

*Women leaders in Lutheran Schools:
has anything changed?*

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WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP SEMINAR, ACLE

1. DEFINITION OF LEADERSHIP

“Anyone can be a leader” is a widely-accepted view of modern leadership theorists, and is certainly the idea disseminated in recent courses on leadership conducted or endorsed by the Lutheran College of Australia.

The definition by Rost applies: “Leadership is an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes (Rost, 1993 p 102)”. Someone who helps to make changes by influencing the values in a school can be anyone from the early childhood trainee or graduate teacher to the College Principal. For the purposes of this workshop, however, we are assuming that the topic is about positional leadership – that is, women in recognised (and usually remunerated) positions of leadership in Lutheran Schools.

We would like to affirm at the start, though, that extremely effective and powerful leadership is exercised by women in Lutheran schools who have not been given any special status or extra dollars in the handbag for their efforts.

At its outset, the Millennial Principals Project of LEA defined the Educational Dimensions of Leadership through a process involving input from Lutheran Principals and Directors and the Australian Catholic University.

As an introduction to this Seminar, we will briefly survey these Dimensions in order to identify those features which ARE important to a Lutheran understanding of school leadership and those which ARE NOT. (See attached Appendix)

We suspect that many teachers and potential leaders in Lutheran Schools still, either consciously or subconsciously, subscribe to notions of leadership that are not as relevant as they once were and that have been largely discredited by modern Leadership theory. These notions may have a particular effect on women who may decide not to aspire for leadership because they feel they do not fit the mould of past leaders they have known and/or admired.

NOT SO IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT
Personal charisma, dynamic personality	Personal integrity, commitment to values
Personal visionary certainties	Ability to harness and develop community vision
Strong, controlling style	Skills to develop teamwork and collaboration
Detailed knowledge and wide experience of management functions related to finances, property and material resources, legal issues	Well-developed people skills; willingness to seek help and advice from other skilled people (networking); ability to develop of team of people with diverse, useful skills; commitment to core values that underpin effective decision-making;
Making efficiency and technical control the core business of the school	Ensuring Christian education is the core business of the school.
Emphasis on creating security, conformity and stability	Using effective and necessary change management strategies to achieve the school's mission

(See Attachment 1 for further reading on Authentic Leadership)

2. HAS ANYTHING CHANGED? NUMBERS OF WOMEN LEADERS IN LUTHERAN SCHOOLS: 1999-2004

In 1999, Mignon Weckert and Robert Hoff presented a paper at ACLE entitled *Women and Leadership* in Lutheran Schools on the basis of a survey they had conducted with 400 Lutheran Women educators.

Following ACLE, LEA set a goal to increase the participation of women in leadership in Lutheran Schools, and a task force, the Women in Leadership group was set up. In 2001 LEA adopted a gender equity in leadership policy and a model policy on gender equity in leadership for individual schools. (See Attachment 2) At the same time LEA committed itself to the following national targets:

- Increase number of female applicants to principal positions to 50% in three years (end 2004)
- Increase actual appointments of females to principal positions to 33% in three years (end 2003) toward the ultimate goal of 50%
- National average composition of interview panels for principals to be 50% female immediately
- National average composition of governing bodies to be 50% female in six years (end 2007)
- Compositions of schools councils and committees and secretariats of LCA and districts to be 50% female in three years (end 2004)
- Chairs of governing bodies to be 50% female in five years (end 2006)

In 2003, LEA commissioned a survey entitled *Women Educators in Lutheran Schools* to which 744 women responded.

Below is a summary of 1999, 2002, 2003 and 2004 Lutheran Schools data, compared against the benchmarks set by LEA (some figures not available at time of publication):

2.1 PERCENTAGE OF FEMALES SERVING IN LUTHERAN SCHOOLS

Type	1999	2002	2003	2004
Primary	71.6		75.1 (FTE)	
Secondary	50.5		54.2 (FTE)	
TOTAL		59 (full-time) 82 (part-time)	61 (full-time) 81 (full-time)	

2.2 PERCENTAGE FEMALE PRINCIPALS IN LUTHERAN SCHOOLS

Benchmark	1999	2002	2003	2004
33	N/A	13.1	21	22

2.3 PERCENTAGE FEMALE PRINCIPALS (PRIMARY)

Benchmark	1999	2002	2003	2004
33	10.7	25	25	24

There are no female Principals of stand-alone Secondary Schools.

2.4 PERCENTAGE FEMALE PRINCIPALS (P-12)

Benchmark	1999	2002	2003	2004
33	13.6	14.3	27	25

2.5 PERCENTAGE FEMALE PRINCIPALS QUEENSLAND

Benchmark	1999	2002	2003	2004
33	N/A	25	29.6	33

2.6 PERCENTAGE FEMALE PRINCIPALS SE REGION

Benchmark	1999	2002	2003	2004
33	N/A	7.7	17.7	24

2.7 PERCENTAGE FEMALE PRINCIPALS SA/NT/WA

Benchmark	1999	2002	2003	2004
33	N/A	6	16.7	13

Comments:

- There has been some good progress towards the benchmarks in all Regions and school sectors.
- Queensland has reached the current benchmark for female leadership and now should work towards benchmark of 50%. Other regions have a distance to go.
- Given the percentage of females teaching, particularly primary schools, female participation in primary school principalship is quite disproportionate.

2.8 PERCENTAGE OF FEMALES IN GOVERNING BODIES

Benchmark	TOTAL		QLD		SE Region		SA/NT/WA	
	2002	2003	2002	2003	2002	2003	2002	2003
50	34.6	40	34	37	30.3	40	37.1	43

2.9 PERCENTAGE OF FEMALE CHAIRS OF GOVERNING BODIES

Benchmark	TOTAL		QLD		SE Region		SA/NT/WA	
	2002	2003	2002	2003	2002	2003	2002	2003
50	17.5	30	27	33	5	13	21	35

3. HAS ANYTHING CHANGED? COMPARISONS OF FEMALE VIEWS OF LEADERSHIP IN 1999 AND 2003.

3.1 Applying for a Leadership position

1999: Q5. Have you ever considered applying for a major leadership position?

2003: Q.6b. Have you ever applied for a position of added responsibility in a Lutheran School?

Q 8a. If you have never applied for either a PAR or a Principal's position, have you ever considered applying for a PAR?

YES RESPONSES

Year	Primary	Secondary	Qld	SE Region	SA/NT/WA
1999	21	31			
2003 (Applied) Total: 26	25	40	33	25	35
2003(Considered) Total: 45	40	46	45	44	45

Comments:

- There has been an increase in women applying (or considering applying) for PARs in Lutheran Schools in this period.
- There is little difference between the percentages of women applying for PARs in schools with a female Principal than those with a male Principal.
- More secondary than primary female teachers apply (or consider applying) for PARs.
- Fewer females have applied for positions in the SE Region, though the same percentage as females in other regions have considered it.

3.2 Encouragement for Leadership

1999: Q. 6. *Has anyone in the Lutheran network ever spoken to you about your potential for leadership?*

2003: Q. 11. *Has anyone at Principal, Deputy or Director's level ever asked/encouraged you to consider applying for a position of added responsibility or principal's position in a Lutheran school?*

YES RESPONSES

Year	Primary	Secondary	Qld	SE Region	SA/NT/WA
1999	26	33			
2003 (Total 37)	36	38	32	39	41

Comments:

- There appears to be more encouragement of female leadership by people within the Lutheran network now than there was in 1999
- Queensland females seem to receive less encouragement than those in SE Region and SA/NT/WA despite the fact that the latter two regions have lower percentages of female Principals.
- Females in schools with female Principals have received marginally more encouragement (42%) than those with male Principals (35%).

4. HAS ANYTHING CHANGED? REASONS FOR FEMALES NOT APPLYING FOR PARs 1999 and 2003

In 1999, the main reasons women gave for not considering leadership were not ranked, but were as follows:

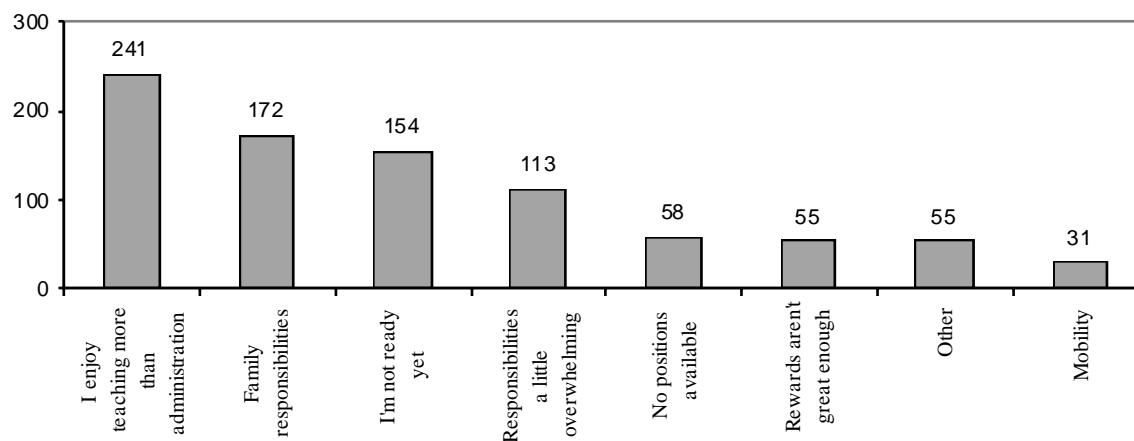
- Happy with present role
- Family (no time)
- Inexperience
- Not interested
- Too much expected from you
- Not encouraged
- Not Lutheran
- Lack of self-confidence
- Male-dominated hierarchy
- Not trained
- Not at one school long enough.

2003 Q9. If you have not applied for a position of added responsibility what were your reasons (you may tick more than one box)?

Overall

	Frequency	%
I enjoy teaching more than administration	241	30.9
Family responsibilities	172	22.1
I'm not ready yet	154	19.7
Responsibilities a little overwhelming	113	14.5
No positions available	58	7.4
Rewards aren't great enough	55	7.1
Other	55	7.1
Mobility	31	4.0
Total	879	

Distribution of responses

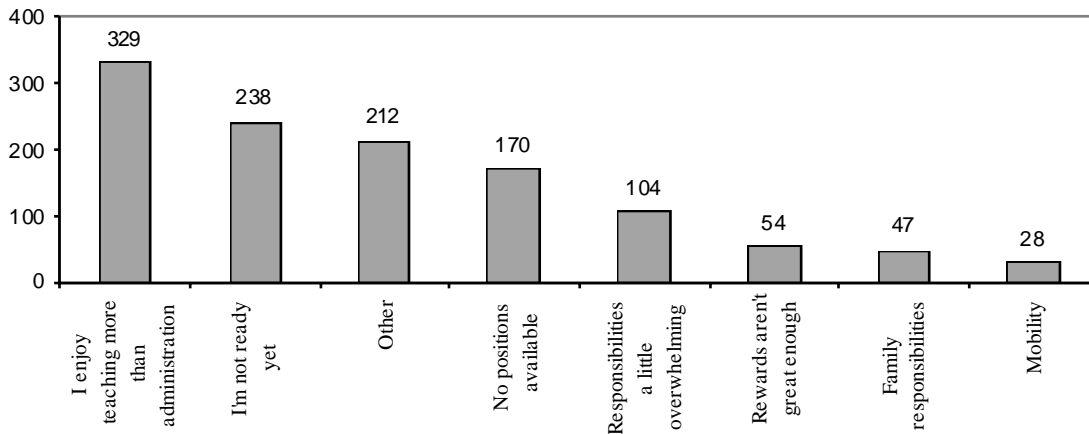


Q10. If you have not applied for a principal's position within a Lutheran school, what were your reasons (you may tick more than one box)?

Overall

	Frequency	%
I enjoy teaching more than administration	329	42.2
I'm not ready yet	238	30.5
Other	212	27.2
No positions available	170	21.8
Responsibilities a little overwhelming	104	13.3
Rewards aren't great enough	54	6.9
Family responsibilities	47	6.0
Mobility	28	3.6
Total	1182	

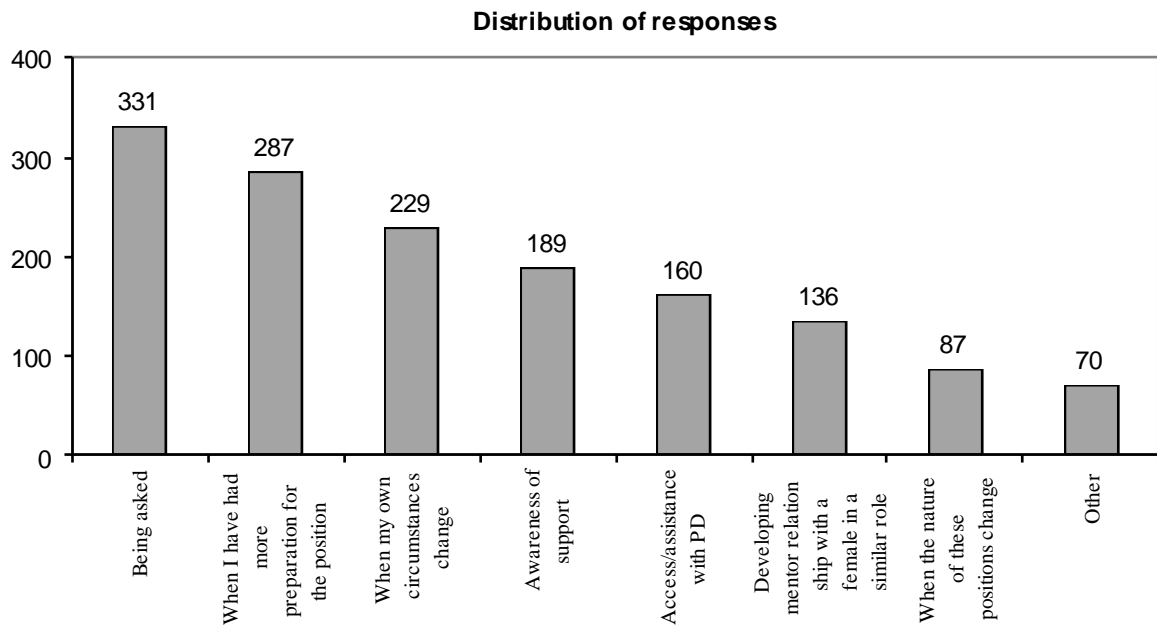
Distribution of responses



Q12. What might encourage you to apply for a position of added responsibility or a principal's position in a Lutheran school (you may tick more than one box)?

Overall

	Frequency	%
Being asked	331	42.4
When I have had more preparation for the position	287	36.8
When my own circumstances change	229	29.4
Awareness of support	189	24.2
Access/assistance with PD	160	20.5
Developing mentor relationship with a female in a similar role	136	17.4
When the nature of these positions change	87	11.2
Other	70	9.0
Total	1489	



Rost, JC, *Leadership for the Twenty-first Century*, Westport, Praeger, 1993

Looking behind the data - 2004

Numbers and percentages tell us one thing – words tell us another. A study and selection of the comments given reveal some interesting insights into what women are thinking.

Question 9:

If you have not applied for a position of added responsibility, what were your reasons.

Family demands are still obviously felt by females

- I was a K-2 coordinator but after I left to have a family I returned to teaching 3 days a week and no longer wish to have the added responsibility
- Between family/work and study commitments not enough time to fulfill requirements of a PAR.

And there are many teachers who recognize that they need further experience

- Too early in my teaching career

A significant number of responses lead one to ask what is happening within school structures that inhibit women applying for positions of leadership.

- I stopped being chosen because there are not enough extra positions.
- Seldom positions in our school advertised as our headmaster simply appoints without giving anyone the opportunity.

- Sometimes don't know what positions are available in school context
- Sometimes positions are pre-selected with known applicants
- Positions not really open for applications It's more that upper admin approach the people they want.
- No encouragement given or have been treated as a joke
- Our last principal made me feel inadequate and totally destroyed my ambition to continue into management
- Due to small size of school I have extra responsibilities but they are not officially recognized with time or money or title. Also the people who really care about the school and students get handed the responsibility.
- It cost the school too much and I can do things in my own time
- I've done it but the structures and support to stop you going completely overboard are not place
- Lack of confidence in the leadership of the school

Question 10:

If you have not applied for a principal's position within a Lutheran school what were your reasons.

Gender is still an issue

- Concerns/fears of sexism and bias
- At the time it was obvious a woman would not be considered

There's a need for encouragement and support and good role models

- Encouragement, lack of opportunities for PD, mentoring
- Have not been exposed to strong mentors or role models in admin
- Concerns over support for principals in their roles

For many respondents, the role of Principal is not an attractive one, with concerns about the demands of the role, often related to lifestyle and stress

- Demands on principals do not allow for a balanced lifestyle as far as I can see
- Principal's position is far too daunting
- It is far too big a responsibility to take on
- I like to have a family/social life outside of school
- It's quite a thankless role
- I have absolutely no desire to be a principal
- The job of principals is huge – I'm not prepared to give up normal life to be a principal
- Not sure of my own abilities and I value my health
- No amount of money would be worth being a principal in any system
- You would have to pay me millions
- They are on the endangered species list in my experience.

Question 12

What might encourage you to apply for a position of added responsibility of a principal's position in a Lutheran school

Opportunities are important

- Being given opportunities when leaders are on long service etc
- Positions are made available more regularly
- Recognition of prior experiences and being given a chance
- Availability of positions for deputy principals

So is positive support for females

- Having more contact with/seeing female role models who are successful in leadership positions
- Support from the management team who are usually male dominated

And a hurdle for many is the requirement to belong to the Lutheran Church

- As I am not Lutheran I'm not eligible
- If non-Lutherans were considered as principal perhaps
- If they were open to non-Lutherans I might apply.
- I'm Catholic and therefore am not in the position to be principal of a Lutheran college
- It is not going to happen because I am not Lutheran or male
- When the stipulation for requiring applicant to be a Lutheran is removed.
- The culture in the LCA needs to change and most markedly the culture within college councils. Change the culture and you might encourage realists to apply.
- Should there ever come a time when being a committed practicing Christian is enough for being a principal as opposed to being Lutheran

Questions for reflection and discussion

What procedures need to be in place in Lutheran schools in order to enhance opportunities for career advancement?

What changes would need to be made to the role of principal in order to encourage you to consider taking on the role?

What would principals (both male and female) need to do in order to present a positive dimension to the role of principal?

Is there anything extra that female principals could do in order to be a positive role model?

What do you perceive to be the possible outcomes if requirements that positions of responsibility regarding belonging to the Lutheran church were lifted?

Imagine that there was no longer the requirement that leaders in our schools must belong to the Lutheran church. How do you perceive that schools would maintain their Lutheran identity?

ATTACHMENT 1

AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP FOR LUTHERAN SCHOOLS



Authenticity in leadership derives its legitimacy from personal integrity, credibility and a commitment to ethical and moral conduct in leadership practice. Leaders earn their badge of authenticity through actions and interactions that enshrine principles and standards incorporating values of honesty, fairness, compassion and integrity. Authentic leaders elevate their actions and relationships above mere pragmatics and expediency and, thereby, raise themselves and others to higher levels of motivation, morality and spiritual awareness.

The ideal of authenticity in leadership is not about behaving as saints, or pious self-righteous people. It is concerned with everyday full-blooded individuals who are politically and managerially competent, credible, earthly and practical. Despite their human frailties, they strive to be ethical, caring and conscience driven in the real world. They don't always get it right but they try to live their lives to the best of their ability.

Authenticity in leadership constitutes a call to a more responsible approach to life and encourages us to strive for a richer and more meaningful response in everything we do.

The diagram shows that the focus of the Principal's performance is on the mission and ministry of the Lutheran Church and that this focus is carried into action through the various qualities and key competencies of the Principal.

The Core Qualities constitute personal attributes for Lutheran principals. The Key Competencies are the professional skills principals require in order to carry out their job effectively. These can be regarded as generic skills that principals apply to the five

Dimensions of Educational Leadership. Core Qualities and Key Competencies are closely interrelated and form a basis for effective performance.

i. THE MINISTRY & MISSION OF THE LCA

- a. Promotes, enhances and extends the ministry of the LCA.
- b. Demonstrates personal commitment to the LCA.
- c. Works effectively with the congregation(s) and/or school pastor.
- d. Participates actively in the congregation.
- e. Models personal Christian faith.

ii. CORE QUALITIES

- a. Personal Disposition
- b. Moral Disposition
- c. Relational Disposition

These three dispositions of a leader focus on;

- a. the leader as person/self
- b. *the leader as moral person, whose actions and behaviour reflect a particular set of values and moral principles*
- c. the leader in relationship with others – staff, students, community, Church, peers etc.

ii. KEY COMPETENCIES

- a. Decision Making and Problem Solving
- b. Analysis and Planning
- c. Communication And Human Interaction
- d. Change Management
- e. Networking

Competencies refer to a set of behaviours, which demonstrate that a person has the knowledge and skills to do the job.

- a. *Decision making and problem solving involve among other skills the ability to think creatively, to discern, reflect and take a risk; and the ability to negotiate, persuade and manage conflict.*

- b. Analysis and planning involve, among other skills, gathering, retrieving and managing information, policy making and goal setting, designing programs, determining and allocating resources and reviewing outcomes.
- c. Communication involves among other skills, creating communication systems, developing in listening and giving feedback and overcoming misunderstanding and communication breakdown. Human interaction includes being visible and accessible, nurturing an environment of mutual respect and acceptance, acknowledging and valuing collective knowledge, skills and expertise as well as providing opportunities for genuine involvement in decision-making.
- d. Change management involves among other skills, managing ambiguity, complexity and paradox; understanding and working with resistance; and being aware of societal trends and current educational issues.
- e. Networking among other things involves interfacing with multiple groups of professional colleagues as well as interacting with new information technologies.

iii. EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP DIMENSIONS

Life for school principals today is nothing if not incredibly complex. They find themselves at the centre of several interconnecting areas of responsibility, in which the day-to-day life of the school is played out. These areas of responsibility, which this study refers to as 'Dimensions of Educational Leadership', involve a comprehensive range of activities and focus upon:

- a. Promoting Teaching and Learning
 - b. Building School Culture
 - c. Nurturing School Community
 - d. Managing School Resources
 - e. Managing Legal Issues and Industrial Relations.
- a. Promoting Teaching and Learning focuses on the core business of the school; develops a learning climate of exploration and curiosity among staff and students; supports purposeful teaching and the thoughtful use of new learning technologies; and establishes a planned approach to staff professional development.
 - b. Building School Culture focuses upon creating shared vision and mission which are reflected in all school policies and decisions; articulating publicly and frequently the values of the school; using symbols, ceremonies, rituals and stories to achieve meaning and commitment.

- c. Nurturing School Community focuses upon building positive relationships with and among students, staff, parents, school council, congregation(s), others within the wider community, and encouraging each member of staff to share responsibility therein. This dimension involves enabling individuals to choose service over self-interest, to connect their hopes and dreams with those of the whole and to see their individual efforts as contributing to the common good.
- d. Managing School Resources focuses upon principals as stewards, responsible for the prudent use of all school resources, human, physical, financial and educational and accountable to the governing body and to the school community for all such use. This dimension includes care and maintenance, growth and development as appropriate.
- e. Managing Legal Issues and Industrial Relations could involve the principal in responding to policy and practice in these areas; and ensuring that the attention of the school community is focused on matters of strategic importance. This requires a working knowledge of common law and legislation as they relate to education and the legal responsibilities of teachers and those in administration. It also requires knowledge and skills in the areas of employment contracts, enterprise bargaining, employment rights and responsibilities and the role of unions.

ATTACHMENT 2

POLICY FOR GENDER EQUITY IN LEADERSHIP POSITIONS IN [.....Lutheran School]

Lutheran Education Australia

(Model Policy)

1. Purpose

The policy of gender equity affirms that women and men are to be considered as equally eligible for positions of leadership at [..... Lutheran school] and so should be given equal opportunities to develop the gift of leadership and to serve in positions of responsibility.

The purpose of this policy therefore is to actively promote the equal participation of women and men in the principalship; positions of added responsibility or management; governance including the chair.

2. The context of the Lutheran school

The Christian approach to the issue of equity and justice in relationships between women and men is grounded in the Scriptures. Both women and men are made in the image and the likeness of God (Genesis 1:27), and both are equally joined to Christ (Galatians 3:27-28).

We value the dignity of each individual person in [..... Lutheran school] because all are created in the image of God. For the same reason we affirm the talents of all staff members. We acknowledge and encourage the potential for service of all.

Lutheran social teaching promotes the principle of basic equality between all people and rejects all forms of social and cultural discrimination in basic rights on the basis of gender, ethnicity, social conditions or religion.

[..... Lutheran school] follows the requirement of the church to employ staff who are skilled and registered educators, are able to uphold the teachings of the church and model the Christian lifestyle.

3. The policy

This policy is based on a vision of equity in employment across the whole spectrum of Lutheran education from pre-service orientation and preparation through employment in schools and systems.

[..... Lutheran school] holds that those aspiring to leadership positions should have equal access to and encouragement towards those work experiences and training opportunities, both formal and informal, which promote responsibility and leadership at all levels of management and governance.

[..... Lutheran school] affirms the right to work as inalienable and recognise the right of women and men to be equally valued and to be given equal opportunity

in employment. Benefits and conditions are to be equitable for both men and women, and reflect a willingness to adopt family-friendly practices.

Our Lutheran belief encourages opportunities to develop participative, inclusive and caring structures and processes in [..... Lutheran school]. Membership of any decision making body needs to be comprised of women and men with appropriate skills and experience. Preparation is to be offered to people for such membership. Those practices and structures which support values of inclusiveness and reinforce principles of justice and equity will be practised.

Employment processes and procedures will reflect the entitlement of women, in their own right, to personal respect, to economic security and to participation in and influence over decisions which affect their personal lives.

All people employed by and associated with [..... Lutheran school] are encouraged to reflect on the differing social realities of the lives of men and women, and to devise strategies to respond to them in accordance with this policy.

[..... Lutheran school] will positively promote this policy through practices such as:

- affirmation of staff families
- enterprise agreements that reflect the work needs of all employees
- consideration of job share as an option
- availability of family care leave
- consideration for staff seeking access to adequate childcare
- consideration of staff family responsibilities

4. Elimination of discrimination

[..... Lutheran school] commits itself to the elimination of those practices and attitudes which inhibit the advancement of this policy. In particular it will:

- ***use inclusive language and have a policy to this effect***
- ***eliminate all attitudes and practices that reflect a gender orientation and discrimination***
- ***meet relevant national and state legislative requirements (regarding discrimination, equal opportunity etc).***

5. General encouragement

[..... Lutheran school] will establish practices which address any gender imbalance in leadership, and which encourage and support the appointment of women to leadership positions where appropriate.

6. Procedures for appointment of staff

[..... Lutheran school] will ensure that:

- all legislative requirements are understood and implemented
- there is gender balance on interview panels
- interviews use non-discriminatory protocols and questions
- position documentation and advertising are gender inclusive

