TARGET AUDIENCE
This leadership program targets staff currently employed as an assistant, deputy or vice principal in a Catholic school or members of the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia (CEOWA) employed in leadership positions who desire future appointment as a Catholic school principal.

INTRODUCTION
The Aspiring Principals Program (the program) is a two-year, 22-day principal preparation program convened by the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia (CEOWA) for selected assistant principals, deputy and vice principals from Western Australian Catholic schools and CEOWA leaders aspiring to principalship. Participation in the program is fully funded by the Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia (CECWA) School Personnel Committee. Program commitment involves 22 days of face-to-face professional learning, 14 days in year one and eight days in year two. Aspirants are also required to complete tasks and activities in both the workplace and at home (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2014).

RATIONALE
Western Australian Catholic system and school leaders must be capable of leading in four ways. Firstly, they must be transactional leaders; those with the ability to prudently and effectively manage their environmental, physical and human resources. Secondly, they must be transformational leaders or highly relational individuals capable of using charisma, emotional connection and intellectual inspiration to move members of staff from thinking only about self to considering the needs of colleagues and achievement of school and system vision. Thirdly, they must be transcendental leaders who strive to create a reflective, values-centred organization through the use of genuine, collaborative dialogue. This way of leading is difficult because it requires the leader to have a deep understanding of self, the absence of the need to manipulate, a sense of wholeness, harmony and well-being produced through care, concern, appreciation of both self and others and authentic selfless concern for people. When a leader is able to move between these three ways of leading as required by real-time situations (i.e. situational leadership), highly-motivated, happy people and a flourishing system is the result. The Aspiring Principals Program aims to enhance aspirant leadership capability through these four lenses.

Catholic Education in Western Australia (CEWA) also faces a problem. Of the 163 Catholic school principals that comprise the system, 70 or 43% will reach or exceed retirement age by 2020 (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2013). The problem, however, lies not in the retirement plans of existing principals. Rather, the problem relates to the capacity of the Executive arm of the system, the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia (CEOWA), to create a pool of role-ready, resilient aspirants to replace existing principals as they leave.
The system faces four complications with regard to the development of this aspirant pool. The age profile of some traditional aspirants, assistant principals in primary schools and deputy and vice principals in secondary schools, is similar to that of the existing principal group (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2013). The CEOWA Executive anticipates that retirement of assistant and deputy principals at the same rate as existing principals will dilute the aspirant pool (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2013). Moreover, some potential aspirants are simply not interested in principalship (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2013; d’Arbon, 2006; Pritchard, 2003). Additionally, some potential aspirants consider aspects of the principalship unattractive and, as a consequence, experience diminished interest in the role (Bezzina, 2012; Cranston, 2005b; d’Arbon, 2006). These unattractive role aspects, also referred to as disincentives in the literature (Bezzina, 2012; Cranston, 2005a; d’Arbon, 2006), include the multi-faceted, intense and stressful nature of the role that demands leadership and management of an array of technical and administrative tasks that must often be completed in time and resource-poor environments (Chapman, 2005; Draper & McMichael, 2003; Fraser & Brock, 2013; Harris, Muijs, & Crawford, 2003; Pounder, Galvin, & Shepherd, 2003; Tekleselassie & Villarreal III, 2011). Finally, some potential aspirants actively pursue and attain principalship with no formation other than that provided by the apprenticeship experience of their assistant, deputy or vice principal roles. A possible consequence for this group is unpreparedness for a complicated and demanding role that requires the consistent application of leadership capabilities to ensure success. Ultimately, for some beginning principals in this category, premature exit from the profession is the outcome (Clarke & Wildy, 2010; Sayce & Lavery, 2010; Wildy & Clarke, 2008).

To further explain the consequences associated with the apprenticeship model of development as the sole pathway to principalship, it is important to highlight five research conclusions. Firstly, for some aspirants, beginning principalship in this way creates a turbulent period of adjustment associated with the move from a role that is comfortable and familiar to one that is foreign and unpredictable (Browne-Ferrigno, 2003; Walker & Qian, 2006; Wildy & Clarke, 2008; Wildy, Clarke, & Slater, 2007). Secondly, beginning principals may encounter a role that is more complex than anticipated and experience consternation when faced with the tensions and dilemmas emanating from principal-level decision-making (Wildy & Clarke, 2008; Wildy et al., 2007). Thirdly, beginning principals may be confronted by the challenges created by role intensification in a time-poor environment (Chapman, 2005; Draper & McMichael, 2003; Fraser & Brock, 2013; Harris et al., 2003; Pounder et al., 2003; Tekleselassie & Villarreal III, 2011). Fourthly, beginning principals may experience isolation from both former and new peers (Wildy & Clarke, 2008; Wildy et al., 2007). Finally, beginning principals may be adversely impacted by negative encounters with staff, parents and school community members (Riley, 2014; Wildy & Clarke, 2008; Wildy et al., 2007).

One measure devised and implemented by the CEOWA to mitigate the issues associated with the anticipated en masse retirement of existing principals by 2020 is the Aspiring Principals Program. This two-year principal preparation program aims to create a pool of aspirants with the knowledge, skills and networks required to rapidly adjust to the rigours of novice principalship (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2014).

**ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS**
Potential candidates for this program include:
- Catholic school assistant, deputy and vice principals aspiring to principalship
- CEOWA personnel, employed in leadership positions, aspiring to principalship
ACCREDITATION REQUIREMENTS
The accreditation required for entry to this program is ‘Accreditation for Leadership.’ Candidates who are close to attaining their accreditation are also encouraged to apply for entry to the program. If a place in the program is offered to these candidates, a conditional offer will be made with the caveat that outstanding accreditation requirements be completed by the conclusion of the program’s first or orientation year.

EXPECTATIONS
As potential future principals, absolute commitment to all dimensions of the program is an expectation of the Executive Director, CEWA. Principals or CEOWA supervisors are required to endorse candidate applications and, in doing so, are aware of the Executive Director’s expectation that participation in program modules takes precedence over competing school and/or personal priorities.

PURPOSE
The purpose of the program is to create a pool of aspirants with the knowledge, skills and networks required to rapidly adjust to the rigours of the role post-appointment and survive the early, turbulent years of principalship (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2014). The program attempts to achieve this aim in four ways. The program strives to provide aspirants with a thorough understanding of Catholic principalship role components and the capabilities required for effective performance. Important in the development of these understandings is the use of a 360-degree psychometric tool to identify aspirant leadership capabilities. Aspirants, equipped with data provided by the tool, work with a trained coach, external to the organisation, to form capability improvement goals. To achieve these goals, strategies developed within coaching sessions are enacted through the role of the aspirant before being evaluated and refined. Moreover, the program guides aspirants through a process to develop a leadership vision statement. Amongst other outcomes, the vision development process challenges aspirants to identify their leadership values and clarify their attraction to principalship. Program activities also provoke aspirant reflection regarding principalship disincentives before exploring mitigation strategies. Finally, the program attempts to enhance aspirant self-efficacy to commence principalship by, amongst other measures, providing opportunities to build support networks. These networks comprise aspirant principals, program colleagues, coaches and CEOWA support staff with line management authority or knowledge pertinent to principalship (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2014).

SELECTION PROCESS
In any given year, approximately ten aspirants are selected to participate in the program. A typical cohort is comprised of eight primary school assistant principals and two secondary school deputy and/or vice principals. The size and nature of the cohort, however, is determined by the anticipated number of beginning principals required to replace their experienced colleagues as they leave the system through transition to retirement or attrition. Nonetheless, completion of the program does not guarantee aspirants appointment to principalship nor is it a prerequisite for the role (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2014).

Program entry is comprised of a three-stage process. The first stage involves submission of a written application. The application requires candidates to provide demographic data and respond to a series of questions. Specifically, candidates are asked to reflect on and describe their reasons for seeking principalship, their leadership style and leadership experiences with regard to the four domains of the CEWA Leadership Framework: Catholic Identity; Stewardship; Education; and Community. When addressing this part of the application, candidates are required to state their
understanding of each domain, provide examples of initiatives led and subsequent outcomes. The second stage is a written endorsement of responses by candidate principals. The third stage involves a selection panel, comprised of a CEOWA representative, a primary school principal, a secondary school principal and a parish priest, reviewing applications and shortlisting candidates for an hour-long interview. Additionally, candidates shortlisted for interview are invited to complete an online assessment of their leadership style known as a DiSC assessment. Candidate applications, the principal endorsement and DiSC assessment inform the interview questions. When preparing for interviews, panelists conduct thorough checks of both listed and non-listed referees including candidate parish priests and current and former principals (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2014).

PROGRAM FACILITATION, CEOWA PERSONNEL AND PRACTISING PRINCIPALS
The majority of module facilitators within the theoretical programs associated with both years of the program are CEOWA support staff with specialist knowledge pertinent to principalship. Support staff include human resource, industrial relations, finance and capital development (building and facilities construction) consultants. Other program facilitators are current and ex-Catholic school principals. Facilitators are trained in the use of David Kolb’s theory of experiential learning. Kolb’s theory is called experiential learning because it emphasises the role that experience plays in the learning process (Kolb, Boyatzis, & Mainemelis, 2001). Facilitators are trained in the four broad adult learning styles described by Kolb: concrete experience; reflective observation; abstract conceptualization; and active experimentation (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2014; Kolb et al., 2001). Kolb asserts that the process of learning represents a cycle whereby a learner first experiences immediate or concrete experiences before reflecting upon their learning. Reflections are then absorbed and translated by the learner before being actively tested and/or experimented with (Kolb et al., 2001). This cyclical process enables the learner to create both new learning and experiences (Kolb et al., 2001). For example, within program modules a facilitator may introduce new theory as a lecture (abstract conceptualisation) before reinforcing concepts through the use of images or video footage (concrete experience). Participants are then asked to engage in individual reflection on the theory using a series of questions (reflective observation) before discussing their perspectives with colleagues in small groups (active experimentation). Small group responses are then probed by the facilitator during a whole group feedback and discussion session (active experimentation) (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2014).

For both years associated with the program, each day of the theoretical program begins with aspirant reflection regarding changes in their leadership perspective and/or practice as a result of participation in previous modules. Post-reflection, aspirants are encouraged to share their thoughts with a colleague before the facilitator gathers the thoughts of small groups in a whole-group feedback session. The reflection process is intended to provide aspirants with an opportunity to critically reflect upon their learning and build collegial relationships with fellow aspirants (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2014).

Likewise, every day of the theoretical program associated with both years of the program concludes with a 45-minute ‘Inside Leadership’ session. During these sessions, the program convenor uses the topic of the day and a series of pre-prepared questions to explore the leadership perspectives and experiences of a practicing Catholic school principal. A variety of principals are invited to participate in ‘Inside Leadership’ sessions: male and female; novices through to significantly experienced; principals with country, remote and metropolitan school experience; and those from co-education and single-gender schools. ‘Inside Leadership’ sessions
are intended to provide aspirants with an opportunity to reflect on theory introduced during the module in the light of the experiences and wisdom of the guest principal. Moreover, interaction between guest principal and aspirants is designed to build collegial support networks. When designing ‘Inside Leadership’ sessions, guest principals are encouraged by the program convenor to use personal stories, anecdotes and metaphors when discussing learning associated with principalship successes and challenges (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2014).

THE ASPIRING PRINCIPALS PROGRAM YEAR ONE: THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS
The program’s first year is predominantly based on a constructive transactional model of leadership as it applies to Western Australian Catholic principalship. However, transformational leadership theory is also introduced during the latter part of the program’s first year. The constructive transactional model of leadership is used to frame an in-depth study of the managerial aspects of the role and the capabilities for effective performance as expressed through the domains and capabilities of the CEWA Leadership Framework (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2014).

Constructive transactional leadership applies primarily to managerial situations and is relational in that it involves an exchange process between the leader and staff (Burns, 1978). In the context of this relationship, the leader invites staff to complete duties and tasks in exchange immediate, tangible rewards (Avolio, 2010; Burns, 1978; Lowe, Avolio, & Dumdum, 2013; Walumbwa & Wernsing, 2013). In Catholic schools, the first stage of constructive transactional leadership occurs at appointment when a staff member signs an employment contract in exchange for salary and other benefits. In return, the staff member becomes accountable to the principal for the professional execution of the role they are employed to perform (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2012a, 2012b).

When recruiting staff, the principal as constructive transactional leader is required to adhere to policy statements and procedures generated by the governing system. When inducting new staff, the principal is expected to assist recruits to understand their roles, performance expectations, rewards for exceptional performance and penalties for under achievement (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2012a, 2012b). When supervising staff, the principal clarifies expectations of staff, works collaboratively to set appropriate goals, consults with staff as they perform their roles, suggests strategies for improvement, provides feedback, praise and recognition when warranted and exchanges rewards for accomplishments (Avolio, 2010; Lowe et al., 2013; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005). Managing in this way, the principal is likely to inspire staff achievement of goals, the result of their direct involvement in the management process (Avolio, 2010; Bass, 1990; Lowe et al., 2013).

Some researchers consider transactional leadership to be an out-dated model for contemporary organisations (Bass, 1990; Silins, 1994). However, research into the needs of beginning principals in the Western Australia Catholic education system concludes that part of the aspirant formation process should focus on the transactional aspects of leadership if schools are to function in an orderly manner (Sayce & Lavery, 2010). Specifically, because Western Australian Catholic schools are required to adhere to CECWA policy statements and procedures, designed by standing committees to meet legislative requirements, principals are required, at times, to lead in this way (Sayce & Lavery, 2010).
YEARS ONE: STRUCTURE AND COMPONENTS

The program’s first year, illustrated in Figure 1, is comprised of six components. These components are 360-degree leadership profiling and coaching; a theoretical program; development of a leadership vision statement; leader-to-leader activities; school board, finance and capital development sub-committee participation; and journaling. The commitment for this year of the program is 14 days of face-to-face professional learning. Aspirants are also required to participate in workplace-based activities and complete tasks at home (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2014).

Component one, 360-degree leadership capability profiling and coaching, commences immediately upon aspirant acceptance into the program. The tool used to generate aspirant 360-degree data is known as the Life Styles Inventory (LSI). The LSI is administered by Human Synergistics, a New Zealand-based consulting firm that focuses on culture change through leadership development. The LSI is based on the research findings of seven noted psychologists: Karen Horney; Clay Lafferty; Abraham Maslow; David McClelland; David McGregor; Carl Rogers; and Harry Stack-Sullivan. Since 1990, the LSI been used by over 1,000,000 leaders from 240,000 organisations to identify and improve leadership capabilities (Human Synergistics, 2014). To formulate the LSI, each aspirant is asked to respond to 240 online, multiple-choice questions regarding their
leadership style and behaviours. Aspirants are also invited to select eight data sources (one senior to them, three at the same level and four subordinate) willing to provide perspectives on their leadership style and behaviours by responding to the same 240 questions. Questionnaire results are presented visually using two circular diagrams called ‘circumplexes’ (Human Synergistics, 2014). An example of aspirant self and data set ‘circumplexes’ is provided in Figure 2. Viewing ‘circumplexes’ side-by-side provides aspirants with an easy-to-interpret, visual representation of their leadership behaviours and style as perceived by themselves and others.

![Figure 2: The LSI 'circumplexes' (Human Synergistics, 2014)](image)

The leadership capabilities presented at 11 o’clock (ability to set realistic goals and achieve them), 12 o’clock (self-actualising capacity), one o’clock (humanistic and encouraging behaviours) and two o’clock (affiliative behaviours) are collectively termed ‘constructive styles’ and represent self-enhancing thinking and behaviours. These thoughts and behaviours indicate an aspirant’s proficiency at setting and accomplishing tasks and his or her level of satisfaction, ability to develop healthy relationships and work effectively with others (Human Synergistics, 2014). The leadership capabilities presented at three o’clock (approval seeking behaviours), four o’clock (conventional practices), five o’clock (dependent relationships) and six o’clock (avoidance behaviours) are collectively termed ‘passive/defensive styles’ and represent self-protecting thinking and behaviours. These thoughts and behaviours indicate an aspirant’s tendency to meet their need for security when interacting with people (Human Synergistics, 2014). The leadership capabilities presented at seven o’clock (oppositional tendencies), eight o’clock (power-based behaviours), nine o’clock (competitive dispositions) and 10 o’clock (perfectionistic tendencies) are collectively termed ‘aggressive/defensive styles’ and represent self-promoting thinking and behaviours. These thoughts and behaviours are used by an aspirant to maintain status and position and fulfil security needs through completion of task-related activities (Human Synergistics, 2014).

The LSI informs aspirants of their predominant leadership style and indicates leadership capability strengths and weaknesses prior to commencement of the program. Generally, leadership capabilities indicated by blue shading (constructive) above the norm are considered strengths
whilst those indicating excessive red (aggressive/defensive) and green (passive/defensive) are considered weakness (Human Synergistics, 2014). Prior to the start of the program's first year, an external consultant and trained coach meets with each aspirant to interpret personal profile data before introducing the cumulative perspective of their data sources and comparing and contrasting the results. Because of the sensitive and potentially confronting nature of the process and results, aspirants are asked not to share their profile with program colleagues (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2014).

Aspirants then enter into a confidential relationship with a trained coach, external to the organisation, for the duration of the program and participate in a total of 10, hour-long coaching sessions. Within coaching sessions, aspirants work with their coach to formulate ISMART goals (Inspirational, Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Results-driven and Time bound). Coaching goals aim to amplify constructive and minimise passive and aggressive-defensive leadership capabilities identified through the LSI (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2014). Once goals are identified, coaches use the GROWTH model of coaching (Goals, Reality, Options, Will, Tactics and Habits) to assist aspirants to identify and implement strategies in their workplaces to achieve stated goals (GROWTH Coaching International, 2009). During the program’s first year, aspirants work with their coach through three, face-to-face coaching sessions spread throughout the year with telephone and email support provided between sessions (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2014).

Component two is a nine-module, 14-day, face-to-face theoretical program facilitated over a 12-month timeframe. The program is informed by the Mandate of the Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia 2009-2015 with content and activities based on the four domains of the CEWA Leadership Framework; the Quality Catholic Schooling (QCS) Framework and school improvement tool; CECWA policy statements and procedures; and the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) Australian Professional Standard for Principals (The AITSL Standard) (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2014).

Following a full day orientation module that presents an overview of the program, aspirants participate in two full day modules based on the Leadership Framework domain of Catholic identity. These modules, ‘Catholic identity’ and ‘the Bishops’ mandate’, are designed to familiarise aspirants with the role of the principal as the faith leader of a Catholic school community. Aspirants study the Mandate of the Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia 2009-2015 and develop an appreciation of the vision of the Bishops’ Conference for the system (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2014). Aspirants also learn about three principalship role dimensions. Firstly, aspirants study the role of the principal as evangeliser of staff, students, their parents and carers and members of the broader school community. Secondly, aspirants examine the requirement of the principal to develop their school as a faith community by, amongst other measures, reflecting the example of Jesus in their attitudes, policies and practices. Thirdly, aspirants explore the importance of fostering dynamic relationships between the school, local parish and diocesan Church (Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn, 2009; Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, 2013; Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2008, 2009; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010). Within both modules, reference is made to the QCS components of ‘Vision and mission’, ‘Evangelisation’, ‘Catholic life and culture’ and ‘Social justice and action’ (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2009) and relevant CECWA policy statements and procedures.
Modules four and five focus on the Leadership Framework domain of stewardship. According to the Leadership Framework, stewardship refers to the responsibility of the Catholic school principal to 'look after things' in four ways. Firstly, the principal is expected to model and promote care for the natural environmental resources at their school and in the broader community (Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, 2013; Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2008; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010). Secondly, the principal is expected to recruit, develop and appraise staff using transparent processes and cater for the wellbeing of both staff and members of the school community (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, 2013; Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2008; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010). Thirdly, the principal is expected to draft, administer and monitor the school budget whilst developing and maintaining school facilities in line with both financial considerations and student needs (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2008; The Ontario Institute for Education Leadership, 2013). Fourthly, the principal is expected to monitor, review and report to Church, government and other authorities to ensure compliance and maintain accountability (Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2008, 2009).

Module four, ‘Stewardship: Understanding system structure and policies’, consists of two full days of professional learning based on the governance structure of the Western Australian Catholic education system. Specifically, the module facilitator guides aspirant understanding of the composition and role of the Bishops’ Conference, the CECWA and the six CECWA Standing Committees and the CEOWA (Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2009). An important part of this module is the study of selected CECWA policy statements and procedures using case studies and input from current and former principals (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2014). Within the module, reference is made to the QCS component of ‘Accountability and compliance’ (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2009) and the AITSL professional practice, ‘Leading the management of the school’ (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011).

In modules five, ‘Stewardship: School finances and capital development planning’ and six, ‘Stewardship: Schools and the law’, aspirants continue exploring the Leadership Framework domain of stewardship. In module four, aspirants experience a full day of professional learning based on school finances and capital development procedures. Within this module, there exists a specific focus on the QCS component of ‘Finances and facilities’ (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2009) and the AITSL professional practice, ‘Leading the management of the school’ (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011). In module six, aspirants spend a full day examining the human resource, industrial relations and legal dimensions of school operations. Content and activities within this module are based on the QCS component, ‘Staff wellbeing’ (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2009), relevant CECWA policy statements and procedures and the AITSL professional practices, ‘Leading the management of the school’ and ‘Developing self and others’ (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011).

Module seven is comprised of three, full days of professional learning based on the Leadership Framework domain of education. This module examines educational leadership as it is defined through selected QCS components from ‘Student learning’ and ‘Student support’ (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2009). Module content and activities are also based on relevant CECWA policy statements and procedures and the AITSL professional practice, ‘Leading teaching and learning’ (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011).
Specifically, aspirants are informed that principals are expected to engender a culture of enquiry amongst staff and students whilst modelling a personal love of learning. This responsibility includes the promotion of professional learning communities amongst teachers, the purpose of which is improvement of teacher knowledge and practice and enhancement of student educational outcomes (Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2008, 2009; Dinham, Anderson, Caldwell, & Weldon, 2011; Dinham, Collarbone, Evans, & Mackay, 2013; DuFour, 2002). Aspirants are also informed that the principal, as educational leader, is required to encourage teachers to integrate Catholic values, where possible, through all curriculum areas (Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2008, 2009; Convey, 2012; Krebbs, 2000).

Module eight is comprised of two, full days of professional learning based on the Leadership Framework domain of community. This topic is presented through three lenses: the QCS components of ‘Engagement with families’; ‘Engagement with parish and Church’; and ‘Wider partnerships’ (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2009). Aspirants review these components alongside relevant CECWA policy statements and procedures and the AITSL professional practice, ‘Developing and working with the community’ (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011). Throughout this module, aspirants develop an understanding that, as principals, they will be expected to develop, promote and sustain the Catholic life of the school community. This role dimension comprises four aspects. Firstly, principals are expected to develop and model constructive and respectful relationships with all members of the school community. Secondly, principals are required to foster safe and inclusive learning environments for students. Thirdly, principals are expected to embed and promote the Gospel values of the common good, subsidiarity, solidarity and participation into policies and practices. Finally, principals are expected to develop structures based on service, collaborative decision-making, participation and cooperation (Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, 2013; Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2008, 2009; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010).

After exploring the four domains of the Leadership Framework, aspirants engage with module nine. This module is comprised of two, full days of professional learning based on the topic of leadership health and wellbeing; a significant area of consternation for beginning principals (Sayce & Lavery, 2010). Both days focus on the nature of stress and emotional labour and are designed to equip aspirants with practical strategies that may be applied to ‘decompress’ or deal effectively with these potentially damaging aspects of the role of the Catholic principal. A case study approach and interactive activities are used throughout these days (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2014).

Component three focuses on the development of aspirant leadership vision statements. This process is longitudinal in that it commences during module four, ‘Stewardship: Understanding system structure and policies’, and continues for the remainder of the program (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2014). The process uses a series of 10 questions based on the work of Daresh (2002) to guide aspirant reflection with regard to their perspectives on a range of principalship dimensions. These dimensions include the role of the principal as faith leader, steward, educational leader and community builder. The process also guides aspirant reflection with regard to their non-negotiable values (Daresh, 2002). Development of leadership vision statements has two goals: assisting aspirants to clarify their leadership values; and define their attraction to Catholic principalship (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2014; Daresh, 2002). It is envisaged that knowledge of self will assist aspirants to gain and maintain a solid footing during the early years of principalship that, in all likelihood, will be turbulent (Catholic
Component four, leader-to-leader interviewing, requires aspirants to participate in four, between-module activities. The activities are scheduled during Terms one (February to April), two (May to July), three (August to October) and four (November and December). Each activity requires aspirants to reflect on a topic pertinent to Catholic principalship before engaging in discussion with their principal and a guest principal allocated to them for the task. For these activities, beginning and experienced principals are selected as guests because of their excellent reviews and willingness to guide and support aspirants. Post-discussion, each aspirant is required to contribute to a group discussion based on their learning. Forum one requires aspirants to reflect on their understanding of Catholic principalship role components and the capabilities required for effective performance. Forum two requires aspirants to identify and consider the factors that enhance their interest in principalship. Forum three requires aspirants to identify and consider the factors that diminish their interest in principalship. The final forum requires aspirants to reflect upon their self-efficacy to commence Catholic principalship (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2014).

This program component has a three-fold purpose. Firstly, these activities aim to develop a professional learning community through which aspirants are able to weigh their principalship intentions and better understand the components, required capabilities, positives and disincentives associated with the Catholic principalship. Secondly, discussion, reflection and online collaboration aim to strengthen aspirant critical thinking skills and build a collegial network with like-minded peers. Finally, it is envisaged that these activities will allow aspirants to build a professional support network with practicing principals. Network members represent a potential source of advice and support for aspirants as they navigate their novice principalship years, a time that may be characterised a sense of loneliness and dislocation from both previous and new peers (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2014; Sayce & Lavery, 2010; Wildy & Clarke, 2008; Wildy et al., 2007).

Component five is designed to augment the constructive transactional leadership capabilities of aspirants by developing them as stewards of school finances and facilities. Upon admission to the program, the Executive Director, CEWA writes to each aspirant’s principal and school board Chair to direct aspirant inclusion on the school board as an observer for the duration of the program. In addition to school board observation, aspirants also participate as an active member on their school finance and capital development sub-committees. This program component is intended to provide aspirants with contextual, real-world experience of the complex, transactional aspects of the Leadership Framework domain of stewardship. These aspects include understanding the school board constitution, working collaboratively with board personnel and developing knowledge with regard to school financial management and capital development planning (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2014).

Component six requires aspirants to submit a 2,500-word journal at the conclusion of the program’s first year (December). The journal provides aspirants with an opportunity to reflect upon their experience of program modules, activities and perspectives regarding Catholic principalship. Aspirants are encouraged by the program convenor to portray their perceptions using a combination of narrative text, images, photographs or other forms of expression. Additionally, aspirants are required to respond to the following questions:
1. What are the role components of Catholic principalship and the capabilities required for effective performance? What features of the program or other factors have influenced your perspectives?

2. What are the attractive aspects of Catholic principalship? What features of the program or other factors have influenced your perspectives?

3. What are the unattractive aspects of Catholic principalship? What features of the program or other factors have influenced your perspectives?

4. Rate your belief in ability to commence Catholic principalship (low, medium or high). Why did you select this rating? What features of the program or other factors have influenced your perspectives? (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2014).

THE ASPIRING PRINCIPALS PROGRAM YEAR TWO: THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS

The program's second year aims to enhance aspirant understanding of their leadership style, behaviours and capability to lead others using two theoretical models: transformational and transcendental leadership. The Catholic principal uses transformational leadership capabilities when attempting to transform or inspire staff to move from a mindset of egocentricity to one that considers the needs of colleagues and achievement of shared vision (Avolio & Yammarino, 2013; Bass, 1990; Burns, 1978; Lowe et al., 2013; Walumbwa & Wernsing, 2013). Although all transformational leaders are different, they generally achieve this shift using a combination of four strategies. These strategies are individual consideration; intellectual stimulation; inspirational motivation; and idealised influence (Avolio & Yammarino, 2013; Bass, 1990; Lowe et al., 2013).

Individual consideration refers to the willingness and capacity of a leader to mentor marginalised staff (Bass, 1990). By taking time to engage in the mentoring process, staff appreciate the care and guidance offered by the leader and are more likely to follow them as they drive achievement of shared vision (Avolio & Yammarino, 2013; Bass, 1990; Lowe et al., 2013). Intellectual stimulation occurs when a leader encourages staff to apply new solutions to existing problems without publically criticising the history of the issue or the mistakes of individuals (Avolio & Yammarino, 2013; Bass, 1990; Lowe et al., 2013). This strategy has the potential to intellectually stimulate staff and inspire the discovery and application of hidden knowledge and skill to achieve shared vision (Marzano et al., 2005). Inspirational motivation is a strategy most often employed by the leader who is naturally charismatic. Inspirational motivation occurs when the leader communicates high performance expectations through dynamic presence, confidence and projection of power (Marzano et al., 2005). Communication in this manner has the potential to generate optimism amongst staff, commitment to the organisation and enthusiasm for achievement of shared vision (Avolio & Yammarino, 2013; Bass, 1990; Lowe et al., 2013). Finally, a leader exercises idealised influence when modelling behaviour sought from staff including exemplary personal achievement, ethical words and actions, appropriate risk taking and consideration of the needs of others before self (Marzano et al., 2005).

In the spirit of Jesus Christ, the ultimate role model for the Catholic principal, the second year of the program also emphasises the importance of transcendental leadership capabilities and seeks to develop aspirant capacity in this regard. Transcendental leadership is a relationship-focused disposition adopted by a leader who seeks to nurture contribution-based exchanges between themselves and the staff they lead (Beckwith, 2011; Kishore & Nair, 2013; Lavery, 2012). In the context of these exchanges, the transcendental leader not only uses transformational leadership capabilities to form relationships with staff, he or she attempts to develop non-hierarchical unity and a reflective, values-centred culture through the use of genuine, collaborative dialogue (Beckwith, 2011; Cardona, 2000; Gardiner, 2006; Kishore & Nair, 2013; Lavery, 2012; Liu, 2007).
The transcendental leader also engages in regular reflective practice, is deeply aware of leadership strengths and weaknesses, is quiet but fully present, open in mind, body and heart, listens unconditionally and models leadership that places service of others before self (Beckwith, 2011; Gardiner, 2006; Kishore & Nair, 2013; Lavery, 2012; Liu, 2007). As a result of these actions, the transcendental leader may assist staff to lead on their own by making decisions and accomplishing goals. Perhaps most importantly, staff may develop a transcendent motivation to serve others (Beckwith, 2011; Gardiner, 2006; Kishore & Nair, 2013; Lavery, 2012; Liu, 2007; Rebore & Walmsley, 2009). As stated previously, this leadership disposition is particularly relevant for the Catholic principal because it emulates the form of leadership enacted by Jesus Christ (Lavery, 2011).

YEAR TWO: STRUCTURE AND COMPONENTS

The program’s second year, illustrated in Figure 3, consists of six, integrated components. These components are continuation of coaching sessions based on aspirant LSI profiles compiled prior to the start of the program; a school improvement project; a theoretical program; continued service on school board and finance and capital development sub-committees; an LSI retest; and journaling. The commitment for this year of the program includes eight days of face-to-face professional learning. Aspirants are also required to participate in workplace-based activities and complete tasks at home (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2014).

**Focus:**

Transformational and transcendental leadership

**Inspiring others to achieve school vision through school improvement**

**Figure 3:** The Aspiring Principals Program: Year two (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2014, p. 13)
During the first full day associated with the second year, the purpose and structure of the program is introduced by the program convenor. On this day, aspirants also work to achieve three goals related to component one, use of LSI data and coaching sessions and two, the school improvement project. Firstly, aspirants revisit their LSI profiles and assess progress made against coaching goals established during the program’s first year. Secondly, aspirants develop and/or refine goals that could be used within the coaching sessions scheduled for the forthcoming year. Thirdly, aspirants generate ideas for their school improvement project to be conducted at their schools over the course of the year (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2014).

The school improvement project requires aspirants to select one of the components from the QCS school improvement tool and lead the review and improvement process using the school improvement tool sanctioned by the CECWA. The process involves five steps. Firstly, aspirants are required to work with their principals and coaches to select a QCS component for review. Secondly, aspirants form a review team comprised of relevant members of staff and/or students, their parents and carers and members of their broader school communities. Thirdly, aspirants lead their teams through a process to review school performance against QCS component descriptors. Fourthly, aspirants lead the collection of evidence to confirm their team’s rating for the component. Finally, aspirants lead the formulation, implementation, evaluation and refinement of an improvement plan for their selected component. These plans are comprised of improvement goals and a range of practical and achievable strategies that could be implemented at their schools to affect improvement. Aspirants are also expected to work with their principals to integrate their component improvement plan with their school’s strategic plan (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2009, 2014).

The project has a three-fold purpose. Firstly, the project provides aspirants with an opportunity to lead and experience the school improvement process, a requirement of Western Australian Catholic school principalship. Secondly, leadership of the project provides aspirants with an opportunity to trial strategies devised within coaching sessions to amplify leadership capability strengths and minimise weaknesses. Thirdly, the project provides aspirants with a practical way to enhance their transformational and transcendental leadership prowess by applying theory and tools introduced during the theoretical program (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2014).

Beyond the orientation day, aspirants collaborate with their coaches, allocated during the program’s first year, to schedule seven, hour-long coaching sessions over the course of the year. As described previously, the role of the coach is to assist aspirants to develop iSMART goals and devise and enact leadership capability improvement strategies through their day-to-day leadership roles and their leadership of the school improvement project. Coaches also fulfil the role of ‘critical friend’ to aspirants as they conduct their projects (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2014).

Component three is a six-module, seven-day theoretical program facilitated over a 12-month timeframe. The program runs concurrently with coaching sessions and aspirant school improvement projects. Specifically, aspirants participate in four, full-day ‘Transforming leadership’ modules. The focus of these modules is transformational and transcendental leadership theory and tools. To develop transformational and transcendental knowledge and capabilities, aspirants are expected to apply theories and tools within their coaching sessions, school improvement projects and day-to-day roles as assistant or deputy principals.
As most aspirants consider applying for principalship at this point in the program, they also participate in a full-day module dedicated to the principal appointment process and the use of transformational and transcendental leadership language within both the application and interview processes. The final component of the theoretical program is a two-day, overnight, health and wellbeing retreat. During the retreat, aspirants participate in a number of reflection-based activities designed to stimulate exploration of their health and wellbeing including proactive strategies that could be implemented to produce improved health outcomes both now and into the future (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2014).

At some point during each face-to-face theoretical module associated with the program’s second year, the program convenor facilitates three specific activities. The first activity provides aspirants with an opportunity to develop, refine and share their emerging leadership vision statements initiated during the program’s first year. The second activity encourages aspirants to work with a critical friend from the cohort to share the progress, successes and challenges associated with their coaching sessions, LSI capability refinement and school improvement project. The third activity provides space for aspirants to debrief with a program colleague and the group with regard to their application of one transformational or transcendental tool, introduced during the previous ‘Transforming leadership’ workshop, at their schools (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2014).

Component four, participation as an observer on the school board and member of the finance and capital development sub-committees, is designed to continue development of aspirant constructive transactional leadership capability. Prior to the conclusion of the program’s second year (October), aspirants complete component five, a second LSI profile known as an ‘LSI retest.’ Where possible, the same eight data sources used to formulate their original profiles (one senior to them, three at the same level and four subordinate) are invited to answer the same 240 online questions regarding aspirant leadership capabilities. Cumulative data source responses are used to form a second 360-degree leadership profile for each aspirant. Once data has been processed, aspirants meet with an external consultant to debrief the self and data source ‘circumplexes.’ During the debrief, the consultant compares and contrasts the final LSI with that completed prior to the commencement of the program, the purpose of which is evaluation of the leadership capability change process. Specifically, aspirants are able to see whether or not they have been successful in amplifying constructive (blue) and minimising passive (green) and aggressive-defensive (red) leadership capabilities (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2014).

The final component is aspirant construction and submission of a 2,500-word journal at the conclusion of the program (December). As was the case at the conclusion of the program’s first year, the journal provides aspirants with an opportunity to reflect upon their experience of program modules, activities and perspectives regarding Catholic principalship. Aspirants are encouraged by the program convenor to portray their perceptions using a combination of narrative text, images, photographs or other forms of expression. Additionally, aspirants are required to respond to the following questions:

1. What are the role components of Catholic principalship and the capabilities required for effective performance? What features of the program or other factors have influenced your perspectives?

2. What are the attractive aspects of Catholic principalship? What features of the program or other factors have influenced your perspectives?

3. What are the unattractive aspects of Catholic principalship? What features of the program or other factors have influenced your perspectives?
4. Rate your belief in ability to commence Catholic principalship (low, medium or high). Why did you select this rating? What features of the program or other factors have influenced your perspectives? (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2014).

ABSENCE
For collegial and administrative purposes, it is important that participants complete the program in the allotted one-year timeframe. Although successful completion of the program requires participant attendance at all modules, it is acknowledged that absence due to extenuating circumstances occurs from time to time (e.g. unexpected illness). In these circumstances, participants are entitled to request permission from the program organiser, Dr Shane Glasson (Project Leader, Talent Identification), to complete up to one module by correspondence. This replacement task is a mutually-agreed and appropriately researched and referenced reflection paper (1,000 words) based on the module topic. Please note that holiday plans and social events conflicting with program modules do not constitute acceptable reasons for absence. Further, periods of long service leave should be planned around module offerings.

If illness prevents attendance at a module, affected participants must contact Kayci Carpenter (Administrative Assistant, Leadership, School Improvement Directorate) on (08) 6380 5285 or carpenter.kayci@ceo.wa.edu.au prior to the start of the module. Planned absences must be negotiated with Dr Shane Glasson (Project Leader, Talent Identification) on (08) 6380 5234 or glasson.shane@ceo.wa.edu.au. Absence beyond the one module limit will result in termination of enrolment for that year. In exceptional circumstances, a participant may be permitted to complete outstanding modules the following year.

ONLINE EVALUATION
The evaluation of each module is critical for the formulation of feedback for program facilitators and the ongoing refinement of program content and activities. To facilitate this process, participants will receive an email after every workshop from Kayci Carpenter. This email will contain a link to an online survey containing a series of quantitative and qualitative questions. To permit time for participants to complete the survey, the link will remain open for five days. Note that responses are confidential and that the tool does not permit identification of individuals.

VENUE
The venue for all program days is the Newman Siena Centre (33 Williamstown Rd, Doubleview). If accepted into the program, participants will receive an email from Marnie Platt confirming module dates and venues. Participants will also receive an email reminder prior to the commencement of each module with information regarding room changes, aspirant requirements and other program-related specifics.

COSTS
This is a free program for school-based and CEOWA aspirants with funding provided through the CECWA. However, schools are expected to fund the 13 days of teacher relief associated with the modules planned during term time (i.e. nine days during the orientation year and four days during the enrichment year). At the end of each year of the program, on the provision that the aspirant meets all obligations detailed in the Expectations section of this document, a 100% teacher relief reimbursement payment will be made to each aspirant’s school. Note that the costs associated with aspirant travel, accommodation and catering from regional and remote locations (excluding Mandurah) will be covered by the CECWA. However, costs incurred via aspirant travel by vehicle will not be reimbursed. Rather, aspirants are encouraged to claim mileage on their personal
income tax return. Consultation with the Australian Taxation Office regarding record maintenance is recommended.

**CERTIFICATION**
Participants who successfully attend and participate in all program components will receive a citation for modules undertaken in addition to a certificate of completion signed by the Executive Director, CEWA.

**TEACHER REGISTRATON BOARD OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA (TRBWA) PROFESSIONAL RENEWAL**
TRBWA require the recording of professional learning for renewal of membership. Registered members can record details of the modules completed as detailed in this program online. For further detail, refer to the TRBWA website at trb.wa.gov.au

**UNIVERSITY CREDITS**
Participation in the program’s orientation and enrichment years and completion of assessment tasks entitles participants to apply for two units of advanced standing from a Master of Education degree at the University of Notre Dame Australia (UNDA), one unit for each year associated with the program. The following conditions apply.

**The Orientation Year**
Participants in the Aspiring Principals Program orientation year may elect to write and submit three research papers for assessment. Participants who choose this option are required to reference their work to an acceptable academic standard using APA referencing. Specific assessment details including topics, assessment due dates, word limits and referencing protocols will be distributed and discussed during the opening module of the program, ‘The Aspiring Principals Program Orientation Year: Setting the Scene.’

**The Enrichment Year**
Participants in the Aspiring Principal’s Program enrichment year may elect to write and submit two research papers for assessment. As is the case for the program’s orientation year, participants who choose this option are required to reference their work to an acceptable academic standard using APA referencing. Specific assessment details including topics, assessment due dates, word limits and referencing protocols will be distributed and discussed during the opening module of the enrichment year: ‘The Aspiring Principals Program Enrichment Year: Setting the Scene.’

Participants who elect to complete and submit the assessment tasks are eligible to apply for advanced standing from ED6031 Contemporary Issues in Education or the elective unit from a Master of Education (Leadership and Management) or the Master of Education (Religious Education) degree. Participants who have already completed these units are eligible to apply for advanced standing from one non-compulsory unit associated with a Master of Education (Leadership and Management) or Master of Education (Religious Education) degree.

Post-completion of the program and assessment tasks, the CEOWA will send a certificate of completion and a letter to relevant participants, countersigned by the Executive Director, CEWA and the Dean, School of Education at UNDA, advising completion of all requirements associated with the program. Within the letter, participants will be notified that the advanced standing potential associated with this program is 10 years from the date of the letter as per UNDA regulations. Program participants who are yet to begin a Master of Education degree will be instructed to
contact the Coordinator of Postgraduate programs at the UNDA School of Education to apply for admission. Existing Master of Education students will be advised to contact the Coordinator to organise advanced standing and initiate further unit enrolment within the Master of Education (Leadership and Management) or Master of Education (Religious Education) degree.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE
To be considered for selection, completed application forms must be converted to PDF and emailed to Dr Shane Glasson (Project Leader, Talent Identification) at glasson.shane@ceo.wa.edu.au by Friday, 7 October 2016 (Term three school holidays, week two).

ENQUIRIES
Please direct enquiries regarding this program to Dr Shane Glasson (Project Leader, Talent Identification) on (08) 6380 5234 or glasson.shane@ceo.wa.edu.au
REFERENCES


Catholic Education Office of Western Australia. (2009). Quality Catholic Schooling (QCS) self-review and improvement framework for Catholic schools in Western Australia. Leederville, Western Australia: Catholic Education Centre.


Kishore, K., & Nair, A. (2013). Transcendental leaders are the moral fiber of an organization. *Journal Of Business Management & Social Sciences Research, 2*(7), 57-62.


