

Key Competencies for School Leadership: According to the Evidence

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Research – policy connections

- NZ research on school leadership has protected and enhanced government commitment to leadership development



the new Professional Standards
for Primary Principals

BES

Secondary Standards currently
under negotiation



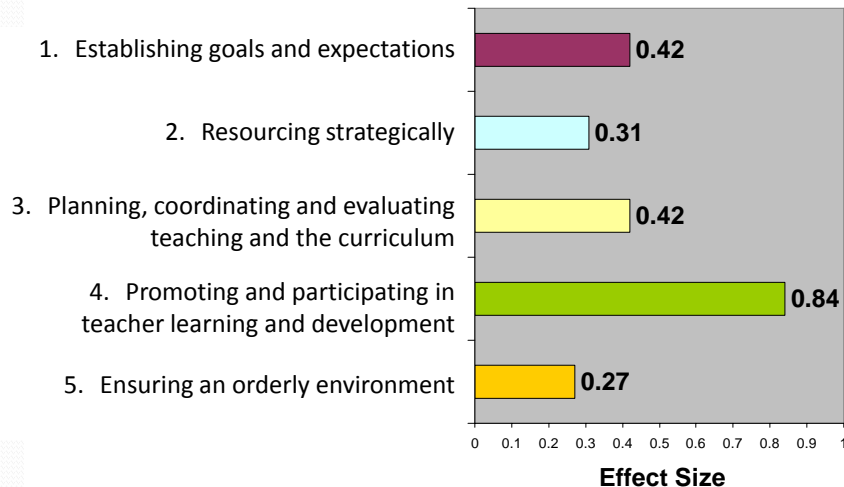
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The big research message

The more leaders focus their relationships, their work and their learning on the **core business of teaching and learning**, the greater their influence on student outcomes.

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Relative impact of leadership dimensions



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Two questions

1. Establishing goals and expectations
2. Resourcing strategically
3. Planning, coordinating and evaluating teaching and the curriculum
4. Promoting and participating in teacher learning and development
5. Ensuring an orderly environment

What competencies do leadership teams need to engage confidently in these dimensions?

What working conditions need to be in place to enable and develop those competencies?

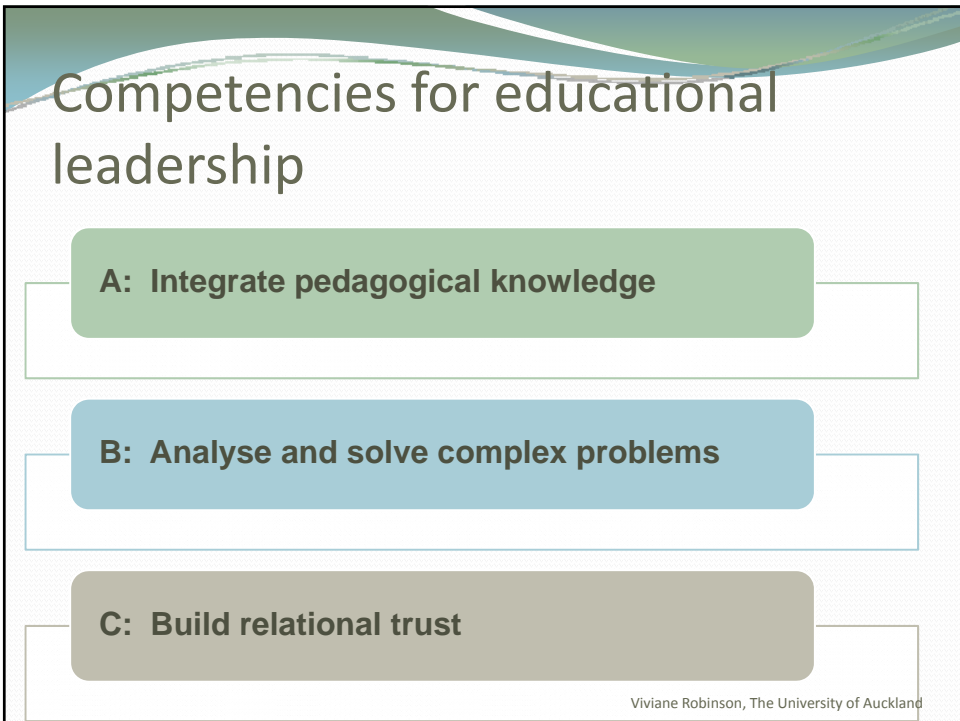
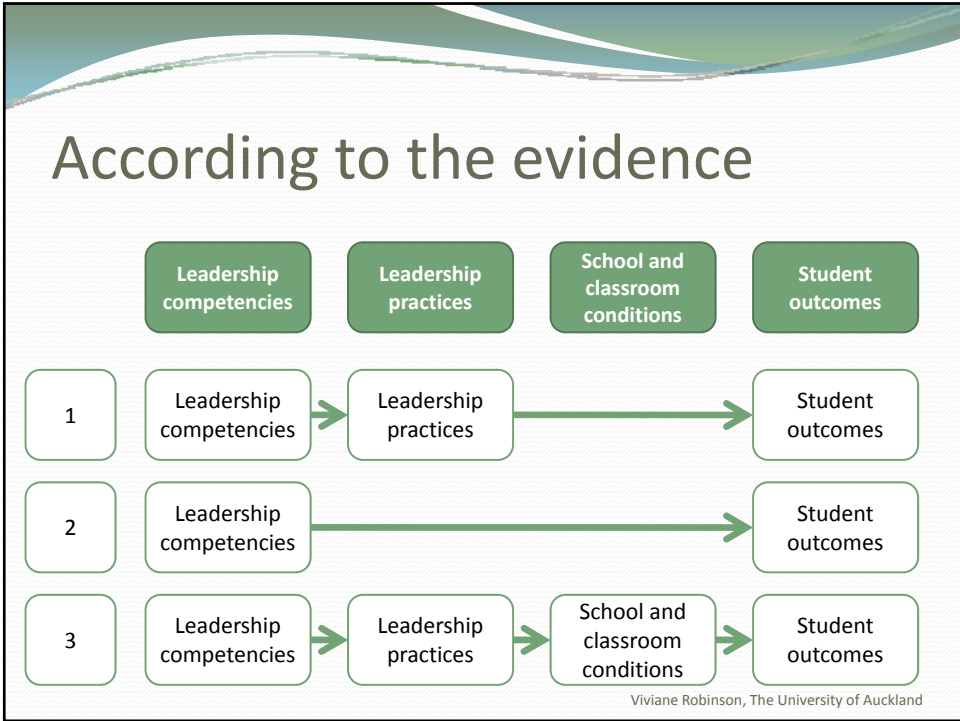
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Group exercise

- Name your 3 most important competencies

What competencies do leadership teams need to engage confidently in these dimensions?

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Competency A: Integrate pedagogical knowledge

Learning goal:

to improve
mathematical
reasoning
and problem
solving

Pedagogical shift required:

from
computational
fluency to
fluency and
mathematical
understanding

Administrative shifts required to support pedagogical shift:

?

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Competency A: Classroom example

Checklist

- focused on
teacher
behaviours



Observation tool

- that requires
noticing how the
teacher *inquires*
into and *responds*
to the students'
reasoning

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How much knowledge for principals?

Sufficient to

- know how to align school administrative and organisational routines e.g., classroom observation to the intended change
- know how to judge the progress being made by those who are accountable to you for the change
- be able to have knowledgeable conversations with your teachers about the change – linked to your visibility and your credibility

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Challenges

- We greatly underestimate the depth of educational knowledge required to meet our new ambitious goals for the learning of all students
- Principals need to be experienced teachers

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More Challenges

- How do we make this knowledge available to all 2700 schools in NZ? Where should it reside?
 - In heads of principals?
 - In leadership teams?
 - In teams plus school infrastructure?
- In teams and school infrastructure plus permanently available district expertise?

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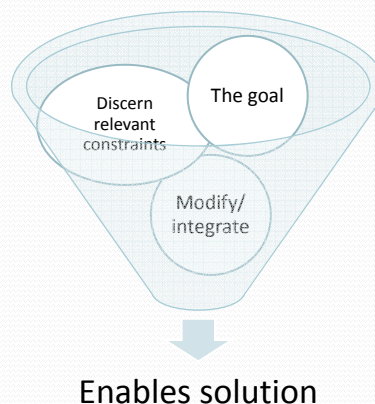
Competency B: Complex problem solving

- Imagine ...a principal wants their Heads of Department to set more specific academic targets but:
 - Some are reacting defensively
 - They don't know what are reasonable targets in some subject areas
 - They don't have good data management systems
 - Some heads of department are not confident they can get agreement with their staff on the importance of targets
- Resolving this issue requires complex problem-solving

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Competency B: Complex problem solving

- Complex problem solving involves discerning relevant constraints and modifying and integrating them in ways that enable a solution to be reached



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Competency B: Complex problem solving

Expert principals are more likely to:	Typical principals are more likely to:
Carefully plan a collaborative problem-solving process	Do less planning of the process
Openly disclose own views without foreclosing or restraining other views	Not disclose own view or disclose in a controlling manner
Overtly manage meeting process e.g., summarising and synthesising staff views	Do less active meeting management
Experience and express little or no negative emotion and frustration	Experience unexpressed negative emotion and frustration

More challenges

- Which problems should be solved at school level?
- Which at more regional or national level?
- Why are so many schools solving problems other schools have already solved?
- How can we ensure more systematic identification and use of high quality solutions?

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Conversation about bullying

Scene: Two principals in neighbouring decile one urban schools are discussing the recent government conference on student management.

We have finally got on top of bullying after a lot of work with the community and our staff – took about 5 years.
[Principal 1]

We haven't – we're an intermediate and there's a lot more testosterone at that age....
[Principal 2]

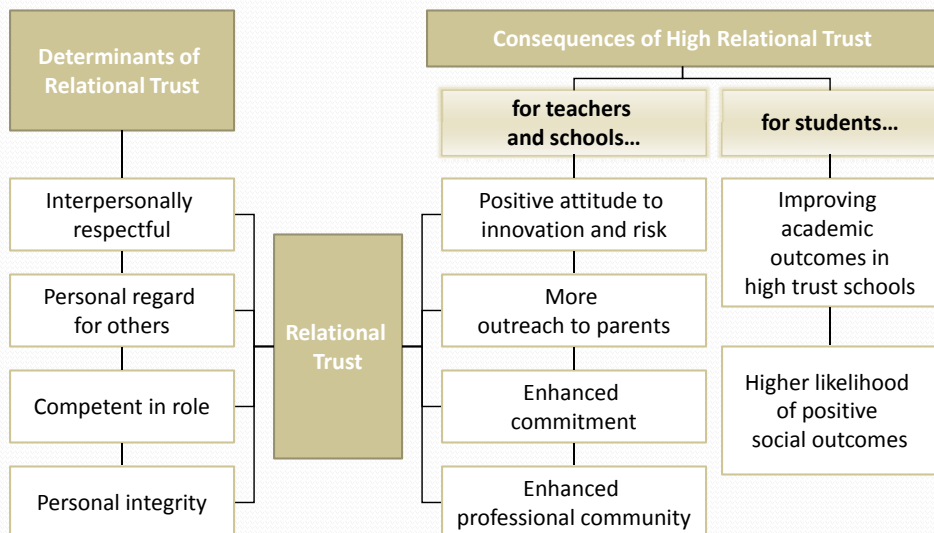
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Competency C: Building relational trust

It's OK in this school to discuss feelings, worries and frustrations with the principal;
 The principal looks out for the personal welfare of the faculty members;
 I trust the principal at his or her word;
 The principal at this school is an effective manager who makes the school run smoothly;
 The principal places the needs of the children ahead of her [sic] personal and political interests;
 The principal takes a personal interest in the professional development of the teachers;
 I really respect my principal as an educator
 To what extent do you feel respected by your principal?"

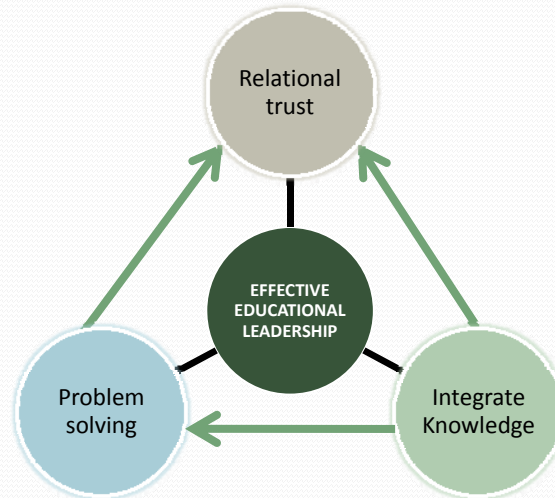
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Relational Trust



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Effective educational leadership....



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Priority for leadership development

The need to protect and direct government investment in school leadership by **demonstrating impact**

Requires assessment of leadership practices and their relationship to working conditions

- Need for a reality check

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“Strong educational leadership in every school”

- Proposed Professional Leadership Plan 2009-10 is consultative and aspirational

But without assessment we do not know:

- The current level of capability
- The nature of the task
- How to target investment
- What progress is occurring
- How to align the goals and working conditions

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The Role of SPANZ



contribute to development of leadership framework and assessment



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Further readings

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