

1990 – Devolution with Tighter Controls

President – Mary Armstrong; **Vice Presidents** – Ken Newton, Brian Loader; **Secretary** – Ron Hurley; **Research Officer** – Don Brown.

Major Papers/Reports

- ‘School-Centred Education: Building a More Responsive State School System’ – Dr Brian Scott’s final report on public schools, from his Management Review of the NSW Education Portfolio, was released in May 1990 by Dr Terry Metherell, Minister for Education and Youth Affairs. This report, the basis of the Schools Renewal Program, focussed on organisational restructuring, schools renewal planning and performance appraisal and development (*please see the SPC History paper ‘1989 – Confronting Change’ for more detail*).
- ‘The Education Reform Act (1990)’ – Along with the Schools Renewal Strategy, this Act made major alterations to the management and structures of the DoE. It established the Board of Studies as a separate organisation independent of the Department, replacing the Board of Secondary Education, and made it responsible for managing the curriculum for both primary and secondary schools. The Board would also manage the School Certificate and Higher School Certificate and the registration and accreditation of non-government schools.

The Education Reform Act, largely based on the recommendations of the Carrick Committee (*please see the SPC History paper ‘1989 – Confronting Change’ for more detail*), established in legislation the minimum curriculum requirements for all students throughout the State. It did this by reference to Key Learning Areas (*see page 7 below for key features of the Act*).

- ‘Draft Working Paper on the Selection, Assessment and Transfer of School Principals, Executives and Teachers’ – This paper contained general principles, proposals for selection, the concept of a five-year review for principals and career counselling for those successful – but equally for those not immediately successful “to ensure their self-esteem was retained and they continue to gain a sense of satisfaction from their role”.
It outlined the prime role for performance appraisal and professional growth as well as a new system for preferential transfers under specific conditions. It emphasised the role of the Region rather than the Central Office in this process.
- The report on the Joint Consultative Committees, established under the direction of the Industrial Commission, required representatives of the Teachers Federation and DoE to provide recommendations on incentives, recruitment and transfers; conflict resolution; school organisation; promotion criteria; multiskilling, training, teacher development and appraisal; and casual/part time working conditions. The DoE included representatives of the principals’ councils on some of these committees despite opposition from the Teachers Federation, which believed Council should not be involved in industrial negotiations.
- ‘Teacher Education: Direction and Strategies’ – published by the NSW Ministry of Education. The SPC submitted a formal response.
- ‘Changes in the Role of Secondary Principals which have led to Increased Responsibility and Workload’ – This paper was prepared by Council for both the Teachers Federation and DoE at the time salary negotiations were taking place within the Industrial Commission.

Major Impacts on DoE, Schools and Principals

- Director-General of School Education (DG) Fenton Sharpe met with Council to point out that in the current restructuring process DoE had to reduce non-teaching staff from 2000 to 800. This process was exceedingly difficult, and he appreciated gaining from principals “clear knowledge and understanding” of how people were feeling. He thanked Council for their support “in what was a difficult time”.
- As reported in the Council History papers of 1988 and 1989, industrial issues and tensions had grown in schools about the lack of progress in salary negotiations and the significant changes made in the staffing and management of schools. By early 1990 the Premier, the Minister and the DG expressed concern about teacher morale. In May 1990, at the DG’s invitation, he and six senior officers met with

the Council Executive and principals to review issues of teacher morale. At the meeting, the new DDG (Human Resources) Nola Berglund recognised and supported the concerns expressed by principals (see page 8 on 'Teacher morale').

- During 1990 the salaries negotiations created uncertainty and unrest as the NSW Government took a strong line against including significant improvements in salaries and working conditions. The DG presented the Government's case to Council on management theories that private industry used in setting salaries, including the concept of job sizing and evaluation, the number of people directly managed and the size of the available budget. This approach did not recognise the intrinsic work of teaching and the different attributes needed to teach children and adolescents.
- On 20 July 1990, after two years, three months and 26 days, Dr Metherell resigned from the Ministry and the Education Portfolio. He was replaced by Virginia Chadwick who was given the brief to reduce tension and demonstrate the Government's support for schools and teachers. She advised that the five-year plan proposed under the Schools Renewal Program would generally be adhered to, but she would be willing to conciliate on some issues, including proposals for school councils.

At the time of her appointment, the government found an extra \$40 million to increase the pool available for the salary negotiations to \$255 million per annum. This enabled agreement to be reached on the quantum of the offer.

Relationships with the Department

- While all principals faced challenges following the significant changes and initiatives introduced by the Government over the previous twelve months, the de-zoning of high schools had presented specific challenges, particularly where school populations were falling. Questions of how to market a school and promote its image in the community were increasingly asked as local competition increased and the Government established 22 Technology High Schools, 16 Languages High Schools, one High School for the Performing Arts, one Senior High School, as well as an increasing number of Selective or Part-Selective High Schools.
- Schools were placed into 'clusters' of 16 schools made up of two or three high schools and to some extent, their feeder primary schools. A Cluster Director was appointed as the DoE's most senior field officer with direct responsibility for these schools. While Council committed to supporting the new arrangements, concern was felt that there were increased demands placed on principals, with extra meetings focussing on Cluster Director performance targets, not the needs of the school.
- The DoE compiled a list of concerns for a meeting between the Premier, Minister and Cluster Directors to clarify the role of the Cluster Director and invited Council to nominate representatives to attend. DG Fenton Sharpe pointed out that the Cluster Directors were not to be known as 'Directors of Education' and that they would work in a collegial fashion with principals and teachers. He stated that "the key pivot in this organisation is the principal, not the Cluster Director". Council representatives were asked to assist in drawing up performance appraisal procedures for Cluster Directors and the Senior Executive Service.
- When Miss M Parker was appointed as Principal representative to the Schools Renewal Consultative Committee, the Council expressed concern to the Minister and the DG advising both that it was the SPC who represented principals across NSW. Miss Parker withdrew her acceptance saying she had accepted the invitation on a misunderstanding. The DG asked Council to submit a list of nominees to the Minister and as a result, the Minister appointed Brian Loader as the Principal representative and Miss Parker as one of his nominees.
- It was Government policy to involve the community in the management of schools, and it was therefore determined that the number of parents was to exceed the number of teachers on School Councils and that parents who were teachers (even at another school) were not eligible to be parent representatives. The DG's advice was that principals should be careful to limit teacher numbers as the School Council could be taken over by staff working against the Principal and undermine his/her authority. Principals were concerned with the requirement that the community representatives on School Councils would be selected by the Cluster Director and not the school.
- When Minister Chadwick took office, she agreed that School Councils could include student representatives and relaxed the ruling about parent representatives who were teachers.

- To implement the Schools Renewal Strategy the DoE planned to develop 35-hour and 70-hour courses for teachers to attend after school or during vacations. Their frequency and distant residential nature impacted on participants, disrupting family life. This caused Council to question why these courses could not be local and held in schools. The Council sought clarification about whether they were to be part of the Award restructuring, whether they were required for promotion, whether they would have external accreditation and whether the Council would have input into course design and development.
- During the introduction of 'OASIS', the DoE's newly developed school management and administration software, there were significant problems in the trial schools prior to it being introduced into all schools. The Financial Management Package for global budgeting caused particular concern. Council advised DoE that the introduction of OASIS and global budgeting was not cost-neutral and that additional clerical support was needed.

Council Matters

- Life Memberships were awarded to Ruth Readford, Ray Glyde and Keith Ison for their contributions to the work of Council. Bruce Bensley finished in his role as Research Officer after five years and, at the end of 1990 at her last Management Meeting, Beverley Beaman was recognised for her contribution over 14 years as the Minutes Secretary for both Council Executive and Plenary Meetings. She was invited to give her recollections of the changes she had seen in Council over that time.
- Cluster Director appointments left principal vacancies at Marrickville HS and North Sydney GHS (both to be special fitness appointments), plus Asquith GHS, Kirrawee HS, Taree HS and Moss Vale HS (these to be filled by seniority).
- At the April Management Committee meeting, President Mary Armstrong commented that while in a 'self-managing' school the principal is responsible for educational leadership, human resource supervision and business management, the role of the principals' councils must change with that of the principal. Devolution would require the State Council to become both a clearing house and a negotiating body on state-wide issues (*see page 9 for Mary Armstrong's Management Committee report, April 1990*).
- The President also spoke of the need to develop peer support programs for principals and to review the way in which Council Plenary Meetings were conducted to maximise their effectiveness. Regional Councils were asked to prepare papers for the SPC Executive on 'Morale in the Teaching Service' (Met SW), 'Casual Relief' (MW/SC), 'Restructuring' (MN) and 'The System of Secondary Education and its Administration in Victoria' (Riverina).
- Following an attack by Radio 2UE on the Principal at Pennant Hills HS, Council Executive met with the DG to identify ways the Department in future could support principals in similar circumstances.
- Council was concerned at the load on SPC Executive members from the increased demand for participation on DoE committees. In order to spread the load and provide a broader range of views, Regions were asked to nominate principals prepared to represent Council. Later that year, the President reported there were 34 Council representatives on either DoE committees or working groups.
- The DoE was asked to provide support for SPC Executive members' schools and to provide release for the President. While DoE did not release the President, it provided ten days' relief for both the President and the Secretary and provided \$12,000 to Council for professional development.
- SPC Treasurer Bill Kennedy was concerned about the increasingly costs facing Council and a membership campaign increased principal participation from 70% to 96%. The additional revenue allowed for an honorarium of \$1000 for the Research Officer, plus 100 hours of secretarial support.
- The ongoing restructure of DoE resulted in a smaller DoE Central Executive with most decision making delegated to Regions. SPC emphasised to all principals that regional matters should be referred to the ADG (Region) and state matters to the SPC Executive. Council was sensitive to the balance it needed to keep between school management issues and industrial issues. Whilst the Executive had increased their contact with the Teachers Federation, it needed to tread a fine line and keep DoE informed on matters being discussed.
- Year Advisers 7-10 were paid an allowance and over time Council had also sought an allowance for Year 11-12 Advisers. DoE advised that whilst funds were not available for this purpose, principals could

determine how the Year Adviser allowance would be used, possibly divided amongst all six advisers or allocated to the four years with the greatest demand.

- The SPC's June Annual Conference at Opal Cove, Coffs Harbour was attended by 200 principals. The theme 'Today's Challenge – Professionalism and Public Image' was addressed by all of the keynote speakers. These included the Minister, Terry Metherell ("Principals need to take up the challenge of leadership"), DG Fenton Sharpe ("We need a commitment to enhance both the substance and the public image of education in NSW"), Dr E. Barrington Thomas (How "others see us"), Professor Hedley Beare ("Restructure seems largely to have been controlled by those outside the education community"), Dr Jan Milburn ("Principals caught between the positives of a more satisfying management role whilst trying to inspire enthusiasm in a demoralised staff") and Mr Bill Peach ("Management is about methods and doing things right, leadership is about aims and doing the right things").
- Regional Councils were asked to develop research papers for Conference: 'Cluster Directors' (Hunter); 'Dezoning' (Met East); 'Global Budgeting' (South Coast); 'School Curriculum' (Met North); 'School Sport' (North West and Met South West); 'Staffing' (Riverina); 'Casual Relief/Extras' (Met West) and 'Staff Welfare' (Western). The work of many principals from across the State resulted in presentations, collaborative workshops and collective decision making.

Staffing

- By May 1990, 59 teacher vacancies in Met SW were still not filled. DoE commenced a recruitment program inviting graduates in Science, Maths and Music to enrol in a Diploma of Education course. The first stage was a 10-week training course which, in the short term, provided new teachers who although not fully trained were desperately needed in those areas. The retraining courses conducted by the University of Western Sydney included practice teaching in the schools in which trainees would take up their appointment. There was to be no more than one trainee per school, attached to a mentor who would be given three periods release. Once appointed the newly trained teacher would also be given three periods release and time off in their second year to complete their Diploma of Education.
- Advertising for extra teachers was done in England and some already-recruited Hong Kong teachers currently in induction programs were to start teaching in Term 3. In relation to the Hong Kong teachers, whilst their subject knowledge and capacity was good, concern was expressed about their command of English.
- For the 1991 school year the DoE determined that there would be 1200 positions state-wide for targeted casuals and new graduates. Teachers who were nominated transfers and targeted casuals would get priority for appointment to vacant positions. Western Region Council expressed concern that this could reduce options for those teachers in rural schools seeking positions in more favourable areas.
- A report by the Schools Renewal Task Force advised that some principal positions would be declared to be special fitness, and if they were not filled by existing principals or deputy principals, teachers at any level could apply for the position.
- Schools were experiencing difficulties in covering staff on extended leave. While teachers covering executive positions gained financial rewards and professional experience, problems arose when those on sick leave returned for short periods before going on leave again. This disrupted teaching programs and had a domino effect as those in acting positions returned to their normal teaching load and the casual was stood down. In cases where severe illness was experienced, this could continue for more than a year. The Council suggested that a pool of mobile executive and/or retired teachers be employed to reduce the impact on schools.
- It was determined that during 1991 there would be a set period when employees could apply for any position at any level in any Region without knowing whether a vacancy would exist. Separate applications had to be made to each Region and the Region would use this pool of applicants to fill vacancies as they occurred.
- Nominated transfers were to be placed before special fitness appointments, and displaced inspectors had prior right to principal positions. Redundancies would only be offered after all positions were filled across the system.

- For 1991 there were to be no restrictions on the employment of teacher relief. The school would receive an amount for relief in their Global Budget and the principal would have to work within that budget. Regional offices would have a small supplement they could allocate to a school.
- The DoE entered negotiations with the Public Service Association for award restructuring for ancillary staff and the introduction of Senior Clerical Assistant positions.
- For 1991, additional ancillary staff hours were to be available on application to Regional Offices and relief from the six-day requirement to cover absences could be approved by Regions.

Industrial Issues

- The Council expressed concern that when complaints about individual schools and/or their principals were being discussed by DoE Industrial Relations and the Teachers Federation, the issues should be canvassed by both parties with the principal prior to any negotiations and the outcome should be advised by Industrial Relations or an appropriate Senior Officer to the principal involved.
- Council was advised that under Schools Renewal, there would be no spilling of principals' positions, i.e. this would only apply at SES level. While there had been proposals that principals would be appointed on a five-year tenure with a review after that, possibly leading to the principal being transferred, this did not eventuate. While there had been concerns that principals would be placed on contracts (like Directors), Council was advised that it was not part of DoE planning. It was only the Principal of the new Technology High School at Cherrybrook who would be placed on a package.
- The Executive objected to the proposed four-tier salary levels for principals, pointing out that our interface with 'clients' is unique and cannot be assessed numerically. Eventually it was determined that there would be two levels, PH1 for schools with more than 900 students and PH2 for the remainder.
- The work value case in the Industrial Commission that had begun in 1989 was both complicated and drawn out. Late that year the Commission granted a 6% interim salary increase for all positions while it continued its work.
- In August 1990 the Industrial Commission approved the following salaries and arrangements:
 - Classroom teachers would be on a 13-level scale ranging from \$20,870 to \$38,000 (an increase of 13% including the 6% previously granted)
 - PH2s were to receive \$59,461 (19.4%) and PH1s \$62,249 (24.7%)
 - Primary principals went from four levels to six levels where a PP6 in a school with less than 26 students and 1 or 2 teachers went to \$42,531 (23.3%) compared to Head Teachers Secondary on \$41,808 (13%). This was unfair as Head Teachers had to have at least two teachers on their staff but in most cases had many more.
 - Secondary DPs went to \$47,663 (13%) placing them between a PP5 with 158 students and a PP4 with up to 300 students.
 - Primary PP1 principals were paid the same as PH2, receiving a 30% increase.
 - A new category of 'Advanced Skills Teacher' was introduced where an AST1 would receive \$1200 pa allowance with the allowance for AST2 to be determined.
 - Only 12% of any increase was paid initially, with the remainder paid in 1991.
 - At this time, the salary of a PH1 was greater than all other DoE employees below SES level, but the DG soon granted Chief Education Officers their traditional salary position above principals.

The Board of Studies

- Under the new Act the Minister could determine additional curriculum requirements for children attending government schools, and control and regulate student discipline in government schools. Principals and the Council expressed concern about the requirement that 600 hours of electives had to be offered in government schools, restricting flexibility in school curriculum.
- The new Board of Studies had 23 members, with only six with current school-level affiliation. Of those six, only three were from government schools and included one secondary and one primary principal. The SPC was asked to nominate four secondary principals and Bernie Shepherd (St Marys Senior High School) was chosen by the Minister. The DoE allowed 0.2 relief for his school.

- Each member of the Board was allocated to one of the Board's subcommittees and Bernie was placed on the Committee on Examinations. Members could attend any of the other subcommittee meetings as well, and he found a lack of knowledge and understanding of schools by most members of the Board meant that he needed to attend many of the other subcommittee meetings as well.
- At Bernie's request, the Council created an 'Advisory Council' to support him. It consisted of the three remaining principal nominees and the two secondary principal representatives from the previous Board.
- The Board advised that the curriculum changes required under the November 1989 'Excellence and Equity' White Paper (*please see the SPC History paper '1989 – Confronting Change' for more detail*) should be available for Year 7 in 1991, and a pilot Design and Technology course would be trialled in Technology High Schools.
- Under the Act the Minister had final approval for all Board courses. These were to be developed by 'Consultative Committees' which were different from the representative syllabus committees that previously existed. The Council was invited by the Minister to nominate representatives for these consultative committees.

Other Matters

- The SPC Executive allocated \$1000 to Nyngan HS for assistance in restoring educational resources and programs after a disastrous flood that year.
- It was announced that 85% of money allocated for computer education would be placed in schools.
- Cluster Directors were to be based in Educational Resource Centres (ERCs), but these were not recognised as cost centres. Monies allocated for ERCs by Regions had to be placed in nominated schools, with no added resources. This created conflict between principals and auditors as the financial management software package (OASIS) was not designed for this purpose.
- The DoE provided fax machines to the schools of the SPC Executive, the Board Representative and his support group to enhance communication.
- Whilst the Federal Government's scope for involvement in primary and secondary education was limited, it was increasing. Nowhere was this more evident than in the curriculum debate. They favoured the adoption of a national curriculum to promote a greater degree of national cohesion and consistency across states, to benefit those students transferring between states and to ensure that Australian schools were providing an education which would enable the country to compete effectively into the next century (*see 'The Quality Teaching Project' on page 10*).

In talking about a vision for students in the 'Clever Country', the Commonwealth Education Minister John Dawkins said that without 'clever politicians', the calibre of the teaching force was irrelevant...and that... 'clever schools' like the 'clever country' depended on the vision that principals have for the young people in our schools.

Please see below for these appendices:

- ❖ *Key features of the 'Education Reform Act 1990' (page 7)*
- ❖ *Teacher morale in secondary schools (page 8)*
- ❖ *Extracts from SPC President Mary Armstrong's report to the April 1990 Management Committee meeting (page 9)*
- ❖ *The Quality Teaching Project (page 10).*

Key features of the Education Reform Act (1990)

The Education and Public Instruction Act (1987) sought to bring coherence to a plethora of legislation, regulations and rules enacted since the Public Instruction Act (1880). It was essentially operational and administrative with nothing explicitly stated about educational principles, objectives, curriculum requirements or standards. It concerned itself with basic provisions such as compulsory school attendance and requirements for non-government school registration. It strongly reflected a traditional bureaucratic approach through regulation and restrictions.

By contrast, the Education Reform Act (1990) proclaimed four key principles underpinning the legislation, namely that “in enacting this Act, Parliament has had regard to the following principles:

- a. Every child has the right to receive an education.
- b. The education of a child is primarily the responsibility of the child’s parents.
- c. It is the duty of the State to ensure that every child receives an education of the highest quality.
- d. The principal responsibility of the State in the education of children is the provision of public education.”

The principal Objects of the Act were stated as:

- a. To set out curriculum requirements including minimum curricula for registration and the curriculum for the recognised certificates.
- b. To provide for the establishment and operation of government schools.
- c. Registration and accreditation of non-government schools.
- d. To allow children to be educated at home.
- e. To provide for the granting of School and Higher School Certificates.

“Every person concerned with administration of this Act” must have regard to the following:

- a. Assisting each child to achieve his or her educational potential.
- b. Promotion of a high standard of education in government schools, which is provided free of charge for instruction and without discrimination on the grounds of sex, race or religion.
- c. Encouraging innovation and diversity within and among schools.
- d. Provision of an education for children that gives them access to opportunities for further study, work or training.
- e. Mitigating educational disadvantages arising from the child's gender or from geographic, economic, social, cultural, lingual or other causes.
- f. Provision of an education for Aboriginal children that has regard to their special needs.
- g. Development of an understanding of Aboriginal history and culture by all children.
- h. Provision of an education for children from non-English speaking backgrounds that has regard to their special needs.
- i. Recognition of the special problems of rural communities, particularly small and isolated communities.
- j. Provision of opportunities to children with special abilities.
- k. Provision of special educational assistance to children with disabilities.
- l. Development of a teaching staff that is skilled, dedicated, and professional.
- m. Provision of opportunities for parents to participate in the education of their children.
- n. Provision of an education for children that promotes family and community values.

The Objects of the Act clearly reflected the Government's fundamental philosophy and approach to education. The emphasis was on quality and standards of achievement, providing an education leading to further study or work, giving parents a greater role in the education of their children, and encouraging family values, promoting diversity and innovation, defining equity in terms of providing opportunities for recognised groups with special needs including, significantly, those with special abilities.

Teacher morale in secondary schools

Background

During late 1988, 1989 and early 1990 statements by teachers and the NSW Teachers Federation increasingly cited teacher morale as being low. In May 1990 the Director-General convened a meeting with the SPC on this question of teacher morale. Participants included the DG (chair), six DoE senior officers, Mary Armstrong (SPC President) and ten Regional secondary principal council representatives. Ken Newton (Camden HS) prepared points for discussion at the meeting.

Assessment of the present state of teacher morale

Those principals present at the meeting identified the signs of low morale they saw in their schools and said that they felt that teacher disillusionment with the Teachers Federation, Department and Government was having an adverse effect on students. They also said that teachers felt that the newly-imposed changes were destroying the system, not improving it. Teachers resented the 'telling them what to do' approach by central agencies, the negative criticism of them in the press, and change being imposed with a perception that they and the system had failed. An increase in resignations, leave applications and absences was being seen in schools across the State.

Discussion of factors contributing to morale issues

These included concerns that the Federation's journal 'Education' was always negative; teachers were experiencing 'overload syndrome'; teachers were disillusioned with the salary negotiations and 'poor pay' which had resulted in them falling behind other comparable professions; and a widespread lack of faith by teachers in the promotions and interview system and transfer rights.

Possible solutions considered for some of the issues raised

These included the need for positive comments by the Minister and senior officers to show they appreciated and had confidence in teacher and student achievement; a moratorium on change; and the improvement of physical working conditions and school image.

The SPC's 'Teacher Morale Discussion Paper' put forward principals' ideas as follows:

- Provide substantial pay rises without trade-offs, i.e. why 11% for politicians without trade-offs?
- Increase teacher prospects of promotion, e.g. introduce 'advanced skills teachers'.
- Provide incentives for teachers to accept appointments to unpopular areas, merit rewards etc.
- Do not announce more 'Centres of Excellence' – and allow the present ones to "quietly fade away".
- Ensure that promotion is on genuine merit and that there is no hidden agenda.
- Ensure Cluster Directors concentrate on sincere and genuine feedback to schools.

At Annual State Conference in June issues of image and morale were addressed by many speakers:

- "It is my belief that we need a newspaper here in NSW along the lines of those produced in Victoria and Western Australia to help keep our teachers in touch with the process of change, the reasons for reform and the simple truth." Minister Metherell
- "If ever there was a time when the teaching profession needed powerful and positive perceptions and images, both of itself by its own members and by the public, it is now." DG Fenton Sharpe
- "Principals are caught between the positive of a more professionally satisfying management role and the negative of trying to inspire an enthusiasm for the new model of 'school empowerment' with staff who are almost too demoralised to wish to hear about, let alone build this new model." Dr Jan Milburn
- "To change our public image will require time, a positive self-concept, planning and professional advice, a comprehensive look at the whole concept of professionalism: entry, training, working conditions, salary, code of ethics etc. Above all, the level of public awareness of the importance of teachers' work must be raised." Dr E. Barrington Thomas.
- "Principals will require leadership and management support from Cluster Directors to enable them to obtain the necessary positive involvement in the design and implementation of school renewal strategies ... obtaining genuine support in the current political and industrial climate will not be easy." J. Heymann (Hunter Region)

* Footnote: There were many ideas, but not many solutions!

Extracts from SPC President Mary Armstrong's report to Council's Management Committee, April 1990

What a year it has been so far! The breadth and depth of Council involvement shows we are gaining increased recognition as an organisation vital to the progress and development of secondary education in government schools, at a professional and managerial level.

The Scott and Carrick Reports, the 'Excellence and Equity' curriculum paper and the Education Reform Bill all forecast sweeping change in schools. We responded to all four – and now are charged with their implementation. It is ironic that the process of devolution in school management will be accompanied by far tighter controls over curriculum.

The success of these initiatives rests finally with principals – our commitment, expertise and sheer hard work and we must examine both the changing role of principals and of our Council.

- The Role of the Principal – In a 'self-managing' school the Principal is responsible for educational leadership, human resource supervision and business management.
- The Role of Principals' Councils must change with that of the Principal. Devolution applies and our State Council is becoming both a clearing house and a negotiating body – on State-wide issues. We have begun to establish closer links with the Primary Principals' Council.

How will we transform expectations into reality? We are being asked to manage schools in a totally different atmosphere with the same teachers (or fewer), who have not yet adjusted to the changes and who bitterly resent the removal of established promotion practices, and view with suspicion even the Advanced Skills Teacher classification.

Given all that, however, we are to achieve a transfer to computerised administration; acceptance of merit-based promotion and performance indicators; introduction of a new curriculum format; and increased productivity (if such a term can apply to our profession).

How we do it will depend on teacher morale, their willingness to accept change and by involving teachers in the process of change – together with the Principal's leadership and managerial skills in the operation of their school.

With Schools Renewal the Principal's role will take on new dimensions in the control of human and physical resources, the pursuit of educational achievement and the promotion of the school in the community, plus increased and immediate accountability via School Councils and the Cluster System.

A significant factor will be a Principal's relationship with their Cluster Director. It is imperative the Principal retain leadership and managerial control of their school. We cannot accept accountability without responsibility.

As Regions and Clusters develop their own identities, policies and structures, the Principals' Council will become the one body which can represent us individually and collectively on management and professional issues. It seems inevitable that Council must undergo its own structural and functional change if it is to work effectively in the evolving climate of Schools Renewal.

Principals have often assumed membership of Council as automatic, but this is not so. Principals must belong to Council in both the financial and deliberative sense to give us security within the changed framework.

The Quality Teaching Project

Collaborative work by the Commonwealth, States and Territories between 1988 and 1993 on national curriculum statements and profiles helped move the focus from program or system-level outcomes in the late 1980s to student outcomes in the 1990s.

The Commonwealth's emphasis on the quality of teaching and learning acknowledged that the success of reforms rested with teachers and schools. As one school principal noted, "We have a whole new vocabulary surrounding [accountability and outcomes] and there has been some recognition that teacher quality is a crucial element in producing acceptable and successful outcomes in education."*

* *Perceptions of the Evolution of Commonwealth Government Policy Approaches to Outcomes-Based Education (1985-1996)* – Mary Welsh, University of Canberra. Paper presented to the Australian Association for Research in Education and New Zealand Association for Research in Education Conference, Melbourne, 29 November - 2 December 1999.

By 1990 links between the SPC and principal associations in other states were growing through the Australian Secondary Principals' Association (ASPA). At the same time, educational policy making was moving more into the Federal arena through the 'National Board of Education, Employment and Training', National Core Curriculum initiatives and discussions on Quality Teaching.

Recognising that the Commonwealth's agenda for schooling sought to enhance the quality of teaching and learning in schools within a national push towards an outcomes-based education, the Council submitted a paper through ASPA to the Commonwealth entitled 'A NSW perspective to The Quality Teaching Project'.

The paper identified 'general' issues in several sections of the Quality Teaching Project causing concern, in addition to where NSW believed additional consideration and consultation was needed:

1. **Profile of the teaching workforce** – Attention needed to be paid to mature graduates who undertook teacher training, before they entered the profession with a fresh set of career concepts and values.
2. **The nature of teachers' work** – This area needed to include consideration of the balance between the development of knowledge and skills vs. responsibilities for the social development of students, plus attention to teacher participation in all areas of school decision making and implementation.
3. **Teachers' careers** – This issue was "at the heart of the present debate" and included: concern for career structures that did not denigrate 'rank-and-file' and older teachers; the portability of qualifications as educational services became more devolved; and financial and other support for the teaching service in remote and hard to staff areas.
4. **The environment in which teachers work** – The inter-dependency between schools' external factors and internal interactions required sensitive examination. The school environment included the total level of staffing resources, including non-teaching staff and administrative technology. Whilst physical resources were important, they were not as critical in teacher quality and performance.
5. **Educational performance** – Resistance to formal accountability and school monitoring can become an area for divisive debate where "*apparent* devolution is accompanied by *more apparent* teacher accountability".

The measurement of an effective teacher is dependent upon the "relationship between the system and its employees, the remuneration received by the employees and the perception of teacher professionalism."