



School Leadership for Reducing Teacher Isolation: Drawing from the Well of Human Resources

Reading 4.5; Drago-Severson and
Pinto, in *International Journal of
Leadership in Education*

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- “ My notes have been created from a perspective shaped by the topic of this module: What makes shared leadership sustainable?
- “ This article presents a study of how 25 school leaders in the US understand the practices they use to support teacher learning in their schools. The authors propose that ‘human resources’ should be managed in such a way as to allow for collaborative learning which, subsequently, builds teams, a shared sense of responsibility, and leadership capabilities.

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- “ Emphasises the importance of reflection, collegial support and teamwork, and highlights the learning that takes place through collegial contact (p.129)
- “ Hence if further skilling our workforce takes place through shared practice, then shared leadership may be sustained through the development of an environment characterised by positive and productive relationships.

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- “ The authors remind us that “School principals have the great responsibility and privilege of helping teachers learn.” (p.130)
- “ `Human resources’ need to be considered in light of a) financial resources, and b) the ways the adults in the school work together (p.130).

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- “ The context of a school is important to the viability of shared professional learning and shared leadership.
- “In order to build professional learning communities and enhance collegial interaction that supports teacher learning, it is essential to identify how leaders establish and maintain these kinds of working conditions.” (p.131).
- “School teachers and administrators also share authority and decision-making and support each other’s leadership” (p.131).

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- “ The article acknowledges that distributing leadership is complex, but an important strategy in supporting learning for effective teaching. (p.131.)
- “ Studies have shown that principals have faced both positive and negative consequences of distributed leadership “from reconnecting with the spirituality of their work in education to the stress over loss of control.” (p.131)
- “ A challenge? Yes. Helpful? Yes.

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- “Collaborative leadership provides access to information and alternative perspectives, fosters dialogue and reflection, and develops a culture supportive of learning and progress” (p.132)
- “Research reflects that “while many school leaders strive to create cultures of collaboration that align with recommendations from prior research, the ways in which the principles that guide the establishment of collaborative cultures are translated into practice varies substantially.” (p.132)

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“ Three factors that provide a context for teacher learning:

- . Hiring: retaining staff
- . Mentoring: pairing experienced with new staff
- . Substituting: releasing teachers from classes to work together.

‘Human resources’ can offer “positive climates for teachers to develop through collaborative work with each other and the principal.” (p.150)

Thus, in the context of the module, this reading argues for a commitment to ‘human resources’, specifically as that pertains to shared professional learning, in order to sustain shared leadership.