

## National College for School Leadership Seizing Success 2008 Conference

### Highlights from day one – video transcript

**Conference chair, Tony Mackay:**

We are gathered here for the National College's Fourth Annual Leadership Conference, Seizing Success, and as you see this year, with a focus on leadership that makes a difference for children. Can I welcome most warmly, on your behalf, the Chair of the Governing Council of our National College for School Leadership, the incomparable Vanni Treves. Vanni.

**Vanni Treves, Chair NCSL Governing Council:**

The work of the school and the work of the school leader is going through an unprecedented period both of recognition and expectation. It is after all your college. It can't be said too often, we deeply believe it, it's your college, it's no one else's, it's yours. School leadership matters. It matters enormously. It matters because it's fundamental to the success of our schools, indeed ever increasingly so, to the success of the education system as a whole. It's our single highest priority to be responsive, as responsive as we can be, to your needs and aspirations, and to ensure that leadership of our schools is well-informed, supported, has access to first-class training and development. Thank you very much.

**Conference chair, Tony Mackay:**

Colleagues – Kati Haycock.

**Kati Haycock, President, Education Trust:**

There's not a person in this room who's not very much aware, when you look at the gaps in your own data, that the gaps that you see there began before kids even arrived at the school door. And they get data on all these things, they bring it back to the next meeting of the Commission, the taskforce. People sit around, they go through page after page of devastating and sad statistics, and what happens? They get thoroughly depressed. They feel totally frustrated. Why is that? Because they focused on all the things they cannot change, rather than the things that they can. Virtually never are the leaders in unusually high performing, high poverty schools, those kind of big outsized personalities. They're regular leaders like the rest of us, but what's different about them is they're very focused. Thank you very much for what you do.

**Conference chair, Tony Mackay:**

You might also just like to recognise that Tim Brighouse is a national treasure.

**Tim Brighouse:**

Thank you. The real thinking, I know amongst you all, is now well how do I take advantage of the changes in what's happening, to have elements in what I do that I can really regard as cutting-edge, as kind of outstanding practice in teaching in learning and whatever. So we picked four headings and then invited schools to submit their propositions to for recognition and award.

**Conference chair, Tony Mackay:**

We are delighted that you're with us. Sir Gerry Robinson.

**Sir Gerry Robinson, Business Guru, author, radio and television personality:**

The truth is that no matter what it is that you do, no matter where you come from, no matter what it is that you're trying to achieve, nothing happens, in my experience at least nothing good happens, without good leadership and good management. Whatever you do, you are not going to succeed as a leader, unless you can motivate and excite others. Be really clear, lay out in a very clear way, what it is that you want people to do, in a way that they can understand, in a way that they can buy into, and in a way that they can get on and do. Those situations where the decision you have to take, you know to be the right decision, but you also know is going to go down like a lead balloon, that's when you require courage. Thank you.

**Conference chair, Tony Mackay:**

It's my pleasure tonight to welcome Professor Jonathan Jansen.

**Professor Jonathan Jansen, Dean of Education and Professor of Curriculum Studies, University of Pretoria:**

I came here today to talk to you about a different kind of compassionate leadership. One that makes a difference for all children. The privileged and the poor, Muslim and Christian, white and black. We did things to enable students not to tolerate each other, that's the wrong word, but to embrace each other. As I sat down with these young white girls, who for the first time had their knowledge of the past interrupted. But what does it matter ladies and gentlemen if you've got distinction in your subjects at school, but you're a social disaster, you're unable to communicate in other languages, you're unable to feel comfortable amongst women, you're unable to relate sensibly and respectfully to black adults. And maybe, just maybe they would also find it possible to love together. Thank you very much.