University of Tasmania

Teachers' Work in a Time of Major Curriculum Change

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for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

by

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Declaration

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for a degree or diploma by this University or any other institution, except by way of background information and duly acknowledged in the thesis, and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due acknowledgement is made in the text of the thesis.

Jeffrey R. Garsed

Approval to copy

Jeffrey R. Garsed

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Abstract

This study examined teachers' perceptions of their work in the context of a major curriculum change initiative in Tasmania, Australia. The thesis was undertaken to present a report that would provide rich data, particularly from the Tasmanian government school context, of teachers' perspectives on their work in this curriculum change context. The major focus of this thesis was on teachers' views of the nature and challenges involved in their work during implementation, at a system-wide level, of a major curriculum change initiative.

Accordingly, the researcher aimed to add substantial detailed material to the extant and emerging literature in this field. The literature underpinning the study was typically broad, yet a comprehensive search revealed few similar Australian studies, and no Tasmanian studies, which provided the depth of description of teachers' work in the current change context which is presented in this thesis.

The data were gathered from 48 teacher and two principal participants from two schools on multiple occasions mainly over the course of one school year. Initial observation in schools was followed by one-on-one interviews, the completion of demographic surveys by each interview participant and two days spent shadowing the two principals by the researcher. Key change leaders were identified and follow-up interviews were conducted up to one year later.

As data were analysed, key categories emerged in the light of relevant areas of the extant literature. The key categories were divided into three themes which addressed the study's two Research Questions:

1. How do teachers and principals in two rural Tasmanian schools perceive their work lives in the context of a major curricular and pedagogical change?
2. What issues arise for teachers and principals in two rural Tasmanian schools in the context of a major curricular and pedagogical change?

The first theme concerned teachers' views of the curriculum change initiative and the second theme was about teachers' self-identities during a time of major curriculum reform. This second theme included: (a) the purposes of teachers' work; (b) teacher professional involvement and commitment; (c) teachers' responses to mandated change; and (d) the emotional aspects of teachers' work and identities. The third theme concerned the influence of the local school culture and leadership in enabling and sustaining educational change.

The final chapter commences with a detailed discussion of these issues and provides a segue into the concluding part of the thesis, a discussion of future directions for policy and research relating to teachers' work and change.

Glossary

ACARA Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority. Federal Government body responsible for National Program of Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) testing.

AEU AEU Australian Education Union, in this instance, AEU Tasmanian Branch, and formerly the Tasmanian Teachers Federation (TTF).

AITSL Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership. An Australian Federal Government body responsible for coordinating the development and implementation of professional standards in teaching and school leadership.

AP Assistant Principal. The second level of promotion beyond classroom teacher. In Tasmania, this position exists only in high schools, district high schools and larger primary schools.

AST Advanced Skills Teacher. The first level of promotion beyond classroom teacher. In smaller primary schools a teacher with this classification is second to the principal.

BeTTR Program Beginning Teacher Time Release – a program of additional professional development time for beginning teachers in their first year of teaching whereby they accrue two hours of time release per week which can be stored and taken as days off class for professional learning

Case Study An in-depth investigation of a bounded system; an individual, group, or institution (Stake, 1995).

Cresap A review into public education spending in Tasmania, conducted by Cresap Ltd, a Melbourne-based corporate consultancy firm, and commissioned by the Field, minority Labor State Government in 1990.

Criterion Based Assessment Student assessment is criterion based and measures student performance against specified standards within criteria. The criteria separate the knowledge, skills and competencies that students must acquire to succeed in a given syllabus and the standards describe the graded outcomes attainable within each criterion.

DoE Department of Education (Tasmania). Formally known as Department of Education and the Arts (DEA) and Department of Education, Community and Cultural Development (DECCD).

ENI Educational Needs Index. The formula by which the DoE determines the levels of additional funding provided to a school due to the socioeconomic conditions of its community.

ELs Essential Learnings.

FTE	Full Time Equivalent.
NAPLAN	National Program of Literacy and Numeracy testing
PL	Professional Learning. Sometimes called Professional Development (PD).
Schools	The Tasmanian Government school system comprises five main levels of schools:

- Primary School:Kindergarten to Year 6.
- High School: Years 7 to 10
- District or District High Schools: Kindergarten to Year 10
- Senior Secondary College: Years 11 and 12.
- Support School for students with different learning needs.

SIR	School Improvement Review. A process of school review involving organisational health surveys of staff with a focus on school leadership. SIRs culminate in the development of community partnership agreements. In 2005-2006, 65 DoE schools conducted such reviews.
SRP	School Resource Package. Funding provided via the Department of Education to a school to run educational programs, employ additional teachers over and above its regular staffing quota. ENI and the number and nature of students with special educational needs contribute to the calculation of a school's SRP.
STAS	Student Assistance Scheme. A scheme to provide assistance for low-income families towards the cost of school levies for students enrolled from kindergarten through to year 12
TAFE	Technical and Further Education.
TPA	Tasmanian Principals Association. A professional association for principals of Tasmanian government schools.
VET	Vocational Education and Training.

Preface

This research project began with my interest in what made the work of teaching professionally satisfying for teachers. I felt that this was important as there were some unsettling statistics on the proportion of teachers who left the profession within their first five years in the job. Principals, too, were retiring early and there was a dearth of applicants for many principal positions.

As ideas began to be discussed, it was suggested that what made teaching different to other professions was a teacher's relative lack of control over the setting and their having to work with clients en mass within a bureaucracy which offered them little help in their day-to-day classroom work. At the outset, I anticipated framing the project's research questions around issues of teacher autonomy and control within the school and Department of Education context, and many of the questions asked of participants at interview reflected this early focus.

When teachers began to tell their stories, it was clear that they did not conceptualise their work, at this time, in this way. The introduction of a major curriculum initiative with attendant requirements for pedagogical and assessment changes had become the major feature of the teachers' work lives and this was reflected as the dominant theme in their responses. Also, the literature on teacher professionalism, professional identity and teachers' work lives helped to shape a new focus for this research on teachers' perceptions of their work at a time of major curricular and pedagogical change.

Chapter 1

Introduction and background: the research defined

This dual site case study reports on teachers' perceptions of their work in two rural government sector schools in Tasmania, Australia, at a time of major curriculum change. Teachers' work does not occur in a vacuum although it often occurs in a single classroom with one lone practitioner. The contexts of the school, the community, the educational sector and level have major influences on the nature and challenges of teachers' work. Thus, salient themes of this study include the influence on teachers' work of broader social and political contexts as well as local school cultural factors, aspects of teachers working together in the context of a major change initiative, and teachers' emotional engagement with their work in the context of the change process.

1.1 Outline of Chapter

This Chapter provides an overview of the research and establishes the basis for the research study. It contains background on the Tasmanian school system, the teacher cohort from which mean age teachers in this study are drawn, and the development of Essential Learnings [ELs], the major state wide curriculum change initiative that provides a focus for this study. This is followed by a description of key elements of the research, such as its scope and delimitations, the assumptions and limitations of the study, its conceptual framework and research questions, the significance of the study and the structure of the thesis. A summary of the Chapter is then provided.

1.2 Background

1.2.1 Context of the research

This research was conducted over the period 2004 to 2005. Initial data were collected during 2004 and analysed during the period of data collection. The researcher and participants are residents of Tasmania, one of Australia's six States and two Territories. Tasmania, the island state of Australia, is approximately 68,000 square kilometres in size with a population of around 507,000 people (Wikipedia, 2010).

1.2.2 Australian government sector education

Responsibility for Australian government sector school education rests with State and Territory Departments of Education. Principals and teachers in schools are responsible for the provision of learning programs and for monitoring and reporting on student learning outcomes. Schools and teachers are accountable through reporting processes to parents and education departments and these departments report directly to State ministers for education. The implementation of new policy for teachers at the school level is a significant field of educational research. School improvement and enhancement of the profession of teaching necessitates ongoing research attention. This significance stems from the need for teachers to see the benefits for their students and to be committed to change before they engage effectively with it (Hopkins & Levin, 2000).

1.2.3 The Tasmanian government school system

Schooling in Tasmania typically starts with a kindergarten year, for children generally aged four to five years, followed by seven years of primary, four years of secondary, and two years of senior secondary college schooling. School education is now compulsory until age 17, but it was age16 at the time interviews for this study were conducted. Transition from Year 12 to university is governed by a centralised, externally set and marked, series of examinations. Average class sizes are typically around 25 students in primary classes and 24 students in secondary classes (DoE, 2006). However, recent Australian Education Union data show that nearly 70 per cent of schools have at least one class of 26 to 30 students and 18 per cent have a class 31 or more (AEU, 2006a).

During the 1980s and 1990s, pressure for educational change proliferated across varying education systems internationally and, by many accounts, continues to grow (Caldwell, 1993; Churchill & Williamson, 1999; Cuban, 2003). Subsequent waves of educational change have challenged schools and in particular teachers, who are largely responsible for implementing change. At times, schools and teachers have become inundated as new edicts from policy-makers and bureaucrats inevitably "land on top of [each] other" (Darling-Hammond, 1990, p. 240).

In Tasmania, as elsewhere in Australia, from the 1990s to the 2000s are characterised by an ever-increasing flow of policies and edicts regarding new priorities for, and consequent expectations of, teachers and schools (Gardner & Williamson, 2005;

Poppleton & Williamson, 2004). Further, the past three decades have seen considerable changes in the role of the principal (Caldwell, 1993) and these changes have not abated (Mulford, Silins & Leithwood, 2004). By the time collection of data for this study had been completed, the Tasmanian Department of Education was undergoing its third major restructuring within two decades.

1.3 Cohort description and context

The two schools that form the cases for investigation in this study are both rural Tasmanian, government sector schools. The larger school, Winterbrook District High School [pseudonym], is a medium-sized school, catering for students from kindergarten to post Year 10. Winterbrook District High School is situated in a town setting some half an hour's drive from a major, coastal Tasmanian centre. The smaller school, Bass Primary School [pseudonym] is a mid-sized kindergarten to Year 6 school located beside a highway, amid farmland, some eight minutes' drive from a larger Tasmanian coastal town.

One female and one male principal, 35 female teachers, and 13 male teachers took part in this study. In all, males represented 28 per cent and females 72 per cent of participants. At Winterbrook District High School, the mean age of all participants was 35 years, and at Bass Primary School, it was 42 years of age. The overall mean age of participants in this study was 38 years. The typical teacher commenced their four-year teaching qualification, straight from school at age 17 years, in 1983 and began teaching in 1987. That was at the time of the Liberal Government led by the Hon. Robin Gray, which was a period of contraction in the Tasmanian State education system, as State economic downturn resulted in young Tasmanian parents following work in other states (Felmingham & Attwater, 1990). In economic terms, State debt was at a record high and State Government expenditure on public education began to be curtailed.

In the early 1990s, the minority, Labor Government led by the Hon. Michael Field came into power. Field's Education Minister, the Hon. Peter Patmore, commissioned a Melbourne-based corporate consultancy firm, Cresap Ltd., to identify $18 million savings in the Education budget for the 1990-1991 financial year. The Cresap Review of Education [known as Cresap] (Cresap, 1990) culminated in restructure and downsizing the Department of Education and resulted in voluntary redundancy packages being offered to many teachers. There followed a period of Liberal minority government, which

was toppled by Labor majority government in 1998. With the change to a Labor government came a new valuing of teachers and public education (Garsed, 2000).

Throughout the past 25 years, however, there have been a number of reform initiatives and a gradual shift towards school-based management in Australia (Caldwell & Spinks, 1988). Many curriculum-based reforms have been initiated and then usurped, for instance, the Pathways literacy approach in primary and middle schools, Criterion-Based Assessment in secondary schools, as well as National Curriculum Frameworks. The magnitude and subsequent demise of many changes has left many teachers wary of reform initiatives that lack sustainability (Churchill & Williamson, 1999). Some teachers considered the Essential Learnings Framework (DoE, 2002) as, potentially, yet another of these short-lived initiatives (AEU, 2006 b).

In contrast, the State Labor Government led by the late Hon. Jim Bacon, and then the Hon. Paul Lennon, had for most of the eight years under Education Minister the Hon. Paula Wriedt shown a new valuing of teachers and a determination to rebuild public education in Tasmania (Garsed, 2000). Wriedt oversaw the implementation of a number of innovative educational initiatives and gained the respect of teachers and their Union, the AEU, through her consultative approach to education and teacher industrial matters (Garsed, 2000).

Key career and contextual markers for a typical teacher participant in the study, who started teaching at age 21 in 1987, are shown in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1 Key career and contextual markers for a typical teacher participant

Year	Teachers' Typical Career Progress	Noteworthy Curriculum & Other Developments	No of Tasmanian Govt. School Teachers*	Tasmanian Minister for Education
1983	Enrolled full-time in a 3 year Bachelor degree course at age 17 to 18 (It was possible to matriculate at age 16 in Tasmania at this time).		4,718*	Peter Rae (Liberal)
1987	First full-time school appointment- aged 21 to 22 years old.	Launch of Pathways Literacy. Release of "Secondary Education: The Future" signals the beginning of an outcomes-based approach to education.	4,699*	Peter Rae (Liberal)
1991	Reach halfway point of salary scale automatic annual increments.	Cresap's Report (1990) results in reduction of staffing in school of around 10 per cent.	4,171*	Peter Patmore (Labor) (Michael Aird replaced Patmore briefly in 1992, before the fall of the Labour-Green Accord).
1995	Top of salary scale automatic annual increments (at end 1994) 30 years old. Eligible to apply for AST1.	(From April 1994) State Liberal Government bans discussion of homosexuality in Tasmanian government schools.	4,154*	John Beswick (Liberal)
1998	Eligible to take first Long Service Leave (three months).	Signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between ALP (Tas) and AEU (Tas) ensures salary nexus and a mechanism of consultation between AEU and the Minister.	4,279*	Sue Napier (Liberal)/ Paula Wriedt (Labor).
1999			4,351*	Paula Wriedt (Labor).
2000		*Learning Together*, released in December 2000,	4,360*	Paula Wriedt (Labor).

Year	Teachers' Typical Career Progress	Noteworthy Curriculum & Other Developments	No of Tasmanian Govt. School Teachers*	Tasmanian Minister for Education
		is the Tasmanian Government's vision for education in Tasmania into the 21st century.		
2001		Curriculum Consultation process toward development of Essential Learnings	4,295*	Paula Wriedt (Labor).
2002		Essential Learnings Framework 1 launched March 2002	4,253*	Paula Wriedt (Labor).
2003	Studentship holders due for second period of Long Service Leave.	Salary nexus renegotiated between Tasmanian Government and AEU (Tas). Essential Learnings [ELs] Framework 2 launched March 2003		Paula Wriedt (Labor).
2004		Final year of Tasmanian Certificate of Education (TCE) for years 9 and 10.	4,252*	Paula Wriedt (Labor).
2005		Els under way K-10. AEU runs poll of teachers re: their readiness to report to parents under the ELs framework.	4,201*	Paula Wriedt (Labor).
2006		Following a survey of teachers by the AEU, the Minister announced refinement of ELs to become the Tasmanian Curriculum.	4,188*	Paula Wriedt (Labor)/ David Bartlett (Labor).

* Australian Bureau of Statistics (1987-2006) *Tasmanian Year Book*

1.3.1 Essential Learnings

The context of this study is a time of major curriculum change. In 1999, following the introduction of *Tasmania Together,* a system of community goal-setting and measurement of progress used to guide decision-making in the government, business and community sectors, the Minister for Education launched a community consultation process aimed at building a framework for a world class education system. Entitled *Learning Together* (DoE, 2000), this consultation culminated in a document that provided an overview of the direction for Tasmanian public education into the 21st century. Essential Learnings (ELs) was widely seen as a curriculum for the 21st century (DoE, 2005 b). In 2003, among DoE schools, the Curriculum Consultation and research were undertaken by the DoE to support the development of the ELs, which began being used in 2005 for the first time in all Tasmanian government schools, from kindergarten to Year 10.

1.3.2 The essentials of the curriculum

The curriculum was organised around five key strands or essentials - Thinking, Communicating, Personal futures, Social responsibility and World futures - which described the learning needed to succeed in the 21st century. Subjects such as English, mathematics and science were built into the curriculum through the 18 elements of the Essential Learnings, which described what students needed to learn in each of the five essential strands. Examples of these elements included Being Literate, Being Numerate and Inquiry (DoE, 2002).

The organisation of the Essential Learnings and their key element outcomes is detailed in Table 1.2.

Table 1.2. The Tasmanian Essential Learnings

Essential Learnings Strands	Key Element Outcomes
1. Thinking	Inquiry Reflective Thinking
2. Communicating	Being Literate Being Numerate Being Information Literate

		Being Arts Literate
3.	Personal futures	Building and Maintaining Identity and relationships
		Maintaining Wellbeing
		Being Ethical
		Creating and Pursuing Goals
4.	Social responsibility	Building Social Capital
		Valuing Diversity
		Acting Democratically
		Understanding the Past and Creating Preferred Futures
5.	World futures	Investigating the Natural and Constructed World
		Understanding Systems
		Designing and Evaluating Technological Solutions
		Creating Sustainable Futures

(DoE, 2002).

The Essential Learnings strands and elements were the same from kindergarten to Year 10. The system of assessment was standards based and achievement was expressed on a continuum denoting the level, or standard, that a student was expected to achieve for each element. Assessment on this single scale changed as a student progressed through school, so that a student's progress could be seen as they moved from one year to the next. The standards were set through a moderation process to ensure assessment for students was consistent across the State.

1.3.3 Assessment and reporting under ELs

In 2005, feedback on each student's progress against three elements of the Communicating and Personal Futures essentials - Being Literate, Being Numerate and Maintaining Wellbeing – was provided through reports which showed how each student was performing relative to the standard expected from their year group. The reports also provided a comparison with all students in the same year around the State. Reports over year levels gradually included information on progress against other elements as assessment against them began and, at the completion of a four year phase-in, each student received a full Essential Learnings report on the 18 key element outcomes.

Within the mandated guidelines outlined above, schools were required to develop reporting agreements with parents and carers that described how reporting would occur to suit the school's individual context. There was also a major focus on professional development, moderation, and the development of resources to assist teachers with the ELs implementation. The new curriculum was also aimed at allowing teachers to spend more time on core teaching and planning and was hailed by DoE proponents as a solution for the crowded curriculum (DoE, 2002).

Essential Learnings for All involved a review of services for students with special and/or additional education needs known as the Atelier Report (Atelier Learning Solutions, 2004). This report endorsed the Tasmanian Education Department's commitment to inclusion as a core value of public education. The report was implemented at the beginning of 2005, resulting in major changes to the way schools operated. Following Atelier, a new structure of twenty-seven clusters of schools state-wide replaced the five school districts to distribute resources to support the inclusion of students (Mulford & Edmunds, 2010). *Essential Learnings for All* was aimed at providing a strong social justice and equity component as its values base, a strong commitment to inclusion as a core value, equity of access to ensure students with special and/or additional needs, as well as resources for inclusive learning approaches and programs.

1.4 The topic, its scope and delimitations

The topic of this study was informed by a broad ranging field of extant literature. A sociological perspective broadly underpinned this study. In the planning of this research it was deemed important to include various demographic data on the participants in order to identify the cohort at the core of this study and to draw on such data, where appropriate, to locate the study's subjects within their particular social and professional milieu. Reports on roles, groups and social institutions are regarded as being consequential to the character of the study's design. These dimensions of this study are situated within the discipline of sociology (Merriam, 1998). In addition, it was anticipated that the study would deal with aspects of school culture at various points. Bogdan and Biklen (2003) claim that sociologists use culture to theoretically inform their qualitative studies.

Although the disciplines of history or psychology could well have provided a foundation for this study, the closest viable alternative to sociology was considered to be anthropology due to the study's ethnographic features. In particular, the prospect of locating the study as ethnography had a number of attractions. Specifically, in ethnography, interview and participant observation are commonly used methods of data collection (Merriam, 1998) and the study's interest in culture is suggestive of such an approach (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003). The focus of the researcher on the meanings attributed by participants to concepts, such as teacher professionalism and work, and the researcher's context sensitivity meant that this could have been achieved through an ethnographic study (Kvale, 1996). Nonetheless, it was deemed that a sociological perspective, as mentioned above, best suited the purposes of this particular study which examined the views of teachers in two rural Tasmanian schools about their work in the context of a major change initiative.

Dual site case study best describes this study. The scope of the study includes only the views of teachers in two rural Tasmanian schools about the nature and challenges of their work at a time of major curriculum and pedagogical change. Time constraint meant that extending the study beyond the bounds of the teaching staff of two schools was not practicable. Focusing on teachers' views about their work and issues they identified as arising from their work also served to keep the topic within manageable bounds. The responses of participants in the study are focussed on the context of this major change.

1.5 Assumptions

The study is based on the following assumptions:

- Conceptions of the nature and extent of teachers' work vary within and across schools
- Expectations about major educational change vary within and across schools
- Respondents may, at times, be referring to matters in a different context but it is assumed here that their responses are in the light of their requirements within the context of the school and the current expectations of the Tasmanian Department of Education
- Individuals on occasions behave in ways, or make statements which might seem contradictory yet their statements are taken as truthful and reliable
- Various dimensions of conflict and conjecture are evident in both schools and the researcher accepts all standpoints as valid within the context of this study.

1.6 Limitations

While ideally the study may have benefited from the researcher spending more time at the two schools which form the cases for this study, this was not possible due to time and other practical constraints. The addition of further school cases may also have strengthened the findings of this study.

The qualitative nature of the research means that findings are not generalizable to other educational settings although many of the circumstances described in this study may well resonate with the experience of educators from other schools and settings. The use of an interpretivist perspective in analysing data means that what is taken to be valid or true is negotiated and there can be multiple, valid claims to knowledge and, under such an analytic approach, validity is ultimately reliant on the discourse of the research community (Angen, 2000).

1.7 The study's research problems and questions

This section highlights the issues that the researcher considered to be significant at the outset. The following set of assumptions, based on both the researcher's teaching experience and reading, helped to focus the research, giving it clarity and suggesting perspectives from which to investigate the issues at hand further:

- Change is an ongoing and essential part of education

- Teachers invest so much of themselves in their job that changes in programs, policies and practices have implications for who they are as people

- As a result of this investment of themselves in the process of teaching, change impacts deeply on teachers and, with increases in the number and frequency of changes, there are implications for teachers that go beyond adjustments to teaching knowledge and practice

- This research seeks to explore teachers' views of their work when implementing change. If those in education systems are to expect that teachers will authentically engage with future changes, understanding what their work means to them and how change edicts affect them and their work is critically important

- This research also raises questions about whether or not teachers are adequately supported in the processes of change and whether a more positive view of a change initiative might be possible through greater teacher empowerment in the process of major change implementation

In light of the above research problems, the Research Questions which underpinned this study were:

- How do teachers and principals in two rural Tasmanian schools perceive their work lives in the context of a major curricular and pedagogical change?

- What issues arise for teachers and principals in two rural Tasmanian schools in the context of a major curricular and pedagogical change?

1.8 Purpose

The general purpose of this study was to explore teacher and principal perceptions of their professional work and leadership in the context of working together to implement major curriculum change. Specifically the study aimed to:

- Determine teacher professional identity
- Describe the climate of leadership for change
- Explore the nature and difficulty of teachers' work in context of major change
- Identify issues arising from teachers' work in the change context

1.9 Significance of the study

This research is significant in five ways. It is distinctive because of these features and its findings contribute to the body of knowledge and educational discourse on teacher professional identity, work lives and change.

First, the study ascertained how teachers in two rural Tasmanian district high and primary school settings viewed aspects of their work in the context of a mandated, system-wide major curriculum change initiative.

Second, this was a piece of research conducted by a teacher about teachers. The researcher in this study was, at the time of conducting the study, a teacher with considerable experience in teaching in rural primary and district schools and who chose to conduct research about teachers in similar school contexts. This means then that the researcher had an advanced appreciation of the teaching cultures extant in the Tasmanian state government education system. The researcher's understanding of the contexts of teaching, in conjunction with research skills developed through writing a dissertation for the degree of Master of Education, provided valuable insights into the working lives of the teachers participating in this study.

Third, this research contributes to the academic dialogue on the issues of teacher professional identity in change contexts. Further, it was hoped that through an examination of participants' responses to questions in interviews about their work, greater insight into the influence of leadership and collaboration towards change implementation may be gained.

Fourth, the research provides depth and breadth of knowledge about teachers' work in change contexts that is potentially helpful to policy-makers and educational leaders in their attempt to gain the support of teachers for improving teaching and learning. As such, this research adds to the research base and generates new knowledge at the intersection of teacher professional identity in contexts of change.

Fifth, this research provides readers with data, knowledge and perspectives that may have resonance with other similar contexts and thereby may further enhance the discussion on teachers' work and change contexts across a range of education stakeholder forums.

1.10 Overview of the thesis

This first chapter of the thesis concerns background about the participant cohort, provides the context of the study, its scope and delimitations, as well as the conceptual framework and research questions that form the focus of the inquiry. Chapter two presents a review of literature which centres on teachers' work through school and broader cultural aspects of teaching and the teachers' work in the context of societal change and includes studies that report on the intensification of teachers' work in recent times. Literature on teacher identity, work lives and professionalism provides an understanding of the individuals who choose to be teachers and how their identities impact on their work. A discussion of literature about teacher interactions, collaboration and leadership points to ways in which teachers might engage in their day-to-day work in the context of major curriculum change. Where possible, literature from the most recent decade, relevant to these topics, has been included. Earlier literature is included where it is an important or seminal work or where more recent work on the particular topic is not extant.

Chapter three, the methods and procedures, describes and justifies the selection of the research approach and the various data gathering strategies adopted, and details the procedures used in the research methodology selected for this study. The research involved qualitative data gathering undertaken with teachers in two schools.

Chapter four, the results, presents the results of this study, together with a discussion of contextual and demographic features that impacted on the participants. These participant features are followed by an overview of each respective school's case, which, after an introduction to the school setting and the principal, is presented under headings of the key issues about their teaching raised by the interview participants.

Chapter five, the discussion, summary, conclusion and implications, comprises discussion and suggestions underpinned by the results reported in Chapter 4. Presentation of this chapter mirrors the conceptual framework and research questions. Analyses of the material and identified main themes are discussed. Suggestions are made for policy-makers and future research.

In the next chapter, a review of literature pertaining to teachers' work and related topics is presented.

Chapter 2

Review of literature

Introduction

The focus of this thesis is on the perceptions of teachers in two schools in rural Tasmania, Australia, of their work in a time of major curriculum change. Central to the study is the implementation of a key curriculum change known as Essential Learnings (ELs), which took place in Tasmanian government schools from 2001. The nature of the ELs curriculum change brought into question the values and purposes of schooling (DoE, 2005 b).

This chapter explores the literature relating to aspects of educational change. The culture and beliefs about teaching and of teachers in the two schools involved in the study, and the perceptions these teachers had at the time of the implementation of a major curriculum change are integral aspects of the study. Literature on the influence of broader political agendas and wider societal expectations, as well as an ensuing accountability regime upon schools in relation to teachers' view of their work is also discussed here. There follows a discussion of the literature which has contributed to defining the concept of teacher professionalism and the notion of teaching as a collaborative profession that is under pressure through work intensification. Teacher capacity for the adaption of new curriculum ideas and teachers' modes of collaboration as identified in the literature are examined and teacher work lives are explored. This is followed by discussion of the literature about the emotional nature of teachers' work, the heightened emotional context of major educational change and the place of community in relation to teachers' work. Implementation, in this instance, occurred after an announcement by the Minister for Education as a result of pressure from members of the public and the education community and input from Ministerial advisers. Thus, in this study, "micro-level realities" that arose from "macro-level concerns" (McLaughlin, 1990, p. 14) are examined.

The literature reviewed here was compiled through searches of electronic data bases, such as Proquest and ERIC, as well as key educational journals, reference lists from completed PhD studies in relevant fields, library searches and literature recommended by supervisors and other recognised academics in fields such as teachers' work and educational leadership and change.

2.1 The context of educational change in Tasmania

In order to contextualise the review that follows, a brief overview of educational policy directions at the time of the study is included here. In the early 2000s, Tasmanian state education was undergoing major change, which was driven by *Tasmania Together*, a 20 year plan for developing and improving the Tasmanian community through attempts to improve government services and connect key sectors of the Tasmanian community. The State of Tasmania had experienced a stable period of government under the leadership of popular Labor premier, the Honourable Jim Bacon, since 1998 and he and his education Minister, the Honourable Paula Wreidt, had shown a valuing of teachers and public education (Garsed, 2000).

2.1.1 *Learning Together* and Essential Learnings

Learning Together, an offshoot of *Tasmania Together* was the Labor Tasmanian government's education policy statement, released in December 2000. *Learning Together* initiated a long-term systemic reform strategy, which included the first attempt in Tasmania to formulate a new curriculum, the Essential Learnings Framework. *Learning Together* represented a plan for transforming Tasmania's education system by providing lifelong learning across child-care, primary and secondary schooling, college education, as well as adult education, library and information services.

Learning Together aimed to deliver a world-class education, training and information system, based on valuing people, achievement, flexibility and innovation, organisation and planning, and a "fair go." The initiative was supported by five goals, each of which was supported by a range of initiatives (Watt, 2005). The goals were as follows:

Goal 1: responsive and continually improving services that ensure all Tasmanians develop knowledge, skills, and confidence

Goal 2: enriching and fulfilling learning opportunities that enable people to work effectively and participate in society

Goal 3: safe and inclusive learning environments that encourage and support participation in learning throughout all of life

Goal 4: an information-rich community with access to global and local resources so that everyone has the opportunity to participate in, and contribute to, a healthy democracy and a prosperous society

Goal 5: a valued and supported education workforce that reflects the importance of teaching as a profession and is held in high esteem by the community.

Learning Together formed the basis for developing the ELs, which attempted to address the primary and secondary school components of the *Learning Together* initiative's five goals. The Essential Learnings [ELs] consists of five strands: Thinking; Communicating; Personal Futures; Social Responsibility; and World Futures (Watt, 2006). ELs were seen by some critics as overly ambitious (Watt, 2005). Phillips (1985) noted too that, throughout the history of education in Tasmania, there resurfaced the persistent problem of amassing sufficient human and physical resources to improve the education system to meet the needs of the small island community.

The ELs curriculum was a learner-centred, constructivist approach to curriculum design that acknowledged the uniqueness and complexity of the learner who makes meaning of their learning experiences in their own way (Wertsch, 1985). The ELs initiative was occurring amid world-wide calls for curriculum based on the needs of the 21st century (Luke, 2001; Reich, 2001), yet the international agenda for education was becoming characterised by emphasis on greater measurement, accountability and bureaucratic control (Garsed & Williamson, 2010). The development and implementation of the ELs, hailed as an innovative curriculum for the 21st century, raised debate about the social purposes of public education.

2.1.2 Purposes and current context of education

The philosophical underpinnings of education and beliefs about its purposes have an influence on teachers' perceptions of their work and its context. Rousseau (1762) viewed education as a mechanism for the improvement of society, rather than merely social reproduction. Piaget (1953) noted a fundamental educational purpose of producing people who are inventive, critical thinkers capable of real innovation, not simply of repeating what others have done.

Recently, Labaree (1997) specified the three broad purposes of schooling that shape societal improvement: democratic equality, social efficiency and social mobility. Cranston, Mulford, Keating and Reid (2010) argue that the purposes of schools in Australia have, in recent years, come under scrutiny due to the impact of a number of influences, including technological change, the increasing diversity of the Australian population, and the growth of a knowledge-based society and the globalisation of the economy, cultures and environment. These forces are causing schools and systems around the world to broaden and personalise curricula (e.g., Department of Education and Skills, 2005; Leadbeater, 2004; 2005).

Following Labaree (1997), Cranston et al., (2010) synthesise three broad purposes of schooling:

- Democratic equality, which is the function of preparing all young people to be active and competent citizens in society. The collective judgment of the whole citizenry is crucial for a democracy to function well. An education based on the goal of democratic equality is clearly a public good.

- Social (and economic) efficiency, which is about producing competent and productive workers. Society as a whole benefits from an economy that is working well, so an education based on the goal of social efficiency is a public good. But it is not only a public good but also involves private purposes due to resulting economic rewards and social efficiency gains.

- One of the social rewards is social mobility. This is the capacity for individuals to gain credentials which will advantage them in the competition for valued social positions. These private goods of education make it a (relatively) scarce commodity which can be traded in, for instance, the labour market. Education is thus a major determinant of an individual's opportunity for an economically successful life.

Engaging and retaining students in education and training to complete qualifications serves both the student through better opportunities and society through improved economic productivity (Eslake, 2011). Yet, the conditions required to achieve greater retention and engagement of students involves a paradigm shift in educational practice (Lamb & Bain, 2004). Making significant improvement to retention of students in the Tasmanian context has been a major, unsolved problem in Tasmanian schools (Kilpatrick, Abbott-Chapman, & Baynes, 2002).

Despite being seen by some as a narrow, functionalist view of education (Giroux & McLaren, 2001), practical or vocational aims for schooling are also seen as legitimate (Nichols & Berliner, 2007) and address the social and economic efficiency and social mobility purposes described by Labaree (1997). Vocational aims need not necessarily be at odds with other, more liberal educative purposes for schooling (Pring, 2004), which correspond with both the broader, reflective skills required for living and working in the new economy (Hargreaves, 2003; Reich, 2001) and also the democratic equality purpose detailed by Labaree (1997). Other functions of schooling (Webb, Metha, & Jordan, 2010) include developing in students high order skills, such as reasoning, inquiry, and cultivating intellect. Cranston et al., (2010) argue that there has been a privileging of the private (social mobility) and economic (social efficiency) purposes of schooling at the

expense of the public (democratic equality) purposes of schooling. Thus, views about the values and purposes of schooling are changing with broader societal change.

2.1.3 Teachers' work in a changing society

Broader societal change has significantly influenced teachers' perceptions of their work and its context (Galton, 2008). Educational purposes vary with time and place, yet within many western societies there are common elements of social, political and economic development, over more than a century, which has seen the evolution of a public education system aimed at sorting students into those who would continue with education and those who would leave early to follow lower skilled occupations (Schofield, 1999). Preparing the young to fit into and perform a meaningful role in future society remains a valid function of education (Nichols & Berliner, 2007) and, to this end, students need to be encouraged to stay on at school past the compulsory years, so that they might be successful participants in the new economy (Eslake, 2011).

As western countries move from the post-industrial era to post modernity (Kumar, 2004), change at all levels of society is more rapid, shifting a host of matters including the role of educational leaders (Mulford, 2003) and the nature and goals of teachers' work (Churchill, Williamson & Grady, 1997). The definition and organisation of work in the early 21st century needs to be understood if education is to meet future student needs or to develop in current students a sense of what possibilities may exist for them in an ever more complex world (Reich, 2001). New approaches to the curriculum are being implemented in many countries (Luke, 2001). Many of these new approaches have important implications for how schools are organised, how teachers do their work, the way in which programs are adapted to individual and community needs and the types of learning that are given priority in schools (Henchey, 1999; Luke, 2001; Tyack & Cuban, 1995). However, not all educational responses to the knowledge society have been helpful to teachers or their students (Hargreaves, 2003).

The nature of knowledge has evolved (Bereiter, 2002; Gilbert, 2005; Siemens, 2006) and led to the development of a new learning theory called connectivism (Siemens, 2006), which considers how knowledge is created in a digitally enhanced society. Connectivism has developed from the notions of complexity thinking, chaos, network and self-organising theories (Siemens, 2006). This theory holds that learning occurs through connecting specialised information sets, which can occur between or within organisations, individuals and digital technology. A central idea in the learning theory of connectivism is the continual expansion of knowledge as new and novel connections open new interpretations and understandings to create new knowledge. The learning

theory, connectivism, contrasts with constructivism where the focus is on individual learners constructing meaning (Siemens, 2004; Starkey, 2010). Connectivism is thus a theory of knowledge which helps conceptualise learning in the digital age and may prove useful as an aid to the development of relevant school curricula.

To many experienced teachers, aspects of the ELs educational curriculum changes, which have appeared across education systems, are not so completely novel as to have never been seen before. Policy cycles and institutional trends intersect in such a way that teachers get a sense of déjà vu when the latest policy announcement is made, as well as a sense of foreboding as there will invariably be work implications for them (Tyack & Cuban, 1995; Williamson & Myhill, 2008). When educational policy changes are viewed in this context, it is clear that, unless teachers can see the relevance of these changes to their existing practice or the compelling need to change their practice, teacher engagement with policy edicts will likely be perfunctory.

Churchill, Williamson and Grady (1997) found that, where educational change is viewed with a level of scepticism, many teachers developed a firm belief that the chief motivator for proponents of educational-change initiatives was their own career advancement. This perception, whether fair or unfair, accurate or inaccurate, specific or general, was found by Churchill et al., (1997) to be the source of considerable cynicism in teachers' views toward educational innovations. This cynicism was compounded further by a commonly held belief that most initiatives produced little in the way of tangible benefits for teachers or students. What is more, many teachers, according to Churchill et al., (1997), viewed current change initiatives as transitory, in the sense that they would soon be replaced by other initiatives. Hence *tactical delay* was seen as a viable response to many change initiatives. Such teacher beliefs can form a strong educational and school culture.

2.2 Broader education culture and work context

2.2.1 School culture

School culture involves the foundational set of norms, values, beliefs, rituals, and traditions that make up the unwritten rules of how to think, feel and act in an organisation (Deal & Kennedy, 2000). In a school with a positive culture, there is a set of values that supports professional development of teachers, a sense of responsibility for student learning, and a positive, caring atmosphere. The importance of school culture for the success of change initiatives has been shown in recent syntheses of research (Lindahl, 2006). School culture takes a range of forms as identified in the literature.

Empowering school culture, as defined by Banks (1995, p. 5), is "the process of restructuring the culture and organisation of the school" to promote educational equity, achievement, and empowerment for all students, regardless of race, ethnicity, class, or gender. It seeks to develop new and innovative ways to deliver quality education.

Hargreaves (1994) emphasised that relations with colleagues are critical factors in the socialisation and development of teachers. These relations are commonly called "cultures of teaching." According to Hargreaves:

> The form of teacher cultures consists of the patterns of relationship among members of these cultures. It is through the forms of the teacher culture that the contents of these cultures are realized, reproduced, and redefined. (p. 85)

Some responses to a perceived need to effect change in schools have resulted in blaming teachers and schools for society's ills, based on the misplaced assumption that schools can solve what home and families cannot (Ainscow, 2005; Gardner & Williamson, 2004; Luke, 2001; Luke & Chang, 2007). According to McLaughlin and Marsh (1978), the broader bureaucratic and academic cultural context of teaching sees teachers from a deficit perspective. This perspective includes a model of staff development characterised by the view of other educators that teachers require staff development as they lack necessary skills for effective teaching. Such a model has several elements that must be understood if the deficit-model approach to staff development is to be changed (McLaughlin & Marsh, 1978). First, the deficit model is a collective view supported by members of diverse role groups such as principals, school district administrators, university professors, state department of education officials, and legislators. This leaves teachers with the belief that everyone is negatively critical of them. Secondly, these outside groups bring to bear administrative regulations, credential requirements, university degree requirements, and state law as a network of reinforcement for their belief. The critical view of other educators is powerfully communicated to teachers. Thirdly, teachers are typically excluded from any discussion of their assumed "deficit" or any meaningful discourse about how to rectify such deficit. Also, the viewpoints of those outside classrooms, particularly those in the educational bureaucracy, about what constitutes good teaching often hold great sway (Gardner & Williamson, 2004). Although educational research developed over decades has not effectively responded to the dilemma of what constitutes good teaching, "outside" experts or central office specialists frequently behave as though they know (McLaughlin & Marsh, 1978). Teaching requires a connectedness to broader societal debate about the purposes and functions of education and an evidence-based approach to improving teaching and learning (Stoll, Fink & Earl, 2003).

Teachers tend to rely on their internal beliefs and values to justify their practice. They are also more likely to base pedagogical decisions on factors which are linked to learning from years of experience rather than on established research (Stoll, 1999; Stoll, Fink, & Earl, 2003). Hence, the school context is a strong influence on teacher learning and the call for evidence-based practice has increased (Huberman, 1993; Stoll, 1999; Stoll et al., 2003). Yet, one of the difficulties with the numerous studies of school culture over recent decades is that the nature of such studies means that their findings cannot be easily generalised beyond their specific contexts (Marsh, 2000).

Others view (school) culture in slightly different ways from those included above. For example, Deal and Kennedy (1990 p. 132) note that, "culture is a concept that captures the subtle, elusive, intangible, largely unconscious forces that shape a society or workplace". Deal prefers less formal definitions of culture like "the things we do around here" (Deal & Kennedy, 2000, p. 5) or "what keeps the herd roughly moving west" (Deal & Kennedy, 2000, p. 5).

Giroux and McLaren (2001) see culture as a conservative force reinforcing the status quo and suggests that it involves the use of power, exercised unequally, to reproduce social relations that serve the interests of a dominant class. Such a view conceptualises multiple cultures that are in conflict, and a dominant culture that wins out in the end. In such a situation of conflict, Giroux and McLaren call for teachers to develop a deep knowledge and a critical pedagogy of learning (Apple, 2000; Giroux & McLaren, 2001). Beare, Caldwell and Millikan (1989) focus on tangible and intangible aspects of culture. They see an underlying philosophy of members and leaders, the translation of this philosophy into an operational mission and a set of values held by leaders and others as contributing to culture.

The view of a school culture may depend greatly on the standpoint from which one is seeing it. Beare et al.,(1989) suggest that, from an anthropological viewpoint, school culture includes a mix of ethnicity, values, experiences, skills and aspirations; special rituals and ceremonies; a unique history and traditions; a unique geographic and socio-economic location. Yet, from an "aesthetic viewpoint," Beare et al., (1989) suggest different aspects would be seen, such as the content and emphasis of subjects, expressive and artistic skills of staff, and cultural connection with communities. Beare et al., (1989) note that one of the most powerful articulations of a school culture is the kind of metaphor used to describe it.

School identity is affirmed and celebrated through displays of artefacts, for instance, school magazines. Behavioural manifestations of school culture include everyday activities, routines, break up of lesson periods, behavioural sanctions applied to individuals and reinforcement of appropriate behaviour through public airings, assemblies, etc. (Marsh, 2000). So, schools have elements of their own individual character amid homogenising forces from their broader social-political context and purposes.

2.3 Current neo-liberal socio-political context of education

Mulford and Edmonds (2010) have argued that the dominance of neo-liberal policy in Australia has tended to place a greater emphasis on the individual in an education market and so privilege the social mobility purpose of schooling. This has affected not only what schools are required to teach, but also how they operate. In particular, according to Mulford and Edmonds (2010) and the like, schools are expected to win market share by appealing to and satisfying the needs and wants of individual consumers, namely, the parents and the students. This has created a focus on the individual benefits of education at the expense of its public purposes. At best, the public good is seen by some as increasingly an aggregation of individual preferences for curriculum and school systems.

From a neo-liberal perspective, education is seen as pivotal to the development of human capital and thus as fulfilling a social efficiency purpose. In this way, the vocational purposes of schooling are fore-grounded at the expense of a broader general education. More than this, there is a return to the vocational-academic binary with separate and inevitably stratified curricula and even separate schools. Where the democratic equality purpose exists, it is in diluted form. Thus, equity and access are promoted on social efficiency grounds. It is argued that more students staying at school for longer is good for the economy. The curriculum tends to privilege the life of the individual and consumer more than the active and engaged citizen (Mulford & Edmonds, 2010). In terms of processes at the levels of schools and school systems, neo-liberal ideology has imported ideas, techniques and practices from the private sector in order to make education more business-like. This ideology characterises schools that are more business-like as being more effective (Cuban, 2004). Thus, the ways in which concepts such as "choice," "accountability," "school effectiveness," and "devolution" are used tend to rework education as an object of profit. Associated with this objectification are regimes of performativity, which force schools to compete for market share through such mechanisms as league tables, resulting in a weakening, of the democratic equality purposes of education (Cuban, 2004).

It is argued that teachers come under public scrutiny more than any other professional group (Bingham, 2012). Some of the pressure applied to schools to improve students' results has resulted in increased accountability upon teachers, but has not necessarily resulted in desired improvements in student outcomes (Ainscow, 2005).

2.4 Burgeoning accountability

As well as formalised socio-political agendas, there are pressures from across society affecting teachers' views of themselves and their work. Pressures for schools to improve include parent pressures for their children to be successful, job market demands for increasingly skilled workers, and the growing popularity of public school alternatives.

Claims about falling standards in public education have bolstered right-wing policy makers across the USA, Canada, and Britain as well as Australia. The most obvious impact on schools and the work of teachers has been through widespread testing regimes (Beane, 1998; Baker, 2001). In Australia, the Federal government's preference for funding private schools over public schools, coupled with the assertion that private schools perform better (Donnelly, 2011), undermine and devalue public school teachers' efforts (Poppleton & Williamson, 2004). This agenda is played out through the mass media, which often presents negative views of public school teachers and schools (Mulford & Myhill, 1999). Ball (2000) argues that, under the guise of accountability to parents, teachers are made to feel incompetent and afraid. The emphasis on performance results has resulted in emotional pressures, pace intensification, changed social relationships, paperwork, record keeping, surveillance and hierarchies (Ball, 2000).

There are three main types of accountability systems that are applied simultaneously in education systems: (a) compliance with regulations; (b) adherence to professional norms; and (c) results driven systems (Anderson, 2005). A climate of accountability involving all three of these types of accountability has been developed over more than a decade in Australia (Cuttance, 2005; Kleinhenz & Ingvarson, 2004). The advent of the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) testing (ACARA, 2012), DoE employee appraisal (DoE, 2012), Standards in Teaching (ACARA, 2012) are clear examples of this. Such a climate of accountability has implications for teacher professionalism and professional identity (Hoyle, 2008).

2.5 The development of teacher professionalism

The status of the teaching profession in recent decades has been of such broad concern that it has led to several Commonwealth of Australia Senate inquiries. Authors such as Sachs (2003) called for teachers to actively and politically promote and defend the profession. Sachs goes on to examine the many factors in current society working against the teaching profession achieving the status it deserves. These tensions had already been identified in the 1960s. Lortie (1969) identified tensions between public school teachers' roles as public service employees and their identity as individuals with the autonomy to practise "teaching as an art" (p. 2).

Boston (2002) describes the profession of teaching as being in a developmental, "adolescent" stage. Over the past half-century, there has been a plethora of literature on the subject of teacher professionalism characterised by "sophistication, variety and rigour" (Boston, 2002, p. 10). The concept of teacher professionalism is problematic to the extent that even its value as a tool for analysis is brought into question (McCulloch, Hensby & Knight, 2000). In view of the difficulties around the notion of teaching as a profession, it is suggested that teaching might be better thought of as a "practice" (Runté 1995). Runté, (1995) sees ethical, reflective and evidence-based practice as aspects of teaching that are of value for both students and teachers. Others have underscored the central professional importance of teachers' engagement in reflection and continual development of innovative approaches to teaching and learning (Darling-Hammond, 1990; Fullan, 1993; Stoll, Fink & Earl, 2003). Galton (2008) has argued that teachers are in danger of becoming technicians as their professionalism becomes reduced and that maintaining teacher input in shaping curriculum and exercising professional reflection and judgement is essential.

Hoyle (2001, 2008) sees the profession of teaching as plagued with dilemmas, including the fundamental dilemma of professional versus bureaucratic (managerial) organisation of work. While the notion of teacher professionalism is a difficult one, Hoyle (2008) argues that it is worth preserving as it has semantical value for teachers, is heuristically powerful, and has the potential for creating an ideal to which teachers might aspire. Hoyle (2008) conceptualised two dimensions to professionalism, an institutional dimension based on autonomy, which he considered as having diminished with the rise of the school accountability (school reform) movement, and a service dimension of accountability to clients. He viewed teacher professionalism as strongly influenced by the

organisation of the school and education system. With the rise of (bureaucratic) managerialism, teachers, according to Hoyle (2008), have been under ever greater surveillance and more rigorous accountability. Organisational constraints on teacher professionalism have been counter-balanced by the difficulty of controlling what actually happens at the chalkface (Hoyle, 2008).

It has been argued that the notion of teacher professionalism changes over time and location and that it is influenced by contestation between rival groups (McCulloch, et al., 2000). Further, McCulloch et al., (2000) claim that teacher professionalism is a form of ideology, which allows teachers a degree of autonomy, yet at the same time legitimating controls over them. As a result of this duality and the consequent confusion over notions of teacher professionalism, McCulloch et al., (2000) argue, teacher professionalism has become a verbal weapon through which power is frequently exerted on teachers. Connell (1985) supports this argument in purporting that control of curriculum is a defining aspect of teacher professionalism.

Teaching has also been described as a "mass profession" (Boston, 2002, p. 11). The lack of a clear authoritative body, which can speak for the teaching profession, leaves unions, employers, academics, governments, and parties to vie for "leadership and ownership of its knowledge – on its behalf" (Boston, 2002, p. 11). McCulloch et al., (2000) describe an ideal of the teaching profession, which developed in the United Kingdom over a number of decades. Based on an assumption that teachers are in control of the curriculum, what is taught and how it is to be taught, McCulloch et al., (2000) argue that curriculum, in its widest interpretation, is a definition of teachers' work and that it is through curriculum that teachers seek to gain autonomy and control over the essential character of their work.

Torstendahl (1990) emphasises the importance of a professional group controlling a knowledge base, in this case teachers controlling the curriculum, but notes that their autonomy is never total as they are granted jurisdiction of their problem areas by those to whom they are accountable. In most cases, this is controlled by the current government and, thus, teacher professionalism can be seen to be reliant upon limited autonomy and limited control of a knowledge-base in the form of a curriculum in its broadest sense (Torstendahl, 1990).

Preston (1996) describes the emergence of democratic teacher professionalism. This was a view of teacher professionalism promoted by the Australian Teachers' Union (ATU), forerunner to the current Australian Education Union (AEU). Preston (1996) articulated the ATU's notion of democratic teacher professionalism which:

does not seek to mystify professional work, nor to unreasonably restrict access to that work; it facilitates the participation in decision-making by students, parents and others and seeks to develop a broader understanding in the community of education and how it operates. As professionals, teachers must be responsible and accountable for that which is under their control, both individually and collectively through their unions (p. 192)

Teacher professionalism is in this sense seen as collaborative, cooperative action between teachers and other educational stakeholders who are empowered participants in a school community.

Dinham and Scott (1996) note that school improvement, if it is to be successful, needs to focus on the core teaching and learning aspects of schools. Wagner (2001) points out that teaching attracts people who enjoy working alone and take pride in developing and perfecting their expertise and producing something unique. The way teachers adapt and improve their practice is dependent on the numerous decisions they make daily.

2.6 Educational change and teacher adaption

Transforming educational practice, while ultimately dependent on teachers themselves taking on new ideas, can be enhanced by appropriate school leadership. Teachers face a myriad of daily decisions on a range of matters that support or challenge normative beliefs. These decisions include questions of what modes of analysis, ways of thinking, and kinds of experiences should be encouraged or thwarted; what attitudes and expectations should be encouraged or modified; what modes of interaction are permitted or curtailed and what forms of knowledge are valued (Beyer & Apple, 1998). Viewed in this way, teaching is far from a value-free practice. Rather, it is dependent on teacher judgement and selection of materials and, accordingly, when attempts at reform or improvement in teaching practice are made, as often they are, through the written curriculum (Elmore, 1996; McLaughlin, 1976; Schubert, 1991; Tyack, 1974), these efforts have been shown to have limited success in substantially changing teachers' deeply entrenched beliefs and habits. Such beliefs and attitudes must be altered if there is to be lasting change in their teaching practice (Cohen & Ball, 1999). Instead, teachers adapt curriculum materials according to their own knowledge and skill bases and to suit what they perceive to be their students' needs (Doyle & Ponder, 1978; Marsh, 2000), rarely following the materials precisely as written (McLaughlin, 1976; Schwille, Porter, Floden, Freeman, Knappen, Kuhs, & Schmidt, 1983; Sosniak & Stodolsky, 1993, Spillane, 1999). Teachers also make decisions about the implementation of policy (Churchill, Williamson & Grady, 1997).

Doyle and Ponder (1978) argued that teachers, through their direct experience and the shared experience of other teachers, approach new initiatives from a position of pragmatic scepticism, which gives rise to what is termed a practicality ethic. Doyle and Ponder (1978) developed the idea of a practicality ethic by listening to teachers respond to various change initiatives. It involves these three criteria:

1. Congruence: Similarity or goodness of fit with existing practices
2. Instrumentality: Are effective in getting the job done
3. Cost/benefit: Effectiveness in relation to time, effort or resources invested

Sizer (1984), in a fictionalised account of an American high school, also reports on how teachers respond to change initiatives by describing how many go through the motions of being compliant and implementing change by making efforts only sufficient to placate those in authority.

2.7 Leadership - transformational leaders

There is a challenge for schools in adopting change strategies that will endure (Silins & Mulford, 2002). Recent research has shown that leadership factors in schools have a marked effect on school improvement data; specifically, school academic capacity and indirect rates of growth in student reading achievement (Hallinger & Heck, 2010, Leithwood, Patten & Jantzi, 2010). Borko (2004) shows the importance of leaders in guiding teachers as they construct new knowledge and practices. Facilitators must be able to sustain a community of learners, which values inquiry, and they must structure these learning experiences appropriately for teachers to remain focussed (Remillard & Geist, 2002; Seago, 2004). Leaders need to offer the challenge of the change journey (Fullan, 2002; Jackson, 2000) and provide the modelling and culture building of a transformational leader (Hallinger, 2003).

Transformational leadership is hypothesised to occur when leaders and followers unite in pursuit of higher order common goals, when people "engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality" (Burns, 1978, p. 20). There has been a call for a new transformational leadership in which principals and teachers help each other to advance to higher levels of school achievement and morale (Hallinger, 2003). Such high aims for principal leadership are difficult to achieve, as instructional leadership requires dealing with the day-to-day challenges that schools present (Mulford, 2003).

Co-opting more teachers into being agents of change resulting in "leadership density" is seen as crucial to facilitating change in schools (Sergiovanni, 2001; Fullan, 2010) and is one of the features of transformational leadership. That is to say, the transformational leadership model (Hallinger, 2003; Mulford & Silins, 2009; Leithwood et al., 2010) does not assume that the school principal alone will create the conditions necessary to transform a school. Rather, leadership is shared with a range of staff (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000; Mulford, 2003). Compared with delegative leadership (Bass, 2008) and traditional instructional leadership, which is sometimes called transactional leadership (Howell & Avolio, 1993; Bycio, Hackett & Allen, 1995; Silins & Mulford, 2002) that focuses on existing relationships and maintenance of a status quo, transformational leadership seeks to extend the aspirations of all through synergising the leadership capabilities of many, rather than relying on one leader to show the way.

Greater leadership density can be created in a variety of ways to generate a culture that empowers members of the school community. These ways can involve the implemention of a variety of leadership development strategies, such as delegation of authority and responsibility, coaching and mentoring, and establishing and maintaining processes to ensure the emergence and support of teacher and student leadership.

The school principal can provide some of the leadership. However, for change to be sustained long-term, teachers must themselves assume increasing levels of ownership over proposed changes in the school (Hallinger, 2003, Hallinger & Heck 2010). Principals and teachers face local cultural (Lindahl, 2006), as well as systemic structural constraints (Hallinger, 2003), in their attempts to develop a culture of staff-wide responsibility for sustained change. The contingency approach to organisational effectiveness, identified by Bossert, Dwyer, Rowen & Lee (1982), shows that sustained change is dependent on individuals and the particular mix of their skills as well as the strength of their collective efforts.

Leadership density is closely aligned with the notion of shared or distributed leadership. School leadership is seen as distributed when teachers who are not in formal leadership positions share in leadership roles (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000). Gronn (2002, p. 18) suggests that distributed leadership is the kind of leadership applicable in contemporary, information-rich society as "Schools now operate in complex, data-rich task environments as never before." Where leadership is dispersed, change initiatives are seen to be more sustainable (Mulford, 2003; Hargreaves & Fink, 2004). Shared leadership for adopting new teaching and learning practices requires teachers to work

together in planning and implementing the practices that they believe will work for them, their school and the classroom context. Models of leadership that are overly reliant on key individuals are seen as unsustainable (Hargreaves & Fink, 2004). Listening to teachers is essential for teacher morale and their willingness to take part in shared leadership (Day, Stobart, Sammons & Kington, 2006; Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, 2011). Studies have shown that shared leadership has had a positive effect on teachers' self-efficacy and morale (Sackney & Mitchell, 2002).

Some studies suggest that there is considerable reluctance among teachers to participate in taking a leadership role and that teachers do not view themselves as leaders (Bellon & Beaudry, 1992; Bishop & Mulford, 1996; Sheppard & Brown, 1996). Yet, distributed leadership is acknowledged as being essential for successful change implementation as teachers need encouragement and guidance to become open to new ideas (Timperley & Robinson, 2001).

2.8 Peer interactions - collaboration, congeniality, and collegiality

Public schools continue to exist in bureaucratic systems, which favour top-down imposed decision-making approaches and mandate certain requirements of teachers (Apple, 2000; Fizgerald, Youngs, & Grootenboer, 2003). Valuing collaboration is a widely recognised condition for successful school reform (Molinaro & Drake, 1997). However, developing and sustaining vibrant collaborative cultures within school structures appears to be problematic. Hargreaves (1994) uses the distinction between internally generated and externally imposed collaboration to distinguish between collaborative cultures and contrived collaboration. A collaborative culture is seen as a bottom-up initiative, arising from teachers' desire or need to work together to accomplish tasks, whereas contrived collaboration is seen as a top-down strategy to achieve a particular goal or effect. As indicated in Table 2.1, the characteristics of collaborative cultures and contrived collegiality seem diametrically opposed. However, both paradigms can exist in the same organisation.

Table 2.1: Hargreaves' (1994) collaborative and contrived cultures

Collaborative Cultures	Contrived Collegiality
Spontaneous	Administratively regulated
Voluntary	Compulsory

Development oriented	Implementation orientated
Pervasive across time and space	Fixed in time and space
Unpredictable	Predictable

The problem with contrived collegiality, according to Hargreaves (1994), is as follows:

> Contrived collaboration can be administratively captured, contained and controlled in ways that make it stilted, unproductive and wasteful of teachers' energies and efforts. By making collaboration into an administrative *device,* contrived collegiality can paradoxically suppress the *desires* that teachers have to collaborate and improve among themselves (p.247).

Conversely, teacher collaboration, in Hargreaves' (1994) definition, includes a much more important place in schools for teachers developing their own spontaneous processes of working together as they see the need to do so, rather than on matters determined by and at times set by others. This is an empowering view of teacher collaboration that is in stark contrast to the controlling approach taken by authorities under some school reform agendas.

Some teachers, involved in a process of micro management of their work, clearly have a sense that there is no room in the system for their intellectual input even in an alternative school teachers' work situation (Hargreaves, 1994). In 2003, Hargreaves reported the following from his work with teachers:

> Teachers were worn down by the loss of creativity and spontaneity in their work and wounded by the theft of their autonomy. They talked about valuing the ability to "call their own shots" and be imaginative in their classrooms. They felt it was a "damn shame" that "that sense of autonomy, that ability to create your own curriculum with high standards, has to be thrown out of place by something artificial," a teacher said. "You're selling your soul to the devil." A colleague also bemoaned the "taking away of professional judgement and autonomy as a teacher." Everything this teacher had learned and done before now seemed to be regarded as worthless. (pp. 91-92).

The teachers' reflections are reinforced by Sach's (1999) argument that two competing discourses are shaping the professional identity of teachers. There is a democratic professionalism that is emerging from the profession itself and a managerialist professionalism that is being reinforced by Australian education authorities and governments through their policies on teacher professional development that emphasise accountability and effectiveness (Sachs, 1999). As discussed in the following section, working together becomes more problematic for teachers as their work intensifies.

2.9 Teachers' work and work lives

2.9.1 Work intensification

Remodelling of education has taken place in a number of countries over the past two decades and has placed teachers under great pressure (Galton & MacBeath, 2008). A study of Tasmanian teachers (Gardner & Williamson, 2004) shows not only that they are working on average 48.7 hours in primary and 52 hours in secondary schools, but also that the nature of their work has intensified following the implementation of a range of Department of Education (DoE) curriculum and policy edicts.

Teacher stress has been increasing for decades and, according to Spaull and Hince (1986), already appeared to be at epidemic proportions in the 1980s. A 1999 report for "Workcover Tasmania" shows that teachers represented only two per cent of the Tasmanian work force yet accounted for around 40 per cent of workers' compensation claims for stress related illness (McHugh, 1999), a figure which has teachers over represented by a factor of 20 or 2000 per cent.

Teacher work intensification involves increased pressure to complete more tasks, burgeoning demands from external sources, a greater range of targets, and demanding deadlines (McBeath & Galton, 2004).The multi-task nature of teaching and the intensification of work in recent years make teaching a challenging professional without the additional requirements associated with major change (Churchill, et al., 1997). Researchers have noted particular consequences arising from teacher work intensification and the isolated nature of teachers' work, including heightened conflict and expressions of frustration over important issues (McBeath, & Galton, 2004). Woods, Jeffrey, Troman and Boyle (1997) report, for example, that pressure to work together on planning the curriculum, which involves an escalation in the number of mandated meetings, commonly results in destroying much of teacher enthusiasm for genuine collaboration that might previously have existed.

2.9.2 Teacher work lives

The central factor that differentiates education from all other industries is that it is more people-centred (Stoll, Fink & Earl, 2003). Connell (1985), in one of the first large Australian studies into teachers' work, noted that teaching is about helping people to learn. However, understanding the complexity and intangibility of teachers' work is a major challenge (Connell, 1985; Stoll, Fink & Earl, 2003) and therefore makes

problematic the meaningful study of such work. Connell (1985) explains that teachers' work is a labour process without an object or, at best, with an object that is as intangible as "the minds of the kids" (p. 70). The outcomes of teaching are thus difficult to measure, making an outcomes-based curriculum problematic (Spady, 1994).

Prior to the 1960s, most studies of teachers' work used a consensually oriented functional framework (Ball & Goodson, 1985). "The spotlight on teachers' growth and development as human beings" (Ball & Goodson, 1985, p. 8) became apparent in the 1980s. Ball and Goodson's research is shaped by the assumption that "the teacher's previous career and life experience shapes their view of teaching and the way he or she sets about it" (p. 13). Nias (1989), in reinforcing the findings of Ball and Goodson (1985), highlights the importance of the school context and of the affective, cognitive, and practical tasks of teaching for forming teacher self concept. Both teacher personal development (Ball & Goodson, 1985) and the school context (Nias, 1989) are now seen as key factors in the development of teacher occupational identity and professional life stages.

There have been a number of life history studies, examining teachers' lives from their own perspective (emic) and in the context of their own experiences, values and beliefs. (Ball & Goodson, 1985; Sikes, Measor, & Woods, 1985; Goodson, 1992; Knowles & Holt-Reynolds, 1994; Goodson & Hargreaves, 1996). Huberman (1993) in his seminal study, *The Lives of Teachers* used this life history approach to good effect. In an attempt to identify the professional life stages of secondary teachers, extensive interviews were conducted with a large sample (N=160) of teacher respondents. Similarly to European researchers who studied teachers' life stages (e.g., Prick, 1986; Sikes et al., 1985), Huberman (1993) depicts the later phases of teaching careers (ages 40-50 and 50-60) as periods of serenity and disengagement, but sometimes too of bitterness and conservatism. While Huberman's (1993) study is focussed on secondary teachers in French-speaking Geneva and a nearby district, it is an example of a rich methodological approach to studying teachers' work-lives. In addition, the insights it offers into the phases of a teaching career and into the attitudes and views of experienced teachers seem to resonate beyond national boundaries.

In the beginning phase, teachers are particularly vulnerable until they have worked out their strategies for "survival" (Connell, 1983; Fullan, 1993; Day et al., 2006). If not nurtured carefully, the required teacher skills may become entirely survival oriented. Fullan (1993) outlined a process whereby an enthusiastic young graduate in a challenging classroom situation can reach burn-out in a relatively short time, even when surrounded by well-meaning and supportive colleagues. Initially, there is a real sense that the work is

socially meaningful and full of personal satisfaction, the greater part of which is derived from engagement with core tasks of teaching and learning (Dinham & Scott, 2000). The inevitable difficulties of teaching interact with personal issues and vulnerabilities, as well as social pressures and values, have been shown to result in resentment of the demands of teaching (Dinham & Scott, 2000). Faced with such difficulties, different teachers react to their situations in different ways and some leave the profession. Finding no other viable alternative career option, some continue to teach in a defensive mode.

The nature and difficulty of teachers' work has been examined by a number of researchers over decades. One recent large-scale, longitudinal study entitled "Variations in Teachers' Work, Lives and Effectiveness" (VITAE) was conducted in the United Kingdom over a three year period and involved 100 schools and 300 teachers. Two dimensions of effectiveness were identified by Day et al., (2006): perceived effectiveness (relational) and effectiveness as defined by value added measures of pupil progress and attainment (relative). The research also found that perceived and relative effectiveness were associated through (a) moderating influences; (b) mediating influences; and, c) outcomes. Moderating influences, which included teachers' personal and professional life phases and identities, interacted with combinations of mediating influences, i.e. pupils, policies, school leadership and colleagues, socio-economic contexts, school phase (level – primary or secondary) and Continuing Professional Development (CPD). It is the success with which teachers are able to manage the interactions between these moderating factors and mediating influences which potentially shapes the outcomes, i.e., their capacities to be effective and to remain committed to the profession (Day et al., 2006).

Ultimately, teacher commitment is a factor in the success of major educational change initiatives (Fullan, 1993; 1999) and has been shown to vary according to the different work-life phases of the individual teacher (Day et al., 2006). Therefore, a school's staff age profile will likely come to bear on the effectiveness of change at school level. Teachers' capacities to sustain commitment are also influenced by their sense of professional identity (Day et al., 2006). Teacher identity comprises the interactions between professional, situated and personal dimensions of teachers' lives and work and reflects both the social and policy expectations of what is a good teacher and also reflects shared educational ideals. The situated dimension is located in and is affected by particular school conditions (e.g., pupil behaviour, level of disadvantage), leadership, support and feedback. The personal dimension is based on a teacher's private life, including family and social roles (Day et al., 2006).

Effective teaching involves emotional and intellectual investments from teachers who draw upon personal and professional knowledge, skills and capabilities in both these spheres of their work/lives. Events in both their work and private lives influence, positively and negatively, teachers' well-being and effectiveness. In Day et al.'s (2006) study, most teachers (67%) had a positive sense of identity and acknowledged a close link between their sense of positive, stable identity and their self-efficacy and agency – their belief that they could make a difference to their pupils' progress and achievement. As Day et al., (2006) note, it is concerning that nearly one-third of the teachers in their study reported that they did not have a positive sense of identity.

Day et al.'s (2006) work shows that key challenges for school leaders and teachers include managing the tensions teachers face within and across both life phase and identity to sustain and increase teacher commitment, resilience and effectiveness. Understanding the cognitive and emotional contexts of teachers' work may become an important tool for developing teachers' capacities to manage their lives/work and to foster their perceived and relative effectiveness. Sustaining and increasing teacher commitment, resilience and effectiveness have important implications for the well-being and, ultimately, the retention of teachers.

2.10 Emotional contexts of teachers' work

From the outset, teachers are motivated by a desire to work with and for people, and by an emotional commitment to ensuring successful outcomes for their students (Dinham & Scott, 2000). Care of and commitment towards others play an important role in teachers' professional lives and extends to how they define themselves as people (Nias, 1989; Barber, 2002). To sustain their energy and enthusiasm for their work, teachers need to maintain an emotional investment in the job (Scott, Stone & Dinham, 2001; Crosswell & Elliott, 2004). Emotions are thus central to teachers' work (Hargreaves, 1994; Zembylas, 2003) and are important in helping to inform and define a dynamic teacher identity (Zembylas, 2003). Understanding the place of emotions in teachers' lives may help us further understand ways in which positive teacher identities are developed and teacher engagement is maintained.

As indicated above, Day et al., (2006) reported that most teachers in their study of teachers' work and lives acknowledged a close link between their sense of positive, stable identity and their self-efficacy and agency. Day et al., (2006) and others (e.g., Cowley, 1999; Anthony & Walshaw, 2009) maintain that self-efficacy in teachers, unlike

in some other professionals, appears to be context-bound in that an association with the workplace, namely the school, has a bearing on teacher identity.

In another study of teachers' lives, Ingvarson, Beavis, Danielson, Ellis & Elliott (2005) noted that teachers expressed pain at how children's lives were affected by society's ills and felt frustrated and overburdened by what they considered as their obligations to deal with these issues, frequently with limited resources. Like others (e.g., O'Connor, 2008; Zembylas, 2003), these researchers argue that teachers, in negotiating the demands that are placed upon them in various school contexts, must engage with the professional, performative and philosophical dimensions of their work. In so doing, teachers personally interpret the demands placed upon them through emotions, and make responses based on "the connection of emotion with self-knowledge'' (Zembylas, 2003, p. 213). Teachers need to learn how to read the emotional responses of students and other teachers, as well as to understand their own emotions, if they are to have professional control (Stoll, Fink & Earl, 2003; Day et al., 2006). A propensity for emotional exhaustion may stem from the way in which teachers never really "switch off" from their role (Nias, 1986) and it has been shown that there are links between emotional exhaustion and psychological burnout (Brouwers & Welko, 1999). The emotional exhaustion that results from sustained high stress leads to two negative attitude factors: depersonalisation and reduced personal accomplishment (Byrne, 1994).

A school community can be an important source of professional support for a teacher (Achinstein, 2002). Literature addressing the influence of the school community on teacher's work is discussed in the following section.

2.11 The school community and teacher's work

Teachers' work will be influenced by local communities. Bishop (1998) showed that the relationship of the local school community with the school impacts on the morale of the school's students and staff. Policy and community expectations determine school organisation and climate and subtly, yet powerfully, affect teacher attitudes, beliefs, enthusiasm, sense of efficacy, conception of responsibilities and teaching practices (Berliner, 2001). Lockwood (1996) pointed to the need for high levels of trust from the local community towards teachers and their work. Where that trust has been eroded, there is a need to establish a framework of social capital in order to establish productive, collaborative relationships between all members of the school and wider communities (Lockwood, 1996). A school without a level of internally based social capital is characterised by a lack of teamwork and people working in isolation. At a broader school

community level, a lack of social capital means there will be fewer shared understandings, hence conflicting values and a consequent loss in aggregate mutual trust (Lockwood, 1996).

Putnam's (1995) vivid account of the decline in social capital in the USA over the past three decades highlighted the shift from direct involvement in community organisations to passive membership of large non-participatory associations in which people barely know each other. Social capital is either lost or, at very least, transferred into anonymous involvement in mass associations. Coupled with this trend is a significant decline in the levels of mutual trust in society (Putnam 1995). It is likely that declining social trust does little to help schools foster better links with communities, as indicated for example, in the marked decline by parent and community members in participation in Parent Teacher Associations. Trust nonetheless remains an important climatic factor in schools. In school communities where trust is high, it is possible for individuals to debate educational ideas effectively and without fear (Bishop, 1998). Achinstein (2002) compared two USA high schools and reported that one school took more of a critical ideological stance in favour of an active role in challenging, rather than simply accepting, societal norms. Such a school community, according to Achinstein (2002), was more conducive to changing educational practice than those school communities (such as the other one in her study) that take a more passive role. Teachers need to work with the parent community so that shared understandings can be developed about educational practice.

New approaches to curriculum have important implications for how schools are organised, how teachers do their work, the way in which programs are adapted to individual and community needs, and the types of learning that are given priority in schools. Barnett and McCormick (2003) reported that a school's engagement with the wider community can help build relationships between staff and the parents which are central to developing the school's standing in its local community and the relative success of leadership initiatives.

There are manifold educational benefits of greater links between school and community in supporting change (Billig, 2000). Particularly, there is a positive effect on the personal development of students (Weiler, LaGoy, Crane & Rovner, 1998); there are opportunities for students to become active, positive contributors to society (Yates & Youniss, 1999); and, experiences in the community can help students acquire new academic skills and knowledge (Dean & Murdock, 1992; O'Bannon, 1999). There are also benefits for the school as a whole of engaging more effectively with its community. Berliner (2001)

pointed out that improving the receptiveness of the school community to what the school has to offer gives teachers a greater chance of success with change initiatives. Leithwood (2003) argues that leadership, if it is to be successful, must reflect the interests, values and beliefs of a school community. Kilpatrick, Abbott-Chapman and Bayne (2002) argue that there was a reciprocal advantage to schools and communities with mature partnerships. In their work, they showed both the importance of the rural schools they studied to the local communities and also of the communities to the schools, especially in terms of maximising opportunities for young people through school retention into education and training (Kilpatrick et al., 2002). Banks (1995) advocated an empowering school culture, which involves the process of restructuring the culture and organisation of the school to include all teachers, students and parents in making a school more successful through maximising equity. Achinstein (2002) argued that encouraging open debate within the community about educational change was conducive to successfully changing educational practice, and was helpful for student engagement and retention.

2.12 Summary of Chapter

The central context of this study is a key curriculum change, known as Essential Learnings (ELs), that took place in Tasmanian schools during the 2000s. The nature of the ELs curriculum change brought into question the values and purposes of schooling and the place of schooling in political and social agenda. This literature review has focussed on a number of themes that elucidate these facets of schooling. The chapter began by contextualising the study through an overview of the context of educational change in Tasmania and a discussion of the implementation of the curriculum initiative that provides a focus for this study, Essential Learnings. It then reviewed literature around the purposes and current context of education and teachers' work in a changing society. Within the broader education culture and work context, literature in the following areas was reviewed: school culture, the current socio-political context of education and the burgeoning accountability of schools and teachers. Teacher professionalism was then discussed before moving to a review of relevant leadership literature. A review of extant literature around teachers' work and teachers' lives followed. The chapter concluded with a discussion of the role of the school community in facilitating change and school improvement. The following chapter, Chapter 3, details the methods used in conducting this study.

Chapter 3

Methods and procedures

Introduction

This chapter describes the research design employed in this study. Interpretive, comparative case study framed this investigation with principals and teachers at each of the two participating schools comprising the primary unit of analysis.

The case study method was employed because it was difficult to separate the concepts of teacher work from the context of school. Case study was applicable because the schools formed bounded yet integrated systems (Stake, 1995, 2000). The two case study sites provided for a comparison of data on teachers' perceptions of their work in relation to major change. The main purpose of this methods chapter is to detail a rationale that links the collection of data and the study's conclusions with the initial research questions (Yin, 1994). This rationale seeks to establish what Lincoln and Guba (1985) call a good "fit" between purpose, approach and theory. This rationale, developed in the context of a number of ethical considerations and processes, guided the development and conduct of this research. The research design components and their respective parts, as discussed in this chapter, are outlined in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1.: Research design components

Research design component	Respective parts
Research Questions	
Participants	
Researcher as Research Instrument	- Instrument flexibility - Site-based instrument responsiveness - Validity through triangulation
Procedures	- Ethical Measures - Approvals and briefings - Gaining entry - Briefing participants - School-based research as mutual endeavour

	• Direct observation, interview and document analysis processes
	• Principal member-checking
	• Ongoing context sensitivity
	• Teacher participant control
	• Teacher member-checking
	• Interview content
	• Principal interview schedule
	• Teacher interview schedule
Data Analysis	

3.1 Key questions of the research

Research Question 1

How do teachers and principals in two rural Tasmanian schools perceive their work lives in the context of a major curricular and pedagogical change?

Research Question 2

What issues arise for teachers and principals in two rural Tasmanian schools in the context of a major curricular and pedagogical change?

As the research questions were concerned with people's perceptions, the nature of one of the questions is "how" and, given that the researcher lacked control over the research setting, a non-experimental design was deemed appropriate (Merriam, 1998; Merriam & Simpson, 2000; Yin, 1994). Stake (1995, 2000) and Yin (1994) recommend a case study approach to address "how" type questions. Also, the reason for asking the "what" type question (number two) was to develop an understanding, from the teachers' perspective, of school practices and processes that led to their conception of teachers' work in relation to a major curricula and pedagogical change. Yet, in effect, this "what" question concerns both a "how" type question and a "why" type question in the context of attempting to understand teachers' perspectives of their work in the change context and the school-based processes (the "how") that determine work in the context of a major change initiative. It is a "why" type question as it includes the notion of why teachers think the way they do. Stake (1995, 2000) and Yin (1994) hold that "why" type questions are particularly well addressed by case study approaches.

Although case studies can utilise either qualitative or quantitative data gathering approaches (Merriam, 1988, 1998; Merriam & Simpson, 2000, 2005; Stake, 1995; Yin, 1994), qualitative methods were regarded as most appropriate for this study. The reasons for the choice of a qualitative paradigm included the fact that the study was to be carried out on-site (Miles & Huberman, 1994) and in a natural setting (Guba & Lincoln, 2005; Lincoln & Guba, 1995). To capture the perceptions of teacher participants, it was expected that understandings would be developed from the body of data itself rather than situated within existing theory (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992, 2003; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). Moreover, as the data were in the form of words, rather than in numerical form, the study was seen as fundamentally qualitative in nature (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992, 2003).

3.2 The study's participants

The 50 key participants for this study were two principals and 48 teachers from two rural, government schools in Tasmania. The pseudonyms used for the schools in this study are Bass Primary School (Bass) and Winterbrook District High School (Winterbrook). The teacher numbers at each site were 36 and 12 respectively. Students, teacher assistants, parents, cleaners and allied staff were not directly included in this study. Within each school, all teachers were asked to participate in the initial interviews in order to make each school "case" as complete as possible. All but two teachers at the smaller, primary school and one teacher at the larger, district school agreed to take part in the study. Another teacher at the primary school was on extended leave and could not be contacted.

Purposive sampling was employed for the second round interviews to include principals and other key leaders. Purposive sampling, a form of non-probability sampling, was the basis for selection of the schools. Fawcett and Downs (1992) have argued that non-probability sampling is appropriate for theory-generating qualitative studies. According to Merriam and Simpson (2000), "non-probability is the method of choice in *qualitative* studies" (p. 47). According to Bogdan and Biklen (1992), the method of sampling employed in analytic induction must be purposive sampling as particular participants are chosen "because they are believed to facilitate the expansion of the developing theory" (pp. 71-72). Patton (2002) showed that many different purposive samples might assist in developing theory. Through purposive sampling, selected information-rich cases yield insights and in-depth understandings. In this study, in-depth understanding was sought from key leaders from each school.

This study was based on two schools of differing size and Educational Needs Index (ENI), yet similar rural locations. The schools had relatively low to moderate rates of student and teacher turnover and both principals had been based at their school for at least twelve months. The selection of stable sites meant the participants' views were more likely to reflect the real and ongoing contexts of the schools, as participants had had a time in which to develop their working relationships. The mean age of participants from the two schools at the commencement of the study are shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2. Mean Ages of Participants

School	Mean Age (Years)
Bass	41.6
Winterbrook	35.1
All Participants	37.9

The mean age for all participants at the commencement of data collection for the study was almost 38 years. This meant that a typical teacher participant began, after a four year Bachelor of Education Degree or a first degree followed by a Diploma of Education, their first year of teaching in 1987.

It was considered appropriate to undertake a study of teachers' perceptions of their work in relation to major, mandated change given the context of impending teacher shortages in Australia (Preston, 1998). In the UK, acute teacher shortage has led to funding for extensive studies on the nature and difficulty of teachers' work, e.g., The VITAE project (Day et al., 2006). It was also considered important to investigate teachers' perceptions of their work at a time of stable government, at State level, with a minister for Education who claimed a pro-teacher stance on the educational change process throughout the five years she held the education portfolio. The establishment of Ministerial consultative committees, the creation of a Teachers' Registration Board and the forging of a consultative mechanism with the Australian Education Union (AEU) provide evidence such a pro-teacher stance (Garsed, 2000).

It was accepted that school-based educators have experienced a number of change-related initiatives in the latter part of the twentieth century (Fullan, 1993; Sarason, 1995; Tyack & Cuban, 1995; Hargreaves, 2004). However, it can be argued that some recent, local change initiatives differ from much of late twentieth century experience in that they note the importance of teachers as the driving force for change (Fullan 1993, 1999, 2001; Hargreaves, 2004).

3.3 Researcher as instrument

As researcher, I was the primary instrument in this study. Burns (2000) argued that with research taking place in natural settings, like that of schools, the researcher's role is central to the understanding and interpretation of actors and actions in such settings. A human instrument was required, as Lincoln and Guba (1985, 2005) argued, to adapt to circumstance and setting. Seidman explained (1991, p. 16) "the human interviewer can be a marvellously smart, adaptable, flexible instrument who can respond to situations with skill, tact, and understanding".

The phenomena under investigation were not static, so meanings and interpretations were generated through interaction with participants to gain their definitions and perceptions of their work and its context. Lincoln and Guba (1985, 2005) claimed that the human instrument is the instrument of choice within a naturalistic setting and the "only possible instrument in the early stages of an inquiry" (1982, p. 175). The integrity and preparedness of the researcher eschews issues of instrument subjectivity or bias as, within this naturalistic context, no other instrument could achieve the depth or sensitivity required.

3.4 Instrument depth and sensitivity

My career, over more than twenty years, as both a teacher in schools and a representative of teachers on various committees and, also, recently, as Research Officer with the Australian Education Union, Tasmanian Branch, has provided me with a conceptual understanding of how schools operate at a micro-level, across a whole school and at the level of the Tasmanian State education system. Wolcott (1994) argued that lengthy life experience of this kind provides a helpful background for the ethnographic researcher.

My prior case study research provided me with first-hand experience in planning, gathering, analysing and reporting qualitative data. The decision to conduct a small pilot study to refine questions and conceptual approaches and also to further hone the skills of the researcher as instrument was of vital importance in ensuring instrument depth and sensitivity. Kvale (1996) and Seidman (1991) believed that researcher experience and piloting processes were essential for successful interview-based qualitative research. Knowledge of the literature and issues on research ethics for qualitative research has meant that I am conscious of the many subtleties of negotiation with participants and

schools and the importance of feedback processes that contribute to successful fieldwork in schools.

3.5 Validity through triangulation

As both an ethical consideration and to enhance construct validity (Yin, 1994), all teachers in the two participating schools were openly invited to take part in this study. Thus, maximum potential for participation was sought and no individual excluded. Decisions on who would be involved rested with the researched, rather than the researcher.

Direct observation and document analysis provided additional sources of evidence for the study. Although Yin (1994) criticised direct observation and document analysis as being open to the challenge of selectivity, he also viewed them as effective methods in establishing construct validity. When performed well, Yin (1994) argued, the advantages of these methods far outweigh any potential disadvantages. The key purpose for using documentary evidence in this study was to corroborate evidence gleaned from interview, observation and survey. Where discord between evidence from two sources was found it was further explored and evaluated. It was possible to then qualify, discount or make note of countervailing evidence.

Corroboration of evidence from multiple sources provided a means of data triangulation within this study. Also, within the structure of the interview schedules, each item on the schedule for principals had a corresponding item on the interview schedule for teachers. This enabled the researcher to make direct comparison between responses from principals and teachers on a given question. Interview, direct observation and document analysis strengthened the study by means of methodological triangulation (Patton, 2002), which is the use of a variety of data collection methods to corroborate evidence thus achieving greater validity (Burns, 2000; Creswell, 2005).

Member-checking sessions followed the initial analysis of data from each participating school. This process enhanced the construct validity of the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1995; Yin, 1994) and helped me to understand idiosyncrasies of local school culture so that subsequent representations of sites and individuals were adequate and fair. Development of the key thematic contributions of the participants was greatly enhanced by checking the transcripts with the participants. One principal made amendments to the initial

interview to aid clarity and understanding. One teacher provided additional comments after reflecting on the interview transcript.

Guba and Lincoln (1989) argued that it is not the researcher alone who benefits from feedback sessions. Also, the ethical guidelines laid down in the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans (Commonwealth of Australia, 1999), stipulated that benefits of research must, at least in part, flow to the participants or their organisation. In this study, participants gained the opportunity to enhance their own understandings through questioning and clarification of the interview material. Guba and Lincoln (1989) described such qualities in a study as having "ontological authenticity" (p. 249), which they defined as "the extent to which individual respondents' own emic constructions are improved, matured, expanded, and elaborated, in that they now possess more information and have become more sophisticated in its use" (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p. 249).

From the earliest discussions with teachers and principals and other researchers about the nature and intentions of this study, widespread interest and discussion was evident. If that discussion led to changes in practice among the participants in the research, then the study has evidenced what Guba and Lincoln (1989) termed "catalytic authenticity" (p. 244). If through this study, teachers and principals have even been encouraged to reflect on and conceptualise for themselves the notions of teachers' work in relation to major curriculum and pedagogical change, the research has exemplified a degree of catalytic authenticity. In fact, it was noted by two participants at one school in follow up interviews that, in the weeks following the first round interviews, the principal actively sought to provide teachers with positive feedback on their teaching.

3.6 Procedures

3.6.1 Ethical measures

Ethical considerations are paramount in research involving human participants and are highlighted throughout this chapter. The researcher remained mindful of ethical concerns from the inception of this research as it concerned teachers' views and dealt with their involvement in hegemonic structures and issues of their resistance and/or acceptance of those structures. Potential harm, ranging from possible embarrassment to reduced standing among colleagues or with the employing body, the Tasmanian Department of Eduaction (DoE), was weighed against the scientific benefits of this study.

Informed consent procedures were strictly adhered to and participants were assured that confidentiality and anonymity measures would be rigorously undertaken and all requirements of the Human Research Ethics Committee Network (Tasmania) properly followed.

Whenever changes to initially planned procedures were to take place, the Executive Officer of the Human Research Ethics Committee Network (Tasmania) was duly advised and permission was obtained before embarking on such change. The Human Research Ethics Committee Network was provided with regular research progress update reports.

Burgess (1989) pointed out the myriad of day to day ethical dilemmas facing the field researcher. Many of these potential issues were ameliorated to some extent by the researcher establishing a sound cooperative relationship with his participants wherein participants came to view themselves as "fellow researchers." Some of these potential ethical issues included the following:

1. Informed consent and the possibility of deception/misunderstanding

Although great lengths were taken to ensure that all participants were clear on the nature and purposes of the research project, it remained possible that individual misunderstandings may occur on the part of participants. Although properly informed by the Informed Consent process, the participants were further reminded of the nature and purposes of the study throughout the course of the research.

2. The professional distance of the researcher

In attempting to understand local practices and beliefs, the researcher ran the risk of not maintaining a professional distance from the participants. This was, however, unlikely as the time spent by the researcher in the field was limited and the researcher had prior experience at interviewing for field research. The researcher aimed to understand the participants' points of view at all times.

3. Power imbalance and reporting of research findings

An inevitable power imbalance characterised the relationship between researcher and participant. There was a real possibility in this kind of study of a researcher misrepresenting participants. This imbalance was partially redressed by consultation and by participant input at key stages of the research process, as well as through member checking sessions and report sharing processes. The researcher was reassured by the participants that the research report was a fair and an accurate depiction of participants' experiences.

4. School-based tension over the purposes of the research project

The over-arching purpose of the study to conduct university-based research aimed at adding to the body of knowledge about teachers and their views of their work. As the schools involved in this study had had limited contact with university researchers, the researcher foresaw that some participants may have needed reassurance of this over-arching purpose. The researcher who, at the time of data collection, was a practising classroom teacher, was able to engender a high level of trust within these school settings.

3.6.2 Approvals and Briefings

Approval of the Human Research Ethics Committee Network (Tasmania) was gained before approaching the DoE for permission to conduct research in government schools. Gaining initial approval to approach eligible schools to discuss the possibility of conducting research required the approval of the DoE's Deputy Secretary (Education) through the Departmental Consultative Research Committee (DCRC), situated in the Office of Educational Review (OER). The approval process took the form of an Application for Permission to Conduct Research in Tasmanian Government Schools to the DCRC. Having gained DCRC approval, (a copy of the letter of approval from the secretary of the DoE can be seen at Appendix A.) I was then able to approach the relevant District Office of the DoE to discuss the kinds of schools I needed to have access to for the purposes of my research. The District Office then required me to approach individual schools through the principal. Once I had gained approval from principals to conduct research in their schools, I could then indicate to the DoE for their records the names of participating schools.

3.6.3 Gaining entry

Following receipt of permission to approach schools I could then approach the principals of those schools to discuss the proposed research. Initial meetings with principals concerned discussion of the nature of the proposed research project and the likely inconvenience and any disruption to the normal functioning of the school and also the potential benefits of this kind of research for teachers and schools. I made contact with principals of eight schools and met with seven of them. At these meetings with principals, I described the nature and requirements of the research process in detail. Principals were invited to raise any issues they thought of as arising from conducting such research in their schools. While supportive of the idea of the research, principals remained vigilant about the possible time commitment required of their teachers. Only three principals indicated that, subject to staff approval, they would permit the research to

proceed. Staff approval was forthcoming at two of these schools and the principals of these schools indicated to me that I might commence by briefing the staff members of each school during one of their weekly staff meetings prior to the commencement of the fieldwork.

3.6.4 Comprehensive briefings of participants

At briefings with teachers and principals, I provided details about the research including why the research topic was considered worthy of investigation, and how schools could benefit from participation. I outlined how certain data might, with mutual approval of teachers, principal and researcher, be used in school review processes to complement the kind of processes currently undertaken in Tasmanian government schools, like the School Improvement Review (SIR). I also noted that research of this kind could be of value to educational authorities and planners as they endeavour to understand the perspectives of teachers on a number of issues including teachers' perceptions of their work. I further described what would be required by way of direct observation, interviews and demographic surveys, and school-based documents that would form the basis of data collection for the study. Sampling criteria and time commitments required of teachers and principals were also explained. I reassured participants of the rigorous processes employed to ensure confidentiality and anonymity and underscored the voluntary nature of participation in the research and the right to withdraw at any time without any reason being required or given. Contact details were provided for the Chief Investigator, the Research Human Ethics Committee and myself, as Researcher. A copy of the Information Sheet for Teachers (see Appendix B) was provided, via email, for each potential teacher participant and a copy placed on the staffroom noticeboard. Principals received a copy of the Information Sheet for Principals (see Appendix C), which I had explained to them at our initial meetings, and a copy of the Information Sheet for Teachers. These Information Sheets provided a summary of the points I detailed in the briefing sessions.

The projected times that I would be in the schools to observe and conduct interviews were nominated by me and I sought staff comment and questions re the convenience of these times. Teachers indicated that they were happy for me to approach them individually about the possibility of them participating in interviews and the times these interviews might take place.

Principals were provided with two copies of the Principals' Consent Form (Appendix D). One was to be signed by them and returned to me prior to the commencement of

fieldwork and the other was a copy for their records. A courtesy copy of the Teachers' Consent Form (Appendix E) was also given to the principals.

3.6.5 School-based research as a mutual endeavour

In addition to the points outlined in the Information Sheets, it was explained to principals and teachers that qualitative research is a mutual endeavour (Kvale, 1996) which seeks to understand people in their life/work settings. It was made clear that such research was not aimed at criticising people's actions, beliefs or understandings, but rather to assist teachers in telling their story. It was further explained that the researcher's depiction of events and people would involve conceptual analysis aimed at interpreting understandings rather than depicting individuals for comparison with other individuals.

3.6.7 Direct observation, document analysis and interview processes

I accompanied each principal for the initial two days at each school as he/she went about her/his activities around the school. This process involved observing interactions with staff and students in the course of the principal's working day. Both observation and shadowing processes were guided by a protocol (see Appendix F). Document analysis was guided by a checklist for document analysis (see Appendix G). Some weeks later, at each school, semi-structured interviews with principals were conducted, in school hours, and took up to one and a half hours duration.

These Principal interview schedules, and those for teachers, were developed after piloting of questions with a third principal and six teachers who were not involved in the main study. It was decided to pilot questions so that the researcher could practise the technique of interviewing and to ensure that the questions would prompt the participants to address the issues that formed the main focus of the study. Kvale (1996, p. 147) argued that "interviewers should be knowledgeable in the topics investigated … have a sense for good stories and be able to assist subjects in the unfolding of their narratives." Burns (2000) held that practice interviews and piloting of questions ensure that the researcher gains practice in an environment where it is safe to make mistakes.

 The digitally recorded principal interviews were usually held in the principals' offices. These interviews were followed up by a second interview, which took place during the second period in the field.

3.6.8 Principal member-checking

Principals were given transcripts of their interviews as soon after the interview as possible. This took place within three weeks of the interview as it was deemed important to receive prompt feedback and make necessary amendments to the transcripts so that analysis could commence. Although anonymity of all participants was assured, it was envisaged that quotes from participants might be included in the research report so it was necessary to gain individuals' approval to include such material.

Principals took particular interest in reviewing the transcripts of their interviews. One suggested only minor changes to the texts and the other required no changes. Both principals provided further insight into the material through their feedback and comments. Principals were shown a draft copy of their school's case which gave them further opportunity to offer feedback and comment. At the outset of these meetings, the researcher indicated that it would not be appropriate to agree to change the draft material at this stage, in the light of the principal's view of it. Criticisms of the cases were discussed and noted by the researcher for consideration during the redrafting process. Stake (1995, p. 115) noted that although participants are the subjects of case studies, "they regularly provide critical observations and interpretations, sometimes making suggestions as to sources of data." In this way, Stake (1995) further explained, participants help to triangulate the researcher's observations and interpretations.

The researcher remained aware that the draft of the case, which is the researcher's view of the material, stands in contrast to the transcripts of interview that are the views of the participants. Stake (1995) pointed out the role of the researcher as interpreter when he said, "The case researcher recognises and substantiates new meanings. ... Finding new connections, the researcher finds ways to make them comprehensible to others" (p. 97).

3.6.9 Ongoing context sensitivity

The principal who wished to make changes to the transcripts gave reasons of clarity and understanding as justification for this request. There are two further possible reasons for that principal seeking to make changes to a transcribed interview.

Firstly, as the study involved only two schools in rural Tasmania, only two principals were participants. Within such a small population, despite provisions of anonymity and the contents of their interviews being reported in the main conceptually, these principals may have felt vulnerable. This is further understandable in the context of the Tasmanian DoE where individuals may fear repercussions for speaking openly on matters of a

politically sensitive nature, given also that the DoE has on file names of participating schools. Numerous anecdotal accounts made to the researcher indicated that individual principals and schools have, in the past, suffered as a result of dissenting from views held by senior departmental officials and/or manifested in DoE policy. Such pressure may be particularly strongly felt by individuals whose ambitions include promotion to more senior positions.

Secondly, principals' views on issues may have altered over the course of time. In the context of a school as a learning organisation, this is a highly plausible reason to request changes to the interview transcripts. It is also reasonable within the context of this research as case study. Stake (1995) and Guba and Lincoln (2005) pointed out that a case study is only a "snapshot" of reality, seeking as qualitative study, interpretations and understandings rather than fixed and predominantly quantitative data. This view accords with Merriam (1998) who held that qualitative research is ever changing, rather than a fixed, objective phenomenon to be "discovered."

The same interview schedule was used with both principals. The questions were developed and framed by the researcher from his review of relevant literature. These questions were piloted with teachers and a principal separate to those taking part in the study, four months prior to the commencement of the main fieldwork. Through this piloting process, interview schedules were refined to ensure the best flow of data from the participants. After the first interviews were completed, follow-up questions for selected participants were framed that could further probe the answers provided and issues raised by participants in the first round. Questions at second round interviews were also asked pertaining to unique, observed aspects of the school or answers given by participants at that school in order to clarify and triangulate answers from other sources. The aim of these semi-structured interviews was illumination of interpretations and understandings.

Principals were reminded at the outset of each interview of their right to not answer any particular question should that be their wish, delete subsequently any response, and have final veto over the use of any of their quotes in the study report. I employed the "active listening" technique as detailed in Yin (1994) and sustained the "respectful disposition" outlined by Taylor and Bogdan (1998).

It was important to the researcher that the interviews should be relaxed and conversational to promote lucid and at length responses so, typically, the researcher and participant sat at right angles to each other on comfortable chairs with a low table beside them where the digital voice recorder was placed.

3.6.10 Teacher participant control

As noted, a total of 48 teachers and two principals across the two schools were participants in the study, making 50 participants in all. Three teachers declined interviews, comprising around six per cent of the total number of teachers at the two schools.

Teacher interviews commenced only days after the initial interviews with principals at each school. Teachers were approached individually and asked if they would like to participate. At one school, only one teacher out of 38 declined to take part in the study. At the other school, some reluctance to participate was evident among some teaching staff. Some of these teachers noted that they had busy work schedules and that finding the time for interviews would be difficult, yet most eventually found time to participate in interviews. One non-participant expressed curiosity about the research project and ventured to express to me her regret that she was unable to participate, citing time commitments as the main reason for having made such a decision. Inquiries of this kind were dealt with in the same manner as inquiries from participants, that is, in a consistent and courteous manner. Ultimately, two teachers at the second school declined interview and a further two, who were on extended leave at the time, were not available to be interviewed. In all, 37 participants at the first school and 13 participants at the second school were interviewed.

Demographic surveys of participants were completed by teachers and principals, via questionnaires (Appendix H), at the commencement of first round interview sessions. One school's meeting room was made available for the interviews to be conducted. At the other school, an unused classroom room was available. This was adequate and there was the alternative of the principal's office on occasions when the spare classroom was being used by the music teacher. Three participants requested that interviews take place out of the school and in the teacher's own time. Each of these interviews was undertaken in the participant's home. Where facilities and space permitted, I sat at a right angle to the teacher participant. Participants were briefed on their rights as per the Information Sheet provided to teachers and posted on the staffroom noticeboard. Participants were asked to read, with a view to signing, a Statement of Informed Consent (teachers).

Participants were shown how to recognise when the digital voice recorder was operating and invited to request instant replays if necessary. Such request was twice made and occurred when a participant lost her/his train of thought and needed to recap on their statement. The recorder was restarted at the point requested by the participant.

The researcher had a small amount of background information on each participating teacher prior to interview, as each had completed a demographic survey sheet and informal discussions had taken place with them in the weeks running up to the time of interview. There were also school documents provided by the principals which clearly outlined individual teachers' roles.

With the digital voice recorder checked and switched on, teachers were asked the set of questions from the semi-structured interview schedule (included later in this chapter). The questions were broad in nature and contained sub-questions which could be used by the researcher to prompt the participant for a fuller or more detailed reply. The way these questions were devised is explained in the forthcoming section, "Content of Interviews." Most interviews took place during teachers' non-instructional periods which were fifty minutes' duration. Many first interviews took as long as the full fifty minutes and some, by mutual consent, extended beyond that. As these interviews were lengthy, where teachers' time was limited the interview was held in two sittings, both conducted on the same day. When resuming the interview, the participant was asked to hear the last few minutes of the earlier session in order to regain their frame of mind at the completion of that session.

Second round interviews, for selected participants, were conducted some months after the initial interviews and contained some questions that were similar to first round questions and also some new questions unique to the individual teacher based on the responses given at the initial interview. These interviews were shorter, lasting no more than forty minutes. Transcripts of second round interviews were emailed to participants and they made no request for any alteration or addition to be made to them.

3.6.11 Teacher member-checking

As well as providing transcripts to all participants, member-checking was also done through whole staff feedback sessions following a regular staff meeting in the weeks following the first set of interviews. After an initial introduction by me, explaining the key themes arising from the interviews, the staff was divided into focus groups to discuss and make comment on these themes.

Notes were taken by me at feedback sessions as I roamed and engaged with each of the teacher groups and also by an assigned member of each group. The comments and questions offered by teachers provided the researcher with further insight into the understandings and values of teachers that were useful in framing further analyses of the

interview material. For instance, in one school a group of teachers viewed change processes as a threat to the way that they teach, yet in the other school the same change processes were seen as an integral part of a teacher's work.

When the initial fieldwork was completed, some further member-checking was undertaken with individual teachers. This was often done at the school and sometimes at a mutually agreed venue. This facilitated clarification of individuals' responses and provided greater insight into their understandings and conceptualisation.

3.6.12 Interview content

The interviews with principals and teachers were the key means of data collection for this study. A number of considerations influenced the decision to employ interviews as the major source of data collection.

Earlier studies, including one on school-based trust and leadership (Bishop, 1998), employed interview as the key means by which to determine teacher understandings of relationships between people within schools. No study addressing these particular questions had been conducted in Australia.

Additionally, it was unknown how teachers in schools actually conceptualise notions of their work in relation to change in their everyday work situation. Therefore, it was vital to use a data collection method that would be responsive to the ways that teachers conceptualise for themselves these notions. Survey questionnaires could not achieve this, as the questions tend to be more closed than open ended and the flexibility of response available and depth of meaning attainable by this means is much more limited. However, the difficulty with interview as a method, Kvale (1996) pointed out, is that the quality of the data achievable through interview is dependent largely on the skills of the interviewer. Kvale (1996) described the effective interview researcher as a "traveller," allowing the participant to lead him/her to an understanding of the way they see the world. In contrast with the metaphor of "traveller," Kvale (1996), coined the term "miner" to describe the researcher who is insensitive to the meanings understood by participants in his/her study and is rather more concerned to extract information from them than to understand them. Throughout this research project, reliance on the participants' perceptions through interviews enabled the researcher to use the words of teachers and principals to shape the emerging theory.

The use of a common set of questions with teachers and parallel sets for principals and teachers, as well as the development of common and unique follow-up interview

questions, enabled points of confluence and contrast to be fully explored (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This approach allowed the researcher insight into both the full range of views, taking into account "outliers," or those with an extreme point of view, and the frequency of concurring views on a particular issue.

The interview questions address issues that arose from an understanding and appraisal of the literature, which was initially condensed into ten key issues. These key issues facing teachers and schools in the current context, listed below, were drafted into sub-questions that functioned as "lenses" through which to view notions of teachers' work:

1. How does the <u>bureaucratic structure</u> of school, district office and head office impact on teachers' work?
2. What aspects of <u>principal leadership</u> impact on teachers' work?
3. Does "<u>trust</u>" between principals and teachers impact on teachers' perceptions of their work?
4. What aspects of <u>teachers' work</u> are satisfying for teachers?
5. How does the "<u>change process</u>" impact on teachers' perceptions of autonomy and control in their work?
6. How does <u>school culture</u> impact on teachers' views of their work?
7. How does the <u>socioeconomic background of students</u> influence teachers' perceptions of their work?
8. How does a <u>teacher's "world view"</u> impact on their perceptions of their work?
9. Do particular <u>ways of working together</u> empower teachers to do their jobs?
10. How does <u>teachers' sense of being valued</u> impact on their view of themselves and their work?

As it was not possible or desirable to separate these issues from each other, many of the interview questions necessarily address more than one issue. In order to maintain some structure and sequence to the interview process, six core questions were asked of all participants.

The round one interview schedules for principals (see Appendix I) and teachers (see Appendix J) involved core questions were asked so that participants could be free to speak at length in response to these and, where necessary, prompts were used. For example, Part G. of the schedule School and society, in both principal and teacher interview schedules included under the core question "What kinds of knowledge do you see teachers facilitating for what kind of society?" the following sub questions, hints, etc. could be used:

1. How should schools play their role in society?
2. What, if any, links can schools have in the life of a community?
3. In what ways does the socioeconomic background of students impact on your teaching?
4. What view do you have about the long-term future of public education?

3.7 Conduct of interviews

Round one interviews commenced at the beginning of the term two (June), 2004, and were completed by the middle of term three (October), 2004. Taken on their own, the 50 interviews provided ample data to produce clear "snapshots" of the two schools as they were at that time. To develop more than a static image of the schools, it was necessary to add vitality to this view by interviewing the principals and selected teachers a second time and at a date some months later. Second round interviews also provided greater depth of understanding about the views of particular teachers about their work and its context. Three teachers were selected for second round interviews for a combination of reasons: i.e., each represented a differing, yet complex professional identity, and demonstrated great commitment to ther/his profession. The researcher had developed a strong rapport with each of them, and each was able to articulate their views and the complexity of their school contexts with great clarity. This enabled me to build a detailed portrait of each teacher which added quality and depth to the depiction of teachers' views of their work in the two schools.

Round two interviews were conducted up to a year after the completion of round one interviews and the questions were aimed at gaining a more detailed perspective on teacher and principal views about key themes and issues that were determined by analysis of round one interview transcripts. The decision was made to conduct the round two interviews so many months after the round one interviews so that the researcher could gain an appreciation of changes that had taken place in the culture and practices of the schools over time. This time lapse was also useful for establishing whether any of the key issues raised by principals and teachers in round one interviews were merely transitory or whether, in fact, these concerns endured over time.

For the reasons outlined previously in this chapter, not all round two interview schedules were exactly the same. A typical round two interview schedule is included at Appendix K, so that readers can gain a fuller insight into the nature and framing of the questions.

3.8 Data analysis

The data analysis in this study began at the commencement of data collection and continued until well after fieldwork had been completed. The intensity of analysis was many times greater once all the data had been completed, even though analysis had been an ongoing activity. A modified form of the constant comparison method devised by Glaser and Strauss (1967) was employed to analyse the data for this study. Constant comparison is an often used method in case studies (Merriam, 1988, 1998; Glaser, 2002) and is the method of choice when collecting and processing data simultaneously (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

The key to sound qualitative data analysis lay in careful coding of the raw data. Strauss and Corbin (1998) outlined two main analytic procedures that are basic to the coding process for the constant comparative method, the first of which "pertains to the *making of comparisons*, the other to the *asking of questions*" (p. 62). The constant comparative method involves comparing incidences of each category of response. Merriam (1988) explains that, "The researcher begins with a particular incident from an interview … and compares it with another incident in the same set of data or in another set. These comparisons lead to tentative categories that are then compared to each other and to other instances" (Merriam, 1998, p. 159). Glaser and Strauss (1967) had earlier stated that the constant comparative method culminates in delimiting theory. Lincoln and Guba (1985), however, who thought of constant comparison as a valuable analytic tool, preferred to substitute the term "construction" for "theory" (p. 343).

Grounded theory approaches, such as those outlined by Strauss and Corbin (1998) were a possibility considered by the researcher. However, concern alluded to by Guba and Lincoln (1985) about the difficulty of sustaining claims of causal links within this kind of qualitative research were shared by the researcher. Lincoln and Guba's (1985) notion of "mutual shaping" was seen as more appropriate as it recognises the essential nature of the shared process of making meaning that is inherent in an interpretive case study of this kind.

Notes from observation sessions, selected school and DoE documents, participant demographic surveys and interviews were the sources of data that were analysed by the constant comparative method. I took extensive written notes and made numerous diary entries. These notes were not shared with participants. Documents collected included school and DoE policy documents, minutes of various school committees (where these were taken), minutes from staff and senior staff meetings, timetables and notices and bulletins to staff. Also, official DoE Central and District Office correspondence to the

principal and staff were copied or noted: i. e., these took the form of memos, faxes, newspaper reports, policy and curriculum documents. A checklist was developed to ensure the same thorough list of documents was collected at each site. Departmental documents were sourced from the DoE website. With the cooperation and assistance of a school principal in the local district, I was able to obtain copies of all correspondence sent by the DoE to school principals during my time in the field. In addition, newspaper, professional and education union journal articles and school demographic data were obtained.

Given the researcher's limited skills in this area it was preferred he did not transcribe the recordings of interviews personally. Instead, experienced university appointed personnel transcribed the digitally-recorded interviews. The transcripts were photocopied to aid the process of constant comparison. All data were coded as they were collected so that their source could be located in the later stages of data analysis. Teachers were assigned pseudonyms so that their anonymity could be protected. The transcripts were labelled with teacher's school, date of interview and a participant number. Individuals' names and the means of decoding the transcript identities were stored separately in a locked filing cabinet at the university's Faculty of Education. A profile grid of teachers from each school, where individuals were identified only by their pseudonyms, contained demographic data of participants. This information combined to provide a quick overview of the staff at each school, and was useful for reference when analysing the details of interviews.

After initial sorting and coding of data, it was then possible to compress the data into units. Strauss and Corbin (1998) explained that forming units of data is the first, comparative stage of constant comparison. Unitising the data involved extracting a word, sentence, paragraph or concept from the information that could be labelled as an entity of meaning. When the transcripts were marked in this way it was possible to tally up all the responses of one kind or another and make comparisons between units.

The next stage of analysis involved the development of categories of data by sorting the data units into groups with common themes. For each transcript, for example, lists of groupings were made and compared. Once data had been sorted under loose headings, more formal naming of conceptual categories began. Merriam (1998) suggested three sources of names for conceptual categories of data. Names can hold meaning for the researcher or the participants, or arise out of the literature. Although all three were sources of concept labelling in this study, the predominant source of concept labels was the researcher himself through his understanding of the literature. In this way, all data

were ultimately categorised. Care was taken that conceptual categories were at the same level of abstraction from the literal, and numerous sub-categories were used to ensure this occurred.

Once data units were categorised, propositions were made in the form of questions about conceptual threads that appeared. These questions pertained to points of confluence and points of contradiction, or themes, within the data and culminated in the drafting of second-round interview schedules for principals and teachers or became topics for discussion at teacher member-checking sessions. Participant responses to second-round interview questions then provided a subsequent level of depth of understanding about these themes. The original proposition was then either developed further or assigned a lesser priority. Some data could not at this stage be sorted, as they did not appear to fit into discernible categories. All unsorted data were kept for analysis after the initial themes had been further investigated with selected participants in round two interviews and in member checking sessions.

In parallel, a separate process, that of "content analysis" took place whereby concepts from the transcripts were grouped and listed. Spradley (1979, p. 97) pointed out that "decoding cultural symbols involves far more than finding their referents; it requires that we discover the relationships that occur among these symbols." These relationships formed the system of meaning specific to the cultural group that was the focus of the study. Therefore, it was crucial to ensure that the meanings of concepts that appeared in the data were primarily those of the participants, rather than meanings imposed on the data by the researcher.

In the process of data analysis, each school's data had been successively sorted so that a series of lists of concepts (units) could be made, which Goetz and Le Compte (1984) argued can help to integrate and synthesise data. With these lists, it was possible to view patterns and regularities occurring both within one school and across the two schools. Merriam (1988. 1998) described regularities as frequently occurring events and responses. From the general set of concepts developed within each school's data, it was possible to develop sub-sets of more specific concepts.

Once unit categories were exhausted, the entire category set was reviewed, beginning with the approximately five per cent of data labelled "miscellaneous." Categories were checked for overlap so that there was no ambiguity about how a particular item might be categorised. Following Lincoln and Guba (1985), categories were "defined in such a way as they [were] internally as homogeneous as possible and externally as heterogeneous as possible" (p. 349).

It was then possible to examine the categories for relationships among the categories. Some categories were too large and needed subdivision; some others were subsumed. Some categories were noted as "missing," "incomplete" or "unsatisfactory." Such categories were earmarked for follow-up in the next phase of data collection.

At the conclusion of many second-round interviews, it was found that most of the questions posed by the researcher in the initial data analysis stages were resolved and a point of data saturation and exhaustion was drawing close. A subsequent member-checking session and third round of principal interviews were sufficient to satisfy the researcher that no relevant new data were apparent, therefore data saturation and category exhaustion had been reached (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Miles & Huberman, 1994). At this point, participants were in strong agreement with the developed categories and viewed them as the essences of their views of their teachers' work within their respective schools. The researcher thus formed the view that no further data collection could usefully inform the study.

The refinement and integration of categories, as well as the use of quantitative methods enabled me to develop a theory that both explained and was grounded in the participants' perceptions of the case. In Chapter Five, which details discussion of the data, generalisations could not be directly drawn from the results of this qualitative case study research. Results of this study revealed both teachers' views of their work at a time of major curriculum change and also the particular issues and concerns teachers found themselves facing.

3.9 Summary of Chapter

This chapter outlined the methods and procedures of the study. Design components, namely, the study's key questions, participants, research instruments, procedures and processes of data analysis, were detailed. The description and justification of these components enabled readers to see the logic of the study and judge the adequacy of the methods for addressing the key research questions. More particularly, this chapter showed the efficacy of the researcher employing himself as the study's instrument. As the topic of this study involved teacher perceptions of their work within schools, the researcher-as-instrument was able to adapt to the setting and maintain responsiveness and sensitivity, relying on his two decades of experience as a teacher in schools.

This chapter also underscored the essential nature of careful ethical procedures, comprehensive briefings and appropriate processes of feeding back data to principal and teacher participants. These researcher-initiated processes provided school personnel with a clear view of the plan of the investigations and the intended procedures for its execution. These processes were further elaborated during the interviews wherein participants had their rights and options of participation explained to them.

Data gathered through direct observation and analysis of relevant school and DoE documents added to the data collected through the seventy interviews which comprised the major data collection method for this study. Interview transcripts from the audio-taped recordings enabled the generation of a substantial and useful database. From this database, it was possible to compare, corroborate and further question the data until saturation point was reached. Through careful coding of each participant's response to each interview question, it was possible to make comparisons both within each site and between the two schools. The use of a modified form of Glaser and Strauss' (1967) constant comparison method was an effective data analysis tool. The parallel process of content analysis enabled categories of data to be developed that properly reflected the perceptions and meanings of the participants. The emerging theory was further strengthened by the use of quantitative data analyses. Thus the study's design components both complemented each other and established a logical link between research questions, methods of data collection and analysis and the study's conclusions. The following chapter, Chapter Four, presents the findings of the study.

Chapter 4

The findings

Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the dual-site case study of Tasmanian government school teachers. It begins with a summary review of contextual aspects that impacted on these participants and a table reporting their demographic details. There follows a table detailing the timeline of research activity in the two schools. This is followed by each respective school's case which, after an introduction to the school setting and the principal, is presented under headings of the key topics raised by the interview participants about their work as teachers. This is followed by a chapter summary.

4.1 The participating schools

The principals and teachers from two schools in northwest Tasmania took part in this dual-site case study. Both cases were rural schools, one a medium-sized primary school (K-6) of 256 students, and the other a larger, district high school (K-11) of 556 students. Both were government schools, yet the differences in size, location, and type of school meant that existing resources and recurrent resource packages for the two schools differed considerably.

4.1.1 Teacher demographic data

Taken as a whole, Table 4.1 shows a summary of demographic data collected, by questionnaire run concurrently with interviews, from individual teacher participants and provides a brief profile of each in terms of key aspects of their professional engagement; such as years of teaching experience, typical weekly working hours and perceived levels of job satisfaction. These data were used to enrich the qualitative responses of participants by showing how demographically similar or diverse teachers were when they responded on the range of issues raised at interview.

Table 4.1 Teacher demographic details

Id No	Pseudonym/ Position	Actual Yrs Teach/Yr in Current School	Time Off From Teaching	Salary Level	Age	Intended Retiring Age	Weekly Hours Spent at School	Hours Spent on School at Home	Job Satisfaction: Bad Day Good Day Typically*	Organisation Membership: SC, Church, Prof, AEU
1	Naomi	19/2nd	9yrs	B1 L12	50	60+	PT 30	14	1 7 3	N Y Y Y
2	Bob (P)	28/6th	LSL	B3 L6	52	55- 60	55-60	10	4 6 5	Y N Y Y
3	Peter	1.5/1st	Nil	B1 L5	41	60	38	10-20	5 7 6.5	N Y N Y
4	Mary	3/1st	Nil	B1 L6	25	60	45	10	3 7 5	N N N Y
5	Les	20+/3rd	Job 15+ yrs	B1 L12	59	65	40	10	1 5 3	N N N Y
6	Geoff	30/10th	LSL 25wks	B1 L12	56	65	40	5	3.5 7 6	N N- N Y (AEU rep)
7	Diane	18/2nd	Travel 3wks	B1 L12	55	58	PT 22.5	2	3 6 5	N Y Y Y
8	Beth (AST)	35/14th	LSL Mat	B2 L3	54	55- 60	42	10	5 7 6	Y Y N Y
9	Polly (AST)	7/6th	Nil	B2 L3	30	50	45	15	1 7 5	Y N N Y
10	Alan	0.5/1st	Nil	B1 L4	22	60	38	5	2 7 5	N N N N
11	Brendan (AP)	14/6th	Nil	AP?	35	60	40-45	6-10	2 7 5.5	N N Y Y
12	Paul (AP)	15.5/8th	LSL	AP	43	55	45	10	3 7 6	N Y Y Y
13	Mike	14/3rd	LSL	B1 L12	42	55	38	0	3 7 5.5	N N Y Y
14	Rose	7.5/2nd	Nil	B1 L11	30	65	40	5	5 7 7	N N N N
15	Abby	3.5/4th	Nil	B1 L7	26	Not Sure	40	5	4 7 5.5	N N N Y
16	Jan (AP)	20/5th	LSL	AP	48	55-60	50	8	5 6 5	Y N Y Y
17	Irene	24/6th	Mat 8mths	B1 L12	45	Not Sure	40+	10-20	2 7 5	N N Y Y
18	Morgan	0.5/1st	Nil	B1 L4	23	Not Sure	40	3	3 7 5.5	N N N Y
19	Melissa	5.5/2nd	Nil	B1 L9	26	60	40	18	5 7 6	Y N N Y

Id No*	Pseudonym/ Position	Actual Yrs Teach/Yr in Current School	Time Off From Teaching	Salary Level	Age	Intended Retiring Age	Weekly Hours Spent at School	Hours Spent on School at Home	Job Satisfaction: Bad Day Good Day Typically*	Organisation Membership: SC, Church, Prof, AEU
20	Kerrie	2/2nd	Nil	B1 L5	31	50	42	5-10	3 7 6	N N N Y
21	Margaret	10/7th	Nil	B2 L3	31	65-70	43	11	2 7 5	N N N Y (AEU Council)
22	Molly	4.5/5th	Travel 6mths	B1 L8	27	Not Sure	42	3	4 7 5	N N N N
23	Rachel	7/3rd	Nil	B1 L9	30	60+	45-50	1	4 7 5.5	N N N Y
24	Ann	4/4th	Nil	B1 L8	27	50	45	5	2 7 4.5	N N N Y
25	Sue-Ellen	21/7th	LSL+Mat 1yr	B1 L12	45	65+	40+	10	5 7 6	Y N N Y
26	Dahlia	5.5/6th	Sick 3 wks	B1 L10	27	35	40	5	3 7 5	N N N Y
27	Jason	1.5/1st	Nil	B1 L5	30	60	35	4-5	4 7 6	N N N Y
28	Karen	12/4th	Jobs 4 yrs	B1 L12	33	65	40	10	2 7 5	Y N N Y
29	Denise	5/2nd	Travel 2 yrs	B1 L6	27	55	45	2	3 7 5	Y N N Y
30	Nick	3.5/2nd	Sick 2 wks	B1 L7	28	60	38	10+	5 6 6	N N N Y
31	Melinda	5/6th	Nil	B1 L6	27	65	40	5	5 7 6	N N N Y
32	Heather	6/3rd	Nil	B1 L12	35	60	38	7	5 7 6.5	N N Y Y
33	Lizette	21/8th	LSL+Sick 1mth	B1 L12	43	44	40	Not much	6 7 6.5	N Y N Y
34	Anita	2.5/3rd	Work/Travel 1yr	B1 L6	25	Not Sure	45	4	4.5 6 5.5	N N N Y
35	Larry(AST)	25/4th	LSL	B2 L3	47	55	42	5	3.5 6.5 5	N N N Y
36	Lars (AST)	27/5th	LSL	B2 L3	48	55	40	10	2 7 5	N N Y Y
37	Leanne (AST)	10.5/4th	Nil	B2 L3	32	50	47.5	5	4 7 6	Y Y N Y
38	Felicity (P)	24/3rd	LSL Mat	B3 L4	53	55+	42	2	5 7 6.5	Y N Y Y

Id No*	Pseudonym/ Position	Actual Yrs Teach/Yr in Current School	Time Off From Teaching	Salary Level	Age	Intended Retiring Age	Weekly Hours Spent at School	Hours Spent on School at Home	Job Satisfaction: Bad Day Good Day Typically*	Organisation Membership: SC, Church, Prof, AEU
39	Kathy	8/4th	Nil	B1 L11	29	65-70	38	12	4 6 5.5	Y N N Y
40	Charlene	14/7th	Travel 1 yr	B1 L12	56	70+	38-40	10+	5 7 6	N Y Y Y
41	Kyle	0.5/1st	Nil	B1 L4	36	Not Sure	38	15	5 6 6	N N N Y
42	Shelly	0.5/1st	Nil	B1 L4	25	56	48	4	4 7 5.5	N N N Y
43	Jackie	20/5th	Mat	B1 L12 4/5plan	50	Not Sure	45	10	4 7 5	Y N N Y
44	Hannah	17/4th	Mat3.5yrs LSL	B1 L12	40	59	PT 30	3	2 7 6	N N N Y (AEU rep)
45	Jill	23/14th	Mat 3yrs	B1 L12	47	47	PT 15	2	1 5 3	N N Y Y
46	Loren	2.5/2nd	Nil	B1 L6	26	55	40	3-5	4 7 6	N N Y Y
47	Barbara	26/1st	Mat 10yrs	B1 L12	50	65	PT 23	3-4	4 7 5.5	N N N Y
48	Joanne	17/4th	Mat 3yrs	B1 L12	40	Not Sure	PT 25.5	8	6 7 6.5	N N Y Y
49	Richard	30/7th	Travel 2yrs	B1 L12	50	65	40	10	1 7 5	N N N Y
50	Peta-Ann (AST)	10/9th	Travel 1yr	B1 L12	39	65	40	2	2 7 5	N N Y Y

Key to Table 4.1

LSL = Long Service Leave   SC = School Council   P = Principal

Mat = Maternity Leave   Prof = Professional Association   AP = Assistant Principal

AEU = Australian Education Union   *On a scale of 1-7.   AST = Advanced Skills Teacher   N = No   Y = Yes

4.1.2 Field research activity

Field research for this study was undertaken throughout the entire school year and part of the following year. Table 4.2 shows a timeline of the research activity undertaken in the two schools throughout the period February 2004 to December 2005.

Table 4.2 Timeline of research activity in the two schools, 2004 and 2005

Research Activity	2004											2005											
	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Initial meeting of teachers in schools	▓																						
Observation and informal discussion with participants in both schools	▓	▓	▓	▓																			
First round interviews, questionnaire/ demographic data in both schools																							
First round transcripts sent to participants via email									▓														
Transcript alterations sent to participants via email										▓													
Research feedback session at Bass											▓												
Research feedback session at Winterbrook													▓										
Second round interviews																▓		▓				▓	
Second round interview transcripts sent to participants																▓		▓					▓

4.2 Bass Primary School

4.2.1 The setting

Bass is a rural primary school set on large grounds amongst farmland in a picturesque, Tasmanian coastal setting. The school is not situated in a town, but amidst pastures and cropping farmland. The community is ethnically homogeneous, comprising only 7.2 per cent of people who, at the time of the study, either identified as indigenous or spoke a language other than English (ABS, 2002). Bass Primary serves a range of socio-economic groups in rural and beachside communities within a 15-20 kilometre radius. The majority of students bus to the school from farms, hobby farms, alternative lifestyle homes, and two beachside communities; the latter are comprised of families, some of whose breadwinners commute 30 minutes or more to the nearest city centre. The beaches also comprise a transient population who move into the area after the summer holiday season when rents are lower, many of whom are low-income families, including a number of single parent pensioners, semi or unemployed.

Although agriculture is the main business in the district, the school is the largest single employer in the area with a total of 22 staff members, including teacher assistants, ancillary staff, and a number of part-time teachers. Sixteen of the 22 staff members were teachers, 14 of whom agreed to take part in the study. For only four teachers, 2004 was their first or second year at Bass and one of these teachers had had a long association with the school as a parent.

In the two years before the collection of data for this study, an influx of tourism and migration from interstate areas meant that average real estate prices in the area had more than doubled, yet the area had not substantially increased in population. The closure of two nearby rural schools in the early 1990s made Bass the only remaining school in the immediate rural hinterland. Competition for students still existed to some extent from a larger government primary school and a small Catholic school in the town centre 15 kilometres (10 minutes drive) away.

At the time of the study, Bass Primary School (Bass) had a school population according to school records (on the 9th August, 2004) of 256 students. The school was a centre for some local community activities out-of-school hours. These included sporting groups that used the school oval and the multi-purpose room and the local fire brigade, stationed

adjacent to the school, which ran its training sessions in the grounds. The school was once an Area School with students to year 8 and still retained a school farm adjoining the school grounds. Produce from the farm, combined with an annual school fete, raised funds that assisted the school's library and educational programs.

The neat entrance to the school comprised a waiting area with an aquarium of tropical fish, some school and local area memorabilia, as well as an attractive display of students' work. The administrative office, principal's office, AST's office, canteen, and multi-purpose room were adjacent to this entrance area. The staffroom, down a short corridor from the entrance, was next door to the library. This building was the hub of the school and had three classrooms as well as the music room adjacent to it. Other classrooms are situated at a distance from the main block. The principal noted that the geographical spread of the buildings posed a "psychological barrier" for inclusion of some teachers. She had been thinking about having covered walkways built to physically link the outlying buildings to the main block. The large grounds, typical of rural Tasmanian schools, included a football playing field, wide asphalt areas, and a modern adventure playground.

4.2.2 The Bass principal and the commencement of research at the school

Felicity Marchant (pseudonym) had been a high school teacher for nearly two decades, and had worked a total of 23 years as a teacher. With grown up children, she had a range of interests outside of school, including acting as a marriage celebrant. Felicity had been acting principal at Bass since 2002 and Bass was the second school at which she had been principal, gaining the position substantively in mid-2004. Although only in an acting capacity at the school, Felicity approached her principalship as though it would be ongoing. Felicity estimated that she spent around 44 hours per week on school-related work. She clearly enjoyed her principalship at Bass and noted that she preferred it to her previous, more isolated school which involved a long daily commute. Despite nearing the age of eligibility for superannuation, Felicity had no immediate plans for retirement.

Upon meeting Felicity, one was taken by her frank and, what appeared at face value, slightly casual manner. From the researcher's initial meeting with her to discuss the idea of conducting research with teachers, in November 2003, Felicity expressed great enthusiasm about the project. It was clear that she understood the value of the research to the school and to the broader educational and research communities. Felicity's enthusiasm for the project was further evidenced by the way she deferred school business

to meet with the researcher on his first three occasions in the school. Unlike all other principals who had been approached, Felicity did not consider a need to consult staff about the concept of the research, indicating that she would inform them at a staff meeting that the project was to be included in the school plan for 2004-5. In early discussions, Felicity explained that she had gained what she felt was a less than favourable report on quantitatively derived leadership scores on surveys conducted for the School Improvement Review (SIR). In this context, Felicity welcomed the prospect of a qualitative research project with the view that this might provide some qualitative balance to the SIR results.

Prior to the commencement of the 2004 school year, at a meeting of the whole staff at which the researcher presented a broad overview of the project's intentions, it was evident that on matters such as major projects, like university research being conducted in her school, Felicity made the decisions and, it appeared, engaged in little consultation, even with her senior staff. It was likely that at least some teachers held uncertainties about committing to such a research project, yet no dissent was expressed, and a senior staff member raised the only question which was about the time commitment for teachers. Her question was answered fully and frankly by the researcher.

4.2.3 Bass Primary teachers

All but two Bass teachers were women. Ranging from 25 to 56 years, the mean age of the 14 participating teachers at Bass in mid-2004 was 38.6 years; somewhat lower than the State mean age for teachers in 2004 of 46 years (DoE, 2005). Only one teacher was planning to retire in the near future. Nine teachers reported taking extended periods of time off teaching for maternity or travel purposes. Participating Bass teachers had an average 13.8 years teaching experience. All were members of the Australian Education Union, Tasmanian Branch.

4.2.4 Responses at Bass Primary School

A selection of some of the key issues reported at Bass Primary School form the structure of the following sections of this Chapter. Table 4.3 provides a list of these key issues and summary responses raised by teacher respondents at Bass.

Table 4.3 Summary of key issues and responses at Bass Primary School

Key Issues	Summary of Responses
ELs changes and the purposes of schools	ELs seen as aligned with important values-based approaches to schooling, yet there are tensions.
Teacher professionalism	Commitment is a strong attribute of professional identity for Bass teachers.
Facilitating the change process	A range of processes and resources had been put in place, yet workload and requirement of additional meetings remained an issue for many teachers.
Engagement with the change to ELs curriculum framework	Some deeply committed and engaged. Others believed in the need for change but critical of the process.
Emotional engagement	Both principal and teachers reported emotional engagement as essential to their work.
Relationships with other teachers/collective efficacy	A number of tensions described. Some sense of contrived collegiality and frustration about unnecessary staff meetings.
Engaging the community in the school	Improving the engaging parents and the wider community in the school was seen as an important aim under the ELs changes, yet this proved difficult to achieve despite significant effort and resources invested.
The influence of local school culture and identity	Efforts toward major change at Bass took place in the context of a conservative school culture.
Sharing leadership	Leadership was shared by teachers volunteering to run programs and facilitate events, additional to their classroom responsibilities.
Principal leadership	Striving to be inclusive and favouring a flattened leadership structure, the principal at Bass was impatient about making improvements to teaching and learning.

4.2.5 Purposes of teachers' work

Bass Teachers articulated views about the key purposes of their work. Some, like this teacher, considered their role as, principally, preparing children to fit into and perform a meaningful role in future society:

> I think we are there to support the children and help them fit into society. Help them actually be able to make a balanced contribution to society (BPS 39, teacher, female, July, 2004).

Other Bass respondents thought of teaching as imparting skills necessary for living in the technological, information-rich world. This teacher's statement typified such views:

We should be teaching more about enquiry. They need to know how to use and analyse the information and the technology that is available (BPS 50, teacher, female, September, 2004).

These typical Bass teacher participants' statements described the confidence they had in the ELs curriculum initiative as facilitating the needs of 21st century citizenry:

Before Essential Learnings, we had the problem of schools not providing what students need to be citizens of the 21st Century. Our exiting students should be better equipped now (BPS 43, teacher, female, July, 2004).

and

I believe in educating children to be peace makers. That's the biggest goal that I'm working for. But, I also have a goal in the children being equipped for a life in a rapidly changing society (BPS 40, teacher, female, July, 2004).

Yet, Bass teachers considered that their more immediate aim was that of engagement of students in school, as this typical teacher respondent noted:

The main aim is that the children are ready to learn and enjoying learning and stuff like that. So we try to have fun (BPS 50, teacher, female, September, 2004).

Teachers' views of their professionalism were linked to a deep commitment to improving the educational outcomes and life chances of their students, which participants identified as a key purpose of teachers' work. Many reported working long hours to achieve these ends.

4.2.6 Teacher professionalism

Full time teachers at Bass, by their own estimations in their responses to the demographic survey, spent an average of 49.3 hours per week on school business. Commitment to the job was widely seen as a hallmark characteristic of teacher identity. This comment was typical:

You couldn't possibly do it if you didn't love to do it and you wouldn't do it otherwise. There is a certain commitment (BPS 24, teacher, female, July, 2004).

The principal, (Felicity) viewed teaching as a profession due to the collegial nature of the work and a sense of deep commitment:

[We] promote a standard that each individual considers to be worthy of our profession and that we're not isolated in that way and I think because we moderate each other's behaviour and each other's work output and results. We are a profession. It's your whole life to do this job. You don't have time for much else. When you're [at home] gardening you think about this job. That makes it a profession (BPS 38, principal, female, June, 2004).

Some teachers perceived the complexity of decision-making as a defining aspect of their professionalism. One teacher drew a parallel with the medical profession to describe the kind of judgement that is required:

> You do a lot of decision-making and you have to adapt and so to me there's a lot of thinking in it - like a doctor. You have to give the right medication or treatment for each individual (BPS 40, teacher, female, July, 2004).

Commitment and community expectations played an important part in defining the profession, according to this older beginning teacher:

> Well you don't lock the door at five pm and go home and forget it, it's something that is taken home with you and I think you are [therefore] seen as a professional. You need to be aware that the community has an expectation and you shouldn't lower [the standing of the profession] in the community. We have such a major influence on what is going to happen to the next generation (BPS 41, teacher, male, July, 2004).

The professional responsibility of teachers to remain abreast of current educational practice was felt by many. This teacher's response was typical of others:

> There are expectations upon teachers to be constantly improving themselves, constantly reflecting on what they do, constantly seeking out alternatives (BPS 42, teacher, female, July, 2004).

The notion of perceived rising expectations by the DoE in relation to teacher performance was commonly stated by participants in the context of the ELs change requirements. This comment was typical of others:

> When we have certain things imposed upon us ... It's your responsibility as a professional [and things are] expected of you and it's difficult to break that from the bottom (BPS 42, teacher, female, July, 2004).

Bass principal, Felicity, in her answer to a question about teacher professional identity, noted the importance of workplace relationships for reaffirming her own sense of identity:

> [You] can't divorce the principalship from the friendship because that happens, it just does. In your workplace you are so close to people that you can't leave out that personal interaction. But it doesn't stress me out. My emotional involvement with people on the whole is pretty positive, not negative (BPS 38, principal, female, June, 2004).

Compliance to school policy was a professional priority for one teacher:

> If the school had made a decision to go down a particular path and you didn't agree with it and are out in the community and someone is saying why is the school doing this, then professional ethics should kick in and you would support the school in that decision (BPS 50, teacher, female, July, 2004).

In contrast, another teacher reported that school requirements and impositions were becoming unreasonable:

> The fact that we have to ask for permission to do things and be kept behind for 5 minutes because we started the meeting late. That is demeaning. It undervalues you as a professional (BPS 23, teacher, female, July, 2004).

A key requirement, at both system and school levels, that impacted on teachers at the two schools participating in this study was the implementation of the new ELs curriculum.

4.2.7 The ELs changes

Bass teachers varied in their views of the importance and significance of the ELs changes. Some teachers at Bass perceived the ELs as congruent with their existing practice. They could adapt the new conceptualisations to their existing practices, as was noted by these teachers:

> People have been doing and are still doing and will continue to do things in the ELs way and for them it's just re-naming things and re-labelling (BPS 44, teacher, female, July, 2004).

and

> I've heard a lot of positive comments from other teachers about the ELs. About how they fit in with everything that we do (BPS 39, teacher, female, July, 2004).

Other Bass teachers thought that the imperative nature of the task they had been given, even if they found some of it to be challenging and the timeframes to be tight. This teacher's views typified those of some other participants at Bass:

> Most teachers agree that it [the ELs] must happen. Some are positive but think it is all a bit too much, too quickly and some of it people have been doing for a while now. But no one seems to think that it mustn't happen [laughs] (BPS 44, teacher, female, July, 2004).

However, the workload associated with the change initiative was seen as burdensome by many teachers, as these typical responses attest:

> [The ELs] is heavy going. I think everyone's of the opinion that once we get our head around it, it will be good. Last week we had a late work back session on assessment and the ELs and there were some examples of the way the assessment is going to be written (BPS 39, teacher, female, July, 2004).

and

> I think it's going to be fairly dynamic for the next couple of years at least. Changing. People get further and further into the ELs but then at the same time only a few years ago – maybe 10 – that national guidelines and statements came in and the KILOS and KINOS but they've all been put out and we're going with

the ELs now, so I don't really know. So long as they find something that works and stick to it, for a little while at least. But I think once everyone gets their head around where the ELs are going I think we should be OK (BPS 39, teacher, female, July, 2004).

and

We are actually moving quite fast to the ELs framework and, with the workload. I have talked to a few who were initially hesitant but they seem to be more positive now that they are finding their feet (BPS 40, teacher, female, July, 2004).

Teachers reported on how the process of change was being facilitated:

I think we have leaders in our teams and so Cheryl works with us but I think in our team most of us are pretty familiar with the ELs now. I don't know what is happening with the Early Childhood section. I'm led to believe our team is finding it a bit easier than some of the others (BPS 40, teacher, female, July, 2004).

and

Daunting at first. It's going to be a mental challenge to reconstruct things but once people are through that reconstruction phase both in their teaching and assessment and curriculum. It's mostly positive (BPS 41, teacher, female, July, 2004).

and

We could have an even more positive impact on students but I feel it becomes really negative by the time they have got to school. Maybe that's where the ELs will come in (BPS 44, teacher, female, July, 2004).

However, many Bass participants were critical of aspects of the ELs and its implementation, as evident in these comments about physical and time resources:

Working towards this new curriculum with the ELs and I think there is so much positive going on and if we don't get the resources and don't help the special needs, the kids on the fringe, it will be a problem for us down the track (BPS 44, teacher, female, July, 2004).

and

We would like more time learning about it especially with the assessment starting next year but we can't quite see how it's going to work (BPS 46, teacher, female, September, 2004).

Bass teachers talked of adapting curriculum materials to their own understandings and requirements and many stated that they were not comfortable with being told how to teach, as exemplified in these statements:

I wouldn't care if the Queen of England walked in and said to do it a different way, then I wouldn't, I will always teach the way I think is going to be most effective [for my students] (BPT 48, female, September, 2004).

and

I have total control over what I do in the classroom, [Timetable constraints] are out of my classroom and my control (BPT 45, female, September, 2004).

and

You need to run your programs the best way that suits your students and your teaching style, because we are all different (BPS 41, teacher, male, July, 2004).

Part of the ELs changes was a requirement for teachers to collaborate on planning for teaching and learning and to undertake various forms of Professional Learning (PL). The following section reports on statements by teachers at Bass Primary School about peer collaboration and PL.

4.2.8 Peer collaboration and Professional Learning

Teacher collaboration was a key focus of the ELs changes and also an important means of teachers supporting other teachers' efforts through the implementation period. In general, Bass teachers felt supported by their colleagues in their work towards the ELs implementation as these typical teacher respondents reported:

[The principal and senior staff] are very supportive and I know with them if I want to try something new they will support me in it (BHPS 40, teacher, female, July, 2004).

and

As a team we work fairly well together and [one of the ASTs] is very definitely supportive. The people in my team are very supportive and I have an affinity for them (BPS 40, teacher, female, July, 2004).

For this teacher, working collegially to plan and implement units of work was not something new. She valued this approach and perceived Essential Learnings as an extension of this practice:

To me working together collegially isn't something new. As a high school teacher, I was always involved with other classroom teachers who were working in my subject area or in other subject areas. I value it because I think you can provide really good teaching strategies and you learn a lot from people you work with. You can provide really good opportunities for your children because you are working with somebody a lot. There are a whole series of advantages and in our area where there are three or four teachers we try to work together really well I think (BPS 44, teacher, female, February, 2005).

Control over professional learning was seen by many Bass teachers as lacking:

I need more control over my professional development. I don't think the Department caters adequately for that. I know we get a lot of professional development days but I think they are used incorrectly (BPS 41, teacher, male, July, 2004).

A teacher of many years' experience noted:

I do lots of P.D. that is not relevant to me (BPS 45, teacher, female, September, 2004).

This participant further noted her frustration at having insufficient time to engage collegially with others:

Again I feel we have been limited by the time that we get to do it (BPS 44, teacher, female, February, 2005).

Felicity thought that the time provided was adequate for collegial planning:

Tomorrow our [teachers] go off class to collegially plan. This is paid for by the school. It is a cluster initiative, this year, so that we all have time every three weeks to work collegially (BPS 38, principal, female, June, 2005).

However, some teachers felt they were compelled to work together even though their practices were not compatible. This teacher found it difficult when she was required to share a class with a teacher who worked differently from herself, as she explained:

I had to share a classroom with someone and I didn't enjoy classroom sharing. I had my ideas of how to run it and the teacher and I ended up planning together and then half of what we planned wouldn't get done (BPT 39, teacher, female, July, 2004).

There was a view at Bass that there was a tension between collegial and individual decision-making about how classrooms should operate.. One teacher pointed out this tension in the following way:

Some of the decisions are team based decisions, and I'm finding that the team wants to have a direction and an influence in what happens in the classroom, yet I am responsible for that (BPS 49, teacher, male, August, 2004).

For some, there was a perceived difficulty of working collegially after many years of working alone, as this teacher articulated:

I think it takes a long time. I know teachers who have been in the classroom for 25 years. You are used to being independent and doing things your way (BPS 42, teacher, female, July, 2004).

Working collegially had been a success, according to the principal who reported Bass teachers moving beyond her own vision of providing planning time:

Last year we did [planning] in after school time and the year before it was sponsored as in-school time and I think that it has [been effective]. It has been effective for individuals on different levels but it hasn't actually [resulted in] the

agenda I wanted but maybe that was a bit myopic from my point in the first instance. They have generated their own agendas much better than the agendas I gave them and a new paradigm of being collegial, critical, colleagues. [They are saying:] 'Come and watch me do it and give me feedback' It is not just [collegial] planning, not just the looking at student samples. We've gone through all the processes of how to do feedback, how to be honest without [being] critical to the point of crippling (BPS 38, principal, female, June, 2005).

This teacher expressed deep frustration in explaining the process that had been adopted of working in teams:

We were supposed to be given that time [for individual use], but in fact it was given to us as a team time, but we were never allowed to actually go away and plan together. We were always sat down in a meeting which was chaired by a senior staff member and our 1½ hours was taken up in this way. So I always found it very frustrating. We were saying "Can we please have some time to work together in a pairs?" That time was given to us after school in staff meeting time that was allocated to team meeting time and again because we had so much rigmarole to get through in a team meeting, we often didn't have enough time to plan there either. We did have a lot of time given to us when our report writing time came around. There was quite a bit of extra time taken off class. I had no problem with that. They gave us a lot of extra time to do that. I always found it a bit incongruous that we were given so much time to write reports but very little time to actually plan our teaching. So I always found the balance was wrong. I think that although there is all this focus on working collegially, a valuing and respect for colleagues is missing (BPS 44, teacher, female, February, 2005).

Collegial planning for teaching and learning among teachers towards implementation of the ELs was dependent on some teachers taking a leadership role and assisting others. Teacher leadership could take a range of forms at Bass and is examined in the following section.

4.2.9 Teacher leadership

A lack of formal leadership positions at Bass resulted in the delegation to classroom teachers of the tasks of organising events and programs in the school, as was explained by this teacher:

Including the principal, there are three people in senior positions at the school at the moment, and two of these share the AST role, but there are others who are asked to coordinate programs (BPS 48, teacher, female, September, 2004).

The Bass principal made particular note of individuals who provided leadership in their particular areas of interest and expertise.

My AST is an educational leader. She came to the school with a whole range of skills and especially leadership qualities. There are also teachers who are

educational leaders. One who has knowledge of educational theory and two early career year teachers whom I am hopeful I will see a lot more educational leadership from (BPS 38, principal, female, June, 2004).

She identified teachers with specific skills who could provide leadership within their areas, even if she understood that leadership as pertaining to a narrow field of curriculum expertise, when she said:

[One of the teachers here] is working within the [year] 3-4 area and [other teachers] are quite committed to what she is doing because they are a very unique supportive group but [this teacher] neither has the confidence nor the trust outside that circle to lead everybody yet, but she does have leadership ability (BPS 38, principal, female, June, 2004).

The views of these teachers underscored the widely held perception that there were few available leaders at Bass:

I see that [Felicity] is trying to delegate a lot more [leadership] and I can see the school is aiming for the flat leadership and it is basically what you are prepared to take on. I think there is a lot of opportunity that is not always taken up (BPS 40, teacher, female, July, 2004).

and

The new AST has got a wealth of experience and I'm trying to draw on that quite heavily and there are a couple of more senior teachers here but none that I would see as an educational leader (BPS 41, teacher, male, July, 2004).

In a small school, responsibility for particular areas of curriculum leadership often fell to those who were anointed by the principal. Felicity referred to identified teachers at Bass who led in certain curriculum areas:

There is one teacher who has knowledge in numeracy and one has some stuff on ICT. But they're narrow, not the big picture things. Their leadership skill is in very identifiable pockets rather than across the board (BPS 38, principal, female, June, 2004).

Felicity's view was echoed by this teacher in her response to a question about who were leaders in the school:

We've got two ASTs and I think we all are [leaders to some extent]. The people who are in charge of different aspects of the curriculum (BPS 39, teacher, female, July, 2004).

This AST recognised leadership across the whole school:

There are people who have taken on leadership roles and those who are given roles and projects so that everyone has a leadership role in some respect. At least one aspect in running the school (BPS 50, AST, female, September, 2004).

Teachers understood that the principal preferred a flat leadership structure, as one teacher typically noted:

> I see that [the principal] is trying to delegate a lot more of it. But I can see the school is aiming for the flat leadership and it is basically what you are prepared to take on (BPS 40, teacher, female, June, 2004).

Leadership was seen as taking varying forms as one teacher, who thought of herself as a leader, expounded:

> I have no ambition to have a leadership role in the sense of a promoted position. But I see myself as a leader in the sense that I am constantly reading and researching and finding out what is happening internationally and sharing that with others (BPS 40, teacher, female, June, 2004).

Leadership in areas of particular expertise was being encouraged at Bass, as this teacher explained:

> I see different people have their different strengths and provide leadership. There's [Richard] with IT and [Joanne] with Health and PE. They go out of their way and do things in unpaid time. As a new teacher I find leadership, in different forms, from a number of different people (BPS 42, teacher, female, June, 2004).

"Leadership opportunities" at Bass were sometimes delegated tasks of organising or running programs and activities as this teacher noted:

> There's a lot of opportunity here to be a leader of different activities, like teachers organising school performances, school sports or community activities. There are lots of opportunities for leadership if you are willing to take them (BPS 50, teacher, female, July, 2004).

and

> We all are delegated different jobs (BPS 40, teacher, female, June, 2004).

The extent to which this delegation was actually fostering of leadership opportunities was questioned by some teachers. This statement was typical:

> I see people being thrust onto committees or delegated to do things but I don't see this as leadership being fostered (BPS 41, teacher, male, July, 2004).

Yet the same process could be seen differently by other teachers. This comment was representative of those:

> Responsibility is not necessarily *delegated*. I think we are offered the areas of responsibility and you put your hand up. Some of the things that have happened at the school have been absolutely tremendous because the people who put their hands up have ownership over those things (BPS 49, teacher, male, September, 2004).

Teacher leadership requires commitment and such commitment has its wellspring in the emotional engagement of teachers with their work (Zembylas, 2003). Bass teachers reported widely on their emotional commitment to, and implications of, their work and this is expounded in the following section.

4.2.10 Emotional dimensions of teachers' work

Teachers and the principal were asked about the ways in which teaching was, for them, an emotional experience. This question resulted in some strong outpouring of feelings, with both positive and negative emotions expressed. With few exceptions, teachers reported a strong emotional component to their engagement with their work.

Felicity in her answer to this question noted the importance of workplace relationships for reaffirming her sense of identity:

> If I didn't work here I would miss the interaction and that emotional level of working with folk. But it doesn't stress me out. It's my emotional involvement with people that on the whole is pretty positive, not negative (BPS 38, principal, female, June, 2004).

Asked which aspects of teaching engaged them emotionally, these teachers' responses were typical:

> All of it really. It's all about the relationships. There is a lot of theory behind what you do, but all of what we do is emotional (BPS 48, teacher, female, September, 2004).

and

> There are two sides to the emotional. [It's] emotional because I enjoy what I do and I feel very positive about my classroom work. Then there are other aspects to do with how the school works that can be negative emotionally because there are sometimes deep differences of opinion (BPS 44, teacher female, July, 2004).

The stresses of teaching and relationships in the workplace had emotional implications that extended into the broader aspects of this teacher's life and family relationships, and, in turn, these had a reciprocal impact on his work life:

> I think there's a lot of stress which does affect you, which does affect your emotions. There are lots of times when I've gone home and ear-bashed my partner over issues that have happened which involved a student, or staff, or principal and I think I'm finding myself doing that more and more, so it is becoming more such a stressful and emotional exercise going to work (BPS 49, teacher, male, September, 2004).

For some teachers in this small community, the lives of students affected them emotionally:

> One child met with a lawyer about a custody issue and where she is living and I found I had to separate myself as I'm not her carer but her teacher and I found that can be draining at times. Probably not getting so involved with what is going on with the children at home, but just the same, you need to be involved to a certain extent (BPS 42, teacher, female, July, 2004).

and

> I don't know whether it's country kids opposed to town kids but you do become much more emotionally involved with the kids [here]. You seem to spend a lot of time out of school hours with them (BPS 43, teacher, female, July, 2004).

Classroom teachers also explained that senior staff decisions had negative emotional impact. Two typical reports were:

> It can be emotional because there are some differences of opinion. I don't think some people are allowed to think. [Yet], there are two answers to that. Emotionally, I enjoy what I do and I feel very positive about my classroom work and then there are other aspects to do with other parts of how the school works (BPS 44, teacher, female, July, 2004).

and

> I try very hard not to let [a school decision affect me emotionally] but sometimes it does, in a negative way. I have good days every now and again and then I enjoy it and come away feeling really happy but lots of times I feel really frustrated (BPS 45, teacher, female, September, 2004).

When there were tensions within the school, this teacher tended to focus on matters within her classroom:

> Sometimes we get caught up in things that have happened [in the school] but I tend not to worry about them too much, I just worry about my own class (BPS 46, teacher, female, September, 2004).

Some specialist teachers felt that under the ELs changes, their roles were being marginalised and were saddened by the loss of opportunity, as this teacher's response typified:

> Here was a great opportunity to embrace The Arts and it is so valuable in so many ways but that is just not see. [I feel a] lack of support for my programs. Where I guess all the years I have been teaching I've never had that and I've probably been really lucky because the principals that I've worked with have been very supportive of [my] program but this time no, I think Felicity really has a Maths/Science lean and she doesn't see the benefits, that's how I see it (BPS 45, teacher, female, September, 2004).

Emotions, though frequently positive, even amid the intensity of major curricula and pedagogical change, could at times be heightened and have negative implications for teachers and their work (Dinham, 2000).

As a member of the senior staff at the school, this teacher reported emotional stress as a result of her difficult leadership role:

> Working in senior staff and particularly with the introduction of the teams, you are out there for criticism. You can't please all the people all the time because there is always someone who thinks you've done the wrong thing and they think you're hopeless at this and hopeless at that and everyone is very quick to tell you

when you do something wrong but not so [quick to tell you] when you've done something right. [You] have to be prepared to wear that and get over that or learn not to be concerned when people are criticising you and judging nearly everything you do (BPS 50, teacher, female, July, 2004).

Classroom teachers also explained that senior staff decisions had emotional impact. Two typical reports were:

It can be emotional because there are sometimes differences of opinion. Emotionally I enjoy what I do and I feel very positive about my classroom work and then there are other aspects to do with other people in the school work (BPS 44, teacher, female, July, 2004).

and

It's pretty hard emotionally. Generally with the staff as a whole, and the kids, and for me a lack of support. Just the last couple of years I would personally say I have found it quite difficult to continue [teaching] (BPS 45, teacher, female, September, 2004).

Including all teachers in the planning process for implementation of the ELs was hard to do when people work on different days. A part-time specialist teacher felt hurt by her inability to attend team meetings:

Well, I suppose to be a part of a team, I am a bit disappointed I am not going to be incorporated into the Early Childhood meetings because they are going to be on a Wednesday rather than on a Thursday, because teachers get more time out of me (BPS 47, teacher, female, September, 2004).

One teacher found that raising a concern about the ELs implementation in a whole of staff meeting could meet with the principal's strong rebuke:

[Felicity] got really quite annoyed and angry and I guess that's because I asked [a difficult question about the ELs implementation] in a whole [of] staff meeting. Teams, teams, teams! (BPS 48, teacher, female, September, 2004).

This teacher's frustration at time being wasted in team meetings led to her confronting Felicity. She reported:

I cried at the end of the year. When I told Felicity how much time we wasted, she cried too. I said, you know, I have just wasted a whole year with this silly set up (BPS 44, teacher female, February, 2005).

Asked about Professional Learning time, Felicity's estimate of included the time spent in team meetings:

With half an hour a week and six days through SED [DoE's Schools Education Division] as well as the couple of days at the beginning of the year we are not cutting them short. We would easily get 75 hours per year (BPS 38, Felicity, June, 2005).

This teacher considered the amount, quality and equity of access to Professional Learning for Bass classroom teachers as not always appropriate:

> We get specific PD which is allocated in our [school] time. Three days at the beginning of the year and if you are part-time you don't get that, it's pro rata. And there are other allocated PD days that come through. Now you can either apply for them or not and get given them. I got half a day. Now most of those PD days, it is really interesting, go to senior staff who are actually not on class; like ASTs and principals. They get the majority of the PD and then they come back and teach us the PD (BPS 44, teacher, female February, 2005).

When this teacher was asked if she believed this was an effective way of learning, she stated that her belief that this method of imparting professional learning was a means of controlling teacher knowledge by distorting and filtering the information they receive:

> No, not always, because we only get one view, and, of course, I am always a bit sceptical because they say this is what the Department says and I don't know if we are always getting the correct facts on that. I think we get a slightly distorted view of what they would like us to do so things look good for them (BPS 44, teacher, female, February, 2005).

Despite all the professional learning meetings, these two young teachers felt they needed more professional learning:

> I still feel like I need more. We have so much in our work time: Meeting times, staff meetings, PD nights. [But] because it's essential and it would be helpful to have more (BPS 46, teacher, female, September, 2004).

and

> I know we get a lot of professional development days, but I think they are used incorrectly. I have been fortunate in that I've had some PD in the BeTTR Program [Beginning Teacher Time Release]; two hours per week we get and we can bank it up and I have found visiting other schools and taking ideas from that is good and also gets you out of your classroom and reflect back on how you are doing things (BPS 41, teacher, male, July, 2004).

A major effort was taking place at Bass to forge greater links with the local community. Teachers' perspectives on these efforts in relation to their work are discussed in the following section.

4.2.11 School culture and links with the community

The Bass school community, as described earlier, occupies a conservative, rural hinterland where, aside from parent (usually mothers') help in the classroom and school canteen and (usually fathers') help with the school farm, the teaching and learning

aspects of school had been the preserve of the principal and teachers. With the ELs, some changes to this paradigm were attempted.

There was a widely held view that Bass needed to foster strong links with its community, as Felicity explained:

> We should be going out there [in the community] more, sharing what we have, what we know and value. [Seeing] what views we can promote, what debate we can foster. Talking about educational issues. We are taking our school to the community, attempting to build our social capital, but it's happening slowly (BPS 38, principal, female, June, 2004).

Involving people from the local community who had not normally been a part of the schools was seen as in important focus of a major school project for the year, as this teacher explained:

> We are getting parents [into the school]. In first term we had something like 160 parents who had been in to the school, not for parent teacher but as volunteers. What we call what we call Project 4 is taking us out into the community to build our social capital (BPS 38, principal, female, June, 2004).

and

> You have to educate parents to be co-learners because if we're not all learning together the parents don't understand what you are trying to do and if they're not supporting you that works against the school and the children (BPS 40, teacher, female, July, 2004).

and

> We are trying to get more parents involved but it tends to be the same ones every time. We have managed a few different ones. New faces we haven't seen before which is good. We are targeting different aspects of the community like grandparents, different businesses etc. to link in people we haven't seen before (BPS 39, teacher, female, July, 2004).

and

> With Project 4 I think we have moved faster than parents could follow and some of them haven't appreciated that children learn by getting out into the community and doing things (BPS 40, teacher, female, June, 2004).

Traditional views about the role of parents and community members in schools were hard to dispel as this teacher explained:

> The parents don't realise the potential empowerment [they have]. They have this power to be partners but are thinking in terms of the old parent help program (BPS 40, teacher, female, June, 2004).

The potential for the school to be a community resource under the ELs-based changes was seen by some at Bass, as these teachers typically explained:

The school could support adult education as well. Especially in a rural area where you have all your school facilities that should be utilised, using it much more as a community resource (BPS 41, teacher, male, July, 2004).

and

Schools can become more integrated into the whole family life. The community agendas will become more important in time. Hopefully at some stage down the track the kids will become life-long learners (BPS 43, teacher, female, July, 2004).

and

Community members coming in and working with kids and kids going out and working with the community (BPS 45, teacher, female, September, 2004).

Teachers at Bass were cognisant of a range of influences on their school, beginning with the local community. A common response about the impact of societal influences on schools was:

Expectations of community and society and politicians and pressure groups are having a bigger impact on life in schools and I think that will have more impact as we go on (BPS 49, teacher, male, September, 2004).

Local school cultures can have a major impact on the success of change initiatives (Fullan, 2002). Felicity believed her school culture was in need of challenging and changing:

The challenge is meeting some of our out-moded practices [in dealing with the wider community] and trying to get people to put up a mirror and have a look and see what their practice looks like (BPS 38, principal, female, June, 2004)

Yet, Felicity was aware that the culture could involve a diversity of viewpoints:
I think we do have to have a range of views otherwise there's nothing to talk about; nothing to say, no one to challenge a particular view (BPS 38, principal, female, June, 2004).

There was a widely held perception that it was possible to make the changes to the ELs curriculum without sweeping changes to traditional classroom practice:

I've heard a lot of positive comments about the ELs, how they fit in with anything that we do in the curriculum. So, we don't have to go and completely change the way we do things; they just tend to slot into different aspects of what is in the ELs (BPS 39, teacher, female, July, 2004).

There was an understanding that while people have their own agendas at Bass, they recognised a collective identity and common purpose:

There is a collective identity in this school. I think we do need that and certainly there are times when that clashes with people's own agendas about things (BPS 50, AST, female, July, 2004).

The principal had her own style of leadership which was viewed in different ways by her staff, as discussed in the following section.

4.2.16 Principal leadership style

Bass principal Felicity believed her relationships with staff were positive:

> My involvement with people here, on the whole, is pretty positive, not negative (BPS 38, principal, female, June, 2004).

She was cognisant of the conservative community and staff she faced in attempting on institute changes in practice at Bass:

> The expectation from parents is that they want what they've always had. They're very comfortable with stability and not so much comfortable with change (BPS 38, principal, female, June, 2004).

Felicity felt that, despite her efforts, change to the ELs was not happening quickly enough:

> The only concern I have is that the changes are not happening fast enough (BPS 38, principal, female, June, 2004).

However, she liked to work with teachers to challenge them and help them reflect on their practice and considered herself as publicly supporting them:

> I just come in and work with the kids and I don't take over or contradict or challenge publicly to suggest they're not doing a brilliant job and that their kids and not doing well. I always give support and positive feedback (BPS 38, principal, female, June, 2004).

Felicity considered her leadership as helping to improve teaching and learning:

> I think I am a leader who promotes what I think are good innovations, developments of understanding about how and why kids learn. I alert people to new research that I think is applicable to us. That's where my leadership comes from (BPS 38, principal, female, June, 2004).

Felicity was clear that leadership was expected of all teachers, at some level:

> Everybody has some leadership responsibility. I hope to develop their ability to become leaders whether it's in a small area or with broader matters. Much of the professional learning is aimed at strengthening that (BPS 38, principal, female, June, 2004).

She was clear in her view that her aim was to improve outcomes at Bass:

> To me the bar isn't high enough, but that's my personal view and I do debate that with others here at this school (BPS 38, principal, female, June, 2004).

Felicity was well aware too that it was no easy matter to lead teachers to reflect on their practice when she stated more than once:

> If I'm holding this mirror and you're looking in it and you don't see somebody that you're happy with or practices that you're happy with, then it's hard (BPS 38, principal, female, June, 2004).

and

> As well as managing the everyday, there is the challenge of reflecting on some of our out-moded practices and trying to, say, put up the mirror and see what it looks like and make changes (BPS 38, principal, female, June, 2004).

Felicity's approach to implementing change was to make explicit for teachers at Bass the requirements under the new curriculum. Such was the nature of her direct style of leadership:

> It's easy to be wise in hindsight, but they [some teachers] struggle without an explicit curriculum. Other people are not particularly perturbed about [having a detailed curriculum provided for them]. One of our goals now is that we are going to develop very explicit curriculum (BPS 38, principal, December, 2005).

The case of teachers at Winterbrook District High School in their responses to questions about their work in the context of the ELs changes is presented in the following section of this chapter.

4.3 Winterbrook District High School

4.3.1 The setting

Set in a picturesque rural valley, Winterbrook [pseudonym] is a small rural township of just over 1000 people just prior to the time of the study (ABS, 2002). Winterbrook had always appealed to newcomers because of its relaxed lifestyle, affordable housing and proximity to a major Tasmanian sea-entry "corridor." Faced with typical small town issues of declining rural industry and low family incomes, the district had, in the twenty years prior to the study, embraced the burgeoning tourism industry with great economic effect, developing a number of purpose-built attractions.

Winterbrook District High School (Winterbrook) caters for students from kindergarten to year 10 and for students doing year 11 prevocational courses (VET). Due to the relative isolation and size of the town, the school had, for many years, been a focal point for the town, and its largest employer, as well as a central community resource. For many years, the local community newspaper had been published and printed at the school. In fact, as the principal noted, it was hard to see where the school ended and the community started.

The school's three campuses were spread approximately two kilometres apart. The main campus housed primary years 3 to 6 and secondary 7 to 10, as well as the VET learning area and library, which was accessed by both students and members of the wider local community. The early childhood campus had students from kindergarten to year 2 and was situated some 700 metres from the main campus. The school farm campus was located nearly two kilometres from the main campus. Such a spread of campus locations, with the main campus housing the administrative hub, led to some management, staffing, resource, and student monitoring issues.

The school farm, which ran at a profit, formed the school's most important, ongoing link with the local community and provided a resource for the teaching of agricultural studies. Adjuncts to the agricultural studies program included the cattle handlers' group and the annual school agricultural show, a key event on the local community calendar.

In terms of racial and ethnic diversity, the school population was over 90 per cent homogeneous. The school's student population of 556, in August 2004, was a direct reflection of the Winterbrook community population (ABS, 2002). Students from traditional farming backgrounds were members of some of the oldest non-indigenous families in the district, many dating back to early settlement. Over the previous two decades, families from metropolitan areas had joined the community for lifestyle reasons and, more recently, poorer families had arrived to take advantage of the cheaper housing in the area.

While, on the whole, the school seemed well supported by its community, it was evident through discussion with a number of teacher participants that the community, and hence the school, was not without its tensions which at times provided challenges for teachers. The principal noted that it was differing family value systems (for example, rural and working class in contrast with urban middle class) that were at the heart of such tensions.

Although in a pleasant location, less than 30 minutes from a major regional centre, the school was relatively "difficult to staff" and had a larger staff turnover than many other schools in the district as eight of the school's 37 teachers left and were replaced for the commencement of 2005 - a fact which is consistent with there being 15 teachers for whom 2004 was either their first or second year at the school. Among the numerous younger teachers, there were some on fixed term employment contracts and others who sought moves to the cities of Hobart and Launceston for family or lifestyle reasons.

A treacherous road that accounted for at least one major staff vehicle accident annually, may have contributed to wariness about the drive to and from the larger regional centres

on the coast where most of the teachers lived. Some teachers, however, enjoyed the trip either in car pools or by themselves and cited the drive as a time to wind down or discuss school matters informally. Even so, travel for many teachers added an hour to the working day and had an impact on both their family lives, and their capacity to assist in their own children's after school activities. Unlike many of their mainland and city counterparts, it seemed that some Tasmanian teachers may simply have been used to less time spent commuting as, across the region, teaching jobs had not been scarce in recent years.

The school existed in a local government area of extreme social disadvantage. This was evidenced through a number of recent census figures including education levels, mean family incomes, and rates of family breakdown (ABS, 2002). The school reflected the low income of families in the area where almost half the students qualified for government assistance under the Student Assistance Scheme [STAS]. The funding package a school received from the Department of Education [DoE], or School Resource Package [SRP], was determined by factors which included student socio-economic background which determines Educational Needs Index [ENI], as well as its number of students, the size of the local town centre and a school's distance from a major centre. The school's ENI in 2004 was 61.07 which, although not extreme, placed it among schools at the higher end of the spectrum.

Among teachers, there was a depth of understanding of students' particular home-life circumstances and how this impacted on their lives at school, as this teacher explained:

> [We] need to be mindful that they have come from a home that isn't so great. [We] need to be caring and understanding and realise these kids come with an invisible suitcase and that's jam packed (WDHS 4, teacher, female, June, 2004).

This was seen as having a large impact on a teacher's capacity to engage students in learning. This typical Winterbrook teacher respondent reported:

> I think it has an impact, a huge impact. There are a lot of reasons for that. I think sometimes students don't value education. Valuing education is not a priority in some homes (WDHS 8, teacher, female, July, 2004).

4.3.2 The principal and the commencement of research at the school

Dr Bob Merlot had been principal at Winterbrook since 1999. He had been an acting principal at a nearby high school and, having failed to secure the substantive position there, he applied for and won the principalship at Winterbrook. While Bob sometimes

found the daily commute annoying, he explained that it was a welcome means by which to wind down at the end of the day.

On first approaching Bob with the idea of a research project on teachers, he expressed reluctance due to the time commitment for his teachers as well as the fact that there had been, over the past few years, a number of studies conducted at the school. He eventually agreed to put the idea to his management team. The team decided to hear more about the proposed project and, after a briefing at a management meeting from the researcher, staff agreed to commit to the research.

Bob had completed his PhD a few years earlier and was widely regarded as a deep thinker who applied his academic knowledge of school change processes to the situation at Winterbrook. The focus of his PhD study was on the relationship between school and community. Bob considered Winterbrook with its close and somewhat isolated community as an excellent opportunity to apply his knowledge to building the school as a learning organisation. He had already seen the development of the school beyond its K-10 beginnings to where it was becoming a genuine community learning complex, engaging the broader community at a number of levels – for example, from mature age participation in course offerings to provision of authentic learning resources for students. He considered as his greatest challenge as principal the creation of a genuine, inclusive learning community at Winterbrook.

After a few meetings with Bob in his school, it became clear that his role was an extremely busy one. By his own estimates he spent up to 70 hours per week on school business. In our discussions, Bob commented that one of the great difficulties of his job is that "everyone wants a piece of you." However, there were some staff members who claimed to have insufficient attention/time with the principal. A number of teachers noted his frequent absence from the school. Even though there was general agreement on the soundness of his leadership capacity, teachers felt that the school was often run by the senior staff. According to their comments, Bob made few visits to their classrooms and, therefore, had few opportunities to provide informal feedback to teachers.

Bob felt the weight of expectations and the complexity of his role as principal:

> There are role expectations out there that determine what you do. Like if you take on any position anywhere there are certain role expectations around that role that mould what that person does. They will expect me to be supportive of them in difficult situations and that will determine certain things that I have to do (WDHS 2, principal, male, June, 2004).

The statements of his teachers about him give a strong indication of the professional esteem in which he was held. In particular, Bob seemed well trusted by his teaching staff. Peter, a secondary Science/Mathematics teacher, made this comment about his principal:

> He treats you as a person. [He's] very good at the interpersonal skills whereas at my last school, [the principal] would seem to be lacking in a lot of ways (WDHS 3, teacher, male, June, 2004).

Abby, a young teacher of three years' experience, noted:

> I would say if you went to [Bob] for any reason at all, the trust would be 100 per cent - especially if you said you didn't want it to go any further (WDHS 15, female, July, 2004).

The quality of being one of the team and not placing himself above others was something mentioned by Bob himself and also by Paul, one of the assistant principals:

> I think they see him as someone who gets out and about and has their interests at heart. He's not aloof. He gets involved with the decision-making. [It's] not top down (WDHS 12, AP, male, July, 2004).

Polly, a senior staff member, noted that while Bob was quite approachable, teachers felt most comfortable talking about their concerns with other teachers, often those from their own section of the school:

> I think a lot of people find Bob is easy to approach and it's quite easy to go and talk to him, however, I do feel that teachers feel more comfortable within their own groups and they will talk about an issue or concern they have amongst themselves and they feel more comfortable doing that than going to Bob…or another senior staff member (WDHS 9, teacher, female June, 2004).

4.3.3 Winterbrook District High School teachers

Winterbrook staff turnover was not high compared with some Tasmanian schools at the time of the study but did result in the generation of two distinct groups of teachers; that is, one group of a number of older teachers and another group of a larger number of younger ones, including six in the age range 35 to 44 years. The mean age of 35.1 years was considerably younger than the state mean age for teachers in 2004 of 46 years (DoE, 2004). Winterbrook was thus a comparatively young staff. In fact, ten of the school's 37 teachers had less than five years' teaching experience and many of these younger teachers, on the one hand, showed a great enthusiasm for the ELs curriculum. On the other hand, there were 17 teachers who were either in promoted positions or at the top of the unpromoted pay scale [band 1, level 12] which indicated a solid core of experienced teachers. Teachers at Winterbrook had an average 12.2 years' experience. All but three (92 per cent) were members of the Australian Education Union.

4.3.4 Responses at Winterbrook

A selection of some of the key issues reported at Winterbrook District High School form the structure of the following sections of this Chapter. Table 4.4, provides a list of these key issues and summary responses raised by teacher respondents from first and second round interviews conducted mid-to-late 2004 at Bass.

Table 4.4 Summary of Key Issues and Responses at Winterbrook District High School

Key Issues	Summary of Responses
Pressure on schools	The public nature of public schooling brings teachers' work under scrutiny and also means inclusion in schools of challenging students.
The nature and importance of the ELs curriculum change	The ELs change is structural as well as curricula. Seen as important but some reservations held by some teachers.
Emphasis on working collegially under ELs	Teachers see the concerns of their own classrooms as their first priority.
Professional accountability	Professional identity linked to the complexity of decision-making and accountability to students and parents.
Facilitating change	A shared vision present and some useful resources for implementing the changes available for teachers.
Tension through differing priorities	Some teachers find a tension between the requirements of change within the school and their own priorities in their classrooms.
Shared vision	The principal and teachers understood a shared vision for change.
Shared leadership	Much talk about shared leadership. Mainly those in formal positions exercising leadership.

4.3.5 The social and political context

Winterbrook teachers made a range of statements about how the nature of public schools influenced their work. The public nature of public education, in contrast schools in the private sector, means that public schools are particularly subject to public scrutiny as this teacher reported:

> The public education system is a bit more open as to what they are about and if you look at some of your private schools there is not that openness about their

values or even their curriculum necessarily (WDHS 18, teacher, female, August, 2004).

The public nature of public schools also meant the mandatory enrolment of all students who wished to attend the school, as these teachers' typical statements attested:

> [Public schools] have to take the good with the bad and when they do get the difficult kids they need to have the ability to try and turn those kids around (WDHS 12, AP, male, July, 2004).

and

> In public education we open our doors to any children. I feel that private schools, even in Catholic education, are seen by some parents in a better light because, to a certain extent, they can choose who their clientele are (WDHS 9, teacher, female, June, 2004).

Societal pressures were widely seen as coming to bear on schools and therefore teachers' work:

> It frightens me. You see some of the things that are happening these days, especially in the high school situation, and you wonder what it will be like in another ten years. I think with the way the curriculum is leaning now, it will help. But it's all down to expectations and values (WDHS 19, teacher, female, August, 2004).

Winterbrook teachers considered schools as subject to pressure from political agendas, and argued that they were burdened by societal expectations of teachers. A typical response was:

> I think too much is put on schools. Too much responsibility and expectation (WDHS 5, teacher, male, June, 2004).

Another common response was that societal expectation added complexity to teachers' work, for example:

> The explicit demands made on teachers add complexities to the job and have increased enormously over the years (WDHS 17, teacher, female, July, 2004).

Direct political influence on schools was evident too, as this teacher's representative statement attests:

> Politicians are talking about [low] English and maths skills. Some of which aren't true and obviously we are doing a lot. Our schools are changing in the way we teach and we are more connected with the real world (WDHS 31, teacher, female, September, 2004).

Schools were seen as having agency in a rapidly changing society:

> [Through the ELs we] are getting children much more prepared for the world and as the world is changing so rapidly, they are going to be much more prepared than they would under the old system, so that is positive (WDHS 23, teacher, female, August, 2004).

Even if they were not seen as setting the agenda for change, as this teacher noted:

> I think it (the Essential Learnings) is good and promising but still under-resourced and that political stuff. But I'm not able to change that (BPS 48, teacher, female, September, 2004).

The standing the school had in the local community was seen as helping to ensure its future:

> I think our links with the community are very good and I think we are a really big part of this community. The community is very passionate about our school and even though a lot of the parents don't [come into] this school, there is still a lot of support for the school out in the local community WDHS 26, teacher, female, August, 2004).

and

> I would think we would be comfortable with the programs we are offering for kids to prepare them for the world (WDHS 16, teacher, female, July, 2004).

According to one teacher, the standing of public education was linked with community expectations about moral values and the behaviour of students in public schools:

> I think the school is probably going to play a bigger part in values education because they don't seem to be gaining those values from anywhere else. [It's] being left up to schools (WDHS 19, teacher, female, August, 2004).

The Winterbrook School principal, Bob Merlot, was conscious of what he perceived of wider debates and influences in the socio-political sphere about what public schooling might look like in the future:

> Delineation between public and private schools is going to become increasingly blurred and it really scares me, when I see consistently what's happening in public schools being eroded by a political agenda (WDHS 2, principal, male, June, 2004).

Yet, Bob considered the practical challenge at hand when he stated:

> We structure programs that engage kids in powerful thinking and know how to get kids engaged in stuff is a central challenge here (WDHS 2, principal, male, June, 2004).

Student engagement and retention was seen by many at Winterbrook as a key focus of their school as these teachers in their responses typically reported:

> It is important that the student is engaged. I have to work hard to capture their interest. Certainly have to build a relationship with them (WDHS 35, teacher, male, October, 2004).

and

> With some students you are continually going through a behaviour process so that it's just a continual challenge to keep them here [retain them in school] (WDHS 20, teacher, female, August, 2004).

One AP explained the importance of the VET program for student retention:

> Before we had VET there was a per centage of students who just got lost when they went to college but those same kids who now stay for the VET courses just seem to go on. I think the VET section here [at Winterbrook] was never ever meant to compete with the college in town, it was meant to pick up the kids who otherwise dropped out and were lost to the system (WDHS 12, AP, male, July, 2004).

Winterbrook teachers perceived the value of an integrated and community-based learning approach:

> I think enquiry-based, integrated learning is important and I think you get a lot more out of that than one subject's input alone and you are catering for and giving students more access to different disciplines as well (BPT 41, male, July, 2004).

and:

> Thinking skills, community [-based learning] and enquiry, which are now essential to the ELs. A lot of those approaches were trialled by me initially at this school and now others can see the value in them (WDHS 35, teacher, male, October, 2004).

Essential Learnings (ELs), as outlined earlier, was a major curriculum innovation with an emphasis on the involvement of local school communities and inquiry-based learning occurring in Tasmanian government schools which formed an important context for this study. The following section expands on Winterbrook teachers' reportage of their experiences of coming to grips with the ELs.

4.3.6 Essential Learnings

Winterbrook teachers perceived human values as a core feature of the ELs curriculum, as this teacher's statement, typical of others', attests:

> The purposes and values [of the ELs] is quite visionary and I think it's actually one of the most positive and intuitive, instinctive approaches to life-long education (WDHS 17, teacher, female, July, 2004).

The ELs curriculum was congruent with a values-based approach to teaching and learning as favoured by principal Bob Merlot:

> I didn't care about the ELs or not … values and purposes are permeating most of what we do (WDHS 2, principal, male, June, 2004).

and

> It's about building citizenship and stuff like that. That's not been enough of a focus in the past. Values too, and I'm a huge fan of developing kids' thinking [in this area] (WDHS 24, teacher, female, August, 2004).

The values-based aspect of the ELs was important for this teacher:

> The teaching of values under the ELs is important and that is important in the construction of the whole school approach (WDHS 31, teacher, female, August, 2004).

The notion of ELs being a values-based approach to teaching and learning was raised only by Winterbrook, and not Bass, participants in this study. The ELs was in a practical sense seen by participants in Winterbrook as a key innovation, as this teacher's view typified:

> The students here need and value a fairly inclusive, practical real-life approach to education and I think the ELs has the potential to offer that and a lot more (WDHS 17, teacher, female, July, 2004).

and

> The ELs for me was about learning and teaching life skills. A big picture for real world learning (WDHS 6, teacher, male, June, 2004).

Changes towards the ELs framed curriculum required a too great a shift in the way this teacher approached her work:

> At the moment I'm holding onto my preconceived ideas about teaching [instead of] moving into the ELs. At the moment I'm still too skills based (WDHS 29, teacher, female, August, 2004).

Winterbrook was one of the schools that first got involved in the ELs changes, and Principal Bob Merlot explained how it commenced in the middle school:

> Two years ago, we had our set-up for the grade 7 area to go ahead with a really adventurous look into the ELs and middle school and we had two teachers set up and start (WDHS 2, principal, male, June, 2004).

For Bob, the ELs represented a fundamental shift:

> If you see the ELs as just a series of checklists, then it will push us forward a little, but if you see it centred on a platform of values then that leads back into [this school being] a learning organisation and a fundamental shift in the needs and values that we base what we do on. So, it depends on at which level you want the change to happen (WDHS 2, principal, male, June, 2004).

Teachers considered ELs as much more than a curriculum change too, as these respondents typically reported:

> It's a change in curriculum and also in the way we structure our school. Who will be the leader of a particular group; what that group will comprise of (WDHS 9, AST, female, June, 2004).

and

> The ELs of course are not only a curriculum change but a structural change (WDHS 5, teacher, male, June, 2004).

ELs was seen as a major departure from existing practice and making the change to such an approach to teaching and learning was perceived as a challenge that some, particularly older, teachers may not wish to take up, as these younger teachers typically reported:

> Older teachers [have a] tendency to not want to work to understand the ELs. It's new and a radical departure. A bit much for them; they don't embrace it like some might (WDHS 10, teacher, male, June, 2004).

and

> There were older teachers who simply retired from [my previous school] because they just weren't prepared to make the [ELs] change (WDHS 30, teacher, male, September, 2004).

This Assistant Principal also noted the extent of the change required under ELs:

> [With ELs], you are talking about changing the mindset of a lot of teachers because it's a different way of teaching. A different way of dealing with kids and how you interact with kids (WDHS 16, AP, female, July, 2004).

Yet, for himself, this teacher considered that the ELs was worth the application of time and effort:

> From very early on I saw the ELs was for me. It is about learning and teaching life skills. [It] incorporates a big picture for real world learning (WDHS 10, teacher, male, June, 2004).

The ELs was viewed by many as a holistic and all-encompassing change to the way schools are structured and the curriculum is delivered. This teacher's explanation of the extent of the changes was representative of many:

> The ELs will open up the curriculum and allow us to bring in more project based, more authentic opportunities for learning which will bring the community further into the school and the school community out into the wider community (WDHS 17, teacher, female, July, 2004).

There was also a range of widely held concerns and reservations held about ELs by teachers. These included the mandated nature of the reporting process and a blurring of subject area boundaries, especially in the Arts. This teacher's view articulated both of these broadly held concerns:

> I worry about the reporting process, although we don't have any control over it and I shouldn't worry. I worry that in our attempt to generalise everything so it fits into the framework we are going to generalise the Arts too much. Here we are generalising Art, Drama, Music into a single curriculum area (WDHS 14, teacher, female, July, 2004).

Teachers' concerns about the implementation of the ELs are further reported in the following section.

4.3.7 A Classroom-focussed change

Even with the shift under ELs toward a more team-based and collegial approach, the basic unit of educational delivery remained the same, namely that the classroom teacher, in the main, worked alone with a class of students. While requiring assistance and support on a range of matters including classroom resources and behaviour management, Winterbrook teachers took a proprietary attitude toward their classroom space, as these teachers typically reported:

> I think I should have control over what is happening in the classroom where I'm teaching … I think taking responsibility and control for running the [learning area] is important to a degree but I tend to try and involve the interest and opinions of other people as much as I can (WDHS 3, teacher, male, June, 2004).

and

> Lots of things are decided at a collective level. [The AST] dictates to a certain level and says you need to do your testing now. But in terms of running of my class, I wouldn't like to be told what I had to do (WDHS 32, female, October, 2004).

Part of this concern over who has control of the classroom and a teacher's sense of autonomy within it seems to stem from a feeling of responsibility for the learning that takes place there. Some teachers considered curriculum delivery methods as their own decision, particularly within their specific area of expertise:

> I need to be in control of what I teach. I'd get a bit annoyed if someone from another area came into my area and said, "I reckon you should be doing it like this." I have control of that class (WDHS 11, teacher, male, July, 2004).

and

> Yes, it's just your space and your classroom and the things you do and things you see as important in your particular subject area (WDHS 35, teacher, male, October, 2004).

There was a certain amount of freedom in being a classroom teacher as this senior teacher of longstanding at Winterbrook outlined:

> I can be in control in my own classroom where I can set up my classroom in the way that I feel comfortable with. I can have relationships with the students within the guidelines of what is set up within our policies within the school and within the way that I like to have relationships with students, but I think we have to work as a team so I don't think anybody can be totally autonomous and in control on their own (WDHS 8, teacher, female, July, 2004).

Linked to self-efficacy and professional identity, the capacity to decide on classroom matters was integral to the job of teaching:

> If you weren't able to choose what you did it would make it hard. You wouldn't be able to convey something in the classroom if you weren't being yourself (WDHS 4, teacher, female, June, 2004).

Even though it was seen as important, autonomy within the classroom had its limits for most Winterbrook teachers, for a number of reasons, not the least of which because they did not see the point in reinventing everything for themselves. Also, they acknowledged that other teachers had specific expertise that formed a resource-base from which they draw:

> Sometimes, it is good to rely on others. I don't like to have to reinvent the wheel (WDHS 37, teacher, female, August, 2004).

and

> That's what I like about the District High. There are so many people with so many different skills (WDHS 14, teacher, female, July, 2004).

There were practical advantages of working together and also of determining some aspects of teaching and learning for themselves as these teachers explained:

> I like the flexibility but would be willing to give some of that up in terms of team planning or collaborative planning … I suppose if you are going to work in a team where collaborative planning, group work is evident I suppose by definition you are giving up an element of that autonomy in the planning process but I don't have an issue with that because again the input I would have in that planning process I would see as over-riding (WDHS 17, teacher, female, July, 2004).

and

> Sometimes you have to because unless you've got people on board that go with you, no matter how good you think you are going, the destination, unless other people see it that way, then it's not going to be a good trip. There have been times when I've sat back and thought I'm not sure this is the right thing to do, we had better go with this and we might find this isn't the way to go, sometimes you have to do that. But, usually I am pretty much a person that if that's what I think, then that's what I will say and give it a try and see what happens. You do take a risk a bit (WDHS 16, teacher, female, July, 2004).

and

> I don't have a problem with [giving up my time] for the cause, the greater good or a particular short term goal. Learning happens in all schools in different ways and finding a way for a particular group of students, or individual students, involves a lot of flexibility, schools as being attached to a factory model of education are long gone so anything we can do to create different blocks of time or different ways of structuring the day and getting students out for different blocks of time (WDHS 35, teacher, male, October, 2004).

Changes towards the ELs framed curriculum required a too great a shift in the way this teacher, representative of others, approached her work:

At the moment I'm holding onto my preconceived ideas about teaching [instead of] moving into the ELs. At the moment I'm still too skills-based (WDHS 29, teacher, female, August, 2004).

Programs that run across a number of classes need to be understood and accepted by a range of teachers, often with differing styles and approaches. A typical comment was:

There are some things that our school expects from us. [For instance] we have a Literacy Program and we are pretty much expected to follow that. That's all right though, because I support the program and I see the benefits and I'm really passionate about the program myself so it's OK for me but I couldn't expect that for everyone (WDHS 26, teacher, female, August, 2004).

Indeed, differing personalities and views made for different responses to collective endeavour:

There are staff members here who would do whatever and they would be involved happily, or co-operatively and there are others who don't find it pleasurable. They do it because there is an expectation. [Yet] I'm more than happy to do collaborative planning. At times, there is a need for you to work on your own, depending on the task (WDHS 37, teacher, female, August, 2004).

This teacher preferred to be told what to do in his classes:

If I was told to teach in a certain way, then I would do it. I would never consider myself a decision maker. Just point me in the [right] direction and I will go (WDHS 27, teacher, male, August, 2004).

Part of teacher professionalism has been the capacity of trained practitioners to make judgements. Winterbrook teachers' views on professionalism are reported in the following section.

4.3.8 Teacher professionalism

Principal Bob Merlot's described professionalism in teaching as:

Teachers every day making professional judgements, on their own. Surrounding us at this moment are probably 30 classes taking place [where] teachers, as we speak, are making decisions about reading programs, writing programs, whether a student's behaviour is appropriate. Do I need to ring the parents? Do I need to get extra help? It is complex decision-making (WDHS 2, principal, male, June, 2004).

He was aware too that the consequences of many of the decisions that teachers make are not obvious and may not be immediately apparent:

When you compare us to a nurse or maybe a doctor, we make decisions daily that unfortunately you don't see the benefit of tomorrow (WDHS 2, principal, male, June, 2004).

Although stating, on the one hand, that teachers made their decisions on their own, Bob Merlot also acknowledged, on the other hand, the number of teachers who relied on one another in performing their professional duties. He considered the essence of his leadership as developing and maintaining a collective vision based around a shared set of values.

Winterbrook teachers identified a wide range of factors that might be included in a definition of teacher professionalism. Expertise and qualification were seen by a number of teachers as ways in which the wider society defined the professional essence of teaching. One SOSE/English teacher pointed out that such a definition might account for the increasing demands on teachers and the greater complexity of the work over recent decades:

> I think we are held much more accountable and the training process and professional development process recognises so much more the complexity of the job, so therefore I think the requirement of the teacher as a professional to operate as a professional has increased hugely over the last 50 years [and this requirement] is accelerating more (WDHS 17, teacher, female, July, 2004).

Commitment was seen by some teachers as a measure of professionalism. By their own estimations on a demographic survey, full time employed Winterbrook teachers spent an average of 49.3 hours [precisely the same figure as for Bass Primary school] on school-related work. The following was a typical comment:

> The demands of the job are such that there's never enough hours in the day. We tend to stay and do things every day after school but you reach a cut-off point where you have to go home (WDHS 28, teacher, female, August, 2004).

The multifaceted nature of the job was acknowledged by a number of teachers, particularly those who claimed to spend ten or more hours per week of their own time, either at home or at school, on school related work. This was a typical comment:

> The balance of the trick to teaching as a profession is to really be on one hand a counselor, a social worker if you like. On the other hand, someone who guides, leads and facilitates learning (WDHS 3, teacher, male, June, 2004).

The kind of professionalism that developed within the school was seen as, at least in part, influenced by community expectations and the constraints of working within the bureaucratic system of the DoE as one AST explained in her view:

> Whenever we are dealing with parents and students we are very professional and we are working within the guidelines that the Department sets down for us (WDHS 8, female, July, 2004).

Professionalism was also seen as emanating from accountability to the community and parents.

Winterbrook teachers considered that they should be accountable for their work, as is exemplified by the statement of this teacher:

> It should be an accountable job. You are required [by parents] to get kids over the line and the fact that you have so much impact on kids' futures (WDHS 4, teacher, female, June, 2004).

The following teacher's comment also supports a positive view of accountability to parents and students and also the DoE:

> We are properly accountable to not just the school and the department but to parents, children themselves and their futures, and the community (WDHS 24, teacher, female, August, 2004).

Department edicts, like the ELs initiative, had a major influence on how teachers perceive their work in times of curricular change.

4.3.9 A whole school change

The significant change to the ELs-based curriculum was compounded for Winterbrook staff because it also involved some major restructuring of the school. Teacher engagement with this change and teachers' sense of ownership of the process within it was a major focus of their responses at interview. For example:

> [ELs is] the major one because we are trying to take one thing at a time, and in doing that, there will also be a change in curriculum and the way we structure our school. Who will be the leader of a particular group? What that group will comprise of? There are still a few unknowns at the moment (WDHS 9, teacher, female, June, 2004).

and

> The ELs of course are not only a curriculum change but a structural change (WDHS 5, teacher, male, June, 2004).

Bob's stated belief was that the success of the implementation of the ELs at Winterbrook could be attributed to the alignment of the change process with a shared vision and having the Curriculum Consultation Officer as a key personnel resource:

> [It's] very much about getting people committed to common visions but then in a technical sense we try to match the change processes to the concerns teachers have and try not to get too much of a mismatch. So [the Curriculum Consultation Officer] has done some extraordinary work over the two years in the change processes she has used with the staff (WDHS 2, principal, male, June, 2004).

The change to an ELs-based curriculum fitted Bob's values-based philosophy of education:

> This school [is] generally positive [about ELs] and I think that is because we took a very broad brush view in 2001 and 2002, because it was a coincidence at

the time, because coming in as a principal I wanted to have a values framework. I was going to do that and I didn't care about the ELs or not. Values and purposes are permeating most of what we do because we have taken the trouble to do that I believe the comments you will hear about the ELs [in this school] will be positive (WDHS 2, principal, male, June, 2004).

Bob had some concerns about how the ELs change process was going. It was clearly going to be easier for some sections of the school than for others:

There will be some isolated people who won't engage. In [grades] 5-8 at this place I think that it has been embraced. In [grades] 9-10 you are still seeing all that predictable territorial stuff needing to come out in the open, but it is and I think beginning to happen there (WDHS 2, principal, male, June, 2004).

Some teachers enjoyed the challenge that the change to the ELs curriculum presented:

We've been on quite a fun journey so far with the ELs. One of my goals is to be a leader in that area (WDHS 4, teacher, female, June, 2004).

There had been a concerted attempt by Bob and his senior staff to ensure that teachers were leading the change process. A senior staff member said:

Teachers have been involved in what should be happening. [The Curriculum Consultation Officer] has worked a lot with Bob and Jan in particular, at a senior staff level, [to plan] what we need to do from here but [she] is very, very good at making everyone feel a part of it and making them feel like they have a say and getting people to come on board (WDHS 9, teacher, female, June, 2004).

The same senior staff member highlighted the importance for teachers of focusing on the goals of the changes rather than getting lost in the process of change itself:

I think getting comfortable with the change, so we can all accept the change and move on, rather than focussing on the change itself and focus on what the changes will bring (WDHS 9, teacher, female, June, 2004).

One teacher reported there was something familiar about the ELs-based curriculum, yet something of vital importance too:

It's been a change that is necessary. I feel it is more student centred [yet] I feel it is just relabelling in some parts. A lot of people disagree with that, but a lot of us have been doing assessing for the thinking strand see that it is important but not all new (WDHS 4, teacher, female, June, 2004).

Convincing parents of the necessity for a radically new curriculum was viewed by Winterbrook teachers as a major challenge:

I think with the whole ELs thing, we are retraining parents in some ways and getting them on board, especially with the reports. That's going to be a big issue and we have to know it inside-[out] ourselves in order to convey it to someone else so it's probably us (WDHS 4, teacher, female, June, 2004).

and

Change in the school is very slow and cautious. I think that's the nature of a conservative community (WDHS 3, teacher, male, June, 2004).

Assessment was mentioned as a major stumbling block for the ELs change process. Resistance from parents added to the difficulty of the ELs change process:

[It] seems difficult to know what you should be teaching. You look back at your yearly plan and say well that fits in with the ELs here and it's hard to know if it's all relevant and needs to be taught or if you need to go into more detail (WDHS 10, teacher, male, June, 2004).

and

[I] don't think the timeline that the department is working on for testing is realistic, for next year. I feel pressured. I feel, reasonably, that I've got my head around integrated units but the assessment feels like reflective thinking, being able to objectively be able to assess those markers. I would like more help on that. So I feel the ELs is still a big area and still has a few grey areas that remain to be sorted out (WDHS 30, teacher, male, August, 2004).

and

I think the department is getting stuff out too late, too late in March. When you have been teaching for two months to find out what you will be assessing in two months. At that meeting they couldn't even tell us. I asked would we have parent/teacher and they weren't sure, they just said, "I suppose so" (WDHS 23, teacher, female, August, 2004).

Physical changes including upgrades to the learning areas, while bringing welcome improvements to the learning environment, provide disruption to the normal running of classes:

The most important aspect of the changes is the new facilities we have and so we have the gymnasium, speech and drama and music we have been able to build up a change in the music and with the new music teacher coming last year, certainly the music department is growing and with the gymnasium being able to facilitate a lot more sporting events. Now we can be inside to do that. We've got now the MDT, new computer, new science labs and art area with all the building works there have been disruptions (WDHS 8, teacher, female, July, 2004).

There was a fundamental change in Bob's vision of the school reaching out into the community. This may well have been necessary in order to keep the community in step with the key changes that were occurring in curriculum and curriculum delivery:

We are also changing into becoming a community learning school so this notion which will then lead into building social capitals for the whole community is a significant change that has happened here (WDHS 2, principal, male, June, 2004).

Yet, despite feeling as though he was making positive connections with the local community, Bob arrived at the school one Monday morning visibly shaken. The school

groundsman had rung him over the weekend to report that some dozens of school windows had been broken. Bob had immediately driven up to the school to inspect the damage. He was fairly sure that this was not an act that had been perpetrated by his current students, yet he could not help feeling that his work in developing trust within the local community still had some way to go.

Certain teachers felt alienated by what they considered to be bureaucratically driven change initiatives, some claiming that such initiatives constituted "change for the sake of change":

> Sometimes you wonder why change needs to occur. Departmental people say every five or six years we need to change. It's the same with the transfer policy suggesting every five or so years you need to be changing schools. Whether that's right I don't know (WDHS 11, male, July, 2004).

Some teachers felt disempowered when changes were implemented in what they claimed was a rushed and non-consultative approach:

> I can't see it [the ELs] being here forever and I hate being cynical, but there is a lot of that and I think there is too much change happening, too quickly, and I don't like teachers being stressed because the support is not there for them (WDHS 33, teacher, female, October, 2004).

and

> There seem to be so many really big decisions lately without any school consultation (WDHS 26, teacher, female, August, 2004).

The time and resources that teachers and schools are given to help them assimilate changes was perceived by some teachers as inadequate:

> [I] want longer to pick up change, but I can see why change needs to happen. I value my autonomy, what I have in my classroom (WDHS 35, teacher male, October, 2004).

One teacher, who claimed knowledge of research, criticised the ELs for not being evidence-based:

> I feel concerned that it hasn't been properly researched which is typical [of] the department, there are no pilot schools that have been really there as a research base (WDHS 33, teacher, female, October, 2004).

A change of the scale of ELs would necessarily involve some tensions and a level of dissent. What Winterbrook teachers thought about the place of dissent in their school is discussed in the following section.

4.3.10 Tension and dissent

Principal Bob Merlot acknowledged both the importance and the potential danger of acknowledging dissent among his teachers. His academic background provided him with a deep understanding of school change theory, yet the practical problem of where dissent can usefully and safely be aired, and in what ways, provided an important challenge for him:

> There's nothing wrong with people who disagree with you, argue with you, but you've got to be careful of the forums you set up to allow that to happen (WDHS 2, male, June, 2004).

and

> Having been a sporting coach for a long time, the best teams are the ones that have a set of goals that you are trying to achieve and you have most people on board, but some games are won by people going completely out of the square. Doing something that was unpredictable, yet they took a risk and it paid off (WDHS 2, principal, male, June, 2004).

Bob was aware of some of the reasons for the differences in thinking between teachers:

> Because of its geography and people's differences in thinking there are differences between K-2 people, differences between [year] 3-6 people and differences between [year] 7-10 teachers. There are differences between teachers everywhere (WDHS 2, principal, male, June, 2004).

The tension between individual teachers' wants and needs and those of the team was clearly evident:

> To some extent [teachers' classroom autonomy] is extremely important … there are some who feel the same as I do. It's good to have but not necessary to have all the time. You have to have a balance, but some regard it as vital (WDHS 3, teacher, male, June, 2004).

Bob also noted the importance of what were termed "management group" meetings as an important forum for staff to raise issues and express concerns:

> Some of the best changes of direction in this school have come from suggestions from teachers at "management group" because the APs and myself meet probably once a week but it's quite deliberate that management group is called that and not senior staff. We need a representative from each section of the school to be there, so there is some power in that, but anyone is entitled to come to management group and have their say and be listened to. I hope my leadership style filters through. [My] aim is to listen first and then to guide second (WDHS 2, principal, male, June, 2004).

For one senior staff member, frustrations exist when teachers will not air their concerns at appropriate forums:

> It does concern me a little when there are particular teachers who will talk to us or other teachers, basically saying the background as to what they see as problems and they won't come forth and say anything. When they are given the opportunity they say "Oh no, we're fine" and that is frustrating sometimes (WDHS 9, teacher, female, June, 2004).

Another senior staff member noted:

> It's difficult for a teacher if you are temporary and you want a job but my argument would be if the job's that bad, then I wouldn't want it (WDHS 12, AP, male, July, 2004).

The status of teachers employed on temporary contracts can often mean that they feel less able to speak up, even where appropriate mechanisms appear to be in place to allow them to do so, as was reported by one teacher:

> When you are temporary you do feel insecure sometimes and don't get much feedback [about teaching performance] (WDHS 30, teacher, male, August, 2004).

At Winterbrook there was an established practice of working together and attitudes towards this way of working are discussed in the following section.

4.3.11 Developing a collegial approach to change

All but two of the responding teachers at Winterbrook articulated the view that teaching was a collective endeavour and many considered that moving towards working a more collaborative decision–making model was an important and necessary shift. Bob, the principal, noted:

> I think the team of teachers that we have got at the moment is probably as cohesive as I've had in 5 years. There are some teachers who disagree with decisions … but I think we are moving and pushing in the right direction and that is because we have an openness (WDHS 2, principal, male, June, 2004).

Bob spelt out the need for a collective efficacy guided by sound leadership:

> If there is a genuine collective vision of where the place is going because then people are able to get on and make decisions about when and where they are supposed to be going which is a guiding framework (WDHS 2, principal, male, June, 2004).

His teachers underscored this view:

> In order for consistency, it's important to have a collective understanding and the kids need to know that too (WDHS 4, female, June, 2004).

and

I think [collective effort] is really important. You need to know what direction you are going in and it's really important that we all get together to determine that direction (WDHS 9, teacher, female June, 2004).

Although many teachers at Winterbrook had adopted the practice of working collegially, leadership of the change process was focussed on certain individuals. The extent of shared leadership among Winterbrook teachers is discussed in the following section.

4.3.12 A shared leadership

One of the assistant principals noted a conscious intent to spread leadership in the school:

Bob's and my version of leadership is different to what traditional people think of as leadership. We are trying to get all staff identifying something that they can take leadership in Maybe [they are] good at designing work in their classroom, or providing a supportive school environment with kids, or community learning (WDHS 16, teacher, female, July, 2004).

Bob spelt out the notion of shared leadership too:

I subscribe to the theory that teachers are leaders and if you subscribe to that then we have 35 leaders. I would like to think that teachers in this school genuinely feel they are leaders of their educational program. Giving [teachers] freedom to make decisions about their classroom practice, to set targets, but how they actually get there is their choice and decision (WDHS 2, principal, male, June, 2004).

All but three teachers at Winterbrook indicated their involvement, or desire to become involved, in leadership aspects within the school. Many of their leadership aspirations centred on expertise they had developed in particular curriculum areas.

An acting senior staff member noted the need for encouragement rather than coercion in fostering teacher leadership:

By just giving people responsibility and you just can't plonk it on them, but you need to encourage people, give them control [over] where they are going and [over] what they are teaching (WDHS 11, teacher, male, July, 2004).

One teacher, new to the school was cautious about how quickly he could assume a leadership role:

There are changes that I am planning but again I'm waiting for people to become more comfortable with me and what I'm doing. Bob wants me to do a lot of that but that doesn't necessarily mean the troops are happy for me to do a lot of that (WDHS 3, teacher, male, June, 2004).

The three teachers who expressed the view that they did not want to be involved in aspects of leadership at the school did so for different reasons. One, a first year teacher

considered that it was too early in his career to take on such roles. Another late-career teacher believed that, as he was near retirement, it was better to leave such tasks to the younger and more enthusiastic. The third, a late-career part-timer, preferred to simply teach her classes and not be burdened with any extra work.

The year 7-10 (high school) component of Winterbrook was small in comparison with stand-alone Tasmanian high schools and teachers working in this section of the school expressed their concern that it was lacking in leadership density:

> I think one of the things about the school because it's small, very small. I'm a classroom teacher [not an AST] and I'm in charge of Maths (WDHS 5, teacher, male, June, 2004).

and

> It's such a small staff and there're a lot of one-man bands around so everyone has to pitch in (WDHS 7, teacher, female, June, 2004).

For the teachers, the concept of teacher leadership at Winterbrook centred on their role in the classroom. The statement of this AST reaffirmed the place for teacher leadership as in the classroom:

> You have teachers who are in charge of subject areas, so they will take a leadership role in what resources that subject needs. They may also help another teacher with resources in the classroom. Then we have area leaders such as [the ASTs]. There are quite a few of the people who are in these roles, the leadership roles, who are people who initially came to Winterbrook as classroom teachers (WDHS 9, teacher, female, June, 2004).

One teacher reported that the bulk of decision-making was done through the formal leadership structure of senior staff:

> [Decisions are made] through the formal structure in the school. At the moment wouldn't say there is a teacher outside that structure (WDHS 6, teacher, male, July, 2004).

Many teachers noted that various colleagues took leadership roles in professional development sessions, both within the school and the local schools cluster:

> On professional development days some people will take a leadership role and different staff members take on different jobs and I'm sure they're approached [by the principal] and they agree to do that and at different times I have done things (WDHS 14, teacher, female, July, 2004).

and

> The first year I was here, I went to a District forum and presented some things on multiple intelligences to other people within the curriculum consultation (WDHS 34, teacher, female, October, 2004).

and

We've had different people take different P.D. sessions and I think that's great (WDHS 33, teacher, female, October, 2004).

and

I think [teacher leadership] has definitely started to develop and people have been given opportunities to provide feedback if they have been to professional development (WDHS 32, teacher, female, October, 2004).

Establishing himself in his new profession, one beginning teacher noted that to him, all other teachers were leaders:

All of the teachers are [leaders] to me. If I walk into the staff room most of them give me a little bit of a steer in the right direction and say such and such happened and this might have been why it was a problem (WDHS 10, teacher, male, June, 2004).

Knowledge of the school and its context was a factor one teacher thought was engendering an informal basis for leadership:

Probably those guys [who have been in the school for some time] who have the corporate knowledge of the school and [they] are quite aware of the fact that they are local people and they know where they are going (WDHS 13, teacher, male, July, 2004).

If this statement has merit, the teaching staff turnover at Winterbrook of around 20 per cent, over the previous two years and at the end of 2004, may have implications for the continuity of this corporate knowledge.

Settling into the school was seen as taking a year or so:

[It is] my second year [at Winterbrook] and I had the first year to get programs in place. Now for this year I feel much more competent and confident and I spend a lot more time assisting teachers newer into the area with background resources (WDHS 17, teacher, female, July, 2004).

Helping teachers who were newer to the school was an aspect of teacher leadership reported by a number of participants. It seemed a natural part of school culture:

You would have done it anyway. It wasn't really a big thing. Most people tend to help each other here (WDHS 17, teacher, female, July, 2004).

Generally, teachers felt that leadership opportunities were available to them yet it was up to individuals as to whether or not they took on such roles:

[The principal and senior staff] come and ask us if we are interested so whether you take it up is up to you (WDHS 34, teacher, female, October, 2004).

and

I don't think we have always done it successfully, but there are opportunities for people to do things and quite often people will be asked, and also there is the option to go into a staff meeting and say, "I'm interested in this and is there an

opportunity for me to do this?," but few take this up (WDHS 9, AST, female, June, 2004).

In DoE schools, senior positions are generic, having foci on both management and leadership aspects. This makes it difficult for schools to choose personnel who suit their particular needs at the time. An Assistant Principal expressed this dilemma:

I don't think you can have someone who will lead curriculum as well as follow up on the day-to-day stuff because the day-to-day stuff will take hours and hours of your time. One of the beefs that I have with the promotion system is this generic role and they say [it is based on] the merit principle, you can't say, "well, we want someone to do this [job]" (WDHS 12, AST, male, July, 2004).

This statement indicates a level of frustration about what levels of flexibility are granted by the centre to schools over senior staffing. Intensification of day-to-day management workload and a lack of adequate resource allocation were implicit in this statement about the role expectations of the Assistant Principal.

Leadership was seen as linked to people's expertise:

I think lots of the teachers are educational leaders and they all have little bits of expertise to bring and it's great that they have expertise in different areas. [For example], one of our teachers is an ex guidance officer so she has a wealth of experience and background in psychology (WDHS 37, teacher, female, August, 2004).

and

We have educational leadership from best classroom practice (WDHS 35, teacher, male, October, 2004).

The opportunity to take part in management group meetings was seen as a way that teacher leadership can be expressed:

I think people know there is an open invitation to go to management group and individuals go there. There are also individuals in charge of specific areas. Some lead P.D. and talk to other members about what they've learnt. One option where primary teachers came along and were interested in two different concepts. Different kinds of teachers are invited to go to different events. It's a matter of allowing time to do that and provide opportunities. I don't want to put too much pressure on people. P.D. opportunities also there for leadership (WDHS 21, teacher, female, August, 2004).

The kind of leadership that could facilitate change could occur spontaneously in one-on-one exchanges between colleague teachers or be part of the job of those with formal roles in the school. Perceptions of such change leadership among Winterbrook teachers are reported on in the following section.

4.3.13 Leadership for change

Facilitating the implementation of ELs at Winterbrook was a dedicated senior staff position called the Curriculum Consultation Officer (CCO). This role was seen by the principal and staff as crucial to assisting teachers to develop their teaching under the new curriculum, as these teachers, typical of many others, attested:

> [The CCO] has been able to steer the staff and the school very much into the ELs and obviously [the principal]. He certainly has been encouraging the staff and certainly leading us in our thinking (WDHS 8, AST, female, July, 2004).

and

> [The CCO] is also influencing the way we are going with teaching and developing our approaches in the school (WDHS 3, teacher, male, June, 2004).

With this kind of assistance in place, Bob was confident that teachers could (and would) make the change. He was clear that he trusted his teachers to plan for and deliver effective learning when he said:

> [I grant] them autonomy to make decisions about their classroom practice, set targets. How they actually get there is their choice (WDHS 2, principal, male, June, 2004).

This trust to perform in their classrooms was confirmed by teachers, as this teacher, representative of others, stated:

> [Bob] said, "It's your domain, you do what you need to do," and he had confidence in us to do what we need to do in the classroom (WDHS 20, teacher, female, August, 2004).

Despite this, Bob perceived the need to maintain his role in educational leadership amid his other commitments as he articulated:

> It's a balancing act between setting that big picture and letting go of day-to-day stuff because you can be really busy as a principal and work yourself into the ground (WDHS 2, principal, male, June, 2004).

The CCO described her own struggle to balance curriculum leadership responsibilities when she continued to spend much of the week with her own classroom responsibilities:

> This year [I am] a bit crabby. Mainly because with my CCO responsibilities I don't see students enough and everywhere I go I have to set expectations and that really gets to me, but I have to put myself in the kids' shoes. When I first started teaching I was more light hearted (WDHS 21, CCO, female, August, 2004).

The role of the CCO, in contrast to that of the principal, could be seen in the responses of these senior teachers:

> [The CCO] is very, very good at making everyone feel a part of it and making them feel like they have a say and getting people to come on-board (WDHS 9, AST, female, June, 2004).

and

> [The principal] certainly has been leading us in our thinking and providing the staff with the vision for the future (WDHS 8, AST, female, July, 2004).

Teachers thought of the principal as at the helm as these two typical responses indicate:

> [We are engaged in] a total restructure of what we do. This causes us to look very closely at our teaching. It's [the principal] who facilitates this change (WDHS 13, teacher, male, July, 2004).

and

> There are a number of teachers who provide educational leadership in lots of different ways. Like the person in charge of the curriculum consultation or people who are in charge of their areas, individual teachers, to an extent. They provide leadership and they are role models, but [the principal] is of course the main educational leader (WDHS 16, AP, female, July, 2004).

Through these key roles, teachers at Winterbrook were well aware, as this teacher articulated, of the direction in which the school was moving:

> You may not have to take it on board all the time, but at least feedback and direction is given as to the way the principal and the school think you should be moving (WDHS 3, teacher, male, June, 2004).

4.4 Summary of Chapter

This chapter commenced with demographic details of teacher participants at the two case study schools, followed by a timeline of research activity. An overview of Bass Primary School setting and teachers was then provided followed by an outline of the key issues raised by teachers at the school. Responses of teachers at Bass were then detailed. Similarly, an overview of Winterbrook District High School setting and teachers was then provided followed by an outline of the key issues raised by teachers at the school.

The following chapter, Chapter 5, discusses specific issues raised by teachers in the context of extant literature. Suggestions are then made for future policy and research considerations.

Chapter 5

Discussion

Introduction

The findings are discussed in this chapter of teachers' views of their work in two Tasmanian government sector schools at a time of major curriculum change, namely, the Essential Learnings (ELs). Discussion of case study data from two school sites and how they fit with the extant literature is presented. There is an examination of how the current literature has been supported, extended or challenged. Typically, the analysis of data gathered in this study has, in many instances, resulted in support or corroboration of the published literature. However, there are findings that are additional to what is known already and, in places, findings that add more detail or nuance to what is known.

Part 5.1 of this chapter concerns teachers' views in relation to the broader social and political, and also local school, cultural contexts which were prominent at the time this study was conducted. Part 5.2 focuses on teachers' sense of identity and purpose in their work in relation to implementing change through purposes of teachers' work, defining teacher professionalism, teachers' responses to change and the emotional implications of teachers' work. Part 5.3 discusses school context and leadership through linking with the community, the influence of local school culture and leadership in a time of change. Part 5.4 provides the conclusion of the study describing how the data presented here relates to the study's research questions. Part 5.5 contains recommendations for policy makers and a discussion of suggestions for future research. A summary of the chapter is then provided.

The research questions that underpinned the empirical research of this study are:

Research Question 1

How do teachers and principals in two rural Tasmanian schools perceive their work lives in the context of a major curricular and pedagogical change?

This Research Question is addressed predominantly in parts 5.1 and 5.2 of this chapter.

Research Question 2

What issues arise for teachers and principals in two rural Tasmanian schools in the context of a major curricular and pedagogical change?

This Research Question is addressed mainly in parts 5.1 and 5.3 of this chapter.

5.1.   Educational and socio-political context of change

5.1.1 The Essential Learnings context

To inform the discussion detailed later in this chapter, provided here is an outline of key aspects and stages of the development of ELs.

The ELs was the result a review of the values and purposes of public schooling in Tasmania called Learning Together (DoE, 2000). The statement of values and purposes which transpired from the Learning Together consultation involving educators and child care personnel from across the state formed the basis for developing five essential learnings: Thinking; Communicating; Personal Futures; Social Responsibility; and World Futures. Selected in November 2000, twenty schools worked with the consultation team to refine the ELs. This group determined outcomes and standards to describe knowledge, skills and competencies; and identifies teaching and assessment practices consistent with the values and purposes (Watt, 2006). Winterbrook District School [pseudonym] had taken part in this consultation, placing it in the first ten per cent of Tasmanian schools to commit to making the ELs transition.

Later during 2002, teachers from more than 40 schools worked with the Consultation Team to specify sets of expectations for students at different levels to provide the basis for outcomes and standards. The intention was to phase implementation of the Essential Learnings curriculum schools over five years commencing in 2004 with full implementation in 2009. In 2004, the Department of Education released key resources to support implementation of the ELs curriculum.

The school-based, teacher-led assessment and reporting system, which is aligned to the Essential Learnings Framework (ELF), consists of five components.   The Office for Educational Review calibrated the standards in the Essential Learnings Framework progressively. Maintaining Wellbeing from Personal Futures and Inquiry from Thinking were calibrated in 2003 and 2004.   Being Literate and Being Numerate from Communicating were calibrated in 2004 and 2005. Acting Democratically from Social Responsibility, Reflective Thinking from Thinking, and Being Information Literate from Communicating were calibrated in 2005 and 2006. Teams of teachers wrote sets of items which were administered to random samples of students to ensure that they accurately described a sequenced continuum of student achievement. From the analysis of the calibration and samples of student responses, a set of progression statements were written

to describe the lower, middle and upper levels of student performance within the standards (Watt, 2006).

Following the extensive consultations over the development of the ELs curriculum framework, its assessment and reporting system was directed through the Office of Educational Review (DoE, 2004). The reporting of student assessments to parents under ELs involved substantial changes to prevailing practices and led to two reports to parents being issued by schools in 2005. The Essential Learnings Report used a standardised format for reporting student achievement from kindergarten to year 10 in the key element outcomes in the Essential Learnings Framework against three performance levels for each of the five standards. Schools also provided written comments on student performances, which had been agreed by the education community through the Assessment, Monitoring and Reporting Policy. In August 2005, the Tasmanian State Government reached an agreement with the Australian Federal Government to use the A-E Report Card for reporting student achievement against quartiles and five bands in plain language. Additionally, and issued for the first time in 2005, the Tasmanian Year 10 Certificate showed student assessments against calibrated key element outcomes of the Essential Learnings Framework (Watt, 2006).

The two schools in this study came from differing starting points with the ELs transition. Teachers at Winterbrook were aware that their school was at the forefront of the changes as this typical teacher's comment expounded:

> Being a project school for the curriculum consultation has been a wonderful advantage for the school because we are one of the schools leading with the curriculum [WDHS 8, Advanced Skills Teacher, female, July, 2004].

Although Bass Primary School [pseudonym] was not a project school for the curriculum consultation phase of the ELs transition, there was still a strong sense of ownership of the change as the principal typical of other staff at Bass explained:

> I think everybody is pretty pleased with it – I don't think anybody is anti it. [Bass Primary School] had never put its hand up [for the Curriculum Consultation phase]. I wonder why ever not, but I wasn't here at that time. It took us quite a while to get going with the ELs, but now we are fine (BPS 38, principal, female, June, 2004).

Although the two schools had different starting points with the ELs transition at the time this study was conducted, by accounts given by participants in interviews and from observation of informal discussion over months in the school, the feeling at both schools towards the broad idea of the ELs changes was in general terms positive.

5.1.2 Political agendas

Public opinion and media debate about the quality and rightful focus of teaching in public schools has been a growing phenomenon. Society's expectations and politicians' efforts to reform education can make the work of teachers and schools more difficult. Ainscow (2005) notes that political and bureaucratic pressure in various parts of the western world in public education may well be working against educational improvements. It is argued that such pressures on schools have a negative effect and actually result in school systems having poorer performance for equity, a crowded curriculum, and the misplaced assumption that school can solve what home and families cannot (Ainscow, 2005; Gardner & Williamson, 2004; Luke, 2000; Luke & Chang, 2007). Family-based stresses have an impact not only on children's ability to forge positive relationships at school, both with their peers and with teachers, and even later on in life, but also on their academic achievement levels (Fullan, 1993). Despite the range of societal ills that are blamed on schools, or at least that schools are expected to redress (Ainscow, 2005), Labaree (1997) argues that the great majority of perceived problems in education are fundamentally political rather than pedagogical in nature.

Respondents in this study considered schools as subject to pressure from political agendas and argued that they were burdened by societal expectations of teachers. A typical response was:

> I think too much is put on schools – too much responsibility and expectation (WDHS 5, teacher, male, June, 2004).

Another common response considered that societal expectation were adding complexity to teachers' work, for example:

> The explicit demands made on teachers add complexities to the job and have increased enormously over the years (WDHS 17, teacher, female, July, 2004].

All respondents in this study provided testament that teachers in these schools were aware of the increasing demands being placed on schools.

The notion of a crowded curriculum and burgeoning expectations of schools is described by many researchers (Gardner & Williamson, 2004; Luke, 2000; Luke & Chang, 2007), who make it clear that the combined effect of such explicit demands on schools in conjunction with inadequate resourcing may make schools' and teachers' efforts less, rather than more, effective. The ELs initiative was seen by some respondents as helping to address the issue of the crowded curriculum and providing students with links to learning within their community, making it an even more attractive proposition for

teachers. Typical comments relating to the value of an integrated and community-based learning approach were:

> I think enquiry-based, integrated learning is important and I think you get a lot more out of that than one subject's input alone and you are catering for and giving students more access to different disciplines as well (BPT 41, male, July, 2004).

and:

> Thinking skills, community [-based learning] and enquiry – which are now essential to the ELs – a lot of those approaches were trialled by me initially at this school and now others can see the value in them (WDHS 35, teacher, male, October, 2004).

Teacher comments such as those cited above are evidence that teachers appreciated that their work exists in a wider community and socio-political context. Gardner (2006) and Poppleton and Williamson (2004) have argued that in Australia, social, political and economic circumstances increasingly have influenced educational agendas and, consequently, the work of teachers in schools. Teachers in this study were conscious of this direct political influence on schools too, as this teacher's representative statement attests:

> Politicians are talking about [low] English and maths skills – some of which aren't true and obviously we are doing a lot – our schools are changing the way we teach and we are more connected with the real world (WDHS 31, teacher, female, September, 2004).

With the advent of accountability regimes and a neo-liberal agenda for education in western countries (Garsed & Williamson, 2010), teachers are under increased pressure to meet externally imposed standards (Ball, 2000). Education is also seen as a panacea for society's deficits and ills. According to some commentators, neo-liberal ideology has imported ideas, techniques and practices from the private sector in order to make education more "business-like" (Mulford & Edmunds, 2010, p. 2). It is argued that such ideology includes a belief in the greater efficiency of and government funding of private schooling over public schools (Donnelly, 2011) like Bass and Winterbrook. These ideologies affect teachers in their work (Poppleton & Williamson, 2004).

This study reports a range of perceived political and economic conditions that influenced the participants' views and their school contexts. Teachers in this study were aware of a broader political agenda for education and its implications for schools and their work even if, as this teacher suggested, they were less cognisant about how to change such an agenda:

> I think it (the Essential Learnings) is good and promising but still under-resourced and that political stuff – but I'm not about to change the agenda on that (BPS 48, teacher, female, September, 2004).

This comment, which typifies those of many respondents, suggests that teachers felt powerless to influence or make any changes to the socio-political context in which they work.

The Winterbrook School principal was conscious of what he perceived of wider debates and influences in the socio-political sphere about what public schooling might look like in the future:

> Delineation between public and private schools is going to become increasingly blurred and it really scares me when I see consistently what's happening in public schools being eroded by a political agenda (WDHS 2, principal, male, June, 2004).

At Bass Primary School a common response about the impact of societal influences on schools was:

> Expectations of community and society and politicians and pressure groups are having a bigger impact on life in schools and I think that will have more impact as we go on (BPS 49, teacher, male, September, 2004).

Sachs (1999; 2003) called for teachers to actively and politically promote and defend the profession. While the teachers in this study considered that schools were subject to political agendas, they typically did not express a notion that they play an active role in influencing broader society's views about their work. Indeed, when asked about the place of schools within the community and the influence of broader society on schools, teachers in this study made no direct reference to activism or agency to challenge the status quo. Despite a long history of Australian teachers defending their profession through unionism (Preston, 1996; Galton & McBeath, 2004), no evidence was apparent in this study that these teachers believed they might need to defend themselves and their work or, through activism, influence the broader political agenda, which is noted as frequently being played out through the mass media presenting negative views of teachers and schools (Mulford & Myhill, 1999). Teachers were aware of broader societal expectations as this teacher's view typified:

> It could be a concern how teachers adapt and respond to society's expectations. Not that I have thought a great deal about it (WDHS 6, teacher, male, June, 2004).

The fact that this teacher had not really considered defending the profession may well have been a result of preoccupation with school-based concerns given that teachers in this

study felt strongly that they could influence school-based and curriculum matters, directly and with confidence, as this teacher's comment typifies:

> Within our sectional and curriculum meetings, I think each and every one of us is interested enough to say something – in fact have the opportunity for quite an amount of influence (WDHS 17, teacher, female, July, 2004).

Part of the neo-liberal agenda is an ideology that characterises schools that are more business-like as being more effective (Cuban, 2004). An important influence on teachers' perceptions of their work is posed by the burgeoning accountability requirements placed on schools by governments and education bureaucracies as they continue to seek performance-based solutions to perceived shortcomings of schools (Ball, 2000). The next subsection concerns teacher perceptions of accountability.

5.1.3 Accountability requirements

In Australia in recent years there has been, from successive federal governments, a call for greater teacher accountability (Kleinhenz & Ingvarson, 2004). This is similar to the situation described by Ball (2000, 2003), and Apple (2000) who outline the push for accountability that has occurred in the UK and the USA. Putatively, the notion of holding teachers to account for the judgements they make in the course of their work and the effectiveness of their efforts is a growing aspect of the political agenda and would not likely, in itself, be contested. However, it is argued that teachers come under public scrutiny more than any other professional group (Bingham, 2012). Paradoxically, Ball (2003) argues that there is little evidence that public trust is increasing as a result of advances in the methods of controlling and scrutinising professional practice.

Teachers in this study considered that they should be accountable for their work, as is exemplified by the statement of this teacher:

> It should be an accountable job. You are required [by parents] to get kids over the line and the fact that you have so much impact on kids futures (WDHS 4, teacher, female, June, 2004).

The following teacher's comment also supports a positive view of accountability to parents and students:

> We are properly accountable to not just the school and the department but to parents, children themselves and their futures, and the community (WDHS 24, teacher, female, August, 2004).

It is perhaps a reasonable argument that, since teaching is important work, those who do it should be held to account and themselves see that this should be so.

At a system level, Anderson (2005) identifies three main types of accountability processes sometimes applied simultaneously in education systems: (a) compliance with regulations; (b) adherence to professional norms; and (c) results driven systems. In the ELs, there were examples of the first two of these processes as it was both a formal policy edict and had an accompanying set of professional norms. Focussed on curriculum structure and delivery, ELs did not contain requirements for particular student outcomes and was thus not an example of (c), a results-driven form of accountability. Even so, a climate of accountability was growing in the education sector as the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) was at this time developing national benchmarking for student achievement (Cuttance, 2005; Kleinhenz & Ingvarson, 2004). Related national standardised testing of students for literacy and numeracy was yet to come, but it had been signalled.

Teacher accountability can take a variety of forms and direct communication with parents can be most valuable. There are forms of accountability for schools which have emerged from the prevailing political agenda for education which include national standardised testing. At the time of this study, Tasmanian public schools did not have a system of teacher appraisal and this was also before the advent of the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) testing (ACARA, 2012). In addition, efforts to move towards national standards in teaching (AITSL, 2012) were in their early stages. In this context, it is perhaps understandable that concerns about these kinds of accountability requirements among study participants were few. In fact, far from feeling overwrought by formal accountability measures, teachers in this study perceived a degree of autonomy within their own classrooms. Some participants noted, and indeed valued, their relative autonomy despite the requirements of the system, as in this example:

> I think all teachers here have a level of autonomy in teaching and the way they teach (WDHS 24, teacher, female, September, 2004).

Teachers felt a responsibility for the more direct needs of their students. Whatever the teachers' individual views about the new curriculum, the focus of their work was on the students and their particular outcomes, although, as this teacher exemplified, there is no single way to achieve what might be appropriate outcomes for students:

> There are always ways around what you're given and if there are certain outcomes that you need to achieve then you can achieve those in a whole heap of different ways (WDHS 17, AP, July, 2004).

The responsibility of teachers to ensure children find some success through their experiences in education was a strong theme in this study. The importance of student success was a major consideration for teachers and principals in the context of a major

curricular and pedagogical change. Responsibility and accountability, among other factors, were aspects teachers described as helping to define their professional identity.

Teachers in this study considered accountability to the local community as integral to their work, as is typified by this teacher's statement:

> We are accountable to not just the school and the department but to parents, and children themselves (WDHS 28, teacher, female, September, 2004).

Such a view of teacher professionalism accords with the democratic professionalism conceptualised in Australia by Preston and advocated by the teachers' union (Preston, 1996) In the UK teacher unions have similarly advocated accountability to parents and children (McBeath & Galton, 2004).

The next section explores participating teachers' professional purposes and identities in the context of a major educational change initiative.

5.2.   Identity and purposes

This section of the chapter relates most directly to the first research question of this study as it concerns how teachers and principals perceive themselves and their work in the context of a major curricular and pedagogical change. Firstly, there is a discussion of how teachers participating in this study viewed their work in relation to perceived purposes of teachers' work. Following this, participants' notions of teacher professionalism are discussed and then teachers' responses to change and professional learning are explored in relation to the views of respondents in this study and the literature. Finally, in this section, the emotional implications of teachers' work are discussed.

5.2.1 Purposes of teacher's work

Viewing the literature broadly, the fundamental purpose of education is advancement of the human condition. For example, historically, Rousseau (1762) viewed education as a mechanism for the improvement of society, rather than simply cultural reproduction. Recently, Labaree (1997) specified the three broad social purposes of schooling that shape societal improvement as democratic equality, economic efficiency and social mobility. As society has become increasingly complex, Mulford and Edmunds (2010) argue, the purposes of schooling in Australia have, in recent years, come under scrutiny. Societal change and a consequent rethink of the purposes of schooling have been due to

the impact of a number of influences, including technological change, the increasing diversity of the Australian population, the growth of a knowledge-based society and the globalisation of the economy, ethnic and regional cultures and the created and natural environments. In combination, these forces are causing schools and systems around the world to broaden and personalise curricula (e.g., DfES, 2005; Leadbeater, 2004, 2005) and to reconsider school structures (Hartley, 1997; Levin & Riffel, 1997; Marginson, 1997). Such review of school structures and curriculum formed the context for this study of two rural, Tasmanian government sector schools. In the context of such a broad-based review of school curriculum and learning structures, and even with broad-based agreement about what must ultimately be achieved, the role of teachers' work could well involve divergent views about how education can make the world a better place.

Views of teachers in this study about the purposes of teaching were to some extent contesting views, although these views were not mutually exclusive. Table 5.1 shows the purposes of teaching as detailed by respondents in this study and in relation to the literature.

Table 5.1 Respondents' views of purposes of teaching and relevant literature

Stated Purpose	Characterised by	Literature
Help students to fit into society Social mobility	Vocational aims. Make a contribution to society Practical real-life approach	Pring, 2004 Nichols & Berliner, 2007 Labaree, 1997
Knowledge and skills Social and economic purposes	Changing nature of knowledge. Higher skills are needed to function in and contribute to more complex society	Siemens, 2004; Reich, 2001; Starkey, 2010 Labaree, 1997
Moral and democratic purpose Democratic equality		Reich, 2001; Hargreaves, 2003 Labaree, 1997
Promote engagement and foster enquiry	Liberal aims compatible with continued student engagement and retention.	Pring, 2004; Webb, Metha, and Jordan (2010)

i.   Teaching to help students to fit into society

Teachers in this study articulated views about the social purposes of their work. Some, like this teacher, considered their role as principally preparing children to fit into and perform a meaningful role in future society:

> I think we are there to support the children and help them fit into society – help them actually be able to make a balanced contribution to society (BPS 39, teacher, female, July, 2004).

The ELs was in this practical sense seen by participants in this study as a key innovation, as this teacher's view typified:

> The students here need and value a fairly inclusive, practical real-life approach to education and I think the ELs has the potential to offer that and a lot more (WDHS 17, teacher, female, July, 2004).

Such practical or vocational aims for schooling are quite legitimate (Nichols & Berliner, 2007) and address the social and economic efficiency and social mobility purposes described by Labaree (1997). Such aims need not necessarily be at odds with other, more liberal educative purposes for schooling (Pring, 2004), which correspond with broader, reflective skills required for living and working in the new economy (Hargreaves, 2003; Reich, 2001) and also the democratic equality purpose detailed by Labaree (1997).

ii.   Teaching for a complex, changing world

a) Knowledge and skills

Complementing the personal, instrumental purposes for education outlined above, many teachers who participated in this study perceived the core purpose of teaching to be the imparting of skills necessary for living in the technological, information-rich world. This teacher's statement typified such views:

> We should be teaching more about enquiry ... they need to know how to use and analyse the information and the technology that is available (BPS 50, teacher, female, September, 2004).

Such a statement accords with a connectivist standpoint. Connectivism is a learning theory which considers where and how knowledge is created in a digitally enhanced society (Starkey, 2010). From a connectivist perspective, the nature of knowledge or what it means to be knowledgeable is evolving (Siemens, 2004; Starkey, 2010).

The aims of education from this perspective go further than mere functional survival. Learning to think, analyse, reflect and be critical are not only skills which assist the

individual to survive and flourish in the new economy (Hargreaves, 2003; Reich, 2001)), but these also further develop and improve society as a whole through better participation in economic, social and democratic processes (Luke, 2001; Starkey, 2010). In the Tasmanian school context, the development of Essential Learnings curriculum framework (DoE, 2003) was seen by many as a major innovation towards this end.

b) Moral and democratic goals

Moral and democratic goals form another dimension of the aims of education. These too extend beyond functionality and individual survival to enhancing the collective interests. In an increasingly globalised society, Reich (2001) asserted that the shift to the digital age and the digital economy heightened the need to focus on moral goals of democracy and humanitarianism that are needed to build the common good. Hargreaves (2003) similarly perceived the teacher's role as a "vital socialising agent in preparing the generations of the future" (p. 56). Many teachers in this study accorded with such views about the purposes of schooling. These typical teacher participants' statements described the confidence they had in the ELs curriculum initiative as facilitating the needs of 21st century citizenry:

> Before Essential Learnings, we had the problem of schools not providing what students need to be citizens of the 21st Century. Our exiting students should be better equipped now (BPS 43, teacher, female, July, 2004).

and

> It's about building citizenship and stuff like that – that's not been enough of a focus in the past. Values too, and I'm a huge fan of developing kids' thinking [in this area] (WDHS 24, teacher, female, August, 2004).

and

> I believe in educating children to be peace makers – that's my biggest goal – the thing that I'm working for – but I also have a goal in the children being equipped for a life in a rapidly changing society (BPS 40, teacher, female, July, 2004).

c) Engagement and retention in schooling

Teachers were also aware of the student retention problem in Tasmania where fewer than one in three Tasmanian students completed year 12 schooling (Lamb et al., 2004). Retaining students to complete qualifications serves both the student through better life chances and society through improved economic productivity (Eslake, 2011). It has been widely recognised by social and economic commentators that a much greater proportion of Tasmanian students than is currently the case need to be encouraged to stay on at school, past the compulsory years, so that they might be successful participants in the new economy (Eslake, 2011).

Teachers in this study agreed with the view that a major challenge of their work was to engage students in learning and retain them in education or training, at least until they attained qualifications that would serve both them and their community well.

Creating the conditions in classrooms and schools that will ensure engagement and retention of young people in learning requires new ways to approach the processes of teaching and learning (Hargreaves, 2003). There were many teachers in this study who shared this view and considered engagement of students as a major aim. The following teachers' comments, which are representative of others, illustrate this view:

> It is important that the student is engaged. I have to work hard to capture their interest – certainly have to build a relationship with them (WDHS 35, teacher, male, October, 2004).

and

> With some students you are continually going through a behaviour process so that it's just a continual challenge to keep them here [retain them in school] (WDHS 20, teacher, female, August, 2004).

and

> The main aim is that the children are ready to learn and enjoying learning and stuff like that. So we try to have fun (BPS 50, teacher, female, September, 2004).

Engagement of students in education with the aim of improving student retention was a key reason for establishing a Vocational Education and Training (VET) program at Winterbrook for those students who, having completed year 10, would not likely complete years 11 and 12 if they had to go to the Secondary College in the city some 20 kilometres away. This Assistant Principal, among other staff at Winterbrook, who commented on the VET program, explained the importance of the program and for student retention:

> Before we had VET there was a per centage of students who just got lost when they went to college but those same kids who now stay for the VET courses just seem to go on. I think the VET section here [at Winterbrook] was never ever meant to compete with the college in town; it was meant to pick up the kids who otherwise dropped out and were lost to the system (WDHS 12, AP, male, July, 2004).

With student retention such a concern, fostering enjoyment and engagement in learning were key aims which found expression in aspects of the Essential Learnings (ELs) and similar innovative approaches to curriculum implemented in other educational jurisdictions (Luke, 2001).

While engagement and retention in schooling may appear a functional, vocational aim of schools, it is far from a conservative aim as the conditions required to achieve it involve changes in educational practice (Lamb et al., 2004), as making significant improvement

to retention of students in Tasmania has been a major, unsolved problem in Tasmanian schools (Kilpatrick, Abbott-Chapman & Baynes, 2003).

5.2.2 Critical thinking and debate

As described in Chapter 1, many respondents viewed the Essential Learnings (ELs) curriculum initiative as a response to the call for new visions about the future and new pedagogies to address the needs of a 21st century citizenry. *Thinking* was a separate learning strand of ELs, an entirely new discrete aspect of the curriculum (DoE, 2002). Some considered that teaching *Thinking* under the ELs was key to the kind of learning that was required for the 21st century.

> The ELs for me is about real world thinking and learning. We are quite successful with that (WDHS 6, teacher, male, June, 2004).

Yet, others considered that the focus of the *Thinking* strand fell short of the critical thinking that could have made it a greater success, as one teacher who was typical of others articulated:

> We really we should be teaching more via enquiry, and that sort of stuff because we need to produce people who are critical, who know how to use information, not just to think in a vacuum (BPS 50, ASL, female, July, 2004).

This was a view which held the purposes of teaching to be the development critical and analytical capabilities in students (Giroux & McLaren, 2001) and went beyond simply assisting them to find a functional place in society. Recently, the argument of educating for the development of critical thinking has gained a renewed interest within an approach called "critical pedagogy" (Apple, 2000; Comber, 1997; Giroux & McLaren, 2001), yet it is not an explicitly stated aspect of the ELs (DoE, 2002).

Challenging existing practices and developing a whole new approach to teaching and learning would necessarily draw focus on teachers' differences. Principal Bob Merlot detailed the importance of debate between teachers in his school:

> Because of people's location in the school they have differences in thinking. There are differences between Kindergarten to grade 2 people, differences between 3-6 people and differences between 7-10 teachers. There are differences between teachers everywhere and they need to talk about those differences (WDHS 2, principal, male, June, 2004).

Such challenges to existing practices in schools can involve protracted argument which is sometimes uncomfortable for individuals, as Achinstein (2002) in her study comparing two USA high schools observed. However, Achinstein (2002) reported that one school in

her study took more a critical ideological stance in favour of an active role in challenging, rather than simply accepting, societal norms and she argued that such a school environment was more conducive to changing educational practice, particularly for student engagement and retention.

5.2.3 Teacher professionalism involves commitment

In this study, the major pedagogical and curricula change for adoption of the Essential Learnings curriculum framework provided a particular context in the two schools for the researcher to explore teachers' views about their understanding of teacher professionalism. The extent to which teachers understood their work as involving reflection, judgement and refinement to meet students' needs was dependent on the way they defined teaching as a profession. Generally, teachers in this study perceived their work as professional but understood the defining elements of the professional nature of their work from differing standpoints. A time of sweeping curriculum change, as well as the nature of that change, likely brought into focus the nature of teacher professionalism as the change evoked greater reflection on the part of many teachers about the nature and difficulty of their work.

Although it is generally 'understood' that teaching is a profession, the nature of the work of a teacher, as noted by Boston (2002) and Hoyle (2008), means there is not a clear, articulated and widely recognised conceptualisation of what it means to be a professional teacher. There were some teachers in this study who considered their work in terms similar to those used by Runte (1995), who placed emphasis on teaching as ethical, reflective and evidence-based practice. The terms "careful," "reflect," and "adaptable" as used by teachers participating in this study, exemplifying Runte's view of teaching, were present in these teachers' comments:

> We really have to look carefully at what we are doing and how we behave. (WDHS 9, teacher, female, June, 2004).

and

> There are expectations upon teachers to be constantly improving themselves – constantly reflecting on what they do – constantly seeking out alternatives. (BPS 42, teacher, female, July, 2004).

and

> It needs to be flexible, adaptable and prepared to take on different things – take on research (WDHS 6, teacher, male, June, 2004).

Runte's notion of a an ethical and reflective, evidence-based practice differs from the democratic professionalism of the teacher unions as described by Preston (1996), yet is not at odds with this.

Hoyle (2008) presents two dimensions to professionalism. Firstly, he conceptualises an institutional dimension based on autonomy, as exemplified in the comments and analyses above. Yet, Hoyle (2008) suggests this dimension has diminished with the rise of the school accountability (i.e. school reform) movement. Secondly, Hoyle (2008) views a service dimension of professionalism in the accountability that teachers have to clients. This notion sits easily with both Runte's (1995) ethical, reflective practice and Preston's (1996) democratic professionalism. Hoyle sees teacher professionalism in this sense as influenced by the organisation of the school and education system and that, with the rise of (bureaucratic) managerialism, teachers have been under ever greater surveillance and more rigorous, systemic accountability.

This teacher's view, typical of many, accorded with Hoyle's notion of rising bureaucratic expectations for teachers:

> When we have certain things imposed upon us – it's your responsibility as a professional that it's expected of you and it's difficult to break that from the bottom (BPS 42, teacher, female, July, 2004).

Expectations of teachers could commonly come from higher in the school system and "being professional" was seen by some participants as accepting departmental edicts and one's place in the bureaucracy

Hoyle (2008) argues that teaching has, like other occupations, gone through processes of professionalisation. Hoyle (2008) sees the professionalisation of teaching over the twentieth century as having two key dimensions; an autonomous, institutional dimension of professionalisation, which he sees as having been in decline since greater accountability and managerialism, and a service dimension which has become ascendant in the new political landscape of greater accountability and bureaucratic control.

Views of teacher professionalism articulated by participants in this study were across both the dimensions identified by Hoyle (2008) as well as the aspects of teacher professionalism identified by Preston (1996) and Runte (1995). However, the majority of teachers accorded with the Hoyle's (2008) institutional autonomy notion. Principal of Winterbrook School, Bob Merlot, typical of many respondents in both schools perceived a high level of autonomous professionalism in the teachers in his school when he stated:

> Teachers, every day, make professional judgements in isolation, making decisions about reading programs, writing programs, whether that was appropriate behaviour – do I need to ring the parents, do I need to get extra help (WDHS 2, principal, male, June, 2004).

Similar to Bob, this teacher, who was typical of others at both schools, thought training and the capacity to make her own judgements were key to her professional identity:

> With the training and professional judgement that you have and you learn to have, you would be the best one to make decisions for your own classroom (WDHS 19, teacher, female, August, 2004).

These views are of a classroom-based professional autonomy and also a professionalism based on professional learning which accords with Hoyle's (1974) earlier conceptualisation of a distinction between restricted, classroom-focussed, professional identity and an extended professional who sought to improve practice and engage with a wider education community through reading, collegial engagement and professional development.

This teacher, like others in this study, considered the need for engagement in his choice of professional learning to be a condition necessary to establish himself as an extended professional:

> I like to be able to make decisions about my own learning and the learning of the kids in my class, according to what they need. We are all expected to use the ELs but I think they are a great thing anyway, but it's still very open-ended and we can interpret with our own knowledge and make choice (WDHS 30, teacher, female, September, 2004).

In reviewing this conceptualisation, Hoyle (2008) notes a new form of professionalism emerging from the reform movement in which there is, typically, mandated professional learning, contrived collegiality and a range of required learning and suggests this might be termed "extended but constrained professionalism" (p. 292). While teachers in this study perceived the need to be extended professionals, the reality for them was that their autonomy on professional learning matters was constrained, a situation they lamented, as this teacher's representative statement outlined:

> The professional development aspect I'm not the driver any more, I'm the passenger, and I've taken a few kicks I haven't liked much. Also, I think, not only the content of the PD but the organisation of it and I've found it interferes very much with my family life by having six PD nights instead of two per term as before and decisions were made about that in Management Meetings (WDHS 25, teacher, female, August, 2004).

As noted later in this chapter, giving up time outside of work hours was part of what it meant to be professional for teachers in this study; however, having both the content and time of attendance for PD mandated by school management was an unwelcome restriction on teachers' professionalism. Working collegially, although widely valued by teachers in this study, was not a matter of professional choice and judgement, as this teacher's statement exemplified:

With the [ELs changes] we are now expected to be working as a team (WDHS 3, teacher, male, June, 2004).

The experience of teachers in this study with requirements under the ELs curriculum implementation revealed strong support for Hoyle's conceptualisation of a new extended but constrained professionalism. Teachers were also clear that they were not comfortable with these constraints and they responded to the situation by asserting the importance of their autonomy on classroom matters, as this, almost defiant, teacher's statement exemplified:

I wouldn't care if the Queen of England walked in and said to do it a different way, then I wouldn't, I will always teach the way I think is going to be most effective [for my students] (BPS 48, teacher, female, September, 2004).

It is perhaps ironic that rather than addressing the ELs curriculum change proactively through taking on shared leadership and seeking out appropriate PD, the responses of many teachers in the two schools in this study to the mandated nature of some of the ELs implementation suggests that they instead reverted to Hoyle's (1974, 2008) restricted professionalism by focusing more exclusively on their own classrooms. The views teachers in this study held about the professional nature of their work in the context of the curriculum change may have been a result of the extent to which they felt empowered to drive that change in ways they considered pertinent to their own classroom practices and experiences.

Nevertheless, in accord with Runte's (1995) notion of the reflective, ethical practitioner, teachers in this study did know that they valued being engaged in reflection and development, even if their immediate circumstances meant that they did not necessarily opt do so. Facilitating teachers' engagement in reflection and continual development of innovative approaches to teaching and learning while at the same time motivating, engaging, and inspiring learners within an ever-changing societal and technological context, though desirable, cannot be achieved by mandating it (Darling-Hammond, 1988; Fullan, 1993; Hargreaves, 2003; Stoll, Fink & Earl, 2004). Darling Hammond described the process of teachers' professional engagement with client needs, "Decision-making by well-trained professionals allows individual clients' needs to be met more precisely and … promotes continual refinement and improvement in overall practice" (Darling-Hammond, 1988, p. 59). The curriculum change context is a phenomenon that brings teacher professionalism into focus as teacher input and judgement is essential for making the new curriculum a success. Maintaining teacher input in shaping curriculum is essential as, through experience in the UK of loss of control of the curriculum, Galton (2003) argues that teachers are in danger of becoming technicians as their

professionalism becomes reduced in an education system that neither trusts them nor requires them to think about what they teach.

As detailed earlier in this chapter, teachers in this study retained a strong view of themselves as autonomous within their own classrooms, although that autonomy is modified somewhat by collegial approaches to teaching and learning. This may be seen as contrasting to some extent with Hoyle's (2008) view of a diminution of the institutional dimension of teacher professionalism.

In relation to Hoyle's (2008) service dimension of professionalism, among teachers in this study there was strong evidence of a professional identity of commitment and responsibility to their students. When asked why they considered their job as a profession, the teachers at both schools in this study perceived the level of responsibility society vests in them to prepare children to be successful in a complex and changing world as a defining characteristic of their professionalism, as these representative teachers' views detail:

> I think it's all professional really. The responsibility that you have for the children and the accountability you have for what you're doing with them and how far they're going (BPS 39, teacher, female, July, 2004).

and

> We are a profession where we are responsible to parents and we are responsible in nurturing the future generation (WDHS 8, AST, female, July, 2004).

In these statements, teachers were identifying the expectation society has of them but fall short of describing an accompanying level of trust to undertake this task, as is evidenced in their views about accountability discussed earlier in this chapter. These teachers' views of the teaching profession are indicative of teachers' awareness of accountability requirements and are some way distant from conceptualisation of the profession characterised by measured judgement, and refinement and improvement in overall practice, to which Darling-Hammond (1998) refers.

All teachers participating in this study preferred teaching to be termed a profession and many articulated the view that one of its defining elements is commitment, as these teacher's statements typified:

> I guess for me it's my primary vocation. It's not just a job, it's my calling and I guess that basically it engages me emotionally (BPS 40, teacher, female, July, 2004).

and

> Well, you don't lock the door at 5.00pm and go home and forget it – that's something that is taken home with you and therefore I think you are seen as a professional (BPS 41, teacher, male, July, 2004).

Teachers' reasoning for preferring the term "professional" involved both a definition of the nature of the work involving a commitment to working beyond regular office hours and also a notion of its status. Their views accord with those of Hoyle (2008) who reports that, while the notion of teacher professionalism is problematic, the term is worth preserving as it has semantic value for teachers, is heuristically powerful and has potential for creating an ideal to which teachers might aspire.

However, the term "professional" is not without its difficulties, as Hoyle (2008) pointed out, including the fundamental tension on the institutional dimension between being an autonomous professional versus the bureaucratic (managerial) organisation of teachers' work.

Compliance to school policy was a profession concern for this teacher:

> If the school had made a decision to go down a particular path and you didn't agree with it and are out in the community and someone is saying why is the school doing this, then professional ethics should kick in and you would support the school in that decision (BPS 50, teacher, female, July, 2004).

This teacher thought that the bureaucratic organisation was diminishing her professional autonomy:

> The fact that we have to ask for permission to do things and be kept behind for five minutes because we started the meeting late. That is demeaning. It undervalues you as a professional (BPS 23, teacher, female, July, 2004).

Although unique among respondents in her description of teachers' work, this teacher drew a parallel with the medical profession to describe the kind of judgement that is required:

> You do a lot of decision-making and you have to adapt and so to me there's a lot of thinking in it and like a doctor – you have to give the right medication or treatment for each individual (BPS 40, teacher, female, July, 2004).

McCulloch et al., (2000) describe an "ideal" of the teaching profession which developed in the United Kingdom over a number of decades. Based on an assumption that teachers are in control of the curriculum in its widest interpretation, that is, what is taught and how it is to be taught, McCulloch et al., (2000) and also Connell (1985) argue that control of curriculum is a defining aspect of teacher professionalism.

Although the broader precepts of the ELs curriculum were developed elsewhere, interpretation of the curriculum at classroom level is widely seen as to the province of teachers, both individually and collaboratively (Churchill, Williamson & Grady, 1997). In line with McCulloch et al.'s (2000) ideal, the teachers in this study perceived themselves as in control of classroom-based aspects of the curriculum, as was exemplified by these comments:

> I have total control over what I do in the classroom, [Timetable constraints] are out of my classroom and my control (BPT 45, female, September, 2004).

A level of autonomy, or freedom to decide for themselves what is appropriate at classroom level, was seen among teachers as necessary for effective teaching. Teachers believed the classroom teacher was the only person in the position to know each student's individual educational needs sufficiently well to ensure they were met. At least from the aspect of the delivery of a program, this typical teacher thought that he was the one who was making the decisions:

> Basically, in the classroom I need to be [left to decide] how I implement my program so on the actual delivery of my program it's my responsibility (BPT 49, male, September, 2004).

The notion of bearing sole responsibility for the learning that took place in the classroom accorded with Runte's (1995) view of the ethical, reflective practitioner and also with McCulloch et al.'s (2000) ideal of control and garnered strong support from participants in both schools, as this teacher's statement exemplified:

> You alone take the responsibility for the success or failures that are happening within that room (WDHS 3, teacher, male, June, 2004).

At Winterbrook, this teacher considered that it was not easy to move from being an individual classroom practitioner to a shared approach:

> It's pretty much a shared decision-making process in this school now and it is also a shared responsibility. I think at times you can get a bit frustrated – people opt to take more on or less, or whatever, which is fine, but you need every member of the team to be doing their bit or you end up with a few problem areas. At times you wonder whether every team member is pulling their weight (WDHS 11, teacher, male, July, 2004).

Thus, for some teachers in this study, a shared responsibility for teaching and learning stood in contrast to a desire to take ownership and ultimate responsibility for their own students' successes.

The next section comprises a discussion of this major curriculum change in relation to participating teachers' views of their work.

5.2.4 Teachers' responses to the ELs initiative

This section examines how participating teachers viewed the Department of Education's efforts to make significant change to teachers' practice through a mandated, system-wide approach to major curriculum change.

Similarly to situations noted previously by researchers and commentators (Apple, 2000; Fizgerald, Youngs, & Grootenboer, 2003), teachers in both schools in this study were aware that the system held certain requirements of them in regard to major change initiatives. They were aware of both constraints imposed by the system and the degree of professional freedom and autonomy they maintained despite this:

> The Department will have certain expectations of what I should do; some mandated and some implicit (WDHS 2, principal, male, June, 2004).

and

> We are given a lot of autonomy in this school – I think we are recognised as professional people who have got experience and we are given the freedom to be able to work within the area of our expertise but at the same time if that's not going properly then support is put in place to help you if you need it (WDHS 8, AST, female, July, 2004).

As noted earlier, freedom to decide at classroom level the how and what of teaching was important to the professional identity of teachers who participated in this study. However, teachers required assistance to work in new ways. Such support came from the principal, senior staff and colleagues and, at Winterbrook School, also from the Curriculum Consultation Officer (CCO) who was specifically allocated to the task of assisting teachers to implement the new curriculum approach.

So, within this change context, teachers at both schools did feel supported on curriculum matters. These comments typify many others made by teachers that indicate they felt supported in their efforts to implement the new curriculum:

> I am totally supported in what I am doing (WDHS 6, teacher, male, June, 2004).

and

> [The principal and senior staff] are very supportive and I know with them if I want to try something new they will support me in it (BHPS 40, teacher, female, July, 2004).

DoE personnel facilitating the ELs implementation plan had argued for the adoption of new pedagogies (DoE, 2003) and, at Winterbrook School, progress was being made towards teaching in new ways, including integrated, inquiry-based learning approaches,

particularly across the primary and middle school where teachers reported working collaboratively to plan integrated teaching and learning units.

> I would see that collaborative, working together, sharing is pretty important (WDHS 11, teacher, male, July, 2004).

and

> As a team we work fairly well together and [one of the ASTs] is very definitely supportive. The people in my team are very supportive and I have an affinity for them (BPS 40, teacher, female, July, 2004).

These views were typical of teachers in both schools who, as far as the curriculum and pedagogical aspects of the changes were concerned, felt well supported by their colleagues and senior staff at the school level. Such support is essential as noted by numerous writers and researchers. For example, Fullan, (1993, 1999), Hargreaves (2003), and Tyack and Cuban (1995) have noted that the majority of educational change initiatives fail because reformers impose the initiative from above, and fail to work with teachers on development and implementation and also because reformers assume the inspirational power of their own rhetoric (Doyle & Ponder, 1978).

With a level of collegial support, despite the possible problems associated with the mandated nature of change initiatives (Fullan, 1993), teachers in this study felt, at least to some degree, in control of the changes. For some it was because they could adapt the new conceptualisations to their existing practices, as was noted by these teachers:

> People have been doing and are still doing and will continue to do things in the ELs way and for them it's just re-naming things and re-labelling (BPS 44, teacher, female, July, 2004).

and

> I've heard a lot of positive comments from other teachers about the ELs – how they fit in with everything that we do (BPS 39, teacher, female, July, 2004).

Allowing teachers to negotiate their own way through a change initiative accords with Fullan (1993) who noted that a successful push for change requires allowing teacher self-learning to unfold and Dinham and Scott (1996) who described the need for school improvement, if it is to be successful, to focus on the core teaching and learning aspects of schools.

At both schools in this study, a focus on teaching and learning at school level with teachers working in teams, kept teachers engaged with the ELs on week-to-week basis, as Galton (2008) found when teachers were under the pressure of change. Yet, ELs was easier for some to implement than others. For example, it was much harder for older,

secondary, subject-specialised teachers as this teacher in the last few years of his career explained:

> Times have changed so much and when I started I was in a highly academic and streamed situation. Younger teachers now who have had primary training and those who have operated a lot at that level are doing the best in this [ELs] situation (WDHS 5, AST, male, June, 2004).

Day et al., (2006) found that a school's staff age profile will likely come to bear on the effectiveness of major change at school level, as older teachers tend to rely on methods that have served them well. The following section expounds on teachers' practical adaption to change.

5.2.5 Evidence of the practicality ethic

Many of the views expounded by teachers in this study accord with Doyle and Ponder's (1978) practicality ethic in relation to their relative propensity to adopt new methods. These authors argue that teachers, through their direct experience and the shared experience of other teachers, approach new initiatives from a position of pragmatic scepticism which gives rise to what is termed a practicality ethic. Doyle and Ponder (1978) developed the idea of a practicality ethic by listening to teachers respond to various change initiatives. It involves these three criteria:

i. Congruence with existing practices

This aspect of Doyle and Ponder (1978) was exemplified by teachers in this study who were positive about the changes, seeing them as merely "re-naming and re-labelling" what they were already doing. There were new elements to the ELs but it was congruence to current practice that this teacher felt comfortable with, for example:

> It was things we've done before – just labelling new parts ... I feel that a lot of us have been doing assessing for the thinking strand and it is something that I've done before but put it in a better way (WDHS 4, Teacher, female, June, 2004).

ii. Instrumentality: Usefulness

There were teachers in this study who were positive about the ELs and who considered the team approach as effective in improving teaching and learning. For example:

> We worked together in teams and we had all this planning done for the whole year – we had resources for the whole term, basically. We found it's good to have these units which are the basis of our [collaborative] teaching and learning but it's also nice to have something individual as well (WDHS 20, Teacher, female, August, 2004).

iii. Cost/benefit: Effectiveness in relation to time, effort or resources invested.

The teacher has to consider whether the effort involved in taking on a new initiative is worth the time and resources expended. Taking on and retaining methods that have proven to be efficient in terms of resources, time and effort were preferred by this teacher, whose statement is typical of others:

> I don't want to throw the baby out with the bath water so I have to hold onto some things I believe in and have seen through my own teaching, are worthwhile (WDHS 25, Teacher, female, August, 2004).

In a similar way to that outlined by Doyle and Ponder (1978), congruence of the new curriculum with existing practice was a strong motivator for teachers in this study. This was because, for some, the ELs was a relatively greater departure from the way they had approached their work. Thus, ELs was something they felt less than fully confident in implementing in their classrooms. This was particularly so for teachers of year 9 and 10 students at Winterbrook School. In recognition of this, structures were put in place at the school to develop a momentum of change with regular curriculum meetings and professional development opportunities.

While there was broad agreement, there were doubts about the appropriateness of the ELs approach for this sector of the school, as this teacher expounded:

> One concern and I might share is to ask that by the time you get to grade 9 and 10 is the so-called 'project approach' to learning still appropriate? (WDHS 5, teacher, male, June, 2004).

There were also teachers in the Early Childhood area at Winterbrook School who perceived a lack of congruence in the ELs approach. They perceived the need to focus primarily on skill development as this teacher explained:

> At the moment I'm holding onto my preconceived ideas about teaching and not moving into the ELs – at the moment I'm still too skills-based (WDHS 29, teacher, female, September, 2004).

This early childhood teacher, among others, thought of the ELs as lacking in congruence with early childhood education practices:

> I've tried to follow the ELs but we shouldn't be at the moment but I am finding not everyone is doing that and there are a lot of aspects of early childhood education that don't fit neatly into the ELs (WDHS 23, teacher, female, August, 2004).

The particular focus of the early years of schooling for some teachers on skill development was difficult for her to see and she may have preferred to use more traditional, structured approaches to teaching. An AST in the same sector of the school

had persevered and found, after a time, that he could make the ELs approach work as he stated:

> I have put into place programs to improve literacy and numeracy but a lot of those have worked over the time. I can actually see how the literacy and numeracy approach works, particularly in Early Childhood (WDHS 35, AST, male, October, 2004).

Requirements to raise numeracy and literacy performance levels of students placed pressure on teachers to achieve results on tests. This was a system requirement which competed for teachers' attention with the requirements of the ELs implementation. While wanting to work on the ELs, which she considered valuable, this teacher thought it was imperative to focus limited time and resources on literacy and numeracy:

> I need to achieve in literacy and numeracy and even though we've got the ELs I'm trying to get ready with them and as a school we need to have our numeracy and literacy outcomes (WDHS 23, teacher, female, August, 2004).

So, for teachers in this study congruence with existing practice, instrumentality and relative cost of time and effort contrasted with the benefit gained were reasons they reported for either taking on new approaches to teaching and learning or rejecting them. These types of responses thus accorded with Doyle and Ponder's (1978) three aspects of the practicality ethic. However, teachers in this study identified a number of additional motivators for the adoption of change initiatives which are discussed in the following section.

5.2.6 Additional motivators for change identified

There were in this study a number of responses which showed teacher acceptance of aspects of the ELs change initiative for reasons that extended beyond, or nuanced differently, the notions of teacher practicality in the implementation of major educational change as they were originally identified by Doyle and Ponder (1978). These responses could be grouped, broadly, as viewing the change as an *imperative*, responding to *positive feedback* and perceiving a *valued higher purpose* to the change initiative.

i. Imperative: It will happen, so take the line of least resistance.

There were some teachers who considered the ELs curriculum change as inevitable. They realised that they were faced with the option of resisting the change or "getting on board" as one put it. This does not mean that they wholeheartedly agreed with the initiative, but simply that they were willing to comply, to an extent, with its requirements. This

approach is similar to a notion developed by Sizer (1984) whose popular fictional character Horace illustrates how teachers go through the motions of being compliant and implementing change by making efforts only sufficient to placate those in authority. It can be viewed as a practical approach to their work and in response to mandated changes, but it is not in terms of classroom practicality of the kind that Doyle and Ponder (1978) had conceptualised.

For teacher participants in this study, there was a sense that they understood an imperative of curriculum change and the nature of the task they had been given, even if some of it was challenging and the timeframes tight. These teachers' views typified those of other participants:

> Most teachers agree that it [the ELs] must happen. Some are positive but think it is all a bit too much, too quickly and some of it people have been doing for a while now. But no one seems to think that it mustn't happen [laughs] (BPS 44, teacher, female, July, 2004).

and

> ELs is not really where I thought it might have been ... it makes it quite difficult because of the direction that we have been given and the timeframe to move in. Some people aren't prepared to say how they feel or what they think, they just accept it (WDHS 3, teacher, male, June, 2004).

There is a sense in the teachers' comments that there is no point in trying to hold back the tide of change.

ii. Positive feedback: Inclusion, encouragement and moral support for change.

Teachers' positive views of the ELs curriculum change may in part have been the result of them seeing the benefits of the practical application of these ideas in their classrooms, but a positive view of change efforts was engendered also through the feedback they received from their principal and senior staff. Support and encouragement could take on a dimension of self-fulfilment as these teachers in the primary section of Winterbrook School reported:

> People are feeling quite positive about it [the ELs] – the feedback we get makes us feel like we are on the right track (WDHS 9, teacher, female, June, 2004).

and

> I feel very supported, I feel encouraged and I feel that my expertise and skills are being recognised (WDHS 8, teacher, female, July, 2004).

The collaborative nature of the teams-based approach evident in both schools in this study provided a vehicle for positive feedback to individual teachers. Valuing

collaboration is a widely recognised condition for successful school reform (Clark & Clark, 1996; Molinaro & Drake, 1997). This aspect is also linked to the notions of shared leadership and inclusion of teachers in decision-making for change implementation (Fullan, 2001; Hargreaves, 2003; Poppleton & Williamson, 2004).

iii. Valued Higher Purpose: Teachers who see the change as conforming to a philosophy/ideology of teaching they value.

As noted earlier, the ELs curriculum was a learner-centred, constructivist approach (Wertsch 1985) to curriculum design that acknowledged the uniqueness and complexity of the learner who makes meaning of their learning experiences in their own way DoE, 2002). The ELs initiative was occurring amid world-wide calls for curriculum based on the needs of the 21st century (Luke, 2001; Reich, 2001) and from their responses it was clear that many teachers in this study held philosophical stand-points that were accorded with these ideas and beliefs.

In this context, the ideological congruence of the new curriculum with their personal educational philosophy, for some teachers in this study, had influenced their level of enthusiasm for adopting the ELs curriculum change initiative. For some participating teachers, the ELs was seen as an extension of the intellectual endeavour involved in their work. The integrated curricula, values-based approach was something that teachers had been practising for some time, and so the new curriculum approach aligned with their ideals as one of them explained:

> The ELs philosophy has been my philosophy for ten years and, now that it's in, I guess I am in my element (BPS 40, teacher, female, July, 2004).

Other teachers similarly reported the need for ideological congruence with their personal views in order for them to adopt the ELs, as these teachers attest:

> If I really didn't believe in it [the ELs] I wouldn't do it (BPS 50, teacher, female, July, 2004).

and

> I think you really have to believe in it [the ELs] in order to teach it well (WDHS 17, teacher, female, July, 2004).

The ELs was a broad approach to teaching and learning that was based on constructivist theory (DoE, 2003) in that it acknowledged the uniqueness and complexity of the learner who makes meaning of their learning experiences in their own way (Wertsch, 1985). Teachers who held this broad approach to teaching and learning felt most comfortable with the new curriculum.

Principal Bob Merlot of Winterbrook School, for instance, was clear that the Essential Learnings concerned a particular philosophy of teaching which he felt was part of a shared vision for his school when he predicted the kind of statements teachers in his school would likely make regarding the ELs:

> A shared vision of values and purposes is permeating most of what we do – because we have taken the trouble to do that I believe the comments you will hear about the ELs in this school will be positive (WDHS 3, principal, male, June, 2004).

Participating teachers were largely positive in their articulations about the ELs curriculum framework. The process of their implementation had, in the views of participants, been well consulted and supported, both at school level and through the Department of Education. However, an assessment and reporting process, detailed earlier in this chapter, associated with the ELs was about to be mandated across all schools (DoE, 2004). The implementation of this assessment and reporting system was seen as being mandated with little consultation and a short timeline for implementation, as this teacher and her principal explained:

> We have different assessments but it's all a bit uncertain ... you don't get much of a chance for discussion – Even [the CCO] said she's not sure what aspects we are focussing on. We'll just have to think about this a bit more (WDHS 7, teacher, female, June, 2004).

and

> Concerns are as you would expect. Again, once you are told to switch over to assessment of just the five strands (WDHS 3, principal, male, June, 2004).

Tight timelines for mandated changes were an important mitigating factor in the implementation of the ELs changes.

5.2.7 Consultation and timelines

In the main, despite some misgivings, the principals and many teachers believed they had been well consulted and supported with the development of the ELs curriculum framework. In most schools, student assessment and reporting to parents is a core aspect of school business. Reporting on student progress is an aspect of teachers' work over which both teachers and parents desire a degree of control, as the reports are essentially a communication between these two parties (Bishop & Baird, 2001).

For many teachers in this study, the notion of a department mandating the format of that communication with little consultation was cause for concern. Tasmanian teachers and schools had until this time held sovereignty over reporting formats and many of those who felt included in the development of the ELs may now have felt disenfranchised:

We are dictated to by further up, with reporting and assessment, and sometimes I think – if they only knew the pressure of this happening in a school (WDHS 37, teacher, female, October, 2004).

Winterbrook School principal, Bob Merlot, suggested that teachers would not welcome this imposition from the DoE and feared that such an initiative could, in fact, undermine the sound progress made to date on the ELs curriculum change implementation. As well as expressing concerns (outlined above) about the lack of consultation with schools, Bob's reservations were particularly based on the assessment scale being conceptually flawed. A 15-point scale, he explained, did not fit easily into the ten year structure of Tasmanian schooling yet teachers would be required to use the new assessment and reporting system by the following school year. This meant that the assessment and reporting format did not adhere to Doyle and Ponder's (1978) practicality ethic on the criteria of congruence with existing practice.

On closer examination, Bob's view that sound progress towards such a vitally important and relatively successful curriculum change could be so easily undermined by a mandated reporting process seems questionable. In the context of Fullan's (1993, 1999) elements for successful educational change, there may have been steps Bob and others at Winterbrook could take to ensure continued success of the ELs change implementation at their school. Fullan (1993) holds that "You can't mandate what matters" (p. 23). He explained that there is great complexity of change in skills, thinking and committed actions in an educational enterprise. Fullan (1993) further noted that "effective change agents neither embrace nor ignore mandates. They use them as catalysts to re-examine what they are doing" (1993, p. 24). With this advice in mind, Bob could have spoken in more positive terms about taking up the challenge of using the DoE mandate as a catalyst for change in his school.

It would not be an easy task however for Bob to keep teachers' faith with the change in the face of the mandated changes to assessment and reporting. This teacher's comment typified those made by teachers for whom the new reporting format raised deep concerns:

Reports have to be in a certain way to me otherwise it's not going to match the program I'm teaching nor will it be understood by parents (WDHS 14, teacher, female, July, 2004).

Comments like this from participants suggested that teachers had not been given sufficient time and support through professional development to ensure they were familiar with the new assessment and reporting format and consequently value it for communicating student progress.

Bob had seen this kind of unsupported change before, as he stated:

> All the same concerns are going to emerge that emerged in the late 80s with criterion based assessment (WDHS 2, principal, male, November, 2005).

The full cost/benefit of the new approach to reporting and assessment could not be known by teachers at the time of this study, yet they were acutely aware of the considerable effort that would need to be invested for making the shift to the new format at a time when there was already a significant curricula and pedagogical change with which to come to grips. This teacher noted the difficulty in her comment:

> We are only sort of coming to terms with the ELs and all it encompasses and I fear bigger changes are coming next year with assessment and reporting (WDHS 37, teacher, female, October, 2004).

There was much praise for the ELs as a curriculum suited to 21st century learners and aspects of the early part of the curriculum consultation were seen as effective, yet there remained some scepticism among teachers about some of the implementation processes adopted by the school and DoE, particularly about professional development for teachers. Fullan (2001) described the change processes that had been adopted over the past three decades and pointed to the numerous mistakes that had been made, for example, the failure to distinguish between the change and the change process. This Bass first year teacher reported that the use of professional development time was not suited to his needs:

> I need more control over my professional development. I don't think the Department caters adequately for that. I know we get a lot of professional development days but I think they are used incorrectly (BPS 41, teacher, male, July, 2004).

A teacher of many years' experience noted:

> I do lots of P.D. that is not relevant to me (BPS 45, teacher, female, September, 2004).

These comments reinforce research evidence (e.g., Nemeth, 1989) that a one-size-fits-all approach to professional learning is inappropriate for teachers who have differing professional needs. At both Bass and Winterbrook schools many teachers acknowledged the need for curriculum change and many were comfortable with the change process as it had been an inclusive one – and it fitted broadly the Doyle and Ponder (1978) practicality ethic. There had been professional development and time for collaboration and refection. As Bob had noted, the school had already established certain shared values of respectful discourse and inclusiveness. The change to a new assessment and reporting format had not followed the same process of inclusive steps.

Teachers' views of the place of professional learning in assisting with the implementation of major curriculum and pedagogical change are discussed in the following subsection.

5.2.8 Curriculum leadership for change

Mandated educational changes can be difficult to achieve and sustain (Buffum & Hinman, 2006; Fullan, 1993). Yet, a school that develops as a Professional Learning Community (DuFour, 2004) or a Learning Organisation (Mulford, 2003) has a greater chance of succeeding with and sustaining such changes. Research findings suggest that policy implementers have a different view of the change process to policy initiators (Doyle & Ponder, 1978; Fink, 2000). Teachers and school-based personnel have a variety of practical matters to negotiate when attempting to implement new initiatives which may not have been anticipated by those who write education policy. Practicality, then, leads to adaptation. Teachers in this study talked of adapting curriculum materials to their understandings and perceptions of their students' needs, as this teacher articulated:

> You need to run your programs the best way that suits your students and your teaching style, because we are all different (BPS 41, teacher, male, July, 2004).

Teachers at Winterbrook School claimed to have good intentions and beliefs about change, but did not always have the confidence to move forward into unknown territory. Teachers at this school identified the CCO as helping them to feel part of the change process as this teacher, typical of many, outlined:

> [The CCO] is very, very good at making everyone feel a part of it and making them feel like they have a say and giving them the confidence to do it (WDHS 9, AST, female, June, 2004).

There was a view from senior management that the CCO was the key to the school's success with the ELs change implementation, as these two AP statements attested:

> With Essential Learnings, we are reliant on [the CCO]. We need her to keep us focussed (WDHS 10, AP, male, June, 2004).

> The CCO was seen as someone preaching the gospel and one who can not only 'talk the talk' but also 'walk the walk'. We kept her there even though we weren't any longer funded. That was important otherwise the change process would have just stopped (WDHS 12, AP, male, July, 2004).

The AP's comment (above) that the CCO "can talk the talk and walk the walk" was a reference to the strength of the CCO in curriculum leadership and in her ability to lead by example. Such an approach undoubtedly lent credibility to the role. This kind of distributed leadership is acknowledged as being essential for successful change implementation as teachers need encouragement and guidance to become open to new ideas (Timperley & Robinson, 2001).

For curriculum change to stand a greater chance of success, leadership needs to be distributed widely to involve in leadership roles for teachers who are not in formalised leadership positions (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000; Mulford, 2003). This kind of leadership would differ from that of principal leadership (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000).

Teachers at Winterbrook School felt it important to draw the distinction between the kind of leadership provided by the CCO and that of the principal. One teacher noted that there was a difference between the general vision for change, provided by the principal and the practical assistance of the Curriculum Consultation Officer (CCO) whose job it was to provide practical assistance to teachers in their ELs-based planning and delivery:

> [Bob] is leading us in a visionary sense – [the CCO] in the more practical aspects of what is being implemented in the school today (WDHS 8, AST, female, July, 2004).

The following chapter section examines participating teachers' view of the emotional implications of their work.

5.2.9 Emotional implications of teachers' work

Emotions are central to teachers' work (Hargreaves, 1994, 1998; Zembylas, 2003), yet they are difficult to measure and so tend to be ignored by policy-makers (Constanti & Gibbs, 2004). Emotions help to inform and define a dynamic teacher identity (Zembylas, 2003).

Teachers' emotional engagement with their work in the context of the change process forms a salient theme in this study. Some teachers in this study perceived their emotional engagement with their work to be negatively affected by the change process. Emotional involvement included the effects of working with children whose home lives teachers knew to be dysfunctional at best and sometimes abusive, as this teacher typically explained:

> One child met with a lawyer about a custody issue. I found I had to separate myself [from this] as I'm not her carer, but her teacher, and I found that can be draining. I probably [should] not get so involved with what is going on with the children at home – but, just the same, you are necessarily involved to a certain extent (BPS 42, teacher, female, July, 2004).

Being involved emotionally with issues facing her students, as this teacher did, added to the intensity of the experience of teaching in a school at a time of major change. Further, this statement accords with Ingvarson et al.'s (2005) assertion that teachers expressed

pain at how children's lives were affected by society's ills and felt frustrated and overburdened by what they thought of as their obligations to deal with these issues, frequently with limited resources.

Schools as human environments are necessarily places which influence and are influenced by emotions. Teachers need to learn how to read the emotional responses of students and other teachers, as well as to understand their own emotions if they are to have professional control (Day et al., 2006; Stoll, Fink & Earl, 2003). Emotional intelligence is necessary for managing the tensions teachers face within and across both life phase and identity to sustain and increase teacher commitment, resilience and effectiveness are key challenges for educational leaders and teachers themselves (Day et al., 2006). Achinstein (2002) reported that in some schools some teachers did not deal well with conflict between each other and with members of the community and that those schools can be emotionally exhausting and that individuals run the risk of burnout. One teacher in this study made the comparison between Winterbrook School and his previous school in terms of how conflict was dealt with and its ensuing emotional consequences:

> I think that if I had to teach at [my previous] school for ten years I think I would be very quickly burnt out whereas at [Winterbrook School] it doesn't seem to involve that kind of emotional strain (WDHS 3, teacher, male, June, 2004).

There is a link between emotional exhaustion and psychological burnout (Brouwers & Welko, 1999). The emotional exhaustion that results from sustained high stress leads to two negative attitude factors, depersonalisation and reduced personal accomplishment (Byrne, 1994). It is important for teachers to have feedback from others about one's capacities and psychological and emotional states determining vulnerability to dysfunction (Brouwers & Welko, 1999). While individuals will vary in their susceptibility to it, there is research evidence that emotional exhaustion is variable across school settings (Klusmann et al., 2008).

This teacher participant was aware of the risk he may have run at his previous school and that he would likely be able to endure teaching at Winterbrook School for a longer stint when he stated:

> I am likely to have greater longevity and effectiveness in my teaching [here] (WDHS 3, teacher, male, June, 2004).

The emotional aspect of teaching had a level of influence on both Bass and Winterbrook teachers. Bass Primary School principal, Felicity Marchant, noted her interaction with staff as a largely positive experience:

All of the staff I have an emotional involvement with of some sort – in every case – most of those cases it is a positive involvement (BPS 38, principal, female, June, 2004).

Principal Bob Merlot too perceived the job of teaching as necessarily involving emotional commitment:

Teaching is an emotional business … if you just see the job as a technical job – where you have sets of routines that you have to go through – I think you will be disillusioned very quickly (WHDS 2, teacher, male, June, 2004).

Most teachers cited students and a commitment to having success with them as sources of emotional engagement with their work. This teacher's statement was typical:

A lot of the nasty issues and incidents were occurring and I took it upon myself to really try and guide [the students] through those issues. I got a sense of fulfilment out of that (WDHS 3, teacher, male, June, 2004).

What Bob and others at both schools reported accords with Day et al., (2006) who stated that effective teaching involves "emotional and intellectual investments" (p. xii) from teachers which draw upon personal as well as professional capacities.

This Winterbrook School teacher emphasised the imperative of emotional involvement in teaching:

If you can't feel emotionally about them, then you're not in the right career – some kids more than others, but emotionally yes, if they're not having a good day then mostly you're not having a good day (WDHS 15, teacher, female, July, 2004).

It was, at times, a difficult balance between personal and professional agendas, as this teacher's statement describes:

You can be emotional to get a point across to kids and let the kids know that you are human and still have to have a professional distance. (WDHT 13, male, July, 2004)

The emotional nature of the work could have at the same time positive and negative dimensions (Klusmann et al., 2008) as teachers derived an emotional satisfaction from their classroom work and felt negative emotions in their collaborations as this Bass teacher succinctly explained:

There are two sides to the emotional. [It's] emotional because I enjoy what I do and I feel very positive about my classroom work. Then there are other aspects to do with how the school works that can be negative emotionally because there are some deep differences of opinion (BPS 44, teacher female, July, 2004).

Such a division in the emotional dimension of their work, if heightened at a time of major change, may have had the potential to reduce teacher collaboration (Hargreaves & Fink, 2004).

Research has shown teachers to be motivated by a desire to work with and for people, and to influence positively students' lives (Dinham & Scott, 2000). Teachers in this study confirm that engagement with the learning, development and personal lives of their students provides the positive emotional engagement in their work and enriches them personally and professionally. This emotional engagement becomes a function of teachers' identities, as is explored in the following section.

5.2.10 Teacher emotions and identity

Zembylas (2003) argues that teacher emotional identity is context-embedded in the power relations, ideology, and culture of the education system and school. The emotional engagement of teachers in their work has professional, performative and philosophical dimensions as teachers in their own way negotiate the demands that are placed upon them in various school contexts (O'Connor, 2008).

Emotional engagement is associated by teachers and principals with commitment and success in their work and, as detailed earlier in this chapter, helps form their professional identity. For a number of teachers in this study, their professional identity was linked closely with the notion, noted earlier in this chapter, of teaching as being "more than just a job." Many referred to their work as a "vocation" or "calling," which was integral to defining their emotional sense of self. This comment epitomises the types of responses provided by participants:

> In the sense [that] you put your whole heart into the job – yes, there are times when you get really passionate about what you are doing. (WDHS 35, AST, male, October, 2004)

The way teachers see their work as much more than a job has links to notions of accountability to students defining teacher professionalism, which was discussed earlier in this chapter. Also, to sustain their energy and enthusiasm for the work, teachers need to maintain an emotional investment in the job (Crosswell & Elliott, 2004; Day et al., 2006; Scott, Dinham & Stone, 2001).

The strong sense of emotional engagement in their work of teachers in this study adds to these findings, as teachers believed an emotional connection to be imperative for them to respond to students' needs. Responding to student needs was seen as core to their work and integral to their identity as professionals. These teachers, typical of others, described such an engagement as a positive aspect of their identity:

You can't help but get involved with kids and their lives and where they come from and what sort of day they've had – so if you can't feel emotionally about them, then you're not in the right career (WDHS 16, teacher, female, July, 2004).

and

If I didn't work here I would miss the interaction and that emotional level of working with folk– but it doesn't stress me out – it's my emotional involvement with people that on the whole is pretty positive – not negative (BPS 38, principal, female, June, 2004).

These types of responses align with previous work on teacher identity and emotional engagement. For example, Day et al., (2006) reported that teachers' capacities to sustain commitment were influenced by their sense of professional identity. Teacher identity comprises the interactions between professional (social expectations of a good teacher), situated (local school) and personal (private life) identity dimensions (Day et al., 2006). Events in both their work and private lives influenced, positively and negatively, teachers' well-being and effectiveness. According to Day et al., (2006), most teachers in their study of teachers' work and lives in 100 schools (67%) had a positive sense of identity and acknowledged a close link between their sense of positive, stable identity and their self-efficacy and agency. Teachers in this study, however, were taking the emotional connection with their work a step further. That is to say, they considered a heightened emotional engagement a precursor to being an effective teacher rather than simply a by-product of it.

Further, Walshaw and Anthony (2009) stated that, unlike in some other professions, an association with the workplace, namely the school, has a bearing on teacher identity. This association with place also emerged as a factor in this current study. For example, one teacher noted that:

Well I reckon it becomes a part of you – it's your personality – those who turn up at 8.30 and go at 4.00 are good teachers but it just becomes a job – I tend to get attached – I have become very defensive of this place. I don't like people putting [the school] down (WDHS 12, AP, male, July, 2004)

The demands of being deeply engaged emotionally in their work are apparent in these teachers' comments:

I think teaching is an emotional profession – I think it is a hugely professional roller-coaster of a day every single day – and you have to come in prepared for it – have enough sleep, be healthy, and be ready for the demands of 25 plus kids all pulling you in different directions – the hectic framework of a secondary timetable structure (WDHS 17, teacher, female, July, 2004).

and

> I am very sensitive and I take on the kids a lot and their situations and when they are difficult with me or defiant to me I can hold my stand and I know, like last year, I had a really tough class and I would go home and cry because they were so full-on and in your face all the time (WDHS 31, teacher, female, September, 2004).

Despite being seen by many as integral to their identity and a necessary condition for effective teaching, emotional demands lead to some teachers feeling overwhelmed. This teacher's use of the metaphor of "treading water" denotes a sense of being in survival mode and finding it difficult to make progress or take on new responsibilities:

> Perhaps it is the crowded curriculum and stresses of teaching so that everyone is so busy treading water too, that they have no time energy or inclination to take any interest in anything new (WDHS 1, teacher, female, October, 2004).

New teachers at Winterbrook School reported a sound level of support from leadership, yet there is evidence from teachers in this study about the extent of the emotional challenge of the work. Such challenges remained for more experienced teachers as this teacher, similar to others, noted:

> It's pretty hard emotionally. Generally with the staff as a whole, and the kids, and for me a lack of support. Just the last couple of years I would personally say I have found it quite difficult to continue [teaching] (BPS 45, teacher, female, September, 2004).

This teacher, who had indicated her intention to retire, in fact did so at the end of the school year. This teacher's response to her situation accords with Zembylas (2003) who argued that teachers personally interpret the demands placed upon them through emotions, and make responses based on "the connection of emotion with self-knowledge'' (Zembylas, 2003, p. 213).

A propensity for emotional exhaustion may stem from the way teachers never really switch off from their role. Nias's (1986) study of professional socialisation reported that teachers invest a large amount of themselves in their work and through this investment have similar personal and public identities.

In this study, teacher emotional sensitivity was also focussed, for some teachers, on the subject they taught. This teacher, for example, explained how it was important to be able to engage with students in ways that were suited to framing the subjects being taught:

> It is very emotional for me and I think a lot of it has to do with the type of contact you have with the kids especially in the subjects like Art and Music – it's the way you communicate – it's different to the way you would communicate in say a Maths or an English class (WDHS 14, teacher, female, July, 2004).

Thoughts and feelings about teaching were integral to a teacher's identity and, for many, these pervaded all parts of their lives. The pervasiveness of such feelings about their work provide an insight into understanding the extent of emotional engagement of teachers with their work. Struggle was seen by some as a necessary part of the job, there were descriptions of teacher emotional experiences which suggested that some teachers were struggling. Emotional engagement for some teachers could be negative and had potential to affect their job satisfaction and the quality of their professional relationships.

5.2.11 The impact of teacher emotions on peer interactions

Emotions have a significant role to play in teacher identity (Nias, 1989, 1993, 1996; Zebylas, 2003). Emotions not only work to help define the individual professional identity but also play a role, through social interaction, in defining teachers collectively (Zebylas, 2003). Teachers' internal emotional conditions will likely impact on relationships with those around them. Relationships with peers are of critical importance for team effectiveness. Teachers reported how the stresses of change and lack of time impacted on the quality of peer relationships. For some teachers, this resulted in not finding the time to discuss matters with a colleague and feelings of guilt for not doing so, as this typical response from a teacher participant indicates:

> We haven't got time to sit down and have a meeting and discuss things properly. I know I should make the time. (WDHS 23, teacher, female, August, 2004)

Paradoxically, teachers in this study reported stress and conflict and also a sense of camaraderie as a result of being time-pressured amid the curriculum change. The notion of conflict and the appropriate place to air differences was a strong theme in the comments of the principals and teachers from the two schools in this study. This teacher's comment about the need to have a voice is representative of others:

> I think having that voice, to be able to say how you feel, and being allowed to do that is vital because at least things are out in the open and they can be dealt with (WDHS 3, teacher, male, June, 2004)

However, not everyone would speak up in forums set up for teachers to have their say and Winterbrook School principal, Bob Merlot, considered people who did not engage in these discussions or participate in collective endeavour as a threat to successful school change:

> There's nothing wrong with people who disagree with you, argue with you, but they need to speak up at the appropriate time. ... There are people who are quite negative influences – the ones who just do their own thing, but don't engage with the collective. (WDHS 2, principal, male, June, 2004)

Bob was most concerned about people who operated outside of the formalised collaborative forums and processes. He asserted that people needed to discuss their differences if change was to be successful.

Little (2003) reported that, out of the adversity created under the pressure of educational changes, it is possible for teachers to find new ways of working together. This finding is supported in the data in this study. Despite some evidence of divisions and tensions, there was also evidence of teachers in the two schools in this study working more effectively together. It was acknowledged that this necessarily involved a level of compromise and particular effort on the part of individuals, as these teachers who were representative of others explained:

> I would see that collaboration, working together, sharing and the whole lot is pretty important and I don't think anyone has a problem with that as long as communication is there (WDHS 11, teacher, male, July, 2004).

and

> You just can't put people together and expect them to get on together because we all have personalities and different traits but we then came back and tried, because we were small enough, and the staff took it on board that they wanted to work in teams so we tried and succeeded (WDHS 12, AST, male, July, 2004).

and

> I believe that it's better to sometimes compromise and work well together than not – as a team we all have different ideas and I think I am happy to go with some of the other ideas because I think just because – even though from my perspective I might think my ideas are best for me (BPS 40, teacher, female, July, 2004).

Teaching is intense work and necessarily engages most teachers emotionally (Day et al., 2006). Some of that emotion, particularly in the classroom, is positive and sometimes, where teachers are pushed for time, negative emotions develop. At these times, teachers can come to resent having to work together as an impost on their scarce time that they could be spending on their classrooms. A teacher who raised the issue of needing more time on organising her classroom reported that she was met with a strong reproach from her principal:

> [Felicity] got really quite annoyed and angry and I guess that's because I asked [a question about the ELs implementation] in a whole [of] staff meeting ... Teams, teams, teams! (BPS 48, teacher, female, September, 2004).

Thus, relationships were at times less than congenial. Whereas, on the one hand, Barth (2006) describes congeniality as being receptive, warm, supportive, giving nice responses, being helpful, and so forth. On the other hand, teacher collegiality involves talking about working with students, how to improve teaching and how to disagree

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constructively about delivering lessons (Barth, 2006). Time and financial costs were key inhibitors to participation in professional learning (Day et al., 2006).

Teachers in both schools in this study stated that they valued working together and were aware of a need to find time to do so. They thought of it as necessary to work collegially on planning and, to some extent, curriculum delivery under the new curriculum guidelines. Both principals considered their schools as relatively successful at working collaboratively towards curriculum implementation. However, the tension between an individual teacher's classroom responsibilities and the requirement to work together was evident in both schools.

Finding time to work together on planning, reflection and teaching was seen as essential for developing an identity as a teacher in the new teaching and learning context. Time, in this way, is seen as belonging to both the teaching staff as a group and to the individual teacher. Creative use of time for these purposes in schools was reported by Little (1995). Mulford (2008) similarly advocated finding time in the short term in order to save time in the longer term. Schools also need strong administrative capacities to handle the bureaucratic demands and accountability pressures that occupy a great deal of leaders' time and energy (Mulford, 2008). In this way, the time-pressured environment had tended to alienate teachers from each other. Such isolation, where teachers did not find time to talk, runs counter to the ELs change initiative aims of teacher collaboration. This heightened emotional context is discussed in the following section.

5.2.12 Heightened emotions

In some instances, there was friction and, at times, even open confrontation between teachers in the change-pressured school environment. Work intensification and resulting unresolved conflict could sour relationships between peers as this teacher reported:

> I don't get angry, or very rarely, and I said, basically, if you want this carnival next year then someone has to help because I'm not doing it on my own (BPS 48, teacher, female, September, 2004).

This teacher was perhaps reaching a point beyond that of healthy disagreement. However, research by Achinstein (2002) reported that, as teachers work collaboratively, they frequently encounter conflict over professional beliefs and practice and that this is a useful part of the push and pull of a school improvement and individual development. However, there are also levels of disagreement which can lead to dysfunction. There is also the need for an appropriate forum where dissenting views may be heard (Achinstein, 2002) as consensus decision-making may not always provide such a forum. This teacher

noted that, once a decision had been made, there was little opportunity for disagreement in his school and that consequent feelings of marginalisation, if strongly enough felt, could result in a teacher requesting transfer to another school:

> Once a consensus decision is made, the principal or senior management – it's like a direction – you basically take it on board – a person who is not particularly happy in this school tends to transfer out at the end of the year (WDHS 36, AST, male, October, 2004).

This notion of abiding by a consensus decision meant that the teacher who holds a dissenting view does not necessarily have access to a forum in which he/she can be heard. Listening to teachers is essential for morale and their willingness to take part in shared leadership (Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, 2012; Day et al., 2006). Studies have shown that shared leadership has had a more positive effect on teachers' self-efficacy and morale (MacBeath, 1998; Mitchell & Sackney, 2001).

Shared leadership involves teachers in decision-making processes thus giving them a voice and consequent greater ownership, and therefore acceptance, of school-based decisions. Shared leadership has the added benefit of fostering more positive relationships between principal and teachers as well as between peers, thus reducing the incidence of more extreme, and possibly destructive, conflict.

Some experiences of conflict result in feelings being so fragile that small matters may become magnified. In the stressful context of change, this teacher, for example, found herself consumed by a straight-forward matter which should have been dealt with promptly and not continued to bother her emotionally in the way that it did:

> I had an issue with senior staff this year that wasn't dealt with to my satisfaction but it was nothing to do with teaching – it was to do with an ancillary staff member – behaving inappropriately towards my kids – and I have been very distressed about the whole issue and I'm not happy about the way it was handled – things were said inappropriately to me and I'm not really sure why I needed to go through that (WDHS 23, teacher, female, August, 2004).

It was evident that this teacher was unsure about why she had continued to feel so stressed about the issue. She felt unable to emotionally let go of the matter, or to reconcile her feelings about the events that had taken place and move on, as she stated:

> I feel [Bob] probably went by the book and did what he had to do but I said to him I'm not happy about how it was resolved and I won't be happy about and I won't be changing my mind about it (WDHS 23, teacher, female, August, 2004).

In the pressured context of implementing a major change initiative, from this teacher's point of view, she was unable to resolve the issues related to the incident and it still bothered her.

Work relationships can have an impact on work performance and feedback, or information about how people are getting on with their work, is one important facet of good work relationships (Dee et al., 2002). This teacher perceived the need for positive feedback from colleagues, particularly principals, exemplified the fragility of feelings when additional work effort was invested and not properly acknowledged:

> I have heard a few comments about events I have organised which have dampened my feelings and I've thought, "Oh, gee, why am I doing this" (BPS 49, teacher, male, September, 2004).

Feedback from leaders can help people feel right about decisions affecting them and their work. In their research recommendations, Dinham and Scott (1997) suggested that school communities explore and frequently revisit their own leadership, communication, and decision-making processes. Feedback processes between school leaders and teaching staff were recommended for helping to foster the kind of collegiality needed to solve the majority of problems at school level.

Principal feedback to staff could be important in a range of situations and should be, but is evidently not always a positive experience. When principals are under pressure, feedback may be cursory or even a little offhand (Blase & Blase, 2003). After being encouraged by her principal to submit an expression of interest for an acting senior teacher role, the teacher was overlooked for the position and a decision was made to award the position to another teacher. The resulting lack of appropriate counselling left relations between her and her principal soured. The aggrieved teacher's comment typifies the experience of a lack of feedback of this kind:

> Another teacher got the AST position, and when I asked for feedback [Felicity] just said, "oh, I don't know, that's what we decided". That really compounded a lot of other stuff that had been going and I became a very bitter person because of that – not because I didn't get the position but because I didn't get any real feedback – I was angry, and I didn't like a lot of what Felicity was doing, and not doing, and how I was having to live with it (BPS 48, teacher, female, September, 2004).

Some of the above teacher statements highlight how difficult it is sometimes to maintain strong, trusting professional relationships in schools. It is well documented how, in schools, professional relationships require time as well as commitment if they are to flourish (Bishop, 1998). Teachers in this study raised the issue of the amount and quality of time spent together when workload intensifies. Workload is examined in the following section.

5.2.13 Managing change under pressure

The multi-task nature of teaching and the intensification of work in recent decades makes teaching difficult, even without the requirements associated with major change (Churchill, Williamson & Grady, 1997). This teacher listed some of the tasks involved in his job that were also noted by other participants in this study:

> To teach is to really be on one hand a counsellor, social worker if you like, on the other hand and someone who guides, leads and facilitates learning on the other (WDHS 3, teacher, male, June, 2004).

The organisation of time and prioritisation of tasks were challenging for both principals and teachers. While acknowledging that these challenges always featured in day-to-day school life, participants noted how the centrally mandated new curriculum augmented the pressure they felt in dealing with the myriad requirements of their daily work. This led to some insecurities and divisions between individuals and, for some, feelings of resentment about what they perceived to be the imposed nature of the changes and the ensuing work intensification. Despite many of these negative feelings, there was also a camaraderie that united many teachers who recognised that their colleagues were going through the same stresses and there was an important, shared goal to be achieved. Indeed working together was valued but seen as difficult to achieve effectively.

The data reported by full-time employed participants suggested that, on average, during term time they spent 49.3 hours per week on school business. This figure was the same for both schools in this study and is not dissimilar to work time reported by teachers in other Tasmanian and Australian teacher studies (Gardner & Williamson, 2004; Ingvarson et al., 2005) and a little short of the UK teachers (without management responsibilities) who work around 52 hours each week during term time (McBeath et al., 2004).

The intensification of teachers' work is not merely a time-related phenomenon, although the availability of time is clearly a factor. Churchill, Williamson and Grady (1997) reported that the effects of educational changes were felt most strongly when new practices usurped existing ones, and/or they were externally mandated, multiple and simultaneous innovations. However, when timelines are short and these complexities are present, the work is particularly stressful for teachers (Churchill, Williamson & Grady, 1997; Ingvarson et al., 2005).

The nature of the stresses is epitomised in this teacher's statement:

> Perhaps it is the crowded curriculum and stresses of teaching so that everyone is so busy treading water too, that they have no time energy or inclination to take

any interest in anything else, especially if they don't have to (WDHS 1, teacher, female, October, 2004).

Teacher work intensification involves increasing pressure to complete more tasks, address a burgeoning range of demands from external sources, meet a greater range of targets, and to be subject to deadlines (MacBeath et al., 2004). Researchers have noted particular consequences arising from teacher work intensification and the isolated nature of teachers' work including heightened conflict and expressions of frustration over some issues (MacBeath et al., 2004). Also, Woods (1997) reported that pressure to work together on planning the curriculum, which mainly involved an escalation in the number of meetings, resulted in destroying much of teacher enthusiasm for genuine collaboration that had formerly existed. Thus, pressures can tend to divide teachers. Teachers in this study gave reports which support the findings of these studies. This report from a specialist teacher at Bass Primary School was typical of other teacher's statements:

> It's not deliberate, but schools are such busy places that people don't take the time and, even though I tend to give plenty of feedback to classroom teachers, they won't come my way (BPS 48, teacher, female, September, 2004).

The key arguments in relation to working together towards change when feeling time pressured can be summarised as the following progression represented in Figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1 Work Intensification and Teacher Leadership for Change
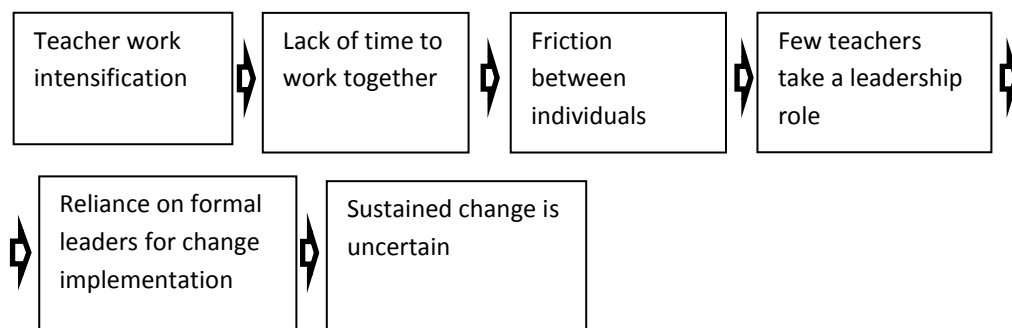
The following section examines school context and leadership as factors influencing teachers' views of their work successes in this time of change.

5.3. School context and leadership

This section concerns the role of the school context and leadership through linking with the community, and the influence of local school culture on teachers' views about their work.

5.3.1 Linking with the community

There are manifold educational benefits of greater links between school and community (Billig, 2000). Particularly, there is a positive effect on the personal development of students (Weiler et al., 1998); there are opportunities for students to become active, positive contributors to society (Youniss, et al., 1997; Yates & Youniss, 1998); and, experiences in the community can help students acquire academic skills and knowledge (Dean & Murdock, 1992; O'Bannon, 1999).

There are also benefits for the school as a whole of engaging more effectively with its community. Berliner (2001) asserted that improving the receptiveness of the school community to what the school has to offer gives teachers a greater chance of success with change initiatives. Teachers in this study were aware of the benefits of such improvements, particularly in a conservative community culture that places little emphasis on aspirations for high educational attainment which can raise young people out of a rural poverty cycle, as is evident in the following comments:

> We should be developing and supporting programs outside the school that encourage students to look at challenging the way things are for them – for a lot there is a cycle and if mum has got six kids and is single, chances are this is what some of these students aspire to. Occasionally one will break the cycle, but not many [do] (WDHS 3, teacher, male, June, 2004).

The problems facing a poor rural community can become issues for teachers in their endeavours to conduct their work. This teacher noted that conflicting student needs within her classroom made it difficult for her students to reach high achievement standards:

> I have high expectations and I want to teach them literacy but at the end of the day if they are happy and safe in this room, that is more important than knowing how to spell, because their family may be completely falling apart, but within the confines of this classroom where they are happy and safe – I that's more important to give to them, I feel (WDHS 31, teacher, female, September, 2004).

A further, related issue for teachers at Winterbrook was a perceived tension between community expectations of the school and the Department of Education (DoE) edicts for major curricular and pedagogical change. Bob Merlot foresaw potential difficulties when

a system-wide, mandated format for assessment and reporting was mandated by the DOE and the need to bring the parent community forward with the change:

> With the whole ELs thing, we are retraining parents in some ways and getting them on board; especially with the reports. [It's] going to be a big issue (WDHS 2, principal, male, November, 2005).

Winterbrook School teachers were also aware that community acceptance of new educational practices could be slow to take hold. This teacher's comment was typical:

> Change in this school is very slow and cautious – think that's the nature of working within a conservative community (WDHS 3, teacher, male, June, 2004).

This Bass teacher's view of her parent community was similar, but she recognised that it was possible for parents to be co-learners, if teachers took the time to work with them:

> You have to educate parents to be co-learners because if we're not all learning together the parents don't understand what you are trying to do and if they're not supporting you that works against the school and the children (BPT 40, female, July, 2004).

From these teachers' representative statements, the nature of the Winterbrook and Bass communities presented particular challenges for those attempting to institute educational change. Yet, the principal had a vision of the school as engaging the whole community when he stated:

> It is an interesting challenge in that you see educational thinking; it is becoming a learning centre for the whole community as opposed to just the K-10 [students] (WDHS 2, principal, male, June, 2004).

The views of principal Bob Merlot and his teachers accord with Henchy (1999) who held that new approaches have important implications for how schools are organised, how teachers do their work, the way in which programs are adapted to individual and community needs, and the types of learning that are given priority in schools. Bob's view is consistent also with Barnett and McCormick (2003) who argued that a school's engagement with the wider community can help build relationships between staff and the parents, which are central to developing the school's standing in its local community and the relative success of leadership initiatives.

The two principal participants in this study both agreed with Leithwood's (2003) assertion that their leadership must reflect the interests, values and beliefs of a school community. Bob Merlot noted how he had worked at making sure parents were confident about the school:

> You have to manage the perception in the community that what goes on in this school is as good as anywhere else (WDHS 2, principal, male, June, 2004).

The principal also stated:

> I think you have to have the ability to set the vision for the place – but that is largely the community's vision – because if you just have this simplistic vision imposed from somewhere else then it's not going to work – so each community has to be able to set its own vision(WDHS 2, principal, male, June, 2004).

Bob Merlot envisaged a deep involvement of the local community with the school to the extent that it was more than simply community ownership of what the school was doing, it was the community taking part in the day-to-day activities of the school. The notions of bringing the community into the school and taking the school out into the community were key elements of the structural changes favoured by the ELs curriculum framework (DoE, 2003).

At Bass, Felicity was clear that her school was engaging with its community:

> We are getting parents [into the school]. In first term we had something like 160 parents who had been in to the school, not for parent teacher but as volunteers. What we call what we call Project 4 is taking us out into the community to build our social capital (BPS 38, principal, female, June, 2004).

Felicity had made community involvement a particular goal as she had noted in informal discussions that, in the past, it had often been the same small group of parents who had taken an interest in the school.

The particular culture of the school and the way each school attempted to engage their communities had an influence on the way the change initiatives were experienced and adopted by teachers at the two schools. This local cultural influence is explored in the next section.

5.3.2 The influence of local school culture

School culture involves the underlining set of norms, values, beliefs, rituals, and traditions that make up the unwritten rules of how to think, feel and act in an organisation (Deal & Patterson, 2002). In a school with a positive culture, there is a set of values that supports professional development of teachers, a sense of responsibility for student learning, and a positive, caring atmosphere. The importance of school culture for the success of change initiatives has been shown in recent syntheses of research (Lindahl, 2006) and was a work-related issue which was raised in the statements of teachers who participated in this study.

There was a larger proportion of younger teachers in rural and north west Tasmanian schools (DoE, 2004) at the time of this study. Having a number of younger teachers who

were enthusiastic about the ELs change implementation was a feature of both sites and was a particularly strong characteristic of Winterbrook School.

Banks (1995) advocated an empowering school culture which involves the process of restructuring the culture and organisation of the school to include all teachers, students and parents in making a school more successful through maximising equity. Connecting school culture with the broader school community was a challenge that both principals – Bob and Felicity – acknowledged. The benefit of involving the local community in the school was confirmed in the views of both principals in the study, but is nuanced differently for each.

Bass Principal, Felicity Marchant, perceived the need to involve the wider school community in talking about educational matters:

> We should be going out there [in the community] more, sharing what we have, what we know and value. [Seeing] what views we can promote, what debate we can foster, talking about educational issues (BPS 38, principal, female, June, 2004).

Winterbrook Principal Bob Merlot's vision went further in the sense that he considered fuller engagement of the school with the community as mutually beneficial:

> We are also becoming a community learning school. This will lead to building social capital for the whole community. It is a significant change that is happening here (WDHS 2, principal, male, June, 2004).

Bob's view was consistent with Kilpatrick et al., (2003) who argued that there was a reciprocal advantage to schools and communities with mature partnerships. The school is an important part of a rural community, especially for maximising its young people's opportunities through retention into education and training (Kilpatrick et al., 2002). It is possible to promote that importance within the community and foster better community involvement in a school (Kimash & Hoffman, 2009).

Both principals expressed a sense of being alone with their communities and a lack of understanding about this from the bureaucracy. Bob noted that bureaucrats and policy makers failed to grasp the importance of a unique local culture for setting school goals, when he remarked:

> They still see schools as the little red schoolhouse on the top of the hill and that what goes in these boxes is, in some senses, all the same (WDHS 2, principal, male, June, 2004).

Felicity was open about her wariness of asking the District Office for help when she said:

> I'll ask someone a bit further up the line – in District Office – but I'm a bit wary of doing it too often, unless I'm sure of myself (BPS 38, principal, female, June, 2004).

This unease about consulting with District Office meant that Felicity, who was a relatively new principal, made her own decisions when dealing with a local problem when sometimes she believed she may have benefitted from independent guidance, particularly at this time of major pedagogical change.

Change in this rural school could be seen as necessarily gradual. The importance of building a culture and at the same time recognising realistic goals were expressed by this Bass teacher:

> Expectations are high and we expect that we will move the children as far as we can but we are not unrealistic (WDHS 37, teacher, female, October, 2004).

Being "not unrealistic" meant not challenging the local culture of mediocrity too much. Felicity, however, showed she was ambitious about change toward improving student achievement when she said:

> I think that our students are meeting all the benchmarks and expectations and fit in quite fine but then so are many schools with their achievement who are not as comfortable [socio economically] (BPS 38, principal, female, June, 2004).

Felicity she was willing to challenge the local culture as she went on to say:

> So, to me the bar isn't high enough, but that's my personal view and I do debate that with others here at this school (BPS 38, principal, female, June, 2004).

School leadership is seen as pivotal for the development of a school as a learning organisation which develops shared goals; establishes collaborative teaching and learning environments; and encourages initiatives and risk taking (Silins & Mulford, 2002). Both principals in this study articulated their commitment to such aims. Leadership towards these ends is precarious and dependent on quality interaction between teachers. In turn, support from a school's leadership exerts crucial pressure on school culture and influences the quality of collaboration possible in each context (Borman et al., 1995, 2001).

Participating teachers' perceptions of leadership varied. This is discussed in the following section of this thesis.

5.3.3 Delegated leadership for a transition to ELs

Teachers in this study perceived leadership in a range of ways, but mainly as vested in formal leadership positions, supported by others who led in their areas of curriculum and year level expertise. Some teachers looked upon those teachers in charge of subject areas – year coordinators and those who help others with resources – as educational leaders but, more often, teachers recognised only those in formalised positions, such as ASTs and APs, as leaders. At Winterbrook School, particular mention was made by many teachers of the role of the curriculum consultation officer (CCO) as a key teaching and learning leader and facilitator in the school. The facilitator is critical for a successful professional development program, as research by Borko (2004) showed the importance of this role for guiding teachers as they construct new knowledge and practices. Facilitators must be able to sustain a community of learners which values inquiry, and they must structure these learning experiences appropriately for teachers to remain on track (Remillard & Geist, 2002; Seago, 2004).

In accord with this research knowledge, the CCO was an additional, formal, leadership position created at local school level specifically to assist in the implementation of the ELs curriculum changes. Having this formalised leadership position meant that teachers had ready access to a staff colleague they could approach for assistance and guidance on their work towards the ELs. Such a formally delegated position differs from the concept of distributed or shared leadership (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000).

School leadership is seen as distributed when teachers not in formal leadership positions are sharing in leadership roles (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000). Gronn (2002) suggests that distributed leadership is the kind of leadership that is applicable in contemporary, information-rich society as "schools now operate in complex, data-rich task environments as never before" (p. 18). Also, where leadership is dispersed, change initiatives are seen to be more sustainable (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; Mulford, 2003).

Teachers at Winterbrook School certainly valued the CCO for the assistance she provided them in making the ELs transition, as many of them praised the notion of the position and the work she was doing in her role. While not conforming strictly to the notion of distributed leadership in the sense of it being teacher leadership, as outlined by Gronn (2002), the decision to appoint a teacher to such a curriculum leadership role may have enhanced the sustainability of the ELs changes at Winterbrook School. Participating teachers quoted earlier in this chapter noted that the CCO's assistance strengthened the

confidence of individual teachers across a diverse school setting to take on new approaches to teaching and learning.

A degree of shared or distributed leadership was claimed by the two principals at the participating schools. The Winterbrook School principal Bob Merlot went so far as to state that there were as many leaders as there were teachers:

> I subscribe to the theory that teachers are leaders and if you subscribe to that then we have 35 leaders (WDHS 2, principal, male, June, 2004).

This could be seen as an overstatement if referring to leadership for curriculum change, yet, in order to be successful, teachers no doubt provided a measure of leadership within their classrooms. There was also evidence that some classroom teachers at Winterbrook provided leadership within their section of the school helping and mentoring their colleagues, as these teachers' typical statements describe:

> I have enjoyed the mentoring especially from the more experienced teachers (WDHS 30, teacher, male, September, 2004).

and

> I spent the first year getting programs in place. This year I feel much more competent and confident and I spend a lot more time assisting teachers newer into the [Science] area (WDHS 17, teacher, female, July, 2004).

Bass Primary principal Felicity Marchant identified teachers with specific skills who could provide leadership within their areas, even if she considered that leadership as pertaining to a narrow field of expertise, when she said:

> [One of the teachers here] is working within the [grade] 3-4 area and her colleagues are quite committed to what she is doing because they are a very unique supportive group but [this teacher] neither has the confidence nor the trust outside that circle to lead everybody yet, but she does have leadership ability (BPS 38, principal, female, June, 2004).

Felicity identified teachers at Bass who led on certain curriculum areas:

> There is one teacher who has knowledge in numeracy and one has some stuff on ICT – but they're narrow, not the big picture things –their leadership skill is in very identifiable pockets rather than across the board. (BPS 38, principal, female, June, 2004)

Again, asked about what leadership is facilitating the change process, teachers at Bass tended to identify those in formal leadership positions. This teacher's statement typified that view:

> We've got two AST2's and I think we all are – the people who are in charge of different aspects of the curriculum (BPS 39, teacher, female, July, 2004)

At Winterbrook School too, there was a perception that those in formal leadership positions were performing mainly managerial tasks rather than leadership for major curriculum change, as this teacher typical of others, explained:

> [The AST] says you need to do your testing now, or you need to do this testing and you deal with that, but I think that's part of the management of the school and doesn't impose on your classroom practice (WDHS 32, teacher, female, October, 2004).

There was, therefore, a consistent pattern of belief that the change process at both schools was being facilitated by those in formalised leadership positions, and not by a form of teacher shared leadership supporting a sustainable process of change. Perceptions of leadership density in the two participating schools are discussed in the following section.

5.3.4 Leadership density

The premise that teachers respond better to cultural change through being co-opted into the change process than to edicts for change creating greater leadership density is seen as a crucial to facilitate change in schools (Fullan, 2010; Sergiovanni, 2001). Leadership density in schools is thus important for school improvement (Barth, 2001; Fullan, 2000; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; Mulford, 2003; Silins & Mulford, 2002).

The transformational leadership model (Hallinger, 2003; Leithwood et al., 1998; Mulford & Silins, 2009) also does not assume that the principal alone will create the conditions necessary to transform a school and, in fact, under this model, leadership shared with staff is desirable (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000; Mulford, 2003; Ogawa & Bossert, 1995). Compared with traditional instructional leadership, which is sometimes called transactional leadership (e.g. Bycio et al., 1995; Howell & Avolio, 1993; Silins, 1994) that focuses on existing relationships and maintenance of a status quo, transformational leadership seeks to extend the aspirations of all through synergising the leadership capabilities of many rather than relying one leader to show the way.

Greater leadership density can be created in a variety of ways to create a culture that empowers members of the school community. This can involve the negotiation and implement a variety of leadership development strategies such as delegation of authority and responsibility, coaching and mentoring as well as establishing and maintaining processes to ensure the emergence and support of teacher and student leadership.

At Bass Primary School, the smaller of the two schools in this study, teachers and principal were conscious of a lack of senior staff and a consequent need to co-opt others

into taking on leadership for the curriculum change, as is noted in this teacher's statement:

> Including the principal, there are three people in senior positions at the school at the moment, and two of these share the AST role (BPS 48, teacher, female, September, 2004)

Despite being nearly twice the size of Bass, Winterbrook was a district school with fewer than 200 high school students and viewed by some of its year 7-10 teachers as small and lacking in leadership density, as these teachers pointed out:

> I think one of the things about the school because it's small – it's very small – although I'm a classroom teacher and I'm in charge of Maths (WDHS 5, teacher, male, June, 2004).

and

> It's such a small staff and there's a lot of one-man bands around so everyone has to pitch in (WDHS 7, teacher, female, June, 2004).

In practice, therefore, this meant that, in terms of managing teaching resources, a level of cooperation between teachers was necessary. Yet, it was not necessarily the case that teachers were all taking responsibility for leadership for curriculum change in the sense described by Mulford, (2003) and Hargreaves & Fink, (2004). Having seniority within a curriculum area at Winterbrook School was quite different to exerting leadership influence for change. Bass principal, Felicity, talked about formal and informal leaders in her school. She made particular note of individuals who provided leadership in their particular areas of interest and expertise:

> My AST is an educational leader. She came to the school with a whole range of skills and especially leadership qualities. There are also teachers who are educational leaders. One who has knowledge of educational theory – and two early career year teachers whom I am hopeful I will see a lot more educational leadership from (BPS 38, principal, female, June, 2004).

In her small primary school, Felicity believed that she was drawing out leadership ability in her young teachers to assist with the curriculum change. This too presented as a form of delegated leadership rather than the more spontaneous, shared leadership described in the literature (Mulford, 2003; Hargreaves & Fink, 2004). By most by reports of most teachers at both Bass and Winterbrook, and, like teachers in numerous other studies (Bellon & Beaudry, 1992; Bishop & Mulford, 1996; Sheppard & Brown, 1996), they did not view themselves as leaders.

The comparatively larger and more diverse Winterbrook School took a different approach to teacher leadership. An Assistant Principal at Winterbrook School described how it was difficult to resource innovations like the CCO position. Yet, the imperative to have

someone guide the change process meant that the school must find the resources to have such a position, as this AP explained:

> If you put someone in charge of something and not give them time or resources then we are wasting our time and at that point we made a conscious decision we would try and maintain the 0.5 FTE for [the CCO] to continue work on the curriculum implementation (WDHS 12, AP, male, July, 2004).

The additional, formal, leadership position dedicated to whole of school curriculum implementation, in a K-12 school like Winterbrook, likely helped maintain a momentum of change. Even though few teachers at both schools considered themselves as leaders, many reported that there were plenty of leadership opportunities available, should individuals be inclined to take them up.

5.3.5 Leadership opportunities

There was a perception among teachers at both schools of attempts to flatten their school's leadership structures, yet not a confidence that such flattening had in fact taken place. One AST was asked about the opportunities present at Winterbrook School for teachers to exercise their leadership skills and her response was ambivalent:

> I don't think people always want to take them up, but there are opportunities for people to lead things and quite often people will be asked, and also there is the option to go into a staff meeting and say, 'I'm interested in this and is there an opportunity for me to do this', but few take this up (WDHS 9, AST, female, June, 2004).

The view of teachers at both schools was that only the few teachers with self-advancement ambitions tended to take on major curriculum leadership responsibilities. Is view is similar to that reported by Churchill et al. (1996) that many teachers developed a belief that the main motivator for proponents of educational-change initiatives was their own career advancement. The AST supported this thinking as she went on to link leadership with career advancement rather than seeing it as helping the school to move forward on the curriculum change journey:

> Quite a few of the people who are in the leadership roles now are people who initially came to [Winterbrook School] as classroom teachers and took up opportunities (WDHS 9, AST, female, June, 2004).

The responsibility of leading for the curriculum change at Winterbrook School, from a teacher's perspective, was seen as resting with the principal and the CCO as these teachers explained:

> [The CCO] has been able to steer the staff and the school very much into the ELs and so obviously has [the principal]. He certainly has been encouraging the staff and certainly leading us in our thinking (WDHS 8, AST, female, July, 2004).

and

> [The CCO] is also influencing the way we are going with teaching and developing our approaches in the school (WDHS 3, teacher, male, June, 2004).

At Bass too, teachers could see that, despite rhetoric of trying to disperse leadership, the principal was providing the driving force for change. The statement of this teacher exemplifies this widely held perception:

> I see that [Felicity] is trying to delegate a lot more of it – and I can see the school is aiming for the flat leadership and it is basically what you are prepared to take on – I think there is a lot of opportunity that is not always taken up (BPS 40, teacher, female, July, 2004).

School leadership is only seen as shared when teachers who are not in formal leadership positions willingly share in leadership roles (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000). Models of leadership that are overly reliant on key individuals are seen as unsustainable (Hargreaves & Fink, 2004).

Principal leadership style differed between the two schools which formed the cases for this study and is examined in the following chapter section.

5.3.6 Principal leadership styles

Recent research has shown that leadership factors in schools have a marked effect on school improvement data; specifically, school academic capacity and indirect rates of growth in student reading achievement (Hallinger & Heck, 2010, Leithwood et al., 2010). Both principals in this study stated the room for such improvement in their schools:

> [In] my personal view, and I do debate that with others, I think we could do a lot better (BPS 38, principal, female, June, 2004).

and

> We're certainly looking to see how we can improve (WDHS 2, principal, male, June, 2004).

Bob perceived his leadership as facilitating a high degree of teacher autonomy about how to implement the new curriculum changes. He was clear that he trusted his teachers to plan for and deliver effective learning when he said:

> Giving them autonomy to make decisions about their classroom practice – set targets. How they actually get there is their choice (WDHS 2, principal, male, June, 2004).

His teachers were aware of the trust he invested in them to perform in their classrooms as this teacher representative of others stated:

> [Bob] said, "It's your domain, you do what you need to do", and he had confidence in us to do what we need to do in the classroom (WDHS 20, teacher, female, August, 2004).

In expressing this view, Bob was suggesting that he did not see the domain of the classroom as a place in which he would attempt to exert direct influence upon teacher practice. In this way, his beliefs and actions are aligned with those of distributed leadership described by Spillane (2005) as a form of leadership "distributed over an interactive web of people and situations" (p. 144). This was also a practical standpoint as Bob's role as principal at Winterbrook School meant that he was frequently too busy to make his skills available across the school. Although an old leadership notion, Bob's leadership could be construed as delegative in style. Delegative leadership is a relatively "hands off" approach in which the leader places great responsibility on lower level managers and employees (Bass, 2008).

In contrast to Bob, there was no statement from Felicity about a conscious attempt to disperse leadership to implement change. In fact, Felicity understood herself as a more "hands on" leader. She noted how she would appear, unannounced, in a teacher's classroom and ask them to explain what they were teaching and why they were teaching it in the way they were. She believed that this was a legitimate form of principal feedback, although she acknowledged that it was confronting for teachers at times. She was frank about this when she said:

> If I'm holding this mirror and you're looking in it and you don't see somebody that you're happy with or practices that you're happy with, then it's hard (BPS 38, principal, female, June, 2004).

Felicity attested to belief in a democratic approach to leadership which is evidenced in her establishing the teams-based approach to curriculum decision-making and her willingness to take part in debate with teachers and, usually, to accept the decision they made:

> I give them the general guidelines and discussed it at some length – what it is about then I just trust them to go and do it (BPS 38, principal, female, June, 2004).

Her deferring to democratically made decisions was on occasion not without debate and conjecture. Indeed, Felicity's was at times a confronting form of leadership, so it was not unexpected that this would result in some teachers feeling under threat, and thus have implications for the quality of teacher peer relations within the school and arguably ultimately impact on the success of the ELs' implementation.

Transformational leadership occurring when leaders and followers unite in pursuit of higher order, common goals is the focus of the following subsection of this thesis.

5.3.7 Expectations of transformational leaders

There is a challenge for schools in adopting change strategies that will endure (Silins, Zarins & Mulford, 2002). Much is expected of leaders in times of major change as teachers feel stressed and insecure. In the two schools in this study, teachers relied particularly upon three leaders to facilitate the curriculum change. These three leaders were the principals of the two schools as well as the curriculum consultation officer at Winterbrook School. As leaders, they were offering the challenge of the change journey (Fullan, 2002; Jackson, 2000) and teachers looked to these people to show them the way forward. Positive feedback from leaders (as noted in section A of this chapter) was a key driver for teachers taking on the new curriculum. The challenge of change required principals and the curriculum consultation officer to be not only visible as instructional leaders but also to provide the modelling and culture building of a "transformational" leader (Hallinger, 2003).

Transformational leadership is hypothesised to occur when leaders and followers unite in pursuit of higher order common goals, when people "engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality" (Burns, 1978, p. 20). There has been the call for a new transformational leadership in which principals and teachers help each other to advance to higher levels of school achievement and morale (Hallinger, 2003). Such high aims for principal leadership are difficult to achieve as instructional leadership requires dealing with the day-to-day challenges that schools present (Mulford, 2003). Such challenges were plentiful for principals in this study as they stated:

> It's a balancing act between setting that big picture and letting go of day-to-day stuff because you can be really busy as a principal and work yourself into the ground (WDHS 2, principal, male, June, 2004).

and

> As well as managing the everyday, there is the challenge of reflecting on some of our out-moded practices and trying to say – put up the mirror – see what it looks like and make changes (BPS 38, principal, female, June, 2004).

The principal can provide some of the leadership, however, for change to be sustained long term, teachers must themselves assume increasing levels of ownership over proposed changes in the school (Hallinger, 2003, Hallinger & Heck 2010). Principals and teachers face local cultural (Lindahl, 2006) as well as systemic structural constraints

(Hallinger, 2003) in their attempts to develop a culture of staff-wide responsibility for sustained change. Under the leadership structure of the two schools, these individuals stood out because others relied on them significantly to help them cope with the changes under the Essential Learnings. These teacher's comments were typical of others:

> [The CCO] is very, very good at making everyone feel a part of it and making them feel like they have a say and getting people to come on board (WDHS 9, AST, female, June, 2004).

and

> [The principal] certainly has been leading us in our thinking and providing the staff with the vision for the future (WDHS 8, AST, female, July, 2004).

and

> [The principal] provides a clear understanding of the goals of education within the school ... clear and shared. She gives us opportunities to meet and mix and develop a rapport (BPS 48, AST, female, September, 2004).

Teachers in both schools expected strong leadership from those in formal leadership positions. This leadership took a range of forms from aspects of day-to-day practical concern, such as teaching resource and behaviour management, through to the ELs curriculum implementation. For the latter, expectation was especially high for the two principals and the CCO who were expected to show the way forward on the curriculum change, encouraging teachers to take on new methods and remain goal-focussed. To reinforce this, day-to-day leadership requires feedback and direction as the following comment from a teacher at Winterbrook School, which was typical of teachers' views, on the role of principal instructional leadership in both schools:

> You may not have to take it on board all the time, but at least feedback and direction is given as to the way the principal and the school think you should be moving (WDHS 3, teacher, male, June, 2004).

At Winterbrook School, the CCO's role was important in facilitating the curriculum change, but it was Bob who remained the key driver of curriculum change, as these teachers clearly stated:

> [We are engaged in] a total restructure of what we do. This causes us to look very closely at our teaching. It's [the principal] who facilitates this change (WDHS 13, teacher, male, July, 2004).

and

> There are a number of teachers who provide educational leadership in lots of different ways – like the person in charge of the curriculum consultation or people who are in charge of their areas, individual teachers, to an extent. They provide leadership and they are role models, but [the principal] is of course the main educational leader (WDHS 16, AP, female, July, 2004).

5.3.8 Leaders addressing the challenge of change

Models of leadership which are too reliant on key individuals are seen as unsustainable (Hargreaves & Fink, 2004). For all three key change leaders in this study, sustaining their leadership efforts at the two schools proved a challenge. Following the major period of data collection for this study, the principal remained at Winterbrook School for less than another full school year and the CCO had left the school after only two months. The principal at Bass moved at the completion of the following school year, a year that was widely seen as a difficult year as the DoE push for implementation of the ELs and its assessment and reporting component were intensified (AEU, 2006). Bob Merlot explained in a later interview, after he had left the school, that this was all too much for teachers and the school:

> You cannot push people like they were pushed in 2005 and I think they were pushing people. An enormous amount of change happened last year (WDHS 2, former principal, December, 2005).

Speaking in retrospect, in her final interview for this study, Felicity concurred with Bob Merlot about the frenetic pace required for implementation of the ELs assessment and reporting:

> We just dedicated all of third term and it was fine. We just dropped all the other things, and … we had our [assessment and reporting process] ready before most other primary schools (BPS 38, principal, female, December, 2005).

Even at Winterbrook with the assistance of the CCO it there were stresses. The responsibility for assisting other teachers with the curriculum implementation, while continuing to teach her own classes for the remainder of the week, took its toll on the CCO. When she was asked to describe her teaching at the first interview, the CCO described how difficult it was to balance curriculum leadership responsibilities and a teaching load:

> This year [I am] a bit crabby. Mainly because with my CCO responsibilities I don't see students enough and everywhere I go I have to set expectations and that really gets to me, but I have to put myself in the kids' shoes. When I first started teaching I was more light hearted (WDHS 21, CCO, female, August, 2004).

When the CCO was interviewed for a second and final time, three months after this initial interview, she indicated that she would not be continuing as a teacher at Winterbrook School in the following year. She was very clear about why she had made this decision when she stated:

> [This] school is pretty supportive of the ELs and of my role in helping to implement it, but I just want to be a regular classroom teacher again now. I have

been told that I have a transfer to a primary school on the coast. I will not mention when I start there about the role I've had [as CCO] here at this school (WDHS 21, CCO, female, November, 2004).

It was clear that the CCO wanted to put the experience of being a curriculum leader behind her. Research shows that teachers are motivated by a desire to work with and for people, and they especially found high satisfaction when focussed on the core business of teaching (Dinham & Scott, 2000). The CCO claimed that having her time divided between classroom responsibilities and those of curriculum leadership was unsustainable. This meant that she had to make a choice about whether to continue in the role or to revert to a solely teaching role. The experiences of leaders in the two schools accords with Smylie and Denny (1990) who reported that time constraints were the major inhibitor for teacher leaders and led to role conflict and ambiguity that made it difficult for them to perform their leadership functions. Leaders in this study ultimately responded to such tensions with leaving their positions.

For the three key leaders in these two schools, playing a central role in ensuring their school was successful in implementing the ELs curriculum was a major undertaking that they firmly believed to be worthwhile. However, it is disquieting to note that all three had moved on from their schools within the 12 months following this study. There was a hint of regret in Bob Merlot's voice as he reflected on his imperative to move on from the position as principal at Winterbrook School:

> I am happy that I have made the move [to a new position] now, but there are still days where I thought I had left it when the job was about [finished], but the job is never done (WDHS 2, former principal, December, 2005).

Felicity indicated that, at one level, she regretted that she was not as prescriptive about the change implementation as she could have been:

> It's easy to be wise in hindsight, but they [some teachers] struggle without an explicit curriculum. Other people are not particularly perturbed about [having a detailed curriculum provided for them]. One of our goals now is that we are going to develop very explicit curriculum (BPS 38, principal, December, 2005).

Wagner (2001) noted that teaching attracts people who, like craftspeople, enjoy working alone and take great pride in developing and perfecting their expertise and producing something unique. Yet, research has also shown that there are teachers who desire to be provided with, at least to some extent, explicitly prescribed curriculum materials (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006). Even for those who prefer greater curriculum autonomy and creativity, time constraints dictate the need for curriculum materials in a readily

accessible form. Evidence in this study shows that school leaders were able to help facilitate teacher access to curriculum materials.

It is arguable that, in line with the contingency approach to organisational effectiveness identified by Bossert et al., (1982), these three key leaders in the two schools played their roles effectively for a time or in a phase of the school's development. The sustainability of change would depend on the particular mix of individuals and the strength of their collective efforts. How teachers felt – their emotional dimension – would be important for sustaining change.

5.4 Conclusions

The general purpose of this study was to explore teacher and principal perceptions of their professional work and issues which arise in the context of working together to implement major curriculum change. Specifically the study examined, in the two schools which formed the cases for investigation, aspects of teacher professional identity, the kind of leadership for change teachers saw as influencing their work, the nature and difficulty of teachers' work in context of the ELs curriculum change, and the issues teachers identified as arising from teachers' work in the change context. In relation to the specific Research Questions of this study, the thesis report addressed them in the following ways:

Research Question 1. How do teachers and principals in two rural Tasmanian schools perceive their work lives in the context of a major curricular and pedagogical change?

The Essential Learnings context of teachers' work at the two schools and the broader political agenda for education at the time of this study set the tone for the way teachers perceived their work and resulted in work intensification similar to that reported by other researchers (Gardner & Williamson, 2004; Galton & MacBeath, 2008). The respondents reported a sense of urgency about the ELs implementation and a belief in a form of teacher professionalism, like that described by Preston (1996) and Runte (1995), that involved a sense of accountability to parents and students. The teachers reported multiple, but not necessarily conflicting, purposes of their work and had an emotional commitment to their work which, for many, pervaded their non-work lives. In accord with Deal and Ponder's (1978) practicality ethic, many teachers in this study had an instrumental approach to adopting educational change, yet some held strong educational philosophical views along constructivist lines (Wertsch, 1985) which connected them more directly to the ELs way of working. Teachers responded to forms of leadership (Mulford, 2003; Mulford, Silins & Leithwood, 2004) present in the two schools and some

felt the imperative of change and a culture of positivity towards ELs as motivators to engage with new ways of planning and teaching.

Research Question 2. What issues arise for teachers and principals in two rural Tasmanian schools in the context of a major curricular and pedagogical change?

Many of the aspects that teachers described as contributing to their perceptions of their work lives (Research Question 1.) also presented issues for them. The deep commitment to their work was a factor influencing, as others have found, their engagement in a major educational change initiative (Fullan, 1993; 1999; Day et al., 2006) and many felt that commitment could become too pervasive or too intense. There were concerns that the ELs may be yet another short-lived educational initiative which would be displaced by the next. Issues were raised about lack of DoE consultation and mandated timelines, in agreement with concerns raised by others (Fullan, 1993; 1999; Hargreaves & Fink, 2004) implementing new assessment and reporting were short. Some individuals raised additional concerns about the global nature of the ELs change and the suitability of enquiry-based learning for the early years or senior students. Pressures to raise literacy and numeracy scores were noted by some.

Lack of time to perform daily teaching tasks at the same time as trying to plan for and implement the ELs was frequently raised as it was by others (Gardner and Williamson, 2004) and there were, for some, consequent negative emotions. While some teachers reported working successfully together, being required to work together did not suit some (Hargreave, 1994) who either felt pressured into doing so or considered lines of responsibility for student success difficult to draw in teaching shared classes. Disapproval of a one-size-fits-all approach to professional learning was an issue strongly felt in both schools. Despite a rhetoric of leadership opportunity formal leaders performed most key leadership tasks in the two schools.

As is recognised by other research (Ainscow, 2005; Luke & Chang, 2007), difficulties facing poor, rural communities impacted on teachers as they tried to fulfil their commitments to their students' success and engaging with the community to improve learning outcomes.

5.5 Suggestions for policy and further research

5.5.1 Policy formulation and implementation

These suggestions are offered while being mindful of the earlier acknowledgment of the fact that generalisations cannot be drawn directly from the results of this qualitative case study research. Suggestions presented here are based on the data analysis and underpinned by the literature and it is possible that the reader may consider and temper these with their knowledge of the literature and their own experience in the field. Results of this study showed teachers' views of their work at a time of major curriculum change and the particular stresses and concerns teachers found themselves facing at this time.

Preferred models for the implementation of change, extant in the literature, differ to some extent from the approaches employed in the two schools in this study. The practical constraints of schools working with limited resources to implement such change are evident in the findings of this study and provide some insights into considerations that need to be made in order to implement a large change initiative at school level. There is a suggestion in the findings here of new ways of conceptualising teacher leadership roles in the policy implementation process, therefore, these might be explored to maximise the use of expertise and to enhance effective change transition processes.

Evidence from this study suggests the need to take account of teachers' requirements to work in contexts characterised by trust and support. Teachers who undertake professional learning that they see as relevant to their core role of teaching students must have opportunities to provide their views that are based on their expertise, and knowledge of local school needs. Therefore, a proper respect for teachers' knowledge will be more likely to ensure policy success. There was hence a call from teachers for a greater say in the kind of professional learning they undertake. Whole-of-staff sessions which characterised the kinds of professional learning undertaken during the ELs implementation, while in part useful, were widely perceived as wasting a lot of individuals' time. As time is a precious resource in schools, there was a perceived need for a type of professional learning tailored more to teachers' individual situations and needs. For policy makers and administrators to trust and facilitate teachers' judgements about the kind of professional learning they themselves require would be a significant change from recent practice and of likely professional benefit to teachers.

Although available support in the form of resources and professional learning opportunities were plentiful in the early phase of the ELs implementation, doing more with less appears to have become the accepted approach to educational change implementation processes within the Tasmanian DoE and in other education systems.

Eventually, however, there must come a time when teachers' capacities are exhausted. Particularly since change has been a constant feature of the Tasmanian schooling context and the rate of that change is growing in terms of pace and quantity. Indeed, the increasing rate of change, and the complexity of issues and problems addressed by change, is a widely accepted phenomenon (Williamson & Poppleton, 2004). It is of some relevance to remember then that, in Tasmania, many teachers have been teaching for more than fifteen years with the majority of those teaching for more than twenty years (Gardner & Williamson, 2004). Accordingly, established pedagogic repertoires and a powerful memory of the experience of the stream of changes, evidenced in the deluge of change edicts during the 1990s (DECCD, 1997; Macpherson, 1997), has helped to characterise teachers' attitudes to change as often being unnecessary and ultimately inconsequential.

The fact that the implementation of the Essential Learnings curriculum documents was occurring simultaneously with the introduction of new and complex assessment procedures made it a bridge too far for many teachers. This was also occurring alongside the restructuring of the Tasmanian Education Department from six districts into three operational branches, and 27 clusters of schools, in order to facilitate the improved inclusion of students of all abilities into mainstream schooling.

Furthermore, these changes were taking place in an increasingly politicised context, often characterised by adverse publicity in which teachers are commonly the scapegoats of inept political decisions. Little wonder that teachers maintain that the pace of change is intensifying at a time of insufficient support and resources (Gardner & Williamson, 2004).

In this dramatically changing educational environment, there have been many opportunities when provision could have been made for teacher-representation on advisory committees by senior officers of the Education Department, and indeed the Minister for Education and her consultative groups. Such groups have usually involved teacher representation through their industrial union, the AEU, but not necessarily involved teachers from schools as such classroom teacher-representation brings with it implications for funding. For example, anecdotal evidence suggests that the replacement costs of classroom teachers results in teachers having fewer opportunities to engage with decision-making processes because of these costs, which are not incurred for principals or other non-teaching personnel.

While teachers in this study state their preference to be supported to teach, they express selectivity about their involvement in non-teaching activities, and their stated preference.

The educators who provide professional learning opportunities for current teachers, and new members entering the profession, could advantageously play a more active role in developing teachers' capacities to operate in the rather "hot" political climate that is increasingly characteristic of the milieu in which teachers work.

It is important that school-based personnel are aware of the political agendas that influence the work of schools. Teachers also need to be aware of their own potential for political agency at a local and national level if they are to defend their profession and those whose life chances depend on good teaching (Sachs, 2003).

The sheer number of changes that teachers are expected to cope with focuses attention on Education Department priorities and how these are determined. Therefore, close scrutiny of the Department's strategies for supporting schools during the process of identifying their internal needs and external requirements, suggests an urgency for the development of robust structures and processes for change implementation. An answer may lie in ensuring a more rigorous and fully consulted planning process to be undertaken by schools and supported by DoE personnel.

5.5.2 Further research

Participants in this study provided insights into their professional identities and raised some issues of concern for teachers in the context of the ELs curriculum change initiative. However, it is well to remember that the individual teachers and contextual factors involved in this research were unique and that the major curriculum change provided the particular context in which teachers provided their responses in interviews for this dual site case study. Case study informed understanding of teachers' views of their work was reached as the schools formed bounded systems for analysis of the teacher participants' views. Future research might then usefully adopt a case study approach and focus on particular aspects of teachers' work.

This study focussed specifically on two Tasmanian schools and their teachers' views about their work at a time of major curriculum change. Conducting a similar study in different school and education system settings may yield useful, contrasting results.

By way of comparison, it may be beneficial to conduct research into teachers' perceptions of their work in other education systems. Australian education systems have performed well in international comparative terms (PISA, 2003); however, this country's position has recently fallen in relation to others on tests of maths, science and reading (PISA, 2009). Consistently outperforming Australia has been Finland which has tight entry requirements into the teaching profession and yet affords its teachers high levels of

autonomy at school level. Conducting research, similar to this study, on Finnish teachers about how feel about their work and address issues in the context of major curriculum change, may yield some worthwhile contrasting or confirming results.

Although the ELs curriculum change initiative was a unique context, it may be possible to analyse the views of teachers from other Tasmanian schools of their work in the context of a similar educational change initiative e.g. the Australian Curriculum.

A similar study could also be extended to become more longitudinal. In this instance, follow up questionnaires and interviews could be undertaken to determine longer term impacts on teachers' work of change strategies, for example, five years or ten years after commencement of initial implementation.

Data collection for this study yielded more than 500 pages of transcripts as teachers were invited to speak at length on their feelings about their work and its context. This is an extensive data set and could form the basis for research based on a range of possible research questions. This study began with an intention to find out about teachers' views sense of empowerment in their work and so it would be possible to ask of the data what teachers considered as issues relating to aspects of autonomy and control in their work.

There were numerous issues related to teachers' work and educational change that were raised by the participants in this study. Many of these could be followed up as research topics in their own right.

Of particular note is the teacher professional learning opportunities provided by the school and the DoE. Teachers widely felt they had little say in the PL they undertook and that what was provided was of minimal relevance to their professional needs. There may be benefits in investigating a range of models of professional learning provision for teachers and which ones are more likely to result in teachers making and sustaining educational changes.

One of the principals in this study emphasised how he envisaged his school as becoming a learning organisation. Research about teacher perceptions about the extent of development of a school teaching staff as a community of learners and what is needed for this to take place may be both interesting and useful.

5.6 Summary of Chapter

This chapter provided discussion of the key issues raised by teachers in this study. Discussion was presented in three parts. The first concerned teachers perceptions of the educational and socio-political contexts of change. This included the Essential Learnings context as is included the purposes of teachers' work, teacher professionalism, teachers' responses to the ELs initiative processes of consultation and timelines for change, curriculum leadership, the emotional implications of teachers' work and managing change under pressure. The third part of the discussion section of this chapter involved the school context and leadership and included discussion of the influence of school culture, delegated forms of leadership, leadership density and transformational leadership. The fourth part of the chapter detailed a summary of the study's conclusions. The chapter concluded with suggestions for policy formulation and implementation and for further research.

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Appendix A.

Departmental Consultative Research Committee
Approval to Conduct Research

DEPARTMENT *of* EDUCATION

Tasmania

9 October 2003

Jeff Garsed
Faculty of Education
University of Tasmania
Private Box 66
HOBART TAS 7001

Dear Jeff

RE: TEACHER CONTROL AND AUTONOMY WITHIN THE SCHOOL

I have been advised by the Departmental Consultative Research Committee that the above research study adheres to the guidelines established and that there is no objection to the studies proceeding.

Please note that you have been given permission to proceed at a general level, and not at individual school level. You must still seek approval from the principals of the selected schools before you can proceed in those schools.

A copy of your final reports should be forwarded to the Director, Office for Educational Review, Department of Education, GPO Box 169, Hobart 7001 at your earliest convenience and within six months of the completion of the research phase in Department of Education schools.

Yours sincerely

David Hanlon
A/DEPUTY SECRETARY
(EDUCATION STRATEGIES)

Appendix B.

Information Sheet for Teachers
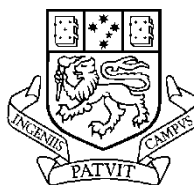
UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

INFORMATION SHEET FOR TEACHERS: Teachers' Work

This study considers the nature of teacher autonomy and control within the broader context of teachers' work. It is being conducted as part of the requirement for the Field Researcher's PhD in the School of Education at the University of Tasmania. It should be noted that the Departmental Consultative Research Committee of the DoE is aware that you have been approached concerning possible inclusion in this study.

Who is conducting the study?

The Chief Researcher is Professor Bill Mulford, School of Education, University of Tasmania.
The Field Researcher is Jeff Garsed, University of Tasmania student who is not a member of the staff of any of the schools included in the study. The research is part of his doctoral studies.

Why was this school selected for participation?

Because it meets the sampling criteria, that is
1. A school with
   a) a mid-range Educational Needs Index.
   b) comparable size to other schools in the study
2. The principal has been based at the school for at least a year.
3. Staffing movements have been relatively low.

What is the time commitment?

This study will initially take a total of five days in your school. During that time you and your principal will be observed and interviewed. The time required for your involvement in this study is about 45 minutes if you take part in the interviews with the Field Researcher.

Are there any benefits to be expected?

Your contributions will be part of a larger depiction of teacher autonomy and control in the school setting, from which your colleagues and educational planners will be better be able to understand the impact of such factors on school effectiveness, including teachers' perceptions of their capacity to teach.

What is the study about?

It is a largely qualitative, case study that employs observation, interview (of teachers and principals), a questionnaire and some analysis of relevant school-based and departmental documents. The study will seek to answer these questions:

1. What are teachers' perceptions of the meaning of teacher autonomy and control within the school context?
2. How much autonomy and control do teachers perceive they have?
3. How do issues of autonomy and control impact on teachers' perceptions of their capacity to teach?

It is believed that teacher perceptions of autonomy and control within the school setting influence the way schools operate and therefore affect student outcomes. This study is especially seeking the opinions of teachers and principals concerning matters of teacher autonomy and control. A fuller explanation of the purpose and rationale of the study can be provided upon its completion. To elaborate further, at this stage, on the purpose and rationale of the study may compromise the integrity of the study or 'lead' you.

Possible Risks

There is a risk that this study could cause embarrassment or affect relationships among or between teachers and principals. Every effort will be made to minimise this risk through anonymity and confidentiality of, and feedback on, responses. You can also elect to withdraw from the study and/or you may also choose to withdraw data or information you have provided at any time.

Anonymity

The researcher will preserve each teacher's identity, as well as the identity of the school. Names of participants will not be used or linked with their respective contributions. The data will be used for research purposes only. If you consider that your participation may cause concern, please feel free to decline from participation.

Confidentiality

Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality of research data. Data obtained in interviews will be stored separately from details of information sources. Data will be securely stored for at least five years and then will be destroyed.

Feedback

The results of the investigations will be forwarded to you. A reporting-back session will also be conducted by the Field Researcher, to either the Principal or the entire staff, subject to your approval.

Participation is voluntary

To opt in, or opt out or withdraw at any time without prejudice is your choice and your decision will be respected.

Ethics Committee Approval

This statement has been approved by the Southern Tasmania Social Science Research Ethics Committee and complies with the laws of the State.

Ethics Committee Contact

The Chair of the Southern Tasmania Social Science Research Ethics Committee, Associate Professor Gino Dal Port, and the Executive Officer, Ms. Amanda Mcaully, can

be contacted (03) 62262763 if you have concerns or complaints of an ethical nature about the study.
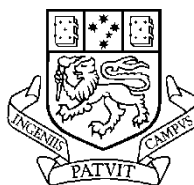
<u>The Chief Investigator</u>

If you have any queries about this study please contact the Chief Investigator, Prof. Bill Mulford, School of Education, University of Tasmania on (03) 62262523.

Thank you for your assistance.

Jeff Garsed
University of Tasmania

01 June 2004

Appendix C.

Information Sheet for Principals

UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PRINCIPALS: Teachers' Work

This study considers the nature of teacher autonomy and control within the broader context of teachers' work. It conducted as part of the requirement for the Field Researcher's PhD in the School of Education at the University of Tasmania. It should be noted that the Departmental Consultative Research Committee and the Arthur District Office of the DoE are aware that you have been approached concerning possible inclusion in this study.

Who is conducting the study?

The Chief Researcher is Professor Bill Mulford, School of Education, University of Tasmania.
The Field Researcher is Jeff Garsed, University of Tasmania student who is not a member of the staff of any of the schools included in the study. The research is part of his doctoral studies.

Why was this school selected for participation?

Because it meets the sampling criteria, that is
2. A primary school with
   c) a mid-range Socio-economic Needs Index.
   d) comparable size to other schools in the study
4. The principal has been based at the school for at least a year.
5. Staffing movements have been relatively low.

What is the time commitment?

This study will initially take a total of five days in your school. During that time you and your staff will be observed and interviewed. In addition, you may be interviewed up to five times over the course of 2004. These interviews are expected to last for up to one hour at a time.

Are there any benefits to be expected?

Your contributions will be part of a larger depiction of teacher autonomy and control in the school setting, from which your colleagues and educational planners will be better be able to understand the impact of such factors on school effectiveness, including teachers' perceptions of their capacity to teach.

What is the study about?

It is a largely qualitative, case study that employs observation, interview (of teachers and principals), a questionnaire and some analysis of relevant school-based and departmental documents. The study will seek to answer these questions:

4. What are teachers' perceptions of the meaning of teacher autonomy and control within the school context?
5. How much autonomy and control do teachers perceive they have?
6. How do issues of autonomy and control impact on teachers' perceptions of their capacity to teach?

It is believed that teacher perceptions of autonomy and control within the school setting influence the way schools operate and therefore affect student outcomes. This study is especially seeking the opinions of teachers and principals concerning matters of teacher autonomy and control. A fuller explanation of the purpose and rationale of the study can be provided upon its completion. To elaborate further, at this stage, on the purpose and rationale of the study may compromise the integrity of the study or 'lead' you.

Possible Risks

There is a risk that this study could cause embarrassment or affect relationships among or between teachers and principals. Every effort will be made to minimise this risk through anonymity and confidentiality of, and feedback on, responses. You can also elect to withdraw from the study and/or you may also choose to withdraw data or information you have provided at any time.

Anonymity

The researcher will preserve each principal's identity, as well as the identity of the school. Names of participants will not be used or linked with their respective contributions. The data will be used for research purposes only. If you consider that your participation may cause concern, please feel free to decline from participation.

Confidentiality

Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality of research data. Data obtained in interviews will be stored separately from details of information sources. Data will be securely stored for at least five years and then will be destroyed.

Feedback

The results of the investigations will be forwarded to you as Principal of this school. A reporting-back session will also be conducted by the Field Researcher, to either the Principal or the entire staff, subject to your approval.

Participation is voluntary

To opt in, or opt out or withdraw at any time without prejudice is your choice and your decision will be respected.

Ethics Committee Approval

This statement has been approved by the Southern Tasmania Social Science Research Ethics Committee and complies with the laws of the State.

Ethics Committee Contact

The Chair of the Southern Tasmania Social Science Research Ethics Committee, Associate Professor Gino Dal Port, and the Executive Officer, Ms. Amanda Mcaully, can

be contacted (03) 62262763 if you have concerns or complaints of an ethical nature about the study.

The Chief Investigator

If you have any queries about this study please contact the Chief Investigator, Prof. Bill Mulford, School of Education, University of Tasmania on (03) 62262523.

Thank you for your assistance.

Jeff Garsed
University of Tasmania

01 June 2004

Appendix D.

Principals' Informed Consent Form

UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

Informed consent for principal participation in the research project
Teachers' Work

This study considers the nature of teacher autonomy and control within the broader context of teachers' work. It conducted as part of the requirement for the Field Researcher's PhD in the School of Education at the University of Tasmania. It should be noted that the Departmental Consultative Research Committee and the Arthur District Office of the DoE are aware that you have been approached concerning possible inclusion in this study.

I agree to participate in this research project and I understand that:
1. The study involves the following procedures: The time required for this study is an initial five days of observation of the principal and teachers by the Field Researcher. During this time I will be interviewed. I further note that I may be interviewed up to five times over the course of 2004. These interviews are expected to last for up to one hour at a time.
2. There is a risk that this study could cause embarrassment amongst or between principals and teachers. Every effort will be made to minimise this risk. If any discomfort should arise during the observation or interviews principals will be invited to cease the particular activity.
3. The study includes answering questions verbally that will be audio-digitally recorded.
4. My participation is entirely voluntary. I may terminate my involvement and/or choose to withdraw data of information I have provided at any time without prejudice.
5. All my data are confidential.
6. All data are for research purposes only. Data will be securely stored for at least five years and then destroyed.
7. I have read and understand the Information Sheet for this study.
8. The nature and possible effects of this study have been explained to me.
9. Any questions have been answered to my satisfaction.
10. I agree that the research data gathered may be published provided that I cannot be identified as a subject.

Name of participant………………………………

Participant's signature………………………………
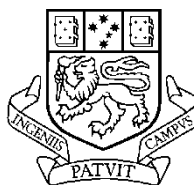   Date……………………

I have explained this project and the implications of participation in it to this volunteer and I believe that the consent is informed and that he/she understands the implications of participation.

Name of investigator (Field Researcher)……………………………………

Field Researcher's signature………………………
        Date……………………

Appendix E.

Teachers' Informed Consent Form

Informed consent for teacher participation in the research project
Teachers' Work

This study considers the nature of teacher autonomy and control within the broader context of teachers' work. It is being conducted as part of the requirement for the Field Researcher's PhD in the School of Education at the University of Tasmania. It should be noted that the Departmental Consultative Research Committee of the DoE is aware that you have been approached concerning possible inclusion in this study.

I agree to participate in this research project and I understand that:

1. The study involves the following procedures: The time required for this study is an initial five days of observation of the principal and teachers by the Field Researcher. During this time I may be involved in two interviews of about 30 minutes each.
2. There is a risk that this study could cause embarrassment amongst or between principals and teachers. Every effort will be made to minimise this risk. If any discomfort should arise during the observation or interviews teachers will be invited to cease the particular activity.
3. The study includes answering questions verbally that will be audio-digitally recorded.
4. My participation is entirely voluntary. I may terminate my involvement and/or choose to withdraw data of information I have provided at any time without prejudice.
5. All my data are confidential.
6. All data are for research purposes only. Data will be securely stored for at least five years and then destroyed.
7. I have read and understand the Information Sheet for this study.
8. The nature and possible effects of this study have been explained to me.
9. Any questions have been answered to my satisfaction.
10. I agree that the research data gathered may be published provided that I cannot be identified as a subject.

Name of participant………………………………

Participant's signature………………………………
        Date……………………

I have explained this project and the implications of participation in it to this volunteer and I believe that the consent is informed and that he/she understands the implications of participation.

Name of investigator (Field Researcher)………………………………………….

Field Researcher's signature…………………………
        Date……………………

Appendix F.

Observation and Shadowing Protocol

Observation and shadowing protocol

The following elements guided the researcher when shadowing principals and observing in schools. In the main, this protocol was adapted from suggestions by Taylor and Bogdan (1998).

- The researcher to dress professionally but not overly formally. Dress to take account of the specific setting.

- The researcher to endeavour to put the principal and others at ease from the outset of field contact. Researcher to show an interest in what principal or teacher does. If principal or teacher requires assistance with a task then the researcher to oblige.

- Unless invited to do otherwise, when in the principal's office, choose a low chair that is offside or at an angle to the principal's seating arrangement. That arrangement will likely be at her/his desk or in a lounge chair.

- When walking with a principal or teacher, unless engaged in conversation with them, the researcher should generally remain just beside and behind them. If not, the researcher should remain at a distance which allows observation of the principal or teacher when they are watching, greeting or interacting with others.

- In situations where the person being shadowed or observed stops to meet with someone in the corridor or elsewhere, researcher to remain relatively unobtrusive and passive. Unless brought to into the conversation, researcher to stay back, approximately a metre away.

- Researcher to remain humble, for example if drawn into conversation.

- Minimise note-taking in the presence of others. Do this as soon as possible after leaving the site.

Appendix G.

Checklist for Document Analysis

Checklist for Document Analysis

The following series of questions provided a starting point for the document analysis which was used in this study. These questions were developed from ideas suggested by Taylor and Bogdan (1998).

- What seems to be the key purpose of the document?
- What are the messages in it?
- What are the key perspectives contained in it?
- What are the document's concerns?
- What, if any, assumptions can be inferred to those who have produced this document?
- What activities are these producers involved in?
- Is there anything missing that one might have expected to find in such a document?
- Does the document provide information about any of the following:
  - ❖ Social constraints?
  - ❖ Social worlds?
  - ❖ Human experiences?
  - ❖ Economic experiences?
  - ❖ Organisational experiences?
  - ❖ Individual responsiveness or creativity?
  - ❖ Chronology of events?

Appendix H.

Participant Demographic Survey Questionnaire

Teacher Questionnaire
(Demographic Information)

1.   Years of teaching   _____

2.   Time taken off for

(paid and unpaid, not including school holidays)

                                 A)   Further study   _____

                                 B)   Long Service Leave _____

                                 C)   Sick Leave   _____

                                 D)   Travel/ recreation   _____

3.   Current salary   _____

4.   Year of birth   _____

5.   Expecting to retire at age   _____

6.   Typical working week hours at school   _____

7.   Typical weekly hours spent working at home _____

8.   Job satisfaction (On a scale of 1 to 7, where 1= very low & 7= very high)

                                 A) On a really bad day   _____

                                 B) On a really good day   _____

                                 C) Typically   _____

9.   Membership of organisations (Yes/No)

                                 A) School council at another school _____

                                 B) Church-related organisation   _____

                                 C) Teacher professional organization _____

                                 D) Australian Education Union (AEU) _____

                                 E) Sporting club   _____

                                 F) Charity organisation   _____

                                 G) Parent-teacher organization   _____

Appendix I.

Semi Structured Interview Schedule (Principals)

Semi Structured Interview Schedule (Principals)

Part A. Greeting and introduction

Wherein the purpose and structure of the interview is explained, the informed consent form signed and the participant is reminded of the confidentiality and anonymity of information. The short demographic survey form is then completed.

Part B. Principal background and identity

Core question: *How did you become principal here at this school and how do you feel about it?*

Part C. Pedagogical style and engagement with students

Core question: *How would you describe your style and approach to teaching?*

Part D. Centres of control and autonomy

Core question: *To what degree do you feel teachers are autonomous professionals and what controls exist in the realm of their work here?*

Part E. The school context, climate of trust, support and collaboration etc.

Core question: *What is it like for you as a principal and team member at this school?*

1. What, if anything has momentarily or enduringly soured things between you and a teacher or teachers?

2. In what ways are you supported, or not supported, by your staff to do your job here?

Part F. Leadership and the change process

Core question: *What kind of leadership is guiding what kind of change processes at this school?*

Part G. School and society

Core question: *What kinds of knowledge do you see teachers facilitating for what kind of society?*

Part H. Conclusion

Question: *In relation to what we have covered here today are there any other issues you'd like to raise or questions you'd like to ask?*

The participant is thanked for her/his participation and reminded that they will receive a copy of the interview transcript for their approval as soon as possible.

Appendix J.

Semi Structured Interview Schedule (Teachers)

Semi Structured Interview Schedule (Teachers)

Part A. Greeting and introduction

Wherein the purpose and structure of the interview is explained, the informed consent form signed and the participant is reminded of the confidentiality and anonymity of information. The short demographic survey form is then completed.

B. Teacher background and identity

Core question: *How did you become a teacher here at this school and how do you feel about it?*

C. Pedagogical style and engagement with students

Core question: *How would you describe your style and approach to teaching?*

D. Centres of control and autonomy

Core question: *To what degree do you feel you are an autonomous professional and what controls exist in the realm of your work here?*

E. The school context, climate of trust, support and collaboration etc.

Core question: *What is it like for you as a teacher and team member at this school?*

F. Leadership and the change process

Core question: *What kind of leadership is guiding what kind of change processes at this school?*

G. School and society

Core question: *What kinds of knowledge do you see teachers facilitating for what kind of society?*

Appendix K.

Round 2 Semi Structured Interview Schedule (Principals

and Teachers)

Round 2 Semi Structured Interview Schedule (Principals and Teachers)

A/ ELs and ELs Assessment
1. How has it been for you/teachers teaching with the ELs-based curriculum?
   - What difficulties have there been? –What advantages?
2. Is ELs a success? If so, in what ways? What are its shortcomings?
3. How would you change it?
4. How has the SARIS assessment process been for you? Time-wise?
5. Does this type of report communicate what you would like to communicate to parents?
6. Is this an efficient way to report? Why/Why not?
7. Is it good for students? Parents? The teaching profession?
8. Do you feel you have been sufficiently part of the process of developing the SARIS reporting?
9. It has been said that 2005 was the most challenging year in the careers of many teachers. What do you think about that?

B/ Working Collegially/Professional Learning
1. Do you value working collegially for curriculum planning and implementation? In what ways?
2. Has working collegially for curriculum implementation and planning been effective for you?
   - How? Why not?
3. Do you/teachers here have sufficient time for planning and working collegially?
4. Can you think of more effective ways of working collegially?
5. Given recommendations of 3 weeks PD for all employees, to what extent so you see that teacher professional learning under funded?

C/ Behaviour Management
1. Do you see behaviour management as a problem in your school?
2. What do you see are the key factors that explain student behaviour problems?
3. What would improve behaviour management at your school?
4. There is the suggestion, in interviews that I have conducted, that different people in the school view behaviour management differently. What knowledge, skills, attitudes and values amongst teachers might help develop a common set of goals and practices in behaviour management?

D/ Leadership for Change
1. What aspects of leadership do you see as facilitating key changes at school level?
2. What leadership, if any, do you provide towards change implementation?
3. What shortcomings do you see in leadership at your school?
4. What factors do you see as key to facilitating change in schools?
5. In general, are you feeling positive about the changes that have been taking place in schools in recent times?

E/ Conclusion
1. Having said all this, what do you see as the future for public education in Tasmania?
2. Is there anything you would like to add to what you have said here?

H. Conclusion

Question: *In relation to what we have covered here today are there any other issues you'd like to raise or questions you'd like to ask?*

The participant is thanked for her/his participation and reminded that they will receive a copy of the interview transcript for their approval as soon as possible.