System Leadership for School Transformation

‘Dean’s Lecture’
Faculty of Education, University of Melbourne,
Melbourne, Tuesday 1st August 2006

Professor David Hopkins
HSBC iNet Chair of International Leadership
‘Policy Does Not Mandate What Matters’

It is exceedingly difficult for policy to change practice, especially across levels of government. Contrary to the one-to-one relationship assumed to exist between policy and practice, the nature, amount, and pace of change at school level is a product of local factors that are largely beyond the control of higher-level policy makers.

McLaughlin (1990:12)
Brief History of Standards in Primary Schools

1950 1960

11 plus dominated "Formal"


Professional control "Informal"

2000 2010

Standards and accountability NLNS

2004
Developing the Policy Framework

- Ambitious Standards
- Devolved responsibility
- Good data and clear targets
- Access to best practice and quality professional development
- Accountability
- Intervention in inverse proportion to success

High Challenge
High Support
LEAs Achieving 75%+ Level 4 English 1998
LEAs Achieving 75%+ Level 4 English 2004
Distribution of Reading Achievement in 9-10 year olds in 2001

Source: PIRLS 2001 International Report: IEA’s Study of Reading Literacy Achievement in Primary Schools
Percentage of pupils achieving level 4 or above in Key Stage 2 tests 1998-2003

Test changes in 2003

- Major changes to writing test/markscheme
- Significant changes to maths papers
Personalised Learning is …

• An educational approach that focuses on every individual achieving their potential and enhancing their learning skills
• About designing teaching, curriculum and the school organisation to address the needs of the student both individually and collectively
• A system that is more accessible, open to customisation and involves the learner in their own learning
• A learning offer to all children that extends beyond the school context into the local community and beyond
The Key Question - how do we get there?

• Most agree that in England:
  • standards were too low and too varied in the 1970’s & 80’s
  • some form of direct state intervention was necessary
  • the impact of this top-down approach was to raise standards (particularly in primary schools).

• But now:
  • progress has plateaued - while a bit more might be squeezed out nationally, and perhaps a lot in underperforming schools, must question whether this is still the recipe for sustained reform
  • there is a growing recognition that to ensure that every student reaches their potential, schools need to lead the next phase of reform.

• The 64k dollar question is how do we get there?
Towards large scale sustainable reform

- Prescription
- Building Capacity
- Professionalism

National Prescription

Every School a Great School

Schools Leading Reform

System Leadership
Four key drivers to raise achievement and build capacity for the next stage of reform

i. Personalising Learning

ii. Professionalising Teaching

iii. Building Intelligent Accountability

iv. Networking and Collaboration
(i) Personalising Learning
‘Joined up learning and teaching’

- Learning to Learn
- Curriculum choice & entitlement
- Assessment for learning
- Co-production

‘My Tutor’
Interactive web-based learning resource enabling students to tailor support and challenge to their needs and interests.

THE LONDON CENTRE for Leadership in Learning
INet
HSBC

The world’s local bank
(ii) Professionalising Teaching

‘Teachers as researchers, schools as learning communities’

- Enhanced repertoire of learning & teaching strategies
- Time for collective inquiry
- Evidence based practice
- Collegial & coaching relationships

‘The Edu-Lancet’

A peer-reviewed journal published for practitioners by practitioners & regularly read by the profession to keep abreast of R&D.
(iii) Building Intelligent Accountability

‘Balancing internal and external accountability and assessment’

- Moderated teacher assessment
- Targets for every child and use of pupil performance data
- Value added data to help identify strengths / weaknesses
- Rigorous self-evaluation to demonstrate good management

‘Chartered examiners’

Experienced teachers gain certification to oversee rigorous internal assessment as a basis for externally awarded qualifications.
(iv) Networking and Collaboration

‘Disciplined innovation, collaboration and building social capital’

- Best practice captured and highly specified
- Capacity built to transfer and sustain innovation across system
- Greater responsibility taken for neighbouring schools
- Link between central and local policy initiatives

‘Autonomous Federations’

Groups of schools opt out of LEA control but accept responsibility for all students in their area
4 drivers mould to context through system leadership
System Leadership: A Proposition

‘System leaders’ care about and work for the success of other schools as well as their own. They measure their success in terms of improving student learning and increasing achievement, and strive to both raise the bar and narrow the gap(s). Crucially they are willing to shoulder system leadership roles in the belief that in order to change the larger system you have to engage with it in a meaningful way.’
System Leadership Roles

A range of emerging roles, including:

- *Executive Headship* or partnering another school facing difficulties i.e. run two or more schools (or ‘softer’ partnership)

- Lead in *extremely challenging circumstances* or become an Academy Principal.

- *Civic leadership* to broker and shape partnerships across local communities to support welfare and potential.

- *Change agent* or school leader able to identify best practice and then transfer and refine it to support improvement elsewhere.
The Evidence

There is clear evidence system leadership works. For example:

• Waverley School, under leadership of Sir Dexter Hutt from Ninestiles, improved from 16% 5 A-Cs at GCSE in 01 to 62% in 04.

• Sir Michael Wilshaw has instilled excellent behaviour, a focus on teaching and learning, and high expectations at Mossbourne Academy.

• Valley Park School, under leadership of Sue Glanville, improved from 31% 5A*-C in 04 to 43% in 05. Invicta Grammar, Sue’s lead school, also benefited by developing its leadership team and curriculum offer.
System leaders share five striking characteristics, they:

- measure their success in terms of improving student learning and increasing achievement, and strive to both raise the bar and narrow the gap(s).
- are fundamentally committed to the improvement of teaching and learning. They engage deeply with the organisation of teaching, learning, curriculum and assessment in order to personalise learning for all their students.
- develop their schools as personal and professional learning communities, with relationships built across and beyond each school to provide a range of learning experiences and professional development opportunities.
- strive for equity and inclusion through acting on context and culture. This is not just about eradicating poverty, as important as that is. It is also about giving communities a sense of worth and empowerment.
- they realise in a deep way that the classroom, school and system levels all impact on each other. Crucially they understand that in order to change the larger system you have to engage with it in a meaningful way.
### Leadership Capacity

#### Ofsted overview of secondary schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Excellent/Very good</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Unsatisfactory/Poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The leadership and management of the Headteacher and key staff</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behaviour, including the incidence of exclusions</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall effectiveness of the school</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How well the pupils achieve</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(OFSTED Annual Report 2003)
The Leadership Purpose

• Leadership is the guidance and direction of instructional improvement. This is a deliberately de-romanticised, focussed and instrumental definition.

• Improvement, then, is change with direction, sustained over time, that moves entire systems, raising the average level of quality and performance while at the same time decreasing the variation among units, and engaging people in analysis and understanding of why some actions seem to work and others don’t.

Personal Development

Strategic Vision

Managing Teaching and Learning

Developing Organisations

Innovation, Networking and Segmentation

Standards & Intelligent Accountability

Moral Purpose

Social Justice, Choice & Contestability

Developer People

Innovation, Networking and Segmentation
Moral Purpose of Schooling

I know what my learning objectives are and feel in control of my learning

I get to learn lots of interesting and different subjects

I can get a level 4 in English and Maths before I go to secondary school

I know what good work looks like and can help myself to learn

My parents are involved with the school and I feel I belong here

I enjoy using ICT and know how it can help my learning

I know how I am being assessed and what I need to do to improve my work

I can work well with and learn from many others as well as my teacher

I can get the job that I want

All these .... whatever my background, whatever my abilities, wherever I start from
Powerful Learning …

…is the ability of learners to respond successfully to the tasks they are set, as well as the task they set themselves. In particular, to:

• Integrate prior and new knowledge
• Acquire and use a range of learning skills
• Solve problems individually and in groups
• Think carefully about their successes and failures
• Accept that learning involves uncertainty and difficulty

All this has been termed “meta-cognition” – it is the learners’ ability to take control over their own learning processes.
Personal Development - e.g.
Sergiovanni’s Model

• **Technical** – derived from sound management techniques

• **Human** – derived from harnessing available social and interpersonal resources

• **Educational** – derived from expert knowledge about matters of education and schooling

• **Symbolic** – derived from focussing the attention on matters of importance to the school

• **Cultural** – derived from building a unique school culture
The Logic of School Improvement

Learning Potential of all Students

Repertoire of Learning Skills

Models of Learning - Tools for Teaching

Embedded in Curriculum Context and Schemes of Work

Whole School Emphasis on High Expectations and Pedagogic Consistency

Sharing Schemes of Work and Curriculum Across and Between Schools, Clusters, Districts, LEAs and Nationally

Our toolbox is the models of teaching, actually models for learning, that simultaneously define the nature of the content, the learning strategies, and the arrangements for social interaction that create the learning contexts of our students. For example, in powerful classrooms students learn models for:

- Extracting information and ideas from lectures and presentations
- Memorising information
- Building hypotheses and theories
- Attaining concepts and how to invent them
- Using metaphors to think creatively
- Working effectively with other to initiate and carry out co-operative tasks
Developing People: Structuring Staff Development

Workshop
• Understanding of Key Ideas and Principles
• Modelling and Demonstration
• Practice in Non-threatening Situations

Workplace
• Immediate and Sustained Practice
• Collaboration and Peer
• Reflection and Action Research
Developing the Organisation: the Six Steps to School Improvement

- A school sets itself a clear and unifying focus for its improvement work.
- Collect data on performance as precursor to initiating an improvement strategy.
- At an early stage identify a school improvement group.
- The SIG subsequently receive specific training in the classroom practices most crucial to achieving the school’s developmental goals.
- The range of staff development activities involved includes:
  - workshops run inside the school on teaching strategies by Cadre;
  - whole staff in-service days and ‘curriculum tours’;
  - inter-departmental meetings to discuss teaching strategies;
  - partnership teaching and peer coaching.
- Whole school emphasis to ensure consistency of practice & high expectations.
Coherent System Design

Hardware Infrastructure

- Recurrent funding
- Physical capital
- Human capital
- Knowledge creation and management
- Qualifications framework
- Curriculum

Operating system Reform model

- Choice and Contestability
- Standards and accountability
- Networking, Collaboration and capacity

Software Teaching and learning

- Leadership and School ethos
- High quality personalised learning for every student
- Teaching quality

Universals Standards

HSBC

The world’s local bank
## Networking and Segmentation: Highly Differentiated Improvement Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of School</th>
<th>Key strategies – responsive to context and need</th>
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</table>
| Leading Schools | - Become leading practitioners  
                  - Formal federation with lower-performing schools |
| Succeeding, self-improving schools | - Regular local networking for school leaders  
                                           - Between school curriculum development |
| Succeeding schools with internal variations | - Consistency interventions: such as AfL.  
                                          - Subject specialist support to particular depts. |
| Underperforming schools | - Linked school support for underperforming depts.  
                              - Underperforming pupil programmes, e.g. catch-up. |
| Low attaining schools | - Formal support in Federation structure  
                           - Consultancy in core subjects and best practice |
| Below floor target | - Intensive Support Programme  
                       - New provider: eg: Academy. |
‘Every School a Great School’ as an expression of moral purpose

• What parents want is for their local school to be a great school.
  (National Association of School Governors; Education and Skills Select Committee 2004).

• Test of resolve:
  − moral purpose and social justice;
  − enhance teaching quality rather than structural change;
  − commitment to sustained, systemic change since a focus on individual school improvement distorts social equity.
Every School a Great School Framework

System Leadership

- Mobilisation and Agency
- Intelligent Accountability
- Professionalised Teaching
- Governance and funding
- Innovation and Networking
- Personalised Learning
David Hopkins was recently appointed to the inaugural HSBC Chair in International Leadership, where he supports the work of iNet, the International arm of the Specialist Schools Trust and the Leadership Centre at the Institute of Education, University of London. He has also just been appointed a Professorial Fellow at the Faculty of Education, University of Melbourne. Between 2002 and 2005 he served three Secretary of States as the Chief Adviser on School Standards at the Department for Education and Skills. Previously, he was Chair of the Leicester City Partnership Board and Professor of Education, Head of the School, and Dean of the Faculty of Education at the University of Nottingham. Before that again he was a Tutor at the University of Cambridge Institute of Education, a Secondary School teacher and Outward Bound Instructor. David is also an International Mountain Guide who still climbs regularly in the Alps and Himalayas. Before becoming a civil servant he outlined his views on teaching quality, school improvement and large scale reform in Hopkins D. (2001) *School Improvement for Real*, London: Routledge / Falmer. His new book *Every School a Great School* will be published by The Open University Press this summer.