

Martin, Mairin, 2008, *Teachers' Perceptions of the Role of the Irish Primary school Principal: Is there a difference in a Disadvantaged School?*

ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

The post of the contemporary Irish primary school principal has changed dramatically in the past decade or so. The speed with which the role has evolved in this time is a matter of grave concern for those in positions of leadership and those who work with these leaders on a daily basis. As a school community mirrors society at large, recent developments in legislation, societal changes, globalisation and inclusion have all contributed to the challenges faced by the contemporary Irish primary school principal. Teachers within the primary school community are now very aware of the challenges faced by senior management and specifically those encountered by school leaders. This dissertation explores their perceptions of the role of the contemporary Irish primary school principal.

This writer's investigation is prompted by the assumption that there is currently a shortage of applicants for the position of principal in many Irish primary schools. The study focuses on the way the post of primary school leader has evolved in the past decade or so. It further analyses the reasons why teachers may be reluctant to apply for principalship in the primary school sector. It examines what steps may be taken to encourage potential school leaders to apply for principalship. It also considers the need for a recognised leadership qualification as a prerequisite for the post of primary school principal. In addition to that, comparisons are drawn between the perceptions of teachers employed in disadvantaged schools versus those employed in other schools.