Maggie Farrar

Schools of Tomorrow Conference

What lies ahead: Seizing our own power and potential
Communities that learn, improve and thrive focus on ........
“There is a heap of evidence staring policy makers in the face that it is the collaborative group that accelerates performance. These results occur because day to day pressure and support is built into the work. It is social capital that has the quality and speed essential for whole system reform.”

Michael Fullan
‘Any reform initiative that improves relationships has a chance of success. Any that doesn’t is doomed to failure’

Michael Fullan
To improve – increase connectivity

‘Isolation is the enemy of improvement’

Michael Fullan
For cluster led improvement this means:

Clusters that come together voluntarily have more chance of success than those that are imposed.

Geography (proximity) makes a difference.

Partnership agreements that make expectations explicit are essential.

Trust is built by doing real work together – peer review, giving and receiving feedback, joint practice development.
Like inquisitive scientists, the best corporate leaders we’ve researched remain students of their work, relentlessly asking questions – why, why, why? – and have an incurable compulsion to vacuum the brains of people they meet.

Jim Collins
Good to Great
‘Continuous learning for everyone is central to the notion of intelligent and improving schools’

McGilchrist, Reed and Myers
The Intelligent School 2004
You know you are in an effective cluster when..

Teachers TALK about teaching and learning
Leaders talk about leading
Teachers WATCH each other teach
Leaders watch each other lead
Teachers plan, organise and evaluate TOGETHER
Leaders plan and evaluate improvement TOGETHER
Teachers teach EACH OTHER
Leaders teach EACH OTHER

Tim Brighouse and David Woods,
The A – Z of school improvement

And using the SOTO framework so do children, parents, teachers and leaders – together
Stages of learning

Dependent - *what others tell me*

Shallow

Independent – *what I learn for myself*

Deep

Interdependent – *what I learn with and on behalf of others*

Profound

The case for Professional Learning Communities

David Hargreaves
For cluster led improvement this means:

The opportunity to work alongside outstanding teachers and leaders within own school and in other schools
Building a co coaching culture within and between schools
Agreeing an annual professional learning focus for the cluster
Progressive ‘staff meetings’ in each others schools over the course of the year
Knowing where your best bits ‘best bits’ are and maximising their influence within and between schools
Forward planning to allow for peer review / joint action research / joint professional learning
Mutual accountability – it makes a difference
What could it look like?

- Agreed performance metrics which all schools report to each other and publish
- Shared review framework with peer scrutiny; reported
- Mechanisms for learning together – joint practice development; and assessing impact – and shared
- Evaluation of partnership/cluster impact – in which everyone has a say

SURE GLAD THE HOLE ISN'T AT OUR END

FROM ROBERT HILL
Accountability: multi-faceted

Personal accountability: To self
Moral accountability: To students/parents/the community
Professional accountability: To colleagues
Contractual accountability: To employer/government
System accountability; To the wider system
‘Becoming a community of leaders requires leading and learning. Becoming a community of leaders requires learning together. And learning together requires that the responsibilities of leadership be shared’

Building community in schools
Thomas Sergiovanni 1993
Better is possible. It does not take genius. It takes diligence. It takes moral clarity. It takes ingenuity.

And above all, it takes a willingness to try.