Heads of Faculty Leading Curriculum Reform:
A Case Study of Post Year 10 Mandated Curriculum Reform
in a Tasmanian Secondary School

by

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B.Ed., M.Ed. (Leadership)

Submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education

Faculty of Education
University of Tasmania
Launceston

June, 2010

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many people have contributed to, and helped shape this thesis. My study journey began at the Australian Catholic University under the supervision of Dr. Helga Neidhart and Dr. Annette Schneider. It later changed course to the University of Tasmania, where my supervisors, Associate Professor Dawn Penney and Doctor Sally Milbourne have provided me with amazing support. They are truly professional mentors who have encouraged me throughout the most critical period of this study journey. I extend grateful thanks to all my supervisors for their professionalism, patience, guidance, wisdom and faith in me.

Many other people have played a significant role in the creation of this thesis. Firstly to the most supportive and generous people in my own college – the Leadership Team, my Head of Faculty colleagues, administrative, computing, library and counselling staff all of whom have been invaluable and have journeyed with me throughout the research process.

Secondly I give heartfelt thanks to my beloved family who have provided me with all the love and support throughout the process. To my husband, Bill, my daughter, Alice, my parents and my sister, who have never doubted my ability to commit to educational study over so many years and to finally complete it, thank you for your belief in me.

Thank you to Dr Tammy Jones and Professor Neil Cranston from the University of Tasmania for the tremendous support I have received from them as critical reading colleagues.

Finally to my academic colleague and friend, Donna, who has supported me and travelled the journey with me through all my post graduate study, thank you for your faith in me, for inspiring me, and keeping me on track when challenges confronted me.

My study journey over many years has led me to many insights into my personal life and professional practice. It has been a long, yet rewarding journey, one accompanied by so many wonderful people. Although I feel as though I am at the end of one road, another pathway looms and I wonder where it will take me.

"Two roads diverged in a wood and I, I took the road less travelled by, and that has made all the difference" (The Road Not Taken by Robert Frost)

ABSTRACT

Curriculum reform internationally and within Australia has been undergoing dramatic change, and educational leaders are faced with the challenges which reform creates. Tasmania is no exception and it has experienced its own educational reform challenges in schools over the past decade. The curriculum reforms in post compulsory secondary education in Years 11 and 12, *Tasmania A State of Learning—A Strategy for Post Year 10 Education and Training* (Department of Education, 2003) created a platform for future mandated reform and was the reform instrument used for the purposes of this study.

Despite significant research having been conducted in other countries, contributing to an extensive body of literature about the implementation of mandated curriculum reform by Heads of Faculty and those in middle leadership roles in schools (Jones, 2006; Moore, 2007a), research in an Australian, and, more particularly, in a Tasmanian context, remains limited. The research literature on implementing curriculum reform in schools has focussed largely on the effect of the Principal and Deputy Leaders as leaders in schools (Fullan, 2001a; Hargreaves, 2003) with limited research about those in 'middle' leadership roles such as the Heads of Faculty and their role in implementing reform. Middle leaders are those largely responsible for leading teams of teachers in the implementation of these new reforms, and are the key personnel in all stages of the implementation of the reform process.

This study identified and sought to generate narratives that would provide key insights into the experiences of 12 Heads of Faculty, who were responsible for the implementation of mandated curriculum reform in Years 11 and 12 in the case study school, a Year 7–12 Tasmanian Secondary School. As one of these Heads of Faculty, working alongside the Heads of Faculty in the case study school, through observation, informal discussion and collegial unity, I was able to

develop an in-depth understanding of their perceptions, experiences and outcomes. This study investigated their leadership role in implementing mandated curriculum reform, the impact of change, and the understanding Heads of Faculty have about leadership and implementation of change in the curriculum reform process. Experience of leadership and the reform implementation process were explored from the personal perspective of Heads of Faculty, including my own. The issues pursued, including the strategies employed, the professional learning and the challenges the Heads of Faculty encountered in bringing about curriculum reform are discussed.

Each Head of Faculty, 12 in total, was invited to complete a questionnaire focussing on their teaching and leadership experiences in relation to leading teams of teachers through reform. Six experienced Heads of Faculty were then identified, and rich data were collected through semi-structured interviews and the writing of personal stories about middle leaders' experiences of leading curriculum reform. Despite initial concerns about leading mandated curriculum reform, the Heads of Faculty welcomed the opportunity to be involved in professional dialogue and reflection about the reform process. From the multiple data sources, I constructed six narrative accounts from my colleague Heads of Faculty, and one of my own experience of leading curriculum reform. The sources of data, both informal and formal, contributed to the narrative descriptions and outcomes of the participant questionnaire, interviews and personal stories.

The findings of this research may inform educational leaders and middle leaders—in particular, Heads of Faculty—about leadership approaches which are effective or enhance the reform process within given limitations, such as externally mandated curriculum reform. The stories, experiences and specific strategies shared by the participants may be used by Heads of Faculty to inform their professional development in implementing reform, and as a resource from which other middle leaders may benefit, in terms of leading curriculum reform with improved outcomes. The research may also provide key information for principals and education systems planning to embark on educational reform in which middle leaders are destined to have a key role to play.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF TABLES

TABLE OF FIGURES

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH

"Middle leaders are expected to embrace, lead and monitor the huge number of change initiatives initiated by senior leaders" (Moore, 2007a, p. 4)

Introduction

In recent years, schools have been required to implement curriculum reform, be it internally or externally driven. Heads of Faculty have been charged with leading these reforms. Middle leaders, Heads of Faculty, in schools are those largely responsible for the implementation of curriculum and leading teams of teachers in the implementation of reform. Heads of Faculty have "the primary responsibility for the implementation of the curriculum, the student learning within their subject areas and the quality of teaching of the individual teachers" (Keese, 2005, p. 35). In the case study school, as the Head of Faculty of The Arts[1], I worked as a member of the curriculum team and listened, observed and gathered data from my colleagues about the change process in implementing mandated reform. As researcher and participant in the study, I found reflecting on leadership approaches, strategies and challenges throughout the reform process to be a valuable professional experience.

The following sections discuss how middle leaders, particularly Heads of Faculty, experience the challenges of leading mandated curriculum reform in post compulsory education in Tasmania. The mandated curriculum reform initiative, *Tasmania: A State of Learning—A Strategy for Post Year 10 Education and Training* (see Appendix A), is revealed, together with key definitions and terms.

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[1] Faculty of The Arts in the case study school encompasses the discrete learning areas of Dance, Drama, Visual Art and Media.

Through the lenses of case study, narrative inquiry, researcher, and participant, the thesis unfolds to explore the experiences of Heads of Faculty in leading mandated curriculum reform.

Middle Leaders Leading Curriculum Reform in Post Compulsory Education

This thesis discusses the stories and experiences of Heads of Faculties with whom I worked. As extremely busy and hard working professionals, my colleagues gave generously of their time to share their experiences with me, as together we faced the impact of implementing mandated curriculum reform in our school. We were required to lead teams of teachers through the reform process and implement the mandated changes in ways which would best meet the needs of our staff and students. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore the understanding Heads of Faculty have of leadership and implementation of change in the curriculum reform process, whilst, at the same time, seeking to extend knowledge of the issues encountered and approaches used by middle leaders faced with the responsibility for mandated curriculum implementation.

Middle Leaders—Heads of Faculty and the Reform Process

In most school structures, Heads of Faculty are entrusted with the role of leading the implementation of curriculum reform (Kirk & Macdonald, 2001; Moore, 2007b). "Direct guidance and support for most teachers mainly comes from their immediate line manager, their subject or faculty leaders" (Moore, 2007b, p. 4). Successful reform rests largely on the capacity and capability of Heads of Faculty to lead reform (Holden, 2004). The challenges facing Heads of Faculty in leading reform are not always clearly articulated, and, from personal experience and observation, it appeared each Head of Faculty in my school demonstrated a variety of ways of coming to terms with the challenges change presented. I have, for a period of time, had an interest in exploring and sharing the range of reform experiences faced by Heads of Faculty who were working with teams of teachers.

Working with a diverse group of educational leaders, I observed that some were operating out of transactional mental models and others were employing transformational leadership perspectives (Davies, 2006; MacGregor-Burns, 1997; Treston, 1997). Heads of Faculty were often referred to as part of the 'middle

management' group in schools (Conners & D'Arbon, 1997), and yet they were not necessarily empowered with strategies or professional learning to assist them in vital leadership roles (Keese, 2005; Kotzur, 2005; Mulford, 2005). To this end, their capacity and capability to cope with leading reform rested largely on intuition rather than knowledge of strategic leadership approaches (Holden, 2004; Mulford, 2005).

The search for freedom and creativity, which allowed the human dimension to be considered integral to the operation of a school, led me to explore further how Heads of Faculty lead curriculum reform through shared and distributed leadership (Muijs & Harris, 2003; Riley, 2000), the way people responded emotionally to change (Conners & D'Arbon, 1997; Fullan, 2001) through the significance of relationships and roles, and the impact these had on the reform (Healey, Ehrich, Hansford, & Stewart, 2001; Riley, 2000; Wagner, 1999).

A Tasmanian Post Year 10 Curriculum Initiative

With the planning of a state-wide Tasmanian curriculum initiative, including the restructuring of the post Year 10 curriculum,[2] there was an opportunity to research, reflect upon and evaluate the stories of Faculty Heads involved in the reform process. "When the change originates outside the school, such as new government policies and guidelines, the first challenge for leaders is to help teachers explore the implications it has for themselves" (Duignan & Macpherson, 1992, p. 89). A great deal of professional learning about the proposed reform was conducted with many middle leaders in the state. Each staff member involved in the teaching and learning programs for Years 11 and 12 in the Department of Education, the Association of Independent Schools of Tasmania and the Catholic Education Office, also received a personal copy of the *Tasmania: A State of Learning* CD outlining the new "Post Year 10 Curriculum Framework—A Resource for Educators" (Department of Education, 2006).

The research reported in this thesis was timely as Tasmania was undergoing mandated curriculum reform in Years 11 and 12, and there was a sense of urgency to engage in the process in preparation for implementation in 2006 for post Year

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[2] This process commenced in 2003, and was to be implemented in 2006.

10 studies. Since 2005, the Department of Education in Tasmania, and Catholic and Independent Schools and Colleges, had worked collaboratively to review and develop a new curriculum framework for students in post compulsory education. It was intended that the new curriculum be tailored for today's world, learners and learning in the 21st century. My hope is that this research will contribute to the body of knowledge about Heads of Faculty as leaders in the reform process across a number of learning areas, and specifically extend understandings of the significance of middle leaders in bringing about curriculum change (Keese, 2005; Kotzur, 2005). Substantial financial resources have been invested in state-wide mandated curriculum professional learning and reform, and one of the aims of this study was the potential to provide insight into leadership by Heads of Faculty.

Leading Reform—A Professional and Personal Challenge

For some, curriculum reform appeared to be straight forward, even exciting (Fullan, 1993a, 2001b), whilst for others it became a source of discontent (Hooper & Potter, 2000). For this latter group, it had the capacity to affect relationships, had consequences for quality outcomes in extreme cases and caused such stress that the only way to cope was for individuals to remove themselves from the situation (Binney & Williams, 1997). The nature of reform, the response and reaction demonstrated by the personnel involved, the leaders of reform, and the particular issue of reform, be it minor or impacting on the entire school, had enormous ramifications for the reform (Hargreaves, Lieberman, Fullan, & Hopkins, 1998; Oliver, 1996).

Heads of Faculty were once regarded as administrators in middle leadership roles, operating from a managerial model engaged in what Hanson (1996, p. 284) referred to as "spontaneous change," rather than planned and evolutionary reform. More recently, Heads of Faculty have been empowered with more responsibility in their leadership role, undertaking more of a balance between leadership, administration and management (Keese, 2005; Kotzur, 2005; Mulford, 2005; O'Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998). The impact change has on anyone within an educational institution depends on a number of factors. Heads of Faculty are at times in a very delicate position in their schools as "the middle leader's role is a pivotal link between senior leaders and classroom colleagues, they are often both

the conduit as well as the interpreters of either the discussions with or dictates from senior leaders" (Moore, 2007b, p. 4). This study focussed on a post Year 10 curriculum initiative in Tasmania as mandated by the Tasmanian Government: *Tasmania: A State of Learning—A Strategy for Post Year 10 Education and Training*.

In almost four decades of working in educational institutions, both in the Government and Independent sectors, I have had wide first-hand experience of curriculum reform, and have observed both leaders and followers during times of curriculum reform implementation. Post-graduate study, professional learning in educational leadership, and the perceived need for direction for Heads of Faculty in implementing major curriculum reform, combined to arouse my curiosity about different approaches. Recent post-graduate study had given me the opportunity to reflect upon the reform process, and part of my own professional challenge was to implement curriculum reform successfully within The Arts Faculty in my school.

The research also had personal significance in my role as Head of The Arts Faculty in my school. Participation in, and reflection on the research process informed my role as Head of Faculty and the process of curriculum reform implementation in which I was engaged. As discussed further in Chapter Six, the Heads of Faculty in this study found it beneficial from a variety of perspectives while the research process had broader significance for the school in which the study was conducted. This study and its findings will hopefully be of interest to educators and policy makers across Tasmania who have been required to spend so much time and energy over the last few years working through major reform with little reflection on, or overview of the process available to date. The research will also hopefully be useful to the wider teaching profession and middle leaders, particularly Heads of Faculty in schools nationally and internationally who are required to lead a major curriculum reform mandated by an outside agency. As this study focussed on individuals within a group of Heads of Faculty at the 'middle' leadership level, it enabled me to engage in professional dialogue with other Heads of Faculty as they reflected on their practice in the reform process. Middle leaders in schools required both an awareness of leadership approaches as well as the capacity for leading through significant educational reform. It was my

hope that the findings of this study would help to further inform all curriculum personnel, particularly Heads of Faculty, about leading curriculum reform.

Case Study: Researcher as Participant

As stated previously, I was one of the twelve Heads of Faculty participating in the research. By virtue of my integral involvement in the case study school it was arguably more difficult to remain objective, bearing in mind my very inside position in the research. Therefore, I endeavoured to adopt a reflective subjectivity rather than an objective stance. I sought to remain open-minded and non-judgemental during the data gathering process, however I endeavoured to put my own views aside and listened to, and recorded the data with the very best intention and respect for each of my colleagues.

Each Head of Faculty was invited to complete a questionnaire focussing on their teaching and leadership experiences in relation to leading teams of teachers through reform. Six experienced Heads of Faculty were then identified and rich data was collected through in-depth interviews with them, and their writing of personal stories about their experiences of leading curriculum reform.

Despite initial concern about leading mandated curriculum reform, the Heads of Faculty welcomed the opportunity to be involved in discussion about the reform process and each articulated their approach, strategies and challenges. From the data gathered, I constructed six narrative accounts. The sources of data, both informal and formal, contributed to the cross case analysis. Through the use of rich data gathered from the experiences of the Heads of Faculty, I synthesised their insights in the hope that their stories, their unique and common experiences, successful strategies and approaches, would engage and assist others in middle leadership roles in implementing mandated curriculum reform.

The Case Study School

The case study school was a large independent Tasmanian secondary school. The school had a total of 1,350 students enrolled. In Years 7 to 10, there were 1,000 students. In the post compulsory sector, Years 11 and 12, 350 students were

enrolled. The teaching staff in the case study school consisted of 96 full-time equivalent teachers.

The Leadership Team in the school comprised the Principal, Deputy Principal of Pastoral Care and Administration, Deputy Principal of Pastoral Care and Community, Deputy Principal of Learning and Teaching, Faith and Justice Coordinator, and Business Manager. The Governing Council and College Board work in collaboration with the Principal (see Table 1).

Table 1: Case Study School Leadership Structure

Governing Council

College Board

Principal

Deputy Principal Learning and Teaching	Deputy Principal Pastoral Care and Administration	Deputy Principal Pastoral Care and Community
Faith and Justice Coordinator	Daily Administrator	Business Manager
Heads of Faculty Team		House Heads—Pastoral Care Team
Curriculum Learning Teams		Tutors in House Groups
Maintenance and Grounds	Human Resources	Administration and Aides

All teaching staff were members of a learning team which was an integral part of every Faculty. For example, in the Arts Faculty, there were learning teams in Media, Dance, Drama and Visual Art. The Heads of Faculty had overall responsibility for the curriculum learning and teaching programs; however there were teacher leaders in each learning team who took responsibility for matters pertaining to content, assessment and internal moderation of the discrete learning team. Weekly meetings were conducted for the team of Heads of Faculty, led by the Deputy Principal of Learning and Teaching. Regular monthly faculty meetings

were held, and Heads of Faculty conducted their meetings with a specific agenda focus for each meeting. At the time of the mandated curriculum reform implementation, this topic was the focus of all the meetings, and had total support from the school Leadership Team.

As the researcher and a participant in the case study school, I had a dual role in the study. Not only was I undertaking the research, but as the Head of Faculty of The Arts I was also a member of the curriculum team.

Research Design

"A research design is the logic that links the data to be collected (and the conclusions to be drawn) to the initial questions of a study" (Yin, 1994, p. 18)

Yin (1994) suggested that there are five components which are important in the research design for case studies. These are:

1. a study's questions,
2. its propositions, if any,
3. its unit(s) of analysis,
4. the logic linking the data to the propositions, and
5. the criteria for interpreting the findings. (p. 20)

These five components suggested by Yin (1994) provided a guiding framework for the case study design aspect of the research.

The overarching research statement and supporting questions evolved from a personal interest in the field of curriculum reform, and from a need to implement on-going changes from both an internal and external forces perspective. The design of the research enabled me to place myself within the context of the research whilst working with my Head of Faculty colleagues. From an inside perspective, I was able to observe my colleagues and consider the overall process. Stake (1995) has suggested that:

The best research questions evolve during the study. . . . Not only do
the questions guide the work during data gathering and the report

writing, they sharpen the meaning of previous studies and illuminate the differential utility of prospective findings. (Stake, 1995, p. 33)

From a personal perspective, and from that of my colleagues, concern was expressed about how leaders were going to approach the reforms with their teams of teachers, given their previous experiences of leading mandated reform which posed challenges in the process. Whilst some literature existed on leadership and curriculum reform, there appeared to be less empirical research, specifically in the Australian context, on how Heads of Faculty lead mandated curriculum reform. In an attempt to fill some aspects of the gap in knowledge about how Heads of Faculty successfully lead mandated curriculum reform, the research questions were framed to assist in exploring this perspective.

My Research Questions

The research questions have guided my study and have been rich reference points during all data gathering processes. My overarching statement was: *Heads of Faculty leading curriculum reform. A case study of post Year 10 Curriculum Reform in a Tasmanian Secondary School.*

The four research questions which supported and assisted in the further contextualisation of the overarching statement were:

1. In what ways do Heads of Faculty view themselves as leaders?

2. What strategies do Heads of Faculty use in their leadership of curriculum reform, and how integral are these leadership strategies to the reform process?

3. What challenges do Heads of Faculty face in the implementation of curriculum reform, and how do they respond to them?

4. What forms of collaborative leadership, if any, emerged during the process of implementing reform?

Challenges of the Research

This study was carried out in one school. By conducting the study in one secondary school in Tasmania, the research could be perceived as being narrow or limited in relation to both context and focus. The fact that the reform explored in

the study was mandated by the Tasmanian Government could also be considered a limitation, as it was specific to the Tasmanian educational reform context. However, in focusing on how Heads of Faculty led mandated curriculum reform the study sought to pursue a context and issues from a particular perspective, exploring Heads of Faculty views on and experiences of reform, and the strategies they used in the process of implementation. There was growing interest from middle leaders, Heads of Faculty, about implementing mandated curriculum reform, and their capability and capacity to lead such reform. The focus was on that group of 12 Head of Faculty participants, including six key Heads of Faculty, to keep the study manageable.

Outline of the Thesis

The thesis consists of seven chapters. The following commentary provides an overview of the thesis.

Chapter One introduces the reader to the emergence of the overarching research statement, and the significance of the exploration and findings of the implementation of the curriculum reform journey, to the researcher and colleagues in the case study school. It addresses the journey my colleagues and I faced in implementing curriculum reform from a *'who, what, when, why, and how'* perspective in our middle leadership roles. I have also detailed how significant the challenge of implementing mandated curriculum reform was for myself and my colleagues.

The context of the research—middle leaders leading post-compulsory mandated curriculum reform in Tasmania—is explored in **Chapter Two.** This chapter provides important background for the research, and explains roles within the case study school, the roles of the participants, and the mandated curriculum initiative being implemented. The following four contextual sections are addressed in the chapter.

1. Curriculum reform in post compulsory education in Tasmania;
2. Heads of Faculty;
3. Case study school; and

4. Leadership skills and strategies which impacted on the success or otherwise of the reform.

In **Chapter Three** a review of the literature relevant to the research is provided in three sections. The first section discusses literature about world trends in the context of post compulsory educational developments with a particular focus on the Australian, and, more pertinently, on the Tasmanian context, where major mandated curriculum reform is currently being implemented. This led to a consideration of the literature on the personnel responsible for the implementation of the mandated reform in schools, namely the Heads of Faculty or middle leaders. Given the personnel involved in the reform process, the third section, the personal dimension of reform, provides insight into the significance for staff of the outcomes of the implementation. Emerging from the literature review, the research questions which supported the overarching statement of the study were formulated.

Chapter Four addresses the methodological framework for the gathering and analysis of the research data, and explains the underpinning theoretical framework of the research. The lenses through which the research design is presented are case study and narrative inquiry. The details regarding participants and data collection methods employed in the research are expanded upon, and anonymity and professional trust are discussed. The analysis of the data is presented, and ethical issues and considerations are discussed.

Chapter Five presents the experiences of leading mandated curriculum reform through a narrative framework, which explores the in-depth stories of the sub-group of six experienced Heads of Faculty, and a personal story from the researcher, in the case study school.

Chapter Six focuses on middle leadership of reform and the individual and collective findings. This enables the results of the research to be revealed in line with the intended purpose of the study. The six personal stories are expanded upon through the identification of individual issues and collective themes arising from the data collection strategies, questionnaire, interview and written personal stories. These issues and themes are discussed in detail.

The conclusions and recommendations discussed in **Chapter Seven** provide a critical reflection of the study. Implications for middle leaders at the case study school and in a wider context are explored. The exploration of experiences by Heads of Faculty responsible for leading mandated curriculum reform within the case study school are shared, in the context of that school.

Definitions of Key Terms

Throughout this thesis, reference is made to a number of titles and terms. The definitions below provide a succinct précis of the use of them in the context of this study.

National Curriculum—Australia

For a number of years there had been significant disparities in educational programs and attainment levels between states and territories. In a joint media release on the January 30, 2008, the Australian Prime Minister, Mr. Kevin Rudd, and the Deputy Prime Minister, Julia Gillard, stated:

> The National Curriculum Board will draw together the best programs from each state and territory into a single curriculum to ensure every child has access to the highest quality learning programs to lift achievement and drive up school retention rates. (Rudd & Gillard, 2008, n.p.)

A position paper provided by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), entitled *The National Curriculum in the Senior Secondary Years*, was released for discussion in August, 2009. The paper provided an outline pertaining specifically to the needs of post Year 10 students and was developed in consultation with "representatives from each of the state and territory curriculum, assessment and certification authorities" (ACARA, 2009, p. 3). The National Curriculum for senior secondary students focuses on national assessment procedures and outcomes for all the post Year 10 courses to enable transitional opportunities for students nationally.

Post Year 10 Compulsory Education

Post Year 10 students are those students who have completed formal Year 10 studies. In Tasmania students then make a choice to continue their education in either an Independent school or college, or attend a Government senior secondary college, Tasmania Academy, Tasmania Polytechnic, Skills Institute Tasmania, or an Australian Technical College. It is acknowledged that there are also some Year 10 students who complete their formal studies and enter the workplace. In the data generated in the questionnaires, interviews and personal stories, the Heads of Faculty refer to the mandated reform and its associated cohort as "PY10." In the six narratives constructed from the data, I have used the acronym as it is one commonly articulated in education circles within the state of Tasmania.

Government Senior Secondary College [3]

Senior Secondary Colleges in Tasmania comprise Years 11 and 12 schooling. Students enrol in these colleges at the end of their Year 10 secondary schooling, and programs of study in academic and vocational areas are available to students.

Tasmanian Academy [4]

Students who wish to complete an academic program of study in Year 12, gain a Tertiary Entrance Score, and pursue a pathway to university, enrol in the Tasmanian Academy, which is part of a larger campus at five of Tasmania's senior secondary colleges.

Tasmanian Polytechnic [5]

The Polytechnic provides practical learning programs for Year 11 and 12 students who require qualifications to enter the workforce.

Students can gain a Tasmanian Certificate of Education and get nationally recognised qualifications.

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[3] Information available from http://www.schools-in-australia.com/senior-secondary-college-tasmania

[4] Information available from http://www.academy.tas.edu.au/
[5] Information available from http://wwwpolytechnic.tas.edu.au./about-us.aspx

The Tasmanian Skills Institute [6]

Known formerly as TAFE Tasmania, this post Year 10 institution works largely with employers and employees in the training of apprentices and cadets.

Australian Technical College [7]

This post Year 10 institution brings together trade training and the Year 11 and 12 Tasmanian Certificate of Education.

Head of Faculty

A Head of Faculty is an educator in the "middle leadership" domain in an educational institution who undertakes responsibility for implementing and leading the curriculum in a particular learning and teaching discipline, for example, The Arts. In the case study school, the Heads of Faculty were responsible to the Deputy Principal of Learning and Teaching. In other educational institutions, teachers with similar roles [Heads of Faculty] are sometimes given titles such as Heads of Department, Curriculum Leaders, Subject Directors or Advanced Skills Teachers. In the United Kingdom, Jones (2006) noted that middle leaders are referred to "as heads of department, middle managers and subject or team leaders" (p. 4).

Tasmania: A State of Learning—A Strategy for Post-Year 10 Education and Training

Tasmania: A State of Learning was a Tasmanian State Government curriculum initiative that commenced in 2003 with the development of learning and training programs for Years 11 and 12 students. The major focus of this initiative for reform was to provide relevant educational programs, to support the retention of young people in post compulsory education, and to encourage the partnerships between education and the wider community in a rapidly changing world.

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[6] Information available from http://www.skillsinstitute.tas.edu.au/about-us.php
[7] Information available from http://www.atcnt.com.au/page.php?id=27&inlevel

Essential Learnings

After major consultation state-wide, The Essential Learnings Framework was developed, prepared and supported by the Tasmanian Curriculum Corporation and mandated by the Tasmanian Government. This curriculum framework was seen as a way forward in education as it focused "attention on what is central to the curriculum" (Department of Education, 2002, p. 4). The principles underpinning the framework focused on elements such as understanding, values, purposes, interconnectedness of learning, engaging students, fostering inclusivity and diversity, with a major focus on pedagogical reform through which these elements would be implemented. The five major essential learning areas identified by the Curriculum Corporation as crucial to student learning were: Communicating, Personal Futures, Social Responsibility, World Futures, and Thinking. These are linked together with the 'Values' and 'Purposes', and ultimately 'Culminating Outcomes'. The curriculum initiative was implemented into all Government secondary school and rolled out over a two year period. In the case study school in this study, The Arts Faculty for example, the embedded some of the learning objectives and outcomes into their assessment criteria, creating a cohesive and cross-disciplinary set of generic Arts outcomes for all discrete learning areas— Dance, Drama, Media, Visual Arts and Music. In short, given our freedom by the school leadership team, we ran with what we felt were positive changes in the Essential Learnings curriculum reform, and put on hold what we considered less essential.

Throughout the data generation process the participants referred to the Essential Learnings as the "ELs"—an acronym commonly used in educational circles within the state of Tasmania.

CHAPTER TWO: CONTEXT OF THE RESEARCH

Middle Leaders Leading Post-Compulsory Curriculum Reform in Tasmania

"Structures, both within a faculty area and across the whole school, are very important to support change and to ensure monitoring of the initiative" (Moore, 2007b, p. 3).

Introduction

As stated in Chapter One, the purpose of the study was to explore and examine how Heads of Faculty lead mandated curriculum reform, and how they worked collaboratively to develop successful strategies for implementation. Given that the curriculum reform was mandated, underpinning this premise of a non-negotiable reform was the certainty that all Heads of Faculty were engaged in the leadership of the mandated post compulsory Year 10 educational reform, *Tasmania: A State of Learning*.

Curriculum Reform

The Tasmanian Government agencies such as the Department of Education, in consultation with National Curriculum agencies, are the systemic bodies responsible for the provision of a framework for curriculum in Tasmania. Given the establishment of the new reform, the leadership and implementation of reform rest with individual schools. In Tasmanian schools and colleges, reforms are largely the responsibility of the respective Head of Faculty, Head of Department, or Advanced Skills Teacher (AST3) in each curriculum area, in collaboration with

the Head of Curriculum. In this study, the team of Heads of Faculty worked very closely with the Deputy Principal of Learning and Teaching in the case study school, and with curriculum leaders from the Curriculum Services Branch in the Tasmanian Department of Education.

Tasmanian Post Compulsory Secondary Education

"What needs to happen in Tasmania is a cultural change. We were an agricultural society, so going past Grade Nine didn't matter because you worked on Dad's farm—and Dad didn't go to school past Grade Nine, and Dad's dad didn't go to school past Grade Nine, so why bother?" (Bartlett, 2009, p. 7)

The Premier of Tasmania, David Bartlett, in a candid conversational article in the UTAS Alumni publication (2009) stated that "education is at the heart of everything" (p. 7). He discussed the concept of the provision of clearer pathways for students in educational institutions which would engage them in learning in "more interesting settings, with a real work component with better pathways to university, with better pathways to further education" (p.5). Additionally, by changing the compulsory secondary school leaving age to seventeen at the same time, the State Government's intention was that it would guarantee pathways and futures for the students.

The 21st century is arguably an age of redefinition, where the rate of educational change appears to be more rapid than in the past, and ongoing reform seems an inevitable reality for systems, schools and education professionals. Reform is a natural process and education reform is no exception (Limmerick, Cunningham & Crowther, 1998; Oliver, 1996). There has been a paradigm shift in curriculum reform at both a national and state level in Australia; in particular about how students learn and the preferred content of the curriculum (Connelly, Campbell, Vickers, Welch, Foley & Bagnell, 2007; Slater & Kysilka, 2008).

The State Government of Tasmania initially introduced the post Year 10 curriculum initiative *Tasmania: A State of Learning—A Strategy for Post year 10 Education and Training* in 2003, commencing with a vision that "Tasmanians embrace learning throughout their lives—learning that encourages and enables us

to live healthy, happy and fulfilling lives, to contribute to the life of our communities, and to shape a fairer more prosperous and sustainable Tasmania" (Department of Education, 2003, p. 7). The document notes the purposes of the new framework for individuals, communities and for Tasmania, and explores the values that guided the development of this new reform. The suggested elements to be valued include learning, people, participation, achievement, flexibility, diversity, innovation, collaboration and responsibility. *Tasmania: A State of Learning* set out the vision, purposes and values that were to guide post Year 10 education and training in the coming years. The initiatives of this reform were based on a learning framework comprising four key learning areas:

1. Guaranteeing Futures
2. Ensuring Essential Literacies
3. Enhancing Adult Learning
4. Building Learning Communities. (Department of Education, 2003, p. 3)

This provided a vision that would guide post Year 10 education and training in the state of Tasmania. The aim of the curriculum reform was to improve the retention of young people in education post Year 10, and to strengthen the partnerships between the community and the learning institutions, in order that "overall, levels of retention, participation and attainment are improving and demand for post Year 10 education and training is growing as a consequence" (Department of Education, 2003, p. 5).

State-wide meetings, conducted by senior curriculum personnel from the Tasmanian Department of Education—a group known as Secondary Education The Future Task Force—were conducted in the north, north-west and southern regions of Tasmania with all stakeholders attending. Principals, Deputy Principals, Curriculum Co-ordinators, Heads of Faculty, and appointed teachers from schools and colleges directly involved with post Year 10 students enrolled in curriculum programs in Years 11 and 12, met regularly, generally monthly, to work collaboratively on how the new vision would be realised. In some schools and colleges specific leadership roles were created, with Post Year 10 Curriculum Coordinators being appointed.

The Case Study School

As a current Head of Faculty in a co-educational school with an enrolment of 1,350 students from Years 7–12, and 96 full-time equivalent teaching staff, I conducted this case study in my own school. The decision to provide limited contextual information on the case study school was made in order to protect the anonymity of the school and its staff members. Although the ethos of the case study school may have a bearing on the implementation of mandated reform, providing details of this particular aspect of the school was seen as less important than maintaining the anonymity of participants. I felt that to provide more information would breach my responsibility as the researcher.

Whilst the focus of the study was on middle leadership, the influence of the Leadership Team, particularly the Principal in the case study school, had some influence on the implementation of reform. The Post-Year 10 curriculum reform had an impact on the entire school, as many teachers taught across sectors and Heads of Faculty were responsible for all year levels. Generally in schools the Principal is at the apex of a hierarchical leadership structure (Gunter & Fitzgerald, 2007) and in the case study school the principal is supported by the Leadership Team. The Principal's trust in the Leadership Team and middle leaders to implement reform enabled him to work in a more lateral way.

Carlson (1996) used the lens of the theatre as a means of viewing the reform process and concluded that a dramaturgical approach provided the opportunity to observe and understand the dynamics relating to the process, both obvious and subtle, surrounding human behaviour in organizations. This study employed a dramaturgical approach of observation in exploring the process through the eyes of Heads of Faculty, each of whom was undertaking a role in the process of implementing reform.

Middle Leaders—Heads of Faculty

"The potential for organisational change is great if the middle leaders, these unsung heroes in a school are provided with the time, understanding and support in undertaking their complex task of leading their teams." (Moore, 2007b, p. 22)

Within schools, the Heads of Faculty have "the primary responsibility for the implementation of the curriculum, the student learning within their subject areas and the quality of teaching of the individual teachers" (Keese, 2005, p. 35). Leading reform requires the Heads of Faculty to have credibility amongst their peers. They should also be exemplary classroom teachers who are able to reflect upon their own practice and that of those in their faculty. Strong management skills, together with a sound knowledge of how their school functions are requisites which enhance credibility and respect within the role. From my own experiences, and the observations of colleague Heads of Faculty, I became aware that change may trigger a variety of responses from those with whom we work, and, as a consequence, Heads of Faculty need to be "emotionally secure individuals, and have a highly developed emotional intelligence, so that . . . staff can feel secure, know that their contribution is valued and feel pleased to turn up for work each day" (Keese, 2005, p. 37). In the case study school, the Heads of Faculty had a specific role description and this formed the basis of their daily operation within the school. The case study school role description for a Head of Faculty was part of the School Policy and Role Description Handbook, ratified by the school leadership team and reviewed annually. The descriptions are presented below.

Case Study School—Head of Faculty Role Description

In the case study school, the Heads of Faculty are responsible to the Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching), and to the Principal, for the quality of teaching and learning within the Faculty. This responsibility must be exercised in a manner consistent with the mission and policy of the College. The Head of Faculty duties, such as the provision of active and informed leadership within the Faculty, working with the Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching) in accordance with College policy to establish clear goals in curriculum planning and review form

part of the daily work requirements. The Heads of Faculty are also required to provide a sequential and flexible work program designed to meet the full range of student ability and need. A more detailed role description is provided in the Appendixes (Appendix B). The case study school role description focused on detailed and specific administrative, managerial and leadership responsibilities for all Heads of Faculty.

The size of faculties in the case study school varied a great deal and Table 2 provides an overview of the structure:

Table 2: Faculty Structure in the Case Study School

Faculty	Number of Staff
The Arts	25
Languages	29
Mathematics	28
Science	30
Health and Physical Education	12
Technology	21
Vocational Education	13
Religious Education	45
Studies of the Society and Environment	26
Inclusive Learning	11
Senior Secondary Learning	43
Resource Centre	6

Conclusion

If there is one assured element in education, it is change. The role of the Head of Faculty is to implement reform with the "intention of identifying effective leadership strategies which [help] the process of embedding" (Moore, 2007b, p. 1). This study focussed on leadership at the middle level, rather than on that of the Principal. In large schools, such as the case study school, where many classes operate daily, the Principal and Leadership Team rely on cooperation from, and leadership by, the Heads of Faculty.

When one has developed a good team of teachers, and has a mutually beneficial relationship with the senior executive, the role of a head teacher [Head of Faculty] can be one of the most satisfying in a school. Every day they can feel they have made some difference to the lives of students, teachers and parents. (Keese, 2005, p. 37)

CHAPTER THREE: LITERATURE REVIEW

Leadership of Curriculum Reform in Post-Compulsory Education

"Change not the masses but change the fabric of your own soul and your own vision and you change all." (Palestini, 2000, p. 71)

Introduction

This Chapter examines the issues central to the purpose of this study; exploring the experiences of Heads of Faculty in leading mandated curriculum reform. The literature is examined in three sections: Section One—Post Year 10 Compulsory Education; Section Two—Leading Curriculum Reform; and Section Three—The Personal Dimension of Leading Reform.

The first section explores the experiences and nature of post Year 10 compulsory education from a global perspective, an Australian point of view, and finally the Tasmanian scene and how that impacts on leading the reform. The ever-changing picture of curriculum reform, based on what society demands, in post compulsory educational outcomes for young adults in the world is explored in this section.

Leading curriculum reform, the second section, investigates the literature around the challenges facing educators at all levels. Middle leaders, termed Heads of Faculty in the case study school, are those who are generally called to ensure the practicalities of the reform are implemented in learning spaces. According to Rowling (2003), "it is easy for a headteacher [Head of Faculty] to be caught up, sometimes unwittingly, in a never ending round of management issues; but the engine that drives the change is leadership" (p. 4). Accordingly, this study also

examined models of leadership and approaches experienced by professionals in leading mandated curriculum reform.

The final section focuses on the personal dimension of leading mandated curriculum reform. How middle leaders, namely Heads of Faculty, lead mandated curriculum reform, "the leadership strategies utilised to secure change" (Moore, 2007b, p. 5), and how followers accept the leadership style, "The type of interaction between leaders and followers" (Moore, 2007b, p. 5), and approach to reform are explored in the literature.

There are bodies of literature which discuss organisational change, and the influence of gender on curriculum reform, however, as the research questions clearly define the boundaries of this study, these areas of the literature are not reviewed.

Conceptual Framework

The framework used to organise this literature review, shown in Figure 2, is based on a non-linear or chaotic view of the nature of reform, which promotes creativity and constant change, enabling individuals to realise their capacity for change (Davies, 2003; Senge, 2000). The ordered or linear system is characterised by stability and predictability. According to Hargreaves, Lieberman, Fullan and Hopkins (1998), "chaos is partly inherent in societies and organizations where information circulates and decisions are made with increasing speed" (p. 5). All contributors to the reform process are essential to the implementation of the curriculum reform (Mulford, 2002). From the review of the literature, the conceptual framework established what literature and research had already contributed to the ever-growing body of knowledge about middle leaders and enabled the researcher to develop further the identified areas and discover those where potential for future research exist.

Figure 2: Conceptual Framework

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┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                    Section One                        │
│                                                       │
│      POST COMPULSORY SECONDARY EDUCATION              │
│          •  Internationally / globally                │
│          •  Within Australia                          │
│          •  The Tasmanian scene                       │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘

        ┌───────────────────────────────────────┐
        │  HEADS OF FACULTY LEADING CURRICULUM   │
        │  REFORM: A CASE STUDY OF POST YEAR 10  │
        │  CURRICULUM REFORM IN A TASMANIAN      │
        │         SECONDARY SCHOOL               │
        └───────────────────────────────────────┘

┌────────────────────────────┐   ┌────────────────────────────┐
│        Section Two         │   │       Section Three         │
│                            │   │                             │
│     LEADING CURRICULUM     │   │    THE PERSONAL DIMENSION   │
│           REFORM           │   │      OF LEADING REFORM      │
│   •  Middle Leadership—Heads│  │   •  Readiness for Reform   │
│      of Faculty            │   │   •  Resistance to Reform   │
│   •  Teacher Leaders of Reform│ │   •  Perceived Need for Reform│
│   •  Ownership of Reform   │   │   •  Initiative Overload     │
│   •  Culture for Reform    │   │   •  Challenges / Barriers   │
│   •  Models of Reform      │   │                             │
│   •  Leadership Approaches │   │                             │
│   •  Leading Mandated Reform│  │                             │
└────────────────────────────┘   └────────────────────────────┘
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Post Compulsory Secondary Education

Post compulsory secondary education in Australia begins as students at the end of their Year 10 schooling continue into 2 further years of education. For the majority of students in Australia, these 2 years of post-compulsory secondary education are undertaken in their own K–12 or 7–12 school or at a stand-alone senior secondary college in their state. Other students attend other educational

institutions such as the Australian Technical College to complete their post compulsory secondary education years. Nationally, an Australian Qualification Framework has been developed for students at a post-compulsory level. "Post-compulsory education is regulated within the Australian Qualifications Framework, a unified system of national qualification in schools, vocational education and training (Technical and Further Education) and the higher education sector (university)" (The Australian Educational Researcher, 2007, p. 91).

Post compulsory secondary education has traditionally provided a pathway for students who intended to study at a tertiary level, however, "recent economic planning is leading to new pressures on the post-compulsory education sector where work-readiness is emerging as a major focus" (Stanley, 2007, p. 91). Vickers (2007), also noted that in post Year 10 education "the other conspicuous change over the past fifteen years has been the introduction of Vocational Education and Training (VET) as an option within the senior secondary curriculum" (p. 257). The need for clear pathways is cited as a reason for major national curriculum reform, however, the literature on a state-by-state basis refers largely to the retention of students before they enter the work force or tertiary educational institutions as the reason for reform. "Retention of young people in the education and training system to at least Year 12 and the development of explicit pathways have become an urgent priority for educators to address" (Stanley, 2007, p. 91).

The dilemma for some schools and students, especially in Tasmania, is that historically students who did not follow the pathway of tertiary study would leave school at the end of Year 10 seeking or undertaking employment (Hanlon, 2004). In the past, employers were satisfied with students who had attained a Year 10 certificate, however, today, "in the current emerging job market the minimum requirements assumed to have been achieved at the end of compulsory schooling (Year 10) are being seen as insufficient for successful employment" (Stanley, 2007, p. 92). Studies have shown that "there is a problem for schools attempting to increase retention of weaker Year 10 students. Such students are likely to be unwilling to remain in a program of study in which they feel they cannot succeed"

(Stanley, 2007, p. 92). The challenge now is for schools and colleges to provide programs of learning which engage these students and provide pathways for them at the end of Year 12. Curriculum leaders and assessment authorities in each state are making provision for these students by providing post-compulsory programs that are seen as "involving choice and students tend to want subjects that they feel interested in and in which they have some chance of succeeding" (Stanley, 2007, p. 95).

A Global Perspective

"One consequence of globalisation is that government Ministers of Education are constantly trying to measure the success or failure of their policies against other countries." (Bagnell, as cited in Connell, Campbell, Welch, Foley & Bagnell, 2007, p. 291)

As party of the global village, educators are entrusted with the future of the young people in the world, and "as educators we have a responsibility to prepare our students to meet the challenges of our increasingly, sometimes dangerously, inter-connected world" (Slater & Kysilka, 2008, p. 254).

Global debate concerning the outcomes of students and the status of schools in the universal ranking of performance and retention rates are permeating the education system world wide, and also within Australia. Similarly, other countries such as "Canada, Finland, Japan, Korea, Iceland and Sweden all manage to combine high educational achievement with small gaps between students and schools" (Slater & Kysilka, 2008b, p. 41).

Countries throughout the world experience curriculum reform in education systems in order to meet the needs of their young people in an ever-changing world. In countries such as India (Agrawal 2004), and China (Huang 2004), the focus for curriculum reform has been on the outcomes for students, particularly in relation to numeracy and literacy, and the need for thorough evaluation. Huang (2004) believes that "any systematic process of curriculum development reflects six steps:

- A curriculum philosophy, or ideal, is formed and clarified;

- A clear educational aim is defined, and systematic and operable objectives are stated;

- Suitable content and experience are selected;

- Content and experiences are located within the curriculum structure and presented in the appropriate media (here curriculum materials are concerned);

- Effective instructional activities are identified; and

- The outcomes of curriculum implementation are evaluated" (p.102).

In line with current Australian curriculum thought, Huang also concludes that the educational reform is in "response and contribution to China's economic and social reform and to our [global] changing social development" (p. 113). Educationalists globally seek the most effective curriculum for their countries, and Australia is no exception (Mulford, 2002). The National Curriculum in Australia recognises our global connection to the world, and that, with the advancements in technology, many countries are preparing for educational developments yet to be realised in the twenty-first century. A working paper prepared for the Curriculum Standing Committee of National Education Professional Associations (CSCNEPA) in 2007 suggested that "a twenty-first century curriculum must take into account where Australia and its citizens are located geographically and in other ways, within a global context" (p. 1).

The Australian scene has been challenged by global changes, and technology has enabled us to be an active part of the global village. Hughes (2008) reported that:

> Over the past sixty years, Australia has become a very active part of the global community . . . we now face a major issue in Australian education, to deliver an effective education for life to all our people. Our international links make clear the nature of this problem and also show us that it is possible to have high quality education without sacrificing equity. (p. 1)

An Australian Overview

"Looking across Australia at the end of the 1980s it was evident that the amount of variation in both the K–10 and the curriculum for years 11 and 12 was quite substantial." (Vickers in Connelly et al., 2007, p. 253)

For the past two decades, Australia has been working towards a National Curriculum that enables students and teachers to transfer from one state to another and from one school to another without interrupting their learning. However, "the states have successfully resisted being corralled into adopting a single, uniform model" (Vickers, in Connelly et al. 2007, p. 249). In the 1990s there was a framework which existed for students enrolled in Kindergarten to Year 12. This framework, in which "the main building blocks of the curricula are called KLA (Key Learning Areas) rather than subjects" (Connelly et al., 2007, p. 249), helped guide the curriculum for a number of schools and colleges, however it was seldom used or made accountable as an authentic national framework.

Across all Australian states, there has been a "considerable amount of overlap in curriculum content . . . and states continue both at the K–10 and Senior Secondary levels to sustain distinctly different approaches to pedagogy, school organization and assessment" (Connelly et al., 2007, p. 250). Whilst this has been acknowledged by Ministers of Education, each state considered the documents separately and made its own decisions about how the KLAs were incorporated into their own curriculum frameworks.

Each state has different commencement ages for students entering schools, and a range of ages for students completing compulsory education. State legislation specifies the compulsory leaving age for students in Australian schools. The challenge for schools and colleges is to provide a national framework for students studying in post compulsory education, and, as a consequence, the National Curriculum will address the pathways for senior students at all levels of education. A national plan for students entering tertiary education, technical and further education, or the work force, will enable students to experience success in the post compulsory years. A national response will provide a common experience for young people as "over the past fifteen years the system has

sustained an uneasy balance between state initiatives and federal imperative curriculum policy" (Connelly et al., 2007, p. 255). However, in the past 2 years there has been a stronger push for the National Curriculum, particularly in relation to the pathways for students who enter post-compulsory education.

The National Curriculum in Australia will provide a common curriculum based on the needs of students at all levels of education providing pathways for positive futures.

> Australia's future depends upon each citizen having the necessary knowledge, understanding, skills and values for a productive and rewarding life in an educated, just and open society. High quality schooling is central to achieving this vision and secondary schools provide students with the ability to build on what they know, to assist them to reach their full potential and acknowledge the capacity they have to learn. (Stanley, 2007, p. 100)

The Tasmanian Scene

> *"In each state, the mandated curriculum documents have a distinctly local flavour, yet they remain based on elements that are commonly used across the nation." (Connelly et al., 2007, p. 255)*

Tasmania's educational experiences of reform, particularly in Years 11 and 12, have been very similar to those experienced nationally. Like other states, "the residual effects of the reforms of the 1980s have probably brought the state and territory curricula closer together than they would have been had this effort at national curriculum construction not occurred" (Connelly et al., 2007, p. 255).

In a national context, the current post Year 10 curriculum reforms and re-structuring of the Government Senior Secondary Colleges in Tasmania have seen major curriculum reform in the state. The mandated reforms being implemented into Years 11 and 12 are evidence of progressive reform. Other states have embraced the pathways for senior students, particularly in the vocational education area, however Tasmania has created a new framework for Senior Secondary Colleges and Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institutions.

> The Tasmanian Government is setting up taskforces aimed at improving post-compulsory education, training and employment opportunities for young people in the State. The taskforces, part of the Guaranteeing Futures Area Taskforce Initiative will develop, implement and monitor action plans which support young people aged 15 to 24 to move from Year 10 towards meaningful participation in their communities as adults (Stanley, 2007, p. 100).

Tasmanian education has experienced a number of mandated curriculum reforms. The most recent in secondary schools, and experienced first hand by the Heads of Faculty in the case study school, have been the Essential Learnings and *Tasmania: A State of Learning*. The Essential Learnings Framework was established to focus primarily on "what is central to the curriculum" (Department of Education, 2002, p. 4). The underpinning principles were established to guide educational practice. This mandated reform preceded the post compulsory reform and influenced to some extent the initial attitude expressed by Heads of Faculty to the implementation of the new reform.

The stated purpose of the Tasmanian educational reform, *Tasmania: A State of Learning* (2003), was:

> improving young people's participation in education and training beyond compulsory schooling. . . . this long-term strategic framework aims to enable second chance learning opportunities for people of all ages; to build a skilled workforce with the capacity to support business and industry in a growing economy; and to create communities that value lifelong learning (Department of Education, 2003, p. 3).

Mulford and Hogan (1999) noted that the view of Tasmanian Principals and leaders was one which supported reform in schools wholeheartedly. While these curriculum developments have been welcomed by many leaders and teachers there has also been some cynicism expressed, due to the number of mandated curriculum reform directions which have concurrently or previously been perceived as not really meeting the needs of students in Tasmania. In a study

conducted by Churchill and Williamson (2004), Tasmanian teachers expressed concerns about:

> a number of change initiatives being promoted simultaneously. They felt there was little acknowledgement of the effect of this multiplicity of innovation on teachers who already see themselves as being committed fully in the day to day tasks associated with working with their students. (p. 38)

Leading curriculum reform

"Teachers expressed some frustration at the top-down approach which they felt had imposed new curriculum on them without giving them much guidance about what they were expected to do." (O'Sullivan, Carroll & Cavanagh, 2008. p. 9)

In a rapidly and continually changing world, each one of us is affected by change and influenced by leaders (Fullan, 2001; Hargreaves, 2003; Limmerick, Cunningham & Crowther, 1998; Oliver, 1996). According to Mulford (2002), maintaining the balance between continuity and constant change is a challenge for all leaders. Leadership for change requires the leader to possess many characteristics, such as honesty, competence and an ability to look forward (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). If leadership is about "inspiring rather than directing, partnering and involving rather than dividing and controlling" (Graetz, Rimmer, Lawrence & Smith, 2002, p. 210), then leaders must set the direction, define the context and provide coherence for their organizations (Kanter, 1999).

One of the most demanding aspects of leading and implementing reform is being able to take risks when what is working seems to be the status quo. There is so much which changes daily in schools that the curriculum can be the one "constant" in the life of the teacher. Leaders are also challenged by the constant need or request for change as it seems when they have just mastered something new, another change confronts them (Leithwood, Jantz & Steinback, 2000). Therefore leaders, who are required to be visionary, imaginative, flexible, and show initiative, need to take up the cause, see the positive in the reform and seek a strategy for its implementation. Limmerick et al. (1998) suggest that, in order to

have the greatest impact on people, we must forget about how we did things in the past and believe in the product we are delivering. If the new product is deemed to be more appropriate than the old, "letting go of old patterns and taking a fresh approach" (Cashman, 1998, p. 87) will enable reform to be commenced from a clear slate.

Educational change is often misconstrued as reactive change rather than planned change with strategic intent (Davies, 2003; Griffin, 1996). In implementing curriculum reform, the Heads of Faculty need to adopt a strategic approach to create greater understanding and sustainability rather than a reactive approach which creates turbulent highs and lows in the reform process. Middle leaders need to have the "courage" to lead (Burdett, 1999).

Any initiative or substantive modification to some part of the school is the direct result of external or internal forces for change (Olsen, 2002). When "introducing even minor changes can incite strong resistance and conflict" (Starratt, 1994, p. 2), how then do leaders and followers in schools cope with reform in order to meet the needs of both internal and external forces? Despite mandated reform directed by outside forces, lasting school improvement relies on teachers at the "coal face" who characterise integrity, trust and good will in implementing reform (Kirk & MacDonald, 2001; Riley, 2000; Snowdon & Gorton, 1998). Hanson (1996) refers to mandated change from outside agencies as "enforced change," (p. 289) when the school has no choice but to respond to the change. The fact that the reform is mandated, as was the case in this study, may influence many stages in the implementation of curriculum reform in the school.

Teaching and learning is the core business of schools. Principals, curriculum leaders and teachers are directly responsible for curriculum implementation. However, it is the Head of Faculty who is arguable the key "driver" of change once the reform has been established and the school is "ready" for its implementation. If the quality of the reform implementation and faculty determines the educational outcomes for students, then the responsibility of a Head of Faculty is enormous. It is no wonder then that Heads of Faculty are often anxious about the reform process. The leaders of reform however need to consider

"self" in the process, as leadership starts with self, incorporates the team, the faculty and the school (Burdett, 1999; Fullan, 1998).

Middle Leadership—Heads of Faculty

"Middle leaders (subject leaders, middle managers, heads of department, curriculum co-ordinators) play a crucial role in developing and maintaining the nature and quality of a pupil's learning experience." (Bennett, Cartwright & Crawford, 2003, p. 3)

Heads of Faculty are leaders in schools and are empowered by Leadership Teams to be key players in the reform process (Connolly, Connolly & James, 2000). Consequently, they also face the challenges that many leaders experience. They are expected to lead by example, that is, be exemplary classroom practitioners (Wilson & McPake, 2000), great managers (Keese, 2005; Kotzur, 2005) and forward thinking and visionary (Mulford, 2005). When leading other professionals, middle leaders often face the dilemma of being the "meat in the sandwich" when they are torn between their own function and its relationship to the bigger picture of the school (Wilson & McPake, 2000). According to Moore (2007b) Heads of Faculty "are both the conduit as well as the interpreters of either discussions with or decisions made by senior leaders" (p. 1). In leading the reform process, the Heads of Faculty need to work with, and through, these potential limitations.

The role of Head of Faculty is complex. Personal goals must be met at the same time as school and systemic goals (Jones, 2006). Role descriptions list the managerial aspects of the duties, however the Head of Faculty also has primary responsibility for the implementation of the curriculum (Kotzur, 2005; Mulford, 2005), student learning, and enhancing the quality of teaching by individual teachers (Gabriel, 2005; Keese, 2005). Allum (2005) discusses the many roles of a Head of Faculty, who she believes act as a "role model, leader, manager, administrator and implementer" (p.14). She provided a list of many personal qualities Heads of Faculty should exemplify. Heads of Faculty should "be discreet, be supportive of colleagues, be loyal to the head of School and senior staff, don't gossip, don't put others down, respect everyone and do things well"(p.

14). Combine these roles and qualities with the duties of every day teaching and learning, leading and managing, and the role of a Head of Faculty is enormous.

In order to achieve high performance outcomes, Heads of Faculty must be dynamic leaders who are empowered to make decisions, work autonomously, rally support and actively and enthusiastically promote the appropriate reform (Keese, 2005). Visionary leaders must be encouraged and empowered to become "champions of change" (Robbins & Coulter, 1996, p. 447); champions with zeal and passion who can enthuse others (Rabey, 1997). If, however, those in formal leadership roles are less experienced or not the "natural leaders" in the faculty, they will not necessarily be the champion change agents. This dilemma requires the formal leaders to work with the "informal leaders" to make the change process more effective.

Followers expect leaders of change to be credible, however no-one can predict how those following will react at the time to either the leader or the reform. According to Fullan (2001), the professional credibility of the leader of reform is essential to the success of its implementation. The leader must have a sense of purpose and provide strategies for working through the process. A study conducted by the United States Small Business Administration (2003), suggested that for leaders to gain credibility they must set an example, eliminate perks, walk around and talk to people, be genuine, and have passion.

Kotzur (2005) suggests that there are ten building blocks that capture the role of Heads of Faculty—teamwork, quality, continuous learning, respect, optimism, resilience, self-awareness, empathy, communication, and leadership. Leadership is the foundation stone upon which all other qualities are laid. With quality leadership, all aspects of teaching and learning improve, the team becomes successful and an attitude of continuous learning and improvement will permeate the faculty mindset (Maxwell, 2001; Parkin & Bourke, 2004). Heads of Faculty should embrace these qualities in leading the curriculum reform process.

Teacher Leaders of Reform

A teacher leader is, according to Patterson and Patterson (2004), one who "works with colleagues for the purpose of improving teaching and learning whether in a

formal or an informal capacity" (p. 74). The formal teacher leader is identified and acknowledged by the Principal and school community and is assigned a specific role.

The notion of teachers as leaders is explored in more recent literature (Little, 2003; Patterson & Patterson, 2004), as teachers are at the heart of the educational process and are often targets of reform. Hehir (2004) believes that "the most significant issue for teaching as a profession is to ensure the recruitment and retention of our brightest and most creative leaders in a career in the classroom" (p. 35). According to Moore (2007b), most teacher leaders do not align themselves with hierarchical definitions of leadership, but view leadership as a collaborative effort, something shared within their classrooms. Sometimes expecting the teacher to be the leader of reform requires the teacher to unlearn what is known, in order to undertake an initiative (Boyd & McGree, 1995). Undeniably, within educational organisations there are many extremely talented and perceptive teachers who do not wear a badge of formal leadership, but who are more skilled as leaders. If these key people within schools are not valued they "may retreat to their classrooms where their own ideas can be put in place and may form professional liaisons only with people who share their values and concerns" (Bascia & Hargreaves, 2000, p. 114).

On the basis of their research Patterson and Patterson (2004) suggest that teacher leaders can make a powerful contribution in shaping school culture and building school resilience. Three American studies conducted by Little (2003) indicate that over the past two decades there has been an emergence of "teacher leadership," which has been a prominent element of reform strategy and policy rhetoric. In the Tasmanian context, the context of this research, this would appear to be the case in faculties within schools where, due to the sheer size of the school, the leader, in the majority of circumstances, is a teacher. There are many schools where enrolment numbers are lower or where a learning area has only one or two staff members, and the leadership teams within the schools are unable to appoint someone to a formal promoted position to lead such a small faculty (Caine & Caine, 2000). However, in many schools, the middle leadership team is appointed

by the Principal and the teacher leader is given a specific role and title, such as Head of Faculty.

Ownership of Reform

> *". . . any new program does not have a chance of succeeding unless employees take ownership of it." (Lindsay in Palestini, 2000, p. 71)*

Ownership of the reform by teachers is important as the faculty staff prefer to be a part of the reform process rather than be controlled by it, especially if the particular reform is an initiative which will be sustained over a considerable period of time (Blenkin, Edwards & Kelly, 1997; Conley, 1996; Snowdon & Gorton, 1998). Every person working in a school is potentially an agent of reform, and paradigms of reform cannot be established if people work in isolation (Fullan, 1993).

Empowerment of all involved is crucial to the establishment of a positive culture for reform (Fullan, 2001; Oliver, 1996). On the basis of their research in Australia, Kirk and Macdonald (2001) confirm that teachers are being given more autonomy and decision making power in the process of curriculum reform. Partnerships between Heads of Faculty and teams of teachers must continue to evolve if reform is to be successful. Leaders are important at all levels (Chandon & Nadler, 2000) and any reform should involve all staff (Daft, 2002).

Studies carried out in Hong Kong reveal that the more closely aligned an innovation is with what teachers already know, and the more empowerment afforded, then the more productive the reform will be (Carless 2004). In an interview with the researcher, Starratt (2004) discussed the significance of involving teachers in the reform process. Starratt's views on the empowerment of teachers in the change process emerged, together with the significance of ownership of the process in leading in individual classrooms. He suggested that the observation of teacher behaviour and patterns, and the influence of others on the group and what they do in their own classroom, will determine their level of engagement in the reform process. He questioned the legitimate areas, boundaries

and autonomy for teachers and the reality of whether they do have the free space to act autonomously.

Educational leaders strive to ensure that everyone in the school is involved in the reform process and is part of establishing the values which form the basis for the impending reform. This not only places the individual at the heart of the culture of the school, but also becomes the catalyst for empowering leaders at all levels within the school. In order to foster enthusiasm and a positive attitude towards the reform the leader must also harness the talents of staff through the nurturing and understanding of members' needs, creating an atmosphere of trust, understanding and empowerment (Daft, 2002; Hooper & Potter, 2000; McArthur, 2002).

A Culture for Reform

> *"If change is going to be managed and high levels of achievement are to be maintained, then it is likely that a school is going to need to create a culture in which innovation is a natural aspiration of the staff . . . however, a culture of innovation is neither easy to develop or maintain." (CSM extra, 2007, p. 1)*

A culture for reform has been identified as fundamental to positive development and implementation of initiatives. If a culture for reform does not exist in an organisation, one needs to be developed in order to help the reform process proceed within a supportive environment. People are the most significant factor in creating a culture for reform (Conley, 1996; Daft, 2002; Graetz, Rimmer, Lawrence & Smith, 2002; Senge, 2000), as the culture of any organisation is embedded in the people and their capacity and capability to accept change. According to Moore (2007b), "an initiative needs to be 'embedded' to ensure lasting and deep-seated change" (p. 5).

The values, skills and attitudes, backgrounds and life experience of the individuals involved in the reform process in the school combine to form a collage that presents a culture for reform. Depending upon the particular values and skills of individuals, the culture for reform may vary. However, a positive culture is essential to the successful functioning of a school. To achieve such success, the culture must be embedded in the underlying beliefs and assumptions that are

shared by all within the school community. Through the deepening of these beliefs and assumptions, the culture for reform will guide staff members' behaviours and attitudes and the way staff perceive the organisation. To fully experience the culture of a school, the staff need to be immersed within it, providing meaning for the roles within the organisation (Conley, 1996; Senge, 2000).

Quality leadership is required to implement and oversee the complex process of reform. In schools where transformational leadership is present, the role and potential of Heads of Faculty and teacher leadership in affecting the climate and culture of a school are recognised (Gabriel, 2005; Hunt, 1991). A leader must ensure and create a culture of objectivity, openness, and sensitivity, a climate conducive to mutual objectivity, trust and confidence, a clear vision and understanding of the change itself, be a listener, value the contribution of everyone, and have the necessary skills to facilitate the implementation of change (Conley,1996; Graetz et al., 2002; Snowdon & Gorton, 1998).

Recurring themes in the literature suggest that a culture of reform and learning can be created if there is professional and reflective dialogue (Connolly, Connolly & James, 2000), a united focus and sense of purpose, collaboration, openness to improvement, trust, respect, and supportive leadership (Fullan, 2003; Senge, 2000; Sparks, 2003). In schools where positive relationships enable professional dialogue, and where teachers and leaders work together to achieve positive outcomes, then successful implementation of reform will occur.

A collaborative environment is central to the creation of a culture for reform within schools (Senge, 2000). Developing relationships between leaders and teachers, and among teachers themselves, are the keystones to creating a truly cultural change for communities (Conners & D'Arbon, 1997). It does however require the change agent to be sympathetic to collaborative practice, to implement sophisticated strategies for implementation and enable all involved in the process equal voice and the opportunity to engage in professional and rational dialogue in the pursuit of truth (Blenkin, Edwards & Kelly, 1997; Oliver, 1996).

The implementation of reform has the potential to create chaos and is not for those who like order and neatness (Lichenstein, 2000). Reform is chaotic, messy and unsettling—qualities which are sometimes difficult for leaders and teachers to come to terms with as they are so conditioned to order, neatness, structure and formality (Davies, 2003; Fullan, 2001; Reilly, 2000). Often this messiness and chaos in the initial stages of reform provide the opportunities for creative ideas and outcomes to emerge, resulting in advancing the reform. The only sure prediction about the culture of reform is that change is constant, and it is part of any organisation within our world (Davies, 2003; Reilly, 2000; Stoll & Fink, 1996).

Initiating change within the organisation does not necessarily mean that change will occur or that the culture of change will make a shift. Indeed, much of the literature explores the reflective or evaluative aspect of cultural shifts in schools and how this determines the success or otherwise of a positive culture for change (Caldwell, 1997; Leithwood & Day, 2007). Schools which participated in a study based on school-based management and shared decision-making, had firmly established shared decision making structures, a commitment to demonstrating decision making and collective leadership, and a culture that focused upon on-going learning and improvement. In schools where the structures allowed for the participants to have a great deal of input, there was a sense of equity and caring in dealing with aspects of change. Empowerment of all involved was crucial to the establishment of a positive culture for change (Fullan, 2001; Oliver, 1996). A common framework for change gave all within the organisation the opportunity to embrace a passion for organisational learning (Schalk, Campbell & Freese, 1998; Stevenson, 2001).

Creating a culture for reform does not necessarily mean restructuring what exists, but producing the capacity to "seek, critically assess, and selectively incorporate new ideas and practices" (Fullan, 2001, p. 44). Fullan emphasises that a culture for reform cannot be created instantly. Rather it is a gradual process that in the long term should benefit all, suggesting that the creation of a suitable culture for reform is a long process (Fullan, 2001; Tyson, 2004). However, in schools with a united focus and sense of purpose, collaboration, openness to improvement, trust,

respect, and supportive leadership, a culture ripe for reform will exist. Positive relationships will enable professional dialogue and reflective practice, and teachers and leaders will work together to achieve positive outcomes (Connolly et al., 2000; Fullan, 2003; Senge, 2000; Sparks, 2003). A shared vision, together with the creation of an environment conducive to reform, will assist in building a positive culture (Conners & D'Arbon, 1997; Fullan, 1993; Masters, 2004), enabling the reshaping of organisational culture (Daft, 2002).

Teachers, students and parents must work together to encourage mutual support in the implementation of reform because unless the "right culture is in place and unless parents, teachers, and students interact with the school in meaningful ways" (Sergiovanni, 2001, p. 100), effective reform will not follow. The culture of any school is the part the people play not only in creating, embedding and enhancing the culture, but also the way in which they contribute to it. It comprises the relationships they enjoy, the roles they play, the collective history and stories they share and the collective wisdom they bring to each new day. It is important to remember that cultural uniformity is not possible, because of the varying backgrounds, age, gender, and experience of the teachers (Starratt, 1994, p. 10). The teachers' own self concept and engagement with the school culture will also vary, as leaders enter different phases of their career. If the reform initiative is not perceived as part of teachers' career plan or pathway it will often be ignored or resisted (Blenkin, et.al., 1997; Duignan & Macpherson, 1992).

Models of Reform

"Many educational reforms have failed because of an enthusiastic but ill-advised leader who has tried to implement a change before engaging in staff development." (Palestini, 2000, p. 81)

Models of reform, as understood and applied to the process by leaders and followers, are crucial in determining the success of curriculum reform (Davies, 2003; Hargreaves, 2003). There are strategies for reform, but no "quick-fix" recipes (Fullan, 2001; Wheatley, 1997). A variety of approaches are required for refrom as "one size does not fit all" (Crom & Bertels, 1999, p.163). Various models of reform, some heroic (Griffin, 1996) in nature, others transformational

(Gunter, 2001) in outlook, stress the significance of collaboration (Moore, 2007), clear articulation of the need for reform (Sergiovanni, 2001), planning, implementation, and evaluation (Fullan, 2003). The models are more general in nature, with some providing strategies and techniques for leaders (Canavan, 2002; Davies, 2003; Hooper & Potter, 2001).

Mortimore (1996) suggests that effective faculties exhibit "a consistent departmental approach; high departmental expectations; teamwork elicited by heads of departments; continuous monitoring; commitment to continuous improvement in both teaching and learning; support and monitoring by senior management" (p. 257).

Whilst there is no "one package for school leadership" (Riley, 2000, p. 47), there are leadership approaches that enhance the reform process. Leadership at all levels within schools requires management strategies such as designing, planning, getting things done, and leadership which embraces mission, vision, direction and inspiration (Fullan, 1991; Grace, 2002). Sergiovanni (2001) suggests five "forces of leadership" for improving and maintaining quality schooling—technical, human, educational, symbolic and cultural forces of leadership (p. 100). The technical force focuses on sound management techniques; the human force encompasses the harnessing of the social and interpersonal potential; the educational force enables leaders to bring professional knowledge to educational development; the symbolic force embraces the values, role modelling and purpose of the school; and the cultural force empowers leaders to build a unique school. Sergiovanni suggests that it is attention to the symbolic and cultural forces that characterises an excellent school. Such a framework, as suggested by Sergiovanni, enables leaders to embrace those facets of leadership that create an holistic approach to curriculum reform.

Authentic (Kouzes & Posner, 2002) and transformational leadership (MacGregor-Burns, 1997) behaviours are more conducive to building relationships than hierarchical transactional leadership behaviours and create motivation for reform (Barnett, McCormick & Conners, 2001). Collier and Esteban (2000) suggest that "systemic" leadership that focuses on community is the task of every member of the organization.

Leaders are role models for others and need to clearly articulate their personal values and remain true to them (Kouzes & Posner, 2002) if their credibility is to be sustained throughout the reform process. Hargreaves and Fink (2004) recommend seven principles of sustainable leadership, which enable leaders to "accomplish goals that matter, inspire others to join them in working toward those goals, and leave a lasting legacy" (p. 1): Sustainable leadership matters, lasts, spreads, is socially just, resourceful, promotes diversity and is activist. Reform, built on the foundation of sustained leadership, will empower leaders at the middle level to "accomplish goals that matter, inspire others to join them in working toward those goals, and leave a legacy after they have gone" (p. 5).

Leadership Approaches

"Personal preferences, values and characteristics—middle leaders have choices, within constraints, in their responses to change and in developing their role and practices." (Bennett et al., 2003, p. 6)

If reform is inevitable and is to be steered in a positive direction, the change agent needs to understand the cultural context of the school, its history, its people and its vision (Keese, 2005; Kotzur, 2005). The way in which the leader of reform comes to some understanding of the cultural context may vary from the use of an hierarchical mechanistic approach to a more open-ended approach (Fullan 2001). Much of the literature explores the similarities between leadership in business and in education, and notes that both face similar challenges in dealing with change behaviour (Fullan, 2001; Graetz et. al., 2002; Hooper & Potter, 2000). Principals are one such source of leadership within an educational context, however for the purpose of this study the leadership focus was on middle leaders, Heads of Faculty, who are the key personnel in leading the current curriculum reform in schools. A great deal of literature and research explores the difference between that of manager in a leadership role and leader in a leadership role in a variety of organisations (Conley, 1996; Fullan, 1991; Grace, 2002).

Moore (2007b) suggests that leadership approach and style influence the outcome of implementing reform. In introducing mandated change to their staff, Heads of Faculty use two different leadership approaches: an "adoptive (top-down) or

adaptive (bottom-up)" approach (Moore, 2007b, p. 1). Moore (2007b) refers to these approaches as "dominant/rational" and "community of learners/emergent" approaches (p. 3). The research conducted by Moore (2007a) concluded that middle leaders generally used a combination of these two different approaches at different times during the reform process, which also significantly supported the leadership approach of middle leaders in his study.

Other research deals with structural frameworks where all participants are equal, or at a "flat" level, replacing a more hierarchical/mechanistic model, which was once seen as the most appropriate leadership approach; leading from the top down with a distributed and shared leadership style (Senge, 2000; Brewer, 1995). The notion of distributed and shared innovation has been encouraged, resulting in creativity, empowerment, and shared and distributive expertise (Sawhney & Prandelli, 2000; Wertheimer & Zinga, 1998).

Contrary to the flat level approach, in literature exploring leadership in schools as significant in the implementation of reform, the leadership had been remarkably different. Management of reform was considered a journey, where a climate of reform was established, and others in the schools had become empowered to take over driving the reform (Hopkins, Ainscow & West, 1997). It commenced with sound leadership modelling and eventually teachers felt empowered to go beyond the four walls of the classroom seeking best practice, working collaboratively and building relationships. Affirmation and celebration were essential ingredients (Connolly et al., 2000; Healy et al., 2001).

Research also indicates that the transparency of the reform process is integral to the success of the reform, and that this can largely be achieved through authentic collaborative practice (Duignan, 2002; Telford, 1996). Leaders who seek to engage all in active discussion and provide appropriate professional learning and ownership of the reform, will develop a shared understanding of the reasons for the reform and will reduce considerably lack of commitment and resistance to the change by other staff. If this does not occur at every stage of the reform process, then often very positive innovations will only be adopted half-heartedly (Oliver, 1996). "Leadership needs to be shared and distributed by all those who work in

schools, empowering teachers and students and engendering trust" (Hinton, 2004, p. 34).

Research investigating the influence of principals' leadership behaviours on teacher outcomes and aspects of school learning culture revealed that a transformational leadership approach was more conducive to building relationships, hence creating a climate more conducive to successful reform outcomes. Identifying exactly what the school wanted to restructure was the motivation for impending reform.

Sparks (2001), in an interview with Senge, agrees that there is the need for reform to be nurtured in a climate where schools engage teachers, parents and principals in the process. Using mental models which require teachers to open themselves to seeing things differently, and engage in collegial dialogue, will create a safe environment for freedom of professional dialogue and encouragement of innovation.

Leaders, not necessarily those in "higher" roles, but teachers and middle managers who are team players, yet strong, energetic and optimistic, and working in schools which are dynamic and realise their potential as learning organizations, are crucial to the reform process (Johnson & Caldwell, 2001; Macgregor-Burns, 1979). A leader, regardless of his/her approach, can be considered successful only when the humanistic dimension of leadership is taken into account and people are the central focus and motivation for any impending reform.

Leading Mandated Reform

"Many teachers are marginalised by the context and process of mandated change. Such marginalisation contributes to the failure of school restructuring initiatives." (Bailey in Bascia & Hargreaves, 2000, p. 113)

Leading mandated reform requires a combination of common approaches and yet unique skills on behalf of the leader. The very fact that the word mandated (inferring that which is imposed on others from above) is mooted with teams of middle leaders and teachers can often create a sense of déjà vu and instant resistance. When experiences of mandated reform have not been positive, middle

leaders have used negative language in relation to reform which was mandated. They expressed the view that the reason for their negative reaction to the reform was its imposition. Literature also supported this opinion of imposed reform (Moore, 2007b; Poppleton & Williamson, 2004). Mandated change serves as an additional impost which must be embraced in the educational setting, and middle leaders know their teams well enough to understand that there is always going to be some reaction to reform by their staff. "Changes which originate outside these teachers' work settings and which are presented as mandatory are seen by them as being the most problematic for their work lives" (Churchill & Williamson, as cited in Poppleton & Williamson, 2004, p. 38).

The challenge, therefore, faced by leaders, is to communicate the impending mandated reform to all those affected by the reform in a way which will gain the positive reaction required for successful implementation. Despite senior and middle leaders recognising that communication is crucial, mandated change is "typically introduced and instituted through a system of principals, consultants, and other 'change agents', workshops and in-service activities" (Bailey, as cited in Bascia & Hargreaves, 2000, p. 120). This "top-down process of mandating change discourages teachers' abilities to set goals, develop skills, respond to feedback and become engaged in improving their practice" (Bailey, 2000, p. 116). Such an approach to leading mandated change creates a hierarchical process for the reform which has been shown to be highly problematic. Bailey (2000) noted that this approach was ineffective as "it is impossible for change mandated by someone other than those who are to effect the change, change not rooted in classroom realities, to take into consideration either teachers' working conditions or their core values" (p. 116).

Mandated educational reform which is externally imposed creates larger challenges for leaders. In a study conducted with teachers in Tasmania, Churchill and Williamson (2004) discovered that:

> while it is common in Australia for teachers to engage in a
> considerable level of locally based innovation efforts, the teachers in
> this study described the changes which they thought affected their

work most significantly as being imposed externally by central administrative authorities and governments. (p. 38)

Teachers are spending their time coping with internal changes that affect their daily work and then they are required to suspend these changes and make a mind shift to cope with something outside their immediate realm of reality, and the "disjunctures between the assumptions embedded in mandated reform and teachers' realities can marginalize teachers" (Bailey, 2000, p. 116).

The Personal Dimension of Leading Reform

"Not more change, teachers often proclaim." (Moore, 2007a, p. 1)

Educators are individuals, each viewing the world from a personal perspective and making their own meaning of the world around them. Backgrounds differ greatly, their training is diverse, and they can be at very different stages of their professional journey. They also embrace different value systems and philosophies of education (Oliver, 1996; Robbins & Coulter, 1996). In any one educational institution, regardless of size, "there's a vast range of abilities and expertise like on any staff and it's a matter of utilizing people's abilities to the best and getting that team work going" (Kirk & Macdonald, 2001, p. 559).

The reform literature suggests that there are multi-faceted dimensions to how people react and respond to reform (Evans, 1996; Hargreaves, Earl, Moore & Manning, 2002). Regardless of the type of reform, roles for everyone will be different, and, as a consequence, attitude, human behaviour and reaction to reform will vary. MacGregor-Burns (1997) suggests that, for real reform to take place, there should be a transformation in attitudes and behaviours that influence our daily lives.

It is sad but true that "education has often been labelled the most resistant profession in terms of its ability to take on change and look forward to the future" (Groundwater-Smith, Cusworth & Dobbins, 1998, p. 313). Teachers are often caught in the middle as they operate in a relatively conservative profession, but, at the same time, try to fulfil the need to prepare the next generation for the future.

When leading mandated curriculum reform, the dilemma for some middle leaders is their personal belief in the appropriateness of the proposed change, and how they cope with leading reform when they are philosophically opposed to it.

The emotion of people engaged in the reform process is another recurring theme in the literature. Feelings of loss, resistance, excitement and anger are emotions people experience when confronted with reform, and this is an expected part of a "passionate vocation" where feelings of pleasure, creativity and joy are also experienced. It is not merely enough to be efficient and well organised as a teacher, but to recognise that quality teaching also involves emotional work (Conners & D'Arbon, 1997; Fullan, 2001).

It is imperative that leaders recognise the differences in individual reactions to reform and harness the varying attitudes as a potential resource in the given situation. Reactions ranging from resistance to belief will influence the outcome of the reform, and the personal dimension rather than the professional dimension may dominate (Binney & Williams, 1997). The literature suggests that although there are multi-faceted dimensions to people's reaction and response to reform, there is a need to cater for individuals or small groups in implementing the reform, just as a classroom teacher is required to provide individual learning programs for each student (Crom & Bertels, 1999).

How teachers as individuals fit as part of the "jigsaw" of the school is a strong determinant of the way teachers behave (McGilp, 2001). Teachers adhere to what is known, tried, and tested, rather than change, as what is known provides the self with a degree of control. The literature suggests that teachers are perhaps not good at change and need to learn how to change (Bell & Harrison, 1995; Hooper & Potter, 2000). The individual must visualise self in the equation of change and come to the realisation that change is a joint operation between the leaders who want the change, the managers who want to make it happen, and the staff who make it work. A secure sense of self is essential in the reform process, and, if we are to begin with ourselves, then we must look at our "inner learning" (Blenkin et al., 1997; Fullan, 1998). There must be collaboration between all parties with their varied concept of self in order to implement change.

As the reform process begins, everyone will experience change in various ways and to varying degrees. For some, the experience may result in a sense of alienation, and, as a consequence, create negativity towards the process of change. The designated leader of change must be aware of this and plan to manage the transition effectively for all involved (Binney & Williams, 1997; Carlson, 1996; Fullan, 2001). Attitudes to change are the responsibility not only of the individual, but also of the collective group engaging in the reform process. The delivery of a proposed reform, the initial reaction, the body language, and the motivation for the reform, influence the attitudes to change (Banyard & Hayes, 1994; Groundwater-Smith et al., 1998). A sense of humour, a genuine concern for the participants, an understanding from all perspectives, a concern for relationships, a respect for both the minds and hearts of all, affirmation, and celebration, are recurring themes in the literature (Binney & Williams, 1997; Carlson, 1996; Connolly et al., 2000; Fullan, 2001; Healy et al., 2001; Wenger, Hong & Hampel, 2002).

Reform can be enlightening, innovative and exciting, but it can also bring with it a decline in staff morale, stress about the loss of roles or possibly jobs, a mistrust of colleagues and eventual loss of commitment to the school (Owens, 1995). Heads of Faculty will need to deal with a variety of reactions to reform. Reaction to reform is an expected component of the process for many, especially if the reform, according to Senge (2000), "forces them to think differently about their jobs" (p. 444). It is important that Heads of Faculty understand such reactions and embrace the attitudes and behaviours teachers exhibit (Starratt, 1994; Wilson & McPake, 2000). Reactions will arise for many reasons, including self-interest, uncertainty, fear, different goals and values (Binney & Williams, 1997; Cashman, 1990).

Research has made a direct link between organisational change and employee behaviour, and explored the readiness for change, resistance to change, and the perceived need for change, as hurdles for leaders of change (Daft, 2003; Schalk et al., 1998).

Readiness for Reform

Leaders of reform need to be sensitive to the readiness of their staff when embarking on the implementation process. Conley (1996) suggests there are two implications for readiness in the implementation of reform. The first is the psychological readiness of the individuals—a preparedness to have an open mind about the reform, to be able to examine personal deeply held beliefs and assumptions, and to potentially alter them during the process. The second implication is that the broader framework of the school is ready and equipped to initiate the impending reform.

Risk taking and moving individuals out of their comfort zone are strategies that motivate some change agents in the creation of a culture for reform (Brecht, 1996; Brewer, 1995). However, if there is not a deep-seated "readiness" for change, very little will happen. (Schalk et al., 1998). Seizing the right moment, capitalising on an opportunity to initiate reform, requires skill, time and energy, that must be invested in the process. One of the most crucial parts of the change process, which must be handled sensitively in order to bring about reform, is the creation of the correct climate or ambience in which to launch the proposed change (Blenkin et al., 1997; Conley, 1996; Conners & D'Arbon, 1997). A shared vision, the timing, bringing all in the community on board, inclusive practice, acknowledging the past and the present in looking at the future and operating from an open perspective will assist in the creation of a positive culture for reform (Fullan, 1993; Masters, 2004).

Resistance to Reform

"Inevitably, there will be some resistance to change and this is most likely to come from the teaching staff, especially those who will be expected to plan and deliver the changes." (Jones, 2006, p. 16)

Resistance to reform is common in any organisation. When structures in schools exist which threaten and challenge the individual's professional identity, meaning for that person will be eroded and more instability is likely to occur. Self-interest, loss of meaning, uncertainty, and a different perspective about the reform, are

some of the reasons for resistance (Blenkin et al., 1997; Daft, 2002; Loader, 2003). Resistance to change is a predominant reaction to reform, however, Burdett (1999) believes that "people do not resist change—they sensibly reject what fails to touch that which they have the capacity to be passionate about" (p. 7). There are, however, many types of resisters to reform. Resistance may be expressed overtly and be obvious, or it may be covertly occurring as part of the underground resistance. Superficially, all may look well for the proposed change, but underneath there can be a groundswell of passive resistance. The literature (Binney & Williams 1997; Hanson, 1997; Snowden & Gorton, 1998) explores many types of resisters and collectively they may be categorised as follows. The "positive" resister is the person who agrees wholeheartedly with the proposed reform when in front of everyone, but then lets the initiative drop. The "unique" resister claims that the proposed reform is meant for everyone else and does not affect them; the "let me be last" resister does not react to the reform but deliberately waits a period of time hoping it will fail or simply go away; the "we need more time to study" resister is merely stalling; the "states rights" resister believes only in reform at the school level; the "cost justifier" focuses on the budget coming before the initiative and the "incremental change" resister cannot let go of the old, and sees the new only in comparison to the past.

Perceived Need for Reform

"Although implementing syllabus documents is central to teachers' work, many teachers regarded the curriculum change as making additional demands of them and were therefore reluctant to engage in any meaningful way with them."
(O'Sullivan, Carroll & Cavanagh, 2008. p. 1)

For reform to be successful within schools, teachers must see a perceived need for the reform, as change for the sake of change is not enough to convince even the most supportive teacher of impending change. In any organization there is always room for improvement, and that improvement is not likely to occur without a formal process for change. The reform, be it either internally or externally imposed, requires the middle leaders to be prepared to embrace the reform and to at least evaluate and reflect upon the outcome of the reform. Involvement in the reform process will enable these leaders to reflect upon the status quo in order to

move forward. When there is a perceived need for reform—reform which will benefit either themselves as teachers or their students—they will be motivated to undertake it (Riley, 2000).

Teachers will respond to reforms if they feel that the reform (be it internally or externally imposed) will be sustained over a considerable period of time (Blenkin et al., 1997). Reforms which are perceived by teachers as a "quick fix," or as jumping on the "band wagon" initiatives will, in most cases, receive negative reactions, and are unlikely to see positive outcomes achieved. Similarly a reform initiative which involves a great degree and depth of theorising, research and policy can sometimes be interpreted by teachers as "pie in the sky," rather than something which has a practical learning application and better outcome for them and their learning programs.

Improved outcomes for students, teachers and parents within the school community are an accepted reason for reform, and are seen as the measure of success (Kotzur, 2007, p. 54). Riley (200) suggests that "teachers are motivated to change their practices, if they can see the benefits for their pupils" (p. 37). Reform which provides a "sense of purpose, builds a culture, and provides the community connections necessary for one to know who she or he is; to relate to others; and to belong" (Sergiovanni, 2000, p. 60) highlights that this sort of reform is more likely to not only be accepted, but also to see the aims of the reform achieved.

Change Fatigue—Initiative Overload

"Teachers' anecdotal comments express weariness and at times frustration at the regularity and extensiveness of changes imposed on the profession." (Moore, 2007b, p. 4)

It is imperative that leaders of the reform process understand the stresses change places upon an individual. Generally teachers are committed and dedicated professionals, and any slight suggestion of change or call for new initiatives may be perceived or interpreted as a criticism of their current work, and can, in some cases, cause unnecessary psychological disturbance. In regard to teacher workloads, which are already huge, "there was an understandable suspicion that

the headteacher's new idea would mean lots of work for the foot-soldiers" (Jones, 2006, p. 17). Many teachers claim that they are working to capacity, and for them to be overwhelmed by yet another change demand can cause feelings of guilt and incompetence. Leaders must consider the hearts as well as the minds of teachers in the reform process (Bell & Harrison, 1995; Bissell, 2002; Conners & D'Arbon, 1997; Oliver, 1996; USSBA, 2003).

The emotions of people undergoing the reform process is a recurring theme in the literature. According to Fullan (2001a), "in a culture of change, emotions frequently run high" (p. 74). Feelings of loss, resistance, excitement and anger are some of the emotions people experience when confronted with reform.

Churchill and Williamson (as cited in Poppleton & Williamson, 2004) conducted a study in Tasmania, researching the effects that continual educational change have on teachers and leaders. They acknowledged the already very heavy workload of teachers in their daily classroom operations, and of leaders in their positions of responsibility. Teachers are coping with the many demands of internal needs of individual schools. They are involved in constant review and development together with the professional obligations to the learning and teaching programs all of which would appear to be an enormous undertaking. The additional demands of externally imposed reform on teachers and leaders, according to Churchill and Williamson (2004) are the reforms which are the most challenging for teachers: "changes which originate outside these teachers' work settings and which are presented as mandatory are seen by them as being the most problematic for their work lives" (p. 38).

Multiple reforms being introduced simultaneously, whether they are internally or externally imposed, can create a sense of change overload.

> While it is common in Australia for teachers to engage in a considerable level of locally based innovation efforts, the teachers in this study described the changes which they thought affected their work most significantly as being imposed externally by central administrative authorities and governments. (Churchill & Williamson, as cited in Poppleton & Williamson, 2004, p. 38)

Rowling (2003) suggests that teachers and leaders who are faced with constant change have four common objections to it "each rooted in both emotion and logic:

- there has been too much change already

- we are far too busy to take on anything more

- a few more quick fixes and all will be well

- we are doing well, what is the hurry?" (p. 23).

Overworked teachers and leaders involved in the reform process need to be convinced of the educational value of the new reforms to ensure their successful implementation. If those involved do not embrace the reform, the implementation may be perceived as a negative process. Equating reform with learning is perhaps a more positive way of approaching what may be a contentious issue with teachers. Leaders who affirm teachers during the reform process and focus on the positive learning dimension of reform may develop a more secure approach to the implementation of reform.

Challenges and Barriers

"We are all prisoners of our past. It is hard to think of things except in ways we have always thought of them. But that solves no problems and seldom changes anything." (Bagnall, as cited in Rowling, 2003, p. 25)

Barriers will be met in most reforms (Brecht, 1996). Research suggests that there is no perfect blueprint for leading reform (Fullan, 2001; Graetz, et al., 2002), however leaders should not give up, regardless of how many barriers they encounter. Starratt (1994) observed that there is "nothing more perilous to conduct, or more uncertain in its success, than to take the lead in the introduction of a new order of things" (p. 2). The challenge for Heads of Faculty is to implement curriculum in light of limiting factors such as internal structures, large classes, negative attitudes and mandated external reform (Kirk & Macdonald, 2001). In order to cope with the changing world, we should move beyond "conventional boundaries into the creation of collaborative networks" (Limmerick et al. 1998, p. 19). This study intends to identify some of the barriers experienced in implementing reform by Heads of Faculty in a Tasmanian secondary school

context. It also addresses some of the strategies which are perceived to assist leaders of reform in overcoming these barriers.

Figure 2: Conceptual Framework
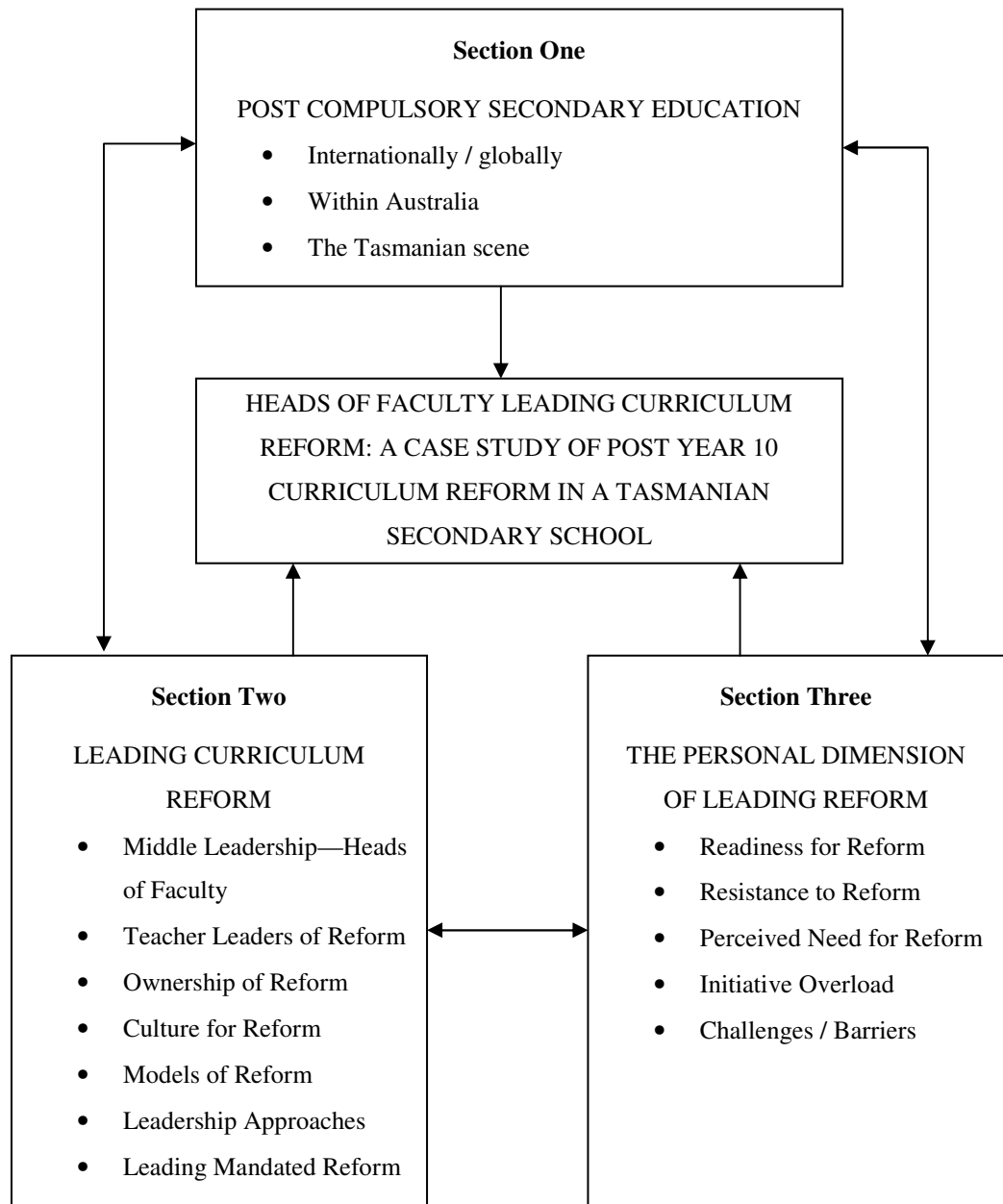
The conceptual framework has provided an overview of the key messages emerging from the literature. The key relationships in each area of middle leadership have provided the foundational knowledge about Heads of Faculty leading curriculum reform. From all aspects explored, the research questions were framed.

The Research Questions

From the review of the literature, the following research questions emerged:

1. In what ways do Heads of Faculty view themselves as leaders?
2. What strategies do Heads of Faculty use in their leadership of curriculum reform, and how integral are these leadership strategies to the reform process?
3. What challenges do Heads of Faculty face in the implementation of curriculum reform, and how do they respond to them?
4. What forms of collaborative leadership, if any, emerged during the process of implementing reform?

Conclusion

The literature about educational reform concludes that change is a complex process in an organization. The challenges and barriers of leadership impede the reform process, but the literature avoids "blueprints" or simplistic strategies for the reform process. The sensitivity, creativity and freedom required for effective reform are expressed largely from a theoretical perspective, but not always from a practical basis. The literature suggests that there are multi-faceted dimensions to how people react and respond to change, and that there is a need to cater for individuals in the implementation process. Middle leaders leading reform are an integral group of people in schools; they are given the responsibility for the implementation of curriculum and initiatives and their role is unique in the process. The research questions have arisen from the review of literature and are further explored through the lenses of case study and narrative inquiry, which underpin the methodological stance of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

"The aim of methods that involve asking direct questions to research participants (such as interview, questionnaires or focus groups) is to create analytically focused discourse that provides insights into specified research questions."
(Gibson & Brown, 2009, p. 86)

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to better understand the experiences of Heads of Faculty in the implementation of mandated post Year 10 curriculum reform. Self-interest in leading a team of teachers through mandated curriculum reform, and my role as participant researcher led me to adopt case study and narrative inquiry as my methodology. The review of literature identified three areas—post compulsory secondary education, leading curriculum reform, and the personal dimension of reform—which formed the conceptual framework that underpinned this exploration of post Year 10 compulsory education, Heads of Faculty, leadership and curriculum reform in a secondary school. Through the lenses of case study and narrative inquiry, and informed by the literature discussed in Chapter Three, four research questions were identified which guided the design and conduct of the study. This chapter details the research design, procedures and challenges faced in undertaking the study.

Theoretical Framework

If the purpose of research and inquiry is the search for deeper understanding, this study is located in the constructive-interpretivist paradigm, where participants and researcher combine to construct, through different methods, their own and shared meanings (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Gough, 2002; Patton, 2002). To this end,

certain assumptions about our world, the people in it, and their different conceptions of social reality, provide us with a conceptual framework upon which to base the findings and evidence of educational inquiry.

Exploration of the epistemological underpinnings of research requires that researchers consider assumptions concerned with "knowledge—its nature and forms, how it can be acquired and how communicated to other human beings" (Cohen & Manion, 1994, p. 6). The most important assumptions in this research were in regard to epistemology, and specifically the relationship between the inquirer and the knowable (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003; Gough 2002). This research was located within a constructivist epistemology, such that knowledge is understood as constructed rather than discovered, that we "invent concepts, models and schemes to make sense of experience" (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000, p. 125). In this study, perceptions were constructed within a framework consistent with the interpretive approach, where understanding of the world was created through human interaction in every-day life and situations; in this case, in the context of curriculum reform with leadership by Heads of Faculty in a Tasmanian secondary school.

Interpretive scholarship is distinctive and powerful as a means of exploring how we can see the world in a new way. According to Eisner (1998), it can reveal something "surprising, startling, or new; this is to present information that disrupts conventional thinking" (p. 392). This research was conducted in an interpretivist paradigm (Eisenhart, 1998; Gough, 2002; Patton, 2002). Carr and Kemmis (1986) believe that the interpretive stance provides a lens through which social reality can be explained, by understanding the subjective meanings of individuals. Some scholars have described it as the constructivist paradigm (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). The notion of "being"—how the social world is perceived and understood, and how the construct of reality is seen from the perspective of human beings—underpins and shapes research conducted from an interpretivist perspective. Cohen and Manion (1994) explain that the nature of inquiry for the purposes of such research focuses on knowledge from a subjective viewpoint; the human dimension and uniqueness characterise this as an approach which "imposes on researchers an involvement with their subjects" (p. 6). In an

educational context, teachers and leaders are constantly seeking "best" practice and the interpretivist approach allows us to serve that purpose by "capturing insights that startle readers out of mainstream complacency about educational issues, suggest how and why various educational contexts and circumstances inform particular meanings, and reveal alternative ways of making sense of educational phenomena" (Eisenhart, 1998, p. 397). In this respect, some of the issues raised in Chapter Six reflect these comments.

From an ontological perspective, there are "assumptions which concern the very nature or essence of the social phenomena being investigated" (Cohen & Manion, 1994, p. 6). These assumptions challenge us to locate the individual within the reality of the study context and engage in debate about the influence of the external world, in this case the mandated curriculum reform in the case study school. For the purposes of this study the ontological perspective focuses on what really constitutes the role of the Heads of Faculty during a period of curriculum reform in the case study school, rather than a "subjective, make-believe world created through fantasy, ideology, or desire" (Eisner, 1991, p. 43).

Methodology, according to Harding (as cited in Gough, 2002), is the process through which the inquiry can be researched. Through the use of a qualitative approach in this study, in particular, case study and narrative inquiry, what will distinguish research from other human discourse, according to Jaeger and Barone (1997), is the "application of methods" (p. 24). The methods employed in this study included a review of the literature, document analysis, a questionnaire, an individual interview, and the writing of personal stories.

Research Process

The process for generating data from the research questions is explained in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Overview of data collection.

Through the lenses of case study and narrative inquiry the findings and recommendations were revealed.

Purpose

To explore Heads of Faculty leading mandated curriculum reform in a Tasmanian secondary school

Research Question 1	**Research Question 2**	**Research Question 3**	**Research Question 4**
In what ways do Heads of Faculty view themselves as leaders?	What strategies do Heads of Faculty use in their leadership of curriculum reform and how integral are these leadership strategies to the reform process?	What challenges do Heads of Faculty face in the implementation of curriculum reform and how do they respond to them?	What forms of collaborative leadership, if any, emerged during the process of implementing reform?

Data Collection

- Literature and document search
- Survey questionnaire to all participants
- Personal stories and
- Individual interviews with sub group of 6 Heads of Faculty

Case Study

"A case study is expected to catch the complexity of a single case." (Stake, 1995, p. xi)

The methodological structure underlying this research was case study. Despite "the demands of a case study on a person's intellect, ego, and emotions [being] far greater than those of any other research strategy" (Yin, 1994, p. 55), it was an appropriate structure enabling me to elicit the views of Heads of Faculty on reform, facilitating the development of an understanding of the innovation from their perspective. This lens, focused upon one Tasmanian secondary school—Years 7–12—which enabled me to make meaning of some of the complexities of leading curriculum reform. This case study used human-as-instrument in order to describe and ascertain common understandings of leadership, reform and outcomes. Case study was chosen as an investigative technique "so as to probe deeply into the teachers' viewpoints on change, thereby facilitating the development of an understanding of the innovation from their perspective" (Carless, 2004, p. 44).

Methodology is the process through which the research question can be investigated (Gough, 2002). The most appropriate methodology for my epistemological stance, and for addressing the research questions identified, was a qualitative one. As researcher, I was challenged to explore questions about social reality of not only my role in the case study school context, but also that of my middle leader colleagues; therefore the characteristics of qualitative study, in particular case study, were employed. The collective experiences of leading mandated reform by all Heads of Faculty in a Tasmanian secondary school provided an appropriate location and context for the use of case study as a research instrument. As a result, according to Eisner (1991), the key characteristics of qualitative research were employed. These included being field-focused, setting the study in one school location, utilising the self as an instrument, being personally involved in the study being interpretive, making meaning of all sources of data, using expressive language, providing guiding questions in all methods used, paying attention to particulars, considering

individuals and their personal situation, having credibility, being an experienced Head of Faculty myself experiencing the reform first hand (Eisner, 1991), and focusing on the personal experience of the participants (Smith, 2003) were employed.

Elements of the human-as-instrument approach included the concept of the "bricoleur" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 2), where the researcher deals with a multiplicity of elements and pieces them together in order to make meaning of a complex situation. Through the use of "bricoleur" the research recognised different voices, different angles of vision, and was self-reflective, pragmatic and dialogical. Through the use of questionnaires, personal stories, and individual interviews, the human-as-instrument approach explored individual perceptions rather than relying on preconceptions about leadership approaches and educational reform.

In my role as researcher, participant and member of the team of Heads of Faculty in the case study school, I interacted with other Heads of Faculty in my school regularly, and had a professional relationship with them, enabling me to observe, listen and reflect upon their individual stories during the curriculum reform process.

Research Participants

The relationship between people and their environments is crucial to the responses of the participants in the construct of a social reality. The methods employed in this research attempted to attain authenticity throughout the data gathering process. The focus on knowledge from a uniquely subjective human viewpoint, an approach which "imposes on researchers an involvement with their subjects" (Cohen & Manion, 1994, p. 6), was the intention of this study.

The participants in the study, Heads of Faculty, were invited by letter (Appendix C) to participate in the study, and made aware that, should they choose to participate, they were at all times volunteers in the research and colleagues in the case study school. For the purposes of the study the participants comprised middle leaders and specifically:

1. The full team of 12 Heads of Faculty in the Tasmanian case study school. All 12 Heads of Faculty were invited to participate in the study through completion of a questionnaire. The researcher was amongst this group of 12.

2. A sub-group of six experienced Heads of Faculty, from a range of teaching and learning areas, were invited to participate individually in a semi-structured interview and write their personal stories, assisted by guiding questions. The sub-group of six experienced Heads of Faculty were selected because they were the most experienced middle leaders in the case study school at the time of data generation. When the questionnaires had been completed, and the number of years of experience as a Head of Faculty had been recorded in the biographical section of the questionnaire, it was clear that the six most experienced Heads of Faculty had all spent at least 9 years or more in a middle leadership role either within the case study school or other educational institutions. I regarded these colleagues as notably well informed and experienced in leading and implementing mandated curriculum reform. As the researcher participant in the study, I also created my own narrative exploring my experiences of leadership and mandated curriculum reform, making a total of seven narratives.

It may be considered a limitation of the study selecting only the experiences of Heads of Faculty leading mandated curriculum reform and not the views of teachers and other leaders in the school, but to keep the study manageable I selected the Heads of Faculty team. My study is about Heads of Faculty and their experiences, not those of other teachers and leaders in the school.

For the purposes of this study, a conscious decision was made not to include the Principal, members of the Leadership Team, or teachers in the faculties, in the data collection. The focus was on how Heads of Faculty led mandated curriculum reform and the strategies they used in this process from their perspective, rather than the perspective of those not in middle leadership or teacher leadership roles. Therefore, through the use of questionnaire, interview and personal story writing, the participants in the study, Heads of Faculty, expressed their views and

experiences about how they viewed themselves as middle leaders and how they led curriculum reform.

As a researcher participant, it was important for me to maintain the positive relationships which already existed with the participants. Being a member of the middle leadership team in the case study school, these long standing relationships had been formed in many different settings within the school. The positive professional relationships which existed between me/myself and the participants enabled the stories shared to be frank and honest and reflected the depth of their middle leadership experiences. The established professional relationships I had with the participants in the study may have been a limitation in the study. The familiarity of being an insider in the school may have caused my Head of Faculty colleagues to respond in a certain way compared with potential responses they may have given to an outsider. There are both positive and negative aspects to being an insider colleague just as there are pros and cons for being an outsider involved in the study (Denscombe, 1998). In the verification process of the personal narratives, the sub-group of six experienced colleague Heads of Faculty commented on how open they had been in their responses to me, despite me being involved in the same reform process.

Narrative Inquiry

Narrative inquirers "primarily use stories as data." (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007, p. 7)

Narrative inquiry seeks to understand human subjective experience by making peoples' stories a central focus of the research (Clandinin, 2006, 2007). The use of narrative inquiry enabled the Heads of Faculty to construct their stories. It also ensured that the study achieved an authenticity of data through the narratives provided by the participants. This study used questionnaires, interviews and the writing of personal stories to enable the participants to recall their professional experiences, and reconstruct their accounts of leading mandated curriculum reform. Following the construction of these accounts there was an opportunity for me to develop insights into my own and my colleague's experiences and come to

an understanding about how challenged some individuals were in leading reform (Dunn, 2003; Trzebinski, 2005).

The sub group of six experienced Heads of Faculty were engaged in this stage of data collection as the final part of the data generation process. They had already completed the questionnaire and interview, and then spent time reflecting through writing on their experience of leading mandated curriculum reform. Their generosity in the provision of detailed and lengthy stories provided the study with further rich data.

Positive relationships already existed between the researcher and the participants and this is essential to the conduct of qualitative research. Narrative inquiry reinforces the significance of good relationships with the participants as they are crucial and central to the outcomes of narrative research (Clandinin, 2007). Clandinin and Connelly (2000) suggest that narrative inquirers work alongside the participants in their stories and this enables the researcher to engage in a variety of ways with the participants throughout the study. A sense of trustworthiness between researcher and participants contributed to the relational focus of narrative inquiry which increased the participants rapport with me during the study:

> It is a collaboration between researcher and participants, over time, in a place or series of places, and in social interaction with milieus. An inquirer enters this matrix . . . in the midst of reliving and retelling the stories of the experiences that make up people's lives, both individual and social, . . . narrative inquiry is stories lived and told. (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 20)

Using the structure of narrative inquiry provided both advantages and disadvantages in the generation and presentation of the data. It could be commented upon that the researcher, the person conducting the inquiry, may be too close to not only the topic being researched, but the participants in the study. Although my position in the research may be perceived as too subjective, throughout the research process I have endeavoured to maintain objectivity when possible, despite the challenges of working with known colleagues in a familiar educational institution. As a Head of Faculty colleague, I was involved in the

reform process and was also experiencing my own challenges relating to implementing reform. These experiences I have shared as a personal narrative in Chapter Five.

Narrative inquiry values the individuality and uniqueness of the participants' experiences. It provided the blank canvas for my representation of the narrative accounts, and structure for the writing of the personal stories shared by the six experienced Heads of Faculty. These are presented in Chapter 5.

Data generation strategies

"Evidence for case studies may come from six sources: documents, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant-observation, and physical artefacts." (Yin, 1994, p. 78)

Data generation methods used in this case study were:

Stage 1: Document analysis was undertaken, with a specific focus on post compulsory Year 10 curriculum reform, leadership, and Heads of Faculty.

Stage 2: A questionnaire about leading mandated curriculum reform was distributed to all 12 Heads of Faculty in the case study school.

Stage 3: An individual interview was conducted with each of the six Heads of Faculty in the sub-group in the case study school.

Stage 4: The same sub-group of six Heads of Faculty and the researcher completed the journaling of personal stories about leading mandated curriculum reform.

Mouly (as cited in Cohen & Manion, (1994) suggests that "research is best conceived as the process of arriving at dependable solutions to problems through the planned and systematic collection, analysis and interpretation of data" (p. 40). The following sections describe that process for this study.

Stage 1—Review of Documents and Literature

"Gathering data by studying documents follows the same line of thinking as observing or interviewing." (Stake, 1995, p. 68)

In the first stage of the case study, relevant Tasmanian curriculum reform documents, such as post Year 10 review literature, were used as sources in exploring the reform process. Within the case study, the document collection and analysis focused on the post Year 10 curriculum review publications, in the form of documents made available to schools and colleges, and a detailed website discussing the proposals and changes to the reform, formal publications from the Tasmanian Government Department of Education. The following documents were perused:

1. Tasmania: A State of Learning—Post Year 10 A Strategy for Post-year 10 Education and Training – Department of Education (2003).
2. Tasmania: A State of Learning—Post-Year 10 Curriculum Framework—A Resource for Educators – Department of Education (2006).
3. Essential Learnings – Department of Education (2002).
4. Tasmania Gets Down to Essentials (Connor, 2001).
5. Transforming the Curriculum (Tyson, 2004).
6. Beyond the Curriculum Wars (Hanlon, 2004).
7. Guaranteeing Futures—The Post Year 10 Curriculum Review – (Lee-Archer, 2005).

Literature focussing on middle leaders, Heads of Faculty, and leading curriculum reform, formed a large basis of the literature review for the study. The purpose was to gather information about the sources of the particular reform being considered in the study. The issues and information collected were used in part to frame the questionnaire and interview questions. Specific reference to literature about leading curriculum reform, and document analysis of mandated curriculum reform in Tasmania arising in the study, were explored more fully in Chapters One, Two and Three.

Stage 2—The Questionnaire

"A questionnaire needs to be crisp and concise, asking just those questions which are crucial to the research." (Denscombe, 1998, p. 97)

The questionnaire was designed to explore the experiences of the Heads of Faculty in curriculum leadership and experience, strategies they employed in the process, challenges they faced, and how they viewed and used/participated in collaborative practice. The questions devised for the questionnaire were drawn from gaps identified in the literature review and document analysis, in consultation with my supervisors.

Individual responses from participants provided information about, "what a person knows (knowledge or information), what a person likes and dislikes (values and preferences), and what a person thinks (attitudes and beliefs)" (Tuckman, 1994, p. 216) about the mandated post Year 10 curriculum reform process in Tasmania. Some of the questions related to: age, gender, length of service as a Head of Faculty, and issues emerging from the literature review such as leadership approach and attitude to reform. The data generated gave me an overview of the views of Heads of Faculty on leadership, mandated curriculum reform, reform strategies, and challenges they encountered during the reform process.

The content of the questionnaire (Appendix D) was presented to the participants in three sections:

1. Biographical Information
2. Middle Leadership – Heads of Faculty
3. Open-ended questions

Section 1—Biographical Information

The biographical information section provided the study with details about each participant which were helpful in seeking out the sub-group of six experienced Heads of Faculty for the next two stages of data generation: individual interviews and personal stories. Participants were asked to identify the number of years they had been in a middle leadership role, namely a Head of Faculty. They were also

asked to list their academic qualifications and professional learning opportunities directly related to middle leadership and the implementation of curriculum reform. This data informed my selection of participants for the next stage of the data collection.

Section 2—Middle Leadership—Heads of Faculty

This section focussed specifically on the role of the Head of Faculty in leading and implementing mandated curriculum reform. All Heads of Faculty identified a number of qualities they considered integral to the successful implementation of curriculum reform. They supported these qualities with strategies they had observed and employed in the implementation of previous curriculum reform.

Section 3—Open-ended Questions

Having some open-ended questions enabled the researcher to elicit a range of information as offered by participants in descriptive form (Starratt, 2004). The open-ended questions in section three provided an opportunity and space for the Heads of Faculty to reflect at greater length and respond more fully to questions from their own understanding of leading mandated curriculum reform. The use of open-ended questions in this section elicited a variety of responses from all 12 Heads of Faculty, who were invited to participate in the study

Completing the Questionnaire

Sample copies of the questionnaire were distributed for perusal at the Head of Faculty meeting in the introductory stage of the study. They were collected at the end of the meeting and then later placed in envelopes by the researcher to be distributed to Heads of Faculty the next day via the means of their staff 'mail box'. Confidentiality for the participants who volunteered to complete a questionnaire was assured through the use of codes for each Head of Faculty. Each questionnaire was placed in an envelope together with a return envelope, given a code, for example, M1, F1. The distribution of the questionnaires to each Head of Faculty gave all Heads of Faculty the opportunity to participate in the research and to express their experiences and self-perceptions about leadership and reform. Every Head of Faculty completed a questionnaire. At the time of completing the questionnaires, and throughout the project, a sense of support for, and genuine interest in, the study was conveyed to me by my colleagues. The

Heads of Faculty also commented anecdotally on how useful it was for them personally to complete the questionnaire and be given the opportunity to reflect on their leadership role, as for some it was the first time they had ever had to articulate their experiences of leadership.

Stage 3—The Interview

"One of the most important sources of case study information is the interview."
(Yin, 1995, p. 84)

In-depth focused interviews with the six selected experienced Heads of Faculty who agreed to participate in the study were conducted to ascertain a "sense of how the process is working" (R. Starratt, personal communication, September, 2004). A series of questions, arising from the analysis of the questionnaire data, was framed and asked in a semi-structured interview enabled the researcher and participants to engage in a conversation where the same set of questions were used with each participant (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003) (Appendix E). The purpose of the interviews was to explore personal experiences and reactions to leading the particular curriculum reform, and elicit information from questions such as "Does the size of the faculty affect the way the leadership of the reform is carried out?"

A sub-group of six experienced Heads of Faculty involved in leading the reform process participated in in-depth individual interviews designed to pursue their views and experiences on the implementation of curriculum reform. Since the research site for the case study was the school of the researcher, the interviews were conducted over a one-week period in the Board Room of the school, booked specifically for the interviews. Each interview took approximately one hour in which the researcher led a "face to face" (Gibson & Brown, 2009, p. 94) interview with the participant. Although questions had been prepared for the interview, the semi-formal structure enabled the researcher and Head of Faculty to be involved in a less formal process. These six Heads of Faculty participated in a semi-structured interview where:

> interviewers prepare a list of questions, but these can be asked in a
> flexible order and with a wording that is contextually appropriate. The

aim is to ask all the questions on the list with sensitivity to the developing conversational structure, but not necessarily in any particular order. (Gibson & Brown, 2009, p. 86)

The Heads of Faculty signed a consent form prior to participating in the interview (Appendix F). Their responses to the interview questions were tape recorded as "tapes certainly provide a more accurate rendition of any interview than any other method" (Yin, 1995, p. 86). The dialogue was then transcribed by the researcher and presented in typed manuscript to the participants for authentication before the data was analysed. These interviews with the six most experienced Heads of Faculty were the most challenging of the data collection strategies, as they involved a very personal, one on one element, of the process. It required me to utilise all the skills I could muster at the time, as each interview took its own course, depending on the responses each participant provided. Seidman (1998) suggests that "there is no recipe for the effective question" (p. 77), and he proved correct as I undertook the process. As researcher, I expected the participants to follow the sequence of planned questions logically, however the responses the Heads of Faculty provided, when expanding upon the questions I asked, enabled the discussion to take many turns and twists, ensuring further rich data for the study.

Stage 4—The Personal Story

"To sharpen the search for understanding, qualitative researchers perceive what is happening in key episodes or testimonies, represent happenings with their own direct interpretation and stories (i.e. narrative)." (Stake, 1995, p. 40)

As part of the case study framework, the sub-group of six participants, who were currently Heads of Faculty in the case study school, were invited by letter (Appendix C) together with a consent form (Appendix G) to share their personal stories, and articulation of their role in the leadership of curriculum reform, through reflective writing. This group of Heads of Faculty were the same group of participants who were also involved in the interview process. In order to provide a focus for the writing of personal stories, the researcher provided some guiding questions about leading the reform to the participants. These questions were

developed from the analysis of both questionnaire and interview data. Although the guiding questions may be perceived as limiting, they were provided in order to give the writing focus and to provide a structure for the story-writing for busy participants. There was an opportunity, at the end, for participants to provide "any further comments."

The researcher distributed guiding questions (Appendix G) to the sub-group of six Heads of Faculty, who over a period of time, completed the stories and returned them to the researcher's staff 'mail box' for analysis by the researcher. According to Yin (1994*)* "data collection follows a formal plan, but the specific information that may become relevant to a case study is not readily predictable" (p. 56). The personal stories the six experienced Heads of Faculty recorded, prompted by guiding questions, provided rich data for the study and were completed generously by the participants. The questions and topics I suggested for their writing helped guide participants' responses. These guiding questions were shaped, in part, by the questionnaire responses, and included aspects such as leadership training, experience leading curriculum reform, and identification of personal experiences which had been positive or negative in leading a team of people through the reform process.

As research participant, the data I generated about myself was gathered from my own anecdotal recordings and reflections of the reform process my colleagues and I were sharing. My story was not guided by the questions the sub-group of six experienced Heads of Faculty were guided by in their stories, but rather by self-reflection on the four research questions arising from the research. It was a deliberate decision not to follow the guiding questions for my narrative as I was so immersed in the data from the other six Heads of Faculty that I felt my writing would be influenced by their responses. My narrative began by reflecting on how I viewed myself as a leader, followed by the strategies I employed in the process of implementing mandated reform, the challenges I faced, and the collaborative practices my faculty shared. Presented in two major sections, Act One and Act Two reflected my creative bias towards my leadership role and how I used a dramaturgical approach to my Head of Faculty position of responsibility. This format also enabled me to clearly state how I viewed myself as a leader of

reform—Act One, a managerial approach and Act Two, a leadership approach. As researcher participant, I engaged in three out of four stages of data collection in the study, the literature and document analysis, questionnaire and personal story. This resulted in a different presentation format of my personal narrative from the personal narratives of the other six Heads of Faculty, presented in Chapter Five. My personal story was written after the other six narratives had been written and relied very heavily on my personal reflection of leadership of mandated curriculum reform.

Data Analysis

"All the way through our case study work, we wonder, 'Do we have it right?' Not only 'Are we generating a comprehensive and accurate description?' but 'Are we developing the interpretations we want?'" (Stake, 1995, p. 105)

The use of semi-formal individual interviews, personal stories, and questionnaires, enabled the data to be viewed from a variety of angles, and to be woven together and conceptualised in a number of ways. Denzin and Lincoln (2000, p. 214), and Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 234), refer to the process of using multiple sources as "triangulation." Triangulation provides the "rationale for using multiple sources of evidence" (Yin, 1994, p. 91).

Analysis of the data involved a process of describing, classifying, and interconnecting issues and concepts in a continuous process, which at each stage led to a further deepening of insights and understanding (Mason, 2002; Silverman, 2002). Miles and Huberman (1994) suggested that analysis during data collection lets the researcher "cycle back and forth between thinking about the existing data and generating strategies for collecting new—often better quality—data" (p. 49). They offered a number of models for analysing the data, but perhaps the one most appropriate for narrative inquiry and case study qualitative research, was "developing propositions" (p. 71). This model focussed on clustering of information, resulting in connected sets of statements reflected in the findings and conclusions of the study. The majority of the data in this study was narrative and text based. Hardy and Bryman (2004) suggested that "themes and concepts are

identified and coded in one data source and are then compared and contrasted with similar material in other sources" (p. 530). They believed that "data collection and data analysis are intertwined" (p. 533) and evolve as the study unfolds.

Mason (2002) suggested that, in the process of "making arguments" (p. 171) in qualitative explanation, the "construction of a perspective, an interpretation, or a line of reasoning or analysis . . . requires this to be a *relational* process" (p. 171). She noted that the "argument should be *convincing* . . . and involves working out how to construct, communicate, support and substantiate it" (p. 173). Through the use of triangulation and with the concept of "making arguments" in mind, the data from the questionnaires completed by all Heads of Faculty was collated. The interview transcripts from the sub-group of six experienced Heads of Faculty were melded with their personal stories and six very individual narratives, and one from the researcher, were created.

The process involved, firstly, the distribution of the questionnaire to all Heads of Faculty. As the data was received, a master sheet of pages was drawn up by the researcher to record the information from each of the three sections from the questionnaire. The biographical section included a very small quantitative element of research, as it provided some statistics about the individual Heads of Faculty and their years of experience in leadership roles. Statistics about areas such as length of teaching service and leadership experience were collated at the same time as the narrative comments. The second and third section responses were also recorded onto a master sheet, so I could create a visual overview of all the responses to specific questions, enabling determination of common or individual themes emerging from the responses (Appendix I). With this initial raw data, combined with the review of the literature, I was able to ascertain questions I wanted to ask in the individual interviews.

Thus, the interview questions were designed with the questionnaire responses in mind, and the process outlined earlier in this chapter took place. As researcher, I word processed the recorded responses, and once again collated the responses under question and then more common headings in order to decipher general and specific themes and experiences from each of the sub-group of six Heads of

Faculty. This second strand of data collection provided a rich source of material for the study. The experiences expressed by the participants during the interview process then aided the production of guiding questions for the personal stories.

A series of guided questions for the personal stories was developed and the personal story responses, once gathered, were also word processed by me, and the stories and themes emerging from the specific experiences were placed on a table of common or individual themes for consideration and analysis.

As qualitative studies generally employ a range of methods for data collection, data sources which complement each other are considered appropriate, as "social research is likely to be more convincing if different kinds of evidence have been brought to bear" (Finch, 1986, p. 163). Through the use of triangulation, the common themes—from the questionnaire, interview, and personal stories—were identified, as were the individual responses that did not concur with comments made by all or the majority of Heads of Faculty. Triangulation was also used to "reflect the views of the participants" (Finch, 1986, p. 166) and create the final seven in-depth stories from Jennifer, Donald, Charles, Rupert, Alan, Deidre and me. These stories were created from the three sources of data, each complementing, and in some cases, contradicting the other. Mason (2002) suggested that, through the use of triangulation, "if you measure the same phenomenon from different angles or positions, you will get an accurate reading or measurement of it" (p. 190). This process also enabled the consistencies and inconsistencies in the data to be revealed, checked and confirmed. Triangulation thus encompassed exploration not only of commonalities, but also of contrasting perspectives expressed in and through a single participant's data.

The process of writing the personal narratives, which reflected the experience of leadership of mandated curriculum reform by the sub-group of six experienced Heads of Faculty, was a challenging part of the study. Throughout the process, I recognised that I needed to be aware that my approach to the writing of the narratives needed to be "sensitive, appropriately nuanced and valid" (Mason, 2002, p. 176). Drawing on the data from the questionnaire, interview, and personal story, I immersed myself in the detail of the data gathered from each participant in the study. One by one, I identified common threads and themes

from each of the data sources provided by individuals, and noted common strands emerging from the three sources. At the same time, I grouped themes that were unique to each Head of Faculty, and created narratives for each that explored all aspects of their experiences of leadership of reform. Information drawn from the biographical section of the questionnaire provided an introduction to each narrative.

The quotation headings of each section of the narratives are direct quotations "selected strategically" (Mason, 2002, p. 184) from the data provided by each of the Heads of Faculty. In most cases, the quotation was common to each of the three sources of data completed by individual Heads of Faculty. Throughout the narrative, the italicised quotations were excerpted from the data provided in the individual questionnaire, interview, and personal story. The writing of the personal narratives, whilst challenging, was most rewarding, and, when they were verified with the Heads of Faculty, their positive responses to their stories made the narrative journey worthwhile. The richest data for the study was gained from the sub-group of six Heads of Faculty who participated in all three data collection stages; the interview, personal story and questionnaire. Their own experiences, expressed in more depth in the interview and personal story, were also supported by their briefer responses in the questionnaire. Each step of the process provided richer and more in-depth information. Maintaining anonymity and integrity for each Head of Faculty became a very conscious part of the writing process. I was aware throughout the process of maintaining the trust and confidence of my colleagues which already existed between us. I found that giving each Head of Faculty a pseudonym, somehow distanced my personal connection and relationship to these Heads of Faculty I knew so well. Towards the end of the study, I was so familiar with their pseudonyms that I had created six new people in my head for the purposes of the study. The pseudonyms thus served the purpose of providing personal distance and distinction between the individuals as participants in the study, and those same people as colleagues.

Validity and verification

"Validity of interpretation in any form of qualitative research is contingent upon the 'end product' including a demonstration of how that interpretation was reached." (Mason, 2002, p. 191)

Validity in qualitative research, according to Hitchcock and Hughes (1995), is "concerned with the extent to which descriptions of events accurately capture these events" (p. 105). Through the use of multiple data sources and methods, I needed to ensure the data was able to be verified (Stake, 2000). The data collection and level of triangulation I utilised in the conduct of this study have validated the conclusions I have drawn in order to create an open level of internal validity. Mason (2002) suggested that the logic of triangulation enables the researcher to "use different methods, or data sources, to investigate the same phenomena and that in the process you can judge the efficacy or validity of the different methods and sources by comparing the products" (p. 190).

Permission was sought from participants for audio tape recording of the interviews to complement the researcher's handwritten notes, and to ensure accuracy of data gathering. Permission was granted for both to be used during the process to allow for accurate recording of responses. Transcripts of data collected were forwarded to the participants for their validation to ensure each was an accurate reflection of what had been recorded (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Mason, 2002; Silverman, 2002).

The specific verification process in the study included the collation of the questionnaire and personal story responses viewed and confirmed by the participants, the interview transcripts viewed and confirmed by the participants, and the sharing of the personal narratives with each of the six Heads of Faculty. This process was significant in the study, and as the researcher I made an appointment with each Head of Faculty, sat with them, and together we read the personal narrative to verify all aspects of the data and their presentation in the narratives. They felt that their experience of leading mandated curriculum reform had been accurately captured, and that the personal narratives I had constructed, authentically reflected their view. The Heads of Faculty expressed their

confidence that their views about leading mandated curriculum reform from all three sources of data collection had been accurately captured and represented in the study.

Verification throughout the project was a challenge. Denzin and Lincoln (2000) point out that qualitative researchers need to "accept the fact that research is ideologically driven" (p. 212), and that, in reality, there is no value-free or bias-free design. Miles and Huberman (1994) suggest twelve tactics for generating meaning and drawing conclusions from a study. These range from counting to see what's there, to making conceptual/theoretical coherence. The verification process for this study involved documentation of the coded questionnaires. It also involved the verification of the transcripts of the coded interviews and personal stories and the final individual checking with the participants for verification of their major contribution.

Ethical issues

> *"Qualitative researchers should be as concerned to produce a moral or ethical research design as we are to produce an intellectually coherent and compelling one." (Mason, 2002, p. 41)*

"Each researcher has a responsibility concerning the ethics of education research" (AARE, 2009, p. 4) and this study was conducted with strict regard for ethical issues and carried out in accordance with the policies and procedures of the Australian Catholic University Human Research Ethics Committee and National Statement on The Association of Active Education Researchers (AAER) Code of Ethics.

The case study was conducted in a secondary school in Tasmania, therefore it is acknowledged that participants may have felt pressured to participate, particularly as the researcher was a member of the Head of Faculty team. Every step of the process was voluntary, and participants were informed about the focus of the study, the methodology and methods used and how the results would be reported by means of a letter (Appendix C). "Rendering case material anonymous . . . is a fundamental guiding principle" (Holloway & Jefferson, 2000, p. 95) in the

conduct of research. At all stages of the research participants were free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason. It was important to maintain the trust of colleagues and to respect confidentiality and their integrity. The "participants and informants [had] the right to remain anonymous" (AAER, 2009, p. 2), and their confidentiality was maintained. While the survey questionnaire responses did not include a name, they were coded by male or female. For example, Male 1 and Female 2 were used to record the data using codes and pseudonyms. The six Heads of Faculty participating in individual interviews were not anonymous, however they freely consented to participate in the study (AARE, 2009). Pseudonyms were used for all data used in the final documentation of this study. This addressed the participants' need for confidentiality, as far as it was possible to maintain confidentiality in a small localized context where people are likely to have known one another. A series of codes for identification and anonymity in the study were necessary. The first was for the twelve participants invited to complete a questionnaire. The second was for the sub-group of six selected Heads of Faculty who wrote their personal stories and participated in individual interviews, as narrative extracts from both were used in this final study. I was participating in the reform process in the case study school and also experiencing the challenges the reform presented so recorded my own personal narrative in the study.

Approval from the Principal of the case study school (Appendix I) was sought. Approval to conduct the study in my own school was also gained from the Director of the Catholic Education Office (Appendix J).

As researcher participant in the case study school, ethical consideration and "respect for the dignity and worth of persons and the welfare of . . . research participants" (AARE, 2009, p.1) guided all stages of the research process.

Limitations and delimitations

> *"How can you generalize from a single case?"* (Yin, 1995, p. 10)

By conducting the study in one secondary school in Tasmania, and focusing on curriculum reform in the post Year 10 curriculum area, rather than including all

secondary classes in Years 7–10, the research could be perceived as being narrow or limited in its context. The fact that the reform being explored was mandated by the Tasmanian Government could also have been considered a limitation, however, given these limitations, I was able to generalise about leadership of reform from the data gathered from a team of Heads of Faculty in the one Tasmanian secondary school.

The role of the researcher as a participant in the team of Heads of Faculty in the case study school may also have been considered a potential limitation. In a small educational community, in particular the case study school, professional relationships already existed. I was conscious of being the insider colleague as opposed to an outsider conducting the research. Responses to the data collection may have been influenced by the fact that I was an insider, however, during the verification stage of the research process, colleague Heads of Faculty commented that they had been very open and honest with me as researcher, as I had been involved in the same reform process as a middle leader. As researcher, I was aware of this and, to the best of my ability, attempted not allow my insider role to influence any aspect of the study. Being aware of the participants, their work commitments and pressures relating to reform were considered carefully during the timing of data collection. Through the use of pseudonyms, to some extent, at least, I felt personally removed from the immediate situation.

Delimitations kept the study manageable and "[drew] boundaries around the study" (Punch, 2000, p. 75). Personnel involved in curriculum reform in schools go well beyond the Heads of Faculty. All those involved in school communities are affected by major curriculum reform, however, a conscious decision was made not to include staff other than Heads of Faculty in this study. The focus was on how Heads of Faculty led mandated curriculum reform, and their perspective on the strategies they used in this process, rather than the perspective of those not in middle leadership or teacher leadership roles. There had been, however, a growing interest from both within the case study school and in other schools in the role of Heads of Faculty, so the focus was on that group of 12 participants, including six key Heads of Faculty, which kept the study manageable.

Through a qualitative lens, and the themes that emerged from the questionnaires, the interviews and the personal stories, rich data was provided for my consideration. These rich data, and their analysis, formed the basis of the final stories, which reflected the views of the sub-group of the six Heads of Faculty.

Conclusion

The methodology and methods employed in the research design of this study enabled me to reveal a number of features that contributed to the leadership of Heads of Faculty leading mandated curriculum reform. Drawing together the data received from the sub-group of six experienced Heads of Faculty from the questionnaire, interview, and personal story, formed the framework for the creation of the stories. In the following chapter, the personal narratives of six experienced Heads of Faculty, and another about my own experience, provide a vehicle through which the unique experience of each Head of Faculty leading reform is shared.

CHAPTER FIVE: EXPERIENCES OF LEADING THE REFORM OF POST-COMPULSORY EDUCATION

"While the Head of Department was still required to provide curriculum pedagogic leadership, leadership in a much broader sense, and management skills were to be given greater emphasis. Such skills were to be employed not only in the Heads of Department's particular curriculum area, but also at a whole school level." (Rosenfeld, Ehrich & Cranston, 2008, p. 4)

Introduction

This chapter presents the narratives of the sub-group of six experienced Heads of Faculty and the researcher in the case study school. Through the use of triangulation (Miles & Huberman, 1994), the data from the questionnaire, interview, and personal story, has been woven together to form seven unique narratives about the experience of leading mandated curriculum reform.

The narratives are shared in the following order:

- Donald's Story—Senior Education Faculty
- Jennifer's Story—Religious Education Faculty
- Deidre's Story—Study of Society and the Environment Faculty
- Alan's Story—Language Faculty
- Charles' Story—Science Faculty
- Rupert's Story—Technology Faculty
- Jules' [researcher] Story—The Arts Faculty

In each participant's personal narrative, direct quotations throughout the narratives are used as they synthesise the key issues from each participant in all sources of their data.

Donald's Story – Senior Education Faculty

"Six different leadership roles in six years"

At the time of the study, Donald had been an experienced teacher and leader in non-government schools in Tasmania. In the case study school, Donald held the positions of Senior Secondary Co-ordinator and Post Year 10 Co-ordinator. He had undertaken a number of leadership roles in several schools in the past 20 years and had been required to implement reform and change as part of his leadership roles. At one stage, Donald recalled that he had undertaken *six different leadership roles in six years*. These leadership roles were in the curriculum and pastoral care areas of his schools and in each of the roles he encountered both positive and negative outcomes. Each role enabled him to reflect upon the reform process, and, as a result, he became prepared for implementing change in the future. *I don't think it matters as any change you try and implement in a school there is going to be some sort of resistance and coping with change and resistance and selling ideas to your staff there are some common ways you can do that regardless of what your leadership role is in the school.*

He firmly believed that his study in Master of Education in Leadership, completed in 2002, had equipped him, to some extent, to accept the challenges of reform implementation. *In my Masters in Leadership course I did units on change management and they have come in useful and I learned about different models of change and communicating with others properly. I can't recall any particular theories which I can fall back on but still some of that information and in my assignments I had to talk about change and that has helped as well.* In developing a positive culture for change, and creating the relationships and trust in the reform process, Donald discussed his experience of, and preparation for, leading mandated curriculum reform.

"Leading mandated change"

As a Year 7–12 school, the case study school had a great deal of autonomy and ownership of how the curriculum was developed and delivered in Years 7–10; its content and assessment procedures were the responsibility of the school. There

was a lot more flexibility in the Year 7–10 curriculum than in the post Year 10 curriculum which was designed and mandated by the Tasmanian Qualifications Authority.[8] In the past, and within the post Year 10 curriculum reform, there was never the same flexibility as there was with Year 7– 10, however, *we had a lot of say in which subjects we did, but as far as what pedagogy and assessment and content of subject we didn't have a lot of sway with that.*

As a group of Heads of Faculty we needed to be prepared for implementing the Tasmanian Government's mandated curriculum reform. Our school, the case study school, went to great lengths to keep all informed of the proposed reform and *the implementation team employed by the Tasmanian Government worked closely with our staff since late 2004.* The Deputy Principal Learning and Teaching, together with the Heads of Faculty, informed staff *who have been updated regularly at Learning and Teaching meetings on the latest developments and had the opportunity to feedback to the Implementation Team.* Donald was at the cutting edge of the reform as a curriculum leader of the reform in the case study school—*the appointment of post Year 10 Co-ordinators was also a step forward.* The reform was supported strongly by the Leadership Team at the school which *sent a variety of teachers from different curriculum areas to post Year10 meetings over the past three years*. To participate fully in the anticipated reforms and to engage in the new directions for post Year 10 education, the case study school offered one of the new learning areas, Student Directed Inquiry.[9] The school supported staff and a small number of students who "*were involved with the trial of one of the elements (Student Directed Inquiry) of the post Year 10 reform.*

Donald felt he had little choice in the implementation of the curriculum reform as the Tasmanian Government had mandated it. He realised that he *had to work with our staff and say this is a reality and it is not going to go away—the Tasmanian Government has committed to this and so have the principals in Independent and Catholic schools*. He did however*,* once again acknowledge the need to keep staff

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[8] Tasmanian Qualifications Authority—the assessment and accreditation board for senior secondary students.
[9] Student Directed Inquiry—an inquiry based university entrance subject; a trans-disciplinary study available to Year 11 and 12 students as part of their academic program.

informed—*I suppose in doing that we had to communicate with the staff along the way what those changes are and I suppose the good thing about change even though it was mandated right from the very start in 2003 the project team consulted staff and were at schools and invited lots of staff to each of their meetings.* Despite the reform being mandated, Donald appreciated the way the process was consultative and a non-hierarchical leadership approach was employed—*it has not just been stuff put upon us from on high it has been inclusive of Year 12 staff right along the way.* Reform evolves as the process unfolds, and its implementation was not just putting the changes in place, but about the beginning, the middle, and the end. Whilst the focus initially was on the implementation of the reform, the Heads of Faculty also needed to be aware of the "bigger picture" and the other external and internal factors which impacted on the reform. Donald saw the reform process as *on-going and not yet completed.*

"Research and rationale for change"

The perceived need for reform, although mandated, still required a rationale, and once that had been established and communicated, Donald agreed that *yes sure it was a change which had to happen but I think it was about communicating the rationale behind those changes*. He was adamant that the presentation of the mandated reform should be *meticulously researched and presented* and firmly believed in the benefits of *regular presentations at staff meetings where all staff were informed of the developments*. Another feature of Donald's approach was that he adopted a practice of routinely checking the progress of the reform by *using a checklist and timeline*. Discussion in faculty groups about course development took place in faculty meetings with faculty staff. Teachers were also encouraged to attend post Year 10 related professional learning provided by the Tasmanian Government in the government senior secondary colleges.

As a middle leader, Donald believed that research was the key to successful implementation of reform. *I consider a strong research base for the reform with a rationale for change to be essential in leading curriculum reform.* Donald undertook reform implementation research in preparation for the implementation of the impending curriculum reform. Through professional reading, research and post-graduate study, together with careful and close observation of the staff with

whom he worked, Donald felt he was moderately prepared for implementation in relation to this reform. Donald considered that *regular meeting time with teachers that aren't lecture style information dissemination but ones which allow for individual or group feedback* were important in the implementation process. A whole school approach was necessary if the proposed reform was to be successful and the middle leaders were to experience positive outcomes in the implementation of the reform. He believed also that *support from the Principal and Deputy Principal was imperative.*

"Heads of Faculty have been key people in implementing these reforms"

All teachers at the school were affected by reform or change. Donald was the post Year 10 Co-ordinator and worked closely with the Deputy Principal Learning and Teaching discussing strategies for communicating the latest developments to staff at meetings. The important aspect of this communication early on in the development of the mandated reform was to *impress upon staff that these changes in senior secondary education were real and not a passing fad.* Collaborative practice enabled the process to be implemented more smoothly, however Donald suggested that very close *collaboration between leaders at different levels of the college/school leadership structure* were essential in the reform process. *The Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching) and the Heads of Faculty have been key people in implementing these reforms.* The mandated post Year 10 curriculum reform had been the focus of the learning and teaching programs of Year 11 and 12 teachers in the case study school, and workshops, meetings, and staff meetings, had focussed on the proposed changes. *The post Year10 reforms have been a prominent agenda item in Heads of Faculty team meetings.*

"A vision—slow and steady"

Donald acknowledged that as a cautious person, he preferred to *carefully examine their* [Heads of Faculty] *approach and more importantly the outcome of the change process.* As a leader, he approached change through careful examination of procedures at other schools, documentation of rationale, clear timelines for the implementation and held regular meetings to discuss the proposed reform. For example he visited other schools undergoing the same reform and from this he

understood that similar challenges were being faced in areas of staff acceptance, timetable implications and new learning areas which replaced the known subjects currently being taught. By making these visits to schools, Donald was able to articulate the experiences of other professional colleagues to his staff, and the knowledge and communication base of the staff were increased as they had a deeper understanding of what was happening with the reform in their own school, and those of others.

In the implementation of the reform process, Donald observed other Heads of Faculty and utilised their strategies, such as listening carefully to staff input and involving all in the implementation of reform. He believed that working with other middle leaders made him aware of a variety of change strategies they employed. He noted that those with a vision and deliberate plan were most successful in communicating the reform and the implementation process. *You have to have a vision, a strong vision.*

He modelled some of his implementation strategies on the best practice employed by other colleagues—*people I am thinking of there, are people who have not rushed into things and have done research, involved all people staff and students, they haven't thought of it as a fait accompli and they haven't thought they are going to do this regardless of what I say.* Strong leadership of reform required flexibility and meeting the challenges throughout the process. *You can't go the other way where you pull out of things because there is going to be resistance— there has to be some resilience there and however you also do need to consult— change is not easy, you either do or you don't sometimes the changes might have to be modified in some ways but flexibility is important.* Donald noted that clear communication, a strong vision and a strong belief in the change were elements of the reform process he employed in implementing any reform, acknowledging that *the process cannot be rushed.*

"It was complicated with the National Curriculum issue"

Donald felt that the impending National Curriculum[10] discussions compounded the mandated reform implementation, with some teachers concerned about whether to pay "lip" service to the Tasmanian Government reform and wait until the National Curriculum had been established. *It was complicated with the National Curriculum issue and it added to that cynicism a bit, as in curriculum there had been a lot of changes over the years especially in the last twenty years there had been things come and go and it was just trying to overcome that suspicion of people and why get too worried or involved as it wasn't going to happen.* Donald felt his staff asked about the National Curriculum developments as a way of stalling their involvement in the Tasmanian curriculum reforms. They could not see the point of engaging in another reform process when on the horizon was a much larger curriculum agenda. *The latest developments federally with a push for a National Curriculum have "muddied the water" somewhat with some staff understandably cynical about whether the state reforms would ever see the light of day.* Donald was concerned that this was a major barrier to acceptance and realistic successful implementation of the Tasmanian developments and *presented new challenges going forward.*

"Trying to overcome that suspicion of people"

Donald recognised that *if reform is pushed through too quickly teachers become suspicious and lack any ownership of the change.* He identified a number of challenges in the implementation of reform. The major concern for him was the effect the implementation had on his staff and their attitude towards the mandated reform. In the implementation of any reform there are those who follow and agree with the reform whole-heartedly, and there are those with whom the Head of Faculty experienced challenges. *With curriculum change there was a cynicism of a lot of staff especially with those who had been around a lot—they had seen things come and go and one of the challenges in implementing the post Year 10 was "here we go again—this will last five minutes and then they'll think of*

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[10] National Curriculum—the curriculum currently being planned and implemented to provide a national profile for post Year 10 education in Australia.

something else." Donald's experience of working with these teachers was challenging and he spent a great deal of time talking to staff in a one on one situation *to overcome that cynicism and to get people engaged* which he found *quite difficult.* Working with experienced staff, who were very supportive and respectful of Donald, but not so much of the impending mandated reform, he found that *as soon as you mention post Year10 they think oh yeah we'll go along with this, and give it a few days or years.*

Time pressures on staff and the need for adequate meeting time allocation to focus on the significant change were also challenges he encountered. In the reform process there were, however, some strategies he employed to overcome some of the barriers to reform. He suggested that by *impressing on teachers the benefits of the changes and that they are real and not going to disappear* he provided support for those who were reluctant. For the reform to be successful, Donald stated that *allocation of time for teachers to come to terms with the mandated reform* were essential in the transition period.

<center>*"Size does matter"*</center>

Another challenge Donald recognised in the successful implementation of reform was in relation to the size of the faculty. *If you had a lot of people in your faculty who teach a wide range of subjects it would be difficult to generalise about change.* He was very conscious of other faculties where there were a number of discrete learning areas within the one faculty and how the strategies he used would impact on these larger areas rather than a faculty which had only one learning area focus. For example, *in the Technology area there was Computing, MDT, Food & Nutrition, and Textiles, and Housing, and implementation of change affected those areas in different ways whereas something a bit more homogeneous such as Maths where you haven't got a different range of subjects, change might be a bit easier.* The number of staff in a faculty impacted on the relationship the Head of Faculty had with each one. Donald expressed quite firmly, that a trusting relationship with his staff was integral to the successful implementation of reform. He felt that faculties where large numbers of teachers worked across a range of learning areas were disadvantaged. *If you are only dealing with a small number of staff who trust you, change becomes a bit easier*

than in a large group where perhaps your relationship as Head of Faculty might not be as strong with all of them. Trust is a big issue.

"Leadership professional development for leaders"

Donald was an advocate of professional and life long learning and he engaged in a variety of professional learning opportunities. He had also undertaken post-graduate study which supported his leadership roles and the implementation of reform. In our discussions he expressed the need for formal professional learning for middle leaders and for those who were considering leadership in the future. It was not something that had been made readily available in the past, but the school was *now looking at leadership professional development for leaders, not just those in leadership positions but for those seeking leadership positions in education and I'm sure that part of what we will learn there will be how to cope with change so I think that will provide succession planning for leaders.* Formal training and learning for those who seek leadership positions are essential, Donald believes. *People seek leadership positions and I think there needs to be formal leadership training not necessarily before you become a leader but it is preferable.* Leaders are learning on the run and the experiences can be very negative, not only for the leader, but for the followers, and this impacts on people applying for leadership roles. *Being in leadership without any formal training, we can learn through experience, but all those bad experiences in your leadership could put you off in applying for other positions in the future.*

Jennifer's Story – Religious Education Faculty

"Change fatigue"

"If the change isn't worthwhile—why bother!"

At the time of the study, Jennifer was an experienced educator who began her teaching career in the government system and then transferred to the non-government system where she had taught for almost 30 years. During that time, she had also undertaken a number of leadership roles within the case study school,

including House Head—a pastoral care middle leadership role and member of the Leadership Team.[11] For the duration of the study, she was a Head of Faculty, a role she had held for 6 years. Jennifer valued professional learning for leaders and emerging leaders and had completed a Master of Education Leadership in 2005, majoring in leadership. She regularly engaged in collegial conversation and was a generous professional at meetings—always willing to share her ideas and her experience.

<div align="center">*"My check list"*</div>

Jennifer had a very large faculty, and, as an experienced teacher and leader, she recorded and articulated her own list of what she considered essential in the leading of any educational reform.

She believed the Leader, [Head of Faculty], needed to:

- *have a clear vision of why, where, how of the change. This included the philosophy, the broad strokes overview, the structure, that is, timeline, benchmarks*
- *be flexible within the structure of the change adapting to changed conditions, i.e. take on board new staff, speed up or slow down the process according to progress.*
- *communicate with relevant staff who assisted in the change process, i.e. teacher leaders who worked at grass roots level.*
- *monitor the progress and keep people on task and in the loop.*

<div align="center">*"As leaders we should be part of the big picture"*</div>

Jennifer engaged in collegial dialogue a great deal of the time during the reform process, but she thought it was really important that we [Heads of Faculty] *engaged in more professional discussion as a group, so that we actually were involved in forward planning for the college.* She was very concerned that as a Head of Faculty she had not participated in the strategic planning aspect of the

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[11] Leadership Team of the case study school—consisting of Principal, three Deputy Principals, Business Manager, Faith and Justice Coordinator.

reform and saw the need for Heads of Faculty collectively to *actually plan for our school where our faculty fits and we as leaders should be part of the big picture.* She felt that during the reform process she was working to some extent in isolation and we [Heads of Faculty] *tended to work as individual faculties and sometimes even to the extent of competing with each other.* She expressed concern about the professional integrity of operating in isolation as a Head of Faculty, identifying that it had not provided a positive experience *for teachers who mostly taught across faculties.* In Jennifer's view, Heads of Faculty would be better served by a more collaborative and strategic approach.

> *"Let's face it, if the change isn't good and worthwhile, why bother!"*

The personal dimension of change impacted on staff, and Jennifer believed that the impact on teachers of several concurrent internal and external curriculum reforms was *change fatigue.* Jennifer was very concerned about the pastoral care of her staff and how much they were asked to do. She stated that *'teachers are over worked.* She was very conscious of all the changes her teachers had been asked to consider over the past 15 years and felt that *too much change that failed made them cynical.* The staff in her faculty had recently been involved in the Tasmanian Government's Years 7–10 Essential Learnings[12], and then the post Year 10 curriculum reform.[13] Jennifer was very aware of the impact of failed change and particularly the failure of mandated curriculum reform such as the Tasmanian Government's Essential Learnings. Past experiences did not assist the reform process and meant that teachers were cynical about mandated change. Teachers who did not understand the need for change were resistant and she experienced cynicism due to *recent curriculum reform failures.* Despite some cynicism, Jennifer believed that *resistors were useful in opening dialogue about issues.* She needed to convince her staff *that the change was in the best interest of the students.* Despite her efforts to convince her staff of the positive features of the reform, she felt that there were *'some people who were'* still *'resistant to change.'* She brought her years of teaching and leading experience to the reform process and believed that most teachers *'were brought on board'* when she

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[12] As defined in Chapter 1.
[13] As defined in Chapter 1.

convinced *them it was good and worthwhile.* Jennifer confirmed that her staff where most receptive when there was perceived need for the change.

"It depends on the person who is in charge of that group"

Jennifer saw her role, in leading such a large group of teachers through the reform process, as the person with the big picture *and my responsibility was to ensure they* [the teachers] *had the scope and sequence and they had the resources.* She was aware that a large faculty needed to rely heavily on collaborative leadership *because the nominated leader, the Head of Faculty, could not micro manage that many people and nor should they.* The creation of workable teams of teachers and bringing people together was a strategy that Jennifer used in the implementation of curriculum reform. *However the risk was that sharing leadership had more room for failure if the group didn't work well.*

There were forty-five teachers in Jennifer's large faculty. Every student enrolled in the case study school, 1350 in total, studied the curriculum in Jennifer's faculty. Jennifer relied heavily on shared leadership, working collaboratively with her staff *and delegating to other people so they were grouped into smaller groups of people and they were organised to meet to get change to happen.* She relied on the staff in year level groupings to communicate the specifics for each year level. For Jennifer to *speak personally to [approximately] forty people took a very long time and I'm not even sure that the message got through so I had to rely on meetings and they tended to be a very inefficient way to get across the message as people didn't listen in a big group, and they didn't open their email!*

In leading reform, Jennifer believed that release time for staff was essential as it *gave legitimate time for writing and discussion.* Team work and the setting up of teams to work on curriculum reform *allowed teachers to work collaboratively.* Affirmation of teachers and publicly acknowledging them provided a positive environment for reform and kept others informed of what was happening within the faculty. Brief information sharing at regular intervals about the change enabled everyone in the faculty to be *kept up to date.*

Once the implications of the mandated changes for Jennifer's faculty were clear, plans for the implementation were made and a *staged set of short term goals were put in place.* Jennifer engaged in very clear collegial dialogue with her staff and continued to reinforce this with regular updates which enabled her staff to *see the way ahead.*

"The only way to do it"

Despite initial concerns, Jennifer believed that shared leadership was an important and successful strategy in the reform process as she saw it as the *only way to do it.* She did however express some concern about this empowerment of teachers as she felt *it had mixed responses depending on the person who was in charge of that group.* If the teacher did not share the workload and involve the other year level teachers, they did not feel ownership of the reform and *some took it on and they did all the work themselves and that group did not get to own any of it.* She found it a challenge as a leader when the designated person leading the group of teachers in the reform process *did not take charge—they were the most difficult ones to deal with.* Jennifer found herself insisting on the shared leadership approach and distributing the task of implementation and she found that *it was a much more successful way as you got the ownership scenario.*

"People will cling onto what is familiar rather than take on something uncharted"

Jennifer was faced with her own misgivings about previous mandated curriculum reforms which had not been successful, and then with those same concerns from the staff in her faculty—*the first and very big challenge for us was the fact that we had just had several years of 'Essential Learnings'[14] which had failed.* One of the challenges she faced as a leader of the post Year 10 curriculum reform was that her staff saw the latest reform in the same light as the failed Essential Learnings and *they treated post Year10 just like that—that ELs had failed and so would post Year10* and *therefore they wouldn't have to change anything so we had to have to overcome that barrier.* She recognised that her teachers had been very

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[14] Essential Learning—as defined in Chapter 1.

comfortable with what had been known to them and many of them found any form of change or reform challenging. *Teachers are very conservative and they wanted to do what they know and with what they are comfortable.*

Another challenge that Jennifer encountered was that she felt the articulation of the reform in its entirety was incomplete. For her *the barrier was that we didn't have the big picture of where it was going.* Despite many meetings, workshops, and discussions, Jennifer did not believe that the post Year 10 curriculum reform had been clearly communicated, rather *it had been articulated in many ways but not in the format that really made sense to anybody.* She saw this as a major barrier to the reform and a reason why people *clung onto what was familiar rather than take on something uncharted.*

Jennifer identified that the resistance to change was further heightened by uncertainty in relation to the *National Curriculum and where Tasmania fitted with the National Curriculum.* She realised that not only had her staff gone through failed mandated curriculum reforms in the past, but also had been asked to be engaged in the implementation of another mandated reform. She was also aware that her staff *didn't want to go through this series of change and then be met with another series of change and that really was a big problem.* Jennifer reflected that *they* [her staff] *had just undergone the cycle of rewriting and implementing a new course and all of those people really didn't want to do that and then deal with the National Curriculum.*

"Specific professional learning for implementing change"

As part of her Masters in Educational Leadership, Jennifer studied specific units in leadership and change. During her career, but more particularly in her leadership roles, she had also attended a number of seminars on leading change. She acknowledged the value of post-graduate study and professional learning in developing her leadership style and *how very useful they were in formalising my ideas as prior to that I would have to rely on my own judgement on the best way to run a faculty and deal with these issues.* In her faculty, Jennifer had undertaken a great deal of learning area specific professional learning. She had implemented a number of curriculum reforms and been quite fortunate in her role receiving

specific Religious Education professional learning on leading change because in the past three years we have introduced a whole learning scope and sequence for the Diocese. So we have had specific professional learning for implementing change and on-going professional development for change. In her role as Head of Faculty, and as part of the Leadership Team in the case study school, Jennifer acknowledged that she had *more access than most people would both through my own initiated personal learning and through the CEO.*[15] From these experiences she was able to share her ideas and strategies for successfully implementing curriculum reform with other Heads of Faculty and her large staff. *It has opened for me opportunities to dialogue with other colleagues about what works and what doesn't work and share ideas and just to be aware of the different models of how change might be implemented and then to make an informed decision about how to go about it.*

Deidre's Story – Study of Society and the Environment Faculty

"Heads of Faculty can't be effective if support is not provided by the Leadership Team"

At the time of the study, Deidre had been teaching for nearly 30 years. The majority of Deidre's teaching was within Tasmanian Government secondary schools and senior secondary colleges. For the past 9 years she had taught in the non-government system and had been a Head of Faculty for that period of time. Through Heads of Faculty meetings, engagement in professional dialogue with colleagues, attendance at state-wide meetings—such as the post Year 10 workshops[16]—and various other professional associations and conferences, Deidre was exposed to a variety of change experiences and strategies.

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[15] Tasmanian Catholic Education Office—the central systemic office for Catholic Education in Tasmania.
[16] Post Year 10 Workshops—A series of professional learning sessions led by Senior Government Curriculum Officers for middle leaders involved in the implementation of the mandated post Year 10 curriculum reform.

"You had to be prepared to work with people"

Deidre was notably anxious about leading any reform, but particularly mandated reform. In order to assist her and address her concerns about how to go about leading the mandated reform, she observed best practice by her colleagues *I observed best practice in The Faculty of The Arts where you* [the researcher] *took staff with you along the way and apart from that I have not seen anything on a whole school basis.* She recognised the importance of leading and taking her staff with her on the reform journey and working alongside the faculty teachers to ensure the success of the reform and *most importantly I took the group with me and I think that to do that, I had to be prepared to work with people.* Deidre was the Head of Faculty of a very large faculty—26 teachers in total. She expressed some reluctance about the reform process, as many of her staff had been teaching at the case study school for a long period of time, and she thought it would have been easier for her as a leader of reform if the school had made more staff changes to bring in fresh ideas and energy *and a new vision had been implemented.* She acknowledged that people perceived as strong leaders possessed qualities that enabled colleagues to experience success in the implementation of reform—*I saw you* [the researcher] *as a strong leader who enthused the group and it worked well with you even though you had a large group with a range of personalities.*

"Involvement in planning for change created ownership"

After a period of time into the planning for the mandated curriculum reform, Deidre eventually accepted that change was going to happen. She realised that she needed to work together with her staff to *come up with the best possible ways/strategies to deal with the changes.* She felt that by presenting the impending reform in the best possible light she would promote more positive attitudes towards the reform. In the process of leading mandated curriculum reform, Deidre knew that her team needed to clearly understand the need for, and value of the reform—*the team needed to feel that what was being put forward as change was worthwhile and valid.* She acknowledged that, in the past, some other mandated curriculum reforms imposed by the Tasmanian Government had not been successful, and that had influenced her own perspective of the reform as well

as some of the attitudes of her staff in the implementation of the latest mandated reform—*what had been happening in the immediate past was not working or was seen by the group as unsatisfactory.* In order to create a culture for reform where ownership was experienced by the teams of teachers in the faculty, Deidre felt that *the team needed to feel that they were having input in the day-to-day functioning of these changes and that the end result was an improvement on past practice.*

<center>*"Respect for each person's ideas"*</center>

Within Deidre's faculty, a great deal of collaboration, discussion, sharing of ideas, successes, failures and best practice formed the basis of introduction to reform—*people feel empowered—they are part of what is implemented.* She believed that further developments with the reform occurred because people felt as though they were involved in the process. In the implementation of a specific faculty reform, when Deidre and her team were reviewing and making changes to the Year 10 syllabus, she deliberately involved teachers *who were from a variety of backgrounds—some new to the course and school.* She made deliberate selection of a range of staff based on previous experiences with the implementation of reform, and she found this to be a very successful strategy as *variety brought a range of ideas and views, many of which were included in the new syllabus.* Deidre included this strategy in the implementation of the post Year 10 curriculum reform as she thought it provided *flexibility, consultation, involvement, respect for each person's ideas, and an open review all seemed to be successful components of leading this particular change.* In support of the reform process, Deidre would have preferred *small groups of teachers in the same staff room where people were thinking along the same lines.* 'This would then enable middle leaders to communicate more successfully with their staff *as leaders are too busy—email was not always caring enough.* The personal approach to communicating with her staff was preferred by Deidre*, with people talking to people being a much preferred way of communicating change.*

"I did not make the decisions"

Throughout the process of reform, Deidre's staff *tended to work in pairs or threes to develop resources and discuss what was working (or not).* Although the mandated curriculum reform affected the entire faculty in some way, but more particularly those with responsibility for implementation in the Year 11 and 12 courses, Deidre emphasised that the *change was not driven by me.* The reform decisions were *decided in a team meeting and I did not make the decisions.* She firmly believed that collaborative practice was an effective strategy that she employed with her faculty because in her view there had *to be collaborative leadership . . . otherwise, I would walk away at the end of the term, and nobody would feel ownership.* Deidre felt frustrated at times during the reform process. When, in the case study school, dedicated days were given to curriculum reform preparation for the sole purpose of planning the implementation process, her team of teachers, all of whom teach in other faculties, were required to attend other faculty meetings to plan impending reform. *My teams kept changing and I felt powerless as we seemed to be one of the last 'teams' to be constructed.* In a faculty where many teachers had come and gone, Deidre was constantly providing faculty orientation for new staff. *Continuity rarely occurred, so it was difficult to develop the team spirit and sense of understanding that resulted in excellent teaching.*

"The larger the faculty the more people involved, the greater the number of ideas and personalities"

Deidre acknowledged that there were two major challenges and several minor challenges she faced in the implementation of reform. The first major challenge she experienced in leading her faculty was its sheer size. She said *the size of the faculty had a huge impact on curriculum reform because the larger the faculty the more people were involved.* She found coping with all the individual expectations and requests demanding, as *the greater the number of ideas and personalities and the way they liked to go about doing things became involved in the equation* and it was *quite difficult to create a sense of what was needed in the faculty especially if* the curriculum reform was *something which was imposed upon you from above.*

She once again stressed the need for ownership of the process and employed strategies which allowed for forums where staff could express their ideas *if people didn't feel they had some say in what happened they were rather reluctant to become involved and commit themselves to the reform.* Yet at the same time, Deidre was faced with another issue because *when they [her staff] did have a say there was still the problem of the multiple people who had different ways of going about things.* Implementing reform, as Deidre expressed, was not an easy aspect of leadership in a large faculty as *it was really hard to do and quite a difficulty especially when you get up into the double figures and they [the teachers] only had a certain amount of effort to put into whatever was required* in the implementation of the mandated post Year 10 curriculum reform. Upon reflection, she thought that *if we cut down on numbers in our faculties and had 10 full time teachers in the one faculty,* the implementation of reform would have been more successful.

"Most teachers did not want to be involved in change"

The second major challenge Deidre experienced in the reform process was that *most teachers did not want to be involved in change* not just the post Year 10 reforms, but rather, any form of change. *They liked to stay at that level where they were comfortable and not change.* Mandated reform was particularly difficult as the post Year 10 reform *was something which was decided from outside the school and then we were told by those above us* that the reform was going to happen and *so the whole mindset was not positive.* Deidre appreciated all the input the case study school had provided before the Heads of Faculty were required to implement the reforms, but *even though we had lots of input—even in the design process,* she acknowledged that *people saw it as far away and not part of it.* She felt that to engage her staff more fully the *readings and background information needed to be synthesised* enabling teachers to digest the philosophy, implementation plan and reforms in a shorter time-frame as *there was no time to do this.* As a middle leader, Deidre was not given *any professional development time* to work with her staff and she felt that the implementation process suffered from this.

A number of further challenges in implementing mandated reform were identified by Deidre. Time was critical. Deidre was conscious of *busy teachers who didn't have the time to consider the fine detail/implications.* She also expressed the view that *teachers wanted answers rather than working through possible solutions,* which led to some delay in implementing the reform in her faculty. Another factor influencing the success of the reform implementation was the perceived failure of other curriculum initiatives such as the Essential Learnings[17] which lead to *cynicism and lack of trust in what was being developed in post Year 10.*

Despite these challenges, through observation and professional dialogue, Deidre's plan of attack was to develop a *clear program and timeline of what needs to be done* together with a *simple presentation of what will happen and what is required of teachers.* She believed that any strategy was useful, especially when dealing with the resisters. She did not sit and wait for the resisters to skirt around the issues of reform, she involved the resisters in the reform process right from the outset by allocating specific tasks to each person in her faculty. Deidre saw her role as the Head of Faculty to *find the right stimulus that will lead those who felt disenfranchised to become involved.*

> *"Professional learning in leadership was restricted to a few things . . . that's pretty scary when you think about it!"*

Deidre was provided with the opportunity to reflect upon the professional learning she had undertaken with a specific leadership focus. *I don't think I have done very much as far as leadership goes.* She was an advocate of professional learning for both herself and her staff and expressed that *most of my professional learning had been to do with my particular areas of teaching.* She recognised there was a gap in her own professional learning, apart from undertaking leadership specific professional learning *organised by the Deputy Principal of Learning and Teaching—so that's pretty scary when you think about it.* She had not engaged in formal leadership preparation for leading reform. Deidre was aware that, when she was appointed to the role of Head of Faculty upon her arrival in the case study school, she learnt about leading reform on the job, in the role, as *when you are*

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[17] As defined in Chapter 1.

employed in that role, the people who employed you thought you just had that ability and capacity which may not be the case at all. A very busy person, Deidre recognised that she needed to undertake professional learning in the leadership area as it would assist her in future reform implementation—*I could do the east coast type thing[18] or university courses but it does take a lot of your time.*

<center>*"Quality faculty professional learning"*</center>

Deidre suggested that *if our faculties were much more contained, that is, staff exclusively in one faculty and not across faculties, professional learning would be the focus.* When the learning teams in the case study school were constructed, other Heads of Faculty would nominate key teachers to participate in the reform process in their faculty. For example, a teacher who taught mostly in The Arts Faculty, but also taught a class in the Languages Faculty attended the curriculum reform learning team in The Arts Faculty. The majority of Deidre's teachers were in this situation, and as a result out of 26 staff on paper in her faculty she had six teachers whose major teaching loads were in her faculty. As a consequence she had a much smaller number of teachers to call upon to develop the mandated curriculum reform in post Year 10. Deidre was conscious of creating an ideal culture for reform and she wanted to make provision for *quality time for professional development where ideas were valued and people felt part of the process and at a time conducive to doing that.'*

Alan's Story – Language Faculty

<center>*"The dilemma for me was where does a Head of Faculty or a leader go when they are strongly or philosophically opposed to something?"*</center>

<center>*"I established my view through the questionnaire, story and interview and it was only a view"*</center>

Alan, at the time of the study, had taught in non-government schools for three decades. He had been a Head of Faculty for 18 years. Alan was the Head of

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[18] A leadership course, Emerging Leaders, offered in the case study school.

Faculty - Languages, with approximately 40 teaching staff and almost 1,350 students enrolled in his faculty.

Through Faculty meetings and feedback from staff, Alan was provided with the resources that he felt were necessary for middle leaders to successfully and effectively implement mandated curriculum reform. In his faculty, he relied on a few staff, who had previously been involved in the implementation of other mandated reforms, throughout the implementation process of the mandated curriculum reform. These staff members had participated in post Year 10 course development professional learning provided by external sources such as the Tasmanian Qualifications Authority.[19] He felt those staff brought with them valuable knowledge and expertise, which, when shared with others, served to *spread the word.* He believed that a *softly, softly—toe in the water* approach was preferable in implementing reform, as it enabled staff to manage change in *small steps.*

Alan believed that middle leaders leading mandated curriculum reform needed:

- *to be fully informed about the nature of the reform, i.e. to have had the opportunities to attend relevant information sessions or to have been part of the process;*
- *to 'believe in' and 'be committed to' the reforms/changes taking place; it is difficult to 'convincingly' lead reforms that are contrary to one's own educational philosophy;*
- *at least 2–3 colleagues similarly informed and committed;*
- *institutional backing—provision of time/structures/money to implement changes;*
- *commitment from key people in super-ordinate positions;*
- *patience and perseverance;*
- *frequent communication in a variety of forms;*
- *co-operation and good will from all parties;*
- *opportunities for dialogue/feedback throughout the process;* and
- *to change with people—don't impose it upon them.*

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[19] TQA as in Chapter 1.

In the preparatory process for leading mandated curriculum reform, Alan participated in the initial phases of the post Year 10 curriculum reforms[20] and *was somewhat disenchanted as we went through what I thought was a somewhat hollow process.* He attended faculty and whole school staff meetings, within the case study school, devoted to the implementation of the mandated curriculum reforms, as well as attending post Year 10 state-wide and northern meetings conducted by the Department of Education. Although Alan was aware of directions of the post Year 10 reforms from his early involvement and from a whole staff level, he thought there was *a wider concern for middle management* who were required to lead the mandated curriculum reform.

"If you don't believe in something yourself it is very hard to lead something like that in a very dynamic or authentic way"

Alan was not personally convinced of the merits of the post Year 10 curriculum reform. *I was not so convinced about that philosophically and if you didn't believe in something yourself it was very hard to lead something like that in a very dynamic or authentic way.* He realised that to lead any reform successfully the leader needed to be personally engaged in the entire process *as some people pick it straight away that you are not really on board yourself.* In terms of being prepared to lead the reform, Alan believed he could not be effective as a leader if he did not support the reform as *I was not sure you really can as an individual if the belief was not there in the change.* He did however believe that *if the belief was there you found a way.* Alan was *almost ardently opposed to the post Year 10 changes which made it very difficult to talk to staff about it.*

"Failure of other compulsory change"

When discussing Alan's experience of leading reform and implementing mandated reform which affected every faculty, he was concerned about the previous failure of other mandated change he had been required to lead. He had *lead compulsory change* in relation to the Essential Learnings,[21] and stated that *we were not alone* in the reform process as there was *a little bit of scepticism there as*

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[20] PY10 curriculum reforms as noted in Chapter 1.
[21] ELs as defined in Chapter 1.

well. He was concerned that *the collapse of Essential Learnings could, over time, destabilise educational change, because the resisters believed there was no point and the cynics said this [current reform] would fall flat on its face like Essential Learnings.* The dichotomy for Alan was that, as a Head of Faculty, he was required to lead and implement the post Year 10 mandated reform. His personal stance on leading reform, was a concern for himself, when as a Head of Faculty *it was difficult if not impossible to be an authentic and dynamic leader of reform, if you were not personally committed to the worth of the cause.*

Alan's experiences of mandated curriculum reforms, specific to his faculty, were positive. He had implemented new mandated syllabi in Years 11 and 12, comprising a suite of courses designed to meet the needs of all students in his learning area, both in the case study school and state-wide. He had believed in the philosophy of these other reforms, as they were directly related to meeting the needs of students He was able to lead his teachers through the experience with a positive approach, and almost everyone in the faculty also experienced success. Alan's experience, however, in the latest post Year 10 curriculum reform, which impacted on all learning areas, faculties, and Heads of Faculty in the case study school, was not one which he faced with such a positive outlook.

"Rome wasn't built in a day"

Alan thought it was important to *know your people as any leader you really have to know your people well and be prepared to be patient.* Working in a slow steady manner was a preferred model for reform adopted by Alan, as *Rome wasn't built in a day.* By approaching reform in this way, Alan expected to *win in the long run.* His interpretation of *win* in this context was that *change won't necessarily be accomplished as quickly as you wanted or as fully as you wanted.* He expressed concern that the change *wasn't owned by people like he would like it to be* unless he worked *initially with people who wanted to work with him.* He also acknowledged the need to be *patient with others knowing that sometimes you were where they were and it was a gradual process.*

"The changes had clear benefits and opened up the curriculum area"

Alan had implemented many changes throughout his career, but had been self-reliant and had not been aware of strategies other Heads of Faculty had employed in the reform process. As a middle leader, Alan felt that ownership by the Head of Faculty was the first step in the successful implementation of reform. In previous curriculum reform implementation in which he had been involved, that was also the case. *I had been part of the construction process, new courses, as a 'critic' and therefore felt some ownership of the material/philosophy.* He saw the provision of time to allow for a deep understanding of the impending reform as important, and acknowledged that in previous reforms *the school had provided the 'time' and facilitated the communication of information.* As the curriculum reform was mandated, *there was little option but to come on board—the changes being compulsory at a state-wide level.* The experiences Alan had had with leading some previous mandated reforms were positive, as *the changes themselves had clear benefits and opened up the curriculum area.* Alan believed that *working through the changes together, resulting in greater resource sharing, was beneficial for staff collegial relationships in most instances.*

"Key colleagues were often 'bridges' to other staff"

In the implementation of the mandated post Year 10 curriculum reform, Alan was uncertain about the specific strategies he would use, *I won't know about "HOW" until I know "WHAT" it is going to look like.* However, in the implementation of previous curriculum reform, Alan used collaborative leadership as a strategy within his faculty, and he worked with *a couple of colleagues who were interested from the outset and were keen to embrace and promote the changes.* Working in this way enabled Alan to approach reform collaboratively, and *there was collaborative leadership practice particularly with the key colleagues who embraced the changes at an early stage.* He welcomed the input from staff who were positive in the implementation of reform, and his teacher colleagues brought their own *ideas/directions and provided much needed energy, inspiration and reflective feedback.* Alan found it a successful strategy when he employed *key colleagues* who *were often 'bridges' to other staff.* In the past, Alan had set up

teams of teachers who worked on specific courses. He had been a part of the process himself, mentoring key people in the implementation of the reform. Alan's perception of the way these key colleagues were seen in the eyes of other faculty members was that they had *gained significant confidence and stature from leading the change process.* Alan stated that he would *'push for this to happen, if such sweeping changes [to curriculum] were to be proposed in the future.*

"The other alternative to that was say—no, I can't go along with this"

Alan's change experience in the past had been positive. He had *only really been confronted with major change in things I did approve of so this is the first time for me.* In other mandated curriculum reforms such as the Essential Learnings, Alan *had doubts—I couldn't see it doing any harm,* however his hope for effective curriculum reform rested with the impending National Curriculum.[22] He believed that *when we did professional learning on the National Curriculum, I was more than happy to be one of the pioneers or front runners with that, but that, [National Curriculum] implementation time is four or five years away.* Alan expressed concern with the post Year 10 mandated curriculum reform and believed it *had massive problems.*

"Change in schools was bedevilled by politics and peoples' ambitions, long term plans and grievances"

Putting Alan's philosophical stance about leading mandated curriculum reform aside, the biggest challenge he saw that Heads of Faculty faced was that *change in schools was bedevilled by politics and peoples' ambitions, long term plans and grievances.* He firmly believed that *the peoples' chemistry was as much as anything, so it was the people who change once the Heads of Faculty backed it.* He knew there were *people who opposed it on principle, and* he sought ways of *dealing with people who were resistant.* Like himself, Alan knew their reasons may be *philosophical rejection, or simply destructive to make things difficult.* He provided the strategy for dealing with this rejection by *identifying those people who were on board already* and *took them on board as almost equals for the*

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[22] National Curriculum as noted in Chapter 1.

purpose of establishing the change. He did this in the hope that others would *feed off their enthusiasm.* He harnessed *their enthusiasm with other people* and used *their reflective feedback and their energies.* The choice of key staff was essential in ensuring the success of bringing other staff on board as *through their allegiances, other people—and perhaps due to their positive nature—convinced the resisters or potential resisters that this was the way the tide was going.* These key people, whom *the resisters trusted and whose competence was valued* were integral in helping others *see the changes.* Alan stated that it was fundamental that *people were involved,* as one of his earlier reform experiences involved only himself, and he was someone who valued other people as part of the change process. *I made sure a couple of other people were there from the outset.* He used the metaphor of a pyramid for bringing teachers onboard. He empowered two teachers, then five, and so on, in the building of the reform implementation. *I thought of it in terms of a pyramid and worked around it that way.* In a large faculty, Alan found that *to get everyone on board at once might be time efficient, but it's not really practical.*

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"I think size is significant"

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Alan thought that, apart from a leader's personal beliefs in leading mandated curriculum reform, and the politics involved in implementing mandated change, there were other challenges which Heads of Faculty faced in the reform process. As mentioned above, his faculty was large, with 40 teachers involved in the curriculum programs. The implementation of reform and the size of the faculty *became significant when you are going to have 40 people who want to move in the same direction.* Alan was aware of the challenges this number presented and realised tha there *were people who were resistant to the change—I think size is significant.'* In faculties in which the number of teachers was smaller, Alan believed it was easier to find *a couple of people who wanted to come with you.* In a faculty of 10 teachers, empowering two other teachers in the reform process *made 30% of your group,* but *with 40, to get 30% of your group to come with you was much larger and unwieldy.* Alan also saw the down side of having a smaller faculty and stated that *it can be a disadvantage.* The only advantage he considered working within a larger faculty was *where you get larger numbers, some people*

fell in line with you and *everyone else was doing it and saw you doing it with other people.* In a smaller faculty, Alan believed that he could *organise some form of resistance movement* as he would only need a small number of teachers *to have a significant pull to support* his views.

"There are faculties which are more receptive to change"

Alan stated that some learning areas might lend themselves to change more so than others. He cited the Faculty of The Arts as an example. He commented that the Faculty of The Arts was a faculty where the staff were *fundamentally creative and worked from right hemispheres and are more prepared to look at things from different ways.* He compared the Faculty of The Arts with other faculties where core subjects were the focus, for example English and Science, and he believed that these *subject areas more traditionally worked out of left hemispheres.* In learning areas where subjects had been *taught the same for many years a paradigm shift* was not as common as in subjects which had been *less used to change.* Alan believed that in the humanities *teachers worked in the realm of ideas so change in that area was more possible than in a realm which was more fixed, such as Mathematics or Science.* Another challenge Alan considered he encountered when the process was undertaken, was dealing with access to information, and understanding of the impending change and the possible *need for teacher re-training.*

"Leading the change was more about structures and processes"

Alan expressed concern about the lack of training for middle leaders and recognised that *you grow through certain stages of teaching to a point where you move up a level* and then did not receive any training very much in *the particular dimension of implementing change.* Alan said he did not feel *adequately prepared in terms of managing change* and was very direct in that he had not *sought it out as a professional development focus.* Alan was a middle leader who believed that leading reform was intuitive—*we sort of instinctively know about how to accomplish change when we believe in it and want it.* He had engaged in a number of professional learning opportunities such as *variations in curriculum, differentiating the curriculum and brain based learning.* He expressed that these

had been his priority rather than professional learning which assisted him in leading change. *I have sought out these more eagerly than information which helped me implement change.* He attended professional learning opportunities and encouraged colleagues to attend *workshops and seminars provided (beyond the school) which were also extremely beneficial.* Alan deliberately employed this strategy *as teachers who may have resented the reforms were gradually "gathered in" by the positivity of their colleagues and the energy evident in the student responses to our early endeavours.*

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"To be untrue to my beliefs"

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However, the "dilemma" for Alan was *where does a Head of Faculty or a leader go when they are strongly or philosophically opposed to something?* Alan stated that *once it would have been said, well you are paid to do a job and there are certain things you can't change and go with it.* Alan felt strongly opposed to the curriculum reform, and was quite firm in his belief that he *would argue for, and worry about a teacher or anybody in education that didn't have a core philosophy and couldn't name what they're on about.* He was concerned about middle leaders who would *be simply plastic enough to go with any change.* Alan preferred to *leave the position than be untrue to myself and my beliefs* and more importantly for Alan, be seen *to be untrue to my beliefs.*

Charles' Story – Science Faculty

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"Food is good for a chat"

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Charles was an experienced teacher and leader whose career of twenty years had, apart from 5 years in the Tasmanian Government system been spent at the one non-government, Tasmanian secondary school—the case study school. He had a Master of Education, majoring in educational leadership, which he completed in 2001. Due to his post-graduate studies he was able to *reflect upon the change process* by engaging in discussion with students, staff and parents. Additionally, by observing the staff morale parameters between faculties, he had made

'comparisons of faculties' in the reform process. He was an active listener and observer, and was very aware of the change strategies used by his colleagues.

"Food was good for the launch"

During past curriculum reform experiences, and the implementation of mandated reform, Charles discussed a number of strategies in the implementation of reform which he found useful, however, he had found the following strategies successful when working with staff in the reform process:

- *a clear vision was important;*
- *made the steps simple;*
- *had a forum for all to respond;*
- *had talkers and writers in the forum;*
- *engaged in one on one chats;* and
- *food was good for the launch!*

Charles believed that through *belief and trust in colleagues,* he engaged in activities which could inform and facilitate reform, including self-reflection, inter-school moderation and communication, reading change literature and attending professional development. All of these assisted him as a leader and helped the staff in his faculty cope with the implementation of mandated curriculum reform.

In the implementation of the mandated post Year 10 curriculum reform, Charles was prepared to *wait* and *talk with professional colleagues* about how they intended to proceed in the reform process. He felt it was essential to focus on the *priority changes* initially in the hope that the *rest might follow.*

"Change can come in easily and without too much fuss"

Charles was very positive when he spoke about collaborative leadership, and he used this strategy in a number of areas of his leadership role. He made time for meetings as well as acknowledging the significance of *one on one chats.* He communicated with his staff, circulating *response sheets for comments* and was able to articulate to his staff *the core of the change* rather than dwelling on

peripheral issues. In fact, Charles was very positive about the impending reform, and noted that *change can come in easily and without too much fuss.*

"Collaborative leadership—YES"

Charles was also conscious of collaborative practice models used by other Heads of Faculty when it came to the implementation of curriculum reform. He commented specifically on the staff in the Faculty of The Arts as a model for best practice of reform implementation. *You guys* [the researcher and Faculty of The Arts staff], *always did so much—you were always moving and things were happening and you used a lot of advertisement.* He felt that communicating the changes to staff, students, and parents, was crucial to successful implementation. He commented that the reforms evidenced in the Faculty of The Arts were *out there in every way shape and form whether it was in the paper, whether it was in our newsletter or spoken—you people were always saying what was going on and moving and changing.* Being proactive and transparent in the change process were elements Charles admired when observing what he considered best practice. *You* [the researcher] *were very active and moving so I think that was a very good example of how change came in very easily and without too much fuss—the way you did it. So well done!*

"Motivation, fun and the journey!"

Charles believed that to get *things moving* in the reform process he needed to have *a vision with an end in mind.* Through the use of excellent *communication, ideas, trials and decisions,* the reform being implemented *would be sold to staff as they wanted to see what it looked like.* He saw the need for *generous resourcing* and the Head of Faculty *being seen to value the reform* as essential elements in the reform process. He used *humour* as a strategy and was open to *staff suggestion* in the hope that by listening he turned the staff around through ownership, with motivation to follow. Ultimately, Charles saw the successful implementation of reform *as motivation, fun and the journey!*

"Curriculum reform had evolved a bit"

Charles felt that the externally enforced process of implementing mandated curriculum reform over the years had *evolved a bit.* The external agencies responsible for designing the mandated reform were far more consultative in their approach. They conducted several staff sessions in all Senior Secondary Colleges and Independent Schools and Colleges. They also held regional and state-wide meetings to receive feedback on the development of the reform. Despite having his *own idea and vision,* Charles found that, by engaging in collegial conversation and discussing the curriculum reform, he still consulted certain Heads of Faculty *which through first going to trusted colleagues—people who I trust or look up to or people I can communicate quite easily with, without feeling that it is an imposing thing.* He liked to engage in professional dialogue by discussing how he intended to implement the reform. *I go to them and test my new ideas with them— like this is the way we are going.* He needed to be affirmed that the direction he was taking would be successful *and so I feel that my vision is something where the others want to go.* He spent a great deal of time talking through his thoughts and plans for implementation of the reform and used a variety of methods for communicating his vision. *When it comes to a point where change—a necessary change to be put in place I'll then involve everybody in a survey or in other informal ways—at a meeting—in a ballot or show of hands.* He discussed the use of written responses as being a way he involved all in his faculty in the implementation process. *Some way where—butcher's paper—or some way where their* [faculty members] *input is also included—sometimes it is good to get their written ideas so then you can reflect back later over what they have said.*

"I don't think they've got it together in the foundation and basis for the need for change"

Charles expressed his view about the mandated reform, commenting that there needed to be a perceived need for the change by the entire post Year 10 staff in the case study school, *belief that it is actually a good move.* He observed that the cyclical nature of reform sometimes made staff think that they have all seen many of the impending changes come and go. *The wheel turns round as they say and*

there have been a few failed moves in the past such as SOLO taxonomy back in the 80s [23]*, then there's Essential Learnings*[24] *which seem to have fallen in a bit of a heap and also that these changes seem to be following along the theory of the time.* He concluded that there was often a mismatch between change theory and actual practicalities of implementation of curriculum reform and was concerned that the impending post Year 10 curriculum reform could fall into this category. *Take Fullan, Hargreaves—change theory which goes through, then along comes the implemented change, so it annoys me that you have the academic thoughts on change and then the attempt to change in the real world and they don't marry or mix together that well because a new theory will come out in the next couple of years.* He expressed his view on what he saw as the relevant change theory. *I think at the moment it's cognitive theory which is based probably back to the root of Vygotsky and how people change and their thoughts too.* In relation to his faculty, Charles was concerned about the direction in which the faculty was headed with regard to the curriculum reforms which had already impacted on the content of courses and the number of hours his subject was being delivered. *I think our curriculum has been watered down so much we seem to be teaching less hard work now and making more fuss of it in a theoretical side of things so it annoys me in a big way we are not actually going forward I believe and we're covering our tracks a bit with the paperwork.* Charles was concerned about the post Year 10 curriculum reform which specifically impacted on his faculty and was worried that the changes were for change's sake. *I don't think they've got it together in the foundation and basis for the need for change.*

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"The smaller you are, the more you can do"

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Charles acknowledged a number of challenges he faced in the implementation of reform. He felt that *the size of the faculty definitely influenced the outcome of curriculum reform implementation.* He had worked in both a small country school and large city schools and compared the reform process in each school. *I'd say they have seed schools and brick schools—the smaller you are the more able you are to do—like on King Island we ran with any change we could, but here if you*

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[23] Bloom's SOLO Taxonomy: the classification for learning objectives.
[24] ELs as defined in Chapter 1.

have any excursion it's ten groups going out at once—it's more difficult to get change across.

"Teachers are opinionated!"

Charles acknowledged that the personal dimension of change impacted on the success of reform, commenting that *teachers are opinionated! Despite this* challenge, Charles prepared for some *negative reactions if teachers are told* what to do. He aimed to *look to change in this is a 'what and why way'* and *couching the changes in positive ways.*

"They wanted some sucker to take it on!"

Charles had worked in schools where leaders were 'touched on the shoulder' rather than having to make formal application for a leadership role or preparing for it with professional learning. *I never prepared for middle management. I was asked to go there* [Head of Faculty] *by a former Principal. I didn't ever put in for it in the first place and that's because there were* [two large learning areas] *and they* [the case study school Leadership Team] *wanted some sucker to take it on!* When he took up the middle leadership position, Charles recognised that he needed to undertake professional learning with a focus on leadership. *I have done a Masters and I did a three way Masters—one part was leadership in education, another was change, and the third part was outdoor education.* At the time of his study, he thought it was a means to an end, however he later realised how useful it had been in understanding the many facets of leadership— *it was nothing to do with anything really, but it was good.*

"Reflecting on what they do is the best way of learning how to do things"

Charles concurred that as Heads of Faculty we certainly should be engaged in leadership professional learning. *Yes we should have formal training because a lot of people will hide behind* the facade of—*we are already doing this and it is on the job sort of work.* In the process of developing leadership skills, specifically required for implementing mandated curriculum reform, he saw that *there is an objectivity about separate learning which gets you to see it in a reflective phase*

or gets you to see what other people are doing. He acknowledged the significance of reflection in the development of leadership skills, and agreed *that a person reflecting on what they do is the best way of learning how to do things. If you reflect back in an objective way rather than in so much subjectively rolling through things in your own way you are able to develop further.* Charles believed that any feedback a leader was able to get when working together with other middle leaders provided a different perspective on leading reform. *When others are involved in that sort of learning then you get feedback and you get a different aspects of looking at problems.*

"Professional development might be a spark or the inspiration to get something happening"

Leading curriculum reform requires energy and forward thinking, and Charles believed that *you need to have momentum and so to get momentum forward you have to have some things happen.* He suggested that he needed to engage in more professional learning especially related to leading mandated reform as it *might be a spark or the inspiration of one among you or a few of you* that provides the impetus for innovative change. The inspirational leader needed to *get something happening—anything happening, it doesn't matter what. It could be something you don't want to actually do but it's an ice breaker—something to get people moving and then you can bring your point of change.* The significance of building a forward moving faculty, through the use of a positive energetic approach to the mandated curriculum reform, was crucial to its success, as *once there is some momentum going or some movement or non stagnation—you could stagnate—you won't get any where.*

Rupert's Story – Technology Faculty

"Technology is a multi-faceted faculty"

"Obtaining the vision as to how the new framework relates to practice needs to be explored"

Rupert had been teaching for almost three decades at the time of the study. For most of his career he had worked in the non-government sector of education in Tasmania. He had undertaken a number of middle leadership roles in the case study school with the majority in a curriculum area. His Head of Faculty role was diverse and encompassed a number of discrete learning areas within the school. He had responsibility for the leadership of Technology subjects in wood, metal, computing, design, food, nutrition and textiles.

"A multi-faceted faculty"

Rupert's faculty was *a multi-faceted faculty,* and he believed that this diversity made *the leadership of that faculty difficult because we have so many strands.* His role required him to lead a range of learning areas and he was challenged by *keeping them all in a departmental direction in similar sort of progress steps.* Some learning areas were at different stages of dealing with and coping with reform and change and Rupert spent a great deal of time working with smaller teams in the discrete learning areas. In smaller learning areas, where staff members were able to cope with reform implementation very well, they worked autonomously, enabling Rupert to put his energies into areas where more leadership, direction, support and assistance were required.

"All staff have been involved"

Rupert acknowledged that he worked in a faculty where *everything was changing all the time.* For example, the discrete learning area of computing required almost weekly updates on the latest reforms and knowledge for the courses and Rupert felt that his leadership of these changes was successful *because all staff had been involved.* He developed and implemented reforms over a long period of time, and

as a result *all staff agreed with the direction and supported the change.* Rupert strongly supported feedback from students as part of the reform process and the students *took on the reform challenges with vigour.*

Knowing his staff fairly well was important to Rupert in the reform process. Being aware of *their backgrounds and their current circumstances also helped,* and Rupert felt he could *adjust*' his approach to reform *because some people perceived that their workloads were very high compared to some.* Being sensitive and equitable were strategies Rupert employed when dealing with delicate situations because *for some they were at the end of their tether because their perceived workload was excessive and they were not going to take on change.* Rupert felt he needed to consider the many individuals within his faculty *as well as have the preparation for change.*

"The need for internal search"

Rupert believed that in preparing for curriculum reform, he needed to *basically take his staff down a self-appraisal, self-direction approach.* He felt the need for this *so that staff can see what they would like to achieve for students.* Rupert thought it was essential that his staff were able to articulate career pathways for students in his faculty and *what they would do career wise.* He was very conscious of communicating to his staff *how their subject was changing and how it had already changed.* He wanted his staff to *harness changes and make changes to what they already did so that they got on board with the post Year 10 philosophy.* Rupert was frustrated to some degree, but also accepted that *if they don't have that internal search as to what their subject would really do and where it was going and what the direction was* they would fall behind and not keep abreast of the latest technological advances for students. His faculty needed to constantly reflect upon *where they are in that perspective now they already knew that everything had changed.* He felt *they needed to move with the times.*

"Leading by being involved"

Rupert, in his role as Head of Faculty, and as a leader of curriculum reform, considered knowing the big picture essential in the leading of curriculum reform;

for the nominated leader to have the big picture vision of where the reform was going. Hand in glove with this vision he also recognised the importance of being able to communicate the vision to his team of teachers and *pass it on to those involved.* It was Rupert's understanding that *it was essential to have the team involved and owning the vision for the reform.* As a middle leader in the case study school, Rupert felt it was essential for the leader to *set an example by being personally involved in the process; leading by being involved.*

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"Encouraging the new ideas"

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Very excited about the curriculum changes, Rupert saw the mandated post Year 10 curriculum reforms as an *opportunity to develop courses the way we have always wanted.* Rupert welcomed the reform, however he saw challenges in *jettisoning old redundant material* whilst getting his colleagues to *view their courses from the new framework rather than the old one.* He led with enthusiasm, *encouraging the new ideas so that staff owned the new framework.*

Although Rupert worked collaboratively with his staff *to provide material to be coordinated and collated in the reform project,* as a Head of Faculty, he preferred to work independently, unaware of change strategies employed by other Heads of Faculty. He did however use some similar strategies used by other Heads of Faculty, including *demonstration and encouragement,* so his staff could see *application* and this would *stimulate ownership.* Rupert viewed his major leadership role in the implementation process of curriculum reform as *the coordinator of the responses.* Rupert believed that a collaborative approach *made the change easier for others in the team to own.* Working in this manner also enabled a collaborative approach to reduce *the 'brain strain' on those, namely, the Head of Faculty, who coordinated the information.*

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"Breaking the closed mindedness"

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Rupert believed that the biggest challenge for all Heads of Faculty in the implementation of post Year 10 mandated curriculum reform was that *as leaders of a faculty we really had a high degree of responsibility for facilitating and encouraging our staff to take all this on board.* Initially he considered that post

Year 10 reforms were *still a bit vague for a large number of people.* He expressed concern that *as facilitators we needed to alert them to the possibilities which enabled them to harness the reform.* Rupert suggested that if Heads of Faculty made our staff aware of all the reform elements *then the possibilities came through and we had won.* His major concern was for teachers in his own faculty who were *not open to those possibilities and did not see those possibilities being available.*

From previous reform experiences, Rupert found that encouragement and support had been the most effective strategies he used to overcome any barriers or resistance in the implementation process. He felt some of his staff considered further change *all too hard* and adopted a negative attitude. His previous experience of implementing major reform met with comments such as *we can never do that.* Rupert considered some team members had a *very closed mind* and *thought the reform won't succeed.* As part of his leadership role Rupert saw the need to *break that closed mindedness* and create a positive culture for reform so *people said that it would be really nice if we could do this and have ideas we would have something to aim for.* Rupert was the Head of Faculty in a very practical learning area and he frequently discussed curriculum reforms with those members of his staff who were receptive to change. *We had some really interesting proposals and given a combination of those and the strategies of post Year 10,* some of his staff were excited about being able to *actually do something with those ideas and look forward.* One aspect affecting the positive energy and enthusiasm for the proposed mandated curriculum reforms for Rupert and his staff was that in the past they had proposed their own reforms and submitted internal curriculum proposals to the Leadership Team which had not been implemented— *it was unfortunate as we had put in proposals in that area so we had more flexibility in that area.*

"Observing how others lead curriculum reform"

Personally, Rupert had not done any *formal training or specific professional learning in the last couple of years* with a specific focus on leadership. Although he had not completed *formal courses* he had been to *conferences and looked at a lot of literature that had come in particularly around ICT and the curriculum.*

Because of the breadth of discrete learning areas within his faculty, Rupert had *looked at various areas within the faculty which can possibly change*. He researched professional learning for his staff and disseminated *what they could apply for or work with to provide more Year 11 courses which met the demands of post Year 10 curriculum reforms.*

Within the faculty, several of Rupert's staff had been involved in *observing how others lead curriculum reform.* Some of the faculty staff had been involved in professional learning workshops and some had travelled to other schools to look at what was *done elsewhere and why they had changed that and what they wanted to change. These professional learning opportunities enabled us to learn about what they did and what they do now and the processes they went through and what troubles they experienced.* The school visits enabled the Head of Faculty to *compare from school to school and the best ways to avoid troubles.*

Jules' [the researcher] Story – The Arts Faculty

Act One, Scene One—The Manager

> *"Change is exciting! It requires reflection, initiative, innovation—important elements in the artistic process—they are akin!"*

> *"Leading curriculum at an early age"*

I had survived! Almost 36 years of teaching in the Arts area had seen me witness many changes. My career began in Tasmanian Government secondary schools where I undertook many leadership roles. My first leadership role was to introduce the learning area of Drama into Tasmanian secondary schools, whilst I was in my second year of teaching. My first appointment was followed by a transfer to another secondary school in Launceston, where I was appointed Drama Coordinator. During my time at this High School, I became the Grade 10 Supervisor using my pastoral leadership skills. In recognition of my expertise in the educational drama field, I was appointed as a state-wide Drama and Arts consultant, working with teachers from Kindergarten to Year 12, a position I held for two years. A short appointment as a primary school Arts specialist was

followed by a role of Head of Faculty in The Arts, teaching Year 11 and 12 students at a senior secondary college. My leadership skills were used in other areas of the college, being appointed as Head of Technology, a struggling curriculum area at the time, which required strong leadership. I also undertook a senior managerial position, coordinating the professional learning for all staff at the college. Alongside this teaching experience, I also lectured in a part time capacity at the University of Tasmania. In my final year at the College, I was appointed Acting Vice Principal of the Vocational Education School, and it was at this time that I transferred from the Education Department of Tasmania, and began my teaching career in the Independent sector. Although I was appointed as a teacher at my new school, within 6 weeks I was given the role of Head of Faculty—The Arts and held that position for 11 years. I have also had an Acting Deputy Principal role, and, at the conclusion of the study, undertook a pastoral role as a House Head. Leadership roles in all the schools in which I have worked have given me the opportunity to work with a range of staff in a number of learning and teaching, pastoral and administrative areas.

"Visionary forward thinking was real leadership"

My formal leadership training was non-existent. Thrown in the deep end at an early stage of my career, I quickly discovered strategies I employed to lead staff in curriculum development and reform. These included creating teams, working with a vision, empowering others through collaborative and distributed practice, and using my out-going personality to nurture others in the process of curriculum reform and implementation. Upon reflection, my early leadership roles were managerial in nature rather than coming from an understanding of what leadership really meant. People always saw me as a great organiser, a people person, and, to a lesser extent, visionary. Well, that is my perception. Whilst I agree that part of exemplary leadership requires great managerial skills, I stress it was only part of any leadership role. The visionary, forward thinking, and cutting edge, leadership in my view was real leadership—as long as the staff on the team were empowered with the vision and became part of the journey.

"Learning leaders on the job"

I did not encounter any immersion programs into leadership roles in any of my schools, until I was offered specific leadership courses in my current school, the case study school. I engaged in an 'Emerging Leaders' professional development course, completed a Master in Education—Leadership, and actively sought out specific professional learning with a leadership focus. Until this point, I thought I was coping well with leading others, and by using my personality, excellent organisational skills, collaborative practice, and a sense of humour, I had survived!

Act One, Scene Two—The Leader

"Authentic Leadership is tough"

The leadership-specific professional learning was the most insightful time I had spent in the process of leadership. Coming to an understanding of the different types and styles of leadership, and wishing to place myself in the authentic transformational mental model of leadership, was a personal professional challenge for me. Whilst appraisal programs and personal comments had given me very positive feedback, these leadership opportunities gave me the time to really think about my leadership style. A transformational approach to the big picture of the College empowered me with the model of leadership which best suited my daily running of a faculty. At this point, I realised an important aspect of my own leadership development was to provide the same opportunity for those with whom I worked, both experienced and inexperienced teachers. This realisation brought the Arts team much closer, as not only were we engaging in dialogue about students, their learning, course content, and the daily routines for a materials intensive learning area, but we were also engaging in professional dialogue at a much deeper level. My own engagement in professional learning and undertaking post-graduate study, were also points of reference for others who were constantly enquiring about my progress, whilst at the same time discussing with me further study and the value of it for themselves.

"The description of reality"

As part of the middle leadership team in the case study school, I have been given many opportunities to attend curriculum reform professional learning offered by outside agencies. Engaging in dialogue with colleagues, state-wide, at meetings organised by the Department of Education about the process of implementing mandated post Year 10 curriculum reform, helped the Arts team in bringing about reform successfully. As a learning area, we are inherently creative and think outside the square, so the options offered in the new curriculum were well received in our faculty, and we were excited by change. Using the strategies of listening, reading and observing, together we explored and participated in the initial stages of the mandated reform. Being informed through Post Year 10 state-wide meetings I attended, and keeping reading up to date, assisted me in the reform process, as I felt I could keep my team in touch with what developments arose during the initial stages of the reform. Whether I agreed or disagreed with the reform at that point did not impact on how I discussed the proposed changes with the Arts team. I guess I adopted a neutral stance at that stage and presented the facts—the description of reality. As the intensity of implementing the reform escalated, I created a deliberate 'plan of attack.'

"An empty canvas with broad brush strokes"

The Arts Faculty, comprised of the discrete learning areas of Dance, Drama, Media, Visual Art, Photography, Theatre Performance, and Theatre Production, was a vibrant and hard working learning area within the case study school. Each learning area was unique in materials and content, however, we were united in the creative process, and the agreed creative outcomes for students. We were passionate about the arts and the significance of the arts in the lives of children, and, as a faculty, we constantly strived for innovation and excellence. To this end, when reform was mooted, the staff was eager to listen, mull over, reflect upon, and discuss, the positive aspects. Mandated reform was non-negotiable and required action. As the leader at this point, a draft for consideration was proposed and discussed. From experience, I had learnt that it was best to go to a meeting armed with a canvas of broad brush strokes and be prepared, even if at the end of

the meeting this was discarded and replaced by different designs as a group proposal for an implementation plan. The Arts staff expected "leadership" in times of change, in the initial stages, and then, gradually, they were the ones who took over the lead by owning the reform.

It was our agreed and usual practice to meet as an Arts team, and then split into discrete learning areas to discuss how the proposed reform could best be implemented into the specific Arts area. Although my own teaching areas were Drama, Theatre Performance, Theatre Production, and Dance, as a leader, I specifically focussed on the other areas in the implementation of reform so the discrete learning area staff did not feel abandoned at this stage. I was fortunate as I had strong, experienced teachers in all discrete Arts areas, however it was important that each person felt valued. This strategy also strengthened my knowledge of how the mandated reform impacted in each area, and, as a result, I maintained the positive relationship I had with staff members in the discrete arts area.

"Capacity to cope with leading mandated reform"

During my teaching career, I had encountered change daily. As a leader and follower, my capacity to cope with change had fluctuated depending on my perceived need for the change. Be it small or large, the intended change, for me, needed to have benefits for myself as a professional, my staff, but particularly for my students. One of the major mandated curriculum reforms I recall in the early 80s was the shift from summative assessment to formative assessment: criterion based assessment. This reform in the curriculum changed not only the assessment, but the pedagogical practices of secondary teachers as they came to terms with this huge, mandated curriculum reform.

As an experienced teacher in the Arts, together with other Arts colleagues, I was closely involved in the shaping of the philosophical base for the state-wide mandated curriculum reform, and the marketing of the reform to teachers and parents. I was empowered in the process, having first-hand knowledge of the reform, which included the writing of the criteria for assessment, the development of standards documents which expanded upon the outcomes for the criteria, and

the course development in Drama. The state-wide curriculum reform commenced in Years 9 and 10 initially, and it was so successful that it then followed into the Years 11 and 12 Tasmanian Certificate of Education courses.

The outcry from teachers in all learning areas when this mandated curriculum reform was mooted was quite alarming. For example, the major assessment the shift had gone from giving nine out of ten for a piece of work or a performance to a rating such as an "A" for an outstanding piece of work. I welcomed the reform, as this way of working with students was far more inclusive of all players in the learning and assessment of learning outcomes. The holistic nature of working with a student, particularly in the Arts, had been realised. This reform was, at first, met with some suspicion and was questioned by the team of Arts teachers, but, once the benefits for students were articulated, trailed, and evaluated, the Arts staff was adamant that this reform was compatible with the creative and more subjective nature of the Arts. Reform experiences, such as this, supported the faculty in embracing the new reforms in the mandated post Year 10 curriculum reforms with a positive attitude. With a great deal of interest in the reform process and impending changes, the faculty forged ahead, seeing how the changes fitted with what we thought were essential qualities in the existing learning programs. We then began articulating how we could adapt the reform proposals to meet the needs of our students.

"Professional learning"

Through professional learning opportunities offered by many agencies—such as professional associations, including: the Tasmanian Association for Drama In Education (TADIE);[25] the Tasmanian qualifications and assessment body, TASSAB; the Tasmanian Secondary Assessment Board;[26]—and a great deal of in-house professional learning, teachers quickly engaged with the reform, and those in subjects with a humanities and creative focus embraced the change willingly. This was not so for some other learning areas, who still used the old system,

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[25] Later to be known as DramaTas.
[26] Now the Tasmanian Qualifications Authority (TQA).

assessing, for example, a piece of work as seven out of ten, and then transcribing the assessment to a 'B' rating or similar for the student!

"A proactive approach to leading mandated reform was essential"

The Leadership Team in the case study school, and in all schools and colleges in which I have worked, have been most supportive and understanding of any mandated curriculum reform. They have provided resources and professional learning opportunities for all interested middle leaders. Guest speakers, attendance at professional workshops, and current information were all organised by the Deputy Principal of Learning and Teaching, and strongly supported in a variety of ways by other members of the school's Leadership Team. This support made the implementation process in the case study school run smoothly, as the Heads of Faculty were reaffirmed through discussion, and steps made clear as to how to communicate the information to staff in our faculties. A proactive approach to leading the reform, and making it a priority for a professional focus, made the implementation approach more informed for the faculty staff and myself.

"A close-knit faculty with a shared vision"

The Arts Faculty, with full-time Arts staff numbers smaller than some other faculties in the case study school, was a close-knit faculty, with a shared vision of where we were progressing with our students. A recent Faculty appraisal of all full-time and part-time members of the faculty had given us time to reflect upon our pedagogical practice and learning and teaching programs. It became clear to us that the mandated curriculum reforms in post Year 10 were commensurate with our vision of post compulsory secondary education. Programs, which met the needs of individual students, were exciting, and members of the faculty saw how they articulated with the programs which we already offered.

"It is not a popularity contest"

Leadership of mandated curriculum reform was not glamorous; it was tough. The most challenging aspect for me was dealing with negativity and cynicism, and being the mediator when, for example, two staff members did not agree on the

priorities for the learning area. I sometimes felt my role was akin to roles such as mother, doctor, nurse and psychologist during the reform process. Being aware of the needs of staff was not only crucial for the well-being of staff throughout the reform process, but professional and pastoral care for staff occurred each day in the daily running of the faculty. Leadership of any kind was not akin to a popularity contest, particularly when things were tough engaging all staff in the reform process. I felt that my role as leader was about earning respect, as I never asked staff to do what I was not prepared to do myself. That was my mantra in my daily work, but particularly during the reform process. I preferred to work with, and alongside staff, in fact I gave them the good bits and I took the worst parts—as they said, *"you get paid the big bucks for that!"*

Conclusion

These narratives are very personal and the Heads of Faculty were extremely generous in their responses to all three forms of data generation: questionnaire, interview and personal story. A time for reflection on the reform process, together with their own leadership skills and approaches, allowed each of them to highlight the uniqueness they experienced in their leadership of mandated curriculum reform. Moore (2007b), in a study focussing on the middle leader's role in leading change, acknowledges the uniqueness of every faculty in schools. Leadership by the Heads of Faulty in each faculty area, in the case study school encountered "different problems in embracing the changes depending on the nature and demands of their subjects" (p. 2). In keeping with the notion of being true to oneself in the reform process, Moore (2007b) suggests that Heads of Faculty need to "remain resolute in pursuing their vision of change and securing uniformity of delivery and student entitlement" (p. 2). From the narratives presented, uniformity emerged to a certain degree, however the individuality, variation and creativity with which the middle leaders in the case study school experienced the implementation of reform are revealed in the findings.

CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION

Middle Leadership of Reform—the Individual and Collective Findings

"Middle leaders play a critical role in implementing and embedding change."
(Moore, 2007b, p. 3)

Critical Reflection on the Research

Throughout the research process, themes and influences that Heads of Faculty faced in the implementation of mandated curriculum emerged, and these will be addressed in this chapter as part of the critical reflection. The data analysis examined in the process of critical reflection deepened my understanding of how Heads of Faculty implemented mandated curriculum reform. The findings of this study were generated from my initial overarching statement: *Heads of Faculty leading curriculum reform: a case study of post Year 10 curriculum reform in a Tasmanian secondary school.*

The following four supporting research questions emerged and formed the framework for the study and the discussion in this chapter:

1. In what ways do Heads of Faculty view themselves as leaders?
2. What strategies do Heads of Faculty use in their leadership of curriculum reform, and how integral are these leadership strategies to the reform process?
3. What challenges do Heads of Faculty face in the implementation of curriculum reform, and how do they respond to them?

4. What forms of collaborative leadership, if any, emerged during the process of implementing reform?

The research processes of case study and narrative inquiry used in this study had an influence on the outcomes of the study, as they enabled me to elicit the experiences of leading mandated curriculum reform by the Heads of Faculty from three different, personal, data generation methods. The methods used included questionnaire, interview, and personal stories. The data gathered from these sources had a significant impact on the reform process within the case study school, and had an influence upon the ongoing implementation of curriculum reform. The responses informed both the study and myself as researcher.

The willingness to participate in this study, exhibited by my colleagues, was outstanding. Anecdotal comments made to me in my role as the researcher at the beginning of the data gathering process reflected the generosity of my professional colleagues involved in the study, despite some reluctance by them as to whether or not the mandated post Year 10 curriculum reform would be successful, or even eventuate. Colleagues made comments such as:

- *"I am more than happy to participate in the study and assist you as a colleague, but I am doubtful about the impending current curriculum change ever coming to fruition."*
- *"It's just a storm in a tea cup."*
- *"Let's just sit and wait and watch . . . we have seen it before!"*

The participants informed me that they felt comfortable with my own leadership role in the case study school, being a colleague Head of Faculty as well as the researcher. There was mutual respect and trust throughout all data collection processes, which enabled the participants to reflect sincerely about their strategies for curriculum reform.

The critical reflection and discussion on the findings will be based on a framework of the four research questions.

Research Question One: In what ways do Heads of Faculty view themselves as leaders?

Middle leaders in the case study school viewed themselves primarily as leaders of teachers within a given faculty. The data revealed that working with teams of teachers to implement reform was the most challenging aspect of implementing the reform for the Head of Faculty participants in the reform process. In the initial stages of the implementation of the reform, the vision and concepts of the post Year 10 mandated curriculum reform were shared and understood and then it became time to present the reform to staff in the leaders' faculties. The majority of Heads of Faculty agreed that having their team involved, and owning the vision for the reform was essential, however some were reluctant to "burden" teachers with the mandated reform and "played down" the significance of the reform with staff. One response suggested, *that in a faculty where things are happening . . . articulating what is going on and moving and changing . . . change comes in very easily and without much fuss.*

One of the reasons the Heads of Faculty expressed a willingness to be involved in the study was that they had previously given themselves very little personal time to reflect upon the way in which they viewed themselves as leaders. The collegial discussion which took place at different stages of the study provided them with a specific opportunity to focus on and articulate their views on leadership of curriculum reform. Heads of Faculty in the case study school were appointed to a leadership position and then got on with the job of dealing with the daily requirements of a middle leader. Each Head of Faculty actively sought a leadership position in the case study school. Every 3 years all middle leadership positions were advertised within the case study school and all staff were invited to make an application at the end of the leadership cycle. The selection process involved attendance at an interview conducted by the case study school's Leadership Team. Successful applicants were subsequently appointed to their current position as a Head of Faculty in a curriculum learning and teaching area. The application and interview process, apart from involvement in this study, was the only time Heads of Faculty formally participated in a process which enabled them to reflect upon and articulate their approach to leadership within the school.

There were significant similarities in the comments made by Heads of Faculty in their questionnaire responses about essential leadership elements required for leading mandated curriculum reform. They almost unanimously agreed that Heads of Faculty needed to:

- have a clear vision of the why, where and how of the reform;
- understand the philosophy of the reform;
- create ownership of the reform by all staff in the team;
- guarantee staff that there will be improved practice when the reform is in place;
- be open to the possibilities the reform offers;
- engage in professional dialogue with others in the school and wider community;
- have a staged set of plans for implementation;
- identify key personnel and change agents;
- delegate;
- share the responsibility—facilitate shared and distributed leadership;
- work with teachers to bring them on board during all stages of the reform;
- set an example by being involved in the reform;
- be positive, have a belief that the reform is good; and
- send an advance "expert party" [curriculum leaders in the case study school] to find out about the reform.

Overall, these similarities experienced in leading the reform process could be clustered around the administrative, managerial and leadership dimensions of the leaders' role.

The literature discusses, more specifically, the role of the Head of Faculty (Allum, 2005; Moore, 2007b; Rosenfled, Ehrich & Cranston, 2008) and the qualities which contribute to a successful Head of Faculty, rather than focusing on how Heads of Faculty view themselves as leaders. There was very little research found about how Heads of Faculty lead mandated curriculum reform. The literature reviewed discussed the role of the Head of Faculty from a Deputy Principal or

Principal perspective (Fullan, 2001; Hargreaves, 2003), rather than from studies conducted specifically with Heads of Faculty.

Vision, big picture of reform

Participants were unanimous in their belief that leaders must be visionary and be immersed in the vision or "big picture" of the school. The literature also supports this belief (Keese, 2005; Kotzur, 2005). Although the majority of Heads of Faculty agreed that having a vision for reform was essential, when questioned further about their understanding of what vision meant in their own context, it seemed that some were confused about the term. They expressed mostly that they had an "understanding" of the mandated change rather than a "vision" and how it directly related to their faculty, the case study school, and, ultimately, Tasmanian education for students enrolled in post Year 10 education. There was a sense of them being somewhat detached from their context.

Some of the Heads of Faculty found gaining an understanding of the philosophy and vision of the impending post Year 10 curriculum reform rather challenging when they were required to commence the implementation process. The vision for the post Year 10 mandated curriculum reform was shared with all staff in the case study school; this was led by senior curriculum personnel from the Department of Education in Tasmania. At three whole-staff meetings held in the case study school staff room from 3:45 p.m. until 5:00 p.m. all staff, including Heads of Faculty, were given the same information about the philosophical basis of the impending reform, the time-line for implementation, and implications for individual educational institutions. The staff was also presented with a DVD outlining the impending reforms and was encouraged to view the information at their own leisure.

Following the staff meeting information sessions, when the implementation process was shared with the whole staff, it appeared that the Heads of Faculty differed greatly on their own interpretation of the vision and their plan for implementation with their faculty staff. Moore (2007b) agrees that when middle leaders as well as "staff had a greater understanding of the initiative there was less resistance" (p. 1). This was expressed to some extent by four Heads of Faculty in

their interviews and personal stories, as they grappled with the curriculum reform purpose from the beginning. This was possibly due to the fact that although they had all shared in the same information from the beginning of the process, they did not necessarily agree with the reform itself and chose not to agree with the vision.

Dialogue and observation

A great deal of collegial dialogue ensued following the initial stages of the reform, and those in Heads of Faculty meetings who were uncertain about how to go about realising the vision took the opportunity to chat informally with more experienced Heads of Faculty in the quiet of their own offices. The literature suggests that change generates "livelier discussion" (Moore, 2007b, p. 1) rather than deep-seated and embedded understanding of the vision. Findings in questionnaire responses, interview discussions, and personal stories, revealed that many Heads of Faculty relied on their observation of other Heads of Faculty in how they were going about implementing the vision, or engaged in dialogue with more experienced leaders about how they were implementing the vision for reform. A mentoring network emerged in a variety of ways among the group of Heads of Faculty where, despite working alone in individual faculties, they were sharing experiences about realising the vision in both formal and informal situations.

Support for Heads of Faculty implementing reform

There was commitment to the reform and strong support from the Leadership Team[27] at the school. Literature (Moore, 2007b; Rosenfeld et al., 2008), also suggests that middle leaders make frequent reference to the importance and commitment by the senior leaders in schools to the vision for reform. There was however no "blue print" for the implementation of the reform. Some Heads of Faculty preferred to operate alone in the change process, being given the autonomy to work in a way which best met the needs of their faculty, while others expected step-by-step guidance in how to implement the reform in their faculty. This support or perceived lack of support from those in the school Leadership Team was commented upon by three experienced Heads of Faculty in the sub-

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[27] The Principal, three Deputy Principals, Business Manager, Faith and Justice Coordinator.

group and one other Head of Faculty who completed the questionnaire. From my observations, this appeared to be the case for those Heads of Faculty who were more worried about how their staff would respond to the reform, rather than the reality of their perception that they were not being supported. To overcome this sense of uncertainty with some Heads of Faculty, the Leadership Team in the case study school invited the senior curriculum personnel, who were responsible for the implementation of the post Year 10 reforms for the Tasmanian Government, into the case study school several times to speak with the entire staff. These guest speakers gave detailed presentations of the impending changes. They involved the case study school staff in practical discussions and workshops, and the Heads of Faculty, who were concerned about how they would deliver the news about further change to their staff, relaxed somewhat. Some Heads of Faculty felt inadequately equipped to undertake the leadership of this huge reform, and believed they lacked the knowledge and necessary skills to lead their staff. There was, however, very much a sense of *we are all in this together, this is not coming from me and despite our own philosophical beliefs we have no choice with mandated curriculum reform.*

Professional learning for middle leaders leading mandated curriculum reform

The need for, and value of, professional learning for Heads of Faculty and their staff in leading and responding to mandated curriculum reform was mentioned by all participants in the study (Little, Gearhart, Curry & Kafta, 2003). The literature supported these comments referring to professional learning (Bascia & Hargreaves, 2000) as "continuous learning" (Kotzur, 2005) and "professional reflective dialogue" for middle leaders (Altrichter & Elliott, 2000; Moore, 2007b). Heads of Faculty saw professional learning in reform implementation, or, more specifically, on leading change successfully, as integral to the success of reform. As a flow on, staff members were enabled to feel confident with colleagues and students when introducing the reform into their programs.

Three of the participants had undertaken post-graduate courses in educational leadership. Others availed themselves of professional learning opportunities before the commencement of this study, attending conferences with a leadership focus in order to strengthen their leadership skills. There were some who had

never engaged in any formal professional learning in leadership. Eight Heads of Faculty felt specific professional learning was so important in developing leadership skills with a particular focus on implementing curriculum reform that they viewed it as something which could not be left up to chance or instinct. It was professional training they considered crucial to their development as leaders of reform.

In the interviews, four of the sub-group of six Heads of Faculty expressed a desire to have specific professional learning which would assist them in the implementation of reform or more generally in the implementation of any change process as the only professional learning experience for some Heads of Faculty was observation of others in middle leadership who they felt operated successfully with teams of teachers in leading reform. They stated that they learnt from these experiences. This was again a more random approach to professional learning. Despite this seeming lack of leadership specific profession learning, Heads of Faculty were very happy to work in the case study school as they felt it was an educational institution which was unique in the north of Tasmania.

The Heads of Faculty noted the following as the types of professional learning they had engaged in prior to the implementation of the mandated curriculum reform:

- reading professional literature;
- identifying and analysing issues;
- examining the outcome of the change process;
- university studies—reflective change;
- comparison of faculties;
- Heads of Faculty meetings; and
- attending professional organizations and meetings.

Professional learning in leadership for the majority of Heads of Faculty in the case study school, apart from issues being discussed at regular weekly formal meetings, had not been a focus of their professional development. Some Heads of Faculty acknowledged the importance of reading professional literature and identifying and analysing educational issues that affected their role in the case

study school. They engaged in professional dialogue with colleagues and were positive about gaining professional learning that gave them *"spark and momentum."*

Many Heads of Faculty (10 out of 12), concluded that their professional learning in implementing reform had been very random and gained through anecdotal conversations and discussions with other Heads of Faculty, rather than planned professional learning with a deliberate focus on implementing curriculum reform. The professional learning for the implementation of mandated curriculum reform that the majority of Heads of Faculty were alluding to was more than learning about generic middle leadership; it was about being given the chance to learn about, articulate and share strategies for implementing reform with others. In the questionnaire, the majority of Heads of Faculty suggested that successful strategies in implementing reform included the facilitation of professional development with staff. In their responses they were not specific about the type of professional learning they would undertake with staff, but there was a distinct focus on searching for professional learning that would enable them to implement reform successfully. The literature about middle leaders focuses more on the need for Heads of Faculty to undertake professional learning themselves rather than be the personnel who lead it for their staff (Allum, 2005; Kotzur, 2005).

Creating a culture for curriculum reform

As indicated in Chapter Two there is a significant body of literature which stresses the need for middle leaders to create a shared culture for change (Daft, 2002; Graetz et al., 2002; Moore, 2007b; Senge, 2000). In this study it became obvious that the Heads of Faculty believed that a culture for reform required an understanding of the culture of the case study school in response to change. They felt there was little purpose in establishing a culture for reform, as the reform, *Tasmania: A State of Learning*, was mandated and non-negotiable. The Heads of Faculty in the study were not fully aware of the existing culture for change in the school, and in their responses articulated their understanding of a culture for reform.

The Heads of Faculty believed that in order to create a culture for reform they needed to:

- understand the structure for implementation i.e. timeline, benchmarks;
- sell the positives;
- get staff on board;
- allow for flexibility within the structure for reform to adapt to changed conditions, that is, speed up or slow down the process to meet individual needs of staff; and
- have clear review and reflection processes in place.

Despite the literature on educational reform stating that schools need to develop a culture for reform (Fullan, 2003; Sparks, 2003), Heads of Faculty participating in this study did not see this as a priority for themselves as leaders, but as something for which others were responsible as part of the bigger picture in the case study school. They acknowledged that there was an existing culture of servant leadership and followership in the case study school, and there was an expectation by all leaders that staff follow the vision of the reform. Having stated this, they felt anxious about those staff members who were reticent to accept the reform, or their interpretation and explanation of what the reform involved, and how it would impact on their faculties. Heads of Faculty agreed that people had the most important role to play in creating a culture for reform in the school. Daft (2002), Graetz et al. (2002), and Senge (2000) supported this stance, suggesting that the culture of any school is embedded in the people and their capacity and capability to accept change.

The literature also highlights the need for the establishment of a positive culture for change. Fullan (2003), Moore (2007b), Senge (2000), and Sparkes (2003) believe that positive relationships are imperative to the success of reform implementation. The Heads of Faculty expressed that there was a distinct need for, or lack of understanding of the case study school's culture for change. They felt there was a shared understanding of teamwork, = its effectiveness, and the positive outcomes it provided. They were concerned about the sense of negativity and cynicism which permeated some faculties partly due to the impact of long-standing staff members, busy teachers, who were not concerned with change and

did not engage in the significance of the reform. However, Heads of Faculty were aware of their role and what they were required to do, and were prepared to work with those staff who were positive in the hope that the "resisters" would eventually come along with the idea of reform and realise that it was not going away.

Research (see, for example, Blenkin et al., 1997; Hinton, 2004; Moore, 2007b) has highlighted the significance of leaders being sympathetic to collaborative practice in creating a culture for reform. Heads of Faculty responded to the need for collaboration as part of their strategy in implementing reform, however there was much more focus on delegation and shared practice, rather than on authentic collaborative practice as discussed in the literature. Individual Heads of Faculty created their own culture for reform in their particular learning area by using strong communication methods, clearly defined goals, and strategic plans for reform. Whilst there was little literature on Heads of Faculty and strategic plans for reform there was a general discussion of how "team composition" (Moore, 2007a, p. 2) influenced the culture of a faculty. In creating an individual faculty culture, some Heads of Faculty operated with a sense of positivity and encouragement, made provision for reflective feedback, and worked collaboratively and enthusiastically with their staff. The consistent element expressed by all Heads of Faculty was that a focus on "teamwork" was integral to successful reform implementation. A learning environment where the needs of all are met was well established in the case study school through a sense of belonging and community. This was reinforced in faculties with learning teams who worked in small groups as part of a larger faculty.

Research Question Two: What strategies do Heads of Faculty use in their leadership of curriculum reform, and how integral are these leadership strategies to the reform process?

Concerned with the implementation of the mandated reform, all Heads of Faculty wanted to know the "how" of the process. They had participated in the "who" to identify the key players in the implementation of the reform, they knew the "what" to be the implications for individual faculties of the mandated reform, the

"when" they understood as the timeline for the reform, and the "why" was concerned with the philosophical underpinnings of the mandated curriculum reform, but they were anxious to explore approaches and strategies that would assist them in ways of going about the reform.

From the questionnaire completed by all Heads of Faculty participating in the study, the following strategies were those they considered most important in implementing mandated curriculum reform.

Heads of Faculty expected consideration of:

- the significance of personnel—"identify key agents and personnel" (Female 1);[28]
- professional learning—"PD of various kinds" (Male 5);
- delegation—"delegate and empowerment" (Male 6);
- shared/distributed leadership—"share the responsibility" (Male 7);
- time—"release time for staff" (Female 4), "allow appropriate time" (Female 2);
- collaboration—"within the faculty discussion, sharing of ideas/successes/-failures/best practice" (Female 3);
- teams—"regular meetings and sub committees" (Male 1);
- communication—"consistently interpret and communicate change as it happens" (Female 1);
- culture/atmosphere for innovation/change—"one that allows staff to feel comfortable—meetings/email/training" (Female 2);
- unchartered territory/safe environment—"softly, softly—toe in the water" (Male 2) "manage change in clear steps and stages" (Female 1); and
- getting staff on board, convincing them there is something to sell to them—"get the department on side" (Male 7), "praising/rewarding teachers" (Female 4), "selling the positive outcomes of change" (Male 4).

When leading curriculum reform, all Heads of Faculty who completed a questionnaire (i.e., not including the researcher) recorded the strategies they used

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[28] Female 1 etc. was the code used to maintain the anonymity of each Head of Faculty.

in the implementation of reform, and identified how effective they had been for their faculty.

Table 3: Strategies employed by the Heads of Faculty.

Research Participant	Strategies Employed by the Participants in the Reform Process	The Effectiveness of the Strategies Employed
Female 1	Identify key agents and personnel	Creates teams and multiplies effects
	Encourage and facilitate professional development with people	Enables and grows leaders
	Consistently interpret and communicate change as it happens	Guides the team
	Continue to create a culture and environment conducive to change	More powerful environment in the long term
Female 2	An approach that allows staff to feel comfortable	Enables staff to feel confident with colleagues and students when introducing new or different programs
	Allow appropriate time	An indication of how important change in an area is, is how much time staff are given to learn about and deliver change
Female 3	Collaboration within the faculty – discussion, sharing of ideas, successes, failures, best practice	People feel empowered. They are part of what is implemented. Further change can occur because people feel as though they are involved in the process.
Female 4	Release time for staff	Gives legitimate time for writing and discussion
	Setting up teams to work on curriculum	Allows teachers to work collaboratively
	Praising and rewarding teachers	Affirms teachers and shows others what is going on
	Brief information sharing at regular intervals about the change	Keeps everyone up to date
Male 1	Examination of procedures at other schools	Increases knowledge base
	Documentation of rationale	Easier for understanding and feedback
	Clear outline of implementation and timetable	Provides checklist of progress
	Regular meetings and sub committees	Communication is improved
Male 2	Importance of staff selection and allocation	Energy, enthusiasm, positivity
	Sending staff representatives to external sources of information	They bring back the expertise and 'part own' the change from the beginning
	Be part of the development and writing	
	Softly, softly 'toe in the water' approach	People can handle 'baby' steps
	Faculty meetings for feedback	Spreads the word
Male 3	Demonstration	Can see application

	Encouragement	Stimulates ownership
Male 4	Mutual negotiation between faculty staff	All have ownership
	Investigation of processes adopted by similar schools to meet outcomes	Tried and true
	Selling the positive outcomes of change	Carrot rather than the stick
Male 5	Self reflection	Free "will' staff person decides to change
	Collegial	Believe and trust friends
	Inter-school moderation and communication	
	Reading papers, magazines, books	
	Professional Development of various kinds	
Male 6	Empowerment	Motivation and productivity
	Delegate	Good outcomes
Male 7	Share the responsibility	Becomes a team effort
	Delegate	Better outcomes – less negativity
	Get the faculty on side	Change is more fundamental
	Enthuse the faculty	Staff are 'aware' of the requirements
	Communicate	

Approaches to leading mandated curriculum reform

Although a great deal of the literature explored the difference between leadership and management (Fullan, 1991; Grace, 2002; Rosenfeld et al., 2008), the Heads of Faculty in the study school made little reference to the difference between the qualities of leadership and management. The majority of the responses dealt with matters pertaining to management, rather than the qualities of leadership or leadership style, approaches, or models. Many of the Heads of Faculty were unable to clearly articulate their own leadership model for dealing with curriculum reform. Those who had engaged in post-graduate studies or participated in professional learning sessions on leadership were able to articulate their preferred model of operation. Some operated from a transformational mental model, some from a transactional approach, and others from their own unarticulated approach.

The majority of Heads of Faculty responded to leading mandated curriculum reform from a practical, hands-on approach, rather than basing their implementation plan and strategies on a philosophical and specific theoretical approach to leadership. The literature focused more on the theoretical nature of change (Carless, 2004; Sawhney & Prandelli, 2000), rather than a practical,

hands-on approach that the Heads of Faculty were seeking in the implementation of mandated curriculum reform. The Heads of Faculty were able to articulate how they went about implementing reform, providing strategies and practical steps for implementing the reform, rather than providing a philosophical perspective about leadership style or approach. Some were unaware of terms such as transformational (Cranston, Ehrich & Morton, 2007; Davies, 2006; Fullan 2006), or transactional (Chin, 2007), in reference to leadership styles. They did express a need to have professional learning about models of leadership appropriate for leading mandated reform within the context of the case study school. The culture of the case study school was drawn from the school's Mission Statement, and some Heads of Faculty were able to articulate their leadership role in terms of some of the values expressed within the statement. In some of the questionnaire responses and interview discussions, examples of the values expressed in the case study school Mission Statement—excellence, individuality, justice, compassion and relationships—were shared in relation to leadership approaches by some of the Heads of Faculty.

Before the initial meetings with faculty staff, Heads of Faculty expressed a need to observe best practice of change within the case study school and beyond. Through formal and informal professional discussion, the Heads of Faculty felt it was imperative to be knowledgeable and informed about the impending mandated reform in order to confidently deliver the reform to their faculty members. This view was also supported in the literature (Moore, 2007b; O'Sullivan et al., 2008).

Clear lines of communication

The Heads of Faculty saw their primary role as being responsible for direct lines of communication to their teams of teachers. Jones (2006) concurs with the view that "coaching, mentoring and good communication, with feedback at all levels, are skills needed to motivate team members" (p. 5). Effective communication was a theme expressed by all participants in the questionnaires, interviews and personal stories. From my own observations, Heads of Faculty who demonstrated energy, a sense of purpose, positive body language and a sense of *we are all in this together so let's make the most of it* appeared to have less challenges with the initial stages of the reform and bringing staff on board. Three of the Heads of

Faculty expressed in anecdotal comments, and in their interviews, that a *gloom and doom* approach did not endear staff to the mandated curriculum reform.

Heads of Faculty found that using clear communication, and setting clear, achievable goals with all staff were successful strategies in the reform process. Heads of Faculty who provided verbal encouragement and support considered these to be key elements in gaining positive reactions from their staff in the process of reform. Each leader believed that working together with his/her team in a faculty where each staff member was affirmed and empowered to undertake specific tasks and/or steps in the reform process gave the staff ownership of the reform. From the interview transcripts it became apparent that Heads of Faculty who openly shared their own concerns and anxieties with their staff enabled their staff to realise that the Heads of Faculty, too, were exploring the strengths of the mandated curriculum reform.

All Heads of Faculty expressed in some way the necessity for clear lines of communication during all steps of the reform process. Heads of Faculty who already had positive communication systems in place did not find the challenge of implementing reform so demanding. The literature concurred that the use of personal means of communication in smaller faculties, as opposed to e-mail or similar in larger faculties, seemed to create more harmonious reactions to the impending mandated curriculum reform (Allum, 2005; Kotzur, 2005). Many Heads of Faculty commented that, from the outset, the communication of the reform was clearly articulated to firstly themselves, by the Deputy Principal Learning and Teaching, and then to the entire staff, via staff meetings and workshops, and finally by themselves within their faculties.

Where clear lines of communication were not evident in faculties due to the lack of understanding by the individual Head of Faculty about the post Year 10 curriculum reform, staff seemed more disgruntled and unsettled about taking the reform on board. Some Heads of Faculty used a very *softly, softly* approach, leading teachers *step by step* to the reform, whilst others just went to meetings stating that it *had to be done* so *just do it.*

Ownership of the reform

Ownership of the reform by both the Heads of Faculty and his/her staff was a key strategy expressed by the majority of the Heads of Faculty. From a position of understanding the reform from the outset, to implementing the reform in their faculties, ownership featured strongly in all their responses.

The first stage of ownership was enforced, because the reform was mandated by the Tasmanian Government. The reform and its implementation were non-negotiable. The Heads of Faculty were the middle leaders, together with the Deputy Principal Learning and Teaching, who were responsible for its implementation. This group of middle leaders had no choice but to own it.

The second stage was taking all staff through the process and bringing them to a shared understanding so that they could, in some way, own the reform. This stage was where the major challenges for the Heads of Faculty were encountered. They clearly wanted their staff to come on board and embrace the reform without any resistance, and it was their role to devise implementation plans to reassure and support staff in the process. "While the whole school initiative was successfully launched by senior leaders with middle leaders, the real challenge lay with the middle leader selling the initiative to their faculty colleagues, some of whom were resistant to any change" (Moore, 2007b, p. 2).

The third stage was working with the staff to empower them in the reform process, leading to ownership in their own learning and teaching programs and classrooms. The literature (Conley, 1996; Graetz et al., 2002; Snowdon & Gorton, 1998) agrees that empowering teachers creates ownership of reform. Some Heads of Faculty took total control of the process of implementation, becoming the fount of all knowledge. Others lingered and waited until other leaders emerged in their faculty and began owning the reform and its implementation. Several used delegation, disguised as shared and distributed leadership, to empower staff in the process, and then claimed it as ownership.

The fourth and final stage occurred when the reform was implemented and staff came to realise that it *"wasn't going away,"* and harnessed their professionalism to embrace the reform in order to provide quality outcomes for their students.

Research Question Three: What challenges do Heads of Faculty face in the implementation of curriculum reform, and how do they respond to them?

The results of the study, and the literature (Bissell, 2002; MacGregor-Burns, 1997), suggest that there are multi-faceted dimensions to how people react and respond to reform. Any change will create new roles and evoke a variety of emotions for leaders and teachers, no matter how many strategies or approaches are in their repertoire, as the teaching profession is not just about planning and organization, it is, as the literature suggests, emotional work (Conners & D'Arbon, 1997; Fullan, 2001).

In the data, Heads of Faculty identified the following challenges they had encountered in the implementation of mandated curriculum reform:

- resistance, cynicism, negativity and lack of co-operation from staff;
- perceived need for reform;
- size of the faculty;
- failure of previous mandated reform;
- time limitations, resources and pressure on staff with already heavy work loads; and
- the influence of the National Curriculum.

Each of these challenges will be discussed in the following sections.

Resistance to reform

The Heads of Faculty, in the majority of instances, expressed concern that the impact of reform on leaders and followers brought about emotional responses from many, and a sense of exhaustion from constant change and the uncertainty it brought with it. Uncertainty, together with a cynicism, negativity, and resistance, took a personal toll on the leaders when constantly confronted by this from some members of their faculty. Literature has supported the concerns of the Heads of Faculty (Bissell, 2002: Blenkin et al., 1997: Daft, 2002: Loader, 2003). Strategies they employed to assist staff through the reform process were varied and included

giving key teachers time to digest the reform, involving them in the reform process from the beginning, and actively listening to their concerns. Some adopted the role of sales executive, convincing staff of the benefits of the reform. Others used a softly, softly approach and found that this was a key factor in implementing the reform successfully. Setting realistic timelines and short-term goals enabled Heads of Faculty to manage the reform within the time constraints of their already busy schedules.

Resistance to reform is discussed in the literature by a number of researchers (Blenkin et al., 1997; Daft, 2002; Loader, 2003, Moore, 2007b). There were faculty staff members who came on board from the beginning, obviously those who enjoyed, or believed in, elements of the reform. There were those who were compliant from a sense of duty or respect for the Head of Faculty. Some sat and listened and then became silent resisters, whilst others were vocal resisters. Dealing with people and their emotions was a challenging aspect each of the Heads of Faculty experienced in the implementation process.

Perceived need for reform

When leading mandated curriculum reform, the dilemma for five middle leaders was their personal belief in the appropriateness of the proposed change and how they coped with leading the reform. Four Heads of Faculty expressed their personal response to the mandated reform in a less than positive manner, however their professionalism and understanding of the reform saw them fulfil the reform process within their faculty. Unlike the situation in the case study school, the literature focused more on reform which was internally imposed, rather than that which was externally imposed (Moore 2007b; O'Sullivan et al., 2008). Those who were strongly opposed to the reform were true to their own philosophy, and chose to vacate their middle leadership position.

Some Heads of Faculty and their staff believed that the reform was not going to happen. They chose to *sit back and wait*, and others commented that *I won't know how until I know what.* The Heads of Faculty who just wanted to get on with it and get it over with were more pragmatic, stating, for example, *it is going to happen so let's just get on and do it.* Regardless of the 'resistance movement' in

each faculty, Heads of Faculty were faced with the challenge of thinking of ways to engage their staff in the reform process, and, *although there may be some people who are resistant to change most teachers will be brought on board if you can convince them it is good and worthwhile. And let's face it, if the change isn't good and worthwhile, why bother!*

Each Head of Faculty saw this barrier as the one that posed the most difficulties for them. They found working with negative staff challenging, and despite agreeing that leadership is not about popularity, they still wanted to be affirmed in their role by having the cooperation of their staff. The literature supports the importance of building relationships, making connections and creating a culture and community where leaders are affirmed in their roles (Healy et al., 2001; Sergiovanni, 2000; Wenger et al., 2002). Heads of Faculty who were assured and confident in their role were not as concerned about negativity from their staff and were convinced of the positive aspects of the reform in its implementation in the case study school.

Size of the faculty

Whilst there appeared to be little literature on how the size of the faculty influenced the strategies employed by Heads of Faculty in the reform process, it was a major factor influencing the implementation of reform in the case study school. Jones (2006) agreed that "factors such as the size of the department or team, the blend of staff within the team, the location of rooms . . . can be tensions . . . in managing change" (p. 5). The size of the faculty influenced the success or otherwise of the communication, and the relationship the Head of Faculty had with the staff also had an impact on the successful implementation of the reform. In larger faculties, where staff members were dispersed physically throughout the school, the sheer numbers precluded the Head of Faculty from engaging in regular one-on-one conversations with staff. In contrast, Heads of Faculty where numbers in their faculties were smaller, and staff were concentrated in one area, had on-going, daily, professional relationships with their staff. In the core faculties of Language, Mathematics, Science, SOSE, and Religious Education, this appeared to be the situation, despite the valiant efforts by the Heads of Faculty to dialogue with their staff as often as time permitted. Heads of Faculty

with a smaller staff used the time available to have more informal discussions with their staff, whilst Heads of Faculty with larger staff relied mainly on formal meeting time for the dissemination of faculty information and curriculum issues.

Leading teams of teachers in the reform process was far more challenging for some Heads of Faculty, because there was less opportunity for those with large faculties to engage in informal discussion or conversation with their staff than those in faculties with smaller staff numbers. The majority of the Heads of Faculty noted that the size of the faculty influenced greatly the outcome of implementing mandated curriculum reform. The "core" faculties in the case study school—Languages, Studies in the Society and Environment, Mathematics, Science, and Religion—had much larger numbers of staff than the "marginal" faculties of Inclusive Learning, The Arts, Health and Physical Education, and Senior Secondary Learning, so personal communication was very challenging for those Heads of Faculty. The available time for Heads of Faculty in larger faculties to speak with each member of the faculty was limited, and not time efficient.

The location of staff in staff rooms also played an important part in the collegial discussion and faculty specific professional support. The case study school provided staff facilities referred to as "Study Bays" where teachers had a desk and spent their time on the preparation and assessment of student work, as well as other related teaching and pastoral care issues. Within these Study Bays the teacher mix was not based on a specific faculty, but was multi-disciplinary. For example, an English teacher could be sitting next to a Mathematics teacher, Food and Nutrition teacher, or Information Technology teacher. This teaching discipline mix provided opportunities for supportive collegial dialogue about more general learning and teaching matters, but was not conducive to faculty specific professional dialogue.

There were other staff areas in the case study school which had a faculty focus, and the Heads of Faculty responsible for these faculty specific areas were more positive in their responses about the implementation of reform than their colleagues who had staff distributed over a number of areas. Examples of such faculties were the Faculty of The Arts and the Health and Physical Education Faculty, providing Heads of Faculty with an efficient means of communication,

simply by being able to speak with the majority of the faculty staff in the one location. For larger faculties, staff members were distributed throughout six Study Bays, and the Heads of these faculties participating in the study stated that electronic communication was the most efficient mode of communication. The faculties that had a staff area common to all staff from that faculty enjoyed a more united approach to the implementation of the mandated curriculum reform. Staff members were generally in the one place all day and informally discussed aspects of the reform as a staff group, brought their ideas, questions, or concerns, to faculty meetings, and engaged in debate which had originated in their faculty staff area. From a personal perspective, as a Head of Faculty that had one faculty area, this informal discussion over morning tea and lunch, or in a mutual spare lesson, allayed many of the individual concerns because these were able to be clarified before the formally scheduled larger faculty meeting.

The larger the faculty, the larger the number of personalities there were to deal with the reform (Bissell, 2002; Moore, 2007b; USSBA, 2003). At times, some Heads of Faculty felt under siege by the number of questions, factions, and lack of cooperation, in their larger meeting. Three of the large "core" faculties chose to split their larger staff numbers into smaller groups to discuss the implications and implementation process.

Prior failed mandated curriculum reform

Prior experience of change in specific schools was explored by some researchers (Conners & D'Arbon, 1997; Moore, 2007b). Tasmania had experienced a great deal of educational reform at all levels of education over the 20 years preceding this study. Firstly, in the experience of the Heads of Faculty in the case study school, there was the National Curriculum Key Learning Areas, stages and outcomes for the eight learning areas in the 90s. These were woven into existing curricula throughout the state in all schools and colleges. More recently, in 2002, came the introduction of the Essential Learnings (ELs) into secondary schools. This was a major reform for all schools, however, as a non-government school, the case study school was not required to adopt the ELs philosophy, and staff had the opportunity to work slowly and cautiously through all elements of the Essential Learnings. Curriculum leaders and teachers within the school had the

autonomy to take from the ELs what we considered worthwhile and integrated this into our Year 7–10 curriculum. Some Heads of Faculty did not embrace the philosophical basis of the ELs, and mentioned this on many occasions in their responses during this study. Elements of the ELs were successful in many schools, and continue to be part of the curriculum, however the use of them is no longer mandated by the Tasmanian Education Department. The majority of the Heads of Faculty were cynical about the perceived failure of previous mandated curriculum reform, and they agreed that this had a huge effect on the reaction of their staff to yet another Tasmanian Government mandated curriculum reform. That this was also noted by their colleagues in other educational institutions affirmed their cynicism.

Time allocation and resources

The teachers in the case study school were extremely busy, and worked very hard in their profession. Heads of Faculty felt that by asking staff to take on extra duties, which included the understanding and implementation of the reform, they were placing too many demands on their teachers' time. Concerns regarding the busy nature of teachers' work have also been expressed in the literature (Bascia, & Hargreaves, 2000; Poppleton & Williamson, 2004).

Heads of Faculty felt they needed a number of resources provided by the case study school in order to implement curriculum reform successfully. These included:

- regular meeting time;
- appropriate time allocation;
- sharing of best practice and ideas;
- money;
- institutional backing;
- Leadership Team support;
- commitment from key people; and
- opportunities to visit other schools.

The Heads of Faculty considered that the case study school should have provided time for middle leaders and key staff when reform was to be implemented. This was not only in relation to time-tabling additional spaces for collegial dialogue and planning, but also time for implementation, so that any new reform was not rushed into too quickly and without proper consideration. They wanted the Leadership Team to wait and watch what other schools and colleges were doing so they were not required to do a great deal of planning only to have the reform pulled out from under their feet.

Resourcing, such as additional time allocation for Heads of Faculty, was their major concern and they requested this from the case study school. Already overworked Heads of Faculty were anxious about how they would find time to devote themselves to such a major curriculum reform, as well as provide adequate support for their faculty staff in the implementation process. Pastoral care for staff was alluded to in the comments, as the Heads of Faculty were concerned about staff members who were asked to do so many additional duties in what was already a very busy role, but within a rewarding school workplace/context. In both the literature (Moore, 2007b; Rosenfeld et al., 2008) and the responses, there appeared to be support for implementing mandated curriculum reform from the leadership within the school.

Influence of the National Curriculum

Despite the National Curriculum being very close to implementation,[29] there were only four Heads of Faculty who commented on the significance of this major impending curriculum reform. The four Heads of Faculty were all concerned that we would embrace the mandated Tasmanian curriculum reform, and then, within a short timeframe, have to change completely to implement the National Curriculum. Comments made by these Heads of Faculty suggested that, had the Tasmanian reform been *"sold"* in light of the impending National Curriculum reform they would have responded more favourably, because they saw the opportunity to *"kill two birds with one stone."* Their thinking indicated that they could put the implementation of the Tasmanian reform on hold and wait until the

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[29] This was scheduled for pilot programs for Years 7–10 in 2010, and Years 11 and 12 in 2012.

National Curriculum was to be implemented. These Heads of Faculty felt the Tasmanian Government had tried to impose the reform too quickly, bringing in major state-wide reform before the National Curriculum expectations had been clearly stated. This also influenced how some of their staff responded to the Tasmanian reform, as they questioned the timing of the local reform in light of national reform.

Research Question Four: What forms of collaborative leadership, if any, emerged during the process of implementing reform?

Working with teams of teachers in the implementation of curriculum reform, the Heads of Faculty articulated their approach to bringing the reform to reality within their faculties. They commented that they were not able to work alone in the reform process, and sought collaborative, distributed and shared leadership strategies to provide the smoothest transition in the implementation of the mandated curriculum reform.

The majority of the Heads of Faculty commented on their use of collaborative strategies in the implementation of curriculum reform. Comments such as *teachers tended to work in pairs or threes to develop material . . . there has to be collaborative leadership . . . otherwise I will walk away at the end of the term and nobody will feel ownership,* were predominant in responses to how Heads of Faculty employed collaborative leadership. The literature also pointed to the significance of collaboration in the implementation of change (Hinton, 2004; Moore, 2007b).

Other Heads of Faculty saw the necessity of working with a range of leadership personnel in the case study school as important in successful implementation of mandated curriculum reform. The Post Year 10 Coordinator suggested that *in implementing the current mandated curriculum reform there has been collaboration between leaders at different levels . . . .. The Deputy Principal (Learning & Teaching) and the Faculty Heads have been key people in implementing these reforms.*

Some of the Heads of Faculty worked only with key personnel in their faculty, relying on their skills to work collaboratively with the other staff members who were perhaps not so positive. *Yes . . . particularly with the key colleagues who embraced the changes at an early stage. These people brought their own ideas/directions and provided much needed energy, inspiration and reflective feedback. They were often 'bridges' to other staff. These individuals also gained significant confidence/stature from leading the change process.*

Some Heads of Faculty in smaller multi-disciplinary faculties worked in a way that could get the practical side of reform completed. They got their staff to do the preliminary work and they took on the role of "coordinator" of the reform -*I coordinate the responses, but all staff collaborate to provide material to be coordinated/collated in the project. The collaborative approach makes the change easier for others in the team to own.* This was supported in the literature by Moore (2007a), who suggested that one size does not fit all faculties, and that individual faculties would find the way of working with their teams to ensure successful implementation of reform.

It was interesting to note that there was great variation of understanding of the meaning of the word "collaboration" as some Heads of Faculty saw it as delegation, others interpreted it as distributing the roles (Bennett, 2008), whilst others had not engaged in any form of collaborative practice. *Collaborative leadership is essential because the nominated leader—the Head of Faculty cannot micro manage that many people. Therefore bringing people together, workable teams are important and this is when it works well. However, the risk is that sharing leadership has more room for failure if the group doesn't work well.* In this case the Head of Faculty focused and relied more on shared leadership rather than collaborative leadership in a large "core" faculty.

In faculties where large numbers at each year level required units of work to be completed for curriculum documents, the Heads of Faculty put their staff into specific year levels groups, and got them to devise the new curriculum elements and complete the task. The Head of Faculty, in this case, was the "overseer." *The initial work was done by the whole team working together to update the units . . . then one particular teacher took on the task to bring all of the work of the*

different teachers into one unified product. The two parts are essential—if it is all one person's work, the change may not by adopted by the whole group. The literature concurs that the notion of team composition in faculties is significant in the implementation of reform (Moore, 2007a; Rosenfeld et al., 2008).

Some Heads of Faculties faced challenges with the entire concept of collaborative leadership, and the case study school structures made it difficult for some faculties to engage in authentic collaborative practice. The faculty staff was not faculty specific staff so their focus was split and they needed to make a decision about which faculty they would work in for the purposes of curriculum reform. The faculty staff was not constant, so Heads of Faculty were faced with a situation in which *ever changing teams of teachers makes it difficult to experience true collaborative leadership as the team spirit does not enjoy continuity.*

Education systems

In 2003, influenced by the impending national reforms for post Year 10 students in Australia, the Tasmanian Government began planning for a state-wide reform of Senior Secondary Colleges and the Technical and Further Education institutions. The reforms were slowly being introduced into these institutions, mandated by the government. To date the case study school has been involved in the state-wide and national reforms, largely in the Vocational Education curriculum and programs. Gradually the influence of further state-wide and national curriculum reforms will require further change to the existing reforms already taken on board in schools since 2003. From a school perspective, there seemed little or no choice in whether to implement the mandated reform. Fully aware of the need to prepare for the impending mandated reform, the case study school had support structures in place for curriculum personnel and staff. The school was very well supported by leadership structures and the literature supported this strategy for implementing reform (Fullan, 2001; Moore, 2007a).

Given all the possible information sharing, professional learning, and clear communication of the impending reforms, the Heads of Faculty were those responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the reforms in the classrooms. It is at this level that the tension of consistency occurred for the Heads of Faculty, as

we all came from different levels of experience, knowledge, and personal factors, when it came to working with teachers in leading change (Starratt, 1994). Regardless of the academic level of those involved in reform, emotions play a role (Bissell, 2002; Fullan, 2001). This was true for teachers and leaders at all levels. Feelings of loss, resistance, excitement, and anger, were some of the emotions people experience when confronted with yet another reform, and it needed to be acknowledged that the vocation of teaching and leadership involves emotional work (Conners & D'Arbon, 1997; Fullan, 2001). The support structures for Heads of Faculty leading mandated curriculum reform in the school needed to take this diversity of experience and emotion into account, as there were those who required and sought more professional and or pastoral support than others.

As a consequence of the implementation process within the school, the roles for the Heads of Faculty changed. The Heads were challenged to implement a major curriculum initiative, sometimes moving them out of their comfort zone to embrace change, and accept an additional workload. Some Heads of Faculty spoke of realising a sense of alienation in their role at times when they were required to lead curriculum reform (Cranston & Ehrich, 2004). They were dealing with their staff, and their usual daily duties, whilst coming to terms with the reform. The support structures, whether they were sourced from outside the school, offered by colleagues or the Leadership Team in the case study school, allayed some of the fears, and made the pathway for reform a smoother transition within the system.

The data strongly suggested that Heads of Faculty were extremely busy middle leaders in the case study school, and that they would welcome more time release, particularly at times when major mandated curriculum reform was required to be implemented. This type of allowance has huge resource ramifications for schools, as staffing and financial constraints impact on the entire school.

Leadership implications

Regardless of the type of curriculum reform, be it either internally or externally imposed, Heads of Faculty were the personnel responsible for its implementation. It was essential that middle leaders were equipped with the leadership qualities

that enabled them to lead in the context of their own school and to work with their staff to create a positive culture for the impending reform. Through observation, professional learning and exemplary practice, Heads of Faculty needed to devise a plan that provided the most appropriate "blue print" for successful implementation in their own faculty. The Heads of Faculty had the overview of the impending mandated reform and the shared vision that enabled them to best discern the strategies for successful implementation of reform with their own staff. Individual contexts and the opportunities and challenges that they presented were different.

Despite sometimes feeling like the meat in the sandwich in a school, placed, as they are, between the teaching staff and the Leadership Team (Moore, 2007b), Heads of Faculty needed to be resilient and able to harness all experiences which arose, both negative and positive, to create the best outcome for all students and staff. Working collaboratively with a range of personnel created a sense of teamwork within a community where clear lines of communication and a sensitivity to the needs of all were recognised. Perhaps the most useful tool in a Head of Faculty toolbox is a sense of humour for breaking the tension in what is sometimes a difficult time for all in the reform process.

Conclusion

The role of the Head of Faculty is complex and so is the leadership of mandated curriculum reform. The role of leader requires knowledge, skills and support all packaged within a given context, the case study school. The way each of the Heads of Faculty relied on their knowledge, leadership skills and levels of support differed one from the other. There were, however, some communal elements and strategies which created a more positive culture and smoother pathway for the reform journey.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

"The Head of Department position is a critical role in any school. Heads of Department are pivotal, as they work with and supervise closely the teacher of the department, and are responsible for all that the department does—its teaching, its relationship with students and parents, the way it promotes its subject and the very nature of the teaching and learning itself." (Allum, 2005, p. 14)

Introduction

This study began from my own experience as a Head of Faculty and from an interest in my own leadership development, particularly in the area of leading curriculum reform. From the initial literature review and data collection phases of the study, I had learnt a great deal about my own and other's leadership styles and qualities, and about the way people responded to the challenges facing Heads of Faculty in the area of leadership. Being a participant-researcher also gave me cause to reflect upon my own leadership practice, in light of the experiences expressed by other Heads of Faculty. From my initial interest, I was able to ascertain the potential for a case study approach to researching successful implementation of mandated curriculum reform.

The purpose of this study was to explore how Heads of Faculty lead mandated curriculum reform. This chapter brings together the narratives from Chapter Five and the findings and discussion from Chapter Six to present recommendations and conclusions about how Heads of Faculty lead mandated curriculum reform.

Using the protocols of case study and narrative inquiry to collect and report upon the data for the study made me aware of the challenges involved in the process, particularly as I collected the data from my Head of Faculty colleagues in the case

study school. One of the challenging and yet rewarding features of the data collection process was that a relationship with each of the participants already existed and close attention needed to be observed to the protocols at the beginning of, during, and at the end of each stage of the data collection process. The data collected in this study, its analysis and summary in previous chapters, illustrated the individuality of each participant, and yet the collective wisdom of a critical group of middle leaders in any school in which a curriculum team was working together in the best interests of its students to implement a mandated curriculum reform.

The findings generated by this study regarding how Heads of Faculty lead mandated curriculum reform caused me to reflect upon the way, I and my colleague Heads of Faculty implemented the framework of mandated curriculum reform, *Tasmania: A State of Learning.*

This study confirmed that the leadership of any change in schools is a challenge. For Heads of Faculty the added dimension of being in the middle level of a school leadership structure makes it an even greater challenge. The relational challenge of the personal dimension of reform, the leadership and implementation of yet another change, and the lack of professional learning available to Heads of Faculty when required to lead change added to the pressure already busy middle leaders encountered in their daily practice.

For many Heads of Faculty in this study, participation provided an opportunity to reflect upon their leadership style, approach, strategies, and action plan, for the implementation of mandated reform. From my own observations, I believe that some Heads of Faculty benefited from being involved in the study, because their involvement gave them time to stop, think and reflect on the reform process. They spoke informally about how they were grateful that they could articulate their views on leading mandated curriculum reform. There was, very much, a sense of "We [Heads of Faculty] are all in this together, regardless of which faculty we lead." As a group of professional middle leaders, we had been entrusted with a leadership role and it was our job to go about finding the most appropriate approach to leading this reform, whilst being able to sell, in a positive manner, the impending reform to our staff.

The negative attitude expressed by some of the Heads of Faculty and their staff needed to be considered and addressed, and this was publicly acknowledged in some faculties where not only did the followers resist the change, but also their leaders. There was very much a sense of resignation that the reform was mandated and had to be implemented. There was no choice for leaders or followers. Those Heads of Faculty who were not convinced of the philosophical underpinnings or value of the reform waited, watched, and then chose to leave their leadership roles.

This research did determine and reveal that very little research has been carried out with a specific focus on middle leaders, particularly Heads of Faculty in an Australian and, more specifically, Tasmanian context. The literature in relation to exploring "Leading from the Middle" (NCSL) which does exist largely derives from research undertaken in the United Kingdom, and is mostly about the role of the Head of Faculty and the qualities Heads of Faculty need in order to conduct an effective subject department. The majority of this research reflects leadership styles and approaches, strategies, and the need for professional learning which would be most conducive to the successful implementation of school improvement requirements, but there is little literature which specifically discussed the day to day implementation of mandated curriculum reform.

This study also provided a more detailed understanding of the dilemma of being a Head of Faculty as a middle leaders in the school leadership structure. The middle leader is frequently pulled in many directions by their staff and the senior leaders in the school. By positioning myself as participant and researcher alongside my Head of Faculty colleagues, I was able to experience first hand the tension between the level of professional responsibility and leadership in the school. Being positive and supportive of mandated reform in the eyes of the senior leaders, whilst presenting the philosophy of the reform in a positive manner to staff, certainly created a "meat in the sandwich" feeling. There was pressure from above [the senior leaders] to deal with reform in a professional way, and pressure from below [the teaching staff] to justify yet another change.

The findings of this study confirmed, but also extended, and provided further insight into, the role of a Head of Faculty and how those in this role perceived

leadership in light of leading mandated curriculum reform. The Heads of Faculty in the study felt they were pressured to make the reform work in their faculties, despite their levels of capability and capacity to lead the implementation of the reform. It highlighted the gaps in professional learning for Heads of Faculty, particularly given the lack of specific professional learning with a leadership of reform focus. It brought to the surface the diversity of understanding by individuals about leadership styles and approaches.

One of the most significant functional and practical elements of leading mandated curriculum reform that was openly shared by all Heads of Faculty was how the size of individual faculties impacted on communication and their capacity to successfully achieve a one-on-one approach to staff during the reform process. These elements they deemed essential for successful leadership of the reform. The size of the faculty and the number of staff for which they were responsible was an obvious concern of the Heads of Faculty and they expressed how they found the sheer number of staff they had to deal with, especially as they were allocated to a number of different locations within the case study school, a difficulty and barrier to the successful implementation of curriculum reform. The issues of size and composition of faculties as critical factors impacting upon the leadership of reform by Heads of Faculty are significant ones to arise from this study. They are issues that appear to have been under-researched and point to the broader need for more in-depth research that explores the leadership by Heads of Faculty in diverse contexts. Furthermore, earlier research did not investigate the impact of size of faculty and its affect on the relationship between Head of Faculty and faculty staff, the lack of specific leadership professional development for middle leaders, the securing of specific strategies for implementing reform, and harnessing the positives in the reform.

When researching and studying leadership in schools during this study, the literature and research about school leadership most commonly referred to principals, rather than middle leaders and more particularly Heads of Faculty. The literature also provided successful leadership strategies for principals rather than strategies for successful leadership of mandated curriculum reform by Heads of Faculty. Principals and Heads of Faculty employed some significantly

different leadership strategies, as well as some very similar leadership strategies, for leading change. The Heads of Faculty in the case study school felt that the principal and Leadership Team dealt more with the bigger picture vision of the school and school improvement, and Heads of Faculty were required to deal with the more specific implementation strategies. The participants in this study highlighted the following strategies and their effectiveness for teachers and Heads of Faculty in the implementation of mandated curriculum reform.

Strategies for middle leaders [Heads of Faculty] leading curriculum reform arising from the study

The Heads of Faculty agreed that they needed to:

- create a culture for reform in their individual faculty even if one does not exist in the school;
- package the reform in step by step, manageable parts;
- work with all the positives of the reform and the positive faculty members;
- be a positive Head of Faculty rather than present the reform from a gloom and doom perspective;
- undertake focussed professional learning about leading reform, specifically for Heads of Faculty, key staff and teacher learning team leaders;
- keep everyone informed of all curriculum developments, such as an abridged version of the National Curriculum;
- be given adequate time allocation for the implementation of wide-spread curriculum reform;
- have teams of teachers in the one physical location for practical and professional reasons where communication both formal and informal can be enacted;
- acknowledge, accept and embrace individuality and diversity within the Head of Faculty team;
- devote specific time to the big picture school vision and mission, so the reform implementation is innovative not just reactionary or laboured;

- consider creating smaller faculties and teams of teachers, by splitting larger core faculties.

This list of considerations expressed by the Heads of Faculty indicated that there were a number of steps in the process of leading reform that could have been put in place in the case study school. They felt that by addressing these points successful implementation of future reforms may occur.

It became very clear during all stages of the study that there is a need for professional learning that focuses on authentic leadership styles and approaches, as opposed to leadership management and administration. There was general acknowledgement that a great deal of time in the role of a Head of Faculty is devoted to the daily managerial tasks. Some Heads of Faculty appreciated the professional learning provided by the case study school and outside agencies that focused on leadership in a broader context, and they agreed this assisted them in deepening their understanding of leadership styles and approaches.

There was a consensus amongst the Heads of Faculty that there needed to have been specific time allocated to ensure a deeper understanding of the big picture and vision of the case study school. Some Heads of Faculty felt there was more of an insular focus and interest in their own faculty, rather than how reform impacted on the entire school. The Heads felt a desire to be protective and fiercely loyal to their own staff, rather than seeing the mandated reform from a whole school perspective.

If, as Allum (2005) suggested, being a Head of Department [Faculty] is about loyalty and respect (p. 14), it is a further challenge for Heads of Faculty who do not support the curriculum reform. Those Heads of Faculty in the study who did not support the reform were faced with the dilemma of not being seen as potentially disloyal to the Leadership Team, the mandated reform itself, but more importantly, untrue to their own beliefs. Other sources of research provided some strategic plans for curriculum implementation for Heads of Faculty who were supportive of the initiatives, but for those in the study who did not support the Tasmanian mandated reform they chose to follow their own beliefs and leave their leadership role.

Throughout the research process and in the implementation of reform it became clear that Heads of Faculty also needed to be great sales people. Many of them discussed the challenge of being able to "sell" the reform to their staff. Couched in broad terms of the benefits of the reform, such as the provision of positive outcomes for students, any professional educator would easily "buy" the product. This was clearly not the case in many faculties, because Heads of Faculty were concerned about how they could use their leadership skills and strategies to present a product to their staff which would provide quality assurance for successful reform. The provision of professional learning with a focus on strategic planning and implementation may be useful in enabling Heads of Faculty to engage in the "hard sell" approach necessary for successful implementation of mandated reform.

Creating a culture for change in schools features in much of the literature, however there was a concern expressed by Heads of Faculty about how they create a culture for change in their own faculties, especially when they have been faced with so much previous mandated reform which has not always been well-received or accepted within their faculty. Some Heads of Faculty in the study empowered their staff by sharing the lead in the implementation process. Others delegated tasks to their staff, and some worked collaboratively in the process to ensure the process of implementation was inclusive of everyone in their faculty. Heads of Faculty who worked alongside their staff, modelling their chosen strategies for successful implementation, rather than placing demands on their staff that they were not prepared to do, found the process more conducive to positive outcomes.

In the study, a combination of questionnaire, interview and personal story sharing of experiences of the reform process gave the Heads of Faculty the opportunity to articulate their views on leadership and reform and more readily accept what was occurring. The Heads of Faculty were able to allay and decrease their sense of fear and apprehension about the reform process by engaging in collegial discussion.

The study affirmed the significance and professionalism of Heads of Faculty in the reform process. It also acknowledged the professional relationship of Heads of

Faculty with senior leaders and staff. It made explicit the collegial professional networks and support for Heads of Faculty in their own school. Strategies and plans for implementing future reforms were more explicit and they were able to articulate examples of how they used previous experiences to make this particular experience of reform more positive, providing their own learning and discovery rather than participating in organised professional learning about leading reform.

What makes a great Faculty?

Whilst the literature suggested there are generic qualities which make a successful Head of Faculty in a successful faculty, this study revealed that there are no blueprints for any group of Heads of Faculty, or their faculties, as each are unique within their given context. Kotzur (2005), however, suggested that the following elements can "make an average or even good subject department great:

1. teamwork;
2. quality;
3. continuous learning;
4. respect;
5. optimism;
6. resilience;
7. self-awareness;
8. empathy;
9. communication;
10. leadership." (p. 31)

This study also concurred that these elements, whilst generic to any faculty context, were conducive to the successful implementation of mandated reform. It is, however, important to understand that Heads of Faculty are individuals, and to acknowledge the uniqueness of Heads of Faculty and their faculty.

Implications and recommendations

There are many implications and recommendations from this study, most dealing with how Heads of Faculty lead mandated curriculum reform. From the

perspective of the Heads of Faculty, these included implications and recommendations for the case study school Leadership Team, school staff, education systems, policy makers and educationalists.

For the Case Study School and Leadership Team

The Leadership Team in the case study school is in a position to provide on-going professional and personal support for Heads of Faculty, and to maximise the role of the Head of Faculty, by:

- providing support structures for individual and collective faculties;
- resourcing the professional learning of Heads of Faculty;
- affirming the work of the Heads of Faculty;
- acknowledging the uniqueness of each faculty and its staff; and
- recognising the unique leadership position of Heads of Faculty—the conduit between the senior leadership structure and staff.

For the Heads of Faculty

Heads of Faculty are middle leaders in a position to provide on-going professional support for faculty staff, and to maximise their role in the implementation of mandated curriculum reform, by:

- attending to their own professional learning;
- devising stronger and more effective means of communication between faculty staff and Head of Faculty and the Head of Faculty team;
- understanding the philosophy underpinning mandated curriculum reform;
- working with teams of teachers throughout the reform process;
- providing a positive culture for change in their faculty;
- being positive leaders in the reform process;
- exploring alternative leadership styles and approaches; and
- using strategies with a "best fit" outcome for staff.

For Systems

Education systems need to provide adequate support to those responsible for leading mandated curriculum reform, and allocate suitable budgets and resources for such programs. Without adequate support, the work of Heads of Faculty is likely to suffer, and, as a consequence, affect the positive outcomes within the given faculty.

Systems can provide appropriate support to Heads of Faculty by:

- providing and funding appropriate adequate and quality professional learning for middle leaders;
- organising support networks for Heads of Faculty who are experiencing similar challenges with the implementation of mandated curriculum; and
- undertaking groundwork and consultation on reforms themselves (philosophy, implementation) before mandating them, to achieve more likelihood of success.

For Policy Makers

Policy makers are responsible for designing and introducing mandated curriculum reform, and they need to consider the following in the process:

- the needs of specific schools;
- the need for change itself;
- the students, the staff, the wider local and state community;
- the implementation time-frame; and
- the personal dimension of change.

Furthermore policy makers need to be mindful of the impact of state-wide curriculum reform on individuals, groups and schools.

Implications for future research

Upon reflection, this research could provide a number of avenues for future research and possible follow up work emerging from this study. The views of

leading and implementing mandated curriculum reform from the perspective of other teachers and leaders in the school could be explored. The possibility of transferability of similar or different experiences by middle leaders in other schools may be of interest and future consideration. In fact, having reached this point of the study, the potential for further study is a reality. These examples of future research could be pursued, as research is a continual journey rather than being a destination.

Summary

This research has addressed a complex middle leadership issue—Heads of Faculty leading mandated curriculum reform. To carry out this study, a number of research questions emerged. These were developed throughout the study, and attempts to address each were made. The current literature on middle leaders, particularly Heads of Faculty leading curriculum reform, examined through a qualitative lens, was pursued and extended.

The personal stories outlined in the seven biographical narrative accounts alluded to some of the responsibilities that the Head of Faculty were required to undertake in schools daily. The stories also explored some of the challenges that were faced by Heads of Faculty in the implementation of mandated reform, and the leadership approaches and strategies they used to overcome the challenges. The stories reflected not only a professional view of individual Heads of Faculty and their approach to leading reform, but also expressed the broad range of understanding each brings to their role based on their diverse life experiences. The professional experiences of leadership also differed for Heads of Faculty, depending on the number of years they had been in Government or Independent systems, the number of years they had been in leadership roles, and the variety of leadership roles they had undertaken.

When I first began this study, I was perhaps searching for innovative and successful quick fix "recipes" for implementing either internally or externally imposed curriculum reform within my own faculty. The ideal would be a sure fire approach to curriculum reform where all staff would come on board and be very

happy and excited about such changes. This was a naive assumption. After working with the twelve Heads of Faculty in the case study school, I have come to realise that there are some leadership approaches to the implementation of reform which are more successful than others, but ultimately successful reform rests with the perceived need for reform, the individual leader, the culture of the school, and the support structures for the reform.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

Reports, Policies and Strategies, Tasmania

Tasmania: A State of Learning (2003)

This is a long-term, strategic framework, containing initiatives to help realise a vision for post-Year 10 education and training. Overall, the strategy aims to improve young people's participation in education and training beyond compulsory schooling; to enable second chance learning opportunities for people of all ages; to build a skilled workforce with the capacity to support business and industry in a growing economy; and to create communities that value lifelong learning. *Guaranteeing Futures*, one of the four elements of the strategy, is a strategic approach to meeting the needs of young Tasmanians in transition from compulsory education to independent young adulthood and builds on current programs for young Tasmanians and a number of key Government initiatives.

The full document can be downloaded at: http://www.education.tas.gov.au/stateoflearning/strategy/

APPENDIX B

Case Study School Head of Faculty Role Description

The Head of Faculty role description applicable at the time of this study was as follows.

Head of Faculty - General

The Head of Faculty is responsible to the Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching) and to the Principal for the quality of teaching and learning within the Faculty. The responsibility must be exercised in a manner consistent with the mission and policy of the College.

Head of Faculty - Duties

- To provide active and informed leadership within the Faculty
- To work with the Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching) in accordance with College policy to establish clear goals in curriculum planning and review, and a sequential and flexible work program designed to meet the full range of student ability and need
- To work with the Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching) to encourage the development of a range of teaching strategies that will successfully challenge and motivate students and create an industrious learning environment
- To manage the use of that area of the College assigned to the Faculty, ensuring rooms are well maintained and secured and provided with displays of educationally stimulating material
- To meet formally with the Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching) and other Heads of Faculty at regular meetings and continually communicate informally with Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching) for the overview and operation of College curriculum

- To work towards harmony amongst teachers and the maintenance of a positive and calm approach within the Faculty and in the College generally
- To encourage dynamic growth in individual motivation, formulation of ideas, innovation and energy for optimum teaching performance
- To encourage and actively promote relevant and balanced Professional Development of staff, insisting on each teacher developing a realistic individual Professional Development plan
- To inform, assist, supervise, observe, counsel and challenge teachers with content, method and technique, especially new and beginning teachers, leading by example and encouraging the development of collegial observation and supervision
- To assist the Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching) in giving information to students regarding upcoming study and assist in counselling students towards appropriate and informed curriculum choices
- To develop, approve and review teaching and learning programs and related resources and booklists
- To develop, maintain and oversee the standard, operation, instruments and review of assessment, and to update the report formats as required.
- To provide expectations that concentrate on:

  Careful and structured preparation

  Planning for classroom management

  Punctuality, effective homework

  Study review

  Correction and prompt assessment

  Return of set work

  The efficient completion of administrative requirements

- To prepare an annual budget and control expenditure within the Faculty while being aware of the needs of all Faculties
- To conduct meetings with the Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching) towards the compilation of staffing recommendations for the next school year. Where appropriate (on Faculty basis), to overview individual teacher

preferences as part of the allocation process. Where appropriate, to assist the Principal in the interviewing of new applicants for Faculty positions

- To determine and oversee the principle and process of awarding Academic and Endeavour Awards at the end of the year

- To oversee and approve excursions, speakers and the organization of competitions that come within the ambit of the Faculty

- To appropriately organise and maintain Faculty equipment and resources

- To promote and clarify the work of Heads of Faculty and Curriculum organization. Communicate items of news of interest within a Faculty to students, staff and parents through memos, College Newsletter

- To direct and oversee the work of other personnel appropriate to the Faculty

- To maintain an up-to-date knowledge of technology possibilities within the Faculty

- To be aware of legal requirements with regard to Duty of Care and Occupational Health and Safety

- To ensure that all teaching areas comply with access and equity standards

- To effectively administer Faculty information, distributing to staff and prioritising as appropriate.

APPENDIX C

Information Letter to Heads of Faculty in the Case Study School—Tasmania

TITLE OF THE PROJECT: Heads of Faculty Leading Curriculum Reform: A Case Study of Post Year 10 Curriculum Reform in a Tasmanian Secondary School

SUPERVISORS: Dr. Helga Neidhart, Dr Annette Schneider

STUDENT RESEARCHER: Julienne Colman

PROGRAMME: ED.D.

Dear

I am writing to invite you to participate in research into how Heads of Faculty lead curriculum reform which I am conducting for my Doctorate in Education at the Australian Catholic University. This project explores Heads of Faculty leading mandated curriculum reform with particular focus on Post Year 10 curriculum initiatives. It will involve the invitation to all Heads of Faculty seeking responses to a questionnaire, followed by an invitation to a sub-group of six experienced Heads of Faculty to write their personal stories of experiences of leading curriculum reform and participate in a semi-formal interview.

You are invited to complete the attached confidential questionnaire, and to indicate your willingness to be considered to be part of the sub-group who will write their personal story and participate in an individual interview.

While the risks of such an investigation are considered minimal, there is always the possibility that a participant may feel uncomfortable. You are under no obligation to

complete the confidential questionnaire and may withdraw from the study at any time. Every effort will be made to ensure your anonymity. Confidentiality will be maintained as codes rather than names will be used in reporting the results.

It is anticipated that the questionnaire should take no more than 15-30 minutes to complete. If you are invited to become a member of the sub-group of experienced Heads of Faculty at a later date, the writing of personal stories and individual interviews should take no longer than a total of 2 hours of your time. If you are willing to participate in the research please complete the two attached consent forms; one is to be kept by you for your own records, and the other is to be returned to me.

The benefits of this research would be to provide some insight into how middle leaders lead curriculum reform. It is timely in the Tasmanian context as we are currently undergoing mandated Post Year 10 curriculum reform. It is intended that this research will contribute to the present body of knowledge about how Heads of Faculty across a number of learning areas as leaders in the reform process bring about curriculum change. It is my intention to publish the findings in appropriate educational journals as well as in the final thesis.

It is your right to refuse consent to participate in the study without having to justify that decision.

Although there is a slight possibility of identification, every step will be taken to reduce the likelihood of it happening. No names will be required on the confidential questionnaires, and codes and pseudonyms will be used in recording and reporting on interview data. The case study school will not be identified in any publications.

Any questions regarding this project should be directed to the Supervisor and the Student Researcher:

Dr. Helga Neidhart and Mrs. Julienne Colman
Tel: 0399533267
School of Educational Leadership
Australian Catholic University – St. Patrick's Campus
Locked Bag 4115
Fitzroy, Victoria, 3065.

When the project is complete a summary of the findings will be available, and you will be given access to the final thesis if you so desire.

This study has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee at the Australian Catholic University.

In the event that you have a complaint or concern about the way you have been treated during the study, or if you have any query that the Supervisor and Student Researcher have not been able to satisfy, you may write to the Chair of the Human Research Ethics Committee at the address shown below:

Chair, HREC
c/o Research Services
Australian Catholic University
Melbourne Campus
Locked Bag 4115
Fitzroy. Victoria. 3065
Tel: 0399533158 Fax: 0399533315

Any complaint will be treated in confidence and fully investigated. The participant will be informed of the outcome.

Thank you for considering this invitation to participate in my research. I realise how time is so valuable, but I believe this research will be useful to all middle leaders in Catholic Secondary schools in Tasmania.

Yours sincerely,

Julienne Colman.

APPENDIX D

The Questionnaire in the Study

MIDDLE LEADERSHIP—(Heads of Faculty)—AND CURRICULUM REFORM QUESTIONNAIRE

Section 1. Biographical information

Please indicate which category you are in by circling one of the following:

1. Sex   Male   Female

2. Age   30-39   40-49   50-60   over 60

3. Teaching experience: <5 years   6-10years   11-15years   16-20years

      21-25years   26-30years   >30years

4. Teaching experience within Catholic system   <5years   6-10years   11-15years   16-20years

      21-25years   26-30years   >30years

5. Number of years as a Head of Faculty   <3years   4-6years   7-10years   11-14years

      15-18years   19-21years   >21years

Educational Qualifications:

(Please tick the appropriate educational qualification(s) you have obtained)

      Bachelor of Education,
      Master of Education,
      Doctorate of Education,
      Graduate Diploma,
      Other (please specify)…………………………………….

Section 2: Middle Leadership – Heads of Faculty

Please circle the number which most closely represents your opinion about the importance of each of the following statements about 'middle' leadership:

1. **Strongly agree**
2. **Agree**
3. **Unsure**
4. **Disagree**
5. **Strongly disagree**

In implementing curriculum reform Middle leaders (Heads of Faculty) require:

1. a clear vision to achieve as a leader of change   1 2 3 4 5

2. clear strategies for bringing about curriculum reform   1 2 3 4 5

3. clearly defined goals for the implementation of reform   1 2 3 4 5

4. clearly focused key outcomes for curriculum reform   1 2 3 4 5

5. an understanding of the change mandated by external agencies   1 2 3 4 5

6. a leadership style which facilitates implementation of curriculum reform 1 2 3 4 5

7. an understanding of the mission of the school   1 2 3 4 5

Curriculum reform requires:

1. high departmental expectations by all in the faculty   1 2 3 4 5

2. consistent teamwork   1 2 3 4 5

3. on-going review by all in the faculty   1 2 3 4 5

4. commitment by all in the faculty to continuous improvement in

    teaching and learning   1 2 3 4 5

5. collaborative practice amongst faculty colleagues   1 2 3 4 5

6. mutual trust and respect amongst faculty colleagues   1 2 3 4 5

7. clear avenues of communication between Head of Faculty and

    faculty colleagues   1 2 3 4 5

8. a positive approach from all in the faculty   1 2 3 4 5

9. an organization with a well developed culture for change   1 2 3 4 5

10. a shared vision by all in the faculty   1 2 3 4 5

Section 3 -Open-ended questions

1. Are you aware of 'change' strategies other colleagues use? Yes/No

    If 'yes', how did you become aware of them?

    ----

2. Which strategies used either by you or your colleagues do you think are effective ways to introduce change? Explain.

Strategy	**Why is it effective?**
1:	
2:	
3:	
4:	
5:	

3. How do you intend to present the impending mandated Post Year 10 curriculum reform to your staff?

    ----

4. In the implementation of the mandated post Year 10 curriculum reform, what challenges or barriers have you faced or anticipate facing?

----

5. What strategies have you used to overcome such barriers in the implementation of reform?

----

6. Which strategies to overcome barriers were more effective or successful than others?

----

7. Are there any other issues you think are important about this research topic which we have not yet discussed? If so, please make some comments in the space below.

APPENDIX E

Individual Interview Questions

1. In what ways, if any, does the size of the Faculty influence the outcome of curriculum reform implementation?

2. What professional learning, if any, have you engaged in to prepare for the implementation of curriculum reform?

3. If you have sought collegial support and advice about curriculum reform implementation from other Heads of Faculty in this school or from other schools or colleges, how have you utilised this knowledge in the reform process?

4. What 'best' practices have you observed in the implementation of curriculum reform?

5. What do you believe are the challenges facing Heads of Faculty in the implementation of mandated curriculum reform?

6. What collaborative leadership practices, if any, do you engage in? Briefly describe them.

7. Which of the change strategies you have used would you feel were more successful than others? Why have they been more successful?

8. In what ways can Middle Leaders be better prepared for implementing curriculum reform?

APPENDIX F

Consent Form for Interview

TITLE OF THE PROJECT:	Heads of Faculty Leading Curriculum Reform: A Case Study of Post Year 10 Curriculum Reform in a Tasmanian Secondary School
SUPERVISORS:	Dr. Helga Neidhart, Dr. Annette Schneider
STUDENT RESEARCHER:	Julienne Colman
PROGRAMME:	ED.D.

I……………………………………………………….have read and understood the information provided in the letter to participants. Any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this interview, realising that I can withdraw at any time. I also agree that the interview may be audio recorded for later verification. I agree the research data collected for the study may be published or may be provided to other researchers in a form that does not identify me in any way. Although there is a slight possibility of identification, every step will be taken to reduce the likelihood of it happening.

NAME OF PARTICIPANT:…………………………………………………..

(block letters)

SIGNATURE:……………………………….. DATE:…………..………..

SIGNATURE OF PRINCIPAL SUPERVISOR:……………………….…….

SIGNATURE OF STUDENT RESEARCHER:…………………..………..

Please retain for your own records

APPENDIX G

Consent Form for Personal Stories

TITLE OF THE PROJECT: Heads of Faculty Leading Curriculum Reform: A Case Study of Post Year 10 Curriculum Reform in a Tasmanian Secondary School

SUPERVISORS: Dr. Helga Neidhart, Dr. Annette Schneider

STUDENT RESEARCHER: Julienne Colman

PROGRAMME: ED.D.

I………………………………………………….have read and understood the information provided in the letter to participants. Any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in the writing of my personal story, realising that I can withdraw at any time. I agree the research data collected for the study may be published or may be provided to other researchers in a form that does not identify me in any way. Although there is a slight possibility of identification, every step will be taken to reduce the likelihood of it happening.

NAME OF PARTICIPANT:…………………………………………………..

(block letters)

SIGNATURE:……………………………….. DATE:……………..………..

SIGNATURE OF PRINCIPAL SUPERVISOR:……………………….…..…….

SIGNATURE OF STUDENT RESEARCHER:……………………..………..

Please retain for your own records

APPENDIX H

Prompt Questions for Personal Stories

1. What do you consider essential in leading curriculum reform with your team of teachers?
2. Write about an episode of change you have experienced which you thought had a positive outcome. What specific characteristics made the reform so successful?
3. Did any forms of collaborative leadership emerge during the process of implementing the reform? Discuss.

Ed.D. Research—Julienne Colman

Topic: How Heads of Faculty lead curriculum reform: a case study of Post Year 10 curriculum reform in a Tasmanian secondary school.

Thank you for agreeing to share some of your professional story as part of my research. The following questions are to be used as a guide only. Feel free to add any aspect of your story which may enrich my research.

Personal Stories

(document given to sub-group of six Heads of Faculty involved in the study)

What do you consider essential in leading curriculum reform with your team of teachers?

Write about an episode of change you have experienced which you thought had a positive outcome. What specific characteristics made the reform so successful?

Did any forms of collaborative leadership emerge during the process of implementing the reform? Discuss

Any further comments you may wish to add.

Thank you for your invaluable time—it is very much appreciated.

Julienne Colman.

APPENDIX I

Summary of Common and Unique Themes
Emerging from the Data

Head of Faculty	Vision/big picture of reform	Perceived need for reform	Approaches to leading mandated reform	Collaborative/ distributed shared leadership
Jennifer Core faculty	A clear vision of why, where, how and the change	Need to convince them that the change was in the best interest of the students	Take on board new staff, speed up or slow down the process according to the progress	Delegating to other people so they were grouped into smaller groups – organised to meet to get change to happen
Donald Marginal faculty	You have to have a vision; a strong vision	Communicating the rationale behind the changes – impressing on teachers the benefits of the change	The process cannot be rushed…doing the research	
Charles Core faculty	A clear vision was important	Belief that the reform is actually a good move	Wait and talk with professional colleagues – make the steps simple	Collaborative leadership – yes!
Rupert Marginal faculty	The nominated leader must have the vision		Take staff down a self-appraisal, self-direction approach	Collaborative leadership made the change easier for others in the team to own
Deidre Core faculty		The team need to feel that what was being put forward as change was valid and worthwhile	I took the group with me…I had to be prepared to work with the people…clear timeline of what needed to be done	Collaborative leadership – yes otherwise I would walk away at the end of the term and nobody would feel ownership
Alan Core faculty		Philosophically opposed – saw no need	Softly – softly – toe in the water approach	Collaborative leadership practice with key colleagues who embraced the changes as an early stage

Other Heads of Faculty Responses				
Phillipa Marginal faculty	Need a vision	Must be a perceived need for the reform	Manage change in clear achievable steps	Shared goals are important
Roberta Marginal faculty	Not important	No need - mandated	Implement PY10 one step at a time	A collaborative exercise – work with staff so they feel comfortable and confident
Michael Marginal faculty	Not particularly important	Staff need to see a need in their programs	Investigate processes adopted by similar schools – tried and true	Involve staff as much as possible in the implementation of the reform
Warren Core faculty	Not important	Why the change?	Some will lead better than others, while some will use "professional incompetence" so they will not be asked to do much	Delegate – good outcomes – empowerment, motivation and productivity….who has an area they want to develop?
Peter Core faculty	Not important		Getting teachers to realise that is does not come from me and that I too am anxious and really need their help	Delegate – get the staff on side - share the responsibility

Head of Faculty	Ownership of the reform	Influence of the National Curriculum	Size of the faculty	Prior failed mandated curriculum reform
Jennifer	Shared and distributed leadership best – you get the ownership scenario	Concerned about the NC and where Tasmania fitted with it – implementing a new course – people don't want to do that and then deal with the NC	To talk personally to 40 people took a very long time…people didn't listen in a big group	The first and very big challenge for us was the fact that we had just had several years of ELs which had failed – too much change that failed made them cynical
Donald	If reform is pushed through too quickly teachers become suspicious and lack an ownership of the change	The latest developments federally with a push for a NC have 'muddied the waters' somewhat	Trust is a big issues…if you are only dealing with a small number of staff who trust you, change becomes a bit easier	They have seen things come and go…here we go again…this will last five minutes and then they'll think of something else
Rupert	Encouraging the new ideas so that staff owned the new framework		It's difficult keeping them all in a departmental direction in a similar sort of progress steps	
Charles				A few failed moves in the past such as solo taxonomy in

				the 80's – then there's the ELs which seem to have fallen in a bit of a heap
Deidre	The team needed to feel that they were having input – people feel empowered		Has a huge impact on curriculum reform…the greater the number of ideas and personalities and the way they like to go about doing things became involved in the equation	What had been happening in the immediate past was not working or was seen by the group as unsatisfactory
Alan		When we did PL on the NC I was more happy to be one of the pioneers with that…	Significant when you are going to have forty people who want to move in the same direction	The collapse of the ELs could over time destabilise educational change
Other Heads of Faculty Comments				
Phillipa	Identify key agents and personnel		Not as difficult for me as others – we adjust to the status quo	
Roberta	When change is discussed or implemented we seem to 'slip off the radar'			
Michael	Mutual negotiation – all have ownership			
Warren	Pragmatism – it has to be done – just do it!	The challenge for me was the unstable NC push and the push from state wide agencies for curriculum reform		

Head of Faculty	Resistance to reform	Time allocation & resources	PL for middle leaders leading mandated curriculum reform	Clear lines of communication
Jennifer	Teachers are very conservative and they wanted to do what they know and with what they are comfortable	Teachers are overworked	Has done a great deal – it has opened opportunities to dialogue with other colleagues	Relied on meetings and small groups to communicate the proposed reform
Donald	With curriculum change there was cynicism of a lot of staff especially those who had been around a lot	Need for allocation of time for teachers to come to terms with the mandated	Has done some – people seek leadership positions and I think there needs to be formal leadership training	Clear lines of communication important

			reforms	
Rupert	It's all too hard		Done very little – need for formal training and specific leadership professional learning	
Charles	Teachers are opinionated	Needs generous resourcing	Has done some – I was never prepared for middle leadership	Talking one on one and working in small groups to communicate the reform
Alan	People opposed it on principle		Has done some – has not sought it out as a professional development focus	Working with one or two key people to communicate the change – spread the word
Other Heads of Faculty Comments				
Phillipa	Am aware of change blockers		Reading – professional literature – identifying & analysing issues – encourage team members – PL grows leaders	Clear lines of communication – consistently interpret and communicate change
Roberta	I don't expect too much resistance	Providing the resources breaks done barriers – allow appropriate time	Training useful – make staff aware of PL opportunities	Personal communication overcome the difficulties faced
Michael	Cynicism of staff – extra work load & time restraints – dealing with stress and reduced teaching performance		Review all mandated literature and determine how it can be presented to my staff in more appropriate fashion	Isolating and highlighting positives in process and potential outcomes
Warren	Yes, but – let's just do it – it has to be done		PD reading	Personal discussion
Peter	Negativity and lack of cooperation			Placing staff in the picture – coercion and communication a friendly honest approach – explain and give global perspective
Other considerations by individuals				
Rupert	'multi-faceted' faculty			
Alan	Concern for 'middle management required to lead reform'			
Alan	Philosophical opposition to the reform – 'be untrue			

	to my beliefs'			
Donald	Concern for research before implementation of reform			
Donald	Concern for support by the Leadership Team in implementing mandated curriculum			
Phillipa	Culture and environment a necessity and effective for lasting change Support HoFs need in order to achieve change – 3 levels – staff, middle leaders and senior leadership			

APPENDIX J

Information Letter to Principal

18th September, 2006.

Principal,

Dear Principal,

I am writing to request permission to conduct research within [case study school] for my Ed.D. through the Australian Catholic University in Melbourne. Dr. Helga Neidhart and Dr. Annette Schneider are my supervisors.

The present working title is "Heads of faculty leading curriculum reform: a case study of Post Year 10 curriculum reform in a Tasmanian Secondary School". I have included a copy of the summary outline of the project for your interest.

The benefits of this research will be to provide some insight into how middle leaders lead curriculum reform. It is timely in the Tasmanian context as we are currently undergoing mandated Post Year 10 curriculum reform. It is intended that this research will contribute to the present body of knowledge about how Heads of Faculty across a number of learning areas as leaders in the reform process bring about curriculum change. It is my intention to publish the findings in appropriate educational journals as well as in the final thesis.

In particular, I am asking for your formal permission to approach Heads of Faculty at [case study school]. I will be inviting all of them to complete a questionnaire and invite a sub-group of six experienced Heads of Faculty to write personal stories and participate individually in a semi-formal interview which may take approximately thirty minutes. The usual permission processes, privacy protection, data checking and security, and access to grievance processes and

counselling support if necessary – as required by the ACU Human Research Ethics committee – are in place.

The research proposal was approved at a doctoral proposal presentation in June this year at the ACU in Melbourne. I am now asking for your formal permission to conduct this research at [the case study school]. If there are any other steps I need to take to do so, or you would like further information or clarification on any of the points raised please feel free to call me at work on [phone number] or after hours on [phone number].

I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Yours sincerely

Julienne Colman

APPENDIX K

Information Letter to Director, Catholic Education Office

18th September, 2006

Director,

Dear Director,

I am writing to request your permission to conduct research within [case study school] Launceston for my Ed.D. through the Australian Catholic University in Melbourne. Dr. Helga Neidhart and Dr. Annette Schneider are my supervisors.

The present working title is "Heads of faculty leading curriculum reform: a case study of Post Year 10 curriculum reform in a Tasmanian Secondary School". I have included a copy of the summary outline of the project for your interest.

The benefits of this research will be to provide some insight into how middle leaders lead curriculum reform. It is timely in the Tasmanian context as we are currently undergoing mandated Post Year 10 curriculum reform. It is intended that this research will contribute to the present body of knowledge about how Heads of Faculty across a number of learning areas as leaders in the reform process bring about curriculum change. It is my intention to publish the findings in appropriate educational journals as well as in the final thesis.

The involvement of professionals within the Tasmanian CEO system will include all Heads of Faculty at the case study school – [case study school], who will be invited to participate in the study through completion of a questionnaire. A sub-group of six experienced Heads of Faculty from a range of teaching and learning areas will be invited to write their personal stories assisted by guiding questions

and also to participate individually in a semi-structured interview. The usual permission processes, privacy protection, data checking and security, and access to grievance processes and counselling support if necessary – as required by the ACU Human Research Ethics committee – are in place.

The research proposal was approved at a doctoral proposal presentation in June this year at the ACU in Melbourne. I am now asking for your formal permission to conduct this research at [case study school]. If there are any other steps I need to take to do so, or you would like further information or clarification on any of the points raised please feel free to call me at work on [phone number] or after hours on [phone number].

I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Yours sincerely

Julienne Colman.