Play Lists

Recommended Resources for Partners in School Leadership

Leadership play list

This play list has been created to introduce and make more accessible the work of the Network Learning Group (NLG) to school leaders and those interested in school leadership. It is divided into three sections:

- *'Researching leadership in networks'* draws on research undertaken and commissioned by the NLG into leadership in networks and its implications for school leadership. It is aimed at staff and students researching leadership in networks and collaboration.

- *'Leading networks and collaboration'* is aimed at school and network leaders and those who work with schools and other organisations in some form of collaborative arrangement. It is made up of thinkpieces, accounts of practice and resources.

- *'Learning networks'* offers a general introduction to networks and collaboration through a series of reports and papers and is aimed at school leaders and those interested in school leadership.

Leadership play list

Section 1. Researching leadership in networks

- **Jopling, M & Crandall, D**, 2006, *Leadership in networks: patterns and practices,* NCSL

This report draws together the leadership research undertaken in the Networked Learning Communities (NLC) programme by focusing upon the work of co-leaders. It provides an account of who undertook this role, their main leadership activities and the issues they faced. It concludes by examining the implications of network leadership for both school and system leadership.

- **Anderson, M**, 2005, *System thinkers in action? The leadership of networks of schools,* NCSL

Again focusing in on co-leaders, this paper presents a detailed case study of the leadership of one NLC chosen as it demonstrated the complex and developmental nature of leadership capacity. Theoretically, it explores the relationship between the practices of co-leaders and the notion of them acting as system leaders.

- **Anderson, M & Thomas, N**, 2004, *Facilitating leadership development for learning networks,* NCSL

This conference paper proposes that shared forms of leadership *and* facilitative approaches to learning are critical to servicing the growth and sustainability of learning networks and that configuring as a network has implications for the development of leadership. Sometimes this will mean challenging long-held views, of individuals and groups, approaches and activity.

- **Harris, A**, 2006, *What are we learning about sustaining a network of schools: Distributed leadership within learning networks,* NCSL

This think piece examines how networking and collaboration build capacity in and across schools through distributing leadership. It suggests that unless leadership is stretched across classroom, school and network boundaries then system level transformation is unlikely to be achieved.

- Hadfield, M, Noden, C, Stott, A, Spender, B, McGregor, J & Anderson, M, 2005, *The leadership of adult learning in networks (Full report),* NCSL

Examining the leadership and management of professional development in networks, this report highlights issues around strategic management, sustainability and the use of external experts in professional development.

- McGregor, J & Tyrer, G, 2004, *Recognising student leadership in networked learning communities,* NCSL

This conference paper explores themes from the NLC programme relating to developing understandings of leadership for learning and student involvement. It suggests that seeing leadership as a relational process rather than vested solely in individual leaders offers possibilities for recognising student leadership in a variety of configurations

- Woods, R & Jones, A, 2005, *Making space to learn: the development of the NCSL 'Facilitation for Collaborative Leadership Learning' programme*

This conference paper traces the development of the collaborative leadership learning programme and outlines lessons learned and potential policy implications.

Section 2. Leading networks and collaboration

- Spender, B, 2003, *Leading a network: Challenges and Strategies,* NCSL

Based on research carried out in the first twelve months of the NLC programme, this booklet highlights the initial challenges and barriers faced by network leaders as they struggled to develop their work. It contains vignettes of new ways of working and is a useful introduction for leaders in networks to the potential challenges they face.

- *Network leadership in action: Sharing leadership,* NCSL

This discussion tool explores the theme of 'sharing leadership' in schools and networks. It draws on accounts of practice generated by NLC co-leaders and the findings of an NCSL Leading Practice seminar involving 100 school and network leaders. It includes reflective questions and examples from practice taken directly from their conversations.

- *Network leadership in action: What does a network leader do?* NCSL

This tool is structured around a series of key roles that network leaders fill as networks develop.

- Bond, M et al, 2005, *What are we learning about community leadership in networks: Every Child Matters, perspectives on community leadership,* NCSL

In this think piece, community leaders from a variety of education and non-education settings describe the problems they have encountered in their work and their aspirations for the future. It is made up of a series of personal accounts from widely different projects, informed by an understanding of community leadership practice in networks, but framed and interpreted within the agenda of *Every Child Matters.*

- Ballantyne, P, Jackson, D, Temperley, J & Jopling, M with Lieberman, A, 2006, *System leadership in action: Leading networks leading the system*

Based on research commissioned by NCSL to trace the leadership journeys of network participants and their increasing influence, this report develops an emergent theory of system leadership, firmly rooted in empirical evidence of how practitioners learn to lead.

- Fullan, M, 2004, *What are we learning about LEA involvement in school networks: Leadership and sustainability,* NCSL

This piece challenges local authorities involved in school networks to develop strategies, training opportunities, situated learning experiences and actions in networks of schools to develop 'system thinkers in action'. This, it is argued, is the key to better organisational and system performance, and to achieving transformation at school (and network) level, LEA level and at the level of national policy.

- Charlton, S, Laurent-Regisse M, & Woods, R, 2005, *Network leadership programme*

This Nexus article introduces NCSL's network leadership programme, which was designed to model processes through which network leaders can learn together about how learning networks can be instrumental in the growth of leadership potential in all their schools.

- Woods, R, & Mann, J, 2005, *Collaborative leadership learning… does exactly what it says on the tin,* NCSL

This Nexus article outlines the origins, design principles, and potential benefits for network and other leaders of NCSL's collaborative leadership learning programme.

Section 3. Learning networks

- Jackson, D & Temperley, J, 2006, *From professional learning community to networked learning community.* Paper presented at International Congress for School Effectiveness and Improvement (ICSEI) Annual Conference, Fort Lauderdale, 3–6 January, 2006.

This paper argues that the school as a unit has become too small-scale and too isolated to provide professional learning for its adult members in a knowledge-rich, networked world. Instead, a new unit of meaning, belonging and engagement – the network - is required. It also suggests that the collaborative learning and enquiry norms of professional learning communities *require* openness to external learning from networks.

- Earl, L., Katz, S, Elgie, S, Ben Jafaar, S & Foster, L, with Sammons, P & Mujtaba, T, 2006, *How networked learning communities work (External evaluation Phase 3),* Aporia Consulting Ltd

This is the final report of the three-year external evaluation of the Networked Learning Communities programme. The report draws on the experiences of the programme, with a view to informing the work of other groups and agencies in England and beyond, which are incorporating networking into their educational change efforts.

- Crowe, V with Noden, C & Stott, A, 2006, *Evidence from learning networks,* NCSL

This report gives a statistical overview of NLCs and contains trend data on pupil attainment for the programme as a whole, as well as containing information on the activities undertaken in NLCs.

- Stott, A., Jopling, M & Kilcher, A, 2006, *How do school-to-school networks work?,* NCSL

This summary of research carried out in the NLC programme sets out the three main elements of networking to which that all leaders need to attend. These are establishing purpose and direction; building effective relationships; and defining key roles and activities. These interlinked aspects of network are described using extensive examples from the programme.

- Ainscow, M, Muijs, D, & West, M, 2006, *Using collaboration as a strategy for improving schools in complex and challenging circumstances: What makes the difference?,* NCSL/University of Manchester

This report summarises the findings of an investigation into the potential of collaboration between schools as a strategy for supporting development in schools facing complex and challenging circumstances. It examines thinking and practice in a sample of six groupings of schools where there was reason to believe that collaboration had had some impact.

- **Carter, K., with Paterson, F**, 2006, *Understanding learning networks,* NCSL

This short report offers some key messages for school and network leaders, policy-makers and others interested in exploring the evidence base on learning networks.