

# The Educational Leadership Capability Framework:

Relationships between research, practice, and policy

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# The importance of knowing some history

Theory without practice is blind,  
Practice without theory is sterile

*Karl Marx*

A litmus test for any country or system:

How well do research, practice and policy intersect in productive ways?

Tomorrow's Schools 1989  
Conversion of Principal (Teacher) to  
Chief Executive

Workload grows in size  
and complexity

2001 – first time  
principals  
programme starts

Limited, voluntary  
principal  
development and  
support

More school  
management  
roles; growing  
interest in 'middle'  
leaders

Surveys and  
qualitative  
studies raise  
concerns about  
school  
leadership  
roles – how  
realistic? How  
well prepared  
and  
supported?  
How effective?

School leadership roles largely defined in collective contracts

Loss of permeability between school practitioners and policy and operational roles

Research limited.. Competition between institutions, more dependent on contracts

Development work also competitive

Guarded sharing

# A deliberate approach to PPR/RPP/PRP intersection

- OECD focus on school leadership – NZ school operational policy people see a window
- Best evidence synthesis: school leadership and student outcomes: identifying what works and why (Viviane Robinson, Margie Hohepa and Claire Lloyd)

tense meetings: what is evidence, who decides, what is realistic to expect from school leaders: how will research be used?

Kiwi Leadership for Principals – framing that brings policy, practice, research together

Tū Rangatira – Māori medium educational leadership - draws on both Aotearoa and international research and practitioner reflection, analysis, contribution

# Gains from the Leadership BeS – for research

- Questions for further research
- Searchable full text electronic thesis database
- Educational Leadership Practices (ELP)
  - a survey tool designed for both practice and policy use –  
providing food for evaluation at both school and national levels

# Gains from the Leadership BeS – for practice

*Leadership dimensions and skills and dispositions provide coherence*

Used in PLD – development of Ministry of Education contracts, evaluation

Used in new standards for principals, which boards of trustees should use in annual evaluation

Used in ERO's development of its school evaluation indicators

*Though:*

*Some simplistic take-aways from the 'effect size' analysis*

*\*use of effect sizes as rankings*

*'promoting and **participating** in teacher learning and development'*

*\*use of effect sizes to show impact at class or school level*

# Gains from the Leadership BeS work – the intersection

- *‘External Policy Group’ → Professional Leadership Forum*  
*Ministry of Education, union & professional association leaders, NZSTA, academics (and PLD providers), policy researcher*

*Frank discussion, continuity, building of trust based on shared purpose – the improvement of the conditions for good leadership in every school.*

Led to the development and support for the ELP and its use

# Loss of the intersection

- Change of government. National-led government focuses on accountability, e.g. through National Standards.
- Forums that bring people together are mostly talk-to shops, networking.
- Loss of iterative collective work.
- Leadership strategy no longer a Ministry focus.
  - Educational Leadership Practices national sample report goes to Ministry, never published.
    - NZCER shares the national picture in presentations, discussions.

# Recovery of the intersection - 1

- New policies – Communities of Learning, PLD contract changes - lead to Ministry seeking evidence that they change practices
- In late 2016 NZCER is commissioned by the Ministry to develop research-based survey tools like the ELP that are ‘two for the price of one’ – useful at both school and national levels.
- We bring together practice, research and policy in our advisory group, that works with us from the development of the Teaching, School and Leadership Practices tool through trials, and discussion of the 2017 and 2018 national pictures.
  - Refreshing experience for all.
- Ministry of Education led funding working group also shows what is possible through joint work over time

# Recovery of the intersection - 2

- In 2016, Education Council remit widened to include policy related to the teaching profession, and they were to be the body responsible for PLD
- Education Council develops the Leadership Strategy 'on behalf of the teaching profession' 2017-18

Seeds it with 5 think pieces about the future of education and what that means for leadership

Holds forums with particular groups: academics, teachers, government agencies, Māori education leaders, providers of PLD;

Online survey and discussion groups.

Draft strategy document overseen by sector advisory group; open for feedback

Feedback largely positive about process and outcome

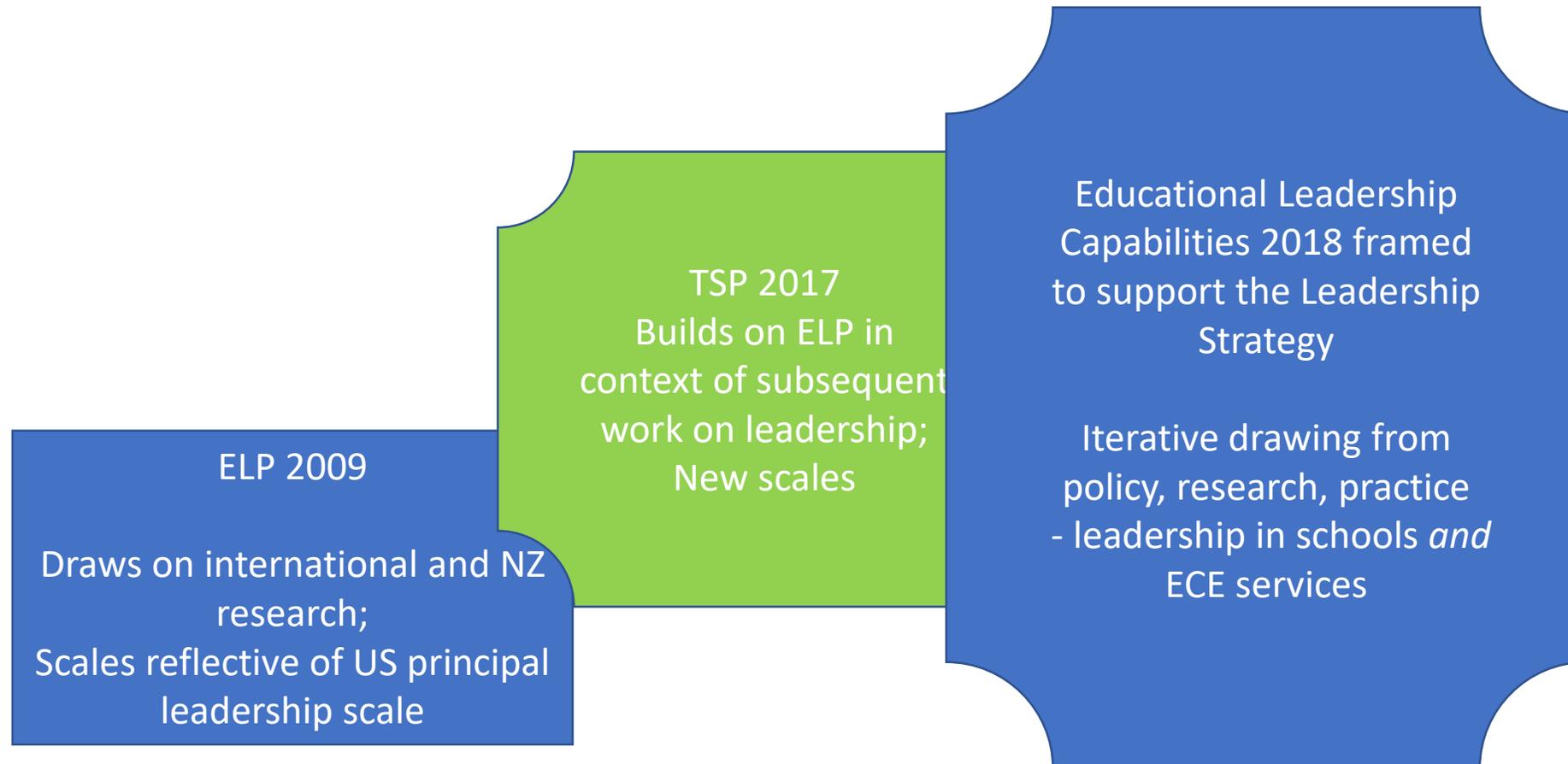
- Educational Leadership Strategy is published July 2018

# Leadership Strategy work – some reflections

## Importance of

- Vision, continuity, drawing on thinking beyond education as well as within
- Bringing the Treaty of Waitangi to the forefront
- Trust and clarity of roles based on expertise, responsibility: working across organisations and contracts as a team
  - Vital role played by Robyn Baker, ex director NZCER

# Educational Leadership Capabilities



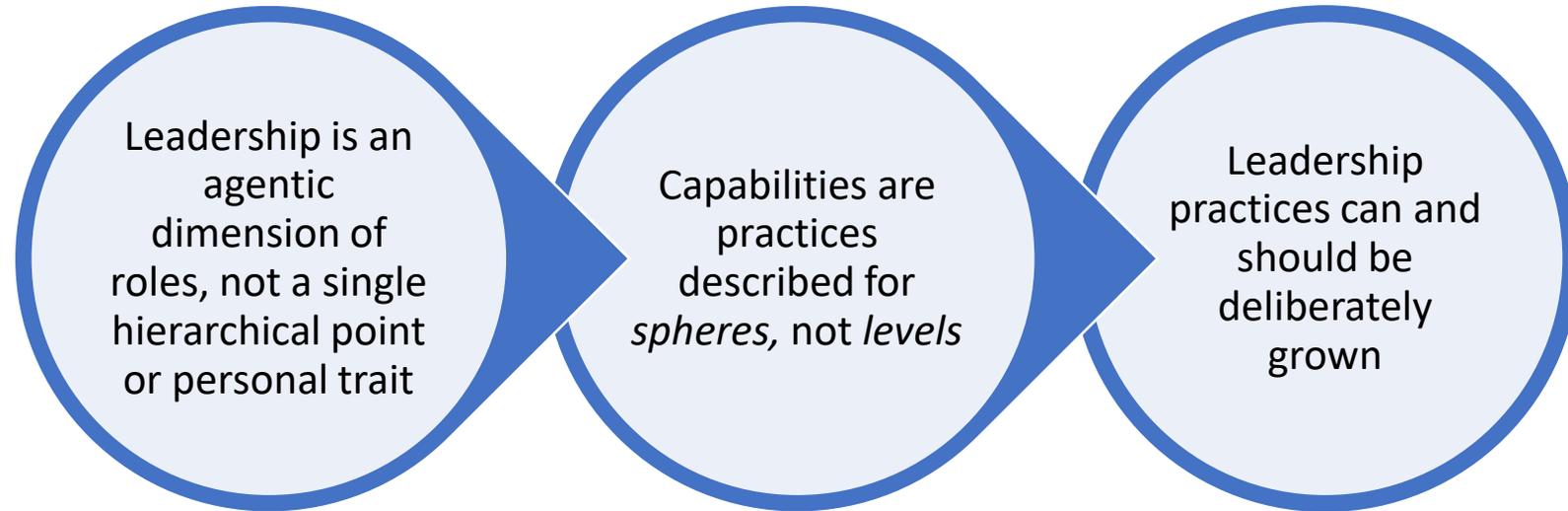
# Process of iterative synthesis

Mapping starts with draft Strategy Capabilities – high level

checked and amplified these in relation to

- Existing operational policy documents (Tū Rangatira, Kiwi Leadership for Principals, ERO evaluation indicators)
- Research used late 2016 to develop TSP – practices linked to gains for learning or wellbeing
- Further scan of relevant literature and similar frameworks overseas – Ontario Leadership Framework, Australian, and ECE literature  
*thanks to our research and PLD and policy colleagues who pointed us to NZ material*
- Feedback on the draft Strategy Capabilities
- Peer reviewers of our drafts sharpened some descriptions and provided further material

# Intention of the Capability Framework



# Developmental intentions

- Food for thought – not checklist for ticking off to get through an appraisal
- Pay heed to them in all PLD – whether or not main purpose is ‘leadership’... Think of the capabilities as akin to NZC Key Competencies - thread through all curriculum domains
- Education Council supported this aim by asking for:
  - Reflective questions
  - Exemplifications of the leadership capabilities in action in Aotearoa New Zealand that were freely accessible to the teaching profession
    - These show that the capabilities are not discrete

# Exemplifications: another Intersection space

- Really good research that speaks to practitioners is not sufficiently available – or freely available...
- ERO has produced some very good descriptions in recent reports and videos – are they known, used?

# Some Leadership Capability Research questions - 1

- How do you develop different capabilities in different contexts, with different 'starting points'?
- What difference do you see in teaching and learning as leadership grows – individually and collectively?

# Some Leadership Capability Research questions - 2

- How are the Leadership Capabilities being used in different contexts?
  - Schools, kura, and ECE services in different situations
  - Leadership Centre in the Teachers' Council
  - Ministry of Education (policy)
  - Education Support Agency (support and development)
  - ERO
  - Teacher unions and principal representative organisations
  - Initial Teacher Education providers
  - PLD providers
- Are they working as intended?
  - If they are, why?
  - If not, why not?
- What are the implications for practice~policy~research?

# Some learnings from *Our Schooling Futures: Stronger Together Whiria Ngā Kura Tūātitini*

- Why structures matter
- Schools have become used to doing it themselves
  - Hidden and not so hidden costs
- Schools want more support within spirit of partnership
- Unlearning is part of adult learning
- Adult learning is vital: teaching is becoming more sophisticated;
- Improvement will come from building on effective practice and use of inquiry, evaluation, research – we are beyond ‘implementation’
- Desirable change depends on capability development and shared responsibility

# Intersection challenges from the TSP 2018 picture

- the newer aspects of *The New Zealand Curriculum*: developing student capabilities of agency, critical thinking, capacity to work with knowledge in new ways
- realising the potential of teaching as inquiry, including protecting the time for teacher inquiry and evaluation, teachers having a shared understanding of inquiry, and using inquiry to make worthwhile changes in teaching and learning
- working collaboratively
- keeping up to date with new knowledge
- drawing on students' different languages, cultures, values, and knowledges as resources for the learning of all
- collaborating with the local community, hapū, and iwi and using their expertise to support learning, and contributing to the local community in ways that it values
- having challenging goals for every student
- curriculum in every learning area that draws on and adds to content relevant to the identities of Māori students.

# Leadership now to the fore

*Supporting all schools to succeed*

Leadership Centre at the Teaching Council

work with Leadership Advisors at local level

- feedback and feedforward

Leadership strategy including capabilities frame work

Local Leadership Advisors provide connective tissue

role to strengthen school leadership – existing and promising

Better focus on learning, wellbeing.

# School system reforms promise more intersectoral work

Clear government interest in education government agencies working with others in shared work that builds and maintains trust

Questions for us as researchers:

What needs to change in how research is supported, how we do research, and how findings are shared and built on in order to see real gains for all students?

What kind of intersectional work does Aotearoa New Zealand need to ensure our leadership capabilities are strengthened in depth and breadth – in every school and ECE centre, and in the government agencies?