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Leadership Learning: Insights from the National Aspiring Principals’ Programme

An Introduction to the National Aspiring Principals’ Programme (NAPP)

Aspiring principals' development in New Zealand had its early beginnings as a pilot regional programme delivered by the University of Waikato for the Ministry of Education in 2003 and 2004 with 20 aspiring and potential leaders in each cohort each year (Robertson & Leckie, 2005). Aspiring principals' development programmes were then run regionally throughout New Zealand by the school support services attached to the Universities in each region. The evaluation of the regional delivery (Piggott-Irvine, Ferguson & Youngs, 2009), along with Best Evidence Research Syntheses on social studies, leadership and professional learning (e.g. Aitken and Sinnema (2008); Robinson, Hohepa & Lloyd (2009); Timperley, Wilson, Barrar, & Fung (2009), informed the development of the NAPP curriculum for the current contract. Findings from the evaluation stated: “Overall, the programme was seen as good preparation for principal recruitment” but it was felt, along with other recommendations, that a stronger emphasis needed to be placed on the management roles of the principal in the curriculum, leading change and leading people.

The Ministry of Education Professional Leadership Plan was published in 2009. This plan highlighted the importance of continuing aspiring and first-time principal leadership development to ensure that Ministry of Education priorities were met. The Professional Leadership Plan included:

- Implementing a national programme for 230 aspiring principals with a focus on hard to staff schools and embedding culturally responsive leadership practices.
- Evaluating professional learning for aspiring principals against a set of national indicators of leadership effectiveness to ensure professional learning leads to improved outcomes for Maori, Pasifika students and those with special education needs.
- Exploring options for pre-principalship qualification to ensure applicants for principals’ positions are well prepared to lead change and improve teaching and learning for every student.

The National Aspiring Principals' Programme

In 2010 the Ministry of Education called for tenders for the design and delivery of a national aspiring principals’ programme. The professional learning consortium Te Toi Tupu, constituting CORE education, The University of Waikato, Cognition Education, the Waikato-Tainui College for Research and Development, with the New Zealand Council for Education Research providing evaluative support, won the contract and developed a comprehensive programme that it has delivered nationwide since 2011.

The actual design of the learning and leadership experiences in the National Aspiring Principals’ Programme, developed by academic director Dr. Jan Robertson with colleagues in Te Toi Tupu, drew on an extensive international literature about what makes for deep important learning and leadership of schools – literature on leading professional learning groups (e.g. Stoll, 2011), networked learning (e.g Katz, Earl & Jaafar, 2009), educators as knowledge leaders (Earl & Hannay, 2011), coaching educational leadership (e.g. Robertson, 2005), inquiry-focused practice and professional learning (e.g. Timperley, Wilson, Barrar, & Fung, 2008), changing leadership mindsets (e.g. Kaser & Halbert, 2009), evidence-based leadership (e.g. Earl & Katz, 2006), educational leadership and student achievement (e.g. Hallinger & Heck, 1998; Leithwood & Riehl, 2005; Robinson, Hohepa & Lloyd, 2009) and partnership in leadership and learning (Robertson, 2011).
The National Aspiring Principals’ programme was built around the five main themes of curriculum the Ministry of Education tendered for:

- Developing self
- Leading change
- Leading learning
- 21st century learning environments, and
- The role of the principal;

and drawing on the international knowledge base, the academic director designed the aspiring principal experience on four key principles of professional learning:

- Personalised, self-regulated, reflective meta-cognitive learning
- Connected and networked leaders sharing and creating knowledge
- Coaching leadership capacity in self and others
- Inquiry-focused leadership and learning, informed by research and evidence.

NAPP is delivered through a range of mediums, with all of the themes of the NAPP curriculum interwoven throughout the learning experiences that the participants engage in. There are online discussions and forums, professional learning groups, online and face-to-face hui and coaching sessions with peers and with an expert kairarahi.

The study of the management role of the principal is a fully online, comprehensive modular curriculum, in which the participants have access to a wide range of material. They interact electronically in the online forums with other participants regionally and nationwide, about the challenges and expectations of the multi-faceted role of the school principal and the educational decisions that need to be made in finance, personnel, and other school governance and management systems along with the legal, cultural and educational implications of these decisions.

The following table gives a high level overview, with examples of the way that the principles and the themes are woven together and enacted in the Programme.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Principles</th>
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<td>Personalised, self-regulated, reflective meta-cognitive learning</td>
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1 learning facilitators
Online national Hui
Virtual Learning Network
My Portfolio
Skype
Survey Monkey

**Coaching leadership capacity in self and others**
- Learning and using peer coaching skills
- Coaching colleagues within the change process in schools
- Peer coaching in online reflective journals
- Online and Skype coaching with Kaiarahi
- Mentoring conversations with own school principal
- Shadow visit and conversation with principal in a different school context

**Inquiry-focused leadership and learning informed by research and evidence**
- Residential national hui with focus on research evidence and policy documents, and best school practice, and student voice
- Using school evidence to inform inquiry learning
- Building a rich resource of readings, resources and documents through module work on role of the principal
- Regular reflective leadership coaching by kaiarahi

The next sections give a description of each of the four principles of professional learning and how they are woven through NAPP.

**Personalised, self-regulated, reflective meta-cognitive learning**

The curriculum for NAPP places a major emphasis on *Developing Self*. The outcomes for this area of the curriculum are that ākonga will reflect on their personal growth including:

- self-awareness: personal effectiveness, beliefs and values;
- emotional, spiritual and social intelligence: understanding own strengths and weaknesses;
- developing and communicating a moral purpose;
- personal goal-setting and a professional development plan;
- appreciating the bi-cultural nature of Aotearoa-New Zealand.

The process of developing self is founded on a learning design of on-going, formative self-reflection, with feedback and coaching, from a peer, from the professional learning group and from the kaiarahi.

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2 The Virtual Learning Network (www.vln.school.nz) and My Portfolio (www.myportfolio.school.nz) are two different online learning environments, currently free for all schools in New Zealand, where personal portfolios can be maintained, achievement monitored, resources stored and networks and online communities developed.

3 learners
This self-regulated, reflective and metacognitive learning was designed to enable ākonga to move beyond the single loop thinking of “doing”, where they just ask “what shall I do next?” The move to double and triple loop thinking (Argyris, 1991; Schon, 1987) where ākonga are challenged to question “Why” and “What might be” are important elements in the path of transformation of professional and school practice. At the beginning of the year, in February, the ākonga complete a comprehensive online assessment of their leadership learning needs for their year’s learning on the five themes of the curriculum. This self-assessment forms the basis of the first coaching session with the kaiarahi, for personal goal setting and to develop an inquiry focus for their leadership learning plan. At the end of the first phase of the programme, after the national residential Hui in April, all ākonga complete another fully online self-assessment of their learning, and their development, and how well they feel that their needs have been met in their leadership learning in the NAPP curriculum areas. This information is shared with kaiarahi for the on-going development of the aspiring principal, and the development of the kaiarahi, into the second phase of learning.

In September, after the third phase of learning, all ākonga reflect again on their personal learning, their leadership, and their contribution to their learning communities. This self-assessment by the ākonga on their leadership learning serves two purposes. The ākonga can revisit their goals, and their earlier self-assessment in the process of monitoring their self-development plan. The kaiarahi receive the aggregated results of this assessment to provide feedback on the areas they personally need to re-focus on with their ākonga and professional learning groups. The ākonga are not individually recognisable to enable authentic and honest feedback without any fear of repercussion for ākonga. The most important aspect is that kaiarahi get feedback to enable reflection on their professional practice in specific areas of the theory of action. It includes such items as: My kaiarahi challenges my thinking; My understanding of Māori achieving success as Māori has deepened; My kaiarahi questions me about Māori achievement. The kaiarahi are integral to the self-regulating, reflective and meta-cognitive process, working in a generative, challenging but supportive way, to deepen reflection and raise self-awareness. Their own professional learning has been paramount to the success of this role. They support the ākonga in the personalised meaning making that can lead them to a reframing and rethink of their practice, of asking why things are as they are. It is the deeper learning, of examining their own values, beliefs and assumptions about leadership and learning, that is designed to take these aspiring leaders into the triple loop learning, transformative zone of asking ‘what might be?’ This is the type of transformative, adaptive practice that changes systems, structures and paradigms, and is essential for the complex challenges of educational leadership (Hannon, 2011).

In NAPP, the ākonga can engage in self-regulated, reflective learning through technology and online learning platforms that can create the type of flexible, personalized, and accessible learning environments for any-time, any-place learning for participants to build, share and create new knowledge.

**Connected and networked leaders sharing and creating knowledge**

Underpinning the design of the National Aspiring Principals’ Programme is the principle of leaders sharing knowledge, creating new knowledge, and building on current knowledge (Earl & Hannay, 2011). Outside perspectives and diversity of values, beliefs and assumptions are key to this process. One of the five themes of the NAPP curriculum is leading future-focused learning environments, increasing ākonga understanding of:

- preparing students for a future that is uncertain
- culturally responsive pedagogies that ensure Māori achieve success as Māori
- the changes that will impact on schools:
Technology with online communities, coaching and the reflective leadership inquiry became enablers of this process. Self-management of schools in New Zealand means that there are 2470 schools who share very little between schools. The National Aspiring Principals’ Programme works to create new generations of leaders who have experienced the value of being networked and connected regionally and nationally with other school leaders, as they study together to create new knowledge to address the challenges in education today. The long tail of under-achievement of groups of students in New Zealand – in particular Maori, Pasifika and students with special education needs – requires a system shift and changes of paradigm and mindset on leadership and learning. What is needed in professional learning is not just more knowledge but more thinking about that knowledge and the metacognitive skill of how to be and to become in leadership practice. Support for building and sharing knowledge in NAPP comes through the professional networks formed regionally and nationally through NAPP, both online and kanohi ki te kanohi.

Coaching leadership capacity in self and others

The coaching leadership methodology (Robertson, 2005) at the basis of the National Aspiring Principals’ Programme is designed to develop self-regulating learners. That is, leaders who take ownership of their own leadership development and are meta-cognitively aware of what they still need to learn and who can learn effectively from their current practice. All ākonga have an experienced leader (kaiarahi) as a coach who actively coaches the ākonga throughout the year, kanohi ki te kanohi, by Skype and in the online communities and personalized reflective portfolio that each ākonga develops. The kaiarahi have learned how to ask critically reflective questions that challenge ākonga to consider other perspectives and to surface and examine their values and beliefs. The kaiarahi link the ākonga to the research literature and the current policy documents.

This is not a cascade model or lighthouse model of leaders teaching all they know, but a model of generative learning where kaiarahi have been challenged to create leaders who are more than they themselves have ever been. This has meant extensive and creative professional learning for the kaiarahi has been key to the process of ākonga learning. This professional learning has focused on coaching leadership, on facilitating deeper, metacognitive reflection, on online communities, on tikanga and te ao Maori, and self-regulated, inquiry learning.

Each ākonga also has a peer coach and they provide support and challenge to each other through the My Portfolio online platform on the ākonga leadership inquiry reflection pages. The ākonga are given some coaching practice at the national Hui and also encouraged to use their kaiarahi as a model of coaching to learn through their own experience of coaching. Time is allocated at the regional professional learning groups for the ākonga to work in their coaching pairs.

Ākonga are encouraged to use their coaching skills in their leadership of colleagues through transformative change in their schools – creating new knowledge together in the process of inquiry. Awhinatanga – building the leadership capacity of others – is an important principle of the National Aspiring Principals’ Programme. There is also group coaching through the regional online professional learning communities and nationwide communities.

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4 Face-to-Face
Inquiry-focused leadership and learning informed by research and evidence

Every ākonga develops an inquiry question to provide a focus for the study of their leadership of change and people to address the inequities in New Zealand education and, hence, the under-achievement of the three priority groups: Maori, Pasifika and students with special education needs. This inquiry cycle emerged from the Best Evidence Synthesis on Professional Learning and Development (Timperley et al., 2008) and is the basis for their self-regulated learning journey. They ask themselves: what are the needs of our learners, what do I (and my colleagues) need to learn to address these needs? What are my values, beliefs and assumptions? What leadership and learning is necessary? What can I learn from my practice? The inquiry focus is the vehicle to enable reflection on the curriculum of the National Aspiring Principals’ Programme and for the coaching practice throughout the year. This is experiential adult learning in the context of their school. The Kairahi supports and challenges their thinking in this process, through Kolb’s (1984) reflective observation and abstract conceptualisation stages of thinking why and what might be. Most importantly, this is not about ‘doing an inquiry’ but developing a diagnostic, inquiry mindset to take into all aspects of leadership practice, for now and in the future, in order to learn from that practice. This has been called “inquiry mindedness” (Earl & Lee, 1998; Earl & Timperley, 2008).

The Leadership Learning Journey

The National Aspiring Principals’ Programme is designed to develop the dispositions, structures and skills for these leaders to be able to continue their leadership learning in this way throughout their careers. They have regional professional learning groups, they have a peer coach, they have a nationwide community network of leadership learners, and they have their reflective online inquiry portfolio. These are all able to be sustained by the aspiring leader after the duration of the intervention of the programme. An important feature of The National Aspiring Principals’ Programme is the statement that “this is not a programme you are doing, or we are delivering to you, but leadership learning experiences that we trust you will develop further into your own principalship or senior leadership in the years to come.”

In the diagram below, an example taken from Generation 2012:

(1) The pink coloured strand outlines the learning on the role of the principal. This work is delivered through modules online that create the opportunity for dialogue and developing one’s own understanding with the other participants in their professional learning group and across the whole cohort. The ākonga’s
own school principal is a key leader in this process of reflection within the school context.
(2) The white strand is the experiential learning of the ākonga in their own school, indicating their leadership learning from their inquiry-based leadership practice;
(3) The purple strand indicates the work of the kaiarahi who coaches the individual and the regional professional learning groups.
(4) The blue strand indicates the developing links and connections with aspiring principals from previous cohorts, in this case, the 2011 cohort. These connections are reliant on the kaiarahi in the region encouraging their involvement, but the national Hui also involves some of the previous cohort of aspiring principals. In 2013, three of the 2012 Maori ākonga, became kaiarahi for a cohort of 12 Maori ākonga in an effort to further meet the needs of our Maori participants, to increase the numbers of Maori participants, and to learn from this pilot to influence the design of the learning for all ākonga.

Theory of Action

The National Aspiring Principals’ Programme is built on a strong theory of action. In the earlier stages, this was perhaps mostly implicit in the writing and directions that the learning experiences were taking. The theory of action became more explicit and was further developed diagrammatically for the purposes of this research. This theory of action (in the figure below) describes how the NAPP programme was rooted in the New Zealand context, founded on a set of assumptions and created around the themes and principles described above. It goes on to highlight the intended immediate and long term outcomes, as they are envisioned by the Te Toi Tupu planning team.
Background to This Report

Te Toi Tupu is a consortium of five organisations contracted by the Ministry of Education to provide PLD across a range of English and Māori medium projects. NZCER, one of the partners in Te Toi Tupu has responsibility for providing evaluation support to projects and for evaluating cross-project effectiveness. NZCER has worked with a number of project leaders provide formative evaluations of the effectiveness of aspects of their projects.

As the National Aspiring Principals’ Programme evolved, Te Toi Tupu expressed interest in developing a greater understanding of the nature and development of this innovative leadership learning for aspiring principals. In August, Jan Robertson, the NAPP Academic Director, began a process of regularly collecting data from the participants for monitoring and evaluation purposes. Thirty-two NAPP participants opted to take part in an additional half day of coaching educational leadership, which included their involvement in written reflections, using a guided reflection process that was based on the theoretical underpinnings for the NAPP (Appendix 1). In September, all participants completed an online self-assessment survey about their leadership learning experience in NAPP, with both closed and open-ended questions (Appendix 2), and in December participants completed one-page summaries based on their professional inquiries that they presented to the members of their Professional Learning Groups, their own school principals and Boards of Trustees. (The guides for these summaries are included in Appendix 3.)

This study takes advantage of these data collected from the participants to allow Lorna Earl (who was subcontracted by NZCER) with support from the Academic Director, to look across these data sets and engage in their own reflective process about NAPP. The regular collection of data from NAPP participants offers a window into the thinking of the participants, as a vehicle for gaining insights about the ways in which they are changing and growing in relation to the assumptions and intended outcomes outlined in the NAPP theory of action. Jan and Lorna were supported in this formative evaluative work by NZCER, particularly Cathy Wylie who has extensive experience in evaluating leadership development initiatives.

Methodology

The research team (Lorna Earl and Jan Robertson), with initial support from Cathy Wylie of NZCER, used the theory of action to identify themes that could be used for coding and analysis to inform their understanding of these themes, through how they were being understood and enacted by the participants of NAPP. These themes cover a wide range of material, are supported by the assumptions and theories of learning and change in the Theory of Action, and are embedded in the NAPP Programme in multiple ways:

- moral purpose in relation to inequities for Maori and Pasifika learners
- cultural responsiveness
- agency and efficacy as change agents, making a difference, taking responsibility, being transformed, ready to lead
- disposition to learn
- capacity for change with others
- knowledge about the school principalship

Once the codes were established, they were used to code the guided self-reflections to validate and refine the codes to ensure that they could be applied to the open-ended responses. The refined and expanded descriptions were then used to code the qualitative data from (i) the September self-assessment “other comments” section for each question asked, and (ii) the December inquiry summary reports, with attention to the nature of the theme, its development, what helped its development and what got in the way.
What We Have Learned

This research was designed explicitly to add to the knowledge base about the six themes described above and to provide examples and images of what they might look like, in practice. It was clear during the analysis that the themes are inextricably inter-related. It is instructive, however, to consider them as separate entities before discussing the connectedness.

Moral Purpose

A moral purpose in education is founded on values that appeal to one’s innate belief of what is right and worthwhile to do. The majority of people who enter education as a profession do so with the moral purpose of making a positive difference to people’s lives through education. Moral purpose in the National Aspiring Principals’ Programme goes deeper. It builds on this sense of moral purpose, by engendering the shared values of equity and social justice through the values of culturally responsive leadership and pedagogy, honouring the Treaty of Waitangi and the dual cultural heritage of New Zealand, and stepping up to actively address the under-achievement of particular groups who have not been well-served by the education system. This involves the realisation that leaders with moral purpose are not just involved in doing for or on behalf of Māori; it means leaders working with Māori and ensuring that the school is a positive place for success for Māori, as Māori.

The quantitative data in the self-assessment survey, in September, showed that the participants felt that they were more focused on moral purpose and on the target groups of students.

| My Leadership Inquiry has helped me develop and communicate a stronger moral purpose | 90% |
| I am more focused on improving Māori students' learning outcomes | 95% |
| I am more focused on improving Special Needs students' learning outcomes | 87% |
| I am more focused on improving Pasifika learning outcomes | 88% |

The qualitative analysis was designed to go deeper and provide insights into the nature of moral purpose and how it was evolving as a concept within NAPP. Consideration of the data through this lens produced four facets of moral purpose for aspiring principals as they travelled through the experiences of NAPP:

- focussed awareness of the equity issues that define New Zealand education;
- self-awareness and examination of personal moral purpose;
- challenging, reinforcing or strengthening of beliefs and/or convictions; and,
- acting with moral purpose.

Awareness of the equity issues that define New Zealand education is a key factor in moral purpose. Within the New Zealand context of inequity and the long tail of underachievement for Māori and Pasifika students, there has been specific government determination to develop schools that enable success for all students, especially those who are currently underserved. The pervasive inequity in New Zealand education is the starting point for developing moral purpose to address inequities. While most educators have strong moral purpose for making a difference in students’ lives, the national issue of inequity requires moral purpose that is driven by social justice and equity. This issue was highlighted by the ākonga as they reflected on the complexity and importance of shared moral purpose with colleagues to move this agenda forward in school and nationally. As one ākonga stated:

_It has been critical to retain the moral commitment to students achieving academic success and keep them at the fore. You cannot move the waka on your own but need everyone on board paddling in unison to get up speed and win the race._

5 5 The quotes used in this paper are not comprehensive. The data from the various data sets were analysed and organized to determine the themes and to highlight salient ideas. The paper was written with these themes and ideas as guideposts and quotes were selected to exemplify them.
Self-awareness and examination of personal moral purpose was highlighted in much of the data. Sometimes, the idea of moral purpose as the driver of practice is a new and revolutionary idea that refocuses thinking and practices:

*Leading with moral purpose - this was amazing, and ground breaking for me.*

Reflection and consideration about moral purpose “made them stop in their tracks and think” or “opened my eyes to becoming far more moral in my dealings with students and colleagues.”

The greater awareness of moral purpose is connected to a sense of personal leadership identity.

*This process and my entire inquiry have been not really about my project at all. It has been about my understanding of myself, my leadership and leading with moral purpose.*

*NAPP has allowed me to unpack what leadership really means for me. It has allowed me to reconnect with my values and connect with the values of others.*

Coming to grips with one’s personal sense of moral purpose is not straightforward as we see in comments like: “It has been quite a challenge to refocus my moral purpose in education”; “I am still wrestling with moral purpose”; and “the process is ‘helping’ me develop and communicate a stronger moral purpose, but that I personally have not yet fully developed that”. This challenging, reinforcing or strengthening of beliefs or convictions is an important part of the process of developing a moral purpose for equity. Although it opens a new view of the role of leaders in education, the attention to a personal moral imperative also reinforces convictions that moral purpose is an essential component of quality leadership.

*I have been able to lead change at our school, in a more effective way, due to this leadership inquiry and the time I been able to take to reflect on what I believe.*

*I have been able to re-frame my leadership approach toward addressing under achievement of these learners and develop a stronger moral purpose in my leadership for change.*

People who already have a strong sense of moral purpose can also use reflection and challenge to reinforce existing beliefs. Comments like “moral imperative”, “holding moral purpose a little closer” and “reinforcing the importance of leading and communicating with strong moral purpose” show the intensity of the their conviction. Having a moral purpose may already be part of the leadership practice but the opportunity for reflection can lead to deeper and stronger convictions.

But, strengthening moral purpose requires strong personal reflection and a willingness to persist.

*To be very honest I wondered whether I should really be doing this course, I felt, at first like a bit of a fraud! But gradually I understood what I have. I know I can make a difference. I am making a difference every day and I am now looking for opportunities to make more of a difference.*

The stronger conviction about moral purpose is also related to sharing leadership to move forward.

*Readings and discussions around relational trust and moral purpose with my principal and other members of the Senior Leadership Team have helped to reinforce the importance of leading and communicating with strong moral purpose in order to provide dynamic, challenging and strategic leadership.*

Another described looking at shared principalship in different ways:

*We are working, not on doing what we have always done in traditional principalship, but on a model of moral leadership which is focussed on improving student outcomes through leading learning and walking alongside our fellow teachers to improve their practice. This is the type of leadership I believe in and am committed to.*

Moral purpose, in these data, was not just a way of thinking, but a way of acting, at times requiring courage and determination. There is a sense of urgency about what needs to be done and being intentional in doing it.

*I am more urgent in developing shared pedagogies within our school and ensuring we are all on the same page and that the children get the best deal possible. I am not prepared to compromise on high quality teaching and learning. As a leader I am very conscious of helping to develop teachers to their potential so that our children benefit. This includes really knowing the children.*
I feel more urgent about becoming a better metacognitive thinker! From your initial introduction I can see that my level of thinking is more about the 'doing' and 'outcomes'. I need to move forward to a deeper level. I also feel more urgent about up-skilling my Maori language skills and becoming more fluent with my mihi.

Moral purpose is a foundation for educational leadership for equity and social justice. It is active every day and it is deeply connected to the people.

It has increased my understanding though of how strong moral purpose and communication is valued. I understand how success is achieved because it is what we demand and expect. By focussing on staying true to our ‘moral purpose’ has been very real for us this year in our leadership role and the decisions we’ve had to make so I am living & breathing it.

What surprised me more than anything during this process was the nature of the work of educational leaders in schools. Whilst we have budgeting, employment, attestation, curriculum guidance, consultation, community engagement, etc. to work on... our roles are about people. Everything we do is about people. The people in our context; the learners (both child and adult) - these are the reasons why leading with moral purpose is vital.

Moral purpose, then, is an amalgam of deep awareness of the equity issues that define New Zealand education; building self-awareness and examining personal moral purpose; challenging, reinforcing or strengthening of beliefs and/or convictions; and, actually acting with moral purpose in leadership practice on an everyday basis.

Critical reflection and examination of personal moral purpose allows educators to develop self-awareness and contributes to an understanding of the power of their personal influence in New Zealand education. Although moral purpose may guide people’s behaviour, it is sometimes part of tacit knowledge, operating in the background, without conscious awareness. An intentional focus on moral purpose can create the conditions for examining and making values and beliefs explicit. These data highlight the ways in which purposeful, critical reflection and consideration of fundamental beliefs raised such self-awareness.

Cultural Responsiveness

Culturally responsive practice is enacted when leaders acknowledge that culture, language and identity are at the heart of the learning relationship and that knowledge is socially and culturally constructed. An understanding of different cultural worlds and a willingness by leaders to respond and connect to students’ culture leads to practices that are culturally responsive. Culturally responsive practice “affirm the validity and legitimacy of Maori knowledge and culture by acknowledging the importance of Maori metaphors, concepts, and principles” (Macfarlane, 2002, p. 101).

Responsive and accountable professional leaders know, practice and widely advocate what works best for and with Māori learners, as well as develop collaborative relationships with whānau, hapū and iwi to share expertise and work together to achieve shared outcomes” (Ka Hikitia 2008-2012). A culturally responsive approach means:

recognising the potential of every Māori student, acknowledging that being Māori is an advantage and understanding that all Māori learners are inherently capable. (Ka Hikitia 2008-2012)

the deliberate and systematic use of a holistic approach and using existing communities, venues and networks to access Pasifika parents, families and learners to support their wellbeing and learning from beginning to end. (Pacific Education Plan 2013-2017)

In the self-assessment survey in September a large majority of respondents indicated increased understanding and attention to cultural responsiveness.

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<tr>
<th>Know more about culturally responsive pedagogy and leadership</th>
<th>97%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Embody the Treaty of Waitangi in their leadership role</td>
<td>93%</td>
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<tr>
<td>More focused on improving Maori learning Outcomes</td>
<td>95%</td>
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<tr>
<td>More focused on improving Pasifika learning outcomes</td>
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The qualitative analysis was designed to go deeper and provide insights into the nature of cultural responsiveness, how it was evolving as a concept within NAPP.

Considering cultural responsiveness through these data shows its complexity and its centrality in understanding educational change in New Zealand. It is a mix of paying attention, doing things differently and rethinking or reframing beliefs. The presentation of the analysis is organised around four ideas:

- culturally responsive practices in schools and classrooms;
- changing dispositions about cultural responsiveness,
- leading for cultural responsiveness
- learning about cultural responsiveness

Cultural responsiveness was a point of focus for many of the aspiring leaders in their own inquiries and in their schools, with intentional data collection and input from the community and from students to support planning and thinking about how to support Maori and Pasifika students better.

Whilst the data says they are achieving 'at the national average', when you look deeper, most of our Maori students, and under-performing boys are in our alternative English programmes.

The inquiry focuses on what strategies can be put in place to involve families and the community to improve achievement in reading of Maori and Pasifika students in Year 1 and 2 at this school?

Decisions about the school or inquiry focus were often made with involvement from and consideration of the perspectives of family/whanau, community and students.

We have taken heed of what our Pasifika parents have informed us of their priorities for their children and what is important to them to ensure that their children are at their best to learn and learn best. We have viewed and revised our practice in the classroom in accordance to what issues our Pasifika students have identified ‘what helps me learn at school?’ and ‘what does not help me learn at school?’ from the student questionnaire.

Cultural responsiveness is dependent on communication, relationships and engagement with the families and the community of the school. Connecting with family/whanau and community can take many different and creative forms. It can mean meeting and working directly with family/whanau and community, consulting with them and including them in ongoing collaboration and decision making.

I have also collaborated with extended whanau, Kapa Haka leaders, Resource teachers of Maori, and Maori elders, to realise the potential of our Maori community, our Kapa Haka group and to establish appropriate protocol for whole school functions and cultural performances.

A professional learning community (PLC) was established which includes colleagues school wide (30), Pasifika students and Pasifika parents. Invitations were extended to agencies to join our Fono, which support our Pasifika community e.g., local church pastors/leaders.

In the last week of term we held a whanau evening for the Pasifika community and it was great to be able to share how well their children were doing. The aim of the night was to promote engagement with that community, to hear what their aspirations were for their children and what they felt we could be doing to improve school for their children. It was a very positive night.

Emphasis on whanau with the new pastoral care structure, high trust and continuing to build on a culture where community help to guide, mentor and assist students with their decision-making both at school and out of school.

Working beyond the school is also an important dimension of cultural responsiveness. Becoming culturally responsive, and sustaining it, is an ongoing process of learning and changing that involves routine interaction to build relationships with family/whānau.

I have learned that Maori achievement will only be improved if we include whanau and partner with them. It will be no good to continue to do school to Maori. We need to do education with whanau.
Relationships are so important here, I need to keep building these. Maori achievement is about authentic relationships and collaboration. My relationships can be more superficial at times and time is needed to be invested in order to deepen these, both with the children but especially parents.

A majority of these initiatives were driven using students and this was incredibly powerful in terms of getting student and whanau buy-in. Staff are now in a position to consider the issues positively and be open to bringing about further engagement of Maori students. The majority of staff are working to actively engage Maori in learning, rather than just treating everyone the same.

The core of cultural responsiveness in schools requires active embedding of culture, language, history and traditions, as part of the regular work of schools. There were many examples where language, in particular, provides a vehicle for recognising culture and for developing shared understanding and respect, illustrated with comments like: “PD around second language acquisition pedagogies, and strategies for teaching a second language”; “The development of Te Reo in school” being important features of the change process.

Equally important is building professional knowledge about culture through things like “Focus on developing the culture in our school”; “HoDs to our nearest marae”; “Kapahaka performance in the school”; “track Pasifika students through their learning journey”; “teachers share their students’ successes, converse about and share ideas and resources, reflect on their own practice; reflect on and share their own successes with their Pasifika students” “upskilling my Maori language skills and becoming more fluent with my mihi”.

Perhaps the most powerful understanding that emerged was that, although cultural responsiveness is enacted in a wide range of activities and approaches, activities are not enough. Changing dispositions about cultural responsiveness is an evolving and deepening process that is embedded in ways of thinking about culture and situating it in a larger framework. What is needed is an understanding that knowledge is culturally and socially constructed, and that schools’ ways of working have been developed on one culture’s social and cultural norms. This process is not singular but involves on-going personal and collective activity as was typified by these types of comments: “develop a deeper understanding of Maori”; “progress with my knowledge and understanding of Maori culture”; “begun to permeate what I do and I am becoming a go-to person with cultural matters”. Changing dispositions, therefore, requires challenging, reframing and changing thinking.

These aspiring leaders talked about their heightened and reinforced awareness of why school leaders needed to initiate change to respond more effectively to the needs of Maori and Pasifika learners.

Having spent most of my career teaching in middle class white schools in the South Island, I hadn’t really understood the importance of this.

I have learned that I hadn’t ever reflected on my life of privilege as a pakeha New Zealander. I have learnt that I can only empathise, but never truly understand, losing language, land, culture, and identity… I have been made [aware of]... the importance of Maori achieving as Maori. Knowing the value of respecting tikanga, te reo and context to give Maori the value in education in my class and school that is due.

The process of questioning and then trying to do things differently is an important part of the reframing and learning process about cultural norms. Leadership for cultural responsiveness is seen in the practice and interactions between people in the school.

It’s been great to start questioning what we do and begin to try something different - and then reflect on the effect of the change.

Realise the need to move away from the ‘whiteness’ of the way we do things, even though our community may not necessarily be overly Maori.

I have been able to re-frame my leadership approach toward addressing under achievement of these learners and develop a stronger moral purpose in my leadership for change.

For Maori leaders, cultural responsiveness requires other frames for reflection, as one ākonga reminds us:
As Maori, I find it difficult to understand why Maori are underachieving as it is a priority wherever I am. It has increased my understanding though of how strong moral purpose and communication is valued. I understand how success is achieved because it is what we demand and expect.

Leadership plays a central role in building capacity for cultural responsiveness within schools and for building confidence and competence of educators to work and act in culturally responsive ways. Changing dispositions is based on recognising the constant need for leadership for new professional learning.

Our Te Reo students worked every second Thursday with our staff in Faculty groups teaching us Te Reo. We focussed on pronunciation, and basic language. The school’s senior leadership team still need to learn that we must look carefully at our values, beliefs and assumptions and challenge ourselves. This has to be the case when addressing Maori and Pasifika achievement.

I definitely think I need to learn more about the Treaty and how it can impact my leadership. Whilst I understand and can apply some leadership traits that positively contribute to improving outcomes for Maori, this is still an area I’d like to learn more about.

As a lead learner, a culturally responsive leader is involved in personal learning and constantly challenging his/her own perspectives and behaviours.

In terms of increasing my understanding of Maori achieving success as Maori, this will be an on-going journey and I think that questions will always be there in regards to who the Maori students are that we have currently in our school.

Cultural responsiveness, especially with New Zealand’s unique dual-cultural heritage, is pervasive and complex. It is a journey of personal and professional exploration and learning, coupled with serious action on a daily basis to continually embed leadership and change in the cultural context.

Agency and Efficacy as Change Agents

In the National Aspiring Principals’ programme there is an emphasis on building agency, defined as increasing participants’ readiness and capacity to act, to lead, to respond to policy directions with moral purpose. Above all, the work is about developing participants to the state where they feel efficacious and autonomous and have the willingness to act as agents of change to make a difference to the current situation of inequity in New Zealand education. That is, leaders who will unrelentingly step up to that challenge of equity in their leadership.

One item in the self-assessment survey in the September showed that the NAPP participants felt that they were developing a sense of efficacy.

| My Kaiarahi assists me develop my sense of efficacy (my confidence that I can make a difference). | 96% |

The qualitative analysis was designed to go deeper and provide insights into the nature of the development of a sense of agency and efficacy. There were three themes in the data related to agency/efficacy:

- belief in one’s efficacy and authenticity as a change agent
- networks to provide support
- personal responsibility for the learning journey

Effective leaders have a sense of efficacy, or a belief that they have the power or capacity to do what is required to effect change. In other words, they see themselves as agents of change. This is shown through a growing belief in personal worth and confidence:

*The experience for me has been life changing and affirming of my self-belief. I know why I have to lead change in education more now, than I ever have.*

*It has challenged me to my core and shown me that I can do it!*

Sometimes this growing self-belief involves the affirmation of knowledge and expertise already gained in one’s career, but not previously recognised.
I've surprised myself with having picked up (during my career) more knowledge and understanding of school systems than I'd realised.

I have learned that I have greater resource within myself than I thought. I didn't think that leadership was a strength but I feel good that I am able to step into the role with more confidence that I thought I would have.

I have found that I am capable of more than I thought when I challenge myself.

This efficacy is often coupled with a sense of authenticity as a person and in one’s identity as a leader:

I have learned that I am capable of leading people. I was starting to question where I was at and what was I doing because I had questioned my moral purpose. I have rediscovered this year and because of it I have a better understanding of self. I believe I am more authentic as a leader.

I have begun to realise the leadership skill and capacity I have, and feel more at one with myself and my leadership (“more comfortable within my skin”).

How much more at ease I feel with myself. I feel more real because I have developed values that I believe in and use those to guide my thinking and how I act.

The study has unearthed strengths I didn’t realise I possessed. It has enabled and encouraged me to become more reflective and honest about my management. It has also introduced me to information that has encouraged me to ask questions and seek advice in a more constructive manner.

Agency and efficacy also entail a growing recognition that leadership itself is about change and that agency is acting with confidence to bring about change - to take responsibility and have on-going influence in leadership roles. This is a strengthening of leadership identity.

I have realised the significance of my leadership and the responsibility I hold as leader.

I have learnt that I am a significant agent for change within a school. I have also reflected on previous experiences of what I called leadership and that they were more likely to be called management as they were certainly reactive.

By becoming more confident and passionate in my leadership and better read, I was able to model [to other staff] how change is a positive experience. I’m slowly bringing others on board.

A high level of agency entails confidence to challenge others, by asking the questions that challenge and problematise practice and having the conversations necessary to lead the change.

I have developed more confidence in my leadership and I’m not afraid to have the hard conversations with staff now.

It’s been a wonderful way to assess my own openness and growth to new concepts. It’s also been really interesting as I have found myself challenging people around me to consider which model they are using i.e. fixed mindset vs. a growth mindset.

This inquiry has given me the confidence to come out of my shell and actually lead with authority. I have thoroughly enjoyed seeing the increase in student achievement due to my leadership in writing.”

Being an agent of change in transformative practices is supported through networks of other leaders experiencing the same or similar change challenges. There were comments about colleagues providing: “a constant source of inspiration”;“ online learning communities”; “national support network”. Sharing and creating new knowledge between leaders from different schools helps build a sense of what is possible and strengthens agency at the individual leadership and school level.

I have learned that my values are shared by others, which has not always been the case in my own school. This has been pleasing and a relief at times…I have learned to step back further [in my own school] and not respond (to negative reactions in the school), and to consider ways of creating change – for example, other people being seen to lead the change rather than myself which has got over some of the resistance issues of others.
Although feeling a sense of agency and efficacy is buttressed by such shared learning, as is gained through professional networks, it is also embedded in a sense of personal responsibility for one’s individual learning. Building agency and efficacy comes from stepping up and accepting responsibility for making a difference, even when it is tough.

I learnt that I had lost the moral purpose of education. The important thing I have learnt is that by being honest about myself and where I fit in NZ education, I can make a difference. I am therefore more confident and able to challenge

This sense of personal efficacy is a dynamic quality that is vulnerable and ever-changing, through an ongoing process of reflection and risk-taking.

I am clear about my strengths and weaknesses. I know that relationships are extremely important - and you must work on them constantly to build trust and respect…. I am being more courageous but also need to have more experiences with the difficult conversations.

I think I am less confident as I see greater ambiguity in the job and not enough of agreement of what should be happening in school and my confidence is low in bringing about further change. I don't think that I am capable of shifting staff further.

Ultimately, agency and efficacy mean being confident to take on a greater sphere of influence, such as the principalship:

I really didn’t see myself as a Principal but I think I have much better understanding of the type of Principal I would like to be.

I have reflected on my own practice and my development as an educational leader. I have developed a greater awareness of principal role, responsibility and my leadership capacity as an aspiring principal.

I have gone from thinking that principalship is something I may do in the future to actually wanting to get into it NOW!

Agency and efficacy are dynamic and evolving elements of leadership. As confidence and authenticity develop, leaders are able to take responsibility for their actions, more intentionally challenge the status quo and thus be more proactive in leading transformative change.

Disposition to Learn

The Best Evidence Synthesis on Professional Development and Professional Learning (Timperley et al., 2008) makes it very clear that developing as an educational professional is a continuous cycle of learning. Hattie (2009, p. 36) said that key to improving learning outcomes for students were teachers “planning and talking about teaching, and ensuring the teacher constantly seeks feedback information as to the success of his or her teaching on the students.” Key to both of these outcomes is the disposition to learn - that leaders see that learning in leadership and therefore leadership as learning is paramount to the effective leadership of change and developing and inspiring a shared vision and moral purpose. Therefore leaders need opportunities to examine why they think in the way that they do, and what values, beliefs and assumptions underpin this thinking and why. Deeply reflective practice is key to this learning disposition. Most importantly in the work with the aspiring principals was that they did not see this leadership development as a ‘programme being delivered to them’ but a leadership learning journey that would help develop the skills, structures and dispositions for them to continue on through their leadership careers as learning leaders.

| My Kaiarahi challenges my thinking about my leadership | 96% |

In the self-assessment survey in the September a large majority of the participants indicated that their thinking about their leadership was being challenged. The qualitative analysis went deeper to provide insights into the ways in which disposition to learn is developed. These data draw attention to the complex intrapersonal and interpersonal nature of learning for leaders. The disposition to learn encompasses:

- self-awareness
Leader as learner, as a disposition and mindset, is firstly a journey of self-awareness – a recognition that leadership is personal and that learning leadership is “about me” and evolutionary. Learning in leadership was described through metaphors like “platform for growth” and a “journey”:

NAPP has provided me significant opportunity to reflect and develop self-awareness of my leadership style, capacity. I have developed greater confidence as a leader. I have also been significantly challenged as a leader and can recognize many of my inadequacies as a leader. This has at times given me much doubt, yet has also provided a platform for growth.

I believe I am at a cross road in many ways - however [it is] a healthy place to be as I consider career directions. I definitely have greater awareness of school, learning, learner needs and am developing my leadership capacity to address these issues in my current school.

The challenge of new learning is welcomed. Leaders with a disposition to learn are not daunted by the fact that learning is sometimes difficult, and often challenging. They embrace the challenge and find it stimulating and energising to be a learner.

I have been constantly challenged and have had my “head” done in many times by the thought provoking...the inquiring questions to get to the bottom of some of my views.

I have learnt a great deal about myself and had some blind spots illuminated. I do not believe that they would have come to the fore if I wasn’t involving myself in this inquiry.

I have thoroughly enjoyed this challenge and it is far from over. I now have the tools to push for what I know is right and I have had the experience in leading this initiative (through my enquiry) so I know how to better deal with issues I have encountered.

I have learnt that I have a passion for learning and that I am a happier person when I have my thinking challenged and some new theories and thinking to ponder and consider.

I feel more urgent about becoming a better metacognitive thinker! ... I need to move forward to a deeper level.

I am pleased that I am more open to take feedback and not feel threatened by it. ...An aha moment for me was actually beginning to focus and reflect on leadership competencies rather than reporting on what I have been doing.

I have learnt the need to ask why? If teachers aren’t responding well, or as expected, or “beyond expectations”, I am asking why....I have seen the need to go deeper;’ this does take time and open thinking, preferably with others and feedback. How can my eyes be opened to the ‘blindspots’ of my learning and practice?

Learning, ultimately, is an autonomous undertaking. As Marie Clay (1998) reminded us: groups don’t learn — individuals do and they are active constructors of their own learning. Having a disposition to learn includes taking responsibility for learning and accepting that it is something that individuals decide and do that involves being motivated and engaged, welcoming the fact that there will always be new learning, and looking ahead and intentional planning for continued learning.

NAPP has demanded that I sort and sift ideas in my own head around my beliefs and values with regard to school leadership. This is a very difficult thing to do!

It has given me a sense of being a learner again which is always fruitful.

Having a disposition to learn also involves taking personal responsibility for engaging (or not) with the opportunities to learn and being able to be diagnostic about one’s level of input to the process.

I disappointed in myself having not fully engaging with the online forums, discussions and use of my portfolio.
Although learning is personal, it is also social and cultural, involving the co-construction of knowledge that occurs in collaborative work and engagement with ideas. Social support and motivation can arise from having a collegial network. Interacting face-to-face and online with colleagues and coaches creates the forums for open and honest discussion, sharing perspectives, and challenging ideas in a safe context.

The discussion posts/kōrero have contributed immensely to supporting and challenging my thoughts, opinions around leadership.

[The online network] has been one of the most valuable aspects of the programme as the discussion and input from all members of this has been open and honest.

The opportunity to discuss the learning with others be it online forums; my Kaiarahi, our west and north cluster and other colleagues met via the NAPP network, has been a real key to my success.

A really valuable opportunity to make links with local colleagues and develop partnerships. I have been able to use this to introduce new opportunities for students and their feedback has been very positive. The PLG is probably one of those worthwhile aspects of this programme.

There was so much to be gained from meeting up with other NAPPers. I left each day with new tricks, fresh ideas, and loads of inspiration.

Networks have the potential to be sustained over time.

It was really clear that our group has formed a tight connection and this will continue beyond NAPP.

My leadership skills and knowledge have doubled if not more this year by being part of this group and meeting some fantastic people who have supported me. Also by building my bank of associates I have gained a lot of advice and resources to ensure my leadership qualities continue this year and in the years to come.

I have enjoyed the relationships formed with colleagues who are on the same journey ... and learning that there are lots of avenues for support for a new leader.

I loved the other aspiring leaders that I met from the area who have contributed to what I've done. I've made connections for whatever the future takes me I know that I will have for the rest of my teaching career.

The cultural and social diversity within networks provide the different perspectives and questioning ground for new learning to occur. New learning is not a simple addition of ideas. It involves rethinking, reframing and moving ideas forward and building on ideas. The work and disposition to learning requires serious consideration of existing beliefs and practices – the ability to problematise practice.

It has challenged my leadership style and made me reflect more on my learning as a leader. Professional reading, questioning and advice have continued to push my ideas forward and think positively about my progress as a learner and leader.

Developing transformational leadership... is something I value and I need to consciously find ways to do. ...This is a tension because I believe it is creating problems at my school. Communication and a shared purpose have not been developed and I feel that is not taking us on the journey that we should be on.

Through this process I have learned how valuing this reflective model has not only changed my own practice but others too...It has taught me the importance of active listening- how "Learning doesn't happen in the doing, it happens in the reflection".

I began my inquiry dead certain of where I was aiming however the requirement for reflection and consideration about moral purpose has really made me stop in my tracks and think.

Becoming a leader is a learning process that involves personal and social learning that never ends. As one ākonga stated:

Through this year I have become aware that leadership is the work and I feel quite excited and inspired to be embarking on this journey. I know that this will be an ongoing process which through reflection and action will bring about more changes in me.
Having a learning disposition is at the basis of the type of transformative leadership necessary to confront the complex challenges facing leaders internationally. It involves a high level of self-awareness and the ability to confront and question one’s own practice. It requires not only a belief that one’s practice is personal and open to challenge but also a recognition that different perspectives are essential to the process of learning in leadership to enable one to approach the zone of not only knowing there is more to learn, but also looking forward to the new places of not-knowing that are inevitable in changing professional practice.

Building Capacity of Others

The challenges facing schools, and the sustainability of on-going changed practice needed to address the challenges, necessitate shared leadership from teachers, leaders, students, whanau and community members. Leaders in this context are engaged in building and reinforcing capacity in all parts of the school community, including themselves, to address the underachievement of priority student groups.

Building capacity for change in schools and between schools in New Zealand’s education communities is a key focus for leadership development in the National Aspiring Principals' Programme. Their on-going inquiry is intentionally focused on leading change within the school and reflecting on the process along the way. The inquiry summaries from the ākonga, in particular, provide rich descriptions of what they learned about the leadership role of building capacity. These descriptions of building capacity of others can be organised under the following six themes:

- negotiating the change
- learning together
- using research, resources and expertise
- fostering self-awareness
- establishing and fostering relationships
- multiple opportunities for learning

Building capacity for change is developing and negotiating the desired change with those who are likely to be affected by the change, not something that is planned by leaders and presented to others for agreement or "buy in". As one ākonga aptly said:

*If you want to build a ship, don’t herd people together to collect wood and don’t assign them tasks and work, but rather teach them to long for the endless immensity of the sea.*

Change comes from having a vision of the possible, of building capacity “for what might be”. Then, the journey of learning that is likely to produce results and sustain them is co-constructed and negotiated along the way, with leaders acting as experts, guides and lead learners. Feedback, time and dialogue are essential dimensions of the process, as these ākonga statements highlight:

*My leadership actions at this time were centred on inspiring a shared vision.*

*I shared with them how I thought it could go and asked for feedback on the design. I then created time for us to meet offsite during school time and talk through the findings. We meet regularly as a full team and I used this as an opportunity to talk through the idea.*

*I think the need to make the purpose behind projects very clear is paramount. Staff need to fully understand the rationale behind projects so they can understand and appreciate the significance of their work. Without this clarity staff may not engage in the process.*

*I wanted to facilitate an environment where teachers would share what they are currently doing (or more importantly what they are currently TRYING) with the hope that they would spur each other on and learn from one another. ... The topic of discussion was based around “What are we doing? What are we trying? What is working well? What could I share that could help my colleagues?” Dialogue was, for the first time, based around the potential to support deep learning which was really exciting.*
In this journey of learning, includes leaders providing “scaffold for staff”, “co construction – listening to their feedback building this into their journey” and practical ‘how to’ issues, like connecting electronically through “VLN ipod/iPad group, keeping a google doc record pmi and sharing resources through ichat and email”.

It is often tempting to have a vision and “sell” it to others. Negotiation, however, is an iterative process or building ideas collectively, negotiating the power positions and finding a productive balance. These types of comments illustrate this point of learning through one’s own self-awareness about building the capacity of others:

Don’t use the quick turnover of consultation to micromanage everything. If you need to micro manage, that’s a problem you need to address. If they need to be micro managed, that’s a problem for you both to address - but micromanaging does NOT address the issue.

My first realisation about my own leadership in this project was that I was wrong about andragogy. I had not negotiated the process enough, or - if I was really honest, at all. I knew what shape the answer would be in, and was looking for something unconsciously known to me but consciously unknown to everyone else. Even the fact that I was probably using the term “answer” or “solution” was wrong. I was so far from coaching these people, I was ushering and hustling them onto a train that was heading north, but I didn’t know what was beyond the next few kilometres. I was pushing north and talking about north and singing songs about north all the way but not listening to the people who were trained drivers, but sitting on seats in back carriage of the train.

I visited each class with the purpose of accessing student voice. I was asking the wrong questions and whilst it was good to confirm what I knew about the students learning with technology, it wasn’t helpful in the long term as the teachers seemed to perceive my actions as checking up, interfering or adding another layer. ... I needed to ... trust myself and stand with empty hands and “attend” to the learners rather than just listen. I like to think that my leadership style is negotiated and minimally invasive. Whilst this may be true, it is irrelevant. In the same way that teachers should be ‘attending’ to students, leaders should be ‘attending’ to teachers. I had forgotten that in the context of this inquiry that I was being watched significantly more than I was watching. As much as I tried to, appropriately, be part of the group, my role in the school meant that I never could. I could interrupt more than other people, challenge more than other people and interfere more simply because of my role. I learnt to listen with my eyes and close my mouth.

Negotiating the change includes valuing the expertise that exists in the school already – and being willing to listen and to use the knowledge and skill of others. It also means trying to understand someone else’s perspective and changing directions to respond to the realities of the situation and of the importance of engaging others in the process of change. When this occurs, “Staff feel valued, more appreciated, want to be part of the decision making process.”

I probably reflect from other people’s points of view more. I am more accommodating of other people’s pedagogies when they clash with mine, I look for commonalities first and build on these. It’s about getting key people in key roles and then supporting them. Before I was more about making people depend on me as it made me feel important and needed.

My kaiarahi was great at helping me to see past the obvious resistance and reflect on why people were feeling what they were feeling. I view change as exciting and necessary and I am developing an understanding of how to work with others’ worries and concerns around change in a respectful way.

Capacity-building is an on-going process of learning, for everyone involved. When people are actively involved in the process and living the change in their own contexts, they develop a shared understanding and take collective responsibility for moving forward. Learning together, they are also able to see issues from others’ perspectives.

Listening to staff and being committed to building capacity within a regular review framework has been equally important. It is exciting to see the diversity of skills developing within staff and the Ako or collaborative learning that is occurring, some of it structured but the majority with ICT is just in time anywhere at any time.
This often means confirming existing knowledge and creating new knowledge, as a group.

*This process allowed staff members to contribute to a list of existing knowledge but also helped to gain consistency and understanding of what needed to be included in teacher’s planning; why it needed to be included, how students’ learning needs will be met and therefore be reflected in the weekly plans.*

PLCs enabled teachers to change their attitudes and approach towards weekly planning and therefore the change has improved student learning in class. More students are being taught regularly at their appropriate levels especially in Reading and Maths whereas in the past, students were being taught as a whole class where their individual learning needs were not being catered for therefore causing them to become disruptive and abusive in class. Also, teachers and tutors are feeling more confident about teaching. Communication between tutors and teachers has also improved because there is more clarity about what is being taught.

In order to build the capacity of others, leaders draw on knowledge that is outside the realm of the specific context. This can be from research: “have a research base and be able to articulate it”, policy documents, data or evidence, as well as from external experts.

*In the process of redesigning the strategic and annual plans I read many of the frameworks, rules and guidelines that schools are bound by; for example; the National Administration Guidelines, the National Education Guidelines, The Statement of Intent, Ka Hikitia, the Pasifika Education Plan, the New Zealand Curriculum, Evaluation Indicators for School Reviews, Success for all (SEN) and the Careers benchmarks. This reading and the synthesising of the information contained in these documents was particularly beneficial for me as I knew of the documents from a surface point of view but to prepare the revised plans I had to engage more fully in the details.*

I had to ensure that not only could I talk the talk, but I could walk the walk too. *Using the research I had done prior to this I was able to sell the idea and because I had the evidence that this method of grouping would benefit all learners and even make the teachers’ job easier, the team were on board.*

I presented for 1 hour [at the staff meeting] and covered a large range of topics from research and Ministry initiatives. The Staff was asked to complete a feedback sheet saying: two things they had learned or had reinforced, one thing they would try in their class, one thing they would disagree with or challenge. *I summarised the feedback sheets, and asked HOD’s to follow up on things staff were going to try.*

I held regular discussions during syndicate meetings about possible actions to progress the inquiry and encouraged my colleagues to do further research and reading to increase our collective knowledge in this area. I suggested possible websites that they could access. *I also modelled the process by sharing ideas that I had been working on and explained how I had implemented them in my classroom. Each teacher was to trial initiatives informed by their readings in the classroom, with particular focus on the target students.*

Capacity building is not a “paint by numbers” activity of telling people what to do and expecting them to change. Instead, it involves creating the conditions where people can look at themselves – what they believe and what they do – thereby fostering self-assessment and self-awareness.

*Have teachers deliver a “know thyself” presentation at the beginning of the year - adapted from know the learner-culture document*  

*Have teachers assess themselves against Tataiako at the beginning of the year.*

To enhance student achievement teachers need to look at themselves and ask – “what am I doing to cause this?”

I made very deliberate acts of leadership based on an initial survey I created for staff around their values and beliefs towards PD.

*Articulating my values to all staff and connecting with theirs: engage the heart; Share the success; values, values and more values – always refer to back to colleagues’ values and their values connect the heart and the head.*

Relationships and the building of trust are at the core of any attempt to build capacity and facilitate change in schools – relationships with staff, with students and with family/whanau.
This project was not about eLearning. It was not about the teachers in my group. It was not about student learning, technology, school networks or accessibility. It was not about pedagogy or planning or school wide trends. It was about people, my relationship with them, my leadership style, habits, mistakes and shortcomings.

This led to me to developing more in the area of manaakitanga – taking my personal moral commitment to raise student achievement to the next level through supporting the professional growth of our PLC, and developing awhinatanga – guiding and supporting those in the PLC to develop as teachers and potential leaders.

Particular areas of development have been around being much more strategic in my relationship development with staff. I think that relationship management is a strength of mine but I am learning that true relationship development must be much more intentional to affect real change in others.

Learning to listen: active listening has enabled me to grow my relationships with parents, students, and my teaching colleagues. My improved listening has enabled issues and problems to dissolve, as the dialogue has been enhanced by my improved ability to rephrase and ask the questions that enable the speaker to self-resolve the issues.

I have to add that my journey in my school in my second year as DP this has also been a huge part of my journey - building and maintaining relationships and trust for example.

According to Timperley (2010) one of the fundamental principles of professional learning is having multiple opportunities to learn and apply information. This process of on-going reflection and discussion is particularly valuable when it involves challenging existing thinking and building new practices.

The PLC developed into a community where teachers shared best practice, but we also challenged ‘the way things have always been done’ in the light of what the data was telling us.

The power of prioritising time for those conversations, the power of engaging others in the process, the power of prioritising reflective practice and empowering others through this process. ... I have been surprised how willing our staff have been to take on this coaching mode, how enthusiastic they all are about being part of this, how reflection and asking reflective questions has empowered not only our staff but our students, how this has inadvertently affected staff morale, motivation and teaching practice, how all our talk is about the whys, hows, instead of the whats... Valuing this reflective model has not only changed my own practice but others’ too – through their own reflections and learning dialogues. It has taught me the importance of active listening, how “learning doesn’t happen in the doing, it happens in the reflection”.

Mentoring and modelling practice is a powerful vehicle for influencing practice and building capacity for change.

I also modelled the process by sharing ideas that I had been working on and explained how I had implemented them in my classroom.

I have learned the importance of a leader in mentoring the next level of leaders within an institution.

We agreed that we had missed a step and needed to model structured mentoring by team leader to staff member and mentor them in their roles/responsibilities, challenges and areas they have identified as goals in appraisal...It is interesting as we had intended that structured mentoring would be for the students and improving their relationships with teachers but we have found over time that the focus moved from the student to structured mentoring for the teachers.

I found myself coaching, modelling and guiding the teachers working with their small groups. My leadership became more about modelling the way and encouraging the heart. I organised modelling sessions and helped the teachers to see the small regular gains their students were making as real progress. I gave lots of feedback and praise and was a sounding board for ideas or thoughts.

The opportunity to lead and bring about authentic change in the achievement of students especially Maori and Pasifika students was great. My inquiry made me a positive role model for other teachers to succeed.
The study of leaders undertaking an inquiry in their own context provides some valuable insights into the challenges they face as they try to build the capacity of others in their schools. Although a leader may have a clear vision of why it is important to build capacity, this vision is not always shared or it is not seen as important enough to produce changes in others’ practice. Building capacity for change includes building the disposition and commitment to action.

Leading resistant staff is difficult, but what I find hardest are staff who you can work with, set clear expectations for and they don’t execute the plan. It isn’t deliberately undermining, but not important to them. I feel a need to micro-manage them to ensure they are doing what they said they would do and that is such a frustrating place to be in.

Change management needs to be sold to staff – there can’t be a ‘fix-it’ attitude, beliefs and values need to be developed along with the shift in pedagogy.

The existing power relations between teachers in schools or the differences in years of experience can be a factor influencing building the capacity of others in the education community.

We were all in agreement that we needed teachers to trial a comprehension strategy for an extended period and report back to the group at three pre-determined staff meetings. We were also expecting that teachers would work within their own syndicate groups and with their own buddies. The idea was for all teachers to get a feel for reading across all year levels. We were expecting very experienced teachers to look critically at the way they teach reading and for many this was threatening. One member of my team was very enthusiastic - a beginning teacher, the other more experienced teacher was more reserved. My leadership then became about, enabling others to act, through supporting the ideas and vision of my less experienced colleague.

I have struggled at time as I am not already in a senior leadership role in our school as many of our colleagues are.

It is difficult to move forward and build the capacity of others in one area when the change initiative is overshadowed by other priorities.

I think for me the largest challenge has been keeping the momentum going with the staff involved. As this inquiry has sat outside the school focus areas it has been challenging to make it an integral part of syndicate meetings and measurable outcomes as a point of difference. This has arisen, essentially as other things have needed be discussed at these meetings and have taken over from my inquiry.

Although it started well and staff were engaged, it lost its momentum when the senior management team decided to look at introducing coaching across the staff. Timing also refers to making sure you do not have too many competing projects on the go. I was very aware the school-wide assessment focus just drifted away as other projects overrode it. It becomes very difficult for staff to stay focussed, engaged and enthusiastic about a project when things are left hanging, or are temporarily over-ridden by other projects.

School leaders are always confronted with small “p” politics of working in schools.

It has been hard this year as I have come into a new school. Not only have I had to take on a leadership role within my school but also build the respect and relationships with staff too. It has been a real challenge.

Leading change in my area of inquiry has been difficult and hindered by time constraints and other staff members. It has also proved to be difficult because I am not in a position of leadership as I had changed schools and lost my senior position.

I feel my leadership in an educational sense, especially with my team of 45+ fantastic teachers, has improved but also that the gaps in what I would now like to be doing but unable to due our new leadership within the management team has caused more frustration for me in my role.

Building capacity in others is a personalised undertaking that is always being grown in relation to the unique needs of the individuals and the context.
ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL – WHAT YOU SEE IS NOT WHAT YOU GET. This would be the greatest mind shift for me. I have learned that I cannot expect everyone to be on my page at the same time and the way in which I deal with 1 member of my team can be vastly different from another. I have learned people need absorption time and a clear understanding of where this is leading. I have also learnt to work alongside the mumblers and disengaged and to strive to include them and recognise their individual contributions. I have learnt the importance of ensuring everyone is involved in celebrations of team accomplishments.

Building the capacity of others necessitates a high level of self-awareness to be able to be sufficiently open and adaptive to negotiate the desired change the enhanced capacity is required for. It means that leaders and the people they work with learn together using shared resources, expertise and the research literature. Fostering self-awareness in others helps to build the disposition and commitment to engage in the leadership practice. Learning with others requires strong and trusted learning relationships that will enable multiple opportunities for learning to be part of the building capacity process.

Understanding the Role of the Principal

Principals at all stages of experience are on a continual cycle of learning about school operating systems. For new principals this cycle offers sometimes daunting volumes of “infowhelm” as they interact with resourcing and people systems. In the National Aspiring Principals Programme ākonga engage in focussed learning about the principal’s roles in developing and using effective school operating systems to enhance student learning. Emphasis in the past has tended to be placed on leaders learning the “what” of school systems. The NAPP emphasis is not only working with the what, but also knowing the “why” and deepening thinking and learning about school systems by asking “what if” and “what might be”. During the NAPP programme, ākonga are challenged to use online platforms and develop their own Personal Learning Environments (PLEs) as they learn about school systems and leadership in an age when digital tools and communities offer learning opportunities that are flexible, personalised, collaborative and connected. In the self-assessment survey a large majority of respondents found the online modules valuable in their learning about the role of the school principal.

| The online learning modules on the role of the principal have helped me learn a lot about the role of the principal as leader of the school community | 91% |
| The online learning modules on the role of the principal have assisted me learn a lot about the multi-faceted managerial role of the principal in a self-managing system | 91% |
| The online learning modules on the role of the principal have influenced my leadership | 83% |
| The online learning modules on the role of the principal are a valuable process and developing resource | 90% |

The qualitative analysis was designed to go deeper and provide insights into what was important to participants’ understanding of the role of the principal. The analysis identified five dimensions of this process:

- seeing the complexity of the principalship
- technology as an enabler
- practice-based knowledge, expert knowledge
- deep engagement with ideas
- building identity as a leader

Although teachers observe principals and their work every day, they are not always aware of the range and complexity of the role. These data show that the awareness of the complex and multi-faceted nature of the principal’s role is an important part of development in understanding the role for aspiring principals.

So many facets of leadership to understand and develop.
This has given me an insight into the multi-faceted role a principal encounters.

Being exposed to the intricacies and amount of information available (through NAPP) gives aspiring principals insight into the complexity of the role.

These have been fantastic as a way of opening up my knowledge of the multi-faceted role of the Principal and some insight into the wide range of tasks that a Principal is responsible for. I have seen this help me when I have acted as Acting Principal this term.

They have helped me understand some of the roles of the principal that I was not aware of and had no knowledge about e.g. property.

The tricky bits of jargon and the multitude of webpages full of information have now become clearer and I can see what it would mean to be a school principal in theory. It is an exciting and invigorating time! I have likened it to others as though I have completed a building apprenticeship and now I need to go and build a house!

They have really opened my eyes and mind to the complexity of the role of a principal and I am now looking at my own principal through much wider eyes and with more understanding.

Technology is increasingly a pervasive element in professional learning that can serve many purposes. In NAPP it was used as a medium for delivering information to the participants that they could utilise in their self-study and as a medium for conversations and inquiry. An electronic platform can serve as an enabler for learning in a variety of ways.

Having a number and range of possible resources, all collected in one place can be immediately useful, and can serve as a knowledge bank for the future.

I have significantly more confidence in accessing specific materials, reading, research, data, policies, guides etc. These modules have influenced my leadership and provided significant support to me when preparing or developing my own resources.

Having resources available on line provided instant access for use on a “just-in-time” basis and for sharing with others.

I have learnt a tremendous amount from the online learning. It has been good that this can be done at my own pace and in my own space.

I appreciated having the hyperlinks - how many pages can one person have open. I am amazed at all the information, legal documentation and forms that are stored on line. I have read most of the references, and have made extra jottings on the Systems document that will help me go back to these pages in the future.

The great thing about the VLN is that it is like having a "Best Practice" workshop there online accessible 24/7. How much more valuable are peoples' actual experiences of situations? "Stories" stay in my mind more easily and I learn more quickly.

You don’t know what you don’t know and these are a valuable resource of how to and what to do.

Reading everyone's posts is amazing learning. It is great to do it at the touch of a button when I'm ready...The influence of the online learning has enabled me to significantly increase my knowledge and has definitely grown me as a leader.

The wealth of materials in an online environment can form the basis for a personalised compendium of resources for use in the future.

I particularly enjoyed building up my own personal library of all the different resources available that I did not realise existed. This will be extremely useful for the future.

The online learning modules have led me to read and dip into countless papers, articles and online resources...some more helpful than others. Whilst I do not always retain the entire content of what I have read it has provided a valuable resource for further reference that I should be able to access at a later date.
The online modules covered the many different roles of the principal as the leader of a school community and were useful in helping me to develop a resource for use in the future.

A huge resource of useful information. I have found reading the various articles/sections etc. interesting and thought provoking. It will also be a valuable resource for the future and I have already found myself coming back to different sections as I deal with different challenges in my leadership role.

I sing the praises of the VLN all the time. As a learning tool it is like nothing I have ever known. I enjoy the fact that I can access it when I like and that any new learning I can cut and paste into my folder. I am building an amazing learning resource for myself.

Having a wealth of resources can provide the basis for deep and challenging reflection and discussion. Sharing and clarifying meaning and applications with colleagues and experts provides a forum for seeing multiple perspectives that can support, and sometimes challenge, ideas in ways that deepen understanding.

The experiences shared through the discussions have been invaluable and have offered a wide variety of solutions to problems or challenging areas in leadership roles at schools. This was the most useful part of my learning journey this year.

There has been a lot of material to work through - but it has been incredibly useful and helpful in many aspects of my role. The readings have been instrumental in reflection and discussion.

It’s good to read different perspectives about the same topic. This helps me to consider aspects of leadership from different angles.

Using an online environment was challenging for some participants, highlighting the importance of using multiple avenues for engaging and processing information about the role of the principal.

I have found this side of the programme hard. I see the value and enjoyed reading some postings but did find the whole process difficult as it didn't really suit my learning. I did gain a lot from readings and mainly talking to my principal about certain things I had no idea on (e.g. finance, budgeting). I would then use these conversations to post my thoughts. I am a face to face person and found the postings more of a hassle than anything, but I understand it is a good way for people to be reflective and accountable for NAPP requirements.

Having to learn a new piece of software that isn’t too straight forward to learn was frustrating and still is!

The online korero have been a chore and have not, in my opinion, been a very valuable way of having a discussion. There are too many people online to have effective, meaningful conversations. I’ve endured them in order to complete the course but I have not gained much learning from them. The resources and readings, however, have been fantastic and I have found myself reading far beyond the basic requirements just because I’ve found them interesting.

Although reading other peoples posts has been very interesting - it is difficult to develop thinking using this format - I much preferred the professional learning group [on-line] discussions - as you can engage in conversations with others and together develop thinking - it is sometimes easy to lose motivation as it feels that there is no audience - that you are posting to the ether - and no one really reads what you say. In the smaller PLG [on-line] discussions - this was much better.

Educational leaders are expected to integrate knowledge from a wide variety of places and relate it to the unique realities of their work environments. Professional learning, as we described it earlier, is an active, social and demanding process. Having an online forum can support processing mountains of information and provide a place for critical challenge of ideas, as people engage in discussions about how it applies to them and see how ideas from the readings become real through the practice-based knowledge and experiences of colleagues.

It’s good to see how others see the addressing of various issues. Mostly we are all on the same page but we can add our own ideas. Sometimes I think we need to remember that we are just talking about ideals and in a real situation it can be much different. It is a good forum to hear about successful things that others have done in their schools.
These have given me an insight of the multi-faceted role a principal encounters. It has been great to collaborate with fellow learners and hear and read about what others experience in their school.

I love the reading and constant stimulation of the Korero and the comments that are tracked through to my email inbox - not a moment goes by when I haven't had to consider an issue or opinion in amongst my everyday business - it's this I'll miss more than anything.

Again this took some time to get up to speed with how it all worked but once I got a handle on this it was a great way to gain understanding of the role of the principal. It used people's real experiences to help answer the questions posed.

Processing and thinking with colleagues is a powerful way to learn that can be reinforced and buttressed by the expertise that is available from current principals, coaches, policy documents, research and other professionals.

There were some incredible, high level professionals in the group. We have been fortunate to have worked alongside these people. It's also been a privilege to see these people making links in their learning that support mine and inspiring to know that some will be principals soon.

Module discussions have been really beneficial. Adding the Principal to the mix and getting their take and input into our discussions has been brilliant. Great discussions with my buddy in this area and the VLN has been good to bring together a range of options, ideas, approaches etc.

I have found it very interesting to read about the roles of the Principal and also the modules "force" reading around some of the essential MOE documentation. I was very grateful when I had an interview for a Principal position. I was able to answer questions that I would have found difficult if not for the online modules.

Good to study but my best source of information has been my own Principal who provides the real life context for my learning.

I did enjoy them for the most part as my Principal spent a lot of time discussing them, so professionally they were a very good resource.

I particularly enjoyed the guests that spoke at our PLG meetings - finance and new principal.

Once I got started with my "buddy" we would read the articles and discuss them together. This was a very valuable exercise. I found the readings on the financial management of a school uncovered a wealth of resources. Discussing this with another principal also outlined the support available in financial management.

Lack of access to expertise can be challenging.

I found this very difficult, as I needed time to talk to our principal to find out our own systems, to then understand the modules more fully. As my principal was not available for this, I felt disheartened.

Growing into and through the role of a leader is both intellectual and personal. Building an identity as a leader involves developing a mindset about who you are and being confident about having the knowledge, skills and dispositions to step up to the challenge.

I have reflected on my own practice and my development as an educational leader. I have developed a greater awareness of principal role, responsibility and my leadership capacity as an aspiring Principal - I have been challenged by my learning's and also questioned and reviewed my career direction. This has been positive for me and my journey as I remain confident in my capacity as a leader in education contexts.

I liked to think that I knew a lot about leadership. I've been blown away by the depth of some of the discussions and the technical aspects that have come up. And I don't think I know anywhere as much as I thought I did.

I really didn't see myself as a Principal but I think I have much better understanding of the type of Principal I would like to be.
The role of the principal is complex and multi-faceted and the journey towards it is a personal process of learning and growing, through engagement and connection with resources, ideas and people. Technology offers a sustaining and flexible, any-time, any-place learning community and resource repository.

Conclusions

The regular collection of data from aspiring principals in New Zealand offers a window into the thinking of the participants, as a vehicle for gaining insights about the ways in which they are changing and growing in relation to the assumptions and intended outcomes from the theory of action. The data sets provide an opportunity to see how the theory of action is evident in how participants see their experiences and their learning from NAPP.

This investigation of the participant data collected as part of the NAPP has provided a close up look at the experience of learning leadership for aspiring principals in New Zealand. It has provided us with an opportunity to consider the process through their eyes in order to extend our understanding of what leadership learning means for individuals and for educational organisations. Although we often talk or write about such concepts as moral purpose, building leadership capacity and developing culturally responsive practice, for example, we are not always clear about what this means in leadership practice, and the learning of such educational leadership practice. We have come away from the work with four key messages:

- Learning leadership is complex and requires a combination of coordination and planning, with flexibility and tolerance for ambiguity.
- Leadership learning is dynamic, evolutionary, and sometimes revolutionary.
- Leadership learning is both personal and collective.
- Leadership learning is driven by purpose – For What?

Perhaps the most compelling message from this work is that learning to be educational leaders who are equipped to support high quality and equitable education in New Zealand is a multi-faceted and complex process. Many of the components of NAPP (moral purpose, cultural responsiveness, building knowledge, electronic communities, coaching, using data, inquiry-mindedness) are well-recognised in the international literature, with their own knowledge base and processes. They are often treated as separate issues through their own distinct research projects, professional learning contracts and policies and have not often been considered together and investigated within leadership development and practices. Our analysis of these data sets makes it very clear that it is impossible to pull these components, such as moral purpose and cultural responsiveness, apart and treat them as separate entities. Instead, they are inextricably linked and need to be considered together in an on-going process. Although we used the dimensions of the NAPP Theory of Action as lenses to analyse the same data, it was clear that they do not work in isolation from one another. Indeed, many of the themes that emerged in each section were repeated in others and comments could have been used across a number of themes. The themes of self-assessment and self-awareness came up over and over. So did the interplay of personal learning and reflection with challenge and support from others on the same journey and from the kaiarahi. Moral purpose was a foundational concept that permeated the rest, but was at the same time, developed by the rest. The development agency and efficacy as change agents and principals was influenced by all of the elements – moral purpose, cultural responsiveness, disposition to learn, building capacity and understanding the role of the principal.

It is clear from this study that leadership learning is complex and different elements such as developing cultural responsiveness, for example, cannot be treated separately but needs to be developed together with other key concepts of leadership that support it, develop it and maintain it. Having a Theory of Action in any leadership development is an essential component of consolidating the starting point, clarifying assumptions, making the expected outcomes explicit, and charting the journey in theory, as it is being planned and experienced. There will always be diversions along the way, but having the Theory of Action will provide a clear framework for adaptive leadership, while maintaining a solid core direction as a reference for making changes during the implementation.
The leadership journey described by the ākonga in NAPP was one of constant learning and of challenge. As one leader said:

What a journey so far - It's been like hopping into a river in a canoe in the calm and then finding there are unanticipated white waters and rapids and falls... thankfully finding others in canoes paddling as hard as I was, and crashing against the occasional rock wall, has helped and the national hui and connections with some amazing other aspiring leaders of learning has been supportive and affirming.

Although the learning was sometimes challenging, the process evolved and moved forward in ways that were dynamic and evolutionary; sometimes even revolutionary, for leadership learners. Leadership learners do not move in a lock-step way, through a training programme, all together at the same time. Instead, they move at their own pace, perhaps forward then back, in circles and along unmarked paths. Each person follows a unique, personalised pathway for building new knowledge, dispositions and practices for themselves. Not only do developers and facilitators of leadership learning need to be cognisant of the non-linear nature of the journey, the participants themselves also need to be comfortable in multiple and uncertain learning environments as they negotiate the complexity and ambiguity of their own learning. This growing resilience came through in a number of ways in the data, with participants being willing to keep going and operate outside their comfort zones.

I am not sure I am more confident as a leader as I have learnt so much about what I don’t know! My respect for my own leaders has increased immensely. I’ve done some things radically different as a result this year and the outcomes of that have been very positive.

I have grown in my leadership and am excited about the learning and getting into a Principal’s role. I feel I would be more confident now. It was the case of what you didn’t know and thinking you could do the job to now knowing what I have learnt and realised wow! I really didn’t know! How scary is that!

I’m planting my garden (choosing very cheap plants mostly root bound) at the moment and think of root bound plants- sometimes it is really valuable for someone to tease out the roots so the growth can go wider and deeper and the tree taller and stronger... ) my emerging metaphor for leadership...

Having a disposition to learn is certainly a key requirement for leadership learning. This learning is personal; it is social and it is emotional. It is linear and erratic. Leadership learning involves new learning in an unpredictable and changeable context where there are tensions that push and pull the learner in the process of grappling with new ideas and practices – reframing, connecting, reviewing and revisiting, as they go deeper in their thinking and in their subsequent practice. Being part of a professional learning network – with colleagues who are charged with the responsibility of being “critical friends” who provide both support and challenge – creates the conditions for the tension, as well as the forum for different perspectives and moving forward to new learning.

Finally, the driving force behind forward thinking leadership learning is purpose – What Am I Doing This For? Back to the Theory of Action – what are the ultimate outcomes for New Zealand education and thus, for educational leadership capabilities and dispositions? Claxton (2006) stated “Only if you tell me what your end is can I tell if your means are good or bad” and Starratt’s (2004) seminal statement “Leadership for what?” challenge us to be clear about purpose and outcomes for leadership as these must underpin the design of the leadership learning experiences.
References


Appendices

Appendix 1 Guided Reflection

What have you learnt about yourself this year?
What has pleased yourself about yourself?
How have you changed as a person in your leadership this year?
What have you learned about transformational change?
What have you learned about yourself about addressing Maori achievement?
What do you still need to learn for your leadership?
What questions do you still have about leadership?
Appendix 2 September Self-Assessment

Reflecting on my NAPP 2012 experience

Our project team would like some formative feedback about your leadership learning experiences in the National Aspiring Principals Programme thus far this year. Our 'inquiry' is focused on how we design a leadership learning experience that meets participants' learning needs as well as the intended curriculum and outcomes. We hope that you will also seek formative feedback in your own inquiry at this stage of the year. This survey is to seek your perspective on the journey you have been part of this year. This survey is attached to your name and is therefore not anonymous. This survey is a compulsory part of the year. All responses will be collated into a group response to be given to Kaiarahi - no individual will be identifiable to any Kaiarahi, unless you write something specific. The survey focuses on your learning through your inquiry - online reflection on your inquiry - engagement with your Kaiarahi - engagement with your professional learning group - engagement with the online systems modules - and it asks you about your 'leadership and learning' outcomes Please select the response that best suits your perception AND add comments in the text box at the end of each series of questions. Allow 10-20 minutes to complete this please.

Full Name (Family/Surname, First name) *

Select your region *

- Southern (South Island)
- Northern (Northland & Auckland)
- Central South (Taranaki, Wanganui, Manawatu, Wellington)
- Central North (Hawkes Bay, Gisborne, Bay of Plenty, Waikato & Central Plateau)

Kaiarahi *

My Leadership Inquiry * 1 Strongly Disagree; 2 Disagree; 3 Agree; 4 Strongly Agree

- has been a real learning experience
- has challenged my thinking about leading change
- has been supported and challenged through my coaching sessions with my Kaiarahi
- has increased my understanding of Māori achieving success as Māori
- has helped me develop and communicate a stronger moral purpose

Comments *

My Portfolio * 1 Strongly Disagree; 2 Disagree; 3 Agree; 4 Strongly Agree

- is developing into an interesting account of my year's learning journey
- provides a place for me to reflect on my leadership regularly
- has been significant in supporting my inquiry process
- has received comments from other participants
- has received regular comments from my Kaiarahi

Comments *

My Kaiarahi * 1 Strongly Disagree; 2 Disagree; 3 Agree; 4 Strongly Agree

- challenges my thinking about my leadership

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6 This material was presented in an online survey, properly formatted.
• is available and approachable
• supports me in my leadership and learning
• questions me about Māori learning student outcomes and the Treaty of Waitangi
• models culturally responsive leadership
• models coaching with effective listening and questioning
• assists me develop my sense of efficacy (my confidence that I can make a difference)
• assists me to understand the NAPP curriculum and makes links to my self-assessment

Comments *
My professional learning group * 1 Strongly Disagree; 2 Disagree; 3 Agree; 4 Strongly Agree
4 Strongly Agree
• has motivated me to contribute to the development and sustainability of our group
• has been a worthwhile aspect of the year
• has developed sufficient trust to allow me to be open about my successes and challenges
• has assisted me develop a good regional/national support network

Comments *
The online learning modules * 1 Strongly Disagree; 2 Disagree; 3 Agree; 4 Strongly Agree
Strongly Agree
• have helped me learn a lot about the role of the principal as leader of the school community
• have assisted me learn a lot about the multi-faceted managerial role of the principal in a self-managing system
• have influenced my leadership
• have influenced some of my reflections in My Portfolio
• are a valuable process and developing resource

Comments *
My Leadership * 1 Strongly Disagree; 2 Disagree; 3 Agree; 4 Strongly Agree
• I have developed in self-awareness
• I am more confident in my role as a leader
• I know more about culturally responsive pedagogy and leadership
• I embody the Treaty of Waitangi in my leadership role
• I am more focused on improving Māori students' learning outcomes
• I am more focused on improving Pasifika students' learning outcomes
• I am more focused on improving Special Needs students' learning outcomes
• I am more capable in online learning communities
• I am modelling a future-focus in my leadership practice

Comments *
My leadership and my learning * 1 Strongly Disagree; 2 Disagree; 3 Agree; 4 Strongly Agree
Strongly Agree
• I am better able to manage my school duties and responsibilities to scheduling my professional learning for NAPP
• NAPP has provided me with wide ranging experiences to meet my needs as a future principal
• There has been coherence in my NAPP learning journey this year
• My understanding of the possibilities of the use and leadership of ICT in schools has increased through my work on My Portfolio and the Virtual Learning Network

Comments *

Is there anything else you would like to share about your experiences in the National Aspiring Principals Programme?
Appendix 3 Framework For The Inquiry Presentation- November 2013

You are required to present to your BOT, your Principal and your PLG, so there needs to be two presentations:

At a BOT meeting preferably in November or December
At a PLG gathering to your small PLG

This is your time to tell the story of your year’s leadership learning through your inquiry.

Make a 15 minute presentation to your small Professional Learning Group with 5 minutes for questions.

The story should capture:

- the focus of your inquiry.- What were the learning needs? What was the inquiry question?
- the methods you used to lead others in a cycle of change –What learning experiences did you and your team design and engage in to address your inquiry question?
- the outcomes achieved so far-How has practice changed as a result of the inquiry? What is the impact of the changed practice for teachers/ school leaders?
- the intended outcomes for student learning- What is the impact of the changed practice for students?
- the intended plan for further development for sustainability- What now are the learning needs for students/ teachers and school leaders?

For Your PLG

Please have an A4 paper handout that outlines the above to give to the other participants in your PLG.

For Your Facilitator

One electronic copy of this is required to be emailed to your facilitator. These will be compiled into an electronic book of all inquiries for Generation 2011.

For Your BOT

Provide the A4 handout plus whatever other appropriate data, recommendations and backup material is relevant.