, it is a quality measure.

Consider the essence of each of the Acts listed above, by working through the following sections. Although these are not all the Acts that you should know, they are the main ones. This gives you an overview on several pieces of legislation that are important to you as a school leader. The exercises that follow each section check your understanding and those of others in your school around the implementation of policy.

**NORMS AND STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL FUNDING**

(Refer to Text 3 for web site identification)

This piece of legislation came about after SASA became operational in January 1997 and builds on what was promulgated in SASA itself. In SASA there is a statement concerning the national norms and minimum standards for school funding. These norms and minimum standards deal with:

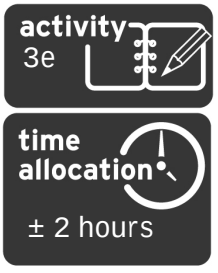
- the public funding of public schools
- the exemption of parents who are unable to pay school fees
- public subsidies to independent schools.

The norms deal only with school-level expenditure, and do not cover a provincial education department's school-related administrative and developmental expenditure. However, the principles of equity and efficiency are expected to underpin the provincial funding allocations. This includes allocation for training of management capacity in schools and funding should be targeted to the schools with the greatest need that is those with weaker SGBs and school leaders.

The national Department of Education (DoE) prepared the legislation around Norms and Standards for Funding after consultation with the Standing Committee on Finance of the Heads of Education Departments Committee (HEDCOM) and after an extensive consultation process with interested and involved stakeholders.

'The State must fund public schools from public revenue on an equitable basis in order to ensure the proper exercise of the rights of learners to education and the redress of past inequalities in educational provision' (section 34(1)).

The latest directive from the Department shows that there is now concern about poverty levels in our poorest schools and regions. Because of this, the government is asking that all schools be identified and placed into one of five quintiles which have been established according to need and poverty indicators. Learners in the poorest schools will not have to pay fees and will not be excluded from education because of their poverty. This is a positive move but for those schools that fall just above the 'no fee' level the struggle continues as there are very poor learners in these schools as well. Many learners are faced with not being able to pay anything towards their school fund and could find themselves having to borrow money to meet the basic demands of the school.




With three other members of your school team, preferably those on the SMT, write a short summary of the conditions within your school that relate to:

- poverty levels of your learners and with this in mind how you help to ensure equity and redress within the school environment
- your Section 20/21 status and how you handle funding in your school
- the level of money that is needed in your school, for what and how it is raised.

Add your answers to the baseline analysis in your Portfolio, stating which members assisted you and what their contribution was.

## NATIONAL CURRICULUM STATEMENTS

*(Refer to Text 3 for website identification)*

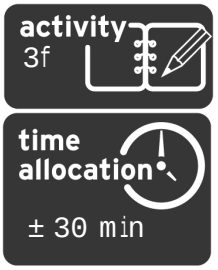
The National Curriculum Statements (NCS) streamline and strengthen Curriculum 2005 and show a strong commitment to Outcomes Based Education (OBE). The design and language have been simplified from Curriculum 2005. There is now also a better alignment of curriculum and assessment. In addition, there is improved teacher orientation and training, with better support materials and provincial support. Overall, the statements have been changed, based on practice and experience, and there is a greater sense of holistic thinking behind the documents.

Here is a list of points that relate to the NCS:

1. The NCS gives clear descriptions of the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that a learner is expected to demonstrate at the end of the band.
2. The NCS builds on the vision and values of the Constitution and Curriculum 2005.
3. The principles stated and apparent in the NCS include:
    - Social justice, a healthy environment, human rights and inclusivity
    - Outcomes Based Education (a learner centred, not a teacher centred approach)
    - A high level of skills and knowledge for all
    - Clarity and accessibility
    - Progression and integration.
4. There are critical and developmental outcomes for learners who learn in an OBE setting.
5. The critical outcomes are stated below. Learners will be able to:
    - Identify and solve problems and make decisions using critical and creative thinking
    - Work effectively with others as members of a team, group, organisation and community
    - Organise and manage themselves and their activities responsibly and effectively
    - Collect, analyse, organise and critically evaluate information
    - Communicate effectively using visual symbolic and/or language skills in various modes
    - Use science and technology effectively and critically, showing responsibility towards the environment and the health of others
    - Demonstrate an understanding of the world as a set of related systems by recognising that problem–solving contexts do not exist in isolation.
6. The developmental outcomes are as shown below, Learners will be able to:
    - Reflect on and explore a variety of strategies to learn more effectively
    - Participate as responsible citizens in the life of local, national and global communities
    - Be culturally and aesthetically sensitive across a range of social contexts
    - Explore education and career opportunities
    - Develop entrepreneurial opportunities.
7. There are Learning Outcomes and Assessment Standards per learning area.
8. Learning Outcomes are designed down from the critical and developmental outcomes. They give specific focus to knowledge, skills and values.
9. Assessment standards describe the minimum level, depth and breadth of what

learners should demonstrate in their achievement of each learning outcome. Assessment Standards are grade specific.

10. The learning areas up to Grade 9 are: Language, Maths, Natural Science, Social Sciences, Technology, Economics and Management Sciences, Life Orientation, Arts and Culture.
11. Learning Programmes are concrete expressions of Learning Area Statements and are guided by the NCS but developed by teachers, schools and provinces.
12. The NCS states that assessment should be:
    - Transparent and clearly focused;
    - Integrated with teaching and learning;
    - Based on predetermined criteria and standards;
    - Varied in terms of methods and context; and
    - Valid, reliable, fair, learner-paced and flexible to allow for expanded opportunities.
13. Assessment Records must be kept for all learners and should include: A Records Book; Learner Portfolios; Progression Schedules; and Learner Profiles.




Develop a table as follows:

| *AREA* | *STRENGTHS* | *WEAKNESSES* | *COMMENT/ACTION* |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Education Material* | | | |
| *Alignment of teaching material to NCS* | | | |
| *Lesson Preparation* | | | |
| *Assessment in general* | | | |
| *Learner Portfolios* | | | |
| *Record Book of learner assessments* | | | |
| *Progression Schedules* | | | |
| *Learner Profiles* | | | |

Complete the table by reflecting on what happens in your school in each of the listed areas. Look especially at the school as a whole and also at specific grades. The comment column is for you to assess whether your school is producing what is needed and what is set out in the NCS. (Refer to Text 3 where you will find the reference to the complete text about the NCS.) The issues identified here are explored in detail in the core module *Managing Teaching and Learning* and the elective module *Lead and Manage a Subject, Learning area or Phase*.

Also, you are required to make suggestions on how to improve the present situation in your school, no matter how small a change.

File this Activity in your Portfolio.

## EMPLOYMENT OF EDUCATORS ACT 1998

*(Refer to Text 3 for web site identification)*

The Employment of Educators Act (EEA) is an Act that covers all aspects relating to the employment, retention and development of educators, with specific regard to educators at:

- Public Schools;
- FET Institutions;
- Department Offices; and
- Adult Basic Education Centres.

The Head of Department at provincial level is the employer of educators, in all respects except for salaries and conditions of services which are the direct responsibility of the Minister. In addition, the public school itself is the employer of persons in the services of the school, such as gardeners and administrators, and also has a say in the employment of educators as stated in the South African Schools Act.

There are paragraphs that relate to salaries and establishment of posts. With regard to the latter, how posts are established is related to learner numbers, needs and subject specification. The Act comments on this and points out that the Minister and Department of Education have overall responsibility in these areas.

However, the provincial Head of Department is responsible for allocation of posts and appointments; to be in line with national regulations and provincial needs, and it is here that the SGB has a role:

'Any appointments, promotion or transfer to any post on the educator establishment is on the recommendation of the SGB.' The SGB has this important role as the government recognises the importance of the direct involvement of parents in the education of their children and the SGB is the mechanism through which the parent voice is heard. Parents need to have a say in the appointment of educators who will teach their children and whereas they cannot directly employ such persons, their recommendations on the suitability of educators can influence a decision of employment. The SGB can also recommend in cases of transfer to other schools and receiving educators on transfer to their schools.

The Act has a section that refers back to one of the responsibilities of the Head of Department, as the employer of educators in a particular province. This section relates to the principles that underpin such appointments. It is stated that when appointing an educator, ability and the need to address the imbalances of the past in order to achieve broad representation must also be considered.

The Act states clearly that the accepted age for retirement is 65 and that there is no difference between males and females when considering retirement.

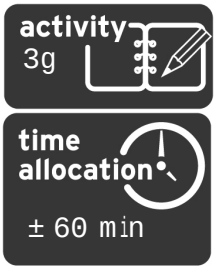
The discharge of educators is also covered in the Act. The general conditions for discharge include:

- Ill health
- Abolition of the post
- Promotion of efficiency and economy in the Department and the school
- Unfitness to carry out duties

- Misconduct
- Misrepresentation, say of qualifications and experience (also labelled misconduct)
- Failure to complete the probationary period satisfactorily.

The Act goes into some detail about the importance of the South African Council of Educators (SACE) which promotes the professional development of educators and a code of ethics which all educators should adopt. All educators are required to be registered with SACE otherwise they cannot be employed in a public school.

Finally, the Act states that a notice period of 90 days is required for all educators. This amounts to about a school term's notice.




In your Journal, record how well the process of employment of educators in your school has happened over the past three to five years and the involvement of the SGB in this process. Also, reflect on incidents where problems with educators have been encountered and try to explain why. If none have occurred, why is this the case?

Finally, do you believe that all educators in your school are working to the standard of competence inferred in the above Act? Are the educators promoting efficiency and fulfilling their duties well? Explain your answer. Use the notes to supplement the baseline analysis in your portfolio.

**EMPLOYMENT EQUITY ACT 55 OF 1998**

*(Refer to Text 3 for web site identification)*

The purpose of the EEA is to achieve equity in the workplace by:

- Promoting equal opportunity and fair treatment in employment through the elimination of unfair discrimination
- Implementing affirmative action to redress past inequalities in the workplace by promoting the employment and promotion of individuals from previously disadvantaged backgrounds.

Read the complete EEA and write down ten things that highlight equal opportunity and fair treatment in your workplace and share these with a colleague. Discuss with that person why you have chosen these items.

*All of the activities around policies and legislation are to introduce you to the framework in which you work and the guidelines under which the school operates. Policies and legislation will be addressed more fully in the core module* ***Manage Policy, Planning, School Development and Governance****. The*

*context of your school will influence how you implement policies as consultation processes will take different times in different settings and the complexity of unravelling the policies will also dictate how quickly they can be implemented. Do not compare yourself to others in this situation but look to creating the right atmosphere and right conditions to ensure that policies are understood and followed. This is what leaders of schools have to do.*

# 3.4 The Context of Schooling – a South African reality

In this section, you will be looking at some of the contextual realities facing schools and school leaders. These were touched on in Unit 1. Many research projects have been undertaken in the past few years on what creates a good school. It is impossible to make all schools the same because of contextual variances which are very marked. Most schools are in rural, under resourced settings with challenges of poverty, HIV Aids and unemployment. These schools are found in largely agricultural surroundings. In contrast there are fewer schools that would equate with schools in developed countries, having resources, access to technology and skilled people to support the school in general. These are found in mainly urban environments. The difference between the two settings is very noticeable. However, having said that research has tried to isolate what makes the school work well regardless of setting and this obviously comes down to certain human traits in the school leaders and educators.

A report to the Minister of Education, prepared in October 2007 by Christie, Butler and Potterton, identified characteristics and criteria of secondary schools that work. The sample of schools visited and researched were all in the middle quintile which meant they were average and not elitist in any way. Also they were not the most disadvantaged and poor. By choosing the middle quintile schools across the country it was hoped that general trends could be identified in all the schools that were achieving. The four dynamics identified are:

- All of the schools were focused on their central tasks of teaching, learning and management with a sense of responsibility, purpose and commitment;
- All of the schools carried out their tasks with competence and confidence;
- All had organisational cultures or mindsets that supported a work ethic, expected achievement and acknowledged success;
- All had strong internal accountability systems in place, which enabled them to meet the demands of external accountability, particularly in terms of Senior Certificate achievement.

What emerged is not surprising but does confirm certain factors and approaches by the school leadership and management of successful schools. It points to the school leader having clear objectives about what matters in education. The report goes on further to say that there was not one typical leadership and management style in all of the sample schools. In many of the schools there was a form of Distributed Leadership where responsibility for getting things done was the task of the collective. Noticeably, in all the selected schools management was efficient and the expectations of educators were very high.

The four criteria identified in the research are not context dependent but are about the essence of teaching and learning and good classroom practice. It can safely be assumed that these characteristics would also apply to primary schools.

But most of our schools are not successful. Taylor (2008) states that the majority of our schools are indeed failing and points to "a culture which tolerates a very loosely bound timetable, teachers and learners come and go as they please and

teaching happens desultorily. Children in these schools are socialized into giving little value to efficient work habits, and to having very low expectations of their own intellectual development."

He goes on to say that the task of intervening in failing schools is the responsibility of the provincial and district-level structures.

> "However, most of these offices are ineffective, largely flaccid organizations, unwilling for political reasons, or unable for technical reasons, to intervene decisively in schools; the majority lack educational authority, based on expertise, and most are in the same dysfunctional state as the failing schools they purport to administer."

Taylor does not paint a very pretty picture of the system. However, it is know that there are huge differences between districts and schools and that one person can make a large difference in the lives of children, if there is the will to succeed. The context in which each educator works is unique and so the response will be unique and personal.

What appears to be emerging from all the research is that for schools to succeed they need to concentrate on instructional leadership that focuses on what is happening in teaching and learning in the classroom. This is also the central aspect of Distributive Leadership discussed previously. In this role, heads of department and the principal of the school are central.

Instructional Leadership is about creating conditions where it is possible to:

- Develop a culture within the school where teaching and learning are talked about and valued. For example, talking about children and classroom experiences during breaks, and at meetings etc.;
- Ensure that reading, writing and basic arithmetic form part of every day study in schools;
- Make lessons balanced between content given and assessment tasks so that the majority of time in the classroom is spent on learning and not on assessment. Keep high expectations of children at the forefront of delivery and ensure lessons are well paced and exciting;
- Support educators so that they are up to date with their subject and pedagogic knowledge.

How well is your school doing in terms of instructional leadership? Are you helping your team to keep up to date with new knowledge and new ideas for creating an exciting and developmental classroom? Do the management and leadership structures of your school share the same ideals around classroom performance?

Instructional leadership is centred in the school but the external factors that impinge on classroom behaviour come from a society that has many challenges

These include -

- An increasing level of violence in schools which seems to mirror what is happening in the broader society
- Educators entering into sexual relationships with children in their schools

- Use of drugs and alcohol by teenagers increasing at an alarming rate
- Frequent absenteeism by educators especially on a Monday and at month-end
- Educators reporting sick because of intolerable work related stress levels
- An increase in the number of AIDS orphans in schools who are laughed at by other children and feel marginalised
- An increase in the number of children who drop out of school because of financial constraints.

With such issues coming into play, the school leadership has to contend with firstly creating a place where the 'human factor' is considered and it is addressed. Secondly, leadership has to build a team of educators that put the welfare of children at the forefront of what they do.

In a society where there are many demands at a socio-economic level, the role of the school becomes more important. Again, the South African situation is not unique and other parts of the world are looking at schools in a different way – as centres of support for the whole child. In the UK, the expression Extended School is being used extensively.

Extended schools ensure improved access to a range of services to support children and their families, and therefore can be seen to embody a philosophical move towards a focus on the needs of the whole child. (Lessons from Extended Schools – www.ncsl.org.uk – downloaded on the 01/10/06)

The UK response in establishing Extended Schools was because of the tragic death of a child. In South Africa, there is a great need for the school and the community to work more closely together but whether there are the resources and the capacity to do so is debatable. In many South African schools aspects of the Extended School are already in place. For example, some schools are operating as Centres of Care by offering to help children to access social grants when they are orphaned, ensuring feeding schemes operate efficiently at the primary schools level, running ABET classes after formal schooling has finished etc. Non Government Organisations run structured programme with schools, helping them to set up a network of support with local NGOs, Department offices, local agencies such as hospitals, and other entities that can provide care for children in need. In several provinces, non-governmental organisations work directly with local schools and have become almost their outreach arm to help children with issues around food, shelter and health. Overall, South African society is characterised by many single parent families, a large number of AIDS orphans and high levels of unemployment/poverty. Against this scenario the school, working in partnership with others, as an extended unit makes sense.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs provides a useful framework to consider what extended activities a school could provide, as follows:

*Figure 3: Maslow's hierarchy of needs*

According to Maslow, human needs can be classified according to five levels of priority. The most pressing of these relates to our biological and physiological needs for survival. This is followed by a requirement for a safe environment and a need for belonging, affection and attachment. Only once these needs have been addressed can the process of building esteem and self-actualisation begin.

What does this mean in practice? For schools it means that children cannot succeed if they come to school hungry and from homes where they feel unsafe. Also, children who are unloved and uncared for have difficulty in socialising within the classroom. These problems and issues need to be addressed before educational progress can be made. You may need to put in place feeding schemes, uniform banks, and counsellors to support the needs of your learners.

What is the profile of the learners in your school and where are they in terms of needs as identified by Maslow? Reflect on this individually and then again in a small, school group of colleagues.

## Building Social Capital

By considering the whole needs of the child, in say an Extended School Programme, it is impossible not to think about the needs of the community in

which the child lives. Therefore, it would seem logical to endorse a notion that those schools that work with learners on their social needs should also be encouraged (and funded) to work with the broader community. This approach would then build **social capital** and is directly dealing with contextual realities of schooling.

Whereas physical capital refers to physical objects, and human capital refers to the properties of individuals, social capital refers to connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them. In that sense social capital is closely related to what some have called "civic virtue." The difference is that "social capital" calls attention to the fact that civic virtue is most powerful when embedded in a network of reciprocal social relations. A society of many virtuous but isolated individuals is not necessarily rich in social capital. (Putnam 2000: 19)

Social Capital is the glue that holds us together and if a school can help strengthen a community as a network of interdependent individuals then the schools' stakeholders benefit overall, as does the broader community in which the school is placed. The principal is central in this debate, as s/he will lead the discussion as to how far the school can go in supporting the broader community. Through the school, values and social networks can be facilitated.

One of the aspects that will help develop the bond between learner, school and community is improved dialogue (remember we discussed this under African Models of leadership). Dialogue is essential in the operation of the SGB where they are tasked with representing the views and needs of the various school stakeholders, and most importantly those of parents. A school leader can encourage further dialogue by having events where learners can express their views (debates, conversation sessions) and educators speak freely (training sessions, weekly staff meetings, weekend Indabas), with parents being invited to attend open days, cultural events and weekend Indabas.

So… open the process of dialogue and start a programme of including the broader community to help address the needs of the children and others. For example, in some communities a network between the school, a NGO, the local clinic and a church has helped the school address issues around feeding, trauma counselling, testing for diseases/ring worm and homework supervision for older children.

Do you believe you can build social capital in your school, to deal with the contextual realities facing your learners? How would you go about this? What Extended Schools Programme could be or is in place to cope with the challenges of the conditions in which your learners live and learn? How would you establish one, or extend its activities, in your school? Discuss your ideas with others in your SMT.

# 3.5 Sustainability – a practical challenge for principals

We have talked about building social capital and responding to the needs of children in a more holistic manner. There is not a right or wrong answer in how we address and deal with the contextual realities but to ignore them will not create the successful schools that we want. What is equally important is the concept of sustainability: if a school starts a process of addressing the needs of children in a holistic manner will the effort be sustainable? Read the following Case Study.

**Sindi – an orphan in Mpumalanga**

Sindi Ngubane attends F. B. Shongwe Secondary School in Mpumalanga. She is 14 years of age and lives with her 10 year old sister, Beauty, and six year old brother, S'bu, in a two room house near Schoemansdal. Two months ago her mother died and Sindi has been left to fend for herself and her two siblings. She manages to get food on a weekly basis from a local NGO and also has the orphan's grant to live on. The NGO helped her to fill in and submit the necessary papers. However, there is never enough food and certainly there is not enough money for shoes, a uniform and files for school. On occasions, the family does not go to school because the children have not been able to wash their clothes due to a lack of soap. Sindi is a proud girl and will not allow the other children in the school to laugh at her and her siblings because they are dirty. When her mother was alive, the family struggled a lot but they were always clean and now with her death, the struggle to survive and provide the basics is really difficult.

However, Sindi is optimistic that the situation will get better. She believes that God will look after her but also she has been offered a job to cook and clean in the afternoons by a local woman, Mrs Thobela, who runs a Spaza shop – and this means getting some money.

The afternoon work would start at 12h30 and finish at 18h30 and would involve Sindi fetching water and wood, cleaning a four-roomed house and yard and preparing food for a family of 5. The work is near her home and she would be able to be back to cook for her sister and brother at about 18h30 each day. (Beauty would look after her brother in the afternoons and collect him from school every day.) The owner of the Spaza shop has offered to pay Sindi R3 a day, plus to give her a bag of mealie and some milk every weekend. Sindi would also have to work on Saturdays but her Sundays would be free to wash and cook, as well as do homework.

Sindi does have some concerns - one of the draw-backs is that she would have to leave school at 12h00 in order to get to work on time and would miss some classes but as the school is very lax about keeping accurate attendance registers, Sindi believes she would be able to go to school and work also, without anyone at the school noticing.

After a month of Spaza shop work, Sindi is very tired and cannot keep awake in class. She finds the work very demanding and Mrs. Thobela often forgets to pay her. It is not the job she expected, but she has been able to buy extra food and soap and has started to save for new shoes for her sister. Beauty has generally been good but sometimes she forgets to collect her brother from school and S'bu now often walks home alone.

At F. B. Shongwe Secondary school, Mr Mbatha, the new maths teacher, has noticed Sindi sleeping in class and has decided to find out what is behind this. He discovers that she is leaving class every day at 12h00 and also has seen her working in the Spaza shop at weekends. He asks questions in the community and finds out what Sindi is doing. Armed with this knowledge, he reports the situation to the school principal and SMT who to his surprise say that they can do nothing about it. It appears Sindi is one of many children working on farms or in domestic situations in the area. The principal says: 'She needs the money to survive – at least Sindi is getting some education and is feeding herself and her family. There is no one at home we can talk to, and there are no social workers in the area. Just leave it. It will take too long to sort out and Sindi will only go back to the work, if we stop her – she will drop out of school. Is that what you want?"

As a school leader with an understanding of the rights of children, what action would you take to protect Sindi? Take into account the importance of mobilising the whole school community in order to make an impact, and the debate around 'Extended Schools'. Answer the following questions:

1. Is the principal right? Is there nothing that can be done to help Sindi? What would you do? Explain your answers thoroughly.
2. Do you think Sindi will drop out of school if you stop her working?
3. What does the Constitution and Bill of Rights say about what is happening to Sindi?
4. Can policy and law help Sindi? If so what policies and what laws and in what way?
5. Can the community help in any way? If yes, in what way; if no, why not?

What is your experience, if any, of learners such as Sindi in your school?

Consider all the facts and write a submission to the provincial Department of Education (answering all the questions) that outlines a way to help Sindi. Quote from the relevant policies to support your argument. File your answer in your Portfolio.

*South Africa is well versed in initiating and writing policies that stand not just as guide lines for South African society but also for the rest of the world who have acknowledged the outstanding, well written Constitution and Bill of Rights of this country. South Africa is a country that stands alone in the comprehensiveness of its Constitution and the way that it has set down on paper what it believes the country should stand for and be like. Having said that there is an underlying assumption in any process of writing policy and law that the society in which these policies are placed is stable and has or will have the necessary provisions and resources to ensure that the policies are workable.*

*In South Africa, societal demands are changing and there are situations where the ideal 'on paper' will not fit the situation and may in fact be at odds with reality. This is a challenge for the government, the policy makers and the education system that has to implement policy.*

## Sustainability challenges

Michael Fullan in *Change Forces* (1993) has some interesting ideas on why policies often remain as policies and implementation challenges are not addressed. Consequently, well-meaning concepts do not materialise into well-implemented and sustained interventions, which he says is often because of societal issues. Fullan goes on to say this is a world-wide phenomenon where politicians start a process with good intentions but then are unable to sustain what is started. Fullan describes what happens through his 3I Model:

I = Initiation
I = Implementation
I = Institutionalisation.

He argues that politicians are very good at starting or initiating something (which is articulated in policy), reasonably good at implementing, but not that good at institutionalising and sustaining the intervention.

This is often because of a lack of time to ensure that a new initiative is really embedded. This is sometimes due to the political imperative. Politicians in a democratic society have four or five years between elections to impress on the general public that what they are doing is correct and should be followed through to the end. Fullan argues that often politicians will initiate a new plan, especially near the time of a general election, in order to win votes. In South Africa, the political imperative to prove to the public that the policies you have adopted are correct is less arduous as there is at present no viable political opposition. However, there is some dissent around how policies are implemented that eventually could form a platform for opposition. At present, they only form areas for debate.

Referring back to the Case Study, in Sindi's case the principal needs to be able to look at the problem holistically and to come up with a solution that will fit her educational and survival needs. Here the collective wisdom and support of all educators is needed and the concept of a school being central to the community is something that the schools would need to be explored further. How far should the school go in supporting and helping Sindi? The legislation and policy framework is but the starting point for considering how to answer that question.

For South Africa, the plight of young people who have to face poverty, mainly in rural areas, is very real. Unless poverty is dealt with, educational reform will not be .sustained, as the fabric of society will continue to disintegrate and fall apart. This is where there is a dichotomy between policy intent and policy reality – a dichotomy that the government is all too aware of and one where there are not complete answers.

Bhorat and Kanbur (eds.) (2006) in a book published by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) have identified that since 1994 policies have created greater access of amenities and assets to the community as a whole. This equates to better access to water, sanitation, electricity and housing, in both urban and rural areas. In schools, there are better resources in many places (although not all as mentioned previously) and communities can see tangible assets being brought into schools in the form of desks, computers, new classrooms and better teaching aids. The increase in accessibility to educational assets is balanced against a lack of educators for the system as a whole (generally, there are more educators leaving the system than joining it) and the widespread impact of HIV AIDS on the community as a whole and educators specifically. Many educators are HIV positive and therefore prone to sickness and frequent absence from work. There has been growth in the number of child-headed households as a result of these factors. Some children have to fend for themselves, as their relatives often do not have the financial resources to support them.

This is in keeping with the HSRC research which says that unemployment among the unskilled and semi skilled has increased since 1994, as the labour market demands have changed with an increase in demand for skilled persons being the norm. Generally, since 1994 South Africa has seen income poverty (more heads being supported on one income) and income inequality (the difference between the highest wage earner and the lowest) increasing in both cases. This has had a knock-on effect in society as crime has risen and this in turn leads to a skills emigration of people who can sell their skills in other countries, where crime is perceived to be relatively low and under control. Security for families and especially children is desired by all. (Remember Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.)

The impact on schools is that schools have become in most cases centres of community life with more children turning to teachers and the schools for support and guidance. Child Support Grants (CSG) are often sourced by educators on behalf of learners and principals are seen completing forms that help learners get IDs and birth certificates so they can claim grants that are rightfully theirs.

Because of the poverty that surrounds many learners, there is a growing questioning about what education can provide as these learners see a matric no longer guarantees a job because the skills needed by the job market are not necessarily what is offered in matric.

To summarise, we have identified four things that have happened since 1994 which have impacted on how policies in schools have unfolded. These are:

1. Income poverty (more people being supported on a single wage, with many income earners dying from HIV/Aids, leading to a rise in crime; increase in 'drop outs' from schools to find money to live on)
2. Income inequality (greater disparity between the lowest and the highest income earners shown in the Gini Coefficient – leads to disillusionment and often crime)
3. Expansion of the work force is greater than the economic growth (especially for the unskilled and semi skilled workers who find it difficult to find jobs; with jobs for matriculants and graduates not always available as matric does not provide the range of skills demanded by the market; drop

out from school at Grade 11 is high – disillusionment with the education system is growing)
4. Greater asset accessibility for all (housing, electricity, water, sanitation, schooling, fee free schools etc.).

All these points suggest that schools no longer provide just education, but also are centres of community life and support. (Look back to the section on what is the purpose of schooling and see that there are many purposes.)

South Africa is growing and becoming prosperous at many levels and is now a player in the global market place but it is important to look at the realities behind this growth. The country has both poor and wealthy people and somehow the gap between the two must lessen. Education and the creation of jobs is one answer. Ensuring that schools provide the best and most appropriate education system is a challenge for you as a school leader. Ensuring that schools give the necessary support to learners in difficulty and who are poor is another and is almost the greatest challenge. Are you up to confronting these issues and dealing with them 'head on'? This is what leaders have to do.

### Sustainability and Leadership

Sindi is one example of a child facing difficult decisions on a daily basis. The choices principals make are crucial in the lives of similarly troubled children and whether in a rural or urban setting it is doing the best for children that must be foremost in the minds of all educators. Sustaining action is imperative as to support a child for a while and then to withdraw that support could be very damaging to the psychological profile of that child.

*Sustainability of change in any system requires the right leaders to be persistent and dogmatic about change and to keep the vision going. Michael Fullan (2005) in his book Leadership and Sustainability says there are eight elements to ensure that educational change is sustained. These are:*

- *Public service with a moral purpose*
- *Commitment to changing context at all levels*
- *Lateral capacity building through networks*
- *Intelligent accountability and vertical relationships(encompassing both capacity building and accountability)*
- *Deep learning*
- *Dual commitment to short-term and long-term results*
- *Cyclical energising*
- *The long lever of leadership.*

*Each proposition is examined and looked at within a South African context in the notes that follow.*

### Public service with a moral purpose

There is no doubt that in South Africa the vision of the public service is one that embraces redress, equity and democracy. All stakeholders now have access to the public sector and can demand change and quality in education. The policies are right but there are some implementation problems. However, the Minister of

Education is committed to ensuring that implementation improves and that money is well spent. One of the problems is that there is a lack of systematic thinking across the public sector. Jansen and Taylor (2003) reported:

> ….There is no question that during the first nine years of its existence, the first democratic government in South Africa has made significant advances in the schooling sector…..provision is now more equitably provided than at any time in the country's history. At the same time,…..that a lack of systematic thinking and implementation capacity have been major barriers to reaching the stated goals of educational reform in post-apartheid South Africa. Indeed there is every indication that basic education in South Africa remains one of the most inefficient and ineffective in Africa, despite the disproportionate per-capita amounts spent on South African pupils.

Having a moral purpose is not enough if the systems are not in place to support this understanding.

### Commitment to changing context at all levels

Changing context is about changing the system. That means changing the structure and culture within which one works. It is a major task. For educators, there are three levels that need to be considered: the provincial, district and school/community. Within South Africa, the nine provinces have nine different contextual realities and therefore nine different cultures. This implies that the Department of Education will not be able to adopt a 'one size fits all' approach and will have to spend time and effort on designing nine different interventions if they wish to sustain any intervention and progress made.

The government has been very strong in delivering strategic plans and major policy conferences for the whole country but these broad policy positions and programme interventions have not had the impact that was expected. So sustaining such is still a long way off.

### Lateral capacity building through networks

Often educators and principals will learn best from fellow educators and principals as they can relate to the realities and the challenges that are faced on a daily basis.

Fullan proposes that the development of networks will strengthen the learning capacity of schools and will be more affordable, as a school leader can be paired to work with another in the same geographical vicinity. Twinning schools is something that has been discussed in South Africa where a better performing school is twinning with a struggling school so that the good experiences of the one can be shared.

Networks are potentially powerful but can have their downsides. First there may come to be too many of them and this can cluster the system rather than focus it. Second, they may exchange beliefs and opinions more than quality knowledge. Thirdly, the networks could operate outside of the official system so then sharing of ideas and processes that work may be lost to the bigger group and system. How this is managed then becomes the challenge. However, putting networks in

place and getting them operational could be an important factor in ensuring sustainability of training programmes and could lead to developing mentoring programmes for sustainability.

### Intelligent accountability and vertical relationships

To get good accountability working in a system requires the system itself to be open to external scrutiny. In South Africa, the IQMS is one part of the process of accountability but it is focused at the school level only. It is not as yet connected to a district evaluation process and if there is to be sustainability then there has to be integration between all the levels and a strong vertical relationship of accountability and trust. Many of the large-scale interventions adopted by the government have shown that the district can be weak in the way they support schools and provide service. Often this is because the monitoring and management systems are not in place to assist in this process and there have been many vacancies at district level. Sustainability can only happen if all posts are filled and the right numbers of district people are in place to support the schools and are able to do so because the right resources, such as cars, to visit schools, are also in place.

### Deep learning

Continuous improvement, adaptation and collective problem solving in the face of complex challenges that keep arising are needed for deep learning to take place. In the schools and districts there must be collaborative cultures of inquiry which steer the schools away from dysfunctional behaviour towards problem solving and adaptation.

To assist this deep learning process, data is required that systematically captures what a school has achieved and how it is progressing. Without data to aid the level of learning, everything remains rather superficial and not contextualised.

Governments thus would have to rethink their relationships to districts and schools (combining intelligent accountability and lateral-capacity-building strategies, for instance) and they would have to develop habits and mechanisms for learning from their actions (internally in the organization and externally). In other words, they need to learn how to constantly adjust, revise, abandon, expand strategies, and so on, according to their efficacy. (Fullan, 2003)

### Dual commitment to short -term and long–term results

Michael Barber (2004) argues that it is necessary to:

> 'Create the virtuous circle where public education delivers results, the public gains confidence and is therefore willing to invest through taxation and, as a consequence, the system is able to improve further. It is for this reason that the long-tem strategy requires short-term results.'

Sustainability strategies must include both the short and the long-term thinking and results must indicate that the plans were right.

### Cyclical energising

If you want sustainability in your systems it is necessary to look at energy levels of all stakeholders. Energy can carry people through when there are plateaus in

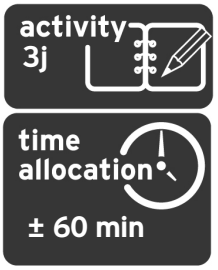
performance and delivery. If you compare how systems and individuals were managed say twenty years ago, there is evidence of a paradigm shift. Loehr and Schwartz (2003) compare the paradigms as follows:

- Manage time versus manage energy
- Avoid stress versus seek stress
- Life is a marathon versus life is a series of sprints
- Downtime is wasted versus downtime is productive time
- Rewards fuel performance versus purpose fuels performance.

Sustainability is about managing in the new paradigm and creating circles of energy to support this approach. We believe that South Africa has yet to go down this route, as the capacity of its public service sector is still not at a level where there are enough people with the right vision and purpose to push and create energy. However, where positive energy is evident, there is change.

## The long lever of leadership

For any system to sustain change there must be leaders in the system who can guide and act as needed. These leaders need to be able to see the big picture, and should be present in all levels. Leaders should be in the school, in the district and throughout the provincial structure. It goes without saying that they are needed at national level also.




Your school is part of the system of education. How have you gone about sustaining changes in your school with regard to:

- The National Curriculum Statements
- Becoming a centre of community life
- Implementing and maintaining what has been set out in your Development Plan and your school Improvement Plan?

Ask five colleagues to rate you on a scale of 1 to 10 on your 'ability as a leader with an appetite for change'. They must record what they honestly think about you in this regard and you must file their responses in your portfolio.

## Reflecting now – reflecting back

As a school manager and one day as a school principal, the contextual realities that your learners face are part of what has to be addressed before good and effective education can be put in place. To ignore such would be to give mixed messages about whom and what you are. It is after all the whole child that is of concern to you and the development of the whole child requires an 'out of the box' response. It will not be found in policies or in the classroom. It is found by harnessing your skills as an educator and leader of educators and by creating a systems-wide implementation plan. You cannot do this alone so working with others in the school and external payers is also essential. It is about your passion to make a difference, your values that resonate with kindness and respect for others, your energy to try something new, your understanding of the policy framework within which you work, your ability to lead others and distribute tasks and leadership functions, your recognition of contextual challenges and your will to stick at it for a sustained and meaningful result.

## 3.6 Conclusion

You have now come to the end of this module. Go back through all the Activities and check that you have everything in place in your Portfolio. Also check that you have started a Journal of reflection on school activities, as this too will be assessed. Remember also to look through your Reader and to acquaint yourself with the references that are made throughout the Module. The references can lead you to further reading and more in-depth understanding of the debates that exist around leadership and management and what it means to be a principal in South Africa at this time.

Having thought about the issues raised in this module, how would YOU now define the roles and responsibilities of a school principal? What will you do differently when back in school and how will you prepare yourself for the next stage in your career – becoming a principal?

Your final exercise is to complete an evaluation of your school using a template prepared by the Catholic Institute of Education which has given permission for it to be reproduced in this module. Template T2 lists characteristics that allow you to assess how functional your school is. Complete the activity as stated below and think through carefully each response, reflecting back on what you learnt so far. This analysis will also lead you into preparing for the other modules and must be submitted in your portfolio.

# Bibliography


Aspin, D.N., Chapman, J. & Wilkinson, V.R. (1994) *Quality Schooling*, Cassell, London.

Avery, G. C. (2004) *Understanding leadership: paradigms and cases*. London: Sage Publications.

Barber, M. (2004) *Courage and the lost art of bicycle maintenance* London: Consultants Conference

Bhindi, N. and Duignan, P. (1996) 'Leadership 2020: a visionary paradigm', paper presented at Commonwealth Council for Educational Administration International Conference, Kuala Lumpar.

Bhorat, H. & Kanbur, R. (eds.) (2006) *Poverty and Policy in Post Apartheid South Africa*, HSRC Press: Pretoria.

Brighouse, T., & Woods, D. (1999). *How to improve your school*. London: Routledge.

Bush, T. (1999) *Crisis or Crossroads? The discipline of educational management in the late 1990s*, Educational Management and Administration, (27) 3

Bush, T. (2003) Theories of Educational Leadership and Management: Third Edition, Sage Publications: UK.

Catholic Institute of Education (CIE) *Quality for All* - www.cie.org.za - downloaded 1/10/06.

Christie, P., Butler, D. & Potterton, M. (2007) *Schools that Work* – a report to the Minister of Education

Clarke, A. (2007). *The Handbook of School Management*. Cape Town: Kate McCallum. (Distributed by Macmillan.)

Covey, S.R., (2005) *The 8th Habit* New York: Free Press

Day, C. (2008) Successful leadership: An intelligent passion in Passionate Leadership in Education, eds. Brent Davies and Tim Brighouse, SAGE: London

Day, C., Harris, A., Hadfield, M., Tolley, H., &Beresford, J. (2000) *Leading Schools in Times of Change*, Buckingham, UK: Open University Press (OUP).

Davies, B. & Ellison, L. (1997) *School Leadership for the 21st Century*, Routledge: UK

De Liefde, W. (2003) *Lekgotla: The Art of Leadership through Dialogue*, Jacana Education: South Africa.

Fleisch, B. (2005) *Public Policy*. Part of the Professional Certificate in Public Management (PCPM) offered by Mathew Goniwe Institutional Development and Support Programme (IDSP) and The Wits Graduate School of Public and Development Management. Johannesburg.

Fullan, M. (1993) *Change Forces*, Routledge: UK.

Fullan, M. (2000) *Three stories of education reform*. Phi Delta Kappa

Fullan, M. (2003) *Change Forces with a vengeance*. London: Falmer Press.

Fullan, M. (2005) *Leadership and Sustainability: System Thinkers in Action*, USA: Corwin Press.

Goleman, D.,(1998) *Working with Emotional Intelligence*, *New York*: Bantam Books

Grace, G. (1995) *School Leadership: Beyond Educational Management:.An Essay in Policy Scholarship,* Lewes: Falmer.

Grant Lewis, S. & Naidoo, J. (2004) *Whose Theory of Participation? – School Governance Policy and Practice in South Africa* in Current Issues in Comparative Education , Vol.6(2) p109.

Gunter, H. M. (2001) *Leaders and leadership in education*. London:PCP.

Harris, A. (2008) Distributed School Leadership Routledge: Oxon, UK

Hopkins, C. D., & Antes, R.L. (1990). Educational research: A structure for inquiry. 3rd Ed. Itasca, IL: F.E. Peacock.

Horner, M. (2003) 'Leadership theory reviewed' in N Bennet, M Crawford & M Cartwright (eds), Effective educational leadership, London:Paul Chapman Publishing.

James, W. Dr. (2000) *Report: Values, Education and Democracy* Minister of Education, Pretoria.

Jansen, J. & Taylor, N. (2003) *Educational Change in South Africa 1994-2003: Case Studies in Large-Scale Education Reform,* Country Studies – Education Reform and Management Publication Series Vol.2 -No.1 – October 2003, World Bank:USA.

Khoza, R. (2005) *Let Africa Lead* Vezubuntu Publishing (Pty) Ltd: Johannesburg South Africa

Leithwood, K., Day, C., Sammons, P., Harris, A. and Hopkins, D. (2006) *Seven Strong Claims About Successful School Leadership.* Nottingham: NCSL and DfES

Loehr, J. & Schwartz, M. (2003) *The power of full engagement*, New York: Free Press

Lynn. A. (2005) *The EQ Difference – A powerful plan for putting Emotional Intelligence to work* AMACOM: New York.

Marneweck, L., Bialobrzeska, M., Mhlangu, E., & Mpha, P. (2008) *Enhancing school leadership: Meeting the challenges of HIV and AIDS – Research paper prepared by the South African Institute for Distance Education for the Teacher Education Conference 4-5 September*

Msils, Vuyisile,(2008) *Ubuntu: and school leadership*, Journal of Education No. 44. University of KwaZulu Natal

Putnam, R., (2000) Bowling Alone: The collapse and revival of American community, New York: Simon and Schuster.

Rosenholtz, S. (1989) Teachers' Workplace: The Social Organisation of Schools, New York: Longman.

Sapre, P. (2002) 'Realising the potential of educational management in India', Educational Management and Administration, 30 (1): 101-8

Schon, D.A. (1996). Educating the reflective practitioner: Toward a new design for teaching and learning in the professions. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, Inc.

Senge, P., Cambron-McCabe, N., Lucas, T., Smith, B. Dutton, J. & Kleiner, A. (2000) *A fifth discipline resource: Schools that learn – a fifth discipline fieldbook for educators, parents, and everyone who cares about education*. New York: Doubleday.

Syrjala, L. (1996). *The teacher as a researcher. In Childhood Education: International Perspectives. Ed. Eeva Hujala.* Finland: Association for Childhood Education International, Oulu University. ED 403 069.

Taylor, N. (2008) What's wrong with South African Schools? Presentation to the Conference: What's Working in School Development, JET Education Series 28-29 February 2008

Teddlie, C. & Reynolds, D. (2000), *The International Handbook of School Effectiveness Research*, London and New York, Falmer Press.

Zohar, D & Marshall, I. (2000) Spiritual Intelligence: :the Ultimate Intelligence, Bloomsbury Publishing: UK.

# Texts & Templates

The reader contains a variety of different texts which were referred to in the Learning Guide and which provide the basis of activities or extensions of the discussion in the main text.

The various templates presented in the module can be adapted to suit your own purposes.


READER

| | |
|---|---|
| The South African Schools Act, No 84 of 1996 | TEXT 1 |
| The South African Constitution, Act No. 108 of 1996 Reading | TEXT 2 |
| Web Sites of Important Acts: Norms and Standards for School Funding | TEXT 3 |
| Ubuntu and school leadership | TEXT 4 |
| Draft Standard for School Principals | TEXT 5 |

TEMPLATES

| | |
|---|---|
| T1 – Values | TEMPLATE 1 |
| T2– Quality indicators for schools | TEMPLATE 2 |
| T3 – School Functionality Index | TEMPLATE 3 |

# Reader

## Text 1: The South African Schools Act, No 84 of 1996

This Act known as SASA, came into being in 1996 and is central to the performance of schools. A copy of this Act should be available in all schools. Go to www.education.gov.za and click on Acts.

The purpose of the Act is:
To provide for a uniform system, for the organisation, governance and funding of schools, to amend and repeal certain laws relating to schools; and to provide with matters connected therein.

## Text 2: The South African Constitution, Act No. 108 of 1996

The South African Constitution can be found on the web site:
www.polity.org.za/gov/docs/bills/sacon.96.html

## Text 3: Web Sites of Important Acts: Norms and Standards for School Funding

The norms and standards of funding for schools is discussed in SASA and also is further expanded on in www.info.gov.za/gazette/notices/1997/18349

The latest document on funding is found on the government web site: www.gov.za under government departments (Education) - clicking on the education web site – click on Documents – click on policies. Look for 31 August 2006 – and the following document.

Amended National Norms and Standards for School Funding (Gazette 29179, Notice 869).

### National Curriculum Statements

The Curriculum Standards can be found under the government website. Go to www.education.gov.za – click on Documents – click on Curriculum Documents.

### Employment of Educators Act No 76 of 1998

This Act can be found as a full text by clicking on the government web site www.education.gov.za - click on Documents – click on Acts – click on appropriate Act which is dated 29th September 1998.

### Employment Equity Act No 55 of 1998

Follow the same instructions as above but click finally on the date of 12th October 1998.

See also Clarke (2007:335) and (2007:4) for a useful overview of legislation and policy.

# Text 4: *Ubuntu* and school leadership

The core text here is:
Msila, V. Ubuntu and school leadership. *Journal of Education, 44, 2008*. 67-84.

# Text 5: Draft Standard for School Principals

## The South African Standard for School leadership

The South African Standard for School leadership comprises:

### The core purpose of school leadership:

the Standard is built upon a definition of the core purpose of School leadership, which together with the other three elements, underpins the principal's school leadership and management practices.

### Key areas of school leadership:

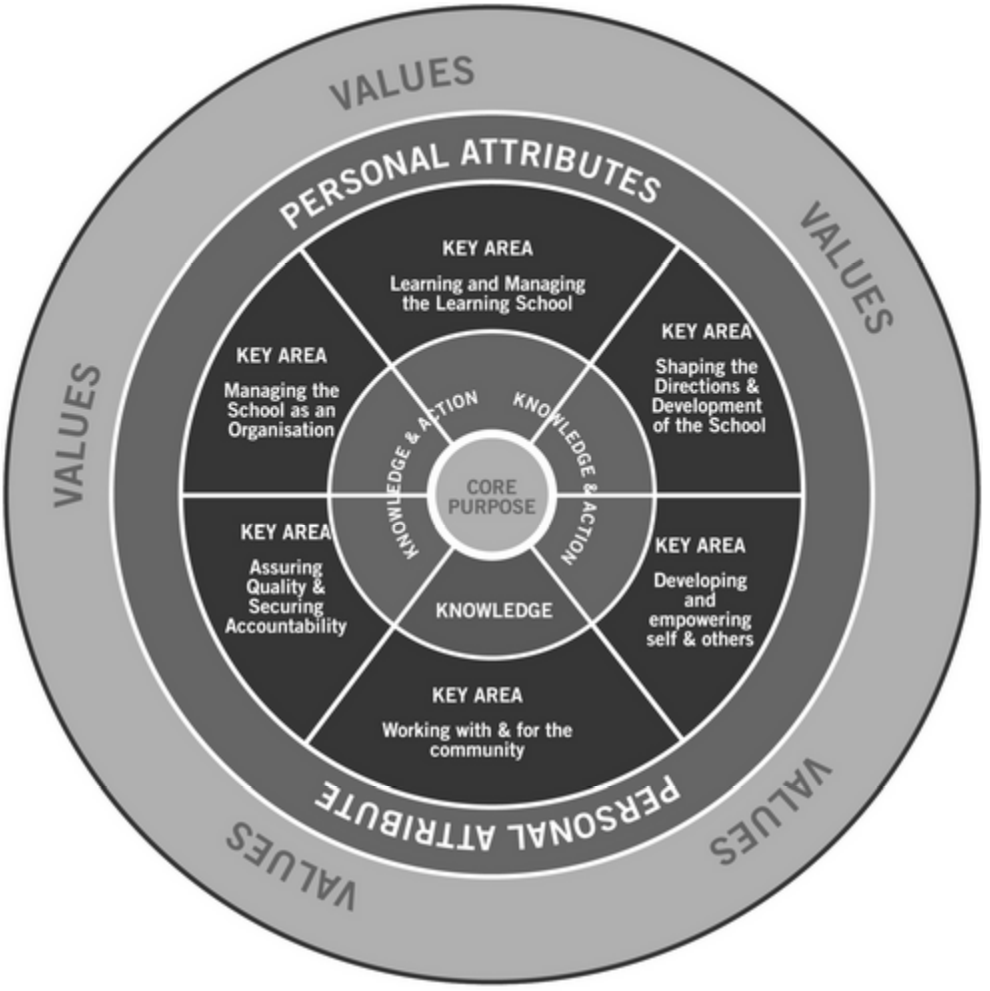
these six interdependent areas constitute the generic role of the principal in any school context but they are focused on the priorities of the South African schooling system. Within each of these six key areas are illustrated some typical *Actions* which a principal needs to take in relation to the *Core Purpose of School leadership*, together with examples of the types of *Knowledge* requirements that underpin these actions. The relative importance of these actions and knowledge may vary from context to context.

These elements, taken together, provide answers to three fundamental questions related to the professional work of any principal. These are:

- WHY a principal takes particular courses of action?
- WHAT are the main functions of School leadership?
- HOW are the main functions fulfilled effectively?

Competent principals should be able to provide and justify answers to these questions within their specific work contexts. They should be able to demonstrate an ability to achieve the core purpose of School leadership by carrying out effectively the key areas of School leadership, drawing upon appropriate values and applying relevant personal and professional attributes. The relationship between the elements of the South African Standard for School leadership is depicted in the diagram below:

# THE SOUTH AFRICAN STANDARD FOR SCHOOL LEADERSHIP




| | |
|---|---|
| WHY ? | Core Purposes of School Leadership<br>Values |
| WHAT ? | Key Areas |
| HOW ? | Personal and Professional Attributes,<br>Knowledge and Action |

## THE CORE PURPOSE OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

***The core purpose of School leadership is to provide leadership and management in all areas of the school to enable the creation and support of conditions under which high quality teaching and learning can take place and which promote the highest possible standards of learner achievement.***

As the leading professional in the school, the principal works with the School Management Team and others within the school's community and in partnership with the School Governing Body. S/he has primary responsibility for providing leadership and direction for the school and for ensuring that its aims and goals are met through the ways in which the school is managed and organised.

The principal has overall responsibility for the development and implementation of plans, policies and procedures that enable the school to translate its vision and mission into achievable action and outcomes. S/he, ultimately, is responsible for the ongoing evaluation of the school's performance and for its continuing development and improvement. The principal is accountable overall to the Department of Education, the School Governing Body and other stakeholders for the quality of education achieved.

The principal has major responsibility for the creation of a safe, nurturing and supportive learning environment, which enables effective teaching and learning to take place. S/he also has responsibility for creating a climate that encourages high levels of performance and commitment from all who work in the school. The principal must promote a work climate in which ongoing personal and professional development is encouraged and supported and in which the potential contribution of everyone is valued.

The principal, working with and through others, is responsible for building relationships between the school and the wider community. S/he has an overall responsibility to encourage the building, development and maintenance of partnerships between the school and its wider community to the mutual benefit of each.

At the heart of the principal's leadership and management of the school are core societal and educational values, which impact on what happens in the school. Some of these values derive specifically from the nature and context of the individual school and its community. Others are derived more generally from the South African Constitution, which underpins the country's education system, and are set out in the Department of Education's *Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy* (2001).

In addition a principal will bring a range of *Personal and Professional Attributes* to this role. These will influence the ways in which the leadership and management role is fulfilled. The development of these attributes, both through experience and training, is crucial for School leadership in the contemporary South African context.

Schools are now required to assume greater responsibility for leading and managing their own affairs and are expected to exercise considerable initiative in respect of school improvement and development.

## The Key Areas of School Leadership

The six interdependent areas together constitute the generic role of the principal in any South African school context. There is no implied hierarchy in the order in which they are presented but as leading learning and managing the curriculum is at the heart of the work of any school, this key area has been defined first.

The six key areas are:

- Leading and Managing the Learning School
- Shaping the Direction and Development of the School
- Assuring Quality and Securing Accountability
- Developing and Empowering Self and Others
- Managing the School as an Organisation
- Working with and for the Community.

Each of the six key areas has an indication of some typical *Actions* that a principal needs to take in respect of each area, as it relates to the Core Purpose of School leadership. The relative importance of these actions may vary according to context. Therefore, the examples are indicative of what a principal needs to do rather than a comprehensive list. Similarly, for each of the key areas some illustrative indication is given of particular *Knowledge* requirements which underpin and inform the *Actions.*

## LEADING AND MANAGING THE LEARNING SCHOOL

*The principal working with the School Management Team and others has a primary responsibility to promote a successful learning culture within the school and to develop the school as a learning organisation. At the heart of the principal's role is a fundamental responsibility for the management of the curriculum, the enhancement of the quality of teaching and learning and the raising of levels of learner achievement. While every key area within the principal's role is directed at the promotion of quality teaching and learning; the leadership and management of the learning school focuses directly on the principal's responsibility for the creation and maintenance of a learning culture for all learners and staff. This is built upon high expectations and supported through ongoing monitoring and evaluation of learning outcomes and a commitment to continuous improvement.*

### Knowledge

- The principal needs to know about:
- The National Curriculum Statement and the values and goals which shape it
- Practices of effective teaching and learning which support the delivery of the National Curriculum Statement
- Strategies for the effective monitoring and evaluation of performance in relation to the National Curriculum Statement
- Methods of accumulating data, and of data analysis, relevant to monitoring and evaluating performance in relation to the National Curriculum Statement
- Using evidence derived from research and practice to inform the improvement of teaching and learning and the enhancement of a learning culture

- Using technology to support teaching, learning and assessment
- Accessing and utilising resources to support teaching and learning
- Strategies and approaches for the development of a learning culture in the school and for raising levels of achievement and excellence in any context
- Building and developing a nurturing and supportive environment for effective teaching and learning
- Approaches and current trends in building and developing the school as a learning organisation
- Social, political, economic and health conditions of the school and wider community which impact upon individual learning behaviours, needs, attendance and well-being
- Approaches to managing specific leaning needs, learner behaviours and attendance
- Approaches to ensuring equity in learner access to high quality teaching and learning.

### Actions

The principal is able to:

- Demonstrate and model a personal commitment to learning and the maintenance of high standards
- Promote strategies to encourage high expectations and to set challenging targets for achievement
- Challenge underperformance, ensuring appropriate corrective action and follow-up
- Facilitate the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of all classroom practice
- Ensure that sound data at class and school level is collected and used to inform the continuous monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning, together with learner progress and achievement
- Keep up to date with thinking and current debates through reading professional books, journals and publications
- Share and transmit ideas and stimulate discussion on pedagogic and welfare issues with all staff
- Ensure that educators have a full understanding of the National Curriculum Statement and possess attendant skills related to teaching, monitoring and evaluation
- Encourage ongoing debate among staff on the development of teaching and learning in the school and about effecting improvements
- Promote a positive learning culture and ethos within the school and demonstrate an understanding of the principles and practice of effective teaching and learning through effective curriculum management
- Ensure that teaching and learning are at the heart of the school's strategic planning and management of all resources
- Continuously strive to build and develop the school as a learning organisation.
- Ensure that educators have opportunities to access quality professional development in order to improve their teaching
- Work with the school's community to assure a school environment which is safe and secure, promotes well-being and is conducive to effective teaching and learning.

## SHAPING THE DIRECTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE SCHOOL

*The principal works with the School Governing Body, the School Management Team and others in the school's community to create a shared vision, mission and strategic plan to inspire and motivate all who work in and with the school and to provide direction for the school's ongoing development. The vision and mission encapsulate the core educational values and moral purpose of the school and takes into account national educational values and the values and beliefs of the school's community. The strategic planning process is fundamental for shaping and sustaining school improvement and for empowering the school to be active and effective in its ongoing development.*

### Knowledge

The principal needs to know about:

- The values, principles and goals which inform South African schooling
- South African educational legislation and policy
- Labour Law and its application in the school context
- The principles and processes of strategic thinking, planning and implementation
- Leading complex and dynamic change processes
- Approaches to building, communicating and implementing a shared vision
- Strategies for inspiring, challenging, motivating and empowering people to commit to the school's values, vision and mission and to carry them forward in planned action
- Ways in which personally to model the values and vision of the school.

### Actions

The principal is able to:

- Ensure that the vision and mission of the school is shared, understood and acted upon by all in the school community
- Work with all in the school's community to ensure that the vision and mission of the school is translated into agreed goals and operational plans, designed to promote and sustain ongoing school improvement
- Ensure that school policy is developed and implemented with due regard to educational legislation and policy
- Work with others in the school's community and motivate them in the building of a shared school culture and a school climate which promotes collaborative working relationships and effective teaching and learning
- Ensure that the strategic planning process takes account of the values, diversity and particular context of the school and its wider community
- Monitor, evaluate and review the impact of school plans and their implementation, and initiate appropriate action in the light of these processes
- Lead by example and model the values and vision of the school in everyday work and practice.

## ASSURING QUALITY AND SECURING ACCOUNTABILITY

*The principal working together with the School Management Team and others is responsible for assuring the quality of teaching and learning in the school. S/he must establish and maintain effective quality assurance systems and procedures within the school, which ensure ongoing evaluation and review of all aspects of the school's operation and which promote collective responsibility for these.*

*The principal has overall responsibility for the promotion of quality assurance and is accountable ultimately to a wide range of stakeholders for all aspects of the school's performance and its continuing improvement. These stakeholders include national and provincial departments of education, learners, staff, parents, school governing bodies and the wider community.*

### Knowledge

The principal needs to know about:

- Practices and procedures related to quality assurance systems, including whole-school review and evaluation and performance management
- Mechanisms for the collection and use of performance data and other evidence to monitor, evaluate and improve school performance across all aspects of its operation
- Processes and systems underpinning accountability, responsiveness and responsibility
- Statutory frameworks and regulations related to quality assurance and accountability, including the South African Schools Act (as amended) and the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS).

### Actions

The principal is able to:

- Encourage the development and maintenance of an ethos of collective responsibility for assuring quality, and ensuring accountability, within the school's community
- Ensure that regulated performance management systems are understood and administered efficiently and effectively
- Set in place and maintain effective mechanisms and procedures for ongoing, systematic review and self-evaluation of all aspects of the school's work
- Ensure that all members of the school's community have clear and agreed understandings of their individual responsibilities and their accountabilities
- Collect, and encourage others in the school's community to collect, and use appropriate data and other evidence to support self-evaluation and accountability
- Use the combined outcomes of ongoing school self-evaluations and external evaluations for the continuing development of the school
- Account regularly, and in accessible and accurate ways, in respect of the school's performance to key audiences including the governors, parents staff and learners, within the school's community

- Work with the School Governing Body to assist it to meet its statutory obligations
- Fulfil the school's legislative and statutory accountability obligations to the Department of Education and the School Governing Body.

## DEVELOPING AND EMPOWERING SELF AND OTHERS

*The principal working with and through the School Management Team and others in embracing the philosophy and practice of Ubuntu, has the overall responsibility to build a professional learning community in the school. This will be achieved through effective interpersonal relationships and communication which recognises, manages and celebrates diversity of ethnicity, race and gender. The principal will promote quality, secure commitment and enhance the performance of all in relation to the school's ultimate goal of achieving the highest quality teaching and learning. Through the provision of genuine opportunities for shared leadership, teamwork, and participation in decision-making, the principal promotes the empowerment of those working in the school. By encouraging effective and relevant continuing professional development opportunities, the principal supports the school's staff to meet their individual development needs and the development needs of the school. Principals also need to be reflective to build personal capacity and be committed to their own continuing professional development.*

### Knowledge

The principal needs to know about:

- Relationships between performance management, continuing professional development and sustainable school improvement
- Approaches to promoting continuing professional development, including approaches to adult learning
- Ways in which shared leadership, participation in decision-making, team-building and effective teamwork may be encouraged, promoted and implemented
- Ways in which motivation, morale and job satisfaction may be enhanced
- The significance and interpretation of Ubuntu within interpersonal relationships and effective communication and feedback.

### Actions

The principal is able to:

- Embrace the philosophy of Ubuntu, valuing and respecting people and their contributions
- Encourage the development of shared leadership, participation in decision-making, teambuilding and teamwork and other positive working relationships
- Provide a range of opportunities for, and encourage and support engagement in, the continuing professional development of people working in the school
- Implement processes to plan, allocate, support and evaluate the work of individuals and teams to guide and ensure improvement and celebrate achievements

- Establish effective communication mechanisms within the school and its community
- Develop and maintain effective procedures and practices for personnel processes such as induction, performance management and professional development
- Ensure equity and fairness in the delegation of work and the devolution of responsibility
- Engage in an ongoing review of own practice and accept responsibility for personal, professional development.

## MANAGING THE SCHOOL AS AN ORGANISATION

*The principal must provide for the effective organisation and management of the school and on the basis of ongoing review and evaluation s/he must strive continuously for ways to develop and improve organisational structures and functions. The principal is responsible for ensuring that the school and its people, assets and all other resources are organised and managed to provide for an effective, efficient, safe and nurturing learning environment. These management functions require the principal to build and strengthen the capacity of those working in the school and to ensure that all available assets and resources are equitably deployed to maximum effect in supporting effective teaching and learning. The principal should seek to build the school as a successful organisation through genuine and effective collaboration with others.*

### Knowledge

The principal needs to know about:

- Organisational models and the principles and practice of organisational development and behaviour
- Procedures for the effective and equitable allocation and deployment of human, financial and physical resources and all other assets, including procurement processes, in pursuit of the school's educational priorities
- Procedures and good practice for the acquisition, maintenance and management of all school assets
- Informed decision-making
- Financial and budgetary planning and management, including the means of more specific supplementary income generation in relation to the strategic financial and budgetary plans
- Practices for performance management, both organisational and individual
- Legal and regulatory frameworks related to managing schools in South Africa
- Applications of existing and emerging technologies for organisational management.

### Actions

The principal is able to:

- Build an organisational structure which reflects the vision and values of the school and enables management systems and processes to work efficiently and effectively in line with all legal and regulatory requirements

- Manage the school's financial and material resources and all assets efficiently and effectively in relation to the achievement of its educational priorities and goals
- Manage the equitable deployment and development of the school's staff in relation to the achievement of the vision and goals of the school
- Implement effective performance management systems and processes in relation to the work of individuals and the school as a whole
- Ensure that the school's management, policies and practices are sensitive to local circumstances and reflect national and provincial policies, goals and needs
- Organise and manage the environment of the school to ensure that it supports the teaching and learning needs of the school and meets relevant health and safety regulations and needs
- Monitor, evaluate and review the quality and use of the school's available resources to ensure ongoing improvement of the quality of teaching and learning
- Use technology (ICT) effectively and efficiently.

## WORKING WITH AND FOR THE COMMUNITY

*The principal working with the School Governing Body and the School Management Team should build collaborative relationships and partnerships within and between their internal and external school community for the mutual benefit of each. Schools exist within particular social and economic communities that have an influence on and may be influenced by the school. School improvement and community development are often interdependent processes. The wider community that the school serves can provide a source of support and resources for the school and the school itself can play a vital role in the well-being and development of its wider community.*

### Knowledge

The principal needs to know about:

- The socio-economic, political and cultural characteristics of the wider school community
- Current issues and possible future trends which affect the school community
- The diversity of resources which are available in the wider community
- Sources and patterns of influence in the wider community
- Curriculum opportunities, formal and informal, which lie in the wider community
- The existence and work of other relevant agencies in the wider community and the possibilities for collaboration with these
- The work, capabilities and needs of other schools within the community and in the district clusters and networks
- Approaches to building and maintaining partnerships between the school and the home, business, the wider community and municipalities and their elected officials
- Ways in which parents and other carers in the community may be encouraged to support children's education and overall well-being.

## Actions

The principal is able to:

- Draw on the richness and diversity of the school's wider community in relation to the development of the school's culture and ethos
- Ensure that teaching and learning in the school are linked into and related to the school's wider community
- Build and maintain effective, collaborative relationships and partnerships with other agencies in the community which are concerned variously with the well-being of children and their families
- Build and maintain effective relationships and partnerships with potential resource providers within the wider community
- Build communication pathways which enable the work of the school to be known in the community and for community feedback to the school
- Provide leadership and support to the wider community through the availability of school facilities and expertise
- Build effective partnerships for mutual support and the sharing of effective practice and resource management with other schools in the community
- Work to develop and maintain an effective partnership between the school's governing body and its professional management
- Establish and maintain means of open communication between the school and the parent/carer community and encourage meaningful home-school relationships
- Give attention to the articulated needs of the learners, among other things, through encouraging and supporting the work of the Representative Council of Learners.

# Templates

## Template 1 - T1 - Values

Read through the list of values and chose five values that you identify with and which are meaningful to you. Prioritise these. It is suggested that you share these with a colleague and discuss why these values are important. Remember values underpin your lifestyle and approach

Achievement – meeting your goals and targets;
Acknowledgement – being recognised by others; respected
Affluence – being wealthy and having a lot of money;
Authority – having control, influence and power over others;
Challenge – doing new things that stretch your capability;
Competitiveness – winning against others, taking risks;
Conformity – stability, order and tranquillity;
Creativeness – using one's imagination and being innovative;
Duty – loyalty and obedience;
Fame – being well known to the public;
Family – having a good, happy family situation;
Financial security – having a steady and adequate income;
Friendships – closeness with others;
Fun – pleasure, laughing and a leisurely lifestyle;
Harmony – inner peace with yourself;
Independence – freedom to make your own decisions;
Integrity – honesty and truthfulness;
Kindness – assisting others and those in society;
Love – giving and receiving affection and care;
Participation – belonging and being involved in activities;
Personal development – using your potential to develop knowledge;
Promotion – getting advancement in the company;
Teamwork – being part of a team, working together;
Responsibility – accountable for results;
Self-respect – having a sense of pride and personal identity;
Spirituality – being close to God; strong beliefs;
Well-being – being physically and mentally well;
Wisdom – understanding life through personal discovery.

## Template 2 - T2- Quality indicators for schools

(Permission to use the indicators listed below as part of the ACE course has been obtained from the CIE – refer to Mr. Nathan Johnstone www.cie.org.za )

Quality indicators are a list of pointers of excellence and quality against which you can measure your school's progress and also classroom progress in

The quality indicators can be used in a variety of settings. For example in:

- The whole school;
- An individual class or grade group;

- The foundation, intermediate of other phases of the school;
- A learning area or subject grouping.

The quality indicators are grouped around nine key aspects of the life of the school:

- School environment
- Classroom environment and procedures
- Teaching and learning

Each of the nine key areas contains several specific quality indicators
You can begin to assess the quality of your school by grading each indicator as follows:

a. 'We're about as good as we can get.'
b. 'We're good, but we can still improve.'
c. 'There are a number of things that still need to be put right.'
d. 'We really are not getting it right yet.'

The quality indicators are just one source of collecting information on the state of you school. Other sources include discussion with staff, with learners and with parents. You can also send out questionnaires and review all the literature and policies on your school.

It is suggested that you rate your school, individually, against the indicators given below and then ask colleagues to do similarly. There could then be followed by an open discussion on what the reality of what has rated is shared and views are discussed. Discussion is extremely important especially if there are different ratings for certain indicators. A plan of action can be agreed upon to improve the ratings.

1. SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

1.1. The school grounds are well maintained.
1.2. The buildings, particularly the toilets, are clean and in good repair.
1.3. Classrooms comfortably accommodate the number of learners.
1.4. The school creates a safe environment for both learners and teachers (e.g. fencing and gates; security guards).
1.5. Teaching and learning takes place for the established number of days and hours per day.
1.6. Attendance and punctuality of teachers and learners is encouraged and monitored.
1.7. There is evidence that all children at the school eat at least one balanced meal per day.

2. CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT AND PROCEDURES

2.1. The time-table is drawn up well in advance.
2.2. There is enough time provided in the time-table to cover the learning programme.
2.3. Religious education is time-tabled and taught across all grades at the school.
2.4. Teachers prepare their work in advance, in line with departmental and school plans.

2.5. Teachers work collaboratively and share materials.
2.6. Classes start on time.
2.7. Class rules and procedures are clear and are followed.
2.8. Consistent discipline is applied and positive behaviour is reinforced.

3. TEACHING AND LEARNING

3.1. Learners are encouraged to bring their own ideas and experiences into the classroom.
3.2. Learners are given the skills to collect, analyse, organise and evaluate information.
3.3. Learners are encouraged to identify and solve problems.
3.4. The school encourages effective communication in a variety of forms (e.g. linguistic, visual, oral, written).
3.5. The school promotes science and technology.
3.6. Teachers set meaningful homework tasks.
3.7. Learners are encouraged to organise and manage themselves in a responsible way.
3.8. Extra-mural activities are well-planned and well-attended.

4. ASSESSMENT AND MONITORING OF PROGRESS

4.1. Teachers monitor the learners' work.
4.2. Teachers use a variety of approaches to assess the learners' work.
4.3. Parents are kept informed about their children's progress.
4.4. Learners are made aware of their own progress.
4.5. The percentage of learners who drop out of school (males and females respectively) is monitored annually.
4.6. The percentage of learners (males and females respectively) who repeat each grade is monitored annually.
4.7. Teachers reflect on, and evaluate, their own practice.

5. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

5.1. Parents are encouraged to participate in the life of the school.
5.2. Teachers are receptive to ideas put forward by parents.
5.3. Parents support and monitor learners' homework tasks.
5.4. Parents are involved in fund-raising activities at the school.
5.5. Parents (both mothers and fathers) are represented, and contribute towards decision-making, on the governing body.

6. ETHOS

6.1. There is a sense of equality and fairness in the school.
6.2. There is a sense of identity and pride in the school.
6.3. Positive relationships are established between learners, both in the classroom and on the playground.
6.4. Learners report that the teachers care about them.
6.5. Staff and learner contributions to the life of the school are recognised and praised.
6.6. Learners are encouraged to work on their own or in groups, with a motivated responsibility to do their best.
6.7. The school celebrates its religious character.
6.8. The spiritual awareness of learners in developed.

6.9. The school is involved in community projects (e.g. visiting the aged or collecting money for the poor).

**7. RESOURCES**

7.1. School management is able to locate and obtain resources.
7.2. Textbooks and other prescribed books are available and are effectively used.
7.3. Library books, science equipment, and media centre equipment are available, well utilised, and listed in an inventory.
7.4. Teachers make their own teaching resources.

**8. GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP**

8.1. The school vision/mission is communicated to the school community.
8.2. There are policies, which are adhered to, on admission, discipline, gender, language, religious education and staff conduct.
8.3. Frequent productive staff meetings are held.
8.4. Teachers contribute to decision-making at the school.
8.5. Changes and improvements at the school are effectively managed.
8.6. The principal and leadership demonstrate professional competence.
8.7. The governing body contributes to the smooth functioning of the school.

**9. FINANCE**

9.1. The school has a budget which is approved at an annual general meeting of the governing body.
9.2. The school has a cheque book and receipt book, and keeps financial records.
9.3. The school's development plan is used in allocating financial resources.
9.4. The school accounts are audited every year.

## Template 3 – T3 – School Functionality Index

*(Developed by Dr. Muavia Gallie and used as part of a course presented in 2008 by the University of the Witwatersrand for selected school principals in Gauteng)*

| Name: | WsoE–ELTL 2008 |
|---|---|

# School Functionality Index

## A. School Ethos

| QUESTIONS | YES | NO | DON'T KNOW |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Are attendance, discipline and vandalism by learners major problems in school? | | | |
| 2. Are most of the parents proud that their children are attending this school? | | | |
| 3. Is there a general concern through the teaching and learning process to provide quality education? | | | |
| 4. Is a questioning, critical attitude actively encouraged, and a complacency attitude actively discouraged among staff? | | | |
| 5. Is there a continual striving for improvement and growth among teachers? | | | |
| 6. Are teachers holding high expectations of learner behaviour and achievements through displaying confidence in them? | | | |
| 7. Is there an open atmosphere for change in the school? | | | |
| 8. Are teachers talking freely about professional matters? | | | |
| 9. Are learners and teachers feeling safe and secure at school? | | | |
| 10. Are teachers working in a stimulating, enjoyable and satisfying atmosphere? | | | |

## B. Vision, Aims and Strategic Planning

| QUESTIONS | YES | NO | DON'T KNOW |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Do the principal and you, as staff member share a common vision about the school's future development? | | | |
| 2. Is there a plan about how to move in the direction of achieving the shared vision? | | | |
| 3. Is there a common set of educational values and purpose among most staff members? | | | |
| 4. Is the school's aim and whole school policies set down clearly in writing, and owned by teachers? | | | |
| 5. Is part of the school aims to help individual learners to achieve their potential (both personal and social) by adopting support material and a teaching and learning style that are sufficiently differentiated to cater for individual needs? | | | |
| 6. Is part of the school aims to provide an environment in which learners are happy, feel valued as individuals and acquire universal moral values? | | | |
| 7. Is part of the school aims to provide an environment in which learners learn to cooperate with one another? | | | |
| 8. Is the management team thinking and planning strategically, paying attention to current practice by being proactive and keen to stay in the forefront of change? | | | |
| 9. Is the management team competent at anticipating future developments and implications these might have for school? | | | |
| 10. Is the management team displaying the capacity to avoid crisis management? | | | |

## C. The Principal

| QUESTIONS | YES | NO | DON'T KNOW |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Does the principal provide strong leadership and a definite sense of direction through a clear vision based beliefs and values? | | | |
| 2. Does the principal actively shape the culture and ethos of the school through strategic thinking and planning? | | | |
| 3. Does the principal encourage quality teaching and high expectations, but supportive to colleagues in crisis? | | | |
| 4. Does the principal discourage complacency through motivation? | | | |
| 5. Does the principal display enthusiasm, optimism, being positive and constructive? | | | |
| 6. Does the principal regularly express appreciation to staff, and celebrate special<br>7. achievements? | | | |
| 8. Is the principal prepared to help out instead of putting him/her self above colleagues? | | | |
| 9. Does the principal generally act as a buffer, protecting staff from political and other external interference? | | | |
| 10. Is the principal well organised and in touch with events in school, as well as keeping abreast of new initiatives? | | | |
| 11. Is the principal strongly supporting and regularly participating in staff and management development? | | | |

## D. The Principal and the Senior Management Team

| QUESTIONS | YES | NO | DON'T KNOW |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Are they working well together as a team through clearly defined roles and responsibilities known to staff? | | | |
| 2. Are they highly visible and approachable? | | | |
| 3. Are they highly visible and approachable, and face up to differences of opinion by working for a negotiated solution? | | | |
| 4. Do they have a sense of joint ownership of school developments when making decisions? | | | |
| 5. Do they set out a broad strategy for change and support teachers during the implementation of change? | | | |
| 6. Do they model desired behaviours and attributes e.g. hard work, commitment, mutual support and team-work? | | | |
| 7. Do they acknowledge that they are accountable to staff by providing clear evidence of the outcomes of their actions? | | | |
| 8. Do they behave with openness, honesty and integrity, and are they ready to admit mistakes and to consider alternatives? | | | |
| 9. Are they adept at managing people, including identifying and mobilising individual talents and energies? | | | |
| 10. Are they delegating meaningful tasks in order to develop and empower staff? | | | |

## E. Structures, Roles and Responsibilities

| QUESTIONS | YES | NO | DON'T KNOW |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Is there a clear organisational structure that is appropriate for meeting the school's aims? | | | |
| 2. Are the staff roles and responsibilities defined within the structure? | | | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 3. Are the lines of accountability known to everyone within the structure? | | | |
| 4. Is the structure flexible enough to be altered to meet changing circumstances? | | | |
| 5. Are systems in place for monitoring and reviewing practice? | | | |
| 6. Is there a readiness to modify and adapt the practice where necessary? | | | |
| 7. Is a whole-school approach in achieving school goals encouraged? | | | |
| 8. Are teachers having easy access to school policy documents and support materials? | | | |
| 9. Are women teachers in promotion posts assigned traditional female responsibilities? | | | |
| 10. Are the proportion of women on the staff reflected in the number of managerial positions held by women? | | | |

## F. Decision Making and Communication

| QUESTIONS | YES | NO | DON'T KNOW |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Are staff meetings used for the discussion of major policy issues? | | | |
| 2. Are working parties or small groups used to investigate particular issues and make policy recommendations? | | | |
| 3. Are teachers sharing in major decision making? | | | |
| 4. Are meetings well-chaired? | | | |
| 5. Are meetings purposeful? | | | |
| 6. Are meetings kept to a minimum? | | | |
| 7. Is there frequent, direct and open communication between staff and management? | | | |
| 8. Are channels of communication operating in both directions? | | | |
| 9. Are teachers regularly briefed by the principal about day-to-day issues? | | | |
| 10. Are teachers generally feeling well-informed? | | | |

## G. Professional Working Relationships

| QUESTIONS | YES | NO | DON'T KNOW |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Is there a good team spirit? | | | |
| 2. Are the staff feeling valued? | | | |
| 3. Are teachers able to express their views openly and honestly? | | | |
| 4. Are teacher contributions given recognition and taken seriously in staff meetings? | | | |
| 5. Is there a concern to build a learning environment for both staff and learners? | | | |
| 6. Are teachers striving to improve their professional practice? | | | |
| 7. Are teachers regularly engaging in joint planning? | | | |
| 8. Are teachers encouraged to share ideas, experiences and success? | | | |
| 9. Is professional development an integral part of the job of teachers, in order to acquire new skills? | | | |
| 10. Are experimentation and reasonable risk taking encouraged? | | | |

## H. Links with Parents and the Community

| QUESTIONS | YES | NO | DON'T KNOW |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Are teachers working to build and maintain good relations with parents? | | | |
| 2. Is there an active and supportive school governing body? | | | |
| 3. Are parents made to feel welcome in the school? | | | |
| 4. Are parents informed about significant developments in the school? | | | |
| 5. Are parents consulted about significant developments affecting their children? | | | |
| 6. Are parents widely encouraged to help out in the classroom? | | | |
| 7. Are parents invited to joint educational excursions? | | | |
| 8. Are teachers working to build and maintain community links? | | | |
| 9. Is the school responsive to the culture of the local community? | | | |
| 10. Are there good links with local business? | | | |

## I. The Governing Body and Department of Education

| QUESTIONS | YES | NO | DON'T KNOW |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Are the staff and governing body enjoying a positive and harmonious relationship? | | | |
| 2. Are teachers resenting the powers of the governing body? | | | |
| 3. Is there evidence of serious disagreement between school staff and the governing body? | | | |
| 4. Is the governing body very content to follow the principal's advice on educational issues? | | | |
| 5. Are all members of the governing body well-acquainted with the iternal workings of the school? | | | |
| 6. Are governing body members provided the opportunity in sub-committees and working parties to work with staff on reviewing specific aspects of school policy and practice? | | | |
| 7. Are governing body members involved in exercises concerned with institutional review? | | | |
| 8. Is there a sound relationship between school and the Department of Education? | | | |
| 9. Are members of the DoE playing a significant part in school management? | | | |
| 10. Is the school very dependent on the support of the DoE? | | | |

## J. Managing Change

| QUESTIONS | YES | NO | DON'T KNOW |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Is the school receptive to innovation and change? | | | |
| 2. Is there a degree of professional scepticism about the current changes? | | | |
| 3. Does the principal, where doubts are expressed, use it effectively to the advantage of education? | | | |
| 4. Is there a perceived 'innovation overload' among staff? | | | |
| 5. Are some of the innovations or developments left 'up-in-the-air' and not fully implemented or discussed? | | | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

6. Is the school re-aligning the existing structures in line with the innovations?
7. Does the principal allocate resources to support innovations?
8. Is change being successfully managed?
9. Have current transformations led to an increase in collaborative decision-making?
10. Despite the fact that collaborative decision-making is taking more time, is management perceiving it to lead to better results?

Thank you.