

# **‘The Best Job in the World: Accountability, Autonomy, Leadership, Teaching and Learning’**

Dubrovnik 2011

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# Education in Europe in 2011

- Finance agenda and educational reform
- Need for economic security – sovereignty
- Reality – where are the decisions made?
- Truth? Spending too much, so we borrow
- Decisions – external and internal impact?
- Budget setting - ministry by ministry
- Education needs to demonstrate vfm

# A Painful Message!

- **Impact on schools**
- **Work, and learn, with and from each other**
- **Best value is about avoiding re-invention of the wheel**
- **How well do present systems work? All or some meeting success? Cannot afford to carry 50%**
- **PISA? A wake up call for many to reflect on their educational value chain.**
- **How we teach, learn, assess, grade, measure success?**

# Assessment crazy!

- **Assessment of learning or for learning?**
- **Role of tests?**
- **Leadership – monitoring and screening**
- **Focus on partnership with others – schools, parents and the community**
- **Sending out the right messages about school(s) effectiveness**
- **Alone, or together? Time to help...**

# Data and Storytelling

- ‘Data doesn’t always provide answers but it does suggest what some of the right questions might be...’
- “There is no straightforward, formulaic link, for example, from contextualised or any other form of data to the judgments inspectors make during inspections. And data must never be used – by schools or inspectors – to furnish excuses for poor attainment or slow progress... so data are valuable... But, data are only numbers on a page, or a spreadsheet on a screen. They only measure what has been tested. And people often only test what they feel they can measure. The challenge for schools, and for inspectors, is to understand the data available and get behind the figures to explore the strengths and weaknesses they indicate.”

# OECD Study on school leadership

- 22 participating countries 2006-2008
- Focus on: 'International activities to help policy-makers compare ... approaches to school leadership policy, identify innovative practices and provide policy options... for action...'
  - 3 conferences + final conference (2008 April)
  - 5 National studies and individual comparative case studies
  - 186 page Synthesis Report
  - Key Messages for school improvement

# The Numbers Game

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# Autonomy and Accountability

Primarily, because we have control of the total budget allocated to each school, key decisions and choice about staffing, resources and training lie within each school setting... being able and responsible for staff development, designing and creating the environment in classrooms, choosing what equipment is purchased and – most importantly – controlling the recruitment and deployment of staff and so thereby influence the teaching and learning of a school

# Stories from Finland and England

- Both countries within OECD Case Studies and both with high levels of autonomy
- Finland – Narrow difference between highest performing and lowest performing schools
- England – Wide(est) differences between highest/lowest performing schools
- History of inspection, accountability and self evaluation (Tenure & Working Conditions)
- Focus on high stakes testing and narrow curriculum v 'context for worthwhile learning in schools'
- System Leadership emerges as the prize from both Case Studies

# Why leadership is important?

- Because we have ...
- a new reform agenda in many countries with reforms is aimed at improving learning outcomes
- recognition of research into the complexity of learning
- mediation between national systems and classroom-level delivery – inspection, accountability and autonomy in inverse proportion to success
- significant differences in and between educational systems across Europe (EUSA Working Conditions 2008)
- EUSA role to identify, share and promote best practice amongst ourselves

# What's in a name – it's all leadership!

Headteacher    Director of Learning

Principal    Executive Head    Head of School

School Manager    HT    Depute    Rector

Headmaster    Headmistress    Head

# And, because...

We now have an emerging range of new regulatory models with feedback, incentives, adaptive capacity and the assumption that:

every school is an adaptive organisation...

and, where schools are intelligent organisations...

and, where, leadership is a key factor in quality delivery... in the classroom

and, where system leadership impacts beyond a single school...

and, where networking, partnership and collaboration between schools becomes the norm

# Key Conclusions

So, if we need a new definition of leadership moving from  
(Individual) Principalship vs. (Distributed) leadership

And, within broader perimeters than a single school...and with partnership  
between schools and associated agencies to address an agenda that is  
beyond just education alone

It also has to be within an educational system where school leadership  
matters, because we recognise that

- Differences between schools operating in similar environments and with similar students can have very differing outcomes
- Surveys based on simplistic models do not show significant impact... however, more complex impact and outcome models all confirm the strong influence of schools in the community – so, who leads our schools is of paramount importance

# Schools do make a difference

- 4 key factors determine success in life...
- Gender and Health ARE in top 10
- Poverty – determines what, where you get access to
- Family – you learn the script from those around you!
- Neighbourhood – Postcode matters
- Quality of schooling - 20x more significant than the other 3 factors alone

# Connections

Education policies and education reform agendas have become increasingly globally interconnected and evidence-based which requires more dynamic interface between policy-making, school improvement and research done in the education faculties. In this sense, faculties are intellectual consumers of the field, the price of which needs to be substantive intellectual contributions to it.

Pasi Sahlberg 2009

# Connections

- 'In order to create contexts for worthwhile learning in schools, educational change should contribute towards strengthening social capital in schools and their communities through building trust and collective responsibilities within and between schools... encourage co-operation rather than competition among teachers and school.'
- Pasi Sahlberg

# Key Conclusions

- And, where school leaders are the key actors in implementing reforms which lead to:
  - Extending beyond the industrial society model
  - Improved quality, effectiveness & performance
- With an ageing profile for school leadership
- And, an increasingly 'unattractive' job for younger members of staff
- But... is seen as an increasingly complex and demanding job
- And, is becoming less attractive as a career option

# However, we agree...

- Leadership (schools) development is recognised as one of the most important levers for societal reform
- Leadership is increasingly focused on learning and learning development
- Future models expect and extend leadership beyond the 'borderlines of the school' through partnership, collaboration, networking in the community
- And, Leadership is becoming increasingly distributed (high achieving countries)

# OECD'S 4 Recommendations or Messages

- (Re)define school leadership responsibilities
- Distribute school leadership
- Develop skills for effective school leadership
- Make school leadership an attractive profession

# OECD – ESHA's response

- A focus on leadership standards – and where professional development is an entitlement/expectation as a parallel priority
- Succession planning within distributive leadership models provides insight into leadership role from the entry point to the profession
- Need to promote awareness about the strategic role of leadership in educational, social and community development
- School leadership and teaching and schools are prized and valued as a national asset requiring consistency and continuity in funding support

# Leadership, management, organisation and administration

**‘Successful schools need effective leadership, management and administration. The three elements are intertwined. One cannot succeed without the other’**

**(The OECD report)**

# Building capacity

- We need to make the right conditions in our school so that people want to do the job of a school leader
- **Autonomy + Support + Partnership = Change**
- Constant focus on 'How to lead T & L?'
- **Linking Research to Policy to Practice – esha-mag**
- **How to help people (schools) to connect!**
- **Give attention and priority to... and, it happens!**
- **Role of EC/EU/ESHA/ICP/Associations**

# To Prioritise, or not?

- If HT wants it... it happens!
- So, ESHA needs to give emphasis & importance... leading to a preference to and for OECD key priorities
- Challenge is for knowledge animation ... ways of making K&U accessible and mobile – promoting (learning) communities where skills and competencies are grown, developed and used... that then becomes the 'legitimate profit!'

# But, how I hear you ask!



- School leadership can improve teaching and learning by shaping organisational structures, school climate and teacher practices
- School leadership can improve equal opportunities by collaborating with other schools and local communities
- School leadership is at the interface between policies and their implementation at the school level

# Discuss and agree your Standards for School Leadership

“Education is fundamentally important to individuals, families, communities and society and to enhancing competitiveness in a rapidly changing world. It is essential, therefore, that schools are places of inspiration, innovation and world class achievement, helping students to achieve their full potential. Leaders have a critical role in making this a reality...”

UK STRB Report

# Key School Leadership Standards

Strategic   Teaching & Learning   Organisation  
People   Community

- School leaders to share responsibility for Leadership in the Community
- School Improvement, community development and community cohesion are interdependent
- Families at the centre of services – schools to work with wider community agencies to ensure the health, learning and happiness of every child

# Leading in the Community (K&U)

- **Benefits and risks of multi-agency working**
- **Extended schools service provision**
- **Diversity and community cohesion**
- **Business and collaboration with local schools**
- **Strengths, capabilities and objectives of partner schools, services and agencies**
- **Wider curriculum beyond school and opportunities**

# Leading in the Community (Skills)

- Establish, engage and work with partner agencies
- Collaborate and engage community in systematic evaluation of school's work – act on outcomes
- Consult, engage and communicate with staff and community to enhance children's learning
- Engage in school-to-school collaboration – contributing to leadership in wider system
- Contribute, broker and commission services towards achievement of community cohesion

# Leading in the School (Learning)

- Leadership has the second greatest impact among factors related to a school's performance (T&L = 1st)
- Impact of school leadership?

Setting appropriate goals – a continual focus on learning

Challenging and promoting ambitious expectations both within the school and the local community

On-going, regular, monitoring of performance through the 'intelligent use of data and information...'

# Leading in School (Teaching)

Agreed evidence base for monitoring performance

Planned professional development of teachers from entry to teaching

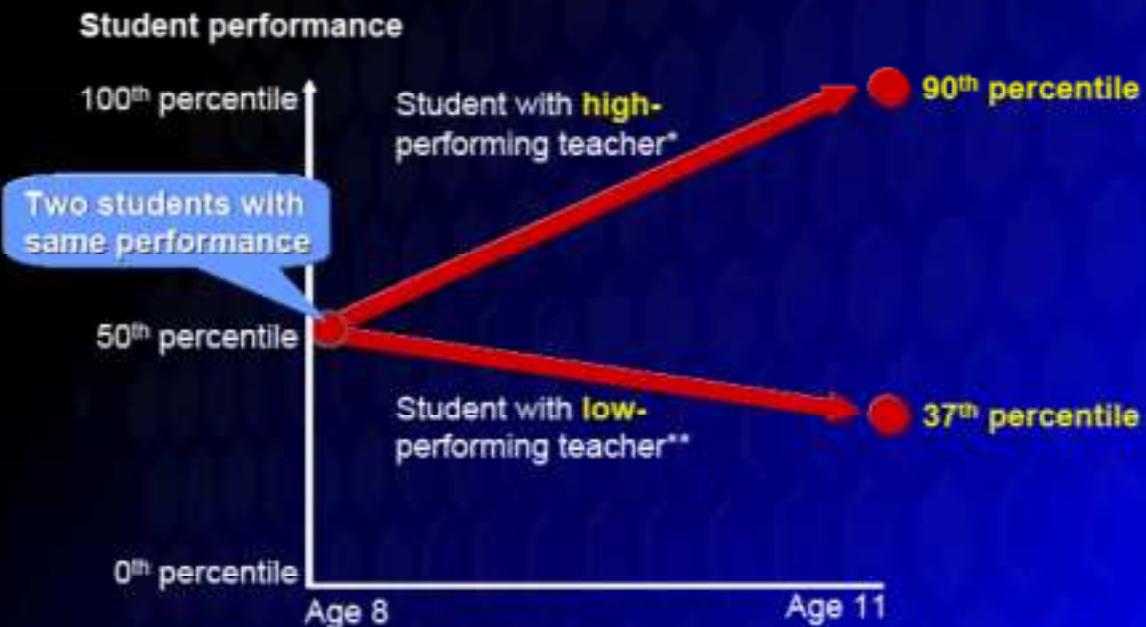
Effective administration, organisation and management structures support key the focus on T&L and supporting School Leadership

# Teaching and Learning

- Consistency and continuity in the quality of teaching is by far the most important factor driving performance and is still missing in most systems
- Reducing student-teacher ratios alone does not improve outcomes
- Unless, and until, education systems are highly effective (continuity and progression in T&L) the impact of those differences (particularly in language acquisition) in a child's socio-economic status will remain a significant factor in their opportunity to meet success in school

# Quality of Teaching

Consistent quality of teaching is by far the most important factor driving performance and is missing in most systems



\* Among the top 20% of teachers

\*\* Among the bottom 20% of teachers

Source: Sanders & Rivers: Cumulative and Residual Effects on Future Student Academic Achievement

# Social Disadvantage

Research findings into the level of language acquisition/words heard by 4 year olds according to social class:

Children of professionals                      45 million words

Children from working classes              26 million words

Children from parents on welfare        13 million words

So, I wonder who learns most easily to read, write and engage with the world of learning?

Betty Hart/Todd Risley (Kansas City Research 1995)

# Social Disadvantage

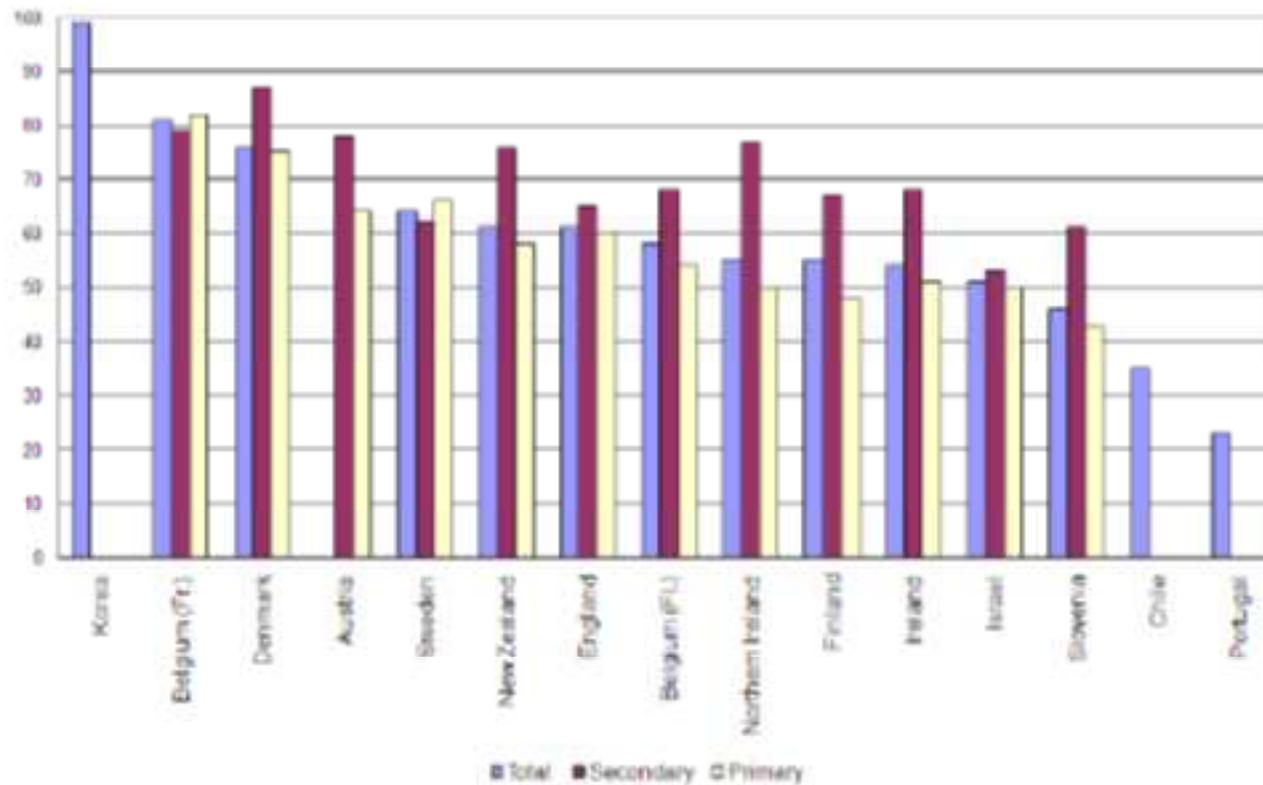
- Emotional deficit (or not) on starting school at the age of 5...
- Professional family environment – a child has experienced 700,000 ‘encouraging’ comments/statements with 80,000 ‘discouragements’
- Working Class/Benefit family – a child receives 60,000 ‘encouraging’ and 120,000 ‘discouraging comments’

# School, family, community...

- Increasingly, we recognise and understand that, as children grow and develop, they need to be confident to meet the challenges they will meet in the three key areas of experience in their lives - school... the community... and, their family?
- We recognise that the most powerful influence on the child's learning and progress at school remains the support and commitment they receive from their parents – so, the professional response has to be to invest in effective partnership, collaboration and communication between home and school if we are to provide the best for our future citizens...

# Getting Older! Age Profiling

Figure 1.4 Percentage of principals aged 50 and over (2006-07, public schools)



# (Re)define school leadership responsibilities

- Higher levels of autonomy - with support
- Redefine school leadership responsibility for improved student learning
  - Supporting, evaluating and developing teacher quality
  - Goal-setting, assessment and accountability
  - Strategic financial and human resource management
  - Collaboration and networking with other schools for the benefit of wider community
- Define and agree School Leadership Standards
- Provide clear frameworks for improved policy and practice

# Distribute school leadership

- Encourage and support the distribution of leadership
- Support school boards/governing bodies in their roles and responsibilities
- Develop and grow leadership from point of entry into the profession through access and opportunity to practise and apply skills and competencies
- Leadership: ‘multiplying the effectiveness of others... generating capacity within school/community’
- ‘Talk together, plan together, work together...’ culture within the profession, schools and support agencies in a community

# Develop skills for effective school leadership

- Leadership development as a continuum
  - Encouragement at/for initial leadership training
  - Ensure induction to teaching/leadership
  - Ensure cpd training to cover both need and context
- Develop greater consistency in provision by all settings/bodies
- Use of/promotion of networking for school leaders

# Make school leadership an attractive profession

- Professionalise recruitment
- Focus on the relative attractiveness of school leaders' salaries – differentiation
- Acknowledge the role of professional organisations of school leaders – promote networking and collaboration
- Provide options and support for career development from point of entry to profession

# So, if we want...?

- **Quality systems... we need quality teachers**
- **Quality systems... we need to get the right people into teaching in the first place**
- **Quality systems... we improve instruction (T&L) confident that this leads to improved outcomes**
- **Quality systems... we focus on professional development in classroom practice**
- **Because, we are confident that quality systems will ensure that every child benefits and meets success coming from a high performing culture of professional effectiveness**
- **And, isn't that what we are all about as School Leaders?**