

ATINER CONFERENCE PRESENTATION SERIES No: SOS2017-0044

**ATINER's Conference Paper Proceedings Series**

SOS2017-0044

Athens, 14 March 2018

**Principals as Leaders of Reading: Sustaining the Momentum**

Tony Townsend

Athens Institute for Education and Research

8 Valaoritou Street, Kolonaki, 10683 Athens, Greece

ATINER's conference paper proceedings series are circulated to promote dialogue among academic scholars. All papers of this series have been blind reviewed and accepted for presentation at one of ATINER's annual conferences according to its acceptance policies (<http://www.atiner.gr/acceptance>).

© All rights reserved by authors.

**ATINER's Conference Paper Proceedings Series**

SOS2017-0044

Athens, 14 March 2018

ISSN: 2529-167X

Tony Townsend, Professor of Educational Leadership, Griffith University,  
Australia

**Principals as Leaders of Reading: Sustaining the Momentum**

**ABSTRACT**

Since it was first funded in 2010 for 60 primary principals of disadvantaged schools by a Commonwealth government grant, the Principals as Literacy Leaders (PALL) program has been focused on supporting school leaders to provide teachers with the skills and resources they need to improve reading outcomes in their schools. By the end of 2017 approximately 1500 school leaders from all states and territories in Australia will have undertaken this program. To date there have been six published studies, numerous conference papers, chapters and journal articles and a synthesis of this material in the book *Leadership and Literacy: Principals, partnerships and pathways to improvement* recently published by Springer. In late 2016 further data were collected from schools in Victoria that had been the subject of previous case study research in 2014. The current paper uses the new data to build on the previous research to consider both the sustainability of the learning from PALL over time and also its impact on leadership strategies, teaching practice and student engagement, learning and achievement in reading. The results suggest that PALL had a major impact on these schools, but that certain leadership qualities were key to its sustainability over time. Data also indicated that teaching practices were more focused, data collection, analysis and decision-making was more aligned and that students were achieving more in reading, using both school measures and national testing data.

Keywords: Principals, School Leaders, Reading, Teacher Practices, Student achievement

## **Introduction**

The Principals as Literacy Leaders project (PALL) was initiated in 2009 by the Australian Primary Principals Association (APPA) with 60 schools in four states of Australia. The project was funded by the Australian Government as part of its Literacy and Numeracy Pilots in Low SES Communities Initiative. Since that time, subsequent programs and research have also been funded by State governments and Principals' Associations. Since 2009, more than 1500 Government, Catholic, and Independent school principals have taken part in one of three projects to emerge from APPA's initiative: the original PALL program itself, Secondary Principals as Literacy Leaders (SPALL) and Principals as Literacy Leaders with Indigenous Communities (PALLIC). In recent times, PALL has responded to particular interest areas, including working with both Secondary and Primary Catholic schools in New South Wales, and both with associations of secondary schools and their primary feeder schools, and schools focused on improving parent engagement with student learning, in Tasmania.

Specific details of what is contained in the PALL program have been reported elsewhere, most recently in Dempster, et al., (2017) and Townsend et al., (2017) so only a brief overview will be provided here. Essentially, PALL is a program of five one-day modules, offered at intervals over the school year, for the purpose of supporting principals and other school leaders to consider ways in which they can support their school communities (teachers and parents) to establish processes that will lead to improved student engagement, improved understanding of their learning and improved achievement in the area of reading. PALL was designed on a foundation of the five following research-informed positions.

1. The PALL Position on the moral purpose of leadership
2. The PALL Position on learning to read
3. The PALL position on reading interventions
4. The PALL position on shared leadership
5. The PALL position on support for leaders' learning on-the-job (Dempster, et al., 2017, pp 12-14)

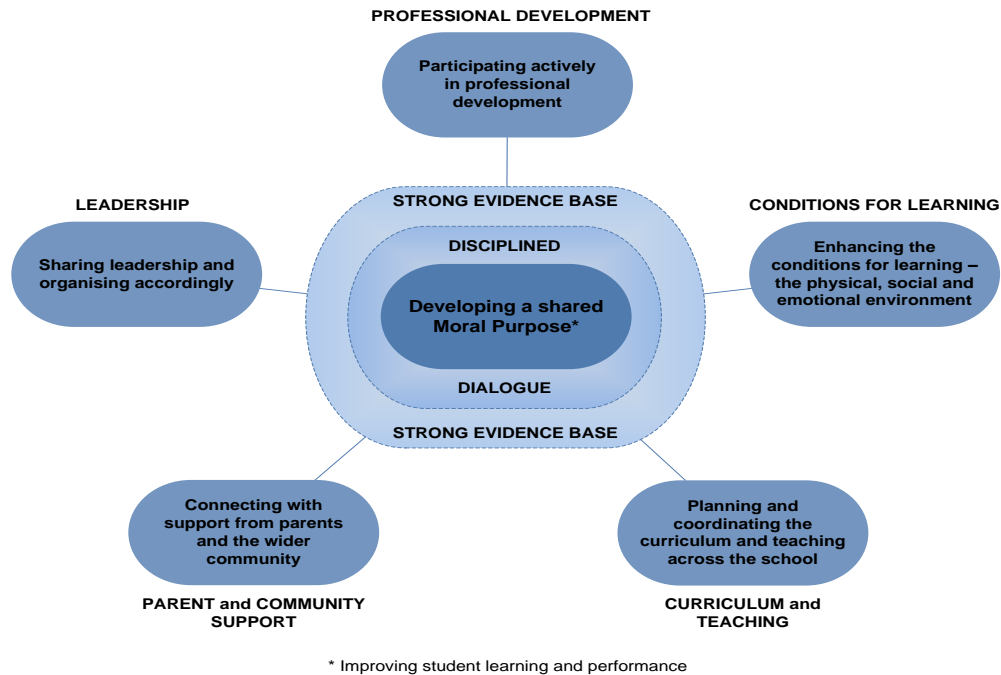
The professional learning program utilizes three specific program features;

- the Leadership for Learning Blueprint (LflB), shown in figure 1 below, was based on research that connected leadership and learning
- a focus on improving reading through a consideration of the BIG 6 of reading, namely Oral Language, Phonological Awareness, Letter-Sound Knowledge - Phonemic Awareness, Fluency, Vocabulary and Comprehension

- the understanding that if we are to change the outcomes of students, then this is most likely to happen through a focused and targeted intervention

**Figure 1.** *The Leadership for Learning Blueprint*

**Leading Learning – A Framework**



Further details on the literature supporting the above is contained in the following section. In addition six studies were undertaken prior to the current study which was conducted near the end of 2016. These studies will be considered in the literature review, but in total they identified the need for a more longitudinal approach to collecting data on the impact of PALL. The reason for this is that most of the studies were conducted in the year following that in which the school leader undertook PALL and focused on how the chosen intervention was implemented. What was needed was the ability to establish how schools were using PALL over a longer period of time. This paper looks at the first attempt to do this, by documenting the data collected from some schools that had previously been case study schools in 2014 and from some other schools where the school leader had completed the program in 2013.

**Literature Review**

The impetus for developing PALL in 2010 came when data from national and international surveys of student achievement in literacy pointed to a

recurring problem in Australian schools (Thomson, De Bortoli, Nicholas, Hillman, & Buckley, 2011; National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN), 2008, 2009, 2010). The overall outcome of these surveys was positive: the majority of Australian students achieved high standards, but a significant minority did not. The focus on principals as leader of the effort for improving reading achievement was supported by a growing body of research evidence that factors such as the quality of instruction (Hattie, 2009); the quality of school leadership (particularly sustainable leadership), (Leithwood et al., 2006; Robinson, 2007; Seashore-Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, & Anderson, 2010) and the impact of well-designed PD and support programs (Wei, et al., 2009; Hord, 1997) leads to the conviction that improving the quality of student learning and achievement, in a sustainable way, is feasible.

The development of PALL was designed on a foundation of the five positions referred to above. At the time PALL was developed, each had been supported by considerable research.

- **The moral purpose of leadership:** Compelling research evidence showed that quality leadership made a difference to children's learning and achievement, and that it is about working together on a common moral purpose – in this case the improvement of children's literacy (Leithwood et al., 2006; MacBeath & Dempster, 2009; Masters, 2009; Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD], 2008; Robinson, 2007).
- **Learning to read:** National and international research confirmed that learning to read requires explicit attention by parents and teachers to the reading BIG 6: (i) early and ongoing oral language experiences, (ii) phonological awareness; (iii) phonemic awareness; (iv) fluency; (v) vocabulary; and (vi) comprehension (DEST, 2005; Konza, 2011; Louden et al., 2005; Rowe, 2005).
- **Reading interventions:** Interventions in reading should be based on sound qualitative and quantitative evidence to target student needs across the school (Dempster et al., 2012; Jacobsen, 2011).
- **Shared leadership:** Achieving improvements in learning and achievement requires partnerships inside and outside the school (Bishop, Berryman, Wermouth, & Peter, 2011; Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations [DEEWR], 2009; Hallinger & Heck, 2011; Konza, 2012; McNaughton & Lai, 2009).
- **Leaders' learning on-the-job:** Leadership learning is maximised when leaders are supported in their schools in implementing interventions by valued mentors (Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, Meyerson, Orr, & Cohen, 2007; Dempster, Lovett, & Flückiger, 2011; Huber, 2011).

Subsequent to the use of literature to support the development of PALL there have been six different studies associated with PALL itself (see Dempster et al., 2012; APPA, 2013; Dempster et al., 2014; Johnson et al., 2014; Townsend et al., 2015; Townsend, Wilkinson, & Stevens, 2015). The findings from these

studies were used to create the book *Leadership and Literacy: Principals, Partnerships and Pathways to Improvement* (Dempster, et al., 2017). The latter work attempted to summarise everything that had been found in the previous works and identified findings as they related to the five positions referred to earlier (see Dempster, et al., 2017, pp 177-188). The book also identified some implications for each of these sets of findings. Finally, four main themes emerged from the collected data (see Dempster, et al., 2017, pp 191-192).

The first was that the PALL program had enhanced the leadership for learning expertise of the school leaders that had undertaken the program. Principals reported heightened competence and knowledge of reading and how children learned to read. They were better able to establish connections with teachers and parents, and were able to lead disciplined dialogue about the data collected so that attention was paid to students who needed it.

The second theme related to the forming of partnerships, with teachers to enable become leaders of learning, in their own classrooms and across the school, and with parents and community to support children's learning. The evidence shows that schools were about collective leadership and those that had positional authority recognised and embraced the concept of leadership as activity rather than leadership only being about position. School leaders actively participated with their teachers in professional learning and created parallel and overlapping pathways for leaders, teachers and students.

The third theme that emerged from the PALL research is focusing on the Leadership for Learning Blueprint, which identifies a range of generic leadership actions for school leaders to use when looking to improve their schools, and blending it together with the specific knowledge contained within the research-validated BIG 6 approach to reading, connected the daily work of principals more closely to student learning. The blending of the generic leadership skills with specific curriculum knowledge allowed leaders to work more closely with their teachers, and also provided a framework for improvements in other curriculum areas as well.

The final theme from the collective PALL research was the need to rethink parent engagement in their child's learning. Although many principals had tried various methods to engage parents and to raise their levels of activity in ways that supported their child's reading progress, in many ways it was not a central focus for principals trying to improve reading in their schools. Nevertheless, it became clear through the research that the solution lies within the schools, with parents and community members collaborating in a model of shared leadership for learning, where strengths and talents are shared and celebrated in the name of accepting the shared moral purpose of improving student learning and achievement in the formal education system.

What the literature shows is that there is a strong role for principals and other school leaders to play in promoting approaches that will improve reading achievement across the school, but there is still more to be learned about how to do this in ways that lead to continuous improvements over time. Because there is an inherent difficulty in trying to measure the impact of such an event as PALL in the year following the undertaking of the PALL program, the need

for a longer view of how PALL may change teaching and learning approaches in ways that enhanced engagement, learning and achievement needed to be undertaken.

### **The 2016 Study**

The current study continues the tradition of the Principals as Literacy Leaders (PALL) program being the focus of ongoing research. It collected additional data from three of the previous four case study schools in Victoria, (reported in Townsend, Wilkinson, & Stevens, 2015), together with data from two further schools that had used the principal's attendance at PALL in 2013 to start an intervention program designed to improve teaching practices and student engagement and achievement in reading. In doing so, the study enabled the collection of data that enabled a longer term analysis of impact to be conducted.

The current study was designed to provide the Victorian Principals Association with data related to the sustainability of the learning that had occurred during the PALL program as well as its impact on the school, both in terms of changed teaching practices, changed leadership approaches and improved student engagement and learning. The research questions of the study were:

- How has the focus on PALL been sustained since it was first introduced?
- How have elements of the Leadership for Learning Blueprint been used to support this progress?
- What impact has PALL and the BIG 6 approach had on the school?
- Is there any evidence that there have been improvements in student performance in Reading?

### **Methodology**

Each of the schools was visited once at a mutually convenient time late in 2016 and during each visit the school leader and/or the leadership team (in most cases this was the principal and deputy principal), as well as a group of teachers involved in the reading intervention activity, were engaged in a conversation about PALL. On most occasions the two groups were interviewed separately, but in one school, as some of the teachers had now become leaders of the activity, they were interviewed in a single group with the principal and deputy principal. The conversations were based around a series of questions for school leaders and companion questions for teachers that were designed to identify respondents' considerations of what impact PALL had on the school, and what changes to teaching practices, student engagement, learning and achievement had been observed. In addition, interviewees were directed to a series of questions that considered each of the elements of the Leadership for Learning Blueprint. The questions had been previously sent to the school so that the interviewees could think about them prior to the meeting, but the

questions only served as a guide to the conversations rather than each question being asked directly. In this way the conversations were wide ranging and covered a number of areas of interest. Each of the conversations was recorded and transcripts were made. The researcher also kept notes during the conversations so that any missing speech could be regenerated. Each of the transcripts was then analysed to enable a number of issues associated with leading the teaching and learning of reading to be developed for consideration (for example; impact, sustainability, engagement, achievement, leadership, teaching practices). In addition to the transcripts, other data collected included information on each school as identified on the My School website, achievement data collected by the school including NAPLAN data, and data related to communications with parents and the community as well as copies of other school records.

### *The Case Study Schools*

School 1 had previously been a case study school in 2014 and is a small school of around 180 students in a rural setting more than 100 kilometres from Melbourne. School 2 had not previously been a case study school. The school is in an outer-Eastern, semi-rural area of Melbourne, one of the fastest growing areas of the city, reflected in the student population increasing from around 48 in 2013 to over 700 in 2016. School 3 had previously been a case study school and is a growing school of around 280 students in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne. The school population has grown over the past five years from about 180 in 2012. School 4 had previously been a case study school and is a growing school of around 280 students in a semi-rural area about 80 kilometres south east of Melbourne. The school population has remained fairly stable over the past five years with around 240-250 children enrolled. School 5 had not previously been a case study school and is a P-12 College with enrolments of over 800 in rural Victoria. The College was formed from the amalgamation of a local high school and two primary schools. The focus of the case study in this College was the P-4 campus that has a population of about 500 students.

## **Results and Discussion**

### *The Impact of PALL on School leaders and their Schools*

It is clear that for these schools, PALL has been incredibly important to the way in which the school has approached reading improvement strategies. The PALL strategy of providing participants with research driven approaches, with readings, resources and strategies for teaching and assessing Reading, and then providing the opportunity for school leaders to reflect on what they have learned for around 6-8 weeks before the next workshop, has been a powerful professional learning experience. In addition, the PALL process, of asking people to do things back at school in between modules, kept people on task over the course



of the year. The outcome was that schools established patterns, not only for Reading but for other aspects of curriculum development as well, in a way that empowered teachers and generated a school wide commitment to the process. Typical comments about the impact of PALL are seen below:

PALL was fantastic because it just was an absolute affirmation we're actually on the right track, so that was brilliant because we'd already started a very strong push on that oral language and vocab development, which we'd identified was really lacking with the kids as they came in... PALL provided that framework and that real direction about – okay, we've been really concentrating on this, but we've got all these other components, and how are we addressing those as well? (*School 1, Principal*)

PALL has made all the difference to this school. When I did it, it was like a light came on. It provided an overall framework for how to go about teachers teaching reading and also for me to assist them to do that well. (*School 5, principal*)

At the same time, the BIG 6 helped people to understand the complexity of learning to read and the detailed approaches that needed to be looked at if all students were to become successful at reading. In this way PALL empowered principals to become better, and more focused, leaders and it empowered teachers to become even better at leading learning in their classrooms. Comments included:

...it [PALL] just probably connected leadership to classroom practice a lot more closely... I think it probably gave us the strong basis to be able to be in teachers' classrooms, challenging them and in really running a change agenda for our literacy in our school and that – it empowered me personally and maybe I felt a lot more confident (*School 4, Principal*)

I guess PALL provided the framework for organising our literacy – that's been huge ...we were doing a lot of tier two and tier three type interventions, but our tier one teaching needed a whole lot of work and we've done a whole lot of work on that. (*School 4, Assistant Principal*)

One element that was seen to be important by many people interviewed was PALL's use of research-driven strategies and its strong connection to up to date research as a means for justifying its approach. This use of the research has been of support to principals when they worked with teachers and parents and for teachers when they worked with each other and with parents as well. It has assisted school leaders and teachers to become more articulate about what is needed to support successful reading.

...what I've got out of [PALL] is I'm probably more articulate about being able to put that forward and pull on the data ...and the research and ... say, "Well, we know this is important because the research says... that's very powerful with parents. Not throwing it all their faces, but to say, "We know that oral language is really important. The amount of words the child comes into at this age group is really a determinant about how academically they're going to be at this stage of their life." And that's a really powerful message with parents. (*School 1, Principal*)

And it [the BIG 6 PD] certainly changed planning because it's so obviously indicates the essential areas for reading or being a literate person. It helped make sure that nothing was being left out that there were those six key areas. Sitting behind each of those key areas was a whole lot of research that we could access that was part of the PD and part of the teaching things that went with it. So, it helped make it really clear what those six areas were, why kids need to be involved with things within those areas every single day, and it made sure nothing was being left out. (*Teacher, School 1*)

In the case study schools PALL and the BIG 6 became embedded in the approach to teaching and learning that the school uses, so it has demonstrated that it is sustainable over time. It is now part of the way in which the school operates.

So this is just our work - we just do this stuff now. It is part of what we do. It's our assessment. It's our analysis of the kids where they are. It's our planning of what happens in the classes. It's the way we operate." (*School 1, Principal*)

It's changed the way we work. It's changed the way we were getting jobs done. It's very different to the way it was. (*School 4, Assistant Principal*)

But it goes further than just sustaining itself in the school. The case study schools were now being used by other schools as an example of what might be done.

We've had so many school visits through – unbelievable. (*School 1, Principal*)

[The local secondary school] got a new assistant principal this year who's in-charge of curriculum and he said they have no English pedagogy at that school, so he's been going around to different primary schools to see what we do. So I put him onto BIG 6, so he's been researching that and having a look at that and ways to incorporate that into their teaching in secondary school. (*School 2, Leader*)

In summary, it is clear that for these schools, PALL has been incredibly important to the way in which the school has approached reading improvement strategies. The PALL strategy of providing participants with research driven approaches, with readings, resources and strategies for teaching and assessing Reading, and then providing the opportunity for school leaders to reflect on what they have learned for around 6-8 weeks before the next workshop, has been a powerful professional learning experience.

### **The impact of PALL on Student Engagement and Achievement**

There is data from both NAPLAN and school-collected information that indicates that the students that have been involved in PALL initiated interventions have improved their engagement and enthusiasm for reading, they are much more capable of articulating what they are learning and they are in fact achieving at higher levels than previously was attained. Although trying to track improvements in achievement back to a particular activity or process is fraught with danger, the evidence suggests that people in schools where principals have undertaken PALL see themselves as contributing to higher levels of student learning and achievement since the PALL/BIG 6 strategies were introduced.

#### *Student Engagement*

Responses from the case study schools indicated that students were now more engaged in reading than they had been previously.

...the level of engagement, the kids love – we’ve got very high levels of engagement. Over the last five to six years, we’ve gone from the lowest quartile to one of the higher quartiles in terms of student engagement, in terms of, “My teacher understands me, my teacher plans lessons that are interesting,” that sort of thing.” (*School 2, Teacher*)

...student engagement across the board is really very high. We were looking at a new survey just to survey student engagement from one of the schools about their wellbeing and how they feel about coming to school and I think our lowest score was 84 percent (*School 4, Principal*)

For a number of respondents engagement and learning were linked. If students were more successful at learning it was because they were engaged and if students are successful at what they are doing then this drives engagement even further.

...because it is very clear to the children what they’re actually learning now, they know what they’re learning, they can articulate what they’re doing, they’re engaged. (*School 2, Teacher*)

I know the students in my grade, they're very engaged ...They're interested to do it, especially with vocabulary, they're interested to learn different words and you can see them then using them in everyday conversations and trying to put them in there to show that they've understood it. (*School 2, Teacher*)

### *Student Achievement*

There are two different ways in which school achievement can be measured, by the National Assessment Plan – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) scores and by the various assessments that schools undertake for themselves. Each is a very different measure, but both need to be addressed. Table 1 provides the NAPLAN reading scores for the case study schools from 2012 until 2016. What table 1 shows is that the NAPLAN scores bounce around a bit from one year to the next, not only for the case study schools, but for similar schools and the state averages as well. The NAPLAN scores are one measure of student performance, but should not be the only one. The raw scores are based on the students in the school at the time of undertaking the test, but there is no indication of how long the student has been in the school prior to taking the test. For instance, although in Schools 1, 4 and 5, around 80% of the students who undertook PALL in Grade 3 were still in the school at Grade 5, for School 2, this figure was around 60% and for School 3 it was around 40%. Depending on the demographics and geography of the school, students may move for employment reasons, or because they are moving away from their first placement as a migrant. These issues are recognised as being beyond the school's control.

And it's interesting when you look at that matched cohort data from three to five in the NAPLAN I think there is only 15 of them in current year five, from year three...only 15, I think, of the 30 who were here so that's 50%...we had one grade one last year which had turned over ten or 12 students, [name] didn't have the same group at the end of the year as he did in the beginning (*School 3, Assistant Principal*)

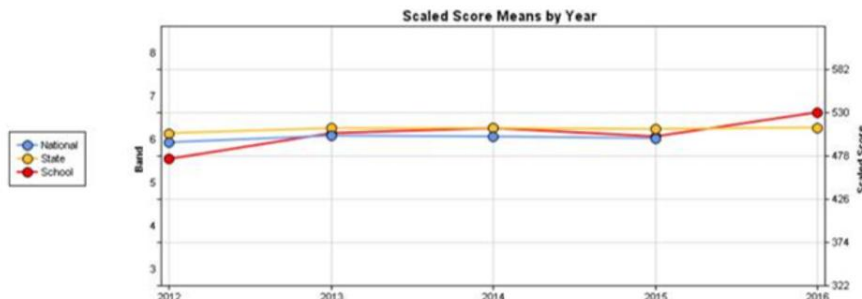
**Table 1. NAPLAN 2012-16 Case Study Schools**

	Grade 3			Grade 5		
	school	SIM	state	school	SIM	state
School 1						
2012	423	419	420	474	492	494
2013	431	424	419	505	506	502
2014	457	426	418	511	507	501
2015	423	426	426	501	497	499
2016	427	NA	438	530	NA	512
School 2						
2012	449	392	420	475	468	494

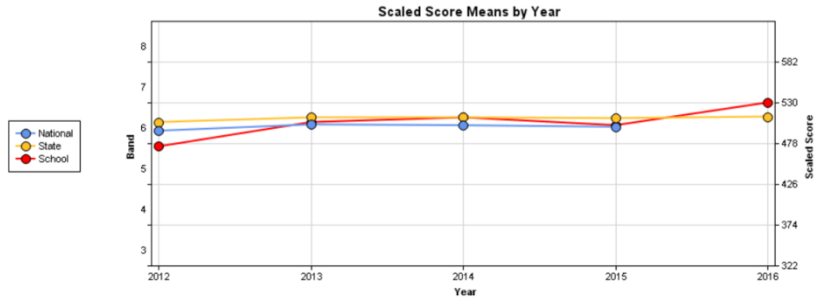
2013	443	396	419	497	483	502
2014	458	393	418	493	477	501
2015	455	394	426	489	469	499
2016	427	NA	438	530	NA	512
School 3						
2012	470	474	420	535	543	494
2013	458	457	419	540	533	502
2014	444	456	418	556	535	501
2015	468	460	426	545	537	499
2016	457	NA	438	538	NA	512
School 4						
2012	383	425	420	465	497	494
2013	450	417	419	488	500	502
2014	446	422	418	502	503	501
2015	430	430	426	531	497	499
2016	429	NA	438	514	NA	512
School 5						
2012	384	400	420	470	475	494
2013	414	397	419	488	483	502
2014	406	398	418	454	481	501
2015	415	395	426	452	473	499
2016	428	NA	438	478	NA	512

However, one thing that Table 1 does demonstrate is that from 2012, the year prior to principals undertaking PALL, until 2016, the trend of student performance in reading is positive both for Grade 3 and for Grade 5 students. Examples of the trend information and how schools are doing in comparison to other schools that are similar to them and to the state as a whole for all of these variables that is provided to schools through NAPLAN are contained in Figure 2 (Grade 5 Trend, School 2), Figure 3 (Grade 5 Trend, School 3) and Figure 4 (Grade 3 Trend, School 5) below.

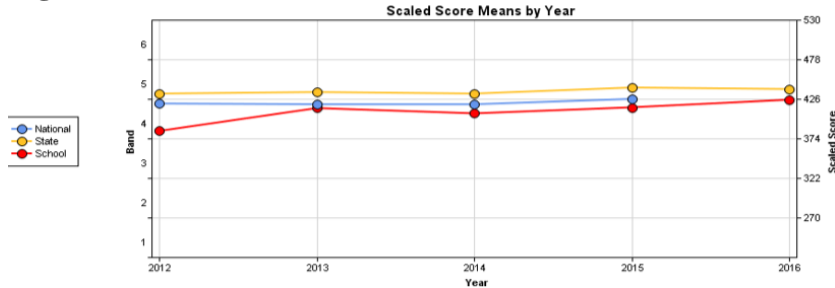
**Figure 2. Trend Scores, Grade 5 School 2**



**Figure 3. Trend Scores Grade 5, School 3**



**Figure 4. Trend Scores Grade 3, School 5**



NAPLAN scores are seen as important data by school leaders and teachers alike. The results are analysed carefully and then used to build new programs to overcome the perceived issues identified.

We track it every year ... at the end of each semester we look at what a summary report tells us about our progression in reading and we do it for maths and writing as well. So cover three areas. ... we have some issues around scores in NAPLAN are higher than what the teacher judgements have been – that’s why we need to work on valid assessments that come out of the analysis. So it’s offering the professional learning assessment too. *(School 3, Assistant Principal)*

NAPLAN is not the only measure that is being used to judge performance of students in reading. The conversations with the schools indicated that students were doing much better in reading achievement in ways that went beyond the average score that is highlighted by NAPLAN. This allows both school leaders and teachers to report with a level of confidence and justification that:

Our kids are doing better. Our kids’ learning is distinctly better than it was in 2012 before we started. If you go right through it, our processes, our teachers, our collaboration ...the biggest result is our kids are doing a lot,

lot better and there are high expectations for our kids and our kids are rising to meet those high expectations. (*School 4, Principal*)

There were many comments that focused on student growth over time. One highlight was that the proportion of students performing at a low growth level was decreasing in the case study schools while the proportion of students performing at the high growth level was increasing. It suggested that some of those previously performing at a low growth level had now moved into the medium growth level and some from the medium level were now experiencing high growth.

...we used to have for example, 30 children in prep at the end of the year. You would've had at least half of them not reaching benchmark. Now, out of a group of 30, you might have one or two that are just below... you have kids in grade one who are working at – basically a grade three level in their reading... we're lifting the bottom cohort, but we're also pushing the top cohort more... (*School 1, Principal*)

...we've lowered the lower than expected growth and raised a higher than expected growth and the middle's where it should be. (*School 2, Principal*)

One of the things associated with improved student achievement is the way in which students perceive themselves as learners. In the case study schools the ability of the student to articulate what they were learning and why was a feature of changed teaching practices.

Even in that explicit teaching model that we've got, there are opportunities for the kids to then reflect at the end of the session, they're having to share their learning. The learning intentions are really clear and the kids are talking about it – what did we do today, what did we learn today, what did you learn? They are responsible for their own learning in that way and if they've got a peer, say a critical friend, then that critical friend has to see that too (*School 4, Teacher*)

This was even noticeable to external observers.

The principal from our local secondary college came out and had a look at my literacy session and he was amazed at the way the kids could articulate what they were doing, what their learning focus was, and why they were doing it, and they could explain what they're doing and the learning that they were getting out of it. (*School 2, Teacher*)

The focus on data and how to use it was reinforced by the most recent study. Teachers are now much more aware of the value and use of data:

...we talk about individual kids and their growth. So, what we want to see is the 12-month growth on an annual basis. So, teachers see the changes and they talk about kids. (*School 5, principal*)

We're all involved in looking at the data and making decisions in deciding how to best help students that require the help. So, no one's by themselves worrying about their little cluster. (*School 2, Teacher*)

To summarise, there is data from both NAPLAN and school-collected information that indicates that the students that have been involved in PALL initiated interventions have improved their engagement and enthusiasm for reading, they are much more capable of articulating what they are learning and they are in fact achieving at higher levels than were attained previously. Although trying to track improvements in achievement back to a particular activity or process is fraught with danger, the evidence suggests that people in schools where principals have undertaken PALL see themselves as contributing to higher levels of student learning and achievement since the PALL/BIG 6 strategies were introduced.

### **Factors that Support PALL Sustainability**

Two elements that seemed to be key to the longer terms sustainability of the PALL process were an adherence to the Leadership for Learning Blueprint (LflB) on the one hand and the long term commitment of the principal to the process. There were many instances of school leaders and teachers calling on the elements of the LflB as a focus for what they did, too numerous here to detail, so what is provided below is a brief overview of how each element of the LflB was reported during the case study interviews

*Evidence that the School used Elements of Leadership for Learning Blueprint*

#### Shared Moral Purpose

The central element of the Leadership for Learning Blueprint is the development of a strong and shared moral purpose as it related to reading improvements. During the conversations in each of the schools, it was clear that in each school there was a strong and shared understanding of the moral purpose of the school that had been articulated and was understood by school leaders and teachers alike. The quotes from both principal and teacher from school 1 are indicative of all the case study schools.

I think the belief that every child can achieve and it's up to us to make the difference. And really my heart says that that's our job. That's what we're here for and it's not easy. So, it's up to us to find the key that's going to work within the school. (*School 1, Principal*)



I think it's also that everyone here has the understanding that regardless of that background, and whatever's going on at home is that absolutely every kid that walks into this school can learn and will learn if we're giving them all the right opportunities and support here as well. And that's something that I think we've been working towards for the last few years... And that was the real change. (*Teacher, School 1*)

### Strong Evidence Base

Professional reflection, self-monitoring of teaching practice and review of progress are not possible without there being credible data upon which to base decisions made about these things. Schools have always collected data, but there is now a much more clear approach to how data might be used. Rather than it simply being the province of an individual teacher, data is now shared so that the school as a whole benefits from the data collected by individuals as the following quotes indicate

And we have always collected data however how effectively we were taking on board the results of the data was probably a concern, so we needed to make sure we had a whole school approach to the data that was coming back externally and also our internal data (*School 5 Literacy Leader*)

I don't see that as rocket science... looking at kids in terms of they're now reading at level seven, what we are going to do to progress them to level 10, what are we going to do to progress them to level 15. These are more of the data conversations that I'm interested in. (*School 5, principal*)

The data are used to identify the specific students that need support and to determine what should be done to support their progress.

There was also a breakdown of each class and each of the students in different ways that we could see how many students were in wave one, two and three and there's an intentional conversation during PRD [the Professional Review and Development process] and other times about what are you doing to try and move some percentage of this wave to be in the next wave. Are there any students that you think you need to be focusing on and why? (*School 3, Assistant Principal*)

### Disciplined Dialogue

The disciplined dialogue approach, a feature of the PALL learning program, suggests that the collection of good data is not sufficient to ensure that the right decisions are made, and unless the data are viewed in a disciplined way, decisions made might be less than optimum. When asked about how they approached disciplined dialogue in their schools, responses provided data about

how professional conversations about reading had changed since principals had completed PALL.

...it's breaking it down. It's not like, "Oh, well, this child is not reading so well." It's about, "Why not? And what part is lacking? What's the component there that's stopping this child from progressing?" So, they're a lot more analytical with what they're doing, really drilling down into the data a lot more, and then planning for that. (*School 1, Principal*)

It's confronting. It is confronting. It is very confronting that you have to be brave and stand out the front and say, "Yes, I'm happy for you to talk about it, but can you see that if you're doing that and everyone else is doing this, it is not a consistent approach? And we're finding that if you have a consistent approach ...the information tells us that consistent approach is what will drive change." (*School 5 Literacy Leader*)

### Professional Development

The argument made by the PALL program is that the school leader needs to be an active learner to lead a learning organisation and this means that he or she needs to support learning of all kinds, of students, of staff and themselves. Schools were involved in various professional learning activities, including formal professional development activities associated with reading, by establishing formal structures in the school that enabled professional conversations to occur through professional learning teams and less formal opportunities to discuss teaching practices, including the use of classroom observations as a means of opening conversations.

So, the whole staff participated including the specialist teachers, and were involved in BIG 6 [professional learning] as well and I mean they worked so closely with this – with the kids. (*Teacher, School 1*)

We've actually had went to a BIG 6 PD day and then we've actually held another one and some staff went to that and we've done one with our PLC community (*School 4, Teacher*)

Schools started to realise that professional learning within the school could be just as important as attending professional development outside of the school, but to make internal professional learning work, they needed to be focused on what was needed.

We hang on to our planning days. I really think that's the best way ...nothing drives a team more than the people that are working in the team. So if it's a planning day and everyone's fussing around with their own thing well then that's a waste - our planning days are hard work. (*School 5 Literacy Leader*)

...staff do a lot of PD for each other... well, today, we're working on vocab. Vocab fits into the BIG 6 like this, the BIG 6 fits into the highly reliable school model like this. So, everything explains where everything else fits, so people can see this is our mission, this is our vision, this is the model (*School 4, Assistant Principal*)

A second way in which staff is involved in professional learning experiences is through the use of teams. Given various names, such as Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) or Professional Learning Teams (PLTs) and using different structures, such as grade or level based on the one hand or discipline based on the other, these teams are used as a means of supporting individual staff to improve their skills and to reflect on their practice.

I think within teams we're doing it well. So, individual teams – level teams, cross school teams. It's probably happening more there even than from staff meetings (*School 3, Teacher*)

In the first year – the moral imperative was driven by the research, but of late, it's driven by the teams themselves through what they call binding agreements, where they've made an agreement as a team, "This is the way we teach. This is the way we teach vocab in our level," and they get built into the planner. (*School 2, Leader*)

### Conditions for Learning

The PALL program has identified the need for school leaders to consider and address the physical, social, emotional and resource-sensitive conditions that support the development of a positive learning environment for children. Although each school had limited resources and many priorities to consider, each was able to use resource allocation as a means for reading improvement.

We increased the budget for reading as well to help with resourcing (*School 3, Principal*)

...we've spent a lot of money on home readers so that they can continue at home as well and that everyone has a variety of books of different levels. (*School 3, Teacher*)

However, it was also possible to make classrooms more "reading-oriented" without the need for additional resources. Each of the case study schools had changed the way in which classrooms were structured and decorated. They became less "busy" and more focused on the important elements that teachers wanted to concentrate on.

...our classrooms have been de-cluttered. And now we have the important stuff there. Every class has certain anchor charts within it, so areas of literacy, and numeracy. And each classroom is using the learning intention for each lesson. So, the kids know specifically, we're going to be doing this at school. (*School 1, Principal*)

The walls have changed a lot... There's not things covering windows... the rooms were kept really open... Everything's labelled so kids know where things are... What's in the classroom tends to be more relevant things that you're actually using – anchor charts or things that are specifically helping the learning that you're doing at the time... So what's in the room tends to be much more relevant for the learning that's happening at the time rather just than displaying kids' work, or having commercial posters... There's always the learning goals, success criteria, learning behaviour – they're quite consistently in all our classrooms now. (*Teacher, School 1*)

### Curriculum and Teaching

There were also changes in the case study schools to the nuts and bolts of classrooms, the curriculum that is offered, in the pedagogical practices that present that curriculum and the assessment practices that make judgements about how well students have learned what has been presented. A key feature of the PALL professional learning program is the use of the BIG 6 of reading.

The BIG 6 is about filling in gaps, making sure things weren't being missed within reading development... Consistency from all levels, prep to six as well ...it flows right through from prep, and I know when I get some kids up there that the language that I'm using is the same that's being used the whole way through. They're very familiar with those sort of routine expectations, activities even, some of them. (*Teacher, School 1*)

It [the BIG 6] is in every week. It's in every week. It's all based around those six areas. (*Teacher, School 1*)

In the case study schools a number of programs to improve reading were tried and tested, but teachers were active participants in decisions about those that were eventually accepted.

There was nothing mandated. It was all play – just play with it, see what you can learn about it, and that's what we do with everything that we introduce. We give people a year to play with it, learn about it, share it back and forward and see what actually works for them and what works for the kids – which pedagogies, which strategies, which activities work, and then actually tie that into a program. (*School 2, Principal*)

In some case study schools, the development of a book club or specific programs provided a focus for reading.

...the book club which is where all of the children across prep to year two go into like ability groups and they go to a different location with a different teacher based on their differentiated abilities (*School 3, Principal*)

We have a phonological awareness enrichment program now and this one specifically codes their comprehension so we can look at enrichment and their intervention, you can now separate them into groups. (*School 4, Teacher*)

School 1 developed a pre-school age program called “Ready, Set, Go” for future students to enable them to develop some of the skills required to start school in a positive way. The principal outlined how this came about and what the benefits are.

Why did our kids have such a deficit with the amount of words that they come in to preps with? And why is that happening? So, we're running programs where we're providing literature and teaching parents how to read at home... How you interact with that, how you question kids .... and that's already affecting their three-year-olds, and their two-year-olds, and their one-year-olds, and the babies to be born, because we're increasing those parental skills... we're putting good literature and activities that are related into their home every week, new sets of stuff that they just don't have. But the key is we teach the parents how to use them and how to interact with the kids. The feedback from the parents is absolutely fantastic. They love it. (*School 1, Principal*)

A common response across all the case study schools was that teaching reading was now done much more explicitly. This is something that is seen by principals and understood by teachers.

...because it's so explicit, the students are able to articulate what they're learning and why and how it all fits together as well because they've been taught the strategy that's been given a name, so they understand what they're doing and why they're doing it so they will say we're doing comprehension. (*School 2, Leader*)

...teaching is a lot more explicit and purposeful than what it was before PALL (*School 2, Teacher*)

...more explicit teaching – they really have nailed down what does good teaching look like and what is included ... We've got our model of explicit teaching in our school (*School 4, Assistant Principal*)

Teachers perceived that their teaching of specific areas had changed after PALL.

I think things like the vocab and the fluency are now in practice because I know myself, I wasn't doing them four years ago. Before the PALL, we didn't teach vocabulary. So, I think pedagogy has changed, and we've incorporated especially vocabulary and fluency. *(School 2, Teacher)*

It's totally different now to what I taught since I've been here – this is my sixth year – totally different now, to even five years ago. *(School 4, Teacher)*

Everything is different [from my old school]. I remember the first few weeks, saying, "I feel like I've died and gone to heaven," and because it is a really very special place. *(School 4, Teacher)*

The PALL approach with the use of strong evidence and disciplined dialogue places a high priority on getting assessment right when it comes to making judgements about how well students are progressing, and importantly, what to do next. PALL has had an impact on the types of discussions held about assessment and what needs to be done to make sure students are progressing in each of the areas.

So, now we talk about assessment schedule... the teacher in year three knows that in year one, this student's score in reading was, and they can go back and look in their file... it provides that common treatment *(School 3, Assistant Principal)*

It's much tighter than it was. Everybody has got assessment schedules because in order to be able to share the data, you've got to have completed an assessment in a certain timeframe so that you've got that data set to share. *(School 4, Assistant Principal)*

### Parent and Community Support

All of the past research associated with parental and community involvement suggests that getting parents to be more active in supporting their children to learn is perhaps the most challenging task facing school leaders and teachers. In the case study schools these links had been forged in a number of ways to encourage parents to become more actively involved in their children's attempt to learn to read.

We also put it [Big 6] in our powerpoint for the information for parent helpers and then they're told about components of Big 6. *(School 3, Assistant Principal)*

We have parent information sessions for the start of the year and we went into the skills of reading and the phonics and the comprehension strategies. So we're trying to make them aware of what we're doing and what they can do with their child at home because they're as much part of the learning journey as we are. (*School 2, Teacher*)

Even so, getting parents involved is always a challenge.

We always struggle with getting the amount of parents in. You always get the ones that don't need it so much as the ones that don't turn up... (*School 1, Principal*)

...we're lucky to get one or two parents a week, and that's across prep to grade two. So I don't think that's because we're not doing the best job at promoting reading, it's that their lifestyles have changed. So – and the school's traditional learning can't compete with that anymore. (*School 3, Teacher*)

One teacher addressed why this issue was critical and might be overcome by providing parents with better information about how important their role is in supporting their child to read and by then providing them with quality advice on how to do this.

I think they underestimate the power they have too, that they don't understand that even just talking to their child and asking them about things makes such a huge difference. They think – oh, well, that doesn't make any difference but it actually does and they don't understand that that can be important. (*School 4, Teacher*)

In summary, the case study schools recognise the difficulties inherent in encouraging parental involvement and have nevertheless used different strategies to encourage parents to be involved in reading activity, both within the school and also at home with their child. There is ample evidence that schools are attempting to communicate with parents, train parents to be involved in reading with their children and have come up with innovative ways to improve this home school relationship as it applies to reading. However, the current case studies recognise that this continues to be a pressure point when it comes to improving children's reading skills and are taking steps to become even more proactive in the future.

### Shared Leadership

A critical component of the PALL approach to improving student reading is the need for sharing leadership widely across the school. The PALL program adopts the position that leadership is an activity rather than it being a position.

The principals of the case study schools have tried to establish patterns of leadership across their schools and that this has been something accepted by staff in the schools as well.

I would never say I made 90 percent of the decisions. I suppose, it's because of the size of our school that we can have really good discussions together. So, we look at our data, we talk about the problems, and we come up with resolutions for it. We investigate what's going to be the best way to do that. So, we see this as whole school work. This is just not me telling them, "Do this." They see an absolute reason why this work should be done. (*School 1, Principal*)

So [principal] was the initial facilitator of it. Then it became my role and then he became a support person to me through my PD and then it became a leaders of units role to help drive it in units – so it's that siphon down effect basically. (*School 5 Literacy Leader*)

But that's a partnership now rather than them telling us. (*School 4, Teacher*)

In each of the case study schools there is a feeling of being in something together. The mutual respect and the focus on building positive relationships between leaders and teachers enables the focus to stay on the work rather than the people involved.

It's all in here. There's nobody off the train or at a different bus stop. It's everybody. There's an expectation and we work as a full team. (*School 1, Principal*)

This is our journey. These are programs we have chosen to use. So, I think we've taken ownership of the areas and then now saying this is oral language we've all seen this as the next step. (*School 4, Teacher*)

Such an approach to balancing what must be done by the principal with a more distributed leadership approach has been received positively by staff who were able to articulate their support for the level of passion that school leaders have shown.

...they [Principal and Assistant Principal] model it. They model passion for reading for the children (*School 3, Teacher*)

I came from a school that was very regimented. Everybody did it the same way and we were all robots. So it's great here because the Principal and Assistant Principal trust the staff to go and implement it in their way knowing that it is going to get done anyway. (*School 4, Teacher*)

The positive feelings expressed by the staff for school leaders are reciprocated by school leaders for their staff.



Oh, we are very lucky with our staff they are absolutely excellent, they really are. You could not ask for a better staff. (*School 4, Principal*)

One person on our staff this year told me they have never seen another school like ours. Every single person here who isn't ongoing would be thinking, "If I could be ongoing I'd like that." (*School 4, Principal*)

In summary, there is a great deal of evidence of shared leadership in the case study schools. It is clear that school leaders have accepted the understanding that leadership of the school is an activity rather than a position. It is also clear that the teachers have embraced the leadership offered to them, through teams and individual leadership of various activities within the school. What also came across in the interviews in case study schools is that the passion shown by school leaders for improving reading, the knowledge gained by them in how this might be done from PALL, and the mutual trust between leaders and teachers are clear elements that support the leadership for learning approach adopted by PALL.

### **Findings from the Data**

#### *Finding 1: PALL's Impact on School Leaders and School*

PALL had a positive impact on the school leaders that attended the program and the BIG 6 made sense when it came to considering ways to improve reading.

#### *Finding 2: PALL's Impact on Engagement, Learning and Achievement in reading*

The use of PALL and the BIG 6 had a positive impact on student engagement in reading, and enabled students to become more articulate about what and how they were learning to read. It also had a positive impact on how teachers went about assessing student progress and there is also evidence of students improving their ability to read.

#### *Finding 3: School Use of PALL's Leadership for Learning Blueprint*

Each of the case study schools was able to articulate ways in which the school had considered the elements of the LfLB. Case study schools were able to articulate a Shared Moral Purpose, they were more efficient in collecting and analysing data to use when making decisions about reading and were more effective in their professional conversations related to this data.

*Finding 4: Principal Characteristics that support positive change*

It is also clear that leadership has been the key in all schools. The role of the principal has not been lessened but the leadership of others has expanded. Some characteristics that the case study school leaders have in common include:

- an absolute commitment to improving student reading and a passionate way of sharing this goal;
- the ability to develop positive trusting, supportive relationships across the school, fostering leader-teacher, teacher-teacher and teacher-student relationships based on communication, and mutual support;
- the leader has remained in the school since the project commenced, but has enabled much of the responsibility for what happens to be passed over to others, thus ensuring that the whole school is part of the process;
- the ability of the leader to "let go" and allow other people to take responsibility for some of the work done. The case study schools could be considered exemplars of shared leadership

## **Conclusion**

Returning to three case study schools, and visiting for the first time two other schools, that have accepted the PALL/BIG 6 approach to teaching reading, has been a productive exercise. It demonstrated clearly that with perseverance, leadership and focus, that individual schools can develop a long term strategy for improving reading performance in their school. NAPLAN scores show that there is a trend towards improving student reading scores, although in some cases it is really too early to make definitive statements. Some schools focused on improving reading capabilities of students in the first years of school and these students have not yet been tested under the NAPLAN activity, which only comes in in grade three. However, schools no longer rely on only NAPLAN scores to make judgements about student progress. Each of the schools provided a range of data that showed that they were assessing students on a regular and consistent basis and that the evidence suggested that students were improving their performances in reading. Perhaps even more important was that schools were not passive in their use of assessment materials. Teachers questioned what they were using, adapted materials to their particular context and recognised that in many cases judgements could only be tentative, as it was still early in the process of assessing ongoing student growth. However, there is clear evidence that school leaders and teachers feel that they are more capable now of both teaching reading and assessing progress than they were previously, that the focus brought to bear through the elements identified in the LfLB have had an impact, on student engagement in reading, on the ability of students to articulate how they are learning and what they are learning, and on achievement as measured by various testing programs that the

schools have selected, tested and finally implemented. All schools agreed that the process was not yet finished; that starts have been made but there is still much work to do. The case study schools are all exemplars of what might be done, with focus, time and commitment used as a means of improving teaching practices, relationships and environmental conditions in ways that encourage higher levels of student engagement and achievement in reading.

## References

- Australian Primary Principals Association (APPA). (2013). *Principals as Literacy Leaders: Project extension No. 1, 2010-2011*. Adelaide: Department of Children's Services.
- Bishop, R., Berryman, M., Wearmouth, J., & Peter, M. (2011). Developing an effective education reform model for indigenous and other minoritized students. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement: An International Journal of Research, Policy and Practice*, 23(1), 49-70.
- Darling-Hammond, L., LaPointe, M., Meyerson, D., Orr, M. T., & Cohen, C. (2007). *Preparing school leaders for a changing world: Lessons from exemplary leadership development programs*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University, Stanford Educational Leadership Institute.
- Dempster, N., Lovett, S., & Flückiger, B. (2011). *Strategies to develop school leadership: A select literature review*. Melbourne: Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership.
- Dempster, N., Konza, D., Robson, G., Gaffney, M., Lock, G., & McKennarney, K. (2012). *Principals as literacy leaders: Confident, credible and connected*. Kingston, ACT: Australian Primary Principals Association.
- Dempster, N., Johnson, G., & Stevens, E. (2014). *The Principals as Literacy Leaders (PALL) project: (PALL: Tasmania): Final report, October 2014*. Unpublished report, Griffith Institute for Educational Research, Griffith University, Brisbane, Queensland.
- Dempster, N., Townsend, T., Johnson, G., Bayetto, A., Lovett, S. & Stevens, E. (2017) *Leadership and Literacy: Principals, Partnerships and Pathways to Improvement*. 209pp.
- Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR). (2009). *Early years learning framework* (Research Report). Retrieved from <http://deewr.gov.au/early-years-learning-framework>
- Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST). (2005). *Teaching reading: Literature review*. Canberra, Australia: Commonwealth of Australia.
- Hallinger, P., & Heck, R. H. (2011). Collaborative leadership and school improvement: Understanding the impact on school capacity and student learning. In T. Townsend & J. MacBeath (Eds.), *International handbook of leadership for learning* (pp. 1241–1259). New York, NY: Springer.
- Hattie, J. (2009). *Visible learning: A synthesis of over 800 meta-analyses relating to achievement*. London, UK: Routledge.
- Huber, S.G. (2011). Leadership for learning - learning for leadership: The impact of professional development. In T. Townsend & J. MacBeath (Eds.), *International handbook of leadership for learning* (Part Two, pp. 635-652). Dordrecht: Springer.
- Jacobson, S. (2011). Leadership effects on student achievement and sustained school success. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 25(1), 33-44.

- Johnson, G., Dempster, N., McKenzie, L., Klieve, H., Fluckiger, B., Lovett, S., Riley, T., & Webster, A. (2014). *Principals as literacy leaders with Indigenous communities: Leadership for learning to read – 'Both ways'*. Canberra: The Australian Primary Principals Association.
- Konza, D. (2011). *Understanding the reading process*. Research into Practice Series. Retrieved from [http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/literacy/files/links/link\\_157541.pdf](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/literacy/files/links/link_157541.pdf)
- Konza, D. (2012). Researching in schools: Ethical issues. *International Journal of the Humanities*, 9(6), 77-86.
- Leithwood, K., Day, C., Sammons, P., Harris, A., & Hopkins, D. (2006). *Seven strong claims about successful leadership*. Nottingham: National College for School Leadership.
- Louden, W., Rohl, M., Barratt-Pugh, C., Brown, Cairney, T., Elderfield, J., et al. (2005). *In teachers' hands: Effective literacy teaching practices in the early years of schooling*. Mt Lawley, Western Australia: Edith Cowan University.
- MacBeath, J., & Dempster, N. (2009). *Connecting leadership and learning: Principles for practice*. The Netherlands: Routledge.
- Masters, G. (2009). *A shared challenge: Improving literacy, numeracy and science learning in Queensland primary schools*. Melbourne: Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER).
- McNaughton, S., & Lai, M. K. (2009). A model of school change for culturally and linguistically diverse students in New Zealand: A summary and evidence from systematic replication. *Teaching Education*, 20(1), 55-75.
- NAPLAN (2008) National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy: Achievement in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy, 2008 [http://www.nap.edu.au/verve/\\_resources/2ndStageNationalReport\\_18Dec\\_v2.pdf](http://www.nap.edu.au/verve/_resources/2ndStageNationalReport_18Dec_v2.pdf)
- NAPLAN (2009) National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy: Achievement in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy, 2009 [http://www.nap.edu.au/verve/\\_resources/NAPLAN\\_2009\\_National\\_Report.pdf](http://www.nap.edu.au/verve/_resources/NAPLAN_2009_National_Report.pdf)
- NAPLAN (2010) National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy: Achievement in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy, 2010 [http://www.nap.edu.au/verve/\\_resources/NAPLAN\\_2010\\_National\\_Report.pdf](http://www.nap.edu.au/verve/_resources/NAPLAN_2010_National_Report.pdf)
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (2008). *Improving school leadership. Volume 1: Policy and Practice*. OECD Publishing.
- Robinson, V. M. J. (2007). *School leadership and student outcomes: Identifying what works*. Winmalee: Australian Council for Educational Leaders.
- Rowe, K. (2005). *Teaching reading: Report and recommendations of the National Inquiry into the Teaching of Literacy*. Canberra: Department of Education Science and Technology.
- Seashore-Louis, K., Leithwood, K., Wahlstrom, K. L., & Anderson, S. E. (2010). *Learning from leadership. Investigating the links to improved student learning* (Final report of research to Wallace Foundation). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota.
- Thomson, S., De Bortoli, L., Nicholas, M., Hillman, K., & Buckley, S. (2011). *Challenges for Australian education: Results from PISA 2009: The PISA 2009 assessment of students' reading, mathematical and scientific literacy*. Victoria, Australia: ACER Press.
- Townsend, T, Dempster, N., Johnson, G., Bayetto, A. & Stevens, E. (2015). *Leadership with a purpose: A report on five case studies of Principals as Literacy Leaders (PALL) schools (Tasmania)*. Unpublished report, Griffith Institute for Educational Research, Griffith University, Brisbane, Queensland.

- Townsend, T., Wilkinson, J., & Stevens, E. (2015). *Leadership with a purpose: A report on four case studies of Principals as Literacy Leaders (PALL) schools (Victoria)*. Unpublished report, Griffith Institute for Educational Research, Griffith University, Brisbane, Queensland.
- Townsend, T., Dempster, N., Johnson, G., Bayetto, A., Lovett, S. & Stevens, E. (2017, July) Supporting Teachers to be Leaders of Learning: Evidence from the PALL program. A paper presented at the World Assembly of the International Council on Education for teaching, Brno, Czech Republic.
- Wei, R. C., Darling-Hammond, L., Andree, A., Richardson, N., & Orphanos, S. (2009). *Professional learning in the learning profession: A status report on teacher development in the United States and abroad*. Dallas, TX. National Staff Development Council.