

An Ethnographic Narrative of Hope for School Leadership in a Rural Educational Setting

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ABSTRACT This ethnographic narrative, which is theoretically framed by appreciative inquiry, attends to the life of a school principal in a rural school in South Africa. The aim of this longitudinal ethnographic narrative inquiry was to uncover the life of a school principal in a rural school to unmask how he makes meaning of his challenging role as a school principal. Observational and conversational data of how Nathaniel (pseudonym) sees himself as a professional and how he performs well, despite the taxing demands, which move beyond the context of what is traditionally known as school, are presented. The qualitative data analysis, using content and narrative analysis, revealed how a dedicated principal leads and manages pupils, staff, parents and the local community in a context of public scrutiny.