

School Leader C PROFESSIONAL LEARNING SURVEY

NB. Report written from 36 replies to Survey.

How long were you a Level 1/classroom teacher?

Most had taught for some time before gaining promotion. Around half had been a L1 teacher for more than 10 years before becoming a SLC/L2. Many had also worked for between 5-10 years before promotion; but there was a small number of teachers promoted after 2 or 3 years.

How long have you been a School Leader C/Level 2?

Roughly a third of all those responding had been a SLC/L2 for less than 12 months, another third for between 1 and 3 years, and a third for 4 years or more. It's not clear if this is a representative sample or not; either there are many SLCs in the system with little experience in their positions, or new SLCs are more likely to respond to Surveys re PD, perhaps feeling the lack of training for their role.

1. During the last few years my access to relevant, engaging PD has:

- Increased Not changed much Decreased

About equal numbers thought their access to relevant, engaging PD had stayed the same or increased. A small number said it had decreased.

2. My access to relevant engaging PD has improved/declined because:

Reasons given were that PD had always been good in their school; more relevant PD re VET available; workload pressures kept SLC in school; more/less relevant PD available; cost of PD and /or relief.

3. What makes PD worthwhile for you?

The overwhelming response was that the best PD was relevant to classroom or SLC role, but particularly to classroom role. Networking with colleagues was valued, as were the chance to enhance one's learning or skills, the benefits of a good presenter and a hands on approach.

4. What have been your most useful sources of PD in terms of carrying out your School Leader C role?

There was very little agreement on this question. People nominated the professional Pathways training, and the High School Development Program KLA sessions most often. More than one person nominated mentoring and coaching, collegial discussions and advice, leadership focused programs, JSC Panel training, Beginning Teacher Coordinator mentor training, MyClasses and the Executive Teacher Network activities. Individuals nominated Student Pathways training, AEU training, ACEL events, probationary report writing training, the Exec teacher modules at UC, ELO and LUAC training, etc – in fact a plethora of PD activities across the system.

The formal PD activities nominated suggest that the ability to lead one's faculty in terms of KLA area is important in high schools, while primary SLCs want to keep up with their special area of professional interest or expertise. The ability to properly supervise faculty members' Professional Pathways is clearly considered central to the SLC role. It's also clear that leadership, especially in terms of Beginning Teachers in the faculty, is important to SLCs. Informal PD through discussion, mentoring and networking is also considered valuable training for the role.

The variety and type of answers point to the two streams of a SLC's work – educational leadership and faculty coordination and management. It is likely that new

SLCs are more confident in identifying the PD needed for educational leadership than they are in identifying the PD needed for their supervisory and management role. This may be a reflection of the large number of SLCs in our Survey with little experience in their current role, but that situation can be expected to exacerbate as retirements/ resignations continue apace over the next 5 years.

4. The following are descriptors of your role, taken from the Professional Pathways document. Please indicate against each item whether you have received training in this aspect of your role, if so from whom, and whether you feel the need for further training.

Descriptor of SLC role	Have you had PD?	If so, who delivered it? When?	Do you need more PD?
Provide professional expertise on educational issues relating to strategies, programs, policy and curriculum.	2/3 said YES		Half said YES
Facilitate teams to achieve school/unit and system goals.	~ 1/2 said YES		More than 1/2 said YES
Members of the school leadership team, providing support to the principal.	2/3 said NO		Less than 1/2 said YES
Provide professional leadership and management through staff supervision and support.	~equal numbers said YES and NO		More than 1/2 said YES
Provide leadership and training in the use of information and communication technologies in schools.	Roughly equal numbers said YES and NO		1/2 said YES
Work with school/unit leadership team to manage resources.	More than 2/3 said NO		1/2 said YES
Initiate and manage projects, informed by research, data collection and analysis.	2/3 said NO		Nearly half said YES

The table above suggests that little if any training is being offered to SLCs in team leadership, managing of resources, or managing projects involving research and data collection.

6. Have you undertaken any formal further study since completion of your teaching qualification? *Half the respondents had undertaken further study since completion of their teaching qualification.*

7. If not, what would make you consider doing additional formal study?

Answers varied widely but time allowance, DET payment of fees, higher pay for qualifications, etc were most often cited as incentives. A number said nothing would induce them to further study!

8. Have you attended training pertinent to your SLC role? Eg sexual harassment, Professional Pathways supervision.

List training undertaken:

56% had trained or were expecting to train in Professional Pathways supervision; 13% had done Beginning Teacher Coordination training; 13% had done JSC Panel training; and lesser numbers had done training in supervising probationary/contract teachers, anti-sexual harassment training, mandatory reporting training, racial harassment training and restorative practices training.

Of particular concern to the Union are the low numbers of SLCs having completed recent training in anti discrimination, harassment and mandatory reporting legislation, and the apparent low exposure to Panel training. This underlines the need for a checklist of training to be covered by SLCs early in their tenure as a SLC.

9. Are you aware of training which can be accessed online?

Fewer than half were aware of the online training available.

If so, do you find this a useful medium for delivery of training?

Many cited lack of time as the major reason for not accessing online training, others preferred personal interaction when learning to allow exploration of the issues. A small number said online training was useful and time efficient.

10. Do you network with SLC colleagues? Over 80% said YES

Explain:

Within the school and at KLA/Professional Association meetings were the most common ways of networking with peers. A smaller number networked socially.

As part of the Teachers EBA 2000-2003 a Professional Learning Fund was established. Part of the fund is reserved for school initiatives, which may include PD activity which benefits individuals within the school.

11. Is your school aware of this Fund and how to apply for funds? 2/3 said YES

12. Has your school ever accessed this Fund? The biggest proportion did not know, nearly 1/3 said YES and nearly 1/4 said NO

13. Have you received any PD money/training from within your school's own PD resources? 86% said YES indicating that most schools are attempting to give their SLCs PD opportunities.

14. Have you accessed money for PD from your own PD fund generated by taking pre-service teachers? 2/3 said YES

Around 25% had not accessed PD money through taking pre-service students. There were a number of SLC who said they had never supervised a pre-service teacher and others who had, but regretted no longer being able to do so.

The existence of SLCs without experience in supervising pre-service teachers is something of a problem given the responsibilities of the SLC role towards Beginning Teacher supervision.

15. General comments about professional development:

In a wide variety of comments, a number of respondents noted the lack of leadership training available. Many commented on being torn between attending to their role as SLC in the school and the desire to do training off site. The former responsibility tended to win out, with SLCs feeling guilty about taking time off to attend PD sessions. Time release for SLCs was suggested, as was reduction of workload.