CHAPTER 3

CURRICULUM ISSUES, CURRICULUM
COMMITTEES AND PROCESSES

THE CURRICULUM ISSUES

ISSUE A: SHARING SENIOR CLASSES WITH ANOTHER SCHOOL

In School A, the Curriculum Co-ordinator identified an issue, documented in her diary (see Appendix D), relating to the association of her school with a neighbouring girls' school for the purpose of sharing classes.

The Curriculum Co-ordinator at School A:

Helen has been teaching for twenty years; two and a half of these years have been in her current school. She applied for the advertised position of Curriculum Co-ordinator in the school and was subsequently appointed to the position in 1992. She replaced the previous Curriculum Co-ordinator, of
five years standing, who was the first Curriculum Co-ordinator to be appointed to the school.

Helen taught in a State Secondary School for ten years from 1977. During this time she had various positions of responsibility, ranging from English Co-ordinator to Health Co-ordinator to Year 7 Co-ordinator. In 1987, acting on a colleague’s suggestion, Helen applied for a consultancy secondment position at the Health Department in the area of STD Prevention Education. Consequently she left the school halfway through the year and worked at the Health Department until the end of the year.

In 1988, Helen worked as a Personal Development Consultant at a School Support Centre, documenting school curriculum and gaining experience in school curriculum organisation. She was working with a multi-disciplined team of curriculum people including social workers, psychologists, counsellors, speech therapists and visiting teachers working with handicapped students. This team was working on whole school issues relating to "district provision". (Ministry of Education, 1989)

Her manager suggested Helen should extend her curriculum knowledge beyond the Health area and encouraged her to apply for promotion to a VCE Curriculum Consultancy at another School Support Centre. "If you move
people around into different positions of responsibility, then they don’t see things from a single minded point of view.” (Helen, tape 1, side A, approx. 155) Helen was apprehensive about the move but, in the end, applied for the position and was appointed for a three year period.

A lot of professional development was built into this new position. Each of the six School Support Centres had a team of about eight curriculum consultants. The two senior people at each Support Centre were appointed as either the School Curriculum Organisation Consultant, looking at whole school issues Years 7 to 10, or as the VCE Curriculum Consultant. These consultants attended in-services on assessment and reporting, discipline and student welfare relating to whole school issues, before organising in-service activities for school staff in their areas. In addition, Helen attended sessions on setting up VCE student programmes, library resources and other issues related to the VCE.

As Curriculum Co-ordinator, Helen has never had a mentor for the position. However there have always been people, usually outside the school in School Support Centres and in her Curriculum Co-ordinators’ Network, that she felt that she could phone if necessary. Helen’s experiences in the School Support Centres, prior to joining the school, were considered to constitute formal training for the position. At the time, Helen was unaware that she
was "being trained". In addition, Helen felt very fortunate that she had experience in Health education, as an interest in this area focuses on students' individual needs and how they may be accommodated in the curriculum. According to Helen, a large portion of her teaching life has involved consideration of the whole school curriculum rather than being focussed on one particular area of curriculum.

In addition to her role as Curriculum Co-ordinator, Helen has a 0.2 teaching load.

The Curriculum Issue at School A:

Most schools can offer only a selection of the forty-four studies available to students in their last two years of secondary school education. The determination of which studies are offered depends on the staff available in the school, the perceived value of the each study (this can vary according to the universities, the staff, the parents and the students), and often, the number of students intending to study the subject (this can be based on previous experience or preliminary surveys of the student group). Another factor that needs to be taken into consideration when determining the subjects to be offered is the staffing cost of small classes.
To increase the breadth of the curriculum offered to their VCE students, and, at the same time, to decrease the staff budget, Helen’s school and a neighbouring girls’ school in the area decided to share a limited number of classes. The time involved for staff and students in travelling between schools was to be minimal.

The schools had been informally linked for many years in a range of areas, including the sharing of library resources, sporting facilities, private music lessons, careers and VTAC information. In addition, the staff of various VCE subjects had met to discuss resources, excursions and professional development in their particular area.

In 1991/2, the Principals and School Councils decided to formalise and to extend these arrangements to the sharing of some VCE classes. The Principals appointed a committee comprised of four staff; the Director of Curriculum and the timetabler in each case. This committee was given a very broad and open-ended brief and were to be responsible for negotiating specific proposals in terms of the selection of classes to be shared, policy to guide the sharing arrangements, procedures and organisation details and the documentation of the whole process.
The Process used for the Resolution of the Issue:

The issue of practical amalgamation was an area in which Helen had strategic knowledge from her work in the School Support Centre negotiating with government schools in response to District Provision policy. (Ministry of Education, 1989)

Initially a survey was conducted amongst the staff of both schools to document the informal arrangements that already existed between the two schools. This, Helen said, "aimed at building staff's confidence and in minimising the perceived extent of the changes". (Helen, fax, 2 May 1994) In addition, it helped to identify the areas that were most plausible for sharing. The results of the survey indicated that most subject departments were already involved in sharing to varying extents.

The next step Helen identified in the process was to establish an understanding of each other's programmes and organisation. This involved a consideration of the number of periods per cycle, the number of days per cycle, the number of periods per subject at each year level, the subjects being offered, class sizes, term dates, special events, time of assemblies, projected numbers, lines of communication, ways of handling extensions and consideration of disadvantage, roles and responsibilities of various
administrators, etc. Common ground was eventually reached through discussion and position statements were written which were put before the Principals.

Upon resolution of the organisational issues, Helen said the Committee concentrated on the policy statements and guidelines for students and staff for the sharing of classes. These guidelines related to attendance, excursions, use of the library and its resources, assessment and reporting, consideration of disadvantage, etc.

In 1993, the first joint classes were held. The function of the Committee currently is “to monitor and modify the arrangements as required and to administer the shared classes”. (Helen, fax, 2 May 1994)

**ISSUE B: APPOINTMENT OF SCHOOL BOOKSELLERS AT SCHOOL B**

Mary choose a completely different, yet valid, curriculum concern; one of appointing booksellers to the School.
The Curriculum Co-ordinator at School B:

At School B, the Curriculum Co-ordinator has the title of Director of Studies. Mary has been teaching for twenty-two years, eleven of these years have been spent in her current school. In her previous school she had sat on the curriculum committee and was responsible for the timetable.

Initially she was employed as a full-time English teacher. The position was not advertised. The Head of English retired and Mary was approached by a friend of hers, who had been approached by someone at the school, to apply for the position. The Principal, who had been at the school for a little over a year at the time of Mary’s appointment, had been Curriculum Co-ordinator in her previous school and, Mary said, she knew that her new school needed a Curriculum Co-ordinator, but there was no-one in the school suitable for the position. When Mary was interviewed for the position of English teacher she was questioned about her curriculum interests. The Principal suggested that she would be ideal for the position of Curriculum Co-ordinator. However the Principal was not willing to appoint someone she did not know to the position, so she asked Mary if she would consider a trial period at the school. Consequently, after one term, Mary was promoted to the position of Curriculum Co-ordinator, a newly created position in the school.
Mary started with the title of Curriculum Co-ordinator eleven years ago. After five or six years her title was changed to the Director of Studies, a position considered to have broader responsibilities. This position encompassed Staff Professional Development as well as Curriculum Co-ordination. Recently however the position has been divided into two with the creation of a Professional Development Co-ordinator. Mary retained the curriculum co-ordination under the title of Director of Studies.

At the time of her appointment eleven years ago, Mary was in her third year of a part-time Master of Educational Studies in Curriculum and Educational Administration at Monash University. Completion of this qualification provided some formal training for the position of Curriculum Co-ordinator, in that Mary’s project involved the construction of a model for the internal evaluation of her school. The project, involving both Curriculum and Administration, was carried out in School B.

In addition to her role as Director of Studies, Mary has a 0.25 teaching load, comprising a Year 12 class and a Theory of Knowledge class in the IB programme. The IB programme is in its infancy at the school and Mary “likes to be involved in any innovations at the school”. (Mary, tape no. 2, side A, approx. 105)
The Curriculum Issue at School B:

Mary chose from her diary (see Appendix D), as the main school issue, the appointment of new booksellers for the next school year. At first sight this may not appear to be a curriculum issue. However her role statement as Director of Studies (see Appendix C) specifies that she is responsible for all curriculum matters within the school including the “management of all curricular-related publications”, including the school booklists.

In an information sheet sent to parents (see Appendix F), she informed them that:

The school appoints official textbook suppliers for the following reasons:
• to work with teaching staff in obtaining new copies of texts for our close inspection prior to the setting of texts for the next year
• to keep us up-to-date on new editions as well as new texts
• to work with the School libraries in the renewal and expansion of our library collection
• to better ensure that all students commence the year with a complete set of textbooks
• to provide a reliable, efficient, innovative service to School families so that the annual purchase of textbooks goes happily and smoothly.

As Mary observed, the issue is of importance to the staff, students and the parents, mainly for reasons of service to the curriculum. If the school books are not available to the students at the beginning of the school year, students,
staff and parents become distressed and anxious. In addition, staff need to use the resource of the school bookseller to keep up-to-date with the latest publications in their subject area to aid in curriculum development and delivery. Thus it is important for the school to use booksellers who support the school by supporting the staff and who provide a prompt service to the school.

In previous years there had been one bookseller for the Junior School, one for the Senior School and several for the Library. In addition, one of these booksellers had supplied books for the IB programme and for the Monash Enhancement Programme which offered first year university subjects to able Year 12 students.

Over the past two years Mary received numerous complaints from staff and parents, regarding the service being provided to the school by the bookseller. Often students did not have the required books at the beginning of the year. Hence the Director of Studies had been in constant contact with the bookseller responding to parent and staff complaints. This situation had become untenable for the Director of Studies, the staff, the students and the parents, so it was decided to invite several booksellers to tender for the job of selling books to the school.
The Process used for Resolution of the Issue:

Initially the Director of Studies discussed the issue with the Principal. She then drafted a letter on behalf of the Principal, inviting four booksellers to tender for the job and to offer a new approach to bookselling. This letter was approved by the Principal and sent to the booksellers. The Principal, the Director of Studies and the Business Administrator read all the replies and initially decided to interview two of the booksellers. However the current bookseller insisted on an interview so it was decided to interview all of the booksellers. The Business Administrator and the Director of Studies conducted the interviews. This was a protracted process.

In addition to drafting the letter, getting the letter approved by the Principal and then interviewing the booksellers, the Director of Studies was involved in follow-up interviews with the Teacher Librarian, to find out the process by which books are ordered into the library, and interviews with the Deputy Head of Junior School and her secretary, as one of the booksellers had been supplying books to the Junior School.

As a result of these interviews, it was decided to offer contracts to two booksellers; one to provide books to the Middle and Junior Schools and one to supply books to the Senior School. Letters were sent to all applicants. In
addition the Business Administrator phoned all the applicants. The current bookseller phoned the Director of Studies to discuss his unsuccessful application.

ISSUE C: YEAR 7 AND 8 ENRICHMENT PROGRAMME AT SCHOOL C

The third issue relates to the introduction of an enrichment programme for the Year 7 and 8 students at School C.

The Curriculum Co-ordinator at School C:

At School C, Margaret, the Curriculum Co-ordinator is also the Head of the Senior School. Margaret has been teaching for twenty years, ten of these years in her current school where she was initially appointed as a classroom teacher. The incumbent Year 12 Co-ordinator left the school at the end of Term 1 for personal reasons. Shortly after, Margaret was asked to fill the position. She had held such a position at her previous school, an independent girls’ school in Melbourne. At the time, the school did not have a Curriculum Co-ordinator; Margaret “slipped into” (her words) this position in addition to her role as the Year 12 Co-ordinator. Over the years Margaret’s title changed from Year 12 Co-ordinator to VCE Co-ordinator to

Margaret had no formal training for the position and there was no-one at the school to act as a mentor. Margaret has found the Curriculum Co-ordinators’ Network invaluable over the years, providing a forum for “asking questions, from the simplistic to the philosophical, and for discussing practical issues.” (Margaret, notes from telephone conversation, 25 June 1994)

Last year the role of Curriculum Co-ordinator was undertaken by another member of the staff. The staff member left the school at the end of the year to take up a position at another school, thus vacating the position of Curriculum Co-ordinator. The school did not want to appoint more staff and there was no-one on the staff with suitable training for the position, so the role reverted to Margaret. However the school appointed a Curriculum Assistant. The aim is to train the Curriculum Assistant to take over the role in the future.

Margaret’s role is to oversee the Curriculum. The Curriculum Assistant chairs the Heads of Department Committee. At the beginning of the year, Margaret and her Assistant discussed the overview of the curriculum and decided which tasks the Assistant would undertake. The Assistant reports
directly to the Curriculum Co-ordinator. The Curriculum Co-ordinator has no role statement however her assistant does.

In addition to her role as Deputy Principal, Margaret teaches two classes, which is approximately a 0.4 teaching load.

The Curriculum Issue at School C:

The issue that Margaret chose for the week that she kept the diary (see Appendix D) was the development of an Enrichment Programme for the Year 7 and 8 students. This idea was initiated by Margaret who felt that "attention needed to be focused on the Year 7 and 8's". (Margaret, tape no. 3, side A, approx 170)

Over the past five to six years the development and implementation of the VCE had monopolised curriculum development and decision making in most schools. Margaret felt that her school was no exception. Recent curriculum development had focused on the Year 9 and 10 programmes. Thus the needs of the Year 9, 10, 11 and 12 students had been revised and were in the process of being implemented. However the Year 7 and 8 curriculum had remained fairly static for a number of years. Margaret felt that it was time to revise and, perhaps, to initiate new programs for the Year
7 and 8 students. The idea of an Enrichment Programme is part of this initiative and the start of an evaluation of the Year 7 and 8 programme.

During the meetings to discuss the viability of such a programme, the staff indicated that they “wanted to provide something different for students who had been in the school for a long time and for students at that age who get bored doing the same thing everyday”. (Margaret, tape no. 3, side A, approx 220) Staff wanted to offer something for everyone and suggested that the program should provide activities for students that were interest based rather than IQ based.

The Process used for the Resolution of the Issue:

Initially the Curriculum Co-ordinator discussed her ideas with the Curriculum Assistant and with the Principal. The idea was then discussed at the Heads of Department Committee meeting; a curriculum based committee whose membership includes the Principal, the Head of the Senior School, the Curriculum Assistant who chairs the meeting, the Heads of Department and the Senior House staff.

The Heads of Department Committee talked about whether the programme was needed and, if so, what specifically was needed - extension, acceleration,
remediation, gifted and talented, withdrawal or something else. The Committee agreed that a programme was needed and discussed the underlying philosophy of enrichment.

The next step in the process was to introduce the idea to a General Staff meeting for an open discussion to gauge the staff’s interest and feelings about the idea and to list any suggestions for the way in which the programme could/should be conducted. Staff confirmed Margaret’s belief in such a programme.

The Senior House staff, who knew the children well, were asked to identify students and/or what sort of interests the students may have. This took the form of a survey where students were asked for their opinions and ideas of activities for enrichment. This information was taken back to the Heads of Department Committee who were asked for their input and discussed what could be done across curriculum areas or within their department in the areas of enrichment. Two staff volunteered to offer electives for Term 1, which would be held after school. After a lot more discussion, the Principal and the Deputy Principal suggested that the programme should commence in a small way and limited the pilot programme to five weeks for one hour a week after school.
At the end of the five weeks, the Heads of Department Committee evaluated the pilot programme to see if the programme was fulfilling its aims and to decide the future of the programme. Students were again surveyed to gauge their reactions to the programme. It was decided to continue with the programme, so the Heads of Department Committee are currently considering different electives for next term.

After the meeting, it occurred to Margaret that it would be a good idea to utilise the talents of the current Artist in Residence for enrichment. She discussed this with some of the Heads of Department and it was decided that this was an opportunity to enrich all the students. Consequently the Artist in Residence held classes with each Year 8 group. Margaret and the Curriculum Assistant thought that this was also an opportunity to enrich a selected group of students. They checked the timetable to see which Year 7 and 8 classes followed this lesson. Margaret approached the relevant staff and asked them if they would mind if some of their students were withdrawn from their class for a special enrichment session. The Curriculum Coordinator already knew that these staff were sympathetic to the idea and, as she suspected, all the staff who were approached gave their consent. As the Artist in Residence was a language based person, the Curriculum Coordinator asked the English staff to select the students who would attend the session. The staff of each English class nominated students according to their
personalities; some staff picked the brightest students in their class, some asked for volunteers, while other staff put all the names into a hat and drew out the required number of names.

THE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

The above cases illustrated each Curriculum Co-ordinator's involvement in a single issue amongst a number mentioned in the diaries, that had arisen in a typical week. These issues may not have been typical but give an insight into the variety of issues that Curriculum Co-ordinators encounter as part of their role. Another area of responsibility that involves the Curriculum Co-ordinator is the Curriculum Committee. The composition of the Curriculum Committee also varied from school to school as did the function of the committee and the role of the Curriculum Co-ordinator within the committee.

This section will consider the Committee in each of the three schools and outline some of the items that have appeared on the agendas and minutes of the meetings (see Appendix E). This information, with the curriculum issues, will be used in the next chapter to characterise the role of the Curriculum Co-ordinator.
The Curriculum Committee in School A:

School A does not have a committee called the Curriculum Committee. However the school has a senior management team (although the group have not been given this name) and a Heads of Department Committee who discuss curriculum issues.

The senior management team, consisting of the Principal, the Curriculum Co-ordinator and the Timetableer, meets every week for about two hours and discusses a wide range of school based issues. Sometimes staff may be invited to the meeting for consultation purposes or discussions prior to the meeting may take place with relevant personnel. The senior management team functions by looking at curriculum issues and planning strategies which are then taken to the Heads of Department Committee. Generally decisions are not made in these meetings without having first presented the ideas at a Heads of Department Committee.

In the past, the Heads of Department meetings were open to Heads of Department and to any other staff who wished to attend, with the result that the committee became too large and unmanageable. Helen pruned the committee by approaching staff who are not Heads of Department, thanking these staff for their contribution to the committee and informing the person
that they were no longer required on the committee as they were represented by their Head of Department.

Now the Heads of Department meetings are attended by the Principal, the Curriculum Co-ordinator, who chairs the meeting, and the Heads of Department, including the Careers Counsellor. The agenda is set by the Principal and the Curriculum Co-ordinator. Heads of Department may add items to the agenda if they wish. However they rarely do.

Helen observed that items may appear on the agenda as a result of her checking with her “confidants” on the staff as to the viability of agenda items.

The Heads of Department meetings are used as a forum to discuss ideas that have come from the management team as well as a forum for disseminating information. At the two meetings surveyed most of the agenda dealt with the dissemination of information. One meeting was occupied by a report and feedback relating to the school’s “Urban Adventure” so that the Heads of Department could disseminate the information to the staff in their department. Other items included information from the Careers Counsellor regarding Tertiary Entrance Selection, a consciousness raising exercise initiated by Helen.
In some instances, Heads of Department "lobby" the Curriculum Coordinator before or after meetings. An example of this relates to the VCE student subject choice selection for the coming year. The Timetabler suggested that an item relating to the "blocks" should be added to the agenda. This was a change for the Timetabler who, in previous years, had felt that he should determine the blocks. However this year he sought "to get the Heads of Department on side" by circulating the blocks to them for comment. As a result several staff came to Helen after the meeting and suggested that students should be given an initial open choice of subjects rather than choosing subjects from fixed blocks. These staff felt that their subject was disadvantaged in student selection by its blocking. Helen discussed the proposal with the Timetabler who had no objections to the idea. The proposal was presented to the Principal at the next management meeting. She agreed with the proposal on the proviso that the change would mean a fine tuning of the subject choice process and that the school would be offering a better service to the students.

One of the important issues in the Heads of Department meetings is the generation of the minutes. Last year, one person wrote the minutes and Helen edited them. This worked well. However this year, a different person takes the minutes. Helen uses this person's notes to write the minutes.
Helen has had difficulty finding the time to write up the minutes, but feels that “Minutes are very very important. You can exert a lot of power by the way you present the minutes.” (Helen, interview tape no.1, approx. 355) Heads of Department take their own notes at the meetings and Helen observed that if there are no minutes there can be distortions and misunderstandings. Helen felt that she is not coping with this aspect of her position.

The Curriculum Committee in School B:

School B does not have a committee called the Curriculum Committee. However they have a Subject Co-ordinators committee, composed of the fifteen subject co-ordinators, the Teacher Librarian, the Deputy Principal, the Principal and the Director of Studies, who chairs the meeting. Mary felt that the Committee worked very effectively and the “spread of opinion means that we have decisions that represent a variety of thinking across the school.” (Mary, tape 2, side A, approx 500)

Occasionally other staff are invited to attend the meetings. For example, on one occasion, the Special Education staff were invited to the meeting to outline how computers are used in Special Education. The Year 11 and 12 Co-ordinators are frequently invited when VCE matters are on the agenda.
In general, the staff for whom the issues are relevant are invited to the meeting.

The Committee meets twice a term after school; the dates appear in the dateslist at the beginning of the year. The agenda, which is compiled by the Director of Studies, is circulated four or five days before the meeting. Subject Co-ordinators can add items to the agenda, and do, but they have to give the Director of Studies twenty-four hours notice, so that the agenda can be retyped.

Mary did not keep copies of the agenda, as it is modified as the meeting progresses. The minutes were kept as a record of the meeting. The first few items on the agenda tended to include announcements from the Director of Studies regarding correspondence or the imparting of information that does not require discussion. The other items were discussed by the group; Mary said this constitutes about three quarters of the meeting time. The reporting back on issues from previous meetings usually occurred as major items as these often require further discussion.

When a key curriculum issue arises, for example the restructuring of the timetable, the Director of Studies prepares a paper which is often presented to the Executive before being presented at a Subject Co-ordinators' meeting.
The Executive is the school management team consisting of the Principal, the Deputy Principal, who is also the Head of the Senior School, the Head of the Middle School, the Head of the Junior School, the Director of Computing Services, the Head of the Development Office, the Head of Student Services, who is also the Year 12 Co-ordinator, the Business Administrator and the Director of Studies. This group meet once a week for two periods.

In the paper, presented to the Executive and then to the Subject co-ordinators, Mary's responsibility is to consider all the alternatives and outlines the pros and cons of each alternative. Alternatives may be added after the initial discussion at the Subject Co-ordinators' meeting. Often Mary finds she gets a sense of people's feelings about a proposal during the Executive meeting and felt free to come up with an amended plan for discussion at the faculty level.

The Subject Co-ordinators would be required to discuss the paper with the members of their faculty at the next monthly faculty meeting, which Helen would not attend, unless invited. The Subject Co-ordinators are required to write minutes of their meetings for Mary who reads them very carefully. In between meetings she arranges informal meetings with individual Subject
Co-ordinators and speaks with any other staff who approached her to clarify any of the issues.

At the Subject Co-ordinators’ meeting held the month after the presentation of the paper, to finalise discussion and come to a decision, taking all of the faculties’ opinions into account. The final solutions are presented at a general staff meeting. Usually by this stage everyone is aware of the issue and so there are no problems. Problems are usually brought up initially in the faculty meetings.

Mary said that the Co-ordinators’ Committee works well together and rarely is there any conflict. If there is dissension, the majority view on the matter is accepted and respected. This was not always the case. During the first few years after she took up the position there were some very strong views from Heads of Department who were finding it very difficult to work in this new collaborative style. There were some difficult times. However most of those people have moved on to other schools.

The Curriculum Committee in School C:

Like the other schools, School C does not have a committee called the Curriculum Committee. However the Heads of Department Committee is
considered to act as the Curriculum Committee. The Heads of Department Committee is an advisory body reporting directly to the Principal. The Committee may make recommendations to the Principal but it is clear to all members of the Committee that the Principal has the final say and it is she who decides what will and will not be implemented in the school curriculum.

This committee consists of the Principal, Margaret as the Deputy Principal, the Curriculum Assistant, who chairs the meeting, the Heads of Department and the Senior House Staff. The Senior House Staff deal with the students on a pastoral level and are involved in curriculum discussions at the meetings. However if ever a vote was taken they would not be included. Margaret felt that, by not occupying the chair, this gave her more freedom to speak her mind.

During the meetings the chair noted all the points that have been raised in discussion and reported these in the minutes. Decisions were usually made by consensus after discussion and time for reflection.

The committee met every three weeks after school. The Curriculum Assistant circulated the agenda before the meeting and wrote the minutes of
the meeting. Margaret did not seek input into the minutes before they were circulated.

REVIEW

In this chapter the role of the Curriculum Co-ordinators in three different girls’ schools was illustrated in case studies of a particular curriculum issue that was recorded in each Curriculum Co-ordinator’s diary during the week surveyed. In the absence of Curriculum Committees, the composition and function of the Heads of Department or Subject Co-ordinators Committee at each school were briefly described. The case studies are used, in the next chapter, to characterise the role of the Curriculum Co-ordinator. The role is discussed under the following headings:

- The Curriculum Committee and Deliberation
- The Role of the Curriculum Co-ordinator compared with Schwab’s Characteristics
- The Role of the Principal
- Curriculum Deliberation in the Management Framework.
CHAPTER 4

CHARACTERISATION OF THE ROLE OF THE CURRICULUM CO-ORDINATOR

THE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE AND DELIBERATION

None of the three schools surveyed had a committee called the Curriculum Committee. All three schools have a Heads of Department Committee or Subject Co-ordinator’s Committee, attended by the Principal, the Curriculum Co-ordinator and the Heads of Department or Subject Co-ordinators. These committees meet two or three times a term. In addition, each school has some sort of senior management committee. In School A, this committee is composed of the Principal, the Curriculum Co-ordinator and the Timetabler. In School B, the Principal and the Curriculum Co-ordinator, who is also the Deputy Principal, meet daily to discuss all issues relating to the school, including the curriculum. In School C, the Executive is a group of nine senior staff including the Principal and the Curriculum Co-ordinator.
Curriculum may be discussed by this group when appropriate. These senior management groups meet at least once a week.

The Heads of Department Committees generally have between fifteen and twenty members, depending on the size of the school and the number of subject co-ordinators within the school. In at least two of the schools, the function of each committee appears to be as an advisory body to the Principal and to implement any curriculum changes decided by the Principal, who may or may not have discussed the decision with the Heads of Department.

This structure contrasts sharply with Schwab's model of a curriculum committee. He suggests that the committee should consist of eight or nine members. The members should include the Principal, various categories of teachers (but not necessarily representatives of the current curricular categories), a student, a member of the School Council with educational experience and, on occasion, specialists who have been invited for a particular purpose. The function of the committee is to discuss the curriculum and the issues that surround it and to come to a deliberative decision.
It is difficult to compare strictly the functions of Schwab’s model of a curriculum committee established to deliberate on curriculum issues with the school curriculum committees with no clear responsibility in this area, other than that those relating to the discussions within the committee.

One important extension of Schwab’s model in the area of the Curriculum Co-ordinator’s leadership in deliberation has been suggested by Henrietta Schwartz (1984). She sought to present the whole curriculum decision making matrix to the Curriculum Committee by combining a codification of nine fields of cultural action, which could be seen as a framework for a common curriculum, which transcends disciplines and knowledge, with Schwab’s four “voices” or commonplaces to form a grid that could be used for deliberations. The assumption was that for any curriculum issue each classroom, school, subject or community has some way of handling cultural action in a manner that is unique to the setting.

Considering the school to be committed, through the curriculum, to fields of cultural action, the dimensions encompassed by these fields in each subject knowledge area are shown below.

1. a value system which indicates the preferred ways of doing things or specifying what is good and what is bad
2. a world view which specifies the beliefs concerning the position of man in the cosmos, and the limits individuals must adhere to in the school and the classroom

3. a social organisation which governs individual and group relationships even to the point of determining forms of verbal address

4. technology which relates to a body of knowledge and skills necessary for the school to function and to survive

5. an economic system which regulates the allocation of goods and services in the school and the classroom

6. a political system which regulates individual and institutional behaviour which specifies how decisions are made, how power, authority, and influence are acquired and used, and who participates in what decision

7. a language which is uniquely suited to the educational process or the subject matter of the classroom

8. an aesthetic system which defines what is beautiful, creative and artistic

9. a socialisation process which is regularises the transmission of knowledge to the students (unlearned ones in the group)
Table 1: Matrix of Schwab’s Four Commonplaces and the Nine Fields of Cultural Action

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School or Classroom Cultural Universals</th>
<th>1. The Teacher</th>
<th>2. The Student</th>
<th>3. What is taught</th>
<th>4. The milieu</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HOW INSTRUCTION IS DELIVERED</td>
<td>WHO IS BEING TAUGHT</td>
<td>THE CONTENT OF TEACHING AND LEARNING</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Value System</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. World View</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Social Organisation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Technology</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Economic System</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Political System</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Language</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Aesthetic System</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Socialisation Process</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The grid, which is easily applied to each subject area and year level, can also provide a framework for general curriculum discussion across all subject departments and can facilitate deliberation on curriculum foundations within the school. An example of such a grid ‘filled out’ for the existing Year 9 Social Studies programme by the Committee members prior to discussion of proposed changes in a hypothetical urban school was provided by Schwartz. (p. 442-443)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School or Classroom Cultural Universals</th>
<th>1. The Teacher</th>
<th>2. The Student</th>
<th>3. What is taught</th>
<th>4. The milieu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HOW INSTRUCTION IS DELIVERED</td>
<td>WHO IS BEING TAUGHT</td>
<td>THE CONTENT</td>
<td>OF TEACHING AND LEARNING</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstream values, teacher talks, lecture-discussion, reading and homework</td>
<td>Subcultural street-peer values, diverse, learns via x hours of TV and stereo a day</td>
<td>Mainstream values, delayed gratification, individual achievement, love nature or conquer nature</td>
<td>Superior adult teacher, instructs unlearned youth in isolation for 5 hours a day</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult human being is centre of the universe, nature must be subdued</td>
<td>Peers/parents/self is centre of the universe, nature is there</td>
<td>Judaean-Christian world view with adults at centre, man subduing nature</td>
<td>Adults control universe of school, nature is kept outside</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superior-subordinate relationship with administrators and students; peer relations with other teachers</td>
<td>Student is told what to do by teacher; student seeks status among peers by doing what they wish</td>
<td>Role models are &quot;good&quot; adults or &quot;superkids&quot;; eg: young Hiawatha acquiesces to adult advise</td>
<td>Peer norms govern youth behaviour; more youths than adults in school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tried-and-true processes and tools are best; eg: texts, lecture, chalkboard</td>
<td>New is better than old; audio and visual tools are good</td>
<td>Mixed messages; computers are valued as are classics</td>
<td>Avant garde is technologically &quot;with it,&quot; respected and feared at once</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruction is offered in time bound periods; senior faculty are valued resources</td>
<td>Learning is continuous tracking</td>
<td>&quot;Important subjects&quot; get more time and resources</td>
<td>Goods and services go to conforming teachers and students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited input into decisions; top-down</td>
<td>No input into governance of school</td>
<td>Democratic principles</td>
<td>Principals/teachers make decisions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher talk-standard American English with localisms; rarely bilingual</td>
<td>Peer street talk; English is second language</td>
<td>Formal English prose and poetry</td>
<td>Students use school talk in class, peer talk in halls; teachers use standard English</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neat and clean are Beautiful. Messy is ugly. Bright is Creative</td>
<td>Peer play is beautiful; work alone is punishment and ugly</td>
<td>Mainstream-looking; people are beautiful</td>
<td>Well-groomed is better than functional casual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First observation successfully completed marks rite of passage; Robinson Crusoe in classroom</td>
<td>Selection by peers to lead a group effort; easy participation with peers</td>
<td>Learn norms of group majority; abide by them</td>
<td>Little tolerance for deviant behaviour; little patience for &quot;different drummer&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Schwartz suggested that the framework formed by these nine universals and by Schwab’s four commonplaces could be used for any curriculum change or for any investigation into the need for curriculum change. Schwartz asserted that “the added cultural dimension will assist the theorist and practitioners to anticipate disruptions and suggest strategies for coping with them”. (p. 461)

Atkins (1993), as a curriculum leader at another independent Melbourne girls’ school, asked her key staff to use the matrix prior to curriculum deliberations on a range of issues. Some difficulties were encountered in interpreting how Schwartz envisaged using the matrix, resulting in varied interpretations of the matrix components. Nevertheless the concept of using the matrix as a tool for deliberation was shown to be worthwhile.

In the three schools in this study, no such tool was used to prepare Heads of Department and others for curriculum deliberation on any issue. Generally the alternatives for each suggestion, from the Principal, the Curriculum Coordinator and the Heads of Department, for implementation of the initiatives were noted and the pros and cons of the alternatives were discussed, if time permitted. However there was no schema in place for classifying the alternatives, for identification of the relative importance of the commonplaces in each, or for the identification of the cultural factors any of
which could have a major effect on curriculum implementation. It may be that the decisions made by the Curriculum Co-ordinator and by the Principal are based on an intuitive, but non-verbalised, knowledge of the commonplaces and cultural universals. Nevertheless consideration of the alternatives would have more relevance to the Heads of Department and other staff if based on a recognisable framework or ethos. Staff would be able to see the wider issues in relation to their subject based needs.

Overview of Deliberation within the Curriculum Committee:

Deliberation, in Schwab’s sense of the word, was not a component of curriculum discussions within the curriculum committees. However, if the process of deliberation is defined as the identification of the alternatives, the listing of the pros and cons of the alternatives, and the subsequent choice of the best solution, it could be said that this process occurred in the committee discussions. It should be noted that the deliberation, in this sense, within each committee occurred relative to a certain issue or platform that had already been ratified in principle by the Principal. The Committee was not primarily involved in discussing curriculum policy issues but in discussion of how the specific curriculum changes could be implemented or introduced into the school. As such, the discussions could be seen as part of the
continuum of platform - deliberation - implementation, occurring predominantly at the implementation end.

THE ROLE OF THE CURRICULUM CO-ORDINATOR

COMPAARED WITH SCHWAB'S CHARACTERISTICS

Schwab was concerned with quality of deliberation in curriculum policy making in schools and the processes whereby this could be accomplished. His ideas revolved around the central role of the Curriculum Co-ordinator and the Curriculum Committee. In an ideal situation, according to Schwab, the Principal would appoint a Curriculum Co-ordinator to handle all curriculum related issues. This person would be responsible to the Principal but would also be responsible to the Curriculum Committee. The Curriculum Co-ordinator would chair the Curriculum Committee and be expected to evoke and maintain curriculum discussion within the school. Such a task would involve a knowledge of the pertinent curriculum issues involved in each subject area and an understanding of the conflicting perceptions of the curriculum involved in balancing the commonplaces of student, staff, subject matter and the milieu of the school. In short, a Curriculum Co-ordinator, operating in Schwab's mode, would be a resource for curriculum discussion as well as being charged with the task of ensuring that all discussions considered the wider issues in curriculum development.
The staff themselves, as a result, would become aware of the broader issues relating to curriculum development.

The case studies that have been documented in the previous chapter show that, in the schools studied, the Curriculum Committee was not expected to formally consider, and perhaps did not wish to consider, the commonplaces or the wider cultural issues involved in curriculum decision making. They were responsible for strategies of implementation of curriculum decisions. In each instance, the Principal has maintained almost exclusive responsibility for the curriculum and, in at least two of the schools, could be considered to have retained the role of the Curriculum Co-ordinator, if viewed in Schwab's terms. Hence it is impractical to suggest that the Curriculum Co-ordinator is able to fulfil the role, as Schwab framed it, in terms of curriculum deliberation and decision making on a policy or platform level.

In the three documented curriculum issues, the curriculum policy decisions had been made before the issue was presented to the Heads of Department Committee. Thus the Curriculum Co-ordinator, in a diplomatic capacity, and the Heads of Department Committee had the task of discussing how to implement the decision. This may be considered as curriculum development, even though it rarely involved a discussion of the wider educational issues underlying the decision, as envisaged by Schwab.
The role played by each Curriculum Co-ordinator in resolving problems by facilitating deliberation and implementing policy can be compared with Schwab’s notion of the process of curriculum deliberation.

Did the process followed in the resolution of the issue (implementation of the decision) allow the Curriculum Co-ordinator:

• to put the special knowledge and modes of knowing of teachers into greater service in curriculum development?

• to enhance the possibilities of attracting a greater number of daring, experienced, and intellectually active people on staff and from outside into curriculum discussions?

• to establish challenging decision-making and collaborative planning as part of the function of teachers?

• to provide a basis for teachers to recognise themselves as possessed of special knowledge and competence by providing them with a sense of intellectual resources?

• to critically review changes in knowledge and attitudes inherent in proposed and actual changes in the curriculum?

• to write short issue-based papers and formal papers which demonstrate both understanding, comprehension, and a well-developed capacity to report?
Curriculum Co-ordinator A:

In this situation, the Curriculum Co-ordinator was part of a team appointed by the Principal to orchestrate the arrangements for the sharing of classes between the two schools. The Curriculum Co-ordinator was not involved in the initial discussions behind the issue. It is not known how the decision was reached or if discussion involved a discussion of educational platforms. This was the prerogative of the School Councils and the Principals of the schools involved. In articulating their combined vision for the sharing of classes, the Principals and the School Councils, presumably considered the systems as a whole and the ends by which their vision could be achieved. The Curriculum Co-ordinator was responsible for ensuring that effective arrangements for shared classes were made. She, as part of the Committee appointed by the Principals, was concerned with identifying the specific elements that would be relevant to the sharing of classes and thus with the means of implementing the change.

Assuming that policy implementation can be considered as curriculum development, the Curriculum Co-ordinator was able to use the special knowledge of the teachers in her school for curriculum development, to establish decision-making and collaborative planning as part of the function
of teachers, and to provide a basis for teachers to recognise themselves as possessed of special knowledge and competence. The extent to which the Curriculum Co-ordinator was able to involve the teachers in these enterprises varied considerably.

Teacher involvement ranged from the timetabler's complete involvement in the whole process to informal discussions with the staff. Early drafts of the policy for shared classes were shown to the teachers involved in the classes to see if they approved. Early drafts were also shown to the Heads of Department for comment. These staff were given the opportunity to participate in collaborative planning at this stage. The rest of the staff were hardly involved in making any of the decisions or in collaborative planning and were informed of the arrangements after they had been finalised.

The Curriculum Co-ordinator was working with staff from another school and hence had the opportunity to engage active and daring people from outside her school in curriculum discussions. Further opportunity for inclusion of staff outside the school in curriculum discussions was provided by the shared staff development day. This day involved the staff of both schools and was organised by the committee, thus providing a basis for all the teachers to recognise themselves as possessed of special knowledge and abilities. Further the staff involved in the shared classes were encouraged to
recognise that they were possessed of special knowledge and competence in their subject area as they were given the responsibility of teaching shared and hence mixed classes. The staff would be aware of the culture of their own school and the behaviour of their own students. However they may have no such knowledge of the other school. Hence the assumption is that they have the intellectual resources necessary to deal with the change.

Returning to Schwab’s characterisation, the Curriculum Co-ordinator was able to critically review changes in the way in which the curriculum was offered and to write issue-based papers demonstrating a capacity to report. The committee was required to document the arrangements and to produce information for parents, staff and students. This entailed the writing of issue based papers for the respective Councils, a task that was shared between the four committee members. Thus the members of the committee were required to demonstrate their understanding and their capacity for reporting.

For this situation relating to the implementation of a curriculum decision initiated by the Principal, the Curriculum Co-ordinator’s role approximated to Schwab’s model.
Curriculum Co-ordinator B:

In appointing the School booksellers, the Director of Studies was ensuring that the teachers were able to have ready access to curriculum materials for the teaching of their classes and for curriculum development. This issue related to the servicing of the curriculum, in response to a specific need, and an identification of the means by which this may be done, rather than to curriculum policy or management. Nevertheless the issue of who supplies books to the staff and students and the manner in which this is accomplished is of utmost importance to all concerned.

The staff were not actively involved in the appointment of the booksellers, so the Director of Studies was not able to use their special knowledge in curriculum development or to involve them in collaborative planning and decision making.

However, it could be argued that the booksellers tendering for the job of supplying books to the staff and students are outsiders with knowledge of school curriculum. The school bookseller must be aware of the current publications relating to the school curriculum and must communicate this knowledge to the Librarian and staff. It is in the interests of the bookseller to promote the books that are being sold and to do this it is necessary to have
some knowledge of the curriculum. Hence the Director of Studies was able to engage experienced people from outside into curriculum discussions.

**Curriculum Co-ordinator C:**

In the case of the consideration of enrichment units for Years 7 and 8 students, the Curriculum Co-ordinator was able to put the special modes of knowing and knowledge of the teachers at her school into greater service in curriculum development, to establish decision making and collaborative planning as part of the function of teachers, and to provide the opportunity for the teachers to recognise themselves as possessed of special knowledge and competence. In addition, the Curriculum Co-ordinator was able to enhance the possibility of attracting a greater number of experienced and intellectually active people on the staff and from outside into curriculum discussion, to critically review changes in knowledge and attitudes inherent in the change and to write issue based papers demonstrating a capacity to report.

The Heads of Department Committee initially discussed the proposals for enrichment units for the Years 7 and 8 students. The proposals were then taken to a General Staff meeting for further discussion. The staff were encouraged to become actively involved in the decision making process, to
see that collaborative planning is part of their function and to use their special knowledge of the Years 7 and 8 students in the service of curriculum development. Specifically the staff were asked to use their knowledge of the Year 7 and 8 students and their interests to suggest enrichment ideas and activities that would be appropriate at these levels. This was particularly appropriate for the Senior House staff who, as part of their pastoral role, deal with the students every day.

Furthermore, the staff were encouraged by the Curriculum Co-ordinator to volunteer to offer an enrichment unit and thus to use their specialised knowledge in their teaching area or in an area of interest to them. In addition, the presence of the Artist in Residence provided the staff with an intellectual resource in the area of enrichment, as well as involving an intellectually active person from outside the school into curriculum discussions.

In initiating the idea of enrichment units for the Year 7 and 8 students, the Curriculum Co-ordinator had started to review the curriculum at this level. As well, her idea encompassed current changes in attitudes and knowledge regarding the way in which curriculum could be offered to students. She was involved in the development of the vision with the Principal, and then in the implementation of the vision with the Heads of Department which
involved identifying the specific areas that would need to be discussed and the means by which the ends, the enrichment programme, could be achieved.

Overview of Schwab’s Characterisation:

In all three instances the Curriculum Co-ordinators were able to exemplify some of the six processes Schwab described as comprising the role of the Curriculum Co-ordinator. The extent to which the Curriculum Co-ordinator’s role approximated to Schwab’s characterisation depended on the nature of the task. It must be remembered that the three illustrated issues represent only one item recorded by each Curriculum Co-ordinator in one week. In addition, Schwab assumed that the position of Curriculum Co-ordinator would be full-time. However each of the Curriculum Coordinators had teaching loads, and one of the Curriculum Co-ordinators was the Deputy Principal of the school with responsibility for discipline as well as curriculum.

In the case of the association between two schools for the sharing of classes at the VCE level, the Curriculum Co-ordinator was involved in the management of resources and students. She was not involved in framing the policy or platform that preceded this task. According to Schwab, this is a valid curriculum undertaking involving, as it does, the way in which the
curriculum will be offered. Such a task involves the Curriculum Co-
ordinator understanding the milieu of the school, its staff, its students and
what is taught. These would form the basis on which she was able to put the
knowledge of teachers into the service of curriculum development and in
which to review the attitudes inherent in the proposed changes. However, in
actual fact, the Curriculum Co-ordinator was not directing the curriculum
change. This was being done by the Principal and the Curriculum Co-
ordinator was ensuring that the Principal's vision was put into practice.

When appointing a school bookseller, the Curriculum Co-ordinator was
servicing the curriculum rather than managing it or deciding on curriculum
policy. This is part of her role as listed in her role statement. However the
process followed does not allow characterisation of the role in terms of
managing staff and curriculum according to Schwab's model.

The Curriculum Co-ordinator involved in the enrichment programme for
Years 7 and 8 approximated most closely to Schwab’s model. This Co-
ordinator was involved in managing a curriculum change which may lead to
a change at the policy level. Staff were involved at all levels in the decision
making process and were encouraged to participate in collaborative planning
as part of their function. Once again, the Curriculum Co-ordinator had to be
aware of what was being taught in the school, the milieu of the school, the attitudes of the staff and the interests of the students.

THE ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL

Beck and Murphy (1993) and Gillies (1985) suggested that the principalship and deputy principalship faced with changing expectations may be as much in search of an identity as the curriculum co-ordinatorship. The role of the Principal and the collaborative relationship Schwab assumed existed between the Principal and the Curriculum Co-ordinator was not adequately explored by Schwab. For reasons of confidentiality, it was very difficult to collect meaningful data for the three Curriculum Co-ordinators on the role of the Principal in the processes under consideration. Nevertheless, in the three curriculum issues that they selected, the importance of the role of the Principal became apparent during discussions with the Curriculum Co-ordinators and it is possible to make some observations about this role.

Issue A:

The Principal of each school and the School Councils were involved at the policy making level of the curriculum change and with the development of a vision. They initiated the change involving the sharing of classes between
the two schools and appointed a committee to discuss the specifics and means of the organisational arrangements after the decision to share classes had been made. The Principals set in place a process that allowed certain members of their staff to put their special knowledge and modes of knowing into curriculum development and to establish collaborative planning and decision making as part of their function. In addition, they provided these staff with a basis to recognise themselves as possessed of special knowledge and competence in the area of curriculum presentation. The Principals had critically reviewed the situation leading up to the association between the schools. However, in the present economic climate, it may be likely that the decision to share classes was based primarily on financial exigencies.

In short, it appears that, for the most part, the Principals have performed the role set out by Schwab for the Curriculum Co-ordinator. The Principals provided the environment for the trusted staff to use their knowledge and skills in curriculum development, which in this case involved organising the timetabling and guidelines for the sharing of classes. For the members of the committee orchestrating the arrangements, the experience created an environment for the sharing of ideas; it was an intellectual challenge. The experience also boosted the confidence of all members of the committee.
Issue B:

When considering the issue of appointing booksellers to the school, the Curriculum Co-ordinator continually consulted with the Principal to ensure that the Principal was kept informed of developments. Before embarking on the process, the means, by which the specific problem could be resolved, was discussed between the Principal and the Curriculum Co-ordinator.

In this situation, one essentially of curriculum service, and hence service to the school community, the Principal’s role was as an adviser and overseer to ensure that the needs of the school were being met in the most appropriate manner. If she did not agree with the process employed by the Curriculum Co-ordinator, she would have rectified the situation to her liking. The Principal at this school, held the position of Curriculum Co-ordinator for a number of year in another independent school. She was one of the founding members of the Curriculum Co-ordinators’ Network group. Hence her experience and interest in curriculum was well established.

In a situation relating to curriculum policy or curriculum management, the Curriculum Co-ordinator would discuss her ideas with the Principal and, sometimes, with the School Executive. The Principal would suggest that the Curriculum Co-ordinator continue with her ideas and would also make
suggestions of her own. In this situation, the Curriculum Co-ordinator has the freedom to be creative in curriculum development within the clear confines outlined by the Principal.

**Issue C:**

The Curriculum Co-ordinator discussed her vision for the enrichment units for the Years 7 and 8 students with the Principal before the notion was presented to the Heads of Department Committee. It is probable that if the Principal disagreed with suggestion then it would have gone no further. However the Principal was in agreement and attended the discussions at the Heads of Department Committee meetings and at the General Staff meeting.

The situation in School C is similar to the situation in School B, in that the Curriculum Co-ordinator has the freedom to pursue her ideas after consultation with the Principal. However this Principal is also actively involved in pursuing ideas of her own.

**Overview of the Role of the Principal:**

The Principal is clearly the dominant figure in curriculum decision making in the each of the three schools and responsible to the School Council for this
and all aspects of the day to day management of the school, the survival of the school, and the welfare of the students and staff. The Curriculum Co-ordinators studied were directly responsible and accountable to the Principal in a special sense. While it is difficult to tell the exact nature of the Principal’s involvement in all of the schools studied, it can be surmised that this involvement varies slightly depending on the nature of the task. At the curriculum policy making level, the Principal may or may not involve the Curriculum Co-ordinator, while on the level of service and management of the curriculum the Principal may allow greater freedom to the Curriculum Co-ordinator, while monitoring the situation in weekly interviews or some such arrangement. In any case, the Principal at the schools surveyed were involved in curriculum decision making especially at the policy or platform level. The quality of deliberation evoked and maintained varied considerably but seemed generally to involve little reasoned argument amongst staff or between principal and staff.

In terms of attendance and discussion at the Heads of Department meetings, the Principal in each case was able to be involved in the curriculum implementation process and to have her say. It is not possible to elaborate any further on the nature of her involvement or expertise in the discussions at the Heads of Department meetings, as no data has been collected relating to this issue. However, the Principal’s involvement may take the form of being
supportive, of being involved as an observer, of directing proceedings, of being involved as a non-threatening participant, just to mention a few possible stances; none of these roles is necessarily deliberative in Schwab’s terms. Whichever stance is taken by the Principal may well depend on the personality of the person - an administrative variable that Smith (1990) found to be much neglected in the literature.

CURRICULUM DELIBERATION IN THE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

It was not possible to totally define the role of the Curriculum Co-ordinator in Schwab’s theoretical frame for practical deliberation. It remains good theory in that it points usefully to neglected aspects of practice. In this study, Schwab’s theory has this useful ironic function that Diamond (1992) observed ethnographers use in structuring their accounts. Elements of Schwab’s characterisation were particularly cogent and provided a useful framework for a description of the processes and skills needed by a Curriculum Co-ordinator. Schwab, for instance, clearly envisaged the deliberative skills of the Curriculum Co-ordinator being put into practice at all stages of curriculum deliberation. In fact, the three Curriculum Co-ordinators in this study were more involved in policy implementation than in
curriculum formation; policy remains the almost exclusive prerogative of the Principal.

The Principals and their Curriculum Co-ordinators in this study clearly perceived curriculum as an arm of school management. This is not Schwab’s view. He tends to warn against it. From the management perspective, deliberation is to do with matching ends and means at different levels within an established institutional paradigm. A useful elaboration of Schwab’s characterisation of curriculum leadership would relate the Heads of Department, the Curriculum Co-ordinator and the Principal’s modes of deliberation to their place within a hierarchy of responsibilities and authority. This elaboration would distinguish between deliberation levels in concerns on the specifics of change and deliberation on systemic or the whole school change and between a deliberation on a concern for ends and purposes. Smith (1990) developed such a framework, from his ethnographic study of communal styles amongst Principals, which has been adapted in Table 3 to portray paradigms of curriculum deliberation at different levels of management in an orthogonal matrix which incorporates these nominal categories.
Table 3: Paradigms of Curriculum Deliberations adapted from Smith (1990)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concern over ends and means</th>
<th>Ends</th>
<th>Vision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>Reformation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Means</td>
<td>Innovation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specifics</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>Systemic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Concern over specific elements or systemic wholes

In the three schools studied, generally speaking the Principals were responsible for the school’s vision and this was accepted by the three Curriculum Co-ordinators. The Curriculum Co-ordinators saw themselves to be responsible for negotiating the implementation of the Principal’s vision working with specific or systemic concerns, as required, and mixed ends and means. The Heads of Department were assumed to be directly responsible for developing the means to achieve certain specific outcomes in their subject areas. The Curriculum Co-ordinators in this study observed that the levels of vision and innovation tend to remain distinct modes of deliberation based upon their appropriate concerns as shown in Table 4. Schwab’s mode of deliberation would sit between and connect platform (vision) and implementation (innovation) and is characterised here as reformation but may be more often concerned with maintenance rather than transformation of the school curriculum. At each level, the person (or people involved)
conventionally listed alternatives, and their pros and cons, appropriate to their legitimate concerns and sought to select the best solution for the situation.

Table 4: Levels of Curriculum Deliberation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concern over ends and means</th>
<th>Vision Principal and School Council meetings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ends</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>Reformation Curriculum Co-ordinators meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Means</td>
<td>Innovation Heads of Department meetings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Specifics Mixed Systemic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Concern over specific elements or systemic wholes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This may appear to be a simplistic overview of the relationship between the Principal, the Curriculum Co-ordinator and the Heads of Department. Clearly particular Principals, Curriculum Co-ordinators and Heads of Department may be drawn, on particular issues, into different paradigms of curriculum deliberation if the appropriate committees shown in Table 4 exist. Any one of the three standard committees may extend its membership but retain its deliberative paradigm. The Curriculum Co-ordinator, the focus of this study, may operate on all three levels or on one level only, depending on the curriculum issue under consideration, their competence and the
Principal's stance. The three issues studied in this thesis can be codified using this typology.

In Issue A, the Curriculum Co-ordinator was involved in implementing the change associated with the sharing of classes between her school and a neighbouring school. In this situation, the Principals formulated the vision, which synthesised systemic concerns and ends, and appointed a committee composed of staff from both schools to implement the vision. The Curriculum Co-ordinator was involved in negotiating ends and means and the systemic concerns of the Principal and specific concerns of staff. The Heads of Department Committee was able to work deliberatively, at the level of innovation, to relate means and specific concerns in their subject areas. She had to have an understanding of the Principals' vision to operate at these levels but the vision implementation was to be mainly at the level of innovation with aspects of reformation rather than at the vision level, as shown below in Table 5.
Table 5: Deliberative mode of Curriculum Co-ordinator A in the resolution of Issue A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concern over ends and means</th>
<th>Ends</th>
<th>Vision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td></td>
<td>Reformation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Means</td>
<td>Innovation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specifics</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>Systemic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Concern over specific elements or systemic wholes

In Issue B, the Curriculum Co-ordinator was concerned with a specific problem, namely the appointment of a school bookseller, as an efficient means of satisfying specific needs, and the means by which this problem could be solved. She was mainly engaged in deliberation at the innovation level, as shown below in Table 6.

Table 6: Deliberative mode of the Curriculum Co-ordinator B in Issue B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concern over ends and means</th>
<th>Ends</th>
<th>Vision</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td></td>
<td>Reformation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Means</td>
<td>Innovation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Specifics</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>Systemic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Concern over specific elements or systemic wholes

98
In Issue C, the establishment of a Year 7 and 8 enrichment programme, the Curriculum Co-ordinator was involved with the Principal in the development of the vision. She was then involved with the Heads of Department Committee to ensure that the vision was implemented. Discussions at the Heads of Department level identified the specifics and means by which the ends or vision could be achieved. This Co-ordinator operated at all three levels - vision, reformation and innovation, as shown below in Table 7.

Table 7: Deliberative mode for Curriculum Co-ordinator C in Issue C

<table>
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Concern over specific elements or systemic wholes

The three Curriculum Co-ordinators, in this managerial frame, operated at different levels in resolving the issue of concern to them during the week of diary keeping. Curriculum Co-ordinator A was concerned with reformation and innovation, Curriculum Co-ordinator B with innovation and Curriculum Co-ordinator C with vision, reformation and innovation.
The three levels of curriculum management and modes of deliberation can be isolated in theory but are interdependent in school life. The successful Principal’s curriculum deliberations in School Council meetings must be seen to be adequately grounded in means and specific ends. The successful Head of Department must be able to express specific concerns and interests in terms of the broader ethos. The successful Curriculum Co-ordinator would need to brief both parties on issues of mutual concern and there are many more issues of this type than in the past. Schwab provided a framework by which this may be done using the Curriculum Committee to bring the Principal, the Curriculum Co-ordinator and key staff (not necessarily only the Heads of Department) together for curriculum deliberation. He defined, in broad rhetorical terms, the perspectives that need to be discussed and provided the Curriculum Co-ordinator with the tools needed to address the issues from different ends of the spectrum.

Schwab’s characterisation of the Curriculum Co-ordinator’s role seems to apply most directly to the central reformative mode of deliberation and to offer some important insights to the Curriculum Co-ordinator drawn further into management or teaching or who would seek to work in either of the other modes.
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Casey, Beverley

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