

# **Teachers as Leaders in a Knowledge Society: Encouraging Signs of a New Professionalism.**

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## **Teachers as Leaders in a Knowledge Society: Encouraging Signs of a New Professionalism.**

**Abstract:** Challenges confronting schools worldwide are greater than ever, and, likewise, many teachers possess capabilities, talents, and formal credentials more sophisticated than ever.

However, the responsibility and authority accorded to teachers have not grown significantly, nor has the image of teaching as a profession advanced significantly. The question becomes, what are the implications for the image and status of the teaching profession as the concept of knowledge society takes a firm hold in the industrialised world? This article addresses the philosophical underpinnings of teacher leadership manifested in case studies where schools sought to achieve the generation of new knowledge as part of a process of whole-school revitalisation. Specifically, this article reports on Australian research that has illuminated the work of teacher leaders engaged in the IDEAS project, a joint school revitalisation initiative of the University of Southern Queensland and the Queensland Department of Education and the Arts.

Whereas just two decades ago, futurists were predicting the death of formal schooling and the demise of the teaching profession, one can argue that this gloomy prediction has already been revealed as unjustified. Indeed, there are clear signs that schools are assuming new forms as self-managing agencies that are partly self-funded, networked, global, accumulating other functions and gradually selecting their own staff (Beare, 2001). The teacher within these emerging educational organisations is increasingly a self-managed professional, moving away from an individual working in a classroom to a “collaborative individual”– an autonomous self-knowing professional who works with others to achieve a shared purpose (Limerick, Cunningham, & Crowther, 1998).

Ground-breaking educational research, such as that of Newmann and Wehlage, (1995) at the University of Wisconsin, has rejected the “schools don’t make a difference” syndrome that emanated from the 1960s Coleman and Plowden Reports in the United States and United Kingdom, respectively. In place of reports such as these that placed a cloud over the teaching profession for more than a generation, the assertion now is that teachers who work in collaborative professional communities can exercise profound impact to redress issues of economic, social and cultural disadvantage. However it is the emerging concept of “knowledge

society” that is doing most to influence futuristic projections regarding the teaching profession. Global change theorist Peter Drucker (1994) asserted that the advent of this notion clearly implies that the school has the potential to become the centre of human activity in 21<sup>st</sup> century society and that vocational groups that are central to knowledge creation have the potential to become a “leading class”. Influenced by analyses such as Drucker’s, Crowther (2003) proposed a particular conception of knowledge society for consideration by educational professionals:

communities of people working together so that their collective intelligence results in creation of new knowledge that enhances their personal efficacy and their quality of life and enables them to contribute to a more sustainable and better world for others. (p.12)

But how realistic are such projections in practical terms? Is there any evidence in the early years of 21<sup>st</sup> century knowledge societies that teachers have the capabilities to become knowledge creators or stimulate processes of knowledge creation in the communities around them? In this article, we conceptualise the work of teacher leaders in a successful Australian school revitalisation process, The **IDEAS** Project, which engages primary and secondary schools in processes of successful school revitalisation. We conclude that the concept of teacher leadership is inextricably linked to knowledge generation, thereby enhancing its integrity as a fundamental construct for 21<sup>st</sup> century knowledge societies. We further conclude that a complex professional and philosophical orientation, which we label “neopedagogical”, is emerging to capture the essence of the work of these “new professionals”.

### **Successful School Revitalisation – The IDEAS Project**

The **IDEAS** Project is the result of thinking, dialoguing and critiquing by educators from schools, education systems (principally, the Queensland Department of Education, Australia) and universities (principally, the University of Southern Queensland) over a period of eight years (1997-2005). It emphasises one of the most essential findings of significant research on school improvement (revitalisation), namely, that enhanced school outcomes are most likely to occur as the result of a course of collaborative action involving whole-school strategies (Cuttance & Associates, 2001; Newmann & Wehlage, 1995).

**IDEAS** manifests a spirit that is exemplified in its five operational principles –

- Teachers are the key to successful school revitalisation;
- Professional learning is best thought of as a shared collegial process within each individual school;
- A “no blame” mindset should permeate organisational problem-solving ;
- A “success breeds success” approach should guide teachers’ analyses of their professional practices ;
- The alignment of school processes is a collective school responsibility.

The observance of these five principles is asserted to provide a deliberate basis for educational professionals to create renewed purpose and revitalised practices in their workplaces. The principles come into effect in the **IDEAS** Project through activation of four structural and processual concepts (Crowther, Dawson & Lewis, 2002). These are:

- *The Research-based Framework for Enhancing School Outcomes (RBF)*. This conceptual model provides teachers and administrators with a way of thinking about their school as an idealised organisation, creating an image of what they want their school to become, and collectively working to build an envisioned future. . Data are collected on an ongoing basis about the perceived effectiveness of the school , relative to ideals, through the use of a 70-item Diagnostic Inventory (DI) that derives from the *Outcomes* Element and five *Contributory* Elements of the RBF (namely Strategic Foundations; Cohesive Community; Infrastructural Design; 3-Dimensional Pedagogy; Professional Supports)
- *Parallel leadership*. A particular relatedness between teacher-leaders and administrator-leaders, parallel leadership has three distinct characteristics: mutualism, sense of shared purpose and allowance for individual expression. According to Crowther, Hann and McMaster (2001), parallel leadership
  - ... leads to strengthened alignment between the school’s vision and the school’s teaching and learning practices. It facilitates the development of a professional learning community, culture building and schoolwide approaches to teaching and learning. It makes possible the enhancement of school identity, teachers’ professional esteem, community support and students’ achievements. (p.73)

Of particular importance in this construction of educational leadership is a definitive postulation regarding principals as metastrategic leaders and, perhaps of even greater importance, of teachers as potential leaders in their own right. The **IDEAS** Project's conceptualisation of teacher leadership is outlined in The Teachers as Leaders framework in Table 1.

**Table 1:**

**The Teachers as Leaders Framework (TLF).**

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|---|
| <p><b>Teacher leaders:.....</b></p> <p><b>Convey convictions about a “better world”, by, for example:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• articulating a positive future for students</li> <li>• showing a genuine interest in students' lives</li> <li>• contributing to an image of teachers as “professionals who make a difference”</li> <li>• gaining respect and trust in the broader community</li> <li>• demonstrating tolerance and reasonableness in difficult situations</li> </ul> <p><b>Strive for authenticity in their teaching, learning and assessment practices, by, for example:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• creating learning experiences related to students' needs</li> <li>• connecting teaching, learning and assessment to students' futures</li> <li>• seeking deep understanding of tacit teaching and learning processes</li> <li>• valuing teaching as a key profession in shaping meaning systems</li> </ul> <p><b>Facilitate communities of learning through organisation-wide processes, by, for example:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• encouraging a shared, school wide approach to pedagogy (Schoolwide Pedagogy)</li> <li>• approaching professional learning as consciousness-raising about complex issues</li> <li>• facilitating understanding across diverse groups while also respecting individual differences</li> <li>• synthesising new ideas out of colleagues' dialogue and activities</li> </ul> <p><b>Confront barriers in the school's culture and structures, by, for example:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “testing the boundaries” rather than accepting the status quo</li> <li>• engaging administrators as potential sources of assistance and advocacy</li> <li>• accessing political processes in and out of the school</li> <li>• standing up for children, especially marginalised or disadvantaged individuals or groups</li> </ul> <p><b>Translate ideas into sustainable systems of action, by, for example:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• organising complex tasks effectively</li> <li>• maintaining focus on issues of importance</li> <li>• nurturing networks of support</li> <li>• managing issues of time and pressure through priority-setting</li> </ul> <p><b>Nurture a culture of success, by, for example:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• acting on opportunities for others to gain success and recognition</li> <li>• adopting a "no blame" attitude when things go wrong</li> <li>• creating a sense of community identity and pride</li> </ul> |
|---|

Source: Crowther, Kaagan, Ferguson, & Hann, 2002, pp.4-5..

- *Three-dimensional pedagogy.* **IDEAS** conceptualises the work of the 21<sup>st</sup> century teaching professional as three-Dimensional Pedagogy (3-D.P). In proposing this construction of teacher professionalism we have stated elsewhere (Andrews & Crowther, 2003) that:
 

..... 3-DP teachers develop their personal pedagogical self at the same time as they engage with their school's SWP and explore the potential of relevant authoritative theories of teaching and learning to both their personal pedagogy and their SWP. (p. 101)

The concept of 3-DP provides a framework that, it is presumed, enables **IDEAS** Project teachers to engage in dialogue where deeply embedded pedagogical practices are shared and new levels of pedagogical insight can be generated.

- *The **ideas** process of professional inquiry.* A school-based implementation strategy that encompasses five conceptually linked phases— *initiating, discovering, envisioning, actioning and sustaining*—the **ideas** process usually takes about two years to work through in a school setting. Of most central importance in most schools is development of a distinctive school vision and an associated schoolwide pedagogy (SWP). The **ideas** process requires the establishment of an internal facilitator(s) and an **IDEAS** school management team (ISMT) with the assistance of external facilitator support (Crowther et al., 2002a).

### **Researching the Work of Teacher Leaders in IDEAS Schools.**

The principal source of data for this article was a formal evaluation report on a national Australian trial of the **IDEAS** Project undertaken in 2002-2003 under the auspices of the Commonwealth of Australia Department of Education, Science and Training. The report, *Evaluation of the National Trial of the IDEAS Project* (February 2004), was prepared by the principal researchers, Paul Chesterton and Patrick Duignan of the Australian Catholic University. The “trial” encompassed 12 schools in three Australian states as they engaged in the **IDEAS** Project over a period of one year. Data collected by the **IDEAS** national trial research team included pre and post use of the **IDEAS** Project Diagnostic Inventory, three sets of site-based visits and a post-trial forum involving the 12 participating schools and the University of Southern Queensland **IDEAS** Project team.

The evaluation report emphasised the overall success of the national trial in terms of very powerful impacts on teacher professionalism, school - community relations and student well-being. Summative statements from the report include the following observations.

First, the implementation of **IDEAS** was found to have positive impacts on teachers in the trial schools in promoting pedagogical reflection and discussion, increasing collaboration, increasing involvement in decision-making, improving teacher morale, and changing teacher practices. However, the extent of these impacts varied among teachers, depending on the extent to which they were directly involved in the **IDEAS** activities, and the degree to which they understood and

were committed to the **IDEAS** intentions and principles.

Second, the successful implementation of **IDEAS** required a considerable shift in the leadership paradigm of many schools. Principals, particularly, had to ‘let go’ of traditional views of power and position in relation to their teachers. All of the principals had, to a large degree, appreciated the need to do so and had acted, accordingly. There was evidence in all schools of greater involvement by teachers in decisions related to developing a vision and generating school-wide pedagogy. Parallel leadership was developing steadily in 10 of the 12 schools, and was flourishing in 4 of the schools. “In these latter schools, it was believed that there was no going back, even if a new principal with more traditional views of leadership were to be appointed to the school”. (Chesterton & Duignan, 2004, p.2)

This article draws primarily upon one particular aspect of the **IDEAS** evaluation report, namely the ways in which forms of teacher leadership were documented as having contributed to enhanced school and community identity. In this article, we make use of the documentation regarding aspects of school and community development in three of the twelve case study schools to conjecture about the possible role of teacher leadership in contributing to processes of new knowledge generation. To this end, we present cameo descriptions of three of the case study schools that comprise the basis for our analyses and conjecture.

### **Cameo 1: St Bernard’s College, Mountview**

Nestled in the foothills of the Australian “high country”, renowned for its winter sports amenities, St Bernard’s is a Catholic K-10 college with an enrolment of 530 students and a staff of 49. This school had been established two years before embarking on the **IDEAS** Project as a result of a central office decision to amalgamate three separate schools and appoint a new principal. The principal’s brief was to form a new college out of the pre-existing infants, primary and secondary schools. The amalgamation process had begun but little dialogue had actually transpired between the three campuses. Many of the staff were concerned about the viability of the separate campuses, especially the one most distant from the central campus. The principal decided to use **IDEAS** to provide a vehicle to develop closer working relationships within these groups and, hopefully, a new collective sense of identity.

At the commencement of the **IDEAS** process an **IDEAS** school management team was formed, consisting of representatives from each campus and led by Jeremy, a young teacher. The Diagnostic Inventory (DI) results illuminated the issues associated with the attempted amalgamation and indicated little sense of shared purpose and very limited cross-campus professional engagement. Both staff and students indicated that there was no shared understanding of future positioning or vision for the school, a lack of agreement about a definition of excellence in teaching, learning and assessment across the campuses and also that the physical design of the schools inhibited interaction by the staff.

The facilitator, Jeremy, and the **IDEAS** School Management Team (ISMT) led the staff through a series of visioning and values workshops which resulted in the staff agreeing on a set of shared values that emphasised the importance of dynamic school development, a futures orientation and the faith-centred basis of the school community. But the ISMT experienced difficulty in the early stages of “Envisioning” and concluded reluctantly at one point that “an awe-inspiring vision could not be created” (Jeremy). Therefore the facilitator engaged the staff in exploring possible schoolwide pedagogical principles using the agreed upon core values as a reflective tool. Specifically, Jeremy encouraged the staff to take “snapshots of personal pedagogy” that they considered reflected the values of *a dynamic, forward thinking, faith centred, shared journey community*. He also created opportunities to involve students extensively in this process. The staff and students then proceeded to develop a *St Bernard’s Collage of Successful Pedagogical Practices*. It was during a community analysis of the collage that the St Bernard’s vision emerged – *A School with Altitude* – “representing our geography, our need to forge a cohesive community connecting the three campuses, as well as our shared beliefs about learning and life” (Jeremy, facilitator).

The *School with Altitude* theme was then teased out into a set of St Bernard’s learning principles that were thought to reflect the ethos of mountain sports and the school’s religious history as well as systemic pedagogical and curriculum framework. Upon completion of this stage of the **IDEAS** process, staff reported very positively to the national trial evaluators, with comments such as “The process has got everyone going in the same direction, a real change in this school”

and “Staff talk more about pedagogy, where the school is going, what is happening with staff and students. It empowers individuals”.

Jeremy has also used the *School with Altitude* vision to engage students in creating futuristic images of their multicampus school. He summarised his experiences this way:

Just yesterday we had a liturgy which communicated the *Altitude* theme through dance, song, and prayer. We then bussed the whole school K-10 to the top of Mt Gladstone for a *Lunch with Altitude* and the students walked the 8km back to school in support of a youth charity. We have created a place where staff and students are one. (Jeremy)

The principal, Clare, commented on the overall initiative as follows: “*A School with Altitude* has students and teachers who believe that anything is possible...who believe that students can and will scale new heights of success”. This sentiment was identified in the national trial report as a typical indication of the way that the **IDEAS** Project had engendered a new ethos in the school.

It can be extrapolated, we believe, that the creation of a refined sense of school community at St Bernard’s has been made possible in large part because of the leadership of those professionals who have greatest capacity to transpose core messages, such as the school Vision statement, into fundamental processes that all community members regard as important. The professionals in question are the school’s teachers and the associated fundamental processes relate to their use of language and metaphor to clarify the school’s identity and to derive distinctive teaching and learning practices that convey a sense of solidarity.

### **Cameo 2: Bromley West Primary School**

Bromley West is an urban primary school of 400 (4 – 7 year olds) students, located alongside a railway line and beside a collection of many historical buildings as part of an official railway heritage site. The surrounding community is strongly multi-cultural and has been classified as low to mid socio-economic. The **IDEAS** Project Diagnostic Inventory outcomes were very upsetting to the staff, pointing to lack of community support for the school, a highly divided staff and serious concerns regarding student behaviour issues.

Betty, the **IDEAS** Project facilitator and the ISMT determined to explore a range of ways of using the school's distinctive historical background and geographic location in the creation of a captivating vision of a desired future (see figure 2). In doing so, it might be said that they employed metaphor and language as a way of linking social reality with a sense of physical place (Stedman, 2003)

The national trial report noted the particular importance that Bromley staff placed on the use of child-oriented visual communications, in the form of a train and six carriages, to make the Bromley schoolwide pedagogy explicit. The teachers then proceeded to explore each of the pedagogical "carriages" in their work, through the creation of individual 3-DP descriptions - this action they called their "embedding process".

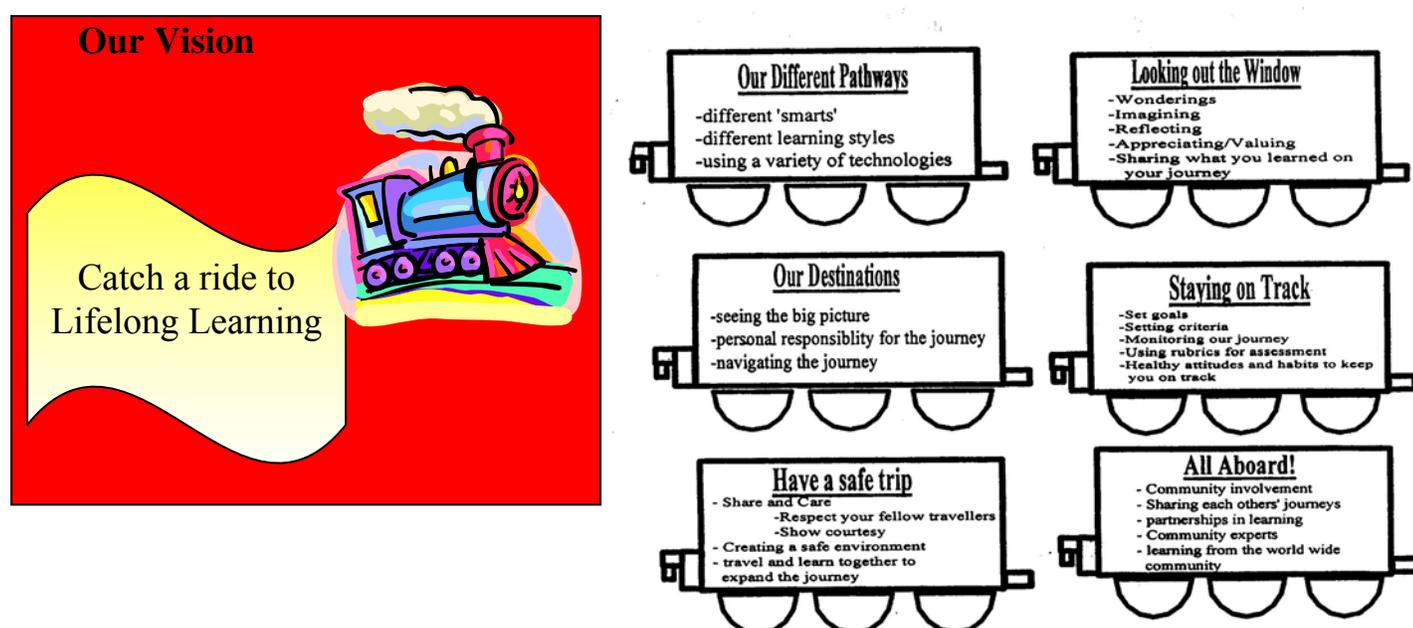
Karen, a member of the ISMT reported on behalf of the Bromley staff at the 2004 **IDEAS** national trial forum. She identified the documented achievements of Bromley's **IDEAS** Project as follows:

- a. establishment of year level learning cluster groups;
- b. a focus on improving literacy and numeracy through the use of a common approach to literacy that relates to the six Bromley pedagogical "carriages"
- c. cross discipline planning as a result of teachers sharing their pedagogical experiences with individual "carriages" in different subject areas ;
- d. allocation of resources to clusters as agreed by staff; each staff member taking on management and financial accountability for the budget;
- e. ongoing professional learning through videoing SWP in action and dialogue about the deeper meanings of classroom practices; and
- f. four teachers applied for formal advanced skill teacher status – their promotion being supported by staff and administration.

The national trial report indicated that after one year's engagement with **IDEAS**, the re-administered Diagnostic Inventory results indicated that the Bromley principal and **IDEAS** Facilitator had challenged a range of negative stereotypes about the community and had dramatically changed the way students and teachers viewed their school community. The

Bromley train metaphor, we assert, with its distinctive statement of shared visionary purpose and authoritative pedagogical principles in the form of the six carriages, represents new knowledge of a very powerful form. In particular, its capacity to transpose shared ideals into meaningful school-based practices had the effect of engendering confidence and optimism where cynicism had previously prevailed. Could this transposition have been undertaken without teacher leadership? We believe not.

**Figure 2: Bromley West Artefacts**



### **Cameo 3: Ambrose Senior High School**

Ambrose Senior High School has a teaching staff of 54 (including part-time staff), and offers educational programs for students in Years 8 to 12. It is a designated “non-local intake” school and offers an innovative performing arts specialist program. The school sits on the fringe of a medium size city and has moved from being a semi-rural to an outer suburban area in the past decade. The school staff were facing an increasingly challenging student body demonstrating high levels of disengagement and had indicated in 2002 that they wanted to make a difference in these students’ life chances. Thus, as a response to continued student disengagement, the school restructured its operations into two sub-schools - is, a Middle School, years 8 and 9, and a Senior

School, years 10 to 12. In addition they adopted a new leadership structure and developed learning teams.

However, even though these structural changes had been made, staff were still faced with a high level of student disengagement and in 2004 they decided to engage with the **IDEAS** Project in the hope that this process might assist in increasing the involvement of their highly challenging student body.

Drawing on staff members from each of the sub-schools Ambrose SHS established an ISMT. The large team, made up of teacher volunteers, several parents and the Deputy Principal was facilitated by Darren, a teacher. Their first task was to distribute the Diagnostic Inventory (DI) to all staff and a random sample of both parents and students. As the staff analysed the data and wrote their D.I. report they agreed that data from all groups (staff, parents and students) indicated a lack of an agreed vision and limited agreement about excellence in pedagogy. Staff morale was low and both staff and students were dissatisfied with the school's outcomes – especially related to student achievement, students' sense of pride in the school and the profile in the community.

In just a short period of time, the dynamic and committed **IDEAS** Project facilitator, Darren, and the active and supportive ISMT engaged staff, students and parents in developing a vision and an associated statement of beliefs and values. They used the process to hold many student forums to engage the students in conversations about how the school can “make a difference for them for their future” (Facilitator, report to the **IDEAS** Forum, November 2003).

The vision that emerged was stated as: *Together Today Making a Difference for Tomorrow*. One ISMT member summed the process up as follows:

The school continues to adapt and develop with changing demands, while remaining committed to the values that will support staff and students working for academic, social and emotional development. We believe education should be engaging for all students and allow them to develop a sense of personal worth and identity; to become active contributors to the life of the school and explore the world beyond. At this school we value:

- Personal achievement and success

- Care and respect of self and others
- Development of each individual's self-worth
- Collaboration with others
- Enjoyment of work and learning
- Personal and professional growth
- Individual creativity

(Jenny Adams, ISMT Member, school newsletter September, 2003)

Darren and the ISMT then proceeded to use analyses of “Best Pedagogical Practices” throughout the school to develop a , statement of schoolwide pedagogy that reflected the perceived learning needs and styles of students: :

At Ambrose Senior High School we strive to make a difference through five specific principles

A Personality Principle

- ☞ personalising relationships, clarifying values

A Synergistic Principle

- ☞ connectedness, working together

An Imagination Principle

- ☞ exploring ways of thinking, multiple intelligences

A Facilitative Principle

- ☞ enabling real life problem solving

A Goal Setting Principle

- ☞ aiming high – planning and organising to achieve

(extract from the school presentation at the **IDEAS** Learning Forum November 2003).

The national trial report noted that the implementation of the **IDEAS** Project at Ambrose Senior High School had fundamentally changed the orientation of students towards their school within a relatively brief period of time. By 2004 the principal reported as follows to the parent community:

The Director General of Education attended the launch of the school vision and schoolwide pedagogy and he commented on the changes that have occurred in our school, the enthusiasm present for education and the achievement of students. (February 2004 Newsletter)

In essence, Ambrose High School used the **IDEAS** Project to create a clarified sense of identity for the student body. The concept of parallel leadership – involving the principal, teacher leaders and student leaders – was of fundamental importance in this process. The vehicle, however, was the concept of pedagogy, particularly pedagogy from students’ perspectives. In conjecturing about the success at Ambrose we conclude that the key is the five distinctive Ambrose pedagogical principles and the process that led to their creation. The individual principles will of course be familiar to most educators but, in combination, they are unique to Ambrose. Herein lies their power as a generator of pride and identity as well as a sense of “We are creative and can construct important new meaning in our lives and community”. Such is the significance of teacher leaders in complex contemporary high schools.

### **Summary - Teacher Leaders and the Creation of New Knowledge**

The three cameos from the **IDEAS** Project national Australian trial that have been presented in this article illustrate ways that teacher leaders (acting mainly in this instance as **IDEAS** Facilitators) and other educational professionals have used contextualised knowledge to enable their schools to redress a range of important challenges, including weak identity, low morale and student disengagement. In each case the cameo description illustrates ways that teacher leaders have employed the five **IDEAS** operational principles and four essential **IDEAS** concepts to generate new knowledge that meets criteria of the type identified by Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) in their analysis of successful organisational innovation in post-industrial organisations:

The essence of the innovation is to recreate the world according to a particular ideal or vision. To create new knowledge means quite literally to re-create the (organisation) and everyone in it in an ongoing process of personal and organisational self renewal. (p.10)

Tables 2 and 3 provide the basis for this important conclusion from the **IDEAS** national trial. In Table 2 we conceptualise, with cross-references to specific examples, five key features of

processes of knowledge creation that we observed and analysed as **IDEAS** Project schools went about revitalising themselves. In Table 3 we provide examples of the ways in which our conceptual framework for teacher leadership (see Table 1) is in evidence in each of the three **IDEAS** Project cameos and, in essence, is fundamental to new knowledge creation in the three educational settings.

Based on our interpretations of Tables 2 and 3 we conclude that a new and exciting paradigm for teacher professionalism may be emerging. Viewed together, Tables 2 and 3 manifest a complex philosophical orientation that comprises numerous discernible philosophical strands. There is, for example, concrete evidence in both tables of humanly constructed meaning of the type that might be associated with *social constructivism* (Vygotsky, 1978; Gergen, 1985; von Glasersfeld, 1987; Lave & Wenger, 1991) There is also a distinctive *critical* element (Bates, R., 1986, 1987; Smyth, 2001; Habermas in Stitton, 2003; Carr & Kemmis, 1983; Sachs, 2000) in both tables, as evidenced in the concept of “confronting barriers” (see Table 3) and “search for sustainable values” (see Table 2). Furthermore, rational approaches to organisational development, as proposed in the philosophical notion of *orgmindfulness in Intelligent Organisations* (Liang, 2001, 2004) is evident in the structure provided by both the *ideas* process and the Teachers as Leaders Framework.

But our conclusions from Tables 2 and 3 include understandings that appear to us to go beyond dominant philosophical orientations in education as we know them. For example, the concept of “collective intelligence” appears in both tables in the form of synergistic power as an attribute of highly effective communities of professionals (Levy <http://facultyofcinema.com/0738292614.html>; accessed 4/8/2005).

Underlying these philosophical traditions is a pervasive conviction also, that schools are primarily for children, that child-centredness is more than a focus on children’s development and learning characteristics, it is recognition that childhood is to be valued in its own right (Goodlad, 2000; Greene, 1995; van Manen, 1991). Thus, successful school revitalisation in post-industrial educational contexts, we conclude, should be thought of as a different paradigm for school

development and improvement from what has prevailed in educational thinking until very recently.

**Table 2**

**Teacher Leadership in IDEAS schools involves....**

|   |
|---|
| <p><b>Conveying convictions about a “better world”</b> –as illustrated by Ambrose Senior High School’s vision <i>Together Today Making a Difference for Tomorrow</i> and a pedagogical framework that is <i>engaging for all students and allow them to develop a sense of personal worth and identity; to become active contributors to the life of the school and explore the world beyond.</i></p> |
| <p><b>Striving for authenticity in their teaching, learning and assessment practices</b> - as illustrated by Bromley’s transposition of their vision into teaching and learning principles that emphasise authoritative pedagogical principles at the same time as they encourage teachers’ individual talents.</p>   |
| <p><b>Facilitating communities of learning through organisation-wide processes</b> - as illustrated by Bromley’s application of the train metaphor to capture the community’s historical heritage and geographic location and extend it into six shared pedagogical “carriages”.</p>  |
| <p><b>Confronting barriers in the school’s culture and structures</b> - as illustrated by Ambrose Senior High School’s vision and pedagogical principles “together making a difference” enable teachers and students to resolve issues related to student involvement in designing the teaching and learning experiences.</p>   |
| <p><b>Translating ideas into sustainable systems of action</b> - as illustrated by Bromley’s operational efficiency in developing a framework for Three-Dimensional Pedagogy for application of their metaphorical “carriages” in classrooms.</p>   |
| <p><b>Nurturing a culture of success</b> - as illustrated by St Bernard’s <u>Collage of Successful Pedagogical Practices</u></p>  |

**Table 3.**

**Knowledge generation in IDEAS schools involves...**

|  |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>an holistic process</b> – as illustrated by the use in all five cameos of the IDEAS Project whole-school framework for revitalisation</li> <li>2. <b>to co-construct meaning</b> – as illustrated by the synergistic use of language, metaphor and sensory experience to generate Bromley’s train metaphor;</li> <li>3. <b>employed by a community of learners</b> – as illustrated by Ambrose Senior High ISMT and St Bernard’s parallel leadership to manage the overall process to nurture communal identity</li> <li>4. <b>with teachers as leaders</b> - as illustrated by the work of teachers as IDEAS Project Facilitators in each of the cameos</li> <li>5. <b>in a search for sustainable values and enhanced community</b> – as illustrated by Bromley’s linking of “our railway heritage” to students’ sense of belonging through the school’s train-related vision and pedagogical framework.</li> </ol> |
|--|

## Conclusion

Given our interpretations of the aforementioned lists, we conclude that a new and exciting paradigm for teacher professionalism is emerging. Viewed together, these lists manifest a complex philosophical orientation that comprises numerous discernible philosophical strands. There is, for example, concrete evidence in both tables of humanly constructed meaning of the type that might be associated with *social constructivism* (Gergen, 1985; Lave & Wenger, 1991; von Glasersfeld, 1987; Vygotsky, 1978). There is also a distinctive critical element (Bates, 1986, 1987; Carr & Kemmis, 1983; Habermas, cited in Stitton, 2003; Sachs, 2000; Smyth, 2001) in both tables, as evidenced in the concepts of confronting barriers (see Table 2) and searching for sustainable values (Table 1). Furthermore, rational approaches to organisational development, as proposed in the philosophical notion of *orgmindfulness* in intelligent organisations (Liang, 2001, 2004), are evident in the structure provided by the *ideas* process and the Teachers as Leaders Framework.

Our conclusions from the lists include understandings that appear to go beyond dominant philosophical orientations in education, as we know them. For example, the concept of collective intelligence appears in Table 2 and Table 3 in the form of synergistic power as an attribute of highly effective communities of professionals (Levy, 2005).

Underlying these philosophical traditions is a pervasive conviction that schools are primarily for children and that child centredness is more than a focus on children's development and learning characteristics; it is recognition that childhood is to be valued in its own right (Goodlad, 2000; Greene, 1995; van Manen, 1991). Thus, successful school revitalisation in postindustrial educational contexts, we conclude, should be thought of as a different paradigm of school development and improvement from what has prevailed in educational thinking until recently.

So, one might ask, what emerges from this analysis that might serve to clarify the emerging image and status of the teaching profession? We believe that case studies such as those that form the basis of this article represent a new philosophical world of teacher professionalism, one that we tentatively label *neopedagogical*—a world where teaching enhances the lives of children through the creation of new knowledge, the assertion of sustainable values, and the development

of futures-oriented capabilities. Neopedagogy derives from the power of teachers' collective engagement in processes of holistic school development and the realisation in their workplaces of their talents and gifts as individual professionals.

The work of teachers as reported here leads us to conclude that a significant cadre within the teaching profession—whose members we call *teacher leaders*—possesses the capabilities that Drucker (1994) associated with the postindustrial knowledge worker. These teacher leaders appear to us to be poised to transform the image and status of the teaching profession.

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