

Leading learning communities¹

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The concept of the learning organisation and learning community emerged in the 1980s (Senge, 1990). It marked the transition of an organisation based on industrial age thinking to one based on knowledge enhancement. Underpinning the transition are two dimensions (Senge, Cambron-McCabe, Lucas, Smith, Dutton & Kleiner, 2000) :

- the source and nature of knowledge and how it is acquired within the organisation and
- the implementation of power relationships within the organisation or community

These issues relate to seeing schools as learning communities. While many schools call themselves learning communities, the term is used appropriately for those that meet particular criteria.

Schools based on an industrial age model are managed by specialists who maintain a high level of control. Knowledge is seen as absolute and is taught in specific subject areas. They are structured or organized on the basis of knowledge consisting of separate, fragmented categories. Schools referenced on learning community models see the locus of control within the system itself; the focus is on self managed team learning. Knowledge is seen as the best social interpretation or representation of reality at that time. They are structured in the interrelatedness of areas of knowledge, learnt in part through mutual collaboration.

Much of this discussion about the learning community has been at the 'big picture' level. The focus of this paper is on operationalising aspects of learning communities and in particular the role of educational leadership. It unpacks this topic, particularly from a learning perspective.

What is a learning community ? There is a range of views. Most note a commitment to shared learning among the community members (for example, see Prawat 1993), achieved through on-going social and intellectual inter-relationships between the members that are enhanced through commitment to the goals shared by the community. My preferred definition is as follows:

It is a community that is learning. It is increasing its knowledge about particular topics or issues. It is not simply a group of individuals who each pursue her or his learning goals. The 'community' focus suggests, in addition, shared knowledge and goals. While learners in the community may be pursuing their own goals, they are also contributing to the changing knowledge of the community and to the community goals for learning.

This perception makes a number of assumptions about learning. Some of these are indicated in the following figure.

How ? What does the community need to do to learn ?	What ? What knowledge is the community learning ?	Goals ? What are the goals / intended outcomes of learning the community holds?
From where ? What does the community already know about the topics it is learning ?	Learning communities learning	Pedagogy ? What are the teaching procedures, information sources and used by the community to learn ?
Progress ? What are indicators of the community learning ?	Why ? What are the sources of motivation for the community to learn ?	Show what it has learnt ? How will the community show what it has learnt ?

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Each of these questions indicates an aspect of the community activity that may be operationalised for genuine learning to occur. The present paper examines some of these. Initially it is useful to identify some topics that may confront a learning community centred school as an organisation.

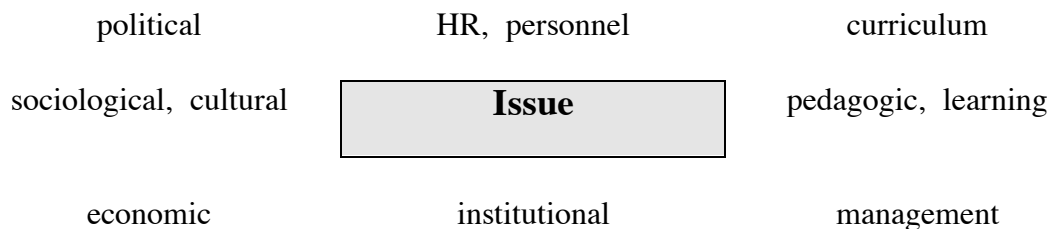
Typical areas in which a learning community may be challenged to learn.

Many issues may stimulate the need for a school community to improve its knowledge or practice in particular areas. Possible issues include those in Figure 2.

Figure 2 : Issues on which a school may improve its knowledge or practice.

How to improve the literacy or numeracy outcomes of your school ?	How to improve the community's capacity to deal with the discipline problems that are causing a headache and are getting harder to handle ?	How to increase the teaching effectiveness of staff who you think could be contributing more successfully to the school program ?	How to implement activities that show your school is contributing actively to the current innovation and creativity policy ?
How you can improve school attendance rates ?	Some possible knowledge areas for improvement		How far down the e-learning pathway you should go ?
How to assist KLAs that are holding back the academic profile of your school ?	How to develop procedures for identifying program innovations that are most worthy of resource support ?	How to up-date your Middle Years program; it has a high drop out level and achievement levels have plateaued?	How to respond to pressure from the school community to introduce lap-tops ?

Each of these issues can be dealt with from a number of perspectives, for example, those shown below.



Each can provide an insight into the issue. The present paper uses the instructional-learning perspective. The learning organisation implements an explicit learning agenda. This perspective is exemplified by questions such as “How would the issue be understood / analysed from a learning /teaching perspective ?”, “What learning / change is necessary ?” “What is the current state of relevant knowledge ? What conditions would need to be in place for teaching / learning to occur ?

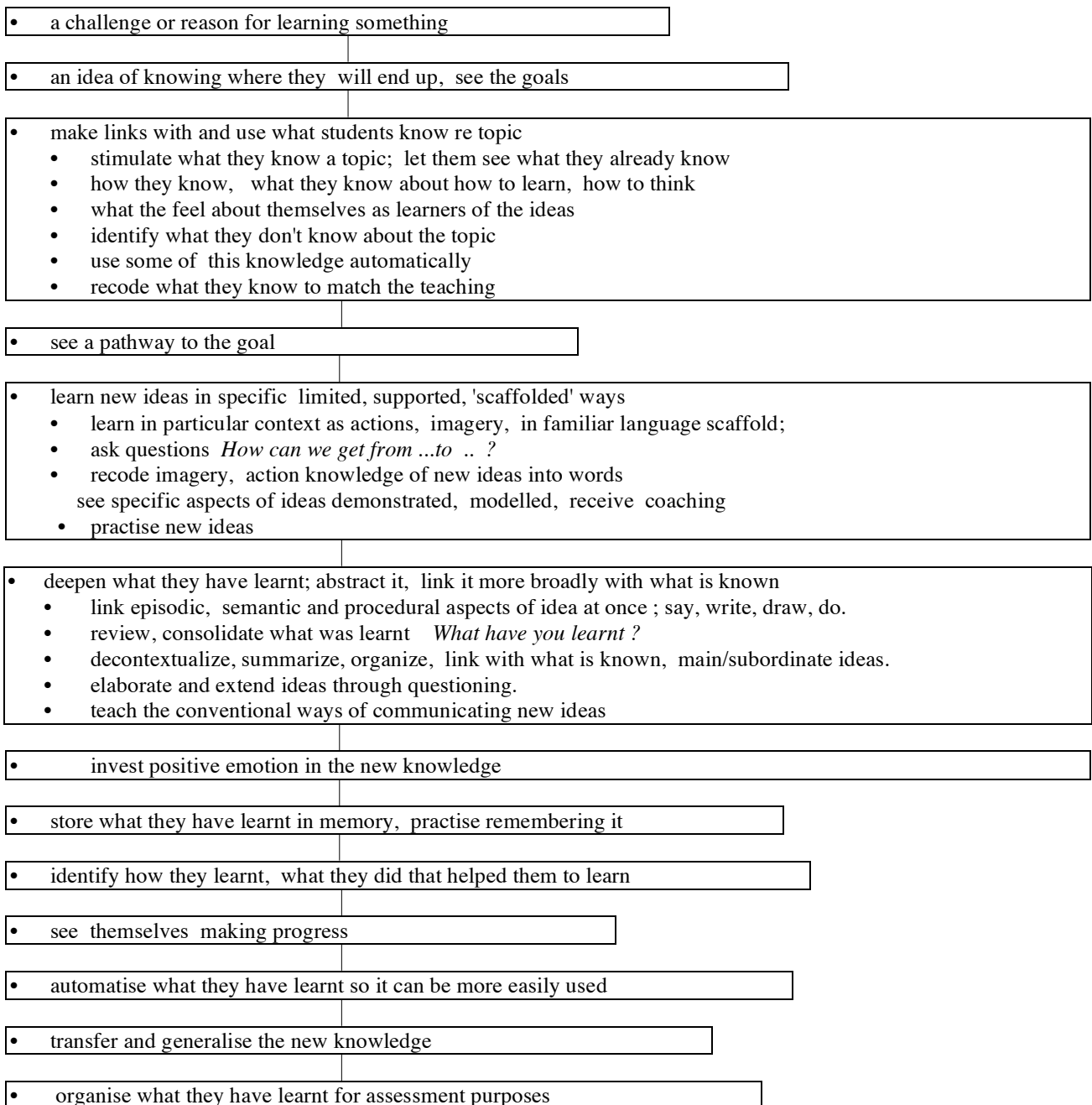
Learning functions or interactions.

This paper proposes that a successful learning community will be underpinned by a explicit theory of learning that maps into decision-making, practice and policy. This theory needs to scaffold knowledge enhancement for individual community members and for groups in the community.

There are many learning theories. Some are not teaching-friendly and are not used in regular teaching. The approach here focuses on what learners need to do to learn. These are learning interactions. Teaching will be most effective when it fosters these interactions. The focus is on the quality of these interactions and the extent to which they lead to knowledge enhancement.

Learning occurs in context, with learners interacting with information from teachers, on-line learning programs, books or peers. Because it is an interactive process, it is necessary to take account of the context, situations, community or culture in which the interactions occur. The information to which the learner is exposed is determined by what the community or culture values. These values will also be indicated in the feedback learners receive.

Framework for examining learning: To learn successfully, learners interact with the teaching information in various ways; they need to use 'learning functions'.



The set of interactions are generic, not based in particular subject areas. Each is linked with a set of teaching procedures that we have been researching over the past decade.

The sequence fits well with the contemporary focus on knowledge enhancement. Each learning interaction is a strategy that individuals can use to modify or enhance their knowledge. The set of strategies provides a systematic framework for transforming knowledge.

Ways of using this framework

To evaluate and improve teaching by seeing how well it triggers or fosters each interaction.	Teachers audio-tape a sequence of lessons and evaluate how well their teaching fosters each learning interaction. They can fine-tune /modify the teaching accordingly
to coach and mentor colleagues	The coach and the teacher identify the learning interactions already effectively in place and those that could be improved by fine tuning the teaching procedures.
To get feedback from students	Use it to develop a questionnaire to get student feedback in relation to how the teaching helps them learn from it in each way.
develop teaching procedures for each learning function.	Map the set of interactions into an extensive set of teaching procedures
teach students how to be self managing and regulating learners	Teachers have used the model to teach systematically the learning interactions as student self –talk. Students can learn to ask themselves the interactions as self instructions or self scripts.
cater for multiple ways of learning in their teaching	Learners can do each interaction in multiple ways. Teachers can take account of this
devise and evaluate instructional and curriculum units that match the various learning functions.	The framework provides a set of criteria for evaluating teaching units and programs from a learning perspective and indicates types of features that may be included in designing teaching units
analyse how students are operating from an 'effective learning' perspective	See which key learning aspects are not used by a student or group and how they can be developed. We have used it to review and evaluate teaching from a learner perspective.
deal with problems in teaching such as lack of student engagement, behaviour problems, by describing them in terms of learner interactions.	Interpret the students' problems from a learning perspective and solve them in terms of pedagogy. Teachers can use it to examine (1) how students are learning and the learning interactions they are using and (2) the learning interactions fostered by the teaching.
link student knowledge and curriculum in a practical, operational way	Pedagogy that takes account of how students learn optimizes both knowledge enhancement. C 21 st students in an information rich context need to know how to enhance their knowledge of a topic by accessing information sources. The set of interactions provide a starting point for learning this.
examine how schools as learning communities can actually learn and enhance their core work	The model is effective in operationalising the learning of professional groups. School leaders can use it to lead a learning community to guide adult and community learning. It shows what a community can do to learn.

The action plan for learning in the community : A case study

The context As an example, let us look at leading a school community to improve the quality of its teaching by explicating the extent to which its teaching practice is based on an understanding of learning. The school's goal was to improve the extent to which its teaching procedures reflected more closely how C21st adolescents learn. It recognized that beliefs and theories that worked 10-15 years ago were no longer relevant. The leadership team found the learning interactions

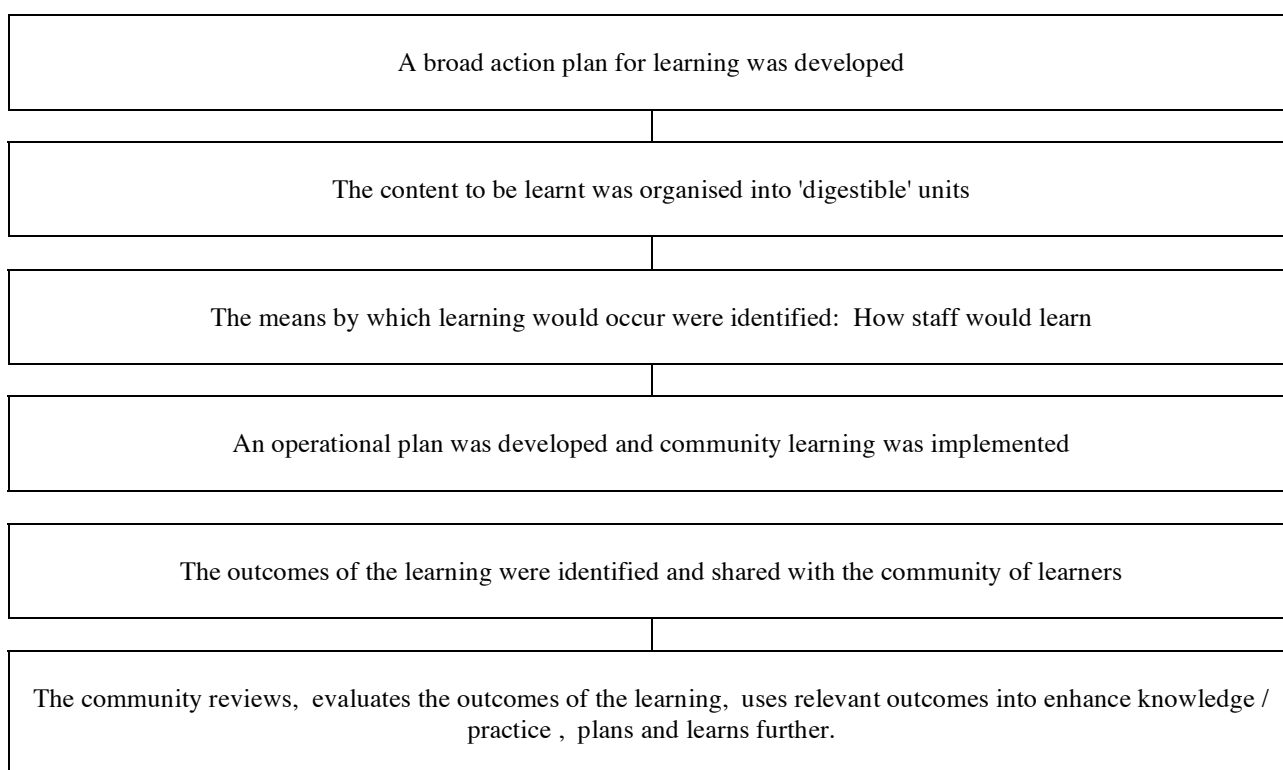
approach acceptable and requested a professional development program that would contribute to achieving this goal. This program involved a professional school community learning.

The school leadership team used the model of learning in two ways:

- to understand how Twenty - first century adolescents learn; how they frame up challenges, how they organise and use what they know, how they learn.
- to foster the learning of its staff. For this purpose it examined how groups of teachers in each KLA framed up goals and used what they knew.

The two aspects were integrated into a set of learning activities for students and staff. This is shown in the broad based action plan for learning in the following figure.

The phases in community learning The following key steps were involved in the learning :



Leadership at various levels initiated and guided aspects of the improvement.

Developing the action plan

To get the action plan for staff learning started, the school leadership

- explicated and operationalised its vision.
- collated the relevant existing knowledge of the staff, that is, what they knew about learning and the procedures it could take for identifying and collating this knowledge
- decided the unit of change or growth. The school decided on the ‘professional learning team’, a sub group of each KLA as the unit for growth and the KLA as the unit for collating the learning outcomes. Each team would be led by 'leaders of learning'..

school

KLA 1
KLA 2

Learning team with teachers A, B
Learning team with teachers C, D
Learning team with teachers E, F
Learning team with teachers G, H

Unit for collating learning

Unit for learning

- examining the processes it had in place for staff learning. Within each KLA the staff worked in small collaborative learning teams in which they could pursue action research projects.

The action plan for community learning

Effective learning -teaching initiative : 3 year vision
<i>Vision of preferred outcomes</i> , stated explicitly by staff, KLA teams, administration, community and presented at school meeting. In three years time :
<i>What will students be doing ?</i> What processes will they be learning ? How will they be learning more effectively ? How do we achieve positive learning and reasonable outcomes for all students ? How will teaching ensure optimal access to learning outcomes? How will behavior difficulties be minimised ?
<i>What will teachers be doing ?</i> Appropriate pedagogy and effective classroom management for C21st ? Metaphors for effective learning and teaching (personal journey, growth).
<i>What will the institution be fostering ?</i> ' How will the school organisation 'see' its students ? What will it validate and resource at the teaching level ? What will it be saying re effective learning and teaching ?

Development process
<i>The context for teachers learning and changing their practice</i> Teaching as a developmental process. Teachers as learners, what teachers need to know about personal development. Dimensions of development: (1) preparedness to change (2) ability to adapt, change (3) learning in context ; learning in different social and cultural contexts (4) individual differences in learning, multiple ways of learning.
<i>Institution fostering and directing the development.</i> The institution's management team develops an implementation plan for the initiative. Issues include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> clarifying, explicating ELT policy, action plan at the institutional level opportunities provided by institution to consolidate, review, plan ahead how individual teacher growth is fostered, how feedback is provided to staff
<i>Teaching the leaders of learning : KLA heads as instructional leaders.</i> How HODs are trained to direct, facilitate and manage development in their KLAs. HODs seen as team leaders of effective learning and teaching in their KLAs. They need to be trained as managers of teachers and teaching
<i>Improving teachers' knowledge of effective L&T principles.</i> Teachers explicate their beliefs re ELT, increase their knowledge of ELT and map these into improved teaching procedures, identify options they have in their teaching for describing, analysing and solving problems.
<i>Professional teaching team approach</i> to manage the development in each KLA: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> processes of the team are negotiated, action plan is developed by the KLA team each member has responsibility for particular aspects of ELT, members working in PLTs plan and implement action research projects that examine teaching aspects of the learning interactions. means for monitoring progress are identified, procedures for collating new knowledge at the KLA level are implemented.

Where are we now ?

Identification and audit of

- existing knowledge of staff re effective learning and teaching, how students in C21 differ from earlier students in what they know, expectations, how to learn, negotiate their identities, re successful teaching in C21
- resources available (eg, procedures for determining how students learn), staff perception of students' needs, available existing data, students' and parents' perceptions of needs
- what staff, KLAs believe they need to be able to improve teaching, what they need to learn, staff preferences re resources, institutional support, the processes that need to be in place, beliefs re effective use of time, 'fair' distribution of load to achieve success .
- what staff believe are reasonable outcomes for students ? Should all students have positive / the same outcomes ? How accessible are learning outcomes for all students ? For which learning characteristics is access limited and are behavior problems more likely ?

Staff review current L & T practice and their perception of students' needs, the processes that need to be in place.

Institutional plan for prioritising activities (in terms of time, resources), plan for operationalising, implementing, monitoring and evaluating programme.

The content to be learnt was organised into 'digestible' units The school leadership team recognized the complexity of the staff learning outcomes necessary for genuine improvement and developed a content plan that involved 'un-packing' the content to be learnt. The learning interactions framework was broken into three sections, with one section to be investigated each year. The plan followed by the school is shown in the following figure.

Focus for year	Key activities
Knowing what, how and why your students know	<p>Staff investigate the first four learning interactions. These target what students know and how they use this to learn. It included a consideration of what students know about</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a topic, how their knowledge is organised (learning style, multiple ways of knowing, different ways of knowing • how to learn, • why to learn, their motives and goals for learning, their attitudes to learning and themselves as learners • being motivated • how to learn by reading
Helping your students learn	<p>Staff investigated the learning interactions that target changing knowledge. It included a consideration of how students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use preferred learning styles, multiple ways of knowing • learn in specific contexts initially, build episodic and procedural knowledge of a topic and then to decontextualise what they have learnt, • learn about how to learn, to broaden their use of learning strategies in content areas • learn more positive, functional attitudes to learning and themselves as learners • learn positive attitudes to what they are learn • learn how to convert information to knowledge • learn how to review, consolidate what they have learnt. • learnt to encode new knowledge in long term memory • learn to transfer, generalize, think innovatively and creatively about what they have learn, learnt to automatise what they have learnt.
Applying the learning interactions model	<p>Staff applied the learning interactions model</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to target special groups, for example, boys and literacy, girls and numeracy, learning difficulties, gifted learning • to Internet learning, hyper text literacy, teaching effective information handling strategies • to understand how gender and culture influence student learning .

How the community will learn The leadership team also recognised the need for a teaching plan by which staff would have time to explore and implement aspects of the learning interactions model in their teaching and for each KLA to consolidate its knowledge about ‘best practice pedagogy’.

The procedures that would be used to facilitate staff learning were identified:

staff identify goals for learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify current problems in teaching as a need for change • identify goals for learning
explicate current knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • collate what they know about how students learn, • explicate and reflect on their beliefs and theories of learning • identify what they don't know but would like to know about learning • reflect on the conditions under which they could be most successful
become aware of new ideas as options, possibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • become aware of the learning interactions model as an option for understanding learning; develop an awareness how learning can be unpacked or unravelled from something that is too big and amorphous to something that is manageable and can be broken into digestible segments. • decided whether they were intuitively reasonable and whether they could in principle target identified problems in teaching.
contextualise the new ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contextualise aspects of the model in their KLA by mapping it into a set of teaching procedures for example, if they were challenging students in Year 8 maths, what would they be doing and what would the students be doing • evaluate their teaching and see options for fine-tuning how they teach.
see teaching procedures modelled in their classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • observe possible novel teaching practice demonstrated, operationalised in their teaching, • were coached to implement the procedures.
trial new teaching procedures in action research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analyse problem areas in their teaching from a learning perspective and identify areas in which they could improve / fine-tune their teaching • within each KLA in PLTs develop an action research learning plan for using students' existing knowledge, design, trial and evaluate novel teaching procedures in their classrooms
evaluate, collate the outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • report their trialing to their KLA team and to the school in a poster that showed how the procedure trialed influenced student achievement, engagement and interest, what students learnt about how to learn and their attitudes to the topic and subject
up-date their teaching	<p>fine-tune their teaching to accommodate changes in approach to learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how it can become part of regular teaching practice - code of teaching that characterises the school's core approach to pedagogy.

This learning occurred both individually and in groups. Staff learnt in professional learning teams. The learning activity of each team was led by a **middle level leader of learning**.

Middle level leaders of learning were trained

The sequence of staff learning was led and supported by a group of staff equipped to foster and guide the staff learning process. The MLLsL were seen by the school leadership team as ‘leaders of learning and leaders in learning’. They were aware that it didn't have 'all the answers' but were able to 'ask the appropriate questions' so that student learning was consistently targeted.

In terms of learning interactions, the work of the MLLsL match that of metacognition in individual learning. Metacognitive processes are to do with the directing, fostering and managing of the learning activity. They are responsible for planning, recognizing when particular knowledge and action is necessary, reviewing and consolidating what has been learnt, deciding and selecting what is most appropriate. These are the activities of the MLLsL role in the current model.

Areas of knowledge the MLLsL needed

- in-depth understanding of the domain in which they are leading learning. In this case it was an advanced knowledge of contemporary adolescent learning and how this could be mapped into effective pedagogy.
- an understanding of adult professional learning (in both group and individual learning contexts),
 - the conditions necessary for this, procedures to foster PLTs in a community,
 - leading and implementing group learning enhancement action plan,
 - coaching and mentoring interventions for improved teaching for individual staff members and groups.
- understand student learning, conditions likely to facilitate this process.
- knowledge of effective pedagogy and how teachers can map their skills, conceptual knowledge and attitudes into pedagogy.
- knowledge of the school as a learning organisation and the relationship professional learning to the work of the school and the work of individual teachers, guiding and coaching the SLT to operationalise and contextualise the improvement focus.
- knowledge of group learning processes. This includes
 - how to ‘convert’ a group of individuals into a learning community, providing reasons for being a learning community; an identified focus, negotiated and accepted purpose or goal, the group of individuals learning how to operate as a community, to learn the actions that learners in a community actually ‘do’.
 - strategies and procedures to facilitate the sharing and negotiation of group knowledge.
 - establishing and maintaining a rapport.
 - developing a sense of mutual trust in the group, individuals in the community see that they are trusted with aspects of the community’s work.
 - fostering goal congruence and goal direction and focus in the group,

- fostering a set of attitudes that define the community.
- an understanding of the influence of context on learning.

The MLLsL needed specific training to acquire these areas of knowledge. They needed to be trained in various capacities for this role (coaching, leading learning teams, analysing content area teaching in terms of its learning demands, unpacking topics, cognitive task analysis).

How leadership style affects classroom teaching: Evidence

Every learning community or culture needs to be led, preferably from within. Instructional leadership is one way of doing this. The leadership uses teaching procedures to lead the group and to solve problems. It is both

- leading the teaching processes in a group or community and
- leading by using teaching processes to deal with issues and problems in community.

Principals' instructional leadership style affects teachers' instructional behaviours and attitudes (Blase & Blase, 1996; Dungan, 1993) such as consideration and tolerance for students, planning, creativity, monitoring of student learning, time on task, expectations for student achievement, focus, and problem-solving orientation (Blase, 1987; Leithwood, 1994; Sheppard, 1996). Leaders' behaviors linked with positive outcomes were

- framing and communicating school goals,
- supervising and evaluating instruction,
- monitoring student progress,
- protecting instructional time,
- maintaining high visibility,
- providing incentives for teachers,
- supporting professional development and
- providing incentives for learning.

The types of leadership talk that encourage teachers to reflect on their practice

Principals who modelled inquiry, asked questions, encouraged risk taking, required justification of practices led to increased teachers' greater critique of practice, consideration of alternatives, teamwork with colleagues, and implementation of innovations (Reitzug, 1994).

Five types of principal dialogue encouraged teachers to reflect critically on their professional practice (Blasé, 1999, 2000):

Making suggestions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • listen, • share their experiences, • use examples and demonstrations, • encourage teacher choice and discretion in strategy use; Teachers not forced to teach in limited ways • contradict outdated or destructive policies, • encourage risk taking, • offer professional literature, • recognize teachers' strengths, • maintain a focus on improving instruction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • invite teachers' advice and opinions about classroom instruction • analyze the use of time by the teacher • suggest how improved teaching can handle routine discipline issues • help teachers prioritize what they will teach • suggest procedures for efficient information gathering and communication with students. • use participatory dialogue to communicate with staff; Where are we now? Where do we want to be? How do we get there?
Giving feedback.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "hold up a mirror", serve as "another set of eyes", "critical friend" • feedback focused on observed classroom behavior, specific, • show sincere and authentic interest • praise, • establish a problem-solving orientation, • respond to concerns about students, • stress the availability for follow-up talk and • avoid restrictive and intimidating approaches to teachers
Modeling.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate teaching techniques in classrooms and conferences, • model positive interactions with students. • use informal "coaching" and mentoring.
Using inquiry and soliciting advice and opinions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use an inquiry (questioning) approach with teachers 'You ask thought-provoking questions. Should you give kids longer to think about answers?") • solicit teachers' advice about instructional matters • recognize that change is a journey of learning and risk taking
Giving praise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • focus on specific and concrete teaching behaviors • “could send other teachers to observe my classrooms • encourage risk taking, and innovation/creativity; ("My leader’s praise gets me searching for new and innovative things on my own").
Encourage collegiate dialogue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support development of coaching skills and reflective conversations among educators • provide time and opportunities for peer connections among teachers • foster dialogue that encourages collegiate co-operation • emphasize the concept of a school as a learning community • develop dialogue around the collective vision with the staff

The strategies effective principals used to foster professional growth

Emphasize the study of teaching and learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • address teacher emergent needs; • opportunities to learn new strategies and learning techniques; • support the major instructional goal
Support collaboration among educators	<p>principals foster collaborative networks among teachers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • modeled teamwork, • provided time for collaborative work, and • actively advocated sharing and peer observation:
Develop coaching relationships	actively encourage teachers to become peer coaches
Encourage and support redesign of programs	encourage redesign of instructional programs, support diverse approaches to teaching and learning
Apply the principles of adult learning to staff development.	<p>create cultures of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • collaboration, • inquiry, experimentation, and • reflection and an understanding of teachers' life cycles, roles and motivation.
Use action research to inform instructional decision making.	implement action research in the school

The analysis of how the principal’s instructional leadership style influenced teacher’ professional learning has direct implications for how MLLsL can also be instructional leaders of professional learning groups.

Recognizing and valuing the knowledge gained by each team

A key aspect of professional learning is the display of the learning outcomes at various times during the learning.

Each teacher reported the novel teaching procedure they trialed in the action research and the observed student outcomes. Each outcome was described in terms of the comparative level of achievement of students with earlier years, level of student engagement, students' knowledge of how to learn and their attitude to the topic being taught. These outcomes are shown for four teachers in the following table.

topic	how taught in past	Teaching approach trialed	Student outcomes
Years 10 and 12 woodwork projects making a tackle box, tool box	Teacher demonstrates procedure and all students make the same item	Students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • given outline of the project, • decide whether the project is useful • modify it to suit their interests • make links with projects they have already made re skills, materials, hardware, tools and processes they used. • plan a possible pathway based on their design and operate within particular constraints 	Making links with previous work increased <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • level of autonomy and motivation/ satisfaction with the task • quality of outcome • knowledge of how to plan
Year 9 mask making to incorporate cultural and historical and functional aspects	Looked at posters, photocopies, books of masks and finished masks (that had the underlying features covered).	Students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • challenged to make a 'raised profile' mask, • used their knowledge of having built anything earlier • saw examples of partially completed masks at different stages of development to identify procedures for obtaining a 3-D feature. • developed explicit pathways for making their masks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • higher quality masks • more able to manage / direct their own learning
Year 10 geography; economic, social life in PNG compared with Australia	Start with pretest on unit, use maps and information sources to collect information re the country	Students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • decided to study PNG, • closed their eyes, visualized a normal day living in Aus, list the key activities in which they engage, repeat this for living in PNG, and jotted down key points. • worked in small groups to discuss living in PNG, consolidated and collated ideas to develop a set of social economic indicators of quality of life. 	Students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • more engaged, asked more questions, more enthusiastic re follow up work, • wanted to learn. • when they accessed information sources they had questions they wanted answered • higher outcomes.
Year 10 History ; emergence of the super powers, communism and capitalism	Teacher centred; provided an overview, map out unit, define communism and capitalism	Students ' <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • put into words what they knew, • identified key words and ideas, gave examples of each, • discussed their images of key words and ideas • said questions they could ask • identified what they knew re differences between communism and capitalism by drawing pictures of each and comparing, • summarised the main ideas. 	Students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • learnt the topic more easily, showed higher understanding • applied the ideas better, • showed higher on-task behaviour, more interested.

Recognizing and valuing group knowledge

The knowledge gained by each teacher or team can become group knowledge by being shared with other members of the KLA or teaching group and with the school community. A key characteristic of a community learning is how it assembles or collates, recognizes and values what it has learnt at various times during learning. What has been learnt by each individual or team now becomes the knowledge of the group or community. These are the outcomes of the community learning.

This phase of the community learning involves two aspects of reflection on practice: community members :

- (1) reflect evaluatively on what has been learnt and identify valuable outcomes of the learning
- (2) reflect 'into the future, contemplating possible directions for future learning.

This activity allows the learning community to see where it is along its pathway to its purposes or reasons for learning. It also allows the teaching group to examine how the new knowledge might enhance its work more broadly and inform a code to teaching practice for the group.

Review, enhance knowledge / practice and continue the learning

As well as collating what has been learnt, the community reviews and evaluates the outcomes of the learning. In this case study innovative teaching procedures were evaluated in terms of their relevance for enhanced pedagogy and an understanding of learning at the KLA level. Staff identified how they could incorporate these into their teaching and to develop them further. The relevance of the strategies for other KLAs were discussed.

At the school level the implications of outcomes for the school's code of teaching were identified. Schools can identify the extent to which the learning has assisted them to achieve aspects of their community goals or visions.

The community also plans and learns further. Schools can identify how they can re-orient their goals or visions and how they might approach the next aspect of their vision. The school identifies new priorities or goals for its learning and implements the next phase of the learning agenda.

Indicators of strong learning focus in a community. It is useful to identify some characteristics of a school community that has a strong learning base. Some are shown in the following:

Knowledge and learning are valued for their contribution to the community.	The school community is continually growing and evolving, forming new relationships. It expects to re-create itself through the learning. Knowledge enhancement is seen as the pathway to the future. The leadership team deals with issues and looks to the future from an explicit learning perspective. The leaders are seen as 'leaders of learning' and 'leaders in learning'.
The school is aware of its knowledge at any time in particular areas.	It is aware of what it knows about specific issues because it has in place procedures for 'harvesting' and collating the knowledge of its members. It is also aware of how it knows, the actions it has implemented to learn, its attitudes to the knowledge and the context of the learning.
Ideas are discussed and evaluated on the basis of their intrinsic worth	A range of influences, for example, . political, cultural, economic or institutional influences can restrict the sharing of ideas within a community. An organisation with a strong learning base, recognises and, where appropriate, them. Ideas are transacted with these influences reduced.
Learner-centred teaching is the focus.	Multiple ways of learning rather than homogeneity are encouraged. The focus is on understanding a world of interdependency and change rather than memorizing facts and striving for right answers.
Explicit indicators of learning	The school has in place explicit indicators of learning and uses these to chart the progress / growth of the community.
A focus on improving teaching practice	The school aims to improve pedagogic practice and sees it as a key route to enhanced performance and achievement. Pedagogy has a high priority when the school reflects on its progress and plans for its future.

A knowledge of learning is valued	The school has a strong focus on the value of a knowledge of learning and how this can contribute to the work of the community. This is shown in the focus on collaborative professional development within the school.
Students and staff take leadership roles in learning and teaching.	Students and staff are encouraged to take leadership responsibilities for aspects of the core work of learning and teaching. Students' perceptions of the world have a key role in the learning. Their passion for learning, their imaginations and ways of seeing things are valued. The school helps staff to learn how to be leaders in areas of pedagogy, leaders of learning, to coach colleagues, etc.
Teachers have time for self evaluation and reflection	The school allocates time for teachers to engage in on-going self evaluation and reflection of self learning and pedagogy and provides opportunity for KLA level analysis of teaching practice. The school expects its staff to engage in this practice.
High quality learning outcomes are valued	High quality learning outcomes are obviously valued, recognized and celebrated. These are not necessarily high scoring outcomes but show high levels of creativity and innovation. The school displays a valuing of knowledge outcomes and encourage knowledge to be displayed.
Dialogue about learning and pedagogy is valued	The school values a high level of functional dialogue, debate and discussion about learning and pedagogic issues. This is initiated and guided by school leaders.
Pedagogic leadership is explicit and systematic	Pedagogic leadership at various levels of the school is explicit and systematic. Responsibility for leadership in various areas of pedagogy is elaborated and clear.
Each unit has an explicit, plan for enhancing teaching.	Each KLA has an explicit, forward looking plan for instructional enhancement. Each KLA is aware of a range of teaching options and uses them selectively.
The school is organised in terms of knowledge enhancement	The school organises its classes, instructional delivery, teaching times, in terms of what is known about effective knowledge change and focuses on 'knowledge enhancement'.

Application to some of the typical areas in which a learning community can learn.

We noted earlier various areas in which a community can learn. The model of community learning has been applied to some of these in the figure below.

area for learning	Example
improving literacy	A literacy enhancement program, based on an explicit model of literacy, was implemented in various secondary colleges. Teachers in all subject areas were assisted, through explicit demonstration and coaching, to incorporate several specific literacy learning strategies in whatever content they teach. Teaching procedures teach students to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prepare their knowledge for reading • improve their word level knowledge of the content • paraphrase, question and summarise text.
teacher self improvement	Teachers implemented self improvement by audio-taping a sequence of lessons, evaluated the extent to which their teaching fostered the learning interactions and used this to fine-tune teaching.
coaching teachers	individual teachers who were having difficulties with their teaching were coached to improve their teaching through their systematic use of a range of teaching strategies based on the set of learning interactions.
understanding multiple ways of learning	Groups of teachers have learnt to implement teaching that takes account of multiple ways of learning by developing teaching procedures that targeted each learning interaction for the various ways of learning. This has been used to develop effective teaching for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • students who have learning disabilities • students who have gifted knowledge • adolescence, middle years teaching
dealing with student problems from a learning perspective.	Groups of teachers learnt to use the model of learning to analyse 'student problems' from an 'effective learning' perspective, to identify the key learning aspects not in place and relevant procedures to trial.
Helping students understand learning, manage and direct their own learning, increase motivation to learn.	Teachers used the model to develop procedures to teach in an explicit way the self-talk (self scripts) necessary for students to improve their ability to manage and direct their own learning and to increase their motivation to learn. They also used it to help students learn how to diagnose problems, difficulties in their learning and to take steps to deal with them.
Bench marking, reviewing and evaluating teaching from a learner perspective	Groups of teachers used the learning model to benchmark review and evaluate their teaching from a learner perspective and to improve their teaching by matching teaching with learners. School leaders used the model to evaluate the quality of learning in their school, identify where to fine-tune the teaching. They did this in different ways <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a checklist that records the frequency of each procedure. • Prepare examples of teaching procedures that foster each interaction and see the extent to which the teaching actually uses similar procedures.
Devise and evaluate instructional units	Groups used the model to devise instructional units that match the learning functions. School leaders have used the framework to evaluate teaching units from learning perspective.

Leading a learning community : A learning 'how to' model

The case study shows how groups learn by using the learning interactions that individual learners do. Leading a learning community involves assisting the community to implement each learning interaction. In this section we examine a 'how to' model for being a learning organisation. The implementation is, however, more complex. The case study also indicated the perception of the

community as consisting of multiple tiers, with each tier learning in a particular domain with particular purposes and goals for learning.

One tier involves the individual members such as students, parents and / or teachers. In a school context, members may be interested in learning in particular contexts, such as classrooms.

A second tier involves the groups into which these members are organized for learning. Each of these groups is led by at least one leader at any time.

A third tier involves the leadership team for the organization or community. The school or community leadership team leads learning at the global level. It looks at whole school learning, learning in relation to other schools and community bodies, interprets policy at the community level. It looks beyond and outside of the school as well as 'into and across the school' in relation to any learning goal.

We can examine the types of learning activities that each tier in the school community will use to achieve effective learning by working through each learning interaction. Examples are shown below for three tiers, the school leadership tier, the leader of KLA tier and the KLA group learning by working through two of the early interactions, (1) the vision of the outcomes of learning, the goals and (2) using existing knowledge.

	leaders of school	*MLLL	*KLA group
vision of the outcomes of learning, the goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identifies outcomes for the school given the change. What will be school / students and staff being doing differently for what they are doing now ? plans how to will the leader communicate the vision to various bodies in the school, to map the vision operationally, how to allocate parts of it to school members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> plans how to develop and negotiate the vision to the group and allocate parts of it so that ownership of it is taken by members KLA. may need to coach KLA members to comprehend vision in the context of KLA, assist the group and each member to explicate the vision, contextualize it, align it with their beliefs, recognise roles and functions, deal with potential threats, possibilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> negotiates the vision of the KLA re learning. What will students and staff do differently from now ? identifies outcomes for the KLA given the change ? identifies how the KLA group will support the development of the vision and ways if implementing it. identifies the key component roles or functions of each staff member in the vision.

<p>use existing knowledge</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identifies the level of current knowledge (abstract, experiential) school has about the domain of the change ? • puts in place processes for gathering this. To what extent is this sufficient to support change ? • identifies the school's attitude to and confidence in changing, preparedness to take risks. Implements procedures to identify this. • identifies the school's level of commitment to changing, preparedness to display an expectation that the change will occur . • identifies the processes in the school that will allow the change to occur ? What does the school know about how to manage, direct and monitor the change ? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implements procedures to collate KLA knowledge that is relevant to the change. • implements procedures that allow relevant KLA knowledge to be displayed to the group and valued. • identifies the processes necessary to increase KLA knowledge and to facilitate collegiate learning. What does the KLA leader know about how to lead group learning / coach attitude change ? • assists each teacher to be prepared to share knowledge, to analyse their teaching, to identify possible areas for improvement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identifies that it knows (abstract, experiential) at present that is relevant to the change What are the KLA's attitude to and confidence in changing ? • identifies what the KLA group know about how to manage, direct and monitor the change process ? What are the questions to which the KLA currently doesn't have answers ? • identifies what it believes about the need to change and level of its goal congruence re change.
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Examples of the activities that may be used at the school leadership tier for working through each interaction are shown in the figure below.

	SLT
a challenge or reason for learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identifies the challenge for the school community relates the challenge to school wide policy, to wider community, other schools examines what school needs to do to change identifies the challenges / expectations school might need to meet
vision of the outcomes of learning, the goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identifies outcomes for the school given the change. What will be school / students and staff being doing differently for what they are doing now ? plans how to communicate the vision to various bodies in the school, to map the vision operationally, how to allocate parts of it to school members
use existing knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identifies the level of current knowledge (abstract, experiential) the school has about the domain of the change ? puts in place processes for gathering this. To what extent is this sufficient to support change ? identifies the school's attitude to and confidence in changing, preparedness to take risks. Implements procedures to identify this. identifies the school's level of commitment to changing, preparedness to display an expectation that the change will occur . identifies the processes in the school that will allow the change to occur ? What does the school know about how to manage, direct and monitor the change ?
see a pathway to the goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> develops a school-wide pathway that shows steps to the goal. This brings together different component pathways and takes account of several agendas identifies school level indicators or measures of the success of the change
learn new ideas in specific contexts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides opportunities for exploration of innovation in specific contexts supports, encourages questioning of new ideas, focus on specific possibilities supports, encourages new experiences, sharing of new experiential knowledge
abstract, decontextualise what they have learnt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides opportunities for school to abstract and generalise the new knowledge, identify aspects of innovation that can inform improved practice in the school communicate the outcomes of the learning to other agencies
invest positive emotion in the new knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> models the display of valuing of innovative outcomes, explicitly shows a school wide valuing of the innovative outcomes explicitly builds up the self efficacy of the school, develops attitude of school as valuing innovation implements procedures to develop an intrinsic motivation to learn, to help each teacher to get increased motivation to continue.
store what they have learnt in memory, practise remembering it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> puts in place procedures for retaining the knowledge gained, for example, on school's intranet, in handbook, in a poster gallery refers to and uses the outcomes of the learning in subsequent policy and practice in the school
identify how they learnt, what they did that helped them to learn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> puts in place procedures to identify and collate what the school has learnt about how to learn, to manage change to innovate, the actions that worked fosters a valuing of reflection on learning and thinking.
see progress being made	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> develops indicators for monitoring the progress of the school and procedures for mapping progress against these fosters an attitude towards seeing progress being made leads the school to celebrate progress

transfer, apply and generalise the new knowledge	<p>analyses the innovation on a school- wide basis in terms of its</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • relevance to school wide policy • relationship to other agencies such as the parent body, other schools • future development in the school • its relevance for dealing with other problems, far transfer • key variables, for example, economic factors, HR.
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Key competencies for leading a learning community

In summary then, to lead a learning community in the Twenty First century, I believe that leaders will need a range of competencies:

Area of competence	Aspects of competence: leaders
understand and value the concept of knowledge, its operationalisation and enhancement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participate in discussion re knowledge, its generation, management and enhancement, see knowledge as a key capacity, a school's intellectual capital, • operationalise these concepts in their practice • foster innovation and creativity through knowledge enhancement • foster processes likely to lead to the self management of innovation • acknowledge the role that an individual's values play in their knowledge, accept this, and where appropriate, separate these components • recognise and respect the ethical and moral aspects of knowledge and implement this in decision making.
understand learning in the C 21st	<p>understand the learning process in the C 21st and the means for fostering and enhancing this,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to foster adult and child learning, recognise the different ways in which staff learn, take practical account of the fact that for any issue staff enter with a range of existing knowledge and experiences and this range offers the possibility of innovation. • how to assist all staff to acknowledge the learning in which they are engaged, to see themselves as learners, for example, as action researchers needing to trial and evaluate ideas and to think in possibilities. • recognize learning as a journey of and risk taking, talk openly and frequently with teachers about instruction, suggest, give feedback, and solicit teachers' advice and opinions about classroom instruction, emphasize the study of teaching and learning. • how to identify where individuals and groups are in terms of their capacity and preparedness to learn, acknowledge the difficulties of growing and changing, including teacher resistance and the difficulty of role changes; • how to display a valuing of learning as a means to solve problems and to foster knowledge change.
learning groups within the community	<p>understand how learning operates at various levels or areas in the community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify the units in the community that will be responsible for learning (parents, student groups, the KLAs, the department, year level, etc), • identify the contribution of each to an overall learning outcome, • how knowledge from the various the various tiers can be integrated or synthesised • recognise the conditions for optimising learning in the community and how to implement these.
use individual and group knowledge	<p>have in place processes for stimulating, valuing and collating individual and group knowledge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • display an awareness and valuing of what each community group and member knows that is relevant, • foster processes for doing this, for example, equip each teacher with the skills necessary for collecting and collating knowledge at classroom level, promote group development, teamwork, collaboration, innovation and continual growth, trust in staff and students, and caring and respect to enhance teacher efficacy. • demonstrate fundamental respect for the knowledge and abilities of teachers; view the "teacher as intellectual rather than teacher as technician"

motivate learning	<p>motivate community members and groups to engage in the learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • foster goal congruence, • put in place processes to 'bring on board' community members in a range of ways.
guide the learning processes	<p>know how to guide, coach the community in various learning processes, for example</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to frame up learning goals, both for the community and for various aspects of it, how to coach groups within the community to do this • how to unpack a vision of the learning outcomes, how to allocate aspects of the vision to various aspects of the community • how to put in place an action plan for learning, how this evolves, how groups / participants contribute to this, help staff to see themselves on a learning pathway and to monitor their personal and group learning journeys. • how to help individuals and groups to identify what they know what is relevant, that this is valued, that individuals and groups can learn. • provide opportunities for staff to self reflect both in evaluative and 'dry run' pro-active ways. • how to learn, both individually and in groups. • develop cooperative, non threatening partnerships with teachers that are characterized by trust, openness, and freedom to make mistakes, provide time and opportunities for peer connections among teachers.
monitor and re-direct learning	<p>have in place processes to monitor, re-direct and re-focus the direction of learning, provide time and the opportunity for groups to evaluate and to reflect on learning progress and to plan future directions.</p>
enhance knowledge	<p>know how to innovate, think creatively, implement processes to encourage foster creativity and innovation in school thinking and outcomes.</p>
display ways of learning	<p>model, demonstrate, coach and mentor learning practices and procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • model teaching skills. • support developing coaching skills and reflective conversations among educators. • apply the principles of adult learning to staff development programs.
train leaders of learning	<p>train leaders in various areas to be leaders of learning, develop 'leader of learning' and 'leader in learning' skills and values in each middle level leader.</p>
provide options for learning	<p>provide options for learning both individually and in groups in a range of ways by exploring new ideas and by collating the outcomes of these.</p>
use outcomes of learning to enhance school processes and structures	<p>implement processes for using the outcomes of learning to evaluate school processes and structures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encourage on-going evaluation, review and up-dating of teaching practice. • review how learning opportunities are provided • provide resources and support for redesign of programs.

Summary

The study of instructional leadership is "complex and not easily subject to empirical verification" (Hallinger & Heck, 1996b, p. 5). Effective leadership integrates collaboration, peer coaching, inquiry, collegial study groups, and reflective discussion into a holistic approach to promote professional dialogue among educators. It is contextualised in school culture and needs to be developed systematically, explicitly and consistently. It has growth and knowledge enhancement as its prime objective. It integrates knowledge from several areas including the study of learning and teaching from within an adult learning framework that involves a collaborative action research perspective, active reflective practice, professional interaction, communication and group development that is referenced on mutual trust and support.

To be managed systematically and consistently, this range of aspects requires integration. The focus of this paper has been to propose a learning framework for this synthesis. This explicit focus on this systematic teacher friendly model of learning makes the current approach to instructional leadership different from some other approaches. The learning framework is not 'set in concrete' but is instead my 'best approximation' at this time.

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