

PRINCIPAL AUTONOMY

the PRIVILEGE AND THE PRICE

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at the

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STATE SCHOOL
ORGANISATIONS (ACSSO)
CONFERENCE**

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WHAT IS PRINCIPAL AUTONOMY?

- **THE MERRIAM-WEBSTER ONLINE DICTIONARY DEFINITION – “THE QUALITY OF STATE OF BEING SELF GOVERNING OR SELF DIRECTING FREEDOM AND ESPECIALLY MORAL INDEPENDENCE”**

WHAT IS PRINCIPAL AUTONOMY?

- INTELLIGENT AUTONOMY – THE CONCEPT ACCOMODATES THE CONCEPT OF INTELLIGENT ACCOUNTABILITY TO ACHIEVE A BALANCE OF CENTRALISATION AND DECENTRALISATION. – FULLAN 2005

WHAT IS PRINCIPAL AUTONOMY?

- **A COMBINATION OF APPROACHES TO ACCOUNTABILITY THAT BLENDS A TOP DOWN FRAMEWORK AND SCHOOL CAPACITY FOR CONTINUOUS SELF REVIEW – MILLIBAND**

WHAT IS PRINCIPAL AUTONOMY?

- **WHATEVER CAN BE BEST DONE AT THE SCHOOL LEVEL SHOULD BE DONE AT THAT LEVEL, AS OPPOSED TO HAVING THOSE FUNCTIONS PERFORMED FROM A CENTRALIZED LOCATION REMOVED FROM THE SCENE OF THE ACTION.**
–(STREMBITSKY EDMONTON 1973)

WHAT IS PRINCIPAL AUTONOMY?

- IN ENGLAND, AUSTRALIA AND SOME PARTS OF THE USA THE CONCEPT OF SCHOOL BASED MANAGEMENT OR THE SELF MANAGING SCHOOL IS PREFERRED.

THE SELF MANAGING SCHOOL

- **A SELF MANAGING SCHOOL IS A SCHOOL IN A SYSTEM OF EDUCATION TO WHICH THERE HAS BEEN DECENTRALISED A SIGNIFICANT AMOUNT OF AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY TO MAKE DECISIONS RELATED TO THE ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES WITHIN A CENTRALLY DETERMINED FRAMEWORK OF GOALS, POLICIES, STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITIES (CALDWELL & SPINKS 1998)**

WHY DO IT ?

- The logic is – each school contains a unique mix of student needs, interests and aptitudes and aspirations and those at the school level are best placed to determine the particular mix of all available resources to achieve optimal outcomes.
- Local control about the things that matter – staff selection, professional learning, student programs, organisation

WHY DO IT?

- The role of school communities is becoming more critical in a choice/competition driven society. The generic public system product is less attractive than it used to be. Meeting local needs and expectations is critical.
- Building local affiliation is crucial
- Maintaining the stock of school leaders
- Attracting teachers to become school principals

Leadership Challenge

MANAGEMENT	LEADERSHIP
Planning and Budgeting	Establishing direction
Organising and Staffing	Aligning people
Controlling and problem solving	Motivating and inspiring
Producing a degree of predictability	Achieving change

EXAMPLES IN AUSTRALIA

- Victoria

1970s - School Councils established

1983 - Cain Govt - Ministerial
Papers

1992 - Kennett Govt - Schools of
the Future - 90+% of the state
education budget decentralised to
schools

1996 - Self Governing Schools

EXAMPLES IN AUSTRALIA

- Self Governing Schools scrapped – Bracks Govt 1989
- **South Australia and Tasmania**
The effective Resource Allocation in Schools Project (ERASP) 1983

Queensland

**The Leading Schools Project 1997.
Strong Teacher Union opposition –
but options developed in creating
school councils and parents and
citizens associations**

EXAMPLES IN AUSTRALIA

- **South Australia**

**PARTNERSHIPS 21 – (1989) 18
SCHOOL DISTRICTS WITHIN DECS –
WITH THE AIM OF DELIVERING
INTEGRATED AND LOCALLY
MANAGED CURRICULUM AND
SUPPORT SERVICES TO LOCAL SITES**

OECD REPORT

- Report 2004 – Comparing patterns of decentralisation 1998 – 2003

Found that in 14 out of 19 Countries that decisions were taken at a more decentralised level in 2003 than in 1998.

Decisions are more often taken at a school level in the Czech Republic, England, Hungary, New Zealand, Slovak Republic, and the Netherlands

CHARTER SCHOOLS

- **United States and Canada**
- Publicly funded but privately operated – fully accountable for the use of its funds – intense public scrutiny of outcomes.
- In some cases Charter Schools are strongly influenced by parents

ACADEMIES – UK

- Schools that have been established to replace failing or struggling schools in socio economic disadvantaged areas. Most have opened in new buildings. Significant investment of up to AUD \$90 million with a contribution from a private entity of approximately AUD \$10 million – with the premises often built through Public Private Partnerships. 50 of the planned 400 are operational.

AUSTRALIAN PROJECT

- ASPA HAS LED THE DEVELOPMENT OF A RESEARCH PROJECT BEING UNDERTAKEN BY DR. BRIAN CALDWELL AND DR. JESSICA HARRIS INTO THE LEVEL OF AUTONOMY WITHIN STATES AND TERRITORIES AND WITHIN INTERNATIONAL CONTEXTS

AUSTRALIAN PROJECT

- THE PROJECT IS TO REPORT WITHIN THE NEXT MONTH INCLUDING RECOMMENDATIONS TO DEST ON POLICY IMPLICATIONS FOR THE MINISTER.
- THE MINISTER HAS MADE EARLY POLICY STATEMENTS WITH REGARD TO AUTONOMY IN THE MAY BUDGET PAPERS

THE RESEARCH FOCUS

- PROVIDES AN OVERVIEW OF CURRENT SCHOOL AUTONOMY PRACTICES AND RECENT TRENDS TOWARDS GREATER PRINCIPAL AUTONOMY IN STATE AND TERRITORY JURISDICTIONS AND SECTORS ACROSS AUSTRALIA
- IDENTIFIES STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES IN THE CURRENT NATIONAL MODELS OF AUTONOMY
- DOCUMENTS SCHOOL LEADERS' VIEWS ABOUT SCHOOL AUTONOMY IN RELATION TO IMPROVED STUDENT OUTCOMES, SCHOOL STAFFING, BUDGET AND OTHER ASPECTS OF

THE RESEARCH FOCUS

- IDENTIFIES AND ANALYSES INTERNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH RELATING TO MODELS OF SCHOOL AUTONOMY AND IMPROVED SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS
- IDENTIFIES EFFECTIVE MODELS OF AUTONOMY.

AUTONOMY MAPPING

- **AREAS OF
CONSIDERATION**

- **TEACHING AND LEARNING**
- **STAFFING AND RENUMERATION**
- **CURRICULUM AND EDUCATION
PLANNING**
- **FINANCE AND FACILITIES**

Joint Survey Respondents

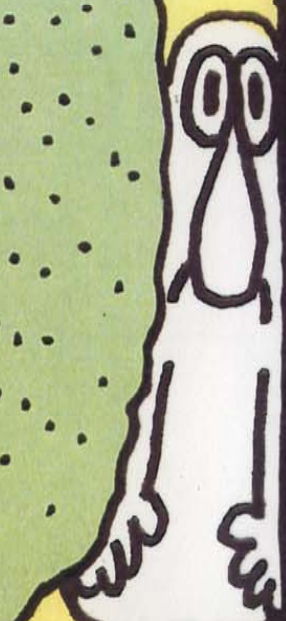
- *Total of 1098 respondents*
- 777 Principals
- 168 Deputy Principals,
- 115 Assistant Principals,
- 38 “other”
- Males – 599 (55%), Female 493 (45%)
- ASPA/AHISA/ APCSSA

School Leader Welfare Survey

- **IN TERMS OF THE DEMOGRAPHICS**
 - **NOT YOUNG!! – 58% BETWEEN 51 -60 YEARS OLD.**
 - **NOT INEXPERIENCED – 47% MORE THAN 10 YEARS WORKING AT CURRENT PROMOTION LEVEL.**
 - **62% WORKING IN URBAN SCHOOLS, 40% RURAL AND REMOTE.**

ROCK

HAR
SPO



MAJOR STRESSORS SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Ranking	Area of Work	Strong/Very Strong Response No	% of Respondents
1	Sheer Quantity of Work	902	82%
2	Lack of time for the important	871	80%
3	State Govt Initiatives	829	75%
4	Expectations – Employer	778	70%
5	Student Related Issues	687	63%

MAJOR STRESSORS SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Ranking	Area of Work	Strong/Very Strong Response No	% of Respondents
6	Federal Govt Initiatives	677	62%
7	Poorly Performing Staff	640	58%
8	Parent Related Issues	629	57%
9	Mental Health Issues of Students	600	55%

MAJOR STRESSORS SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Ranking	Area of Work	Strong/Very Strong Response No	% of Respondents
11	Mental Health of Staff	571	52%
12	<i>Lack of Autonomy/ Authority</i>	<i>527</i>	<i>48%</i>
13	Financial Management	465	43%
14	Inability to get space from school	393	36%

PRINCIPAL ILLNESS

MEDICAL CONDITION CATEGORY	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
CARDIO-VASCULAR	171	48%
PSYCHOLOGICAL	81	23%
GASTRO-INTESTINAL	68	19%
DETAIL NOT GIVEN	38	10%
TOTAL	358	100%

PRINCIPAL ILLNESS

QUESTION	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
I am worried about the way I am using alcohol to manage my stress	50 (5%)	174 (16%)	135 (12%)	290 (27%)	443 (41%)
I am worried about the way I am	12 (1%)	38 (3%)	72 (7%)	273 (25%)	693 (64%)

Hope that your new job is everything
that you had hoped for



WHAT AUTONOMY CANNOT BE

- The simple concept of hire and fire
- Devolution of blame
- Treasury driven
- Overburdened with unnecessary compliance/accountabilities
- Purist
- Context insensitive

WHAT AUTONOMY SHOULD BE

- Not one size fits all – re remote Western Australia versus urban Sydney
- Intelligent – mix of centralized and decentralized delivery
- Mapped and Monitored
- Resourced – Support staff etc
- School Leader
Development/Preparation enhanced