

District Supervisors' Involvement in School Renewal: Educational Leadership or a Perceived Imposition?

This paper reports on the process of Catholic School Renewal in a regional Australian diocese. In particular it focuses on the role and approach of district supervisors and the impact they have on a change process in the schools for which they are responsible. The research comprised a qualitative case study. Participants were a sample of staff members who worked in one of four selected Catholic primary schools situated in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton. Data collection took the form of semi-structured interviews and a survey questionnaire. The data were analysed using the constant comparative method. The research concluded that there is a need for district supervisors to have strong inter-relational skills and a solid understanding of leadership concepts and the ability to implement them. The study also concluded that district supervisors should undertake appropriate professional development to ensure that they all have equivalent understandings of renewal and of their role within it.

Note: Throughout this paper, the term *district supervisor* is used instead of the title currently used for those in this role in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton, *Assistant to the Director-Schools*.

Introduction

For more than forty years, since the end of the Second Vatican Council, the Catholic Church has been committed to renewal. In Queensland, Catholic schools have responded to this commitment by undertaking cyclical renewal processes since the early 1980s:

All Catholic schools in Queensland will engage in self-renewing processes which reflect Gospel values and focus on distinctive characteristics of a Catholic school. (Conference of Catholic Education, Queensland, 1986)

The renewal model that is used in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton is a derivative model which was introduced in 1982. Originally its main focus was as a response to the changing face of Catholic schools in terms of staffing (fewer religious) and organisation and administration. The original rationale was that each Catholic school would:

... continually re-evaluate its own structures and processes and also its relationship with parents, community and Catholic education at large so that there was a consonance between the Christian values it espouses and its actual practice. (McLay, 1979, p. 82)

When the process was first introduced, there was only one diocesan district supervisor whose role was to implement renewal into all of the 26 primary schools

within the Rockhampton diocese. As time progressed, the district supervisor was joined in this task by the diocesan Religious Education coordinator.

Catholic School Renewal as implemented in the Catholic diocese of Rockhampton is regarded as being a five-year cyclical approach. The phases of the process are reflection, examination, clarification and action. This study focused on the examination phase, which involves a thorough examination of all current school practices. The examination phase is coordinated and led by the district supervisor who is responsible for appointing an External Validation Team (EVT) to assist in the process. The EVT comprises between four and nine members depending on the size of the school under examination.

Before the examination phase begins, a committee within the school, referred to as the Internal Review Committee (IRC) conducts an extensive process of surveying members of the school community about all aspects of school life. Feedback from the surveys is collated and written up as the Internal Report. This is then presented to the District Supervisor and .EVT members who familiarize themselves with it and use it as the basis for their visit to the school. The district supervisor and EVT members spend between three days and a week at the school interviewing, observing and analysing the Internal Report before presenting the school community with their findings, presented in a document known as the External Report.

As a result of the evolution and growth of Catholic education in the Rockhampton diocese, there are now four district supervisors, each of whom is responsible for conducting the examination phase of the renewal process in schools under his/her jurisdiction. The Assistant to the Principal (RE) and School Board members are usually charged with the task of coordinating the internal examination at their school and producing an Internal Report. At no stage are any of the participants, including the district supervisors who lead the process, offered training in the process or in formulating or analysing surveys. Until recently there had never been any formal research conducted to examine the process of renewal in the Diocese of Rockhampton. This research seeks to redress that situation.

Background

In 1977, the British Department of Education and Science stated that the most important ingredient in the process of change in schools would appear to be effective leadership (Department of Employment and Science, 1977), usually provided by the principal (Chapman, 1986). This assertion has been repeated many times since (Duignan, 1997; Fullan, 2005; Sammons, Hillman & Mortimore, 1997; Snowdon & Gorton, 1998), with the added caveat that the principal can also be the biggest hindrance to change as “the principal’s actions carry the message as to whether a change is to be taken seriously” (Berman & McLaughlin, 1977, p. 24). There is a strong correlation between principals who are good facilitators and managers of change, and principals who are strong supporters of their staffs and are prepared to be innovative and forward moving (Wohlstetter, 1997). The affirming presence of the school leader in turn creates an affirming presence among and between the staff and students (Starratt, 2004). As principals have the ability to both motivate staff and facilitate (or hinder) change, they are central to the successful implementation of change (Bolam, 1993; Fullan, 2005; Starratt, 2004). In the Rockhampton diocese principals work closely with district supervisors and, as a consequence, it is essential that the relationship is a positive and supportive one so that the principal can affirm and be supportive of the message of the district supervisors. As the district supervisor is responsible for the management of the renewal process at the school, it is essential that he/she and the principal relay the same message.

Some critics of school districts (or Catholic dioceses) as organisational structures claim that districts and district personnel have no role to play and that the district structures represent inefficient bureaucratic institutions (Chubb & Moe, 1990; Elmore 1993). Others regard them as necessary only as institutions through which policies and funding must pass (Marsh, 2000). However, an increasing number of studies in recent years suggest that districts do play a key role and are important in facilitating change (Chrispeels, 1997; Massell & Goertz, 1999; Spillane, 1996).

Renewal is concerned with the future direction of the school and with ensuring future growth and accountability. Therefore it is necessary for school leadership to deal well with implementing policy and change. Marsh (2000) argues that the factors of capacity, size, understanding and leadership are important in determining how districts deal with these two issues.

Capacity refers to the capacity of people, specifically that of the district supervisor and principal, to learn new ideas. This factor is further categorised as human capacity, social capacity and physical capital (Spillane & Thompson, 1997). Human capacity includes personal commitment to learning and implies that the district and school leaders must ensure the provision of professional development for teachers if reform is to succeed. Social capital refers to the relationships that exist within an organisation and is manifest by trust, collaboration and the inclusion of teachers and principals in decisions that will have an effect on them. A major investment in social capital by the district supervisor is clearly needed for him/her to succeed in his/her role of supporting the school and leading the renewal process. Physical capital includes the financial resources allocated to staffing, time and resources (Chrispeels, 1997; Spillane & Thompson, 1997; Swan, 1998). In the Rockhampton diocese, primary schools' staffing and resource levels are determined by the Catholic Education Office and the district supervisor, as advocate for school improvement, can impact on decisions made.

The issue of size is closely related to capacity. Firestone and Fuhrman (1998) assert that change is more likely to happen in larger districts as they have the resources to facilitate change. Hannaway and Kimball (1997) agree, adding that larger districts also have stronger connections with industry partners from whom they can access information and technical assistance.

Variations in understanding of reforms by district supervisors and school leaders contribute to variations in support for reforms (Spillane & Thompson, 1997). The understandings are shaped by the sources of information from which one draws one's local context, personal beliefs and experiences (Spillane, 1997). It follows that the district supervisor must ensure that he/she has an in-depth knowledge of the local context and personnel. In the Rockhampton diocese situation, the district supervisor spends much of his/her time in the schools for which he/she is responsible and has a tremendous opportunity to gain this knowledge and insights. As reported by Spillane and Thompson, it is incumbent on district supervisors to have a clear understanding of the actual reforms being proposed by the (diocesan) authorities, and the ability to relay this understanding to school leaders.

There is evidence that the beliefs, skills, and energy of people in specific positions make a difference (Firestone & Fuhrman, 1998). Strong leadership from district supervisors facilitates a change initiative, whereas there is less support for initiatives from districts where the supervisors are less involved. Firestone & Fuhrman (1998) also found that there is a greater chance of initiatives being adopted if the district supervisor has a passion for the initiative prior to it being elevated to reform status. Sustained reform is less likely to occur in the absence of a leader who has a clear understanding of the direction in which the school should be heading and who can steer and facilitate the change process (Fullan, 2005).

The cognitive understanding and knowledge that district supervisors have of reform efforts impact considerably on how well or otherwise reforms are implemented and resourced in a district (Fullan, 2005; Marsh, 2000; Massell & Goertz, 1999; Spillane, 1997, 1998). The district supervisor's ability to clearly and convincingly explain the reforms to school leaders has a direct correlation to the level of support given to the reforms by school leaders and other staff members. With support and adequate resourcing, combined with the school leader's ability to balance central authority and school authority, the reforms will be successful (Marsh, 2000).

Fullan (2003, 2005) asserts that the district supervisor is one of the key players in assuring purposeful interaction between individuals within and across the 'tri-levels' of school, district and system and, through his/her lateral interaction with other schools and districts, plays a significant role in the sustainability of reforms. It is the district supervisor who can communicate the strategic directions and vision for the system and who is best placed to discover examples of local success that connect to the strategic direction and vision. The successful district supervisor will have much to contribute and should be "transparent, coherent, and inspiring about the short-term and long-term purposes of reform" (Fullan, 2005, p. 90).

A number of research projects (David, 1990; Elmore & Burney, 1999; McGaw, 1997; Quinn, 2000) conclude that the provision of professional development is necessary for the implementation of successful change. Local context and personal beliefs also impact on people's perceptions as do strong leadership and energy from district personnel (Firestone & Fuhrman, 1998). These are major factors in the successful implementation of change.

The Study

This paper presents research findings from a case study used to explore how Catholic School Renewal is perceived by a sample of staff members in four primary schools in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton. Specifically, the problem was explored from the personal perspectives of staff members from a selection of those school communities that undertook the examination phase of the Catholic School Renewal process in the late 1990s. The conduct of the research was focused by the following research questions:

1. How is the process of Catholic School Renewal a source of potential growth?
2. How does the process of Catholic School Renewal ensure quality Catholic education?
3. How is the process of Catholic School Renewal a useful quality assurance tool?

As the purpose of the study was to explore a phenomenon from the particular personal perspectives of staff members, an interpretive approach to research was employed with participants being selected through purposive sampling (Merriam, 1998; Patton, 2002). Each of the research participants was a staff member at one of the four schools that comprised the case. The schools represent three of the four regions of the diocese. None of the schools in the fourth (Western) region had undertaken the examination phase of the renewal process within the specified twelve month period; therefore the researcher selected two schools from one of the other regions. The extra school was selected because it has some of the characteristics that typify schools in the Western Region. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were used (Howe, 1995).

After having interviewed 28 participants, I was able to identify salient features which were subsequently used as the basis for a survey questionnaire. Appropriate scales were developed with responses recorded on a five-point Likert scale. There were 64 respondents to the survey questionnaire.

Data were analysed and interpreted in this study through the *constant comparative method* (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). I simultaneously coded and analysed data in order to build propositions which were later refined, discarded or fully developed depending

on the data which was progressively collected (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). The advantage of the constant comparative method is that it offers a systematic approach to collecting, organising and analysing data from the empirical world in question (Curry, 1999).

Preliminary findings

The initial analysis of the data in this case study emphatically demonstrated that the renewal process as a source of potential growth generated major conflicting and contrasting outcomes in different schools. The findings at two schools indicated that the staff in general believed the process to be positive, while the staffs at the other two schools were energetically critical of the process. A number of themes emerged, the most dominant of which were (a) the process and (b) the composition of the External Validation Team and the role of the district supervisor. These themes provided the lenses through which the data were discussed.

The Process

Data analysis enabled me to group the four schools in two pairs. These will be referred to as Pair A and Pair B. Pair A comprised one school from each of two regions and Pair B comprised two schools from the third region. The overwhelming belief of participants from Pair A was that the renewal process is helpful for a number of reasons. These included the professional abilities of the EVT members, such as their sensitivity during interviews and class visits, as well as the perception that they were credible and authentic individuals, and that the purpose of the process had been well communicated prior to the examination phase. Participants believed that the above was possible because of the professional and relational approach of the respective district supervisors.

However, Pair B staff members were dissatisfied with the management and conduct of the examination phase and were frustrated by the way in which the district supervisor fulfilled his role in the process. They believed that they had been poorly informed about what was to take place and that the information they received from the district supervisor was “shoddy”. Therefore, they did not see either the purpose or the end result as being important. In complete contrast to the beliefs expressed by Pair A participants, Pair B participants believed strongly that the process was not helpful for a number of reasons. These included the unprofessional approach, abilities and skills of the EVT members and the perceived inappropriate composition

of the EVT. Other reasons were the lack of credibility that the district supervisor brought to the process, as well as the lack of credibility and respect that the district supervisor was afforded by those with whom he came into contact. Participants lamented the absence of any meaningful relationship between the district supervisor and the members of the school community. Further, they believed that the district supervisor was responsible for these shortcomings.

A major flaw in the process, as identified by Pair B participants, was that the district supervisor had not provided staff members with the necessary professional development to enable them to implement change (Elmore & Burney, 1999; McGaw, 1997; Quinn, 2000). As a consequence, staff members did not believe that they gained any personal meaning from the examination phase of the process and were therefore not committed to the process. The importance of meaningful professional development in facilitating change is well documented in the literature (Wheatley, 1999).

The lack of understanding and knowledge that the district supervisor and EVT members appeared to have, had a considerable effect on creating the negative view that participants had of the process (Fullan, 2005; Marsh, 2000; Massell & Goertz, 1999; Spillane, 1997, 1998). This, combined with the stress placed on staff members, added to the lack of support given to the process (Marsh, 2000).

The district supervisor is one of the key players in assuring purposeful interaction between and among individuals within and across the 'tri-levels' of school, district and system (Fullan, 2003). The lack of leadership displayed by the district supervisor played a significant role in undermining the sustainability of the process. This is strongly supported in the literature (Fullan, 2005).

The composition of the EVT and the role of the district supervisor

Pair A participants who expressed positive opinions about the examination phase believed that the fundamental reason for their outlook was the positive professional abilities and sensitive approach of the EVT. The EVT members were well prepared for the task which they were charged with undertaking, they employed a professional

approach and were well skilled in the necessary interview and observation techniques.

There are a number of reasons given why staff members responded positively to the EVT. Firstly, all EVT members were acknowledged as experienced “successful” educators who invited guidance and input from their peers. This enhanced both their credibility among teachers as appropriate persons to undertake the process and their likeableness among the teachers. In general, people co-operate with those whom they like (Kouzes & Posner, 2003).

At both of the Pair A schools the EVT was comprised of three diocesan Executive Leadership Team members and an experienced principal. On each EVT, two of the Diocesan Executive Leadership Team members had been involved as team members on many successful renewals and were well qualified for the task. The other Diocesan Executive Leadership Team member and the principal were willing to be guided by those with more experience. All were professional educators with long standing records as capable operators who were consequently afforded credibility by the school community members.

Clearly, it is essential that the EVT members are seen as credible by the school community. This is supported in the literature which demonstrates that, above all else, people need to be able to believe in their leaders. Leaders must be trustworthy, dynamic and experts in their field (Higginson, 1996; Owen, 1999; Spitzer, 2000). The ‘First Law of Leadership’- “if we don’t believe in the messenger, we won’t believe the message” (Kouzes & Posner, 2002, p. 26) - is a principle that must be acknowledged by the EVT members.

A second and pivotal reason for the success of the process was that EVT members were prepared to act as a team and not merely as a cluster of individuals. They deliberately planned a collegial approach to the process. Further, they reviewed the Internal Report prior to the school visit, discussed this as a team and had generated shared understandings of many of the issues of concern expressed in the school report to be explicitly explored in the visit. Each was sensitive to the needs and concerns of those at the school and made a concerted and conscious effort to put the school-based people at ease even before entering the school. As a team, the EVT members had a shared understanding of the process (Limerick, Cunningham & Crowther, 1998) as a life giving process which was positive and aimed to provide the

school community with collegial support by providing some suggestions for the future growth and direction of the school. Moreover, the night before the visit commenced, the EVT shared a meal with the Internal Review Committee (IRC) to hear their concerns and expectations for the visit. This served to provide the EVT with further valuable insights, as well as putting the IRC members at ease by communicating to them the positive nature of the process.

There is broad consensus in the literature about the importance of shared leadership in the change process. Successful models of leadership commonly entail shared leadership, collaborative leadership or multiple leadership roles, with the individuals undertaking facilitative behaviour towards a common goal (Limerick et al., 1998). Leadership should be distributed, rather than being the task of a sole designated leader (Cheng, 1996; Crowther, Hann & McMaster, 2001; Limerick et al., 1998; Fullan, 2005; Ogawa & Bossert, 1995; Sultmann & McLaughlin, 2000). It is an organic activity, dependent on interrelationships and connections (Riley, Docking, & Rowles, 2001).

A third reason for the positive experience in the Pair A schools was that the EVT members were skilled in the necessary areas of empathetic interviewing along with a supportive style of class-room observation and visitation. EVT members were charged with the task of interviewing school community members in pairs, with due consideration being given to the composition of the pair in relation to the issues that might arise in the interview. Class visits were also well coordinated, the district supervisor being mindful of the areas of expertise and interest of the particular EVT members. For example, staff members who were experts in IT were engaged collegially by EVT members who shared the same expertise. Clearly, this approach enhanced the credibility and legitimacy of the process for all participants because the process was experienced by the staff as essentially one of professional development aligned with the enhancement of student learning. As the focus of any school improvement effort, of which renewal is one, is the enhancement of student learning, this approach proved to be very meaningful.

The personal qualities, such as empathy, understanding and compassion, displayed by the EVT members clearly contributed to the positive staff response. The impact of this style of leadership in which authentic inter-personal relations are paramount is strongly supported in the literature. Leadership is about aligning and inspiring; being accessible, competent and having integrity (Higginson, 1996); must be credible and

entail caring for others, mobility and listening (Kouzes & Posner, 2003). Kouzes and Posner (2003) also suggest that leaders should strive to be liked, as people don't follow a technique, but rather a person - the message and the embodiment of the message. Leaders are judged and supported by the attitudes they display, more so than by their behaviours (Duignan, 1997; Gronn & Ribbins, 1996; Southworth, 1995).

Another dynamic factor in the perceived success of the process at the Pair A schools was the collaborative work practices demonstrated by the leaders of the EVT and the IRC at each of the schools. There was a good relationship evident between the school-based coordinator and the district supervisor. The coordinator of the IRC at both schools had met with the respective district supervisor prior to the process being undertaken. Furthermore, both coordinators had involved parents and staff members in the process and had portrayed a positive view of the process and the EVT members who would be visiting the school. Members of the school communities were given a reasonable understanding of the process before it was implemented and could therefore see its proposed purpose which in turn gave it personal meaning for the individuals. Armed with personal meaning, the participants were able to view the process positively. Generally speaking, they afforded the EVT credibility and, due to the information provided to them and the leadership provided by the IRC chairperson, they had ownership of the process as they understood it - enough to gain personal meaning from it. Clearly then, the participants accepted the process as credible and meaningful and this proved to be a good prototype for some positive outcomes.

In contrast to the Pair A schools, the Pair B schools displayed an overwhelming lack of support for, and confidence in, the process. Participant feedback suggests that this could largely be attributed to the lack of expertise of the district supervisor. He was criticised for being unapproachable, for the very poor relationship that he had with principals and other school leaders; and the perception that he had shown poor judgment in his selection of suitable EVT members. The latter were criticised for being office-based and therefore out of touch with the realities of school life. Further, they were not seen as having the skills to undertake the task presented to them, including conducting interviews, class-room visits and writing an External Report.

Interestingly, the composition of the EVT at one of the Pair B schools was the same as at the Pair A schools, where the EVTs were lauded for their expertise and approachability. The different reactions can be attributed to the approach of the district supervisor. EVTs always have the respective local district supervisor on them,

and this - the district supervisor - was the major negative contributing factor in the Pair B schools.

It appears as though the EVT's in the Pair B schools were unable or unprepared to act as a team and therefore acted as a cluster of individuals. As the designated leader of the EVT, the district supervisor appeared unable to articulate an understanding of the process that was congruent with that stated by the diocesan documents. This resulted in the EVT lacking leadership and being unable to come to agreement on a shared vision and, consequently, they, in turn, were unable to articulate a positive message to the local school communities. This fostered a shared sense of suspicion and discontent among the school staffs and a line of questioning by some EVT members that was considered to be intimidating and inspectorial. The process was doomed to failure as the process lacked credibility, there was a lack of trust and, in contrast to the Pair A schools, the participants felt unsupported and unappreciated (Kouzes & Posner, 2002) and as though they were not working towards a common goal (Limerick et al., 1998).

Clearly evident in the research findings, and consistent with the literature (Firestone & Fuhrman, 1998; Fullan, 2005; Kouzes & Posner, 2002, 1999; Marsh, 2000; Massell & Goertz, 1999; Spillane, 1997, 1998) is the importance of the role of the district supervisor in ensuring the success or otherwise of the process. The district supervisor is charged with the task of leading the process, which includes educating school-based personnel and helping with any needs they have in relation to the process. It is also necessary for the district supervisor, through the education and support provided, to portray the process as a positive worthwhile experience as people will not willingly devote time, energy and commitment to a process that they do not believe to be useful and worthwhile. As the professional who is responsible for the operation of the school, it is also incumbent on the district supervisor to provide insights and clarification to the EVT in relation to issues and queries that may occur.

Also clearly emerging as important is the relationship that the principal and other key stakeholders at the school have with the district supervisor. This relationship is usually characterised by collegiality at worst and close friendship and professional respect at best. The district supervisor for the Pair B schools did not engender any professional respect from the principals of the schools or from the members of the leadership teams of these schools. In fact, very few teachers or support staff even credited him with respect as a professional. To make matters worse, he had

developed a negative relationship with members of the Leadership Team at one of the Pair B schools which was evident to other staff members at the school. This made the success of the process very difficult to achieve as the expertise and enthusiasm of a district supervisor have a major impact on the outcomes of system change initiatives (Firestone & Fuhrman, 1998; Fullan, 2005; Marsh, 2000; Massell & Goertz, 1999; Spillane, 1997, 1998). This is compounded by the fact that the principal also has a major impact on how staff members perceive initiatives, and if it is evident that the principal is not supportive of the process, staff members will not be supportive either (Berman & McLaughlin, 1977).

Clearly the suspicion with which the district supervisor was viewed was a major contributing factor to the lack of success of the process at the Pair B schools. The results of the research are consistent with the literature in concluding that leadership involves “setting a direction and motivating others to follow” (Higginson, 1996, p. 26), aligning and inspiring (Kouzes & Posner, 2003) and having integrity and credibility (Duignan, 2002) - none of this will happen if the leader is not respected. Leaders will be judged and supported by the attitudes they display, more so than by their behaviours (Duignan, 1997; Gronn & Ribbins, 1996; Southworth, 1995).

A contributing factor to the call for fewer diocesan Executive Leadership Team members and more practitioners in the EVT is the belief that the entry style of the district supervisor can be negative and can jeopardise the rest of the process. An associated concern is that, as the district supervisor leads the process, the process is not uniform as it is open to the interpretation of the four role holders. It is evident that the district supervisor who led the processes at the Pair B schools did not have an understanding of how the process works in the Rockhampton diocese. This should be considered as a major concern by Rockhampton Catholic Education as this particular district supervisor had been in the role for a substantial number of years.

Given the many reservations and concerns stated by staff members, if the process is to be a source of growth as its mandate suggests, there needs to be clearly articulated sensitive, authentic leadership from the system authority. In the case of renewal, the system authority is synonymous with the district supervisor.

Conclusions and Recommendations

This study concluded that the process of renewal in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton is a useful quality assurance tool which helps to ensure quality Catholic education. Whether or not the process is a source of growth is dependent on a number of variables, paramount among which is the approach and ability of the district supervisor to facilitate and manage the process. The literature emphasises the impact that strong leadership from district supervisors has on schools and school districts (Fullan, 2005; Marsh, 2000; Massell and Goertz, 1999; Spillane, 1997, 1998); a finding strongly endorsed by this research.

In this study, it was evident that the perceived competence or professional standing of the EVT members was based on how the district supervisor was viewed; if he/she was seen as incompetent, the EVT members were regarded as being incompetent also. As a consequence, the composition and approach of the EVT was questioned. Where the district supervisor was not considered to be competent there were a number of consequences.

The first relates to the lack of professional development provided to staff members. Staff members had no ownership of the process because they had not been provided with adequate professional development about the meaning of and approach to the process.

The research study concluded that good leadership by the district supervisor facilitated a good EVT, comprised of members with a common purpose and sense of team, who contributed greatly to a successful and well received process. Inherent in this is the ability of the team leader, in this case the district supervisor, to provide strong leadership. Where this was not evident, nor were the attributes of a successful team. It is evident that one of the district supervisors did not have a clear concept of the diocesan approach to renewal. The consequence of this was that the schools with which this district supervisor worked had negative experiences of renewal, in contrast to the other schools where the district supervisors viewed the process from a diocesan perspective.

As a consequence of the research the following recommendations are offered.

1. Being mindful that the district supervisor is charged with the task of leading the renewal process at schools within the designated region, it is

recommended that Rockhampton Catholic Education ensures that the role holder has the following attributes and knowledge:

- a. A sound knowledge and understanding of the Rockhampton diocesan approach to renewal. This will ensure that the district supervisor will implement the process as it is intended and not incorporate personal or professional agendas. This will go some way to ensuring a diocesan-wide approach.
 - b. The ability to lead a team. If the EVT is provided with strong, informed leadership, the individuals will be more likely to work collaboratively, which will enhance their credibility among school staff members.
 - c. Credibility in the school communities as a person who can develop positive relationships with and provide leadership to school leaders
2. That the district supervisors, in collaboration with executive staff in Rockhampton Catholic Education develop a resource package to be presented to school staffs as professional development prior to the examination phase of renewal. This will ensure that all staff members and other members of the school community are informed of the purpose and nature of the process and are given the opportunity to gain personal meaning and ownership from it. Having a resource developed at a diocesan level will ensure that the same message is delivered in all regions of the diocese, and is therefore not dependent on any one district supervisor's interpretation.
 3. That the district supervisors adopt a diocesan-wide approach for the preparation of EVT members to ensure that they are very informed in preparation for the task at hand. This would include:
 - the resource package being presented by the district supervisors to either inform the EVT members of the diocesan approach to renewal, or to reinforce their existing knowledge
 - the district supervisors providing instruction on how to

conduct successful and non-threatening interviews and on practical observation techniques.

This training will assure school communities of an acceptable level of knowledge and expertise by those embarking on the task of validating their internal review reports. It will also give the EVT members increased knowledge and confidence.

To ensure the future success of renewal and credible leadership by district supervisors, the process needs to be tightened and structures made more uniform across the diocese. Currently there is a lack of consistency in this area and an absence of a diocesan understanding of the merits or pitfalls of the process.

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