

ICSEI 2006

Symposium 1: Issues associated with building effective collaborative relationships between schools in urban contexts

11.00 am – 12.30 pm Thursday 5 January

Mark Hadfield, Alma Harris, David Jackson and Mel Ainscow

A range of collaborative initiatives has been developed within the UK in order to try to improve the quality of educational provision on offer and to raise the levels of pupil achievement. David Jackson, National College for School Leadership, England and Alma Harris, University of Warwick, England, discuss the lessons learnt from two national initiatives aimed at supporting collaboration between schools in challenging urban environments. The focus is on the problems faced in adapting generic design interventions to the specific challenges faced within urban contexts. Mel Ainscow, Centre for Equity in Education, Manchester University, England, and Mark Hadfield, University of Wolverhampton, England, consider two smaller scale, tailored initiatives, and spotlight the issues associated with scaling up such bespoke approaches.

Symposium 2: Enlarging the world of leadership – evidence from advanced practices in local authorities (school districts) in supporting system-wide change within an increasingly networked school system

Part one 11.00 am – 12.30 pm Wednesday
4 January (Part two, by invitation, Thursday 5
January 2.30 pm – 4.30 pm)

David Jackson, Valerie Hannon and Tony MacKay

Three related challenges beset many educational systems. One involves the 'plateau effect' occurring when top-down national educational strategies run to ground. The second is 'equity' – top-down strategies can widen the gap. The third is that the sharp focus on 'standards' narrows the scope for attending adequately to the whole needs of the child.

Lateral approaches alongside co-development relationships – 'networked learning' characteristics – offer potential for disciplined innovation within a framework of national priorities. They appear to require attention to five inter-related dimensions: vision and values; alignment and coherence; capacity building; system leadership; evidence of effectiveness and impact.

This interactive symposium draws together leading practice from a range of countries, together with detailed evidence from the UK. It will further extend this knowledge-base from the perspectives and experiences of those attending the symposium through a facilitated discussion.

David Jackson, National College for School Leadership, England; Valerie Hannon, DfES Innovation Unit, UK and Tony MacKay, Centre for Strategic Educational Thinking, Australia, draw together leading practice from a range of countries, together with detailed evidence from the UK.

International think tank: Tri-level change and leadership of networked local systems

2.30 pm – 4.30 pm Thursday 5 January

Tony MacKay, Valerie Hannon, David Jackson and Ann Kilcher will host an invitational think tank.

Tony MacKay will facilitate, and the think-tank will build from the outcomes of the Symposium 'Enlarging the world of leadership'.

It is for an invited group of international researchers and writers who have experience of working in the fields of tri-level change, system leadership and the adoption of school-to-school collaborative practices at a local system level. The discussion will use as a starting point the concept of tri-level change and the five organising categories arising from Innovation Unit and National College for School Leadership research with more than 50 local authorities in the UK: vision and values, alignment and coherence, capacity building, system leadership, evidence of effectiveness and impact.

Symposium 3: Broadening conceptions of professional international think tank learning communities

11.00 am – 12.30 pm Thursday 5 January

Louise Stoll, Karen Seashore Louis, Andy Hargreaves, David Jackson, Ray Bolam, Coral Mitchell, Larry Sackney, Jan Robertson, Lynn Butler-Kisber and Sylvia Sklar

There is considerable interest in professional learning communities' (PLCs') potential for promoting school effectiveness and improvement. This four-country symposium broadens conceptions and understanding of participants involved and contexts in which PLC operates to maximise its use as a change strategy. In earlier work, PLCs focused exclusively on teachers and school leaders. It is now acknowledged that school improvement requires participation of a much wider community. Symposium participants present research and development efforts broadening the reference frame to include support staff, external community, networks of schools and international learning communities. Audience members are invited to contribute their experiences and perspectives.

Papers: *Inclusive Learning Communities: the Involvement of Support Staff*, Ray Bolam, Louise Stoll and Angela Greenwood (England); *Extending the Learning Community: A Broader Perspective*, Coral Mitchell and Larry Sackney (Canada); *From Professional Learning Community to Networked Learning Community – Lateral Capacity Building for System Learning*, David Jackson (England); *International professional learning communities for educational leaders: new contexts for building internal capacity*, Louise Stoll (England), Lynn Butler-Kisber (Canada), Jan Robertson (New Zealand), Sylvia Sklar (Canada) and Tom Whittingham (England)

National College for
School Leadership
Triumph Road
Nottingham NG8 1DH

T: 08707 001 1155
F: 0115 872 2001
E: nlc@ncsl.org.uk
W: www.ncsl.org.uk/nlc

Networked Learning Communities

Learning from each other Learning with each other Learning on behalf of each other

www.ncsl.org.uk

National College for School Leadership
Networked Learning Communities programme

ICSEI 2006

3 – 6 January 2006
Fort Lauderdale, USA

Introduction

The Networked Learning Communities (NLC) programme, launched in September 2002, brings together clusters of schools, local authorities, Higher Education Institutions and the wider community to work collaboratively to raise standards and improve opportunities for their pupils. The NLC programme is almost certainly the largest such initiative in the world, and is the National College for School Leadership's (NCSL's) largest development and research programme. The main aims of the programme are to develop good network forums, learn about networked learning and to influence the wider education system.

There are currently 133 Networked Learning Communities collaborating across the country, including approximately 1,500 schools, 25,000 staff and over 500,000 pupils. This represents around five per cent of the schools in the country. In addition, 19 local authorities are now involved in a development and research project which is acting as a test-bed for initial findings generated from the main programme.

NCSL publications and resources



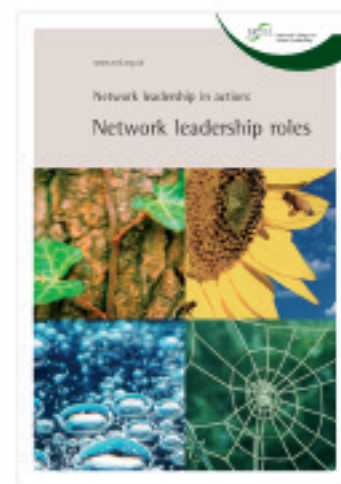
Nexus

To celebrate existing examples of networked learning activity, the Networked Learning Communities' printed magazine, Nexus, is published three times a year. Available free of charge, Nexus is the magazine of choice for over 10,000 subscribers involved in, or committed to, networking and collaboration. Past themes have included: networked learning, pupil voice, impact on pupil learning, leadership and different network types. The autumn 2005 edition focused on network leadership in action, showing the connection between school-to-school networking and network-to-network activity.

If you would like to order past copies or subscribe to the regular mailing list, please email your full name and postal address to nlc@ncsl.org.uk

Network leadership in action series

As part of the Networked Learning Communities programme, the National College for School Leadership has been conducting research amongst network leaders and others in leadership and support roles in school networks to find out how they have interpreted their roles. What has emerged is an understanding of the key issues facing leaders and an appreciation of the complexity and importance of their role in school networks.



Network leadership roles

One of the distinctive features of successful networks is dedicated facilitation and leadership. These development tools describe the work of network leaders and others in leadership and support roles in school networks. They identify key roles, reflective questions, possible starting points and examples from practice.

Getting started with Networked Research Lesson Study

The resources in this publication provide a network leader's guide to getting started with Networked Research Lesson Study. These include guidance on planning for and undertaking Research Lessons in networks, snapshots of practice, and development tools and templates, accompanied by a DVD.



Getting started with Networked Learning Walks

This development tool provides network leaders with all they need to get started with Networked Learning Walks. It provides guidance on planning for and undertaking a Learning Walk in a school network and includes tools and templates designed for use in supporting the process.

What are we learning about...? series

The *What are we learning about...?* series is designed to make public the learning that has emerged from NCSL's Networked Learning Communities programme and other initiatives during the last two years.

Edition one: LEA involvement in school networks

In the first edition in the series we outline some of the different roles which local authorities perform and look at concrete examples of what that looks like in practice. We explore the concept of brokerage as a way of describing what local authorities do to support networks of schools.

Edition two: Establishing a network of schools

In the second edition in the series we outline the key elements we have found to be evident when establishing a network of schools. We explore why networks are important and what is distinctive about collaborative working.

Edition three: Community leadership in networks

In the third edition in the series we look at the importance of building community leadership in networks.

We consider how the national policy agenda to ensure *Every Child Matters* (2003) is beginning to be acted out in local networked contexts. Through exploring different perspectives of community leadership we consider the tensions, opportunities and challenges involved in moving from homogenous school-based networks to more diverse heterogenous community-based networks.

Edition four: 'Making mathematics count' in school networks

In the fourth edition in this series we outline what we have found to be the characteristics of effective school learning networks and describe what they look like in practice. We also look at how networks of teachers are helping to address key issues associated with effective teaching and learning in mathematics.

These ideas are then illustrated through a series of think pieces, accounts of practice and development tools. These are intended to enable engagement with theory, practice and policy perspectives on the best of what we are learning about...

To order copies, or to sign up for future editions, please email nlc@ncsl.org.uk or download from www.ncsl.org.uk/nlc

Connecting up online...

talk2learn: Learning Networks Exchange

The Learning Networks Exchange online community in talk2learn aims to connect up thinking around learning networks.

Online tools now available for use in talk2learn are:

- live chat
- survey & voting functions
- hotseat
- co-construction of a document
- varied dialogue opportunities
- network online communities

Access online or register to be a member of the Learning Networks Exchange online community at www.talk2learn.com

NCSL Networked Learning Group website

The NLG website has up-to-the-minute information on networked learning opportunities, programmes, publications and resources.

Downloadable information is available on the Networked Learning Group's:

- work and activities
- programmes and events
- publications and resources
- steering group and associates opportunities

Take a look at the website resource at www.ncsl.org.uk/nlc

NLG Learning Exchange Online (LEO)

The LEO website provides networks with a space to share their work, ideas, resources and learning.

LEO's powerful search engine enables you to search for the latest publications, documents, events and news from networks nationwide and includes:

- network homepages
- links to useful websites
- network news and information
- document upload and download

A guest log-in facility is available or you can register for full membership at www.nlcexchange.org.uk

