

RESEARCH AND CONSULTANCY THE EDUCATIONAL TRANSFORMATIONS WAY

A major part of our work at Educational Transformations is to conduct research commissioned by public and private organisations and institutions and to provide support to schools and school systems through tailored professional development. We have developed a particular approach – The Educational Transformations Way, as described and illustrated below, and those seeking our services in the future can be assured of the same.

Commissioned Research

While our work is led by staff at Educational Transformations we always assemble a team of people who are expert in the area and consult widely in design and delivery of research and tailored professional development programs. For each of the following projects, our managing director Professor Brian Caldwell served as project director, researcher and co-author. Our director of research Dr Jessica Harris served as associate director, project manager, researcher and co-author. Team members and co-authors in recent projects are listed below.

International Project to Frame the Transformation of Schools (2007-2008) Jim Spinks, co-author with Professor Brian Caldwell of four books on self-managing schools and with extensive international experience, served as co-director of the project. International members of the team included Dr Toni Saarivirta, Research Unit for Urban and Regional Development Studies, University of Tampere (Finland), Mike Goodfellow, Head of Community Development, Strategy and Programme Networks, Specialist Schools and Academies Trust, assisted by former principal Mike Walton (England); Professor David Egan, Director, Wales Institute of Applied Education Research, University of Wales Institute Cardiff (Wales); Professor Yong Zhao, Director of US-China Centre for Research on Excellence in Education and Distinguished University Professor at Michigan State University, assisted by graduate students Qi Chen, Ruhui Ni, Wenzhong Yang, Wei Qiu, and Gaoming Zhang (China and United States). Research assistance in Australia was provided by Evelyn Douglas, Director, Innovative Educational Solutions. This project was funded by the Australian Government and Welsh Assembly Government.

Principal Autonomy (2007) Jim Spinks, co-author with Professor Brian Caldwell of four books on self-managing schools, served as associate director, researcher and co-author for this project commissioned by the Australian Government. We sought the advice of a reference group comprised of representatives from all national principals' and parents' associations.

Review of Parental Engagement in Queensland State Schools (2007) We worked closely with a coordinating team from the Department of Education, Training and the Arts, Queensland, in the design and implementation of this project which was led by our Director of Research Dr Jessica Harris. Dr Harris assisted by Professor Brian Caldwell conducted case studies in 10 Queensland schools. We needed expert support in reviewing a large body of literature on the topic and preparing a substantial report. Author Dr Jane Grant joined our team for this aspect of the project, which was commissioned by the Queensland Government.

History of State Aid to Non-Government Schools in Australia (2005-2007) Professor Richard Selleck, University of Melbourne, eminent educational historian with several books on leaders and institutions in public education; Dr Ian Wilkinson, educational historian with field experience in non-government schools; and Dr Pam Dettman, former principal of non-government schools. The project was commissioned by the Australian Government.

Tailored Professional Development

We only accept a brief to conduct tailored professional development for schools and school systems if we have the opportunity for extensive consultation with key stakeholders or if we have undertaken prior commissioned research. We do not commence until we are satisfied that we understand the context and that clients are satisfied we can add value. Extended support must always include milestones at which progress against expectations is assessed and adaptations are made to suit changing contexts. As far as possible, the design of the consultancy is based on a client-generated data-base that helps identify needs and priorities. Confidentiality is maintained throughout except where the school or school system places the consultancy in the public domain. Here are four examples of consultancies that reflect The Educational Transformations Way.

Wales July 2007 Three workshops for school and school system leaders on the theme Re-imagining Educational Leadership in an Era of Transformation hosted by iNet Wales. These workshops were tailored to the local context after two consultancies on education policy in Wales (March) and leadership development (June). These consultancies included interviews with dozens of people including school principals and the Director and Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills.

Mauritius March 2007 Six workshops were conducted by Professor Brian Caldwell for every principal and large numbers of school system leaders in Mauritius on the theme Mauritius on the Move. These events were conducted for iNet in association with the Ministry of Education. The workshops were designed after an exhaustive review of current policies and ministerial statements and meetings with current and former leaders of education in Mauritius. Director of Research at Educational Transformations, Dr Jessica Harris, assisted in the preparation by visiting Mauritius in February and preparing a case study of Mauritius for the iNet G100 conference in Beijing in October 2006.

Tailored program for Frankston Assistant Principals' Network 2007 Led by Professor Brian Caldwell and Dr Jessica Harris, Educational Transformations conducted a series of three workshops for the Frankston Assistant Principals' Network in Victoria. These were designed after several meetings with the coordinating committee. Adaptations were made after each workshop. These events were framed by the model for alignment in *Raising the Stakes* (Caldwell and Spinks, 2008). Examples of good practice generated by participants were described in the report of the International Project to Frame the Transformation of Schools (see above).

Tailored program for a private school 2008 Led by Professor Brian Caldwell Educational Transformations is conducting a year-long program of leadership development for the senior management team at a leading private school in Melbourne. The program consists of two two-day workshops, four one-day seminars, and a keynote address to all

members of staff at the school. Regular policy briefings are prepared by Educational Transformations. The Educational Transformations Way was followed to prepare the program, including three initial meetings with the principal and other school leaders and attendance at a one-day senior management meeting at which goals for 2007 were reviewed and new goals were formulated for 2008. There was extensive reference to survey and achievement data.