

Running head: TEACHER LEADERS AS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROVIDERS:
A CASE STUDY

TEACHER LEADERS AS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROVIDERS:

A CASE STUDY

by

MICHELLE L. ROSEN

A dissertation submitted to

The Graduate School of Education

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

In fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree

Doctor of Education

written under the direction of

Dr. Alisa Belzer

and approved by

Dr. Alisa Belzer, Chair

Dr. Peter Bastardo

Dr. Daniel Battey

New Brunswick, New Jersey

January 2014

TEACHER LEADERS AS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROVIDERS: A CASE STUDY

© 2014

Michelle L. Rosen

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

TEACHER LEADERS AS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROVIDERS: A CASE STUDY

ABSTRACT

High stakes assessments mandated by 2001 No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) have increased the focus on student achievement causing a closer examination of the link between student achievement and teacher quality. Teacher training, through professional development, has been documented to be one of the most important factors in student achievement and may be one of the few indicators of student success that a school can control. As a result of a shift in beliefs and practices regarding professional development, current research has pointed in the direction of encouraging schools to embrace a professional development model led and supported by teacher leaders.

This study's purpose was to examine teacher leaders who receive their own professional development through a University Literacy Center, and what they do as professional development providers in their schools. The teacher leaders receive their own professional development from the Rutgers Center for Literacy Development. The specific research questions designed were: What do teacher leaders who receive professional development through a Literacy Center do as professional development providers once they return to their schools? What influences their activities? What are the supports and obstacles they face in doing so?

The sample was comprised of three teacher leaders from a New Jersey District and their respective three principals. A case study was used to describe factors that influence the professional development that teacher leaders provided. Data collection sources were professional development session observations, teacher leader and principal interviews, and artifacts. Data from the interviews, professional development session observations, and examinations of relevant documents were used in order to discover emerging patterns. Data collection and analysis occurred simultaneously, as is the preferred and effective strategy in qualitative research design.

The data indicated the following factors influencing the design and implementation of the professional development: teacher leader roles and internal resources, external resources, and relationships, along with the associated challenges. Used as a vehicle to transmit, facilitate and support ongoing teachers' learning opportunities, teacher leaders can be necessary elements in the school's organizational structure. Additionally, professional development organizations such as the Rutgers Center for Literacy Development can use this data to inform their offerings.

TEACHER LEADERS AS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROVIDERS: A CASE STUDY

Acknowledgements

I am deeply grateful to the many people in my life who have supported me on this journey they call the EdD. Without you by my side, none of this would have been possible. Thank you to my committee chair and advisor, Dr. Alisa Belzer for your continuous support throughout this process. Your commitment to my work, constructive feedback, and guidance is immeasurable. Thank you to my committee members, Dr. Daniel Battey and Dr. Peter Bastardo for your commitment, support, and ideas. I am forever grateful. My most sincere thanks to my cohort without whom this journey could not have become the positive experience it has been. Thank you to the “Brewster” School District for supporting my study and especially the teacher leaders who helped make this all possible. Thank you to my family and friends for the support and words of encouragement along the way. Finally, thank you to my husband Greg and children, Griffin and Mollie, for their endless encouragement. I love you forever.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
Teacher Leadership Defined.....	4
History of Teacher Leadership.....	7
Making the Case for Teacher Leadership.....	9
Shared Leadership.....	10
Problem Statement.....	11
Purpose of Study.....	13
Organization of the Study.....	14
Chapter 2: Literature Review.....	16
Theoretical Framework.....	17
Defining the Role of the Teacher Leader.....	19
Effective Professional Development.....	21
Teacher Leaders as Professional Development Providers.....	25
Turnkey Training.....	26
Coaching.....	29
Contextual Impacts on Teacher Leaders as Professional Development Providers.....	31
The Principal and the Teacher Leader.....	32
School Culture.....	37
Barriers to Teacher Leadership.....	39
Relational Barriers.....	40
Structural Challenges.....	42
Effective Literacy Instruction.....	43
Conclusion.....	47
Chapter 3: Methodology.....	49
Sample.....	50
Luann.....	52
Allison.....	54
Mindy.....	56
Principals.....	57
Setting.....	59
Data Collection Procedures.....	64
Observations.....	65
Interviews.....	71
Artifacts.....	72
Role of the Researcher.....	73
Data Analysis.....	74
Validity.....	77
Limitations.....	78

TEACHER LEADERS AS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROVIDERS: A CASE STUDY

Chapter 4: Findings.....	79
What do Teacher Leaders Do?.....	81
Influences on Teacher Led Professional Development.....	88
Internal Resources.....	89
Identifying Professional Development Needs.....	94
Analysis of Assessment Results.....	94
Initiatives and Mandates.....	97
Professional Judgment.....	99
Resources.....	103
University Literacy Center	104
Teacher Leader Monthly Meetings.....	108
Relationships.....	110
Principal and Teacher Leader Relationships.....	111
Teacher Leader and Teacher Relationships.....	115
Teacher Leader to Teacher Leader Relationships.....	118
Challenges.....	119
Summary.....	124
Chapter 5: Conclusion.....	125
Summary of Findings.....	127
Discussion.....	132
Limitations.....	135
Recommendations.....	137
Future Research.....	141
Conclusion.....	142
Resources.....	146
Appendix A: Teacher Leader Interview Guide.....	167
Appendix B: Pre/Post Professional Development Interview Guide.....	169
Appendix C: Principal Interview Guide.....	170

Chapter 1: Introduction

The 2001 No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) is based on the premise that setting high standards and establishing measurable goals can improve educational outcomes. High stakes assessments mandated by NCLB have increased the focus on student achievement (Nichols, Glass, Berliner, 2006). However, difficulties meeting performance standards related to NCLB have caused closer examination of the link between student achievement and teacher quality. This evidence-based relationship has highlighted the importance of improving the effectiveness of teacher professional development (Yoon, Duncan, Lee, Scarloss, & Shapley, 2007; Little, 1994). In-service teacher training, through professional development, has been documented as one of the most important factors in student achievement and may in fact be one of the few indicators of student success that a school can control (Yoon, et. al., 2007; Guskey, 2000). The U.S. Department of Education, “confirms that teachers are the single most important factor in raising student achievement” (NCLB, 2007). Thus, high quality, on-going professional development is essential in promoting teacher growth, quality classroom instruction, and ultimately, student learning (Yoon et. al., 2007; Guskey, 2000; Hawley, & Valli, 1998).

Given today’s current climate of high stakes accountability and the related emphasis on teacher quality, it is more important than ever for teachers to define their roles, in part, as lifelong learners through participation in professional development (Reeves, 2010). This, in turn, creates an urgency to increase the effectiveness of professional development; it is a critical component in advancing student achievement (Strong, 2010; Darling-Hammond, 1996). However, professional development in education can often be overlooked and/or poorly implemented. While many federal, state and local mandates require that teachers have professional development plans, the ways in which those professional development plans are carried out is not always given adequate attention. Another issue jeopardizing implementation of quality professional development is the manner in

which it is prescribed. We often see policy makers dictating what teachers should be learning, or calling for new programs without the necessary and/or appropriate professional development. This top-down approach causes ineffective (perhaps even non-existent) implementation of professional development. To address these problems, examination of professional development models is timely as a way to investigate what actually does enhance teacher learning and, ultimately, student achievement.

Professional development in many schools and districts has been undergoing a transformation: changing from the traditional emphasis on one-day workshops (often provided out of district, or by outside consultants that come in) to a more innovative and increasingly common, in-district, teacher-led, and consistently sustained professional learning (Harwell, 2003; DuFour, DuFour, Eaker, & Many, 2006; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Darling-Hammond, 2009). This is occurring for a few reasons. First, mostly gone are the paid professional development days that were commonly written into teachers' contracts. School budgets in most districts have been cut significantly over the past few years. Therefore, teachers are less frequently granted permission to attend costly, out of district workshops. Many schools have cut costs by refusing to pay either workshop registration fees or substitute teachers' pay to cover teachers' absences while attending them, thus eliminating teachers' funding and time to attend out of district professional development. Similarly, districts frequently do not have the funds to bring in expensive presenters and programs. Ironically, this economic reality is perhaps a blessing in disguise, given that the old one-day workshop approach to professional development has been found to be generally ineffective, whereas the new shift towards professional development that is sustained and embedded in teachers' professional contexts has been found to be more effective (Harwell, 2003; DuFour, DuFour, Eaker, & Many, 2006; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Darling-Hammond, 2009). Teachers who participate

in one-day workshops are likely neither to retain information they were taught, nor to share it with colleagues (Pancucci, 2007).

Conversely, teachers who work together, share ideas, and provide critical feedback with each other over time are more likely to improve their skills as they collaborate with colleagues (Harwell, 2003; DuFour & Marzano, 2011; Reeves, 2008; Danielson, 2006; Liberman & Miller, 2004). This typically multifaceted type of professional development, which is often supported by the school, enables teachers to experience meaningful opportunities to increase their effectiveness and enhance their core teaching strategies (Cohen & Hill, 2001; Hallman, Wenzel & Fendt, 2004; Hawley & Valli, 1999) as they simultaneously create a community of practice which has been documented to be an effective context for learning (Wenger, 1999). Research that points to the ineffectiveness of one-day workshops as well as the effectiveness of teacher led, ongoing, on-site professional development has been a catalyst for engaging teacher leaders as in-district professional development facilitators. When schools have an effective professional development provider onsite, the potential for enhanced learning opportunities is increased (Harwell, 2003; Fullan, 2006). Outside professional developers who run one-shot workshops work with teachers for only a few hours and rarely get to know them, the context in which they work, or their particular needs and challenges. Alternatively, teacher leaders have the potential to facilitate more effective and sustainable professional development.

This type of professional development encourages ongoing learning opportunities infused with research-based strategies (Harwell, 2003) based on specific needs, while creating a community of learners who can provide critical feedback and support throughout the learning process (for both teacher leaders and teachers). Teacher leaders provide the support mechanism to create a content rich learning environment with a supportive and meaningful process for learning (DuFour, 2006, Stoelinga & Mangin, 2010; Coburn & Russell, 2008). Teacher led professional development tends to

be more collaborative as a result of teacher leaders being more familiar with their colleagues, students and policies and procedures within the schools.

Teacher Leadership Defined

As a result of a shift in beliefs and practices regarding professional development, current research has pointed in the direction of encouraging schools to embrace teacher led professional development which has been shown to be effective (Chubb & Moe, 1990; Furman, 1999; Mangin & Stoelinga, 2008; Mangin & Stoelinga, 2010). Here, teachers are positioned as catalysts and leaders of change (Cohen & Hill, 2001; Garet, Porter Desimone, Birman & Yoon, 2001). By creating instructional leadership positions such as master teachers, coaches, teacher leaders, and mentors, the goal is to increase teacher knowledge and improve instructional practices and student outcomes through teacher led, sustained, meaningful professional learning (Mangin & Stoelinga, 2008; Mangin & Stoelinga, 2010; Strike 2007; Mangin & Stoelinga, 2008; Mangin & Stoelinga, 2010; Strike 2007).

As Silva, et al. (2000) have pointed out, while teacher leadership roles began more as managerial type positions; they now are often positioned to mobilize others to share aspirations and attitudes that express a sense of responsibility for improving learner outcomes (Swanson, 2000). Teacher leaders often take part in ensuring that instructional improvements are either implemented or challenged, depending on how the initiatives will affect the students (Ackerman & Mackenzie, 2006). In this way, they can contribute to the need for school improvement which has been building for decades. While initiatives to improve student achievement have come and gone, the underlying idea has remained the same: more innovative thinking is needed to meet new demands. While not a completely new innovation, teacher leadership is a way to accomplish this. Utilizing teacher leaders effectively can benefit schools through increasing teacher quality and ultimately improving student achievement.

There are many variations in the specifics of how researchers define the role of teacher leader. However, throughout the literature, there is general agreement that teacher leaders assume the role and responsibility of working with colleagues and administrators to improve student learning (Fullan, 1993; Lambert, 2002; York-Barr & Duke, 2004). Whitsett and Riley (2003) expand the description of teacher leadership adopted from Hersey and Blanchard (1982) as being the process of influencing the activities of an individual or group in efforts directed towards goal achievement in a given situation. In other words, teacher leaders, as defined in the research, are positioned to create learning opportunities to improve practice for other teachers, similar to Katzenmeyer and Moller's (2001) assertion that teacher leaders are teachers who "lead within and beyond the classroom, influence others toward improved educational practice, and identify with and contribute to a community of teacher leaders" (p. 6). Strodl's description of teacher leaders is similar to Katzenmeyer and Moller's (2001) as they both describe leadership as the influence a person asserts upon the behavior of others. Strodl adds that leadership is the quality of a person to motivate people to change individual behavior to cooperative group behavior and to give direction and purpose to the lives of other people; successful leaders depend on trust and shared decision-making, rather than power.

In addition, teacher leaders influence the work of school improvement practices (Durant & Frost, 2003; Leithwood & Riehl, 2003; Pugalle, Frykholm & Shaka, 2001; York-Barr & Duke, 2004). Silva, Gimber, and Nolan (2000) describe teacher leadership as "sliding the doors open" (p. 2) and influencing other teachers' instructional practice while increasing student achievement through collaboration and discussion. Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) and Wetig (2002) agree that teacher leaders step up from traditional classroom roles to be visionaries, problem solvers, organizers, and communicators; they pursue improvements and assume responsibility in promoting others to

improve teaching practices. Katzenmeyer and Moller (1996) further supported teacher leadership with the notion that teacher leaders contribute strength and creativity to schools.

Teacher leadership can be understood as both a formal and informal role within the educational environment. Formal teacher leadership is both a behavior and a position. Teachers may be viewed as informal teacher leaders when they help another teacher with a specific task without it being part of their “job description,” while formal teacher leaders may be assigned the role by a building administrator. Formal teacher leadership, as part of a complex educational system, offers the opportunity to facilitate better interaction, school change and ultimately increased student achievement (Barthm 2001; DuFour & Eaker, 1998; Lieberman & Walker, 2007; Muchmore, Cooley & Crowell, 2004). In their role, teacher leaders may help create a community of learners and leaders. Exact definitions vary among experts concerning the role of formal and informal teacher leaders; however the positive externalities associated with teacher-led professional development are universally agreed upon.

Since the ultimate goal of teacher led professional development is to improve student success, whether a teacher leader is effective is important. To be most effective, teacher leaders need to possess certain attributes that will allow them to create a community of learners. Both Katzenmeyer and Moller’s (2001) teacher leadership study and York-Barr and Duke’s (2004) meta-analysis of twenty years of research on teacher leadership describe teacher leaders as typically being self-starters, professionals who go beyond their job descriptions. Teacher leaders are professionals who hold a clear understanding of their purpose, professionally and personally, and have true love for life-long learning (Krisko, 2001) who can respond well to both children and adults, possess organizational skills, and use specific as well as varied strategies to meet differentiated needs and display leadership qualities (Kull & Bailey, 1993).

History of Teacher Leadership

Conceptions of teacher leadership have evolved over time. They began with a focus on administrative tasks, they are now seen as facilitating improvement in the quality of classroom instruction. This concept stems from the increased responsibilities of the principal as both the manager and instructional leader of the school. Positioning teacher leaders effectively encouraged the shift from the principal as the sole instructional leader and towards a collaborative approach to teacher professional development Gimbert and Nolan (2000), Wynee (2001). The history of teacher leadership is described by Silva, Gimbert, and Nolan (2000) as a three-phase evolution. During the first phase, more than five decades ago, teacher leaders took on instructional administrative roles in schools, such as department chair, head teacher, master teacher, and union representative. These positions created a structure that isolated teacher leaders from their teacher colleagues, much like the barrier that often exists between teachers and administrators. When teachers took up these leadership roles, they gained power and influence, which threatened traditional lines of control. This phase of teacher leadership focused on system-oriented efficiency and effectiveness, and did not focus on influencing others with regard to classroom practice. In fact, the concept of influencing others with regard to classroom practice was ignored, causing another wave of teacher leadership to be explored.

Silva, Gimbert and Nolan (2000) assert that the second wave of teacher leadership emerged in response to the first wave's shortcomings. The shortcomings were related to instructional leadership in the way it lacked influence with regard to improving classroom practice. This second wave of teacher leadership capitalized on teachers' instructional knowledge and was aimed at improving classroom practice. Positions such as team leaders and curriculum developer emerged, and teacher led staff development opportunities encouraged teacher leaders to work with their peers in a formal, yet collaborative manner not seen in the hierarchical structure of the first wave. This

type of teacher leadership is prevalent in many schools today. While the second wave showed slight improvements in ways teacher leaders worked with colleagues to improve instructional quality, failed school reform efforts were still prevalent. While the idea of employing teacher leaders in a more instructional capacity was strategic, the models created lacked adequate substance to make significant changes.

The third wave, which emerged in the 1990's, closely followed the second. This phase marked increased collaboration and informal leadership: teachers helping other teachers. In the third wave, the lines blurred between formal and informal teacher leadership roles. The ideas and structures of the second and third waves can be readily found in the most recent literature, which demonstrates a positive model of informal and formal teacher leadership roles (Silva, Gimbert, & Nolan, 2000). As a result of the increased collaboration among teachers, this third wave of teacher leader models yielded more successful results.

This brief history indicates that originally a teacher leader's basic role was as a representative of the school, not an actual leader or change agent (Whitsett, 2003). Administrative type teacher leadership emerged as schools and the demands on building administrators grew. However, changes in definition and responsibilities of teacher leaders can be traced to a shift in ideology due to new and fluctuating pressures on the building principal. This shift has created a need for effective teacher leadership which not only involves changing from top-down hierarchal to a more flattened school structure, but also requires a new role definition for the position. Second and third wave conceptions of teacher leadership differ greatly from traditional concepts of leadership due to a shift from top-down to shared-decision making, which emphasizes the importance of teamwork (Wynne, 2001). The progression of waves highlights the concept that teacher leaders are an integral component of the school's infrastructure. They should be positioned in a role that encourages true collaboration as the schools' instructional leaders. Today, the idea is to move from the teacher leader

performing less in managerial roles and more as a professional developer who can support professional growth and learning among colleagues and facilitate school improvement.

Making the Case for Teacher Leadership

The finding that teacher leadership contributes to school improvement is central to much of the teacher leadership literature. The literature suggests many ways that schools can benefit from effective teacher leadership (Barth, 1991; Crowther; Kaagan, Ferguson, & Hann, 2002; Donaldson, 2006; Du Four & Eaker, 1998). However, Donaldson (2006) recognizes schools as unusual organizations because they fail to fully benefit from traditional leadership models due to ineffective implementation. He suggests that a way to address this is to take a more collaborative approach, incorporating teacher leaders. This suggestion is based on research highlighting improved school environments when teachers work together. Improved school environments are a result of increased teacher quality, which is linked to increased student achievement. Barth (2001), DuFour and Eaker (1998), Lieberman (2007), and Cooley, Marx and Crowell (2004) similarly reported that teacher leadership is essential to student achievement. Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) suggested that teacher leaders, who engage in their own professional development, increase their own knowledge, which in turn empowers them to increase other teachers' knowledge. According to Ackerman and Mackenzie (2006), teacher leaders could close the gap between an ideal school setting and the current reality. Research indicates that the foundations of school improvement are based on teacher leaders (Durrant and Frost, 2003; Hickey & Harris, 2005; Leithwood & Rhiel, 2003; Lord & Miller, 2000; Mayo; 2002; Surrana & Moss, 2004). In addition, teacher leaders benefit schools by sharing responsibility with the principals as their duties as instructional leaders increase.

Shared Leadership

In this age of high stakes testing and the introduction of the new Common Core Standards, school principals are increasingly expected to provide instructional leadership related to content

knowledge even though they are not necessarily equipped, nor do they have the time, to do so (Stein & Nelson, 2002; Firestone & Rhiel, 2005). Given principals' heightened workloads, including human resources management, managing high stakes testing, and now content knowledge responsibilities, doing the job well is becoming increasingly difficult (Elmore, 1996; Elmore & Burney, 1996; Firestone & Rhiel, 2005; Stein & Nelson, 2002). Principals' additional responsibilities serve as an impetus to use a shared leadership approach. This type of shared leadership works when the practice and interaction are shared amongst teachers and administrators (Spillane, Healey & Parise, 2009; Hulpia, Devos, Roseel, 2009). This suggests the importance of making teaching public, for example, by teachers observing each other and sharing ideas as a means to improve. Research suggests that schools' culture and instructional learning capacities are heightened when a shared leadership model is implemented (Elmore, 1996; Elmore & Burney, 1996; Firestone & Rhiel, 2005; Spillane, Healey & Parise, 2009; Hulpia, Devos, Roseel, 2009). While principals tend to focus attention on teacher evaluation and instructional practices, a shared leadership approach can position teacher leaders as responsible for professional development as well. It is critical to understand that shared leadership should not simply be the principal delegating tasks to teachers to off-load responsibilities due to a busy schedule; rather, it should reflect an understanding of the interdependency of the leaders, followers, and the situation (Spillane, 2009). Utilizing teacher leaders as professional development providers for their colleagues is one way to accomplish this goal.

The increase in educational accountability has created a strong need for shared leadership, while the process of educating children effectively has become increasingly complicated (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996) and as a result, changes in organizational structure, especially leadership models, have become necessary (Donaldson, 2006; Fullan, 2006). This means administrators and teacher leaders must work collaboratively as a way to handle the increasing pressure. The push for teacher leaders highlights their potential as an integral part of a school's administrative team focused on

instructional improvement. In order to manage the increased pressures, teacher leaders can share responsibilities with administrators. In a distributed leadership model, they can work to build trust and develop rapport among faculty, diagnose organizational conditions, deal with processes related to curriculum, manage the workload of the staff and build skills and confidence in others in order to help the school run smoothly (Ackerman & Makenzie, 2006; Lieberman, Saxl, & Miles, 1998; York-Barr & Duke, 2004). Potential success for schools using formal teacher leaders in a shared leadership structure is based on their ability to communicate meaningful information and build relationships among organizational members (Pearmann, 1998). As a way of accomplishing this goal, teacher leaders have to be involved in the decision making process as part of the school improvement cycle. Yet schools, as currently structured, often depend too heavily on the principal as the sole leader, exercising control in isolation. Schools depend on skilled, effective principals in order to improve, but need to also move towards a greater dependence on teacher leaders in order to maintain a level of self-sustained growth, as is evidenced by a shared leadership approach (Donahoe, 1993).

Problem Statement

The Rutgers Center for Literacy Development was created in 2006 at the Graduate School of Education. The Center is a multi-faceted professional development organization whose mission is to provide ongoing learning opportunities for educators in order to enhance literacy achievement in schools. One of the Center's initiatives stems from the current interest in professional development and a clear focus on developing teacher leaders. Research on teacher change shows those who are involved in networks that are both social and academic are more likely to implement change in instructional practices compared to teachers who are not (Coburn & Russell, 2008; Pannucci, 2007). In an effort to put this finding into practice, the Center provides network meetings where all members meet as a group on the university's campus (as well as onsite professional development at schools). Center staffers view the network meetings as a critical element in meeting its goals of

providing high quality, evidence-based theory and strategies. Networks can provide access to expert knowledge that otherwise may not be available within the district (Adler & Kwon, 2002).

While the Center is open to all educators, the core group of participants has been comprised of formal and informal teacher leaders. The Center's approach to providing support, in the form of but not limited to, resources, network opportunities, and expert literacy speakers, allows access to high quality professional development. To support this effort, members are encouraged to learn research-based content knowledge, debrief, and plan for ways they might "turnkey" this information in upcoming professional development they will provide at their schools for their colleagues. To develop research-based content knowledge, the center provides access to literacy experts from around the country through a number of professional development sessions. While it has been noted that professional development is not as effective when completed in one-shot sessions, the center attempts to maintain the conversation between sessions through online discussions. However, the Center has never assessed how teacher leader participants use new information and ideas they have been exposed to at Network meetings.

Recently, the Center's co-directors have begun to question what the teacher leaders who participate in the center do as professional development providers once they are back in their own school environments. The Center focuses on professional development for teacher leaders; therefore it is of critical importance to understand what Center members do as professional development providers when they are in their schools, and what influences this. It is important for the Center to identify the supports and challenges facing the teacher leaders once they go back to their schools. Gaining a better picture of what influences members' decisions and actions related to professional development when they leave the Center will help more effectively support their work.

Purpose of Study

While teacher leadership has been a developing area of educational research over the past three decades, the majority of this research has concentrated on the antecedents, outcomes, and development of teacher leadership (Smylie & Mayrowetz, 2009). Additionally, Smylie (1995) pointed out that the main focus of research has been on wave one type leadership roles such as the use of department chair or team leader (Silva et al., 2000). However, this study focuses on another area: teacher leaders who act as on-site professional development providers in their schools. The purpose of this case study is to learn more about what factors influence the work of teacher leaders as professional development providers. Examining the teacher leader in this role will add to the existing teacher leader research with a specific focus on teacher leaders positioned in a role that supports effective and sustainable professional development models. It is important to focus on the skills teacher leaders possess that would relate to the second and third wave of the teacher leader historical context as they are moving toward a more effective and sustainable professional learning environment for teachers. The teacher leaders who are the focus in this study receive some of their own professional development from the University Literacy Center. Therefore, in this particular case, the context of describing teacher leaders as professional development providers includes the training they receive as participants of the Literacy Center network. Current teacher leader research focuses on teacher leader roles and responsibilities. Additionally, it highlights the way teacher leaders can support principals and affect school culture. Research shows, in general terms, that when teacher leaders act as professional development providers this is a promising model for improving teacher effectiveness (Chubb & Moe, 1990; Furman, 1999; Mangin & Stoelinga, 2008; Mangin & Stoelinga, 2010). This study will add to the growing body of teacher leader research by focusing on factors that influence the teacher leader as a professional development provider who participates in a University Literacy Center professional development provider. In order to address the problem of

practice, the specific research questions are: What do teacher leaders who receive professional development through a University Literacy Center do as professional development providers once they return to their schools? What influences their activities? What are the supports and obstacles they face as professional development providers? A qualitative case study research design will focus on three teacher leaders from the Brewster School District. They were selected as the focus of this study because of their designated roles as their schools' teacher leaders. Their activities as professional developers were documented for five months as they delivered professional development to their colleagues.

Organization of the Study

In Chapter 1, the concept of teacher leadership was introduced. A range of definitions, attributes and benefits of this approach to shared leadership, school improvement and professional development have been discussed. Next, the statement of the problem and purpose for the study were described and the research questions guiding the study were stated.

In Chapter 2, a review of pertinent literature will be presented. Topics in the literature review will include a description of the current climate of teacher accountability as it directly relates to student improvement, evidence of the potential of teacher leaders as professional development providers grounded in best practices, research on the principal's role in maximizing teacher capacity by strategically positioning teacher leaders as professional development providers, and how this relates to effective literacy instruction.

In Chapter 3, the research methodology will be described including the research approach, the participants, the data collection instruments used in the study, and the procedures used for carrying out the design. The chapter concludes with a description of the methods used to analyze the data.

In Chapter 4, results of the study will be presented as determined by the research questions. Findings from the study will be organized by patterns and themes which emerged from the data collection phase. Factors that emerged from this case study's data included the following factors affecting teacher leaders' delivery of professional development: their role and internal resources, how professional development needs are identified, resources, relationships, and challenges.

In Chapter 5, results from the study will be related to previous research, and implications for both practice and research will be explored. This chapter will address analysis of the findings in relation to audiences that may benefit from the research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Teachers who engage in quality professional development have significant positive impacts on their school's environment, including the ultimate goal of improved student achievement (Miller, Wallace, DiBiase and Nesbit, 1999; DuFour, 1994; Fisher, Frey and Nelson, 2012). The most effective means of providing professional development for teachers is the implementation of teacher leaders (Blasé & Blasé, 2004; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Lieberman & Miller, 2008). Teacher leaders who engage in constructive professional development opportunities are invaluable assets to their schools as they can then facilitate opportunities for their colleagues (Pancucci, 2007). Since teacher leaders are a permanent presence in their schools, they foster an atmosphere of continued learning and development for the entire teaching staff. The Carnegie Forum's, "A Nation Prepared: Teachers for 21st Century" argues for structuring school environments that encourage professional learning; the report highlights the importance of teacher leaders in raising standards for all teachers. The report indicates that utilizing teacher leaders is essential in attaining excellence in the education, citing the main rationale for designating a lead teacher as developing a sense of collaboration between colleagues as they work to improve their instructional practices (CFEE, 1986). Organizing schools into frameworks that encourage teacher leadership is proven to be a key strategy for fostering productive teacher professional development, improving teaching practices, and promoting student progress (Blasé & Blasé, 2004; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Lieberman & Miller, 2008; National Commission on Teaching & America's Future, 1996; Newmann & Wehlage, 1995).

The purpose of this study is to examine the work of teacher leaders as professional development providers. In support of that effort, this literature review will define the role of a teacher leader and provide an overview of effective professional development models, including teacher leaders as professional development providers. One approach to professional development

that is featured is turn-key training because study participants are a part of the University Literacy Center, which assumes they will function in part in this way. Another aspect of professional development that will be discussed is instructional coaching, a key role teacher leaders take as professional development providers. It also will explore the contextual factors which teacher leaders can influence (and are influenced by), specifically, principal support and school culture. Furthermore, the literature review will also examine literacy instruction, since the teacher leaders who participated in this study focus on providing professional development for literacy instruction.

Theoretical Framework

While the aim of this study is to examine the factors affecting professional development that teacher leaders provide, it is essential to consider how the leaders determine the most effective approach to leading while working in this context. Ongoing, embedded professional development opportunities vary tremendously from the content to the context to the teachers involved in the process. Therefore, a leadership theory focused on a situational approach provides an appropriate framework for this study.

The Hersey-Blanchard Situational Theory, developed by Dr. Paul Hersey and Ken Blanchard in the 1970's and referenced a multitude of times when studying effective leadership models, focuses on leaders changing their leadership styles as a result of the situations in which they are involved. In this case study, teacher leaders' styles would vary depending on the causes and outcomes of the professional development sessions. According to the theory, instead of honing in on one leadership style, successful leaders adjust their efforts given the situation. More so, leaders take into consideration what needs to get done in order for the job to be completed successfully. To accomplish this goal, their approach to leading should place more or less emphasis on the task and more or less emphasis on the relationships with the people they are working with depending on the ultimate goal of the professional development sessions.

According to Hersey and Blanchard (1988), there are four main leadership styles that effective leaders need to use interchangeably depending on the situation:

Telling (S1) - Leaders tell their people what to do and how to do it

Selling (S2) - Leaders provide information and direction, but there's more communication with followers. Leaders "sell" their message to get people on board

Participating (S3) – Leaders focus more on the relationship and less on direction. The leader works with the team and shares decision-making responsibilities.

Delegating (S4)– Leaders pass most of the responsibility onto the follower or group. The leaders still monitor progress, but they are less involved in the decisions.

These styles denote more emphasis on task completion through *Telling* and *Selling* while the *Participating* and *Delegating* types focus primarily on the way in which leaders foster and support team members' abilities to work independently.

Within the parameters of the Situational Leadership Theory, Hersey and Blanchard explain that in order for leaders to focus on the appropriate style mentioned above, they must understand that the chosen style depends greatly on the maturity of those they are leading; in this case, teacher leaders need to be aware of the wisdom and experience of the teachers for whom they are providing professional development. They break maturity into different levels:

M1- People at this level of maturity are at the bottom of the scale. They lack the knowledge, skills, or confidence to work on their own and they often need to be pushed to take that task on.

M2 – This level has followers that might be willing to work on the task, but they still do not have the skills to complete it successfully.

M3 – Followers are ready and willing to help with the task. They have more skills than the M2 group, but still lack confidence in their abilities.

M4 – These followers are able to work on their own. They have high levels of confidence and strong skills, and are committed to the task.

For teacher leaders to be effective with providing professional development, Hersey and Blanchard's theory suggests the following leadership styles to accompany the teacher's maturity levels:

Maturity Level	Most Appropriate Leadership Style
M1- Low maturity	S1- Telling/Directing
M2- Medium maturity, limited skills	S2- Selling/Coaching
M3- Medium maturity, higher skills but lacking confidence	S3- Participating/Supporting
M4- High maturity	S4- Delegating

This theory appropriately serves as a framework for this study as its primary focus is for leaders to understand that in order to lead effectively, they must first determine the context of the situation and the audience with whom they are working. Once they have defined these situational factors, their leadership style can be refined to meet the needs successfully. Specific to this case and tying in the Situational Leadership Theory, teacher leaders should constantly be rethinking and formatting their leadership approach to best meet the teachers' professional development needs.

Defining the Role of the Teacher Leader

Although still considered a relatively recent phenomenon in the field of education, there are already many definitions of teacher leader. Several definitions point to the influence that teacher leaders have in their schools. These descriptions characterize teacher leaders as those who have “the capacity and commitment to contribute beyond one's own classroom” in efforts to improve instructional practice and as those who lead “within and beyond the classroom, and influence others toward improved educational practice. Researchers who have studied teacher leaders through this lens have typically attributed the role to an explicit or implicit responsibility to provide professional

development to their colleagues, to influence their communities' or districts' policies (Fullan & Hargreaves 1996; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Miller, Moon, & Elko, 2000; Childs-Bowen, Moller & Scrivner, 2000; Youitt, 2007; York, Barr & Duke, 2004; Wasley, 1991).

Some definitions identify teacher attributes that can be considered indicative of teacher leadership. Along a broader spectrum, research findings explain teacher leadership as an innate perspective, as “essentially an ethical stance that is based on views of both a better world and the power of teachers to shape meaning systems. It manifests in new forms of understanding and practice that contribute to school success and to the quality of life of the community in the long term” Crowther, Fagan, Ferguson & Hann, 2009, p. 72). While many researchers identify teacher leaders by broad characteristics, some researchers outline more specific traits of teacher leadership. Le Blanc and Shelton (1997) and O'Connor and Boles (1992) stated that teacher leadership includes specific behaviors such as the ability to model positive attitudes and enthusiasm and demonstrate skills in managing interpersonal relationships, communication and understanding group dynamics. Furthermore, they are willing to devote time to doing whatever it takes to make the school better and enhance student learning by working with other teachers to improve pedagogy. Lastly, a specific attribute of teacher leadership that is of critical importance to the role is the ability to understand the politics of power and authority.

For the purposes of this study, teacher leadership refers to the process by which teachers, individually or collectively, influence their colleagues, principals, and other members of their school communities in order to improve teaching and learning practices. Teacher leaders are facilitators within the school and can be seen as an important element in strengthening and sustaining school improvement efforts (Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement, 2008). In agreement with the definition, Wasley, (1991) identified teacher leaders as

those who possess "the ability to encourage colleagues to change, to do things they wouldn't ordinarily consider without the influence of the leader" (p. 64).

Classroom oriented definitions of teacher leadership see this role as emerging directly out of teachers' experiences and reflections on their successes with students (Lieberman & Miller, 2005; Sergiovanni & Starrat, 1998). Here the focus is on increasing student achievement through meaningful, contextualized implementation of effective instructional strategies. This is in contrast to an older conception of teacher leadership, which tended to focus on the organizational level and looked at teacher leaders in roles related to site-based management (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; York-Barr & Duke, 2004). Thus, the literature conceptualizes teacher leaders as those who lead by modeling reflection, continuous improvement, ongoing dialogue, and implementation of research-based educational practices and by becoming influential among colleagues in areas related to improved instruction (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Lieberman, 2005; Sergiovanni & Starrat, 1998).

Effective Professional Development

Research indicates that one of the more effective ways to facilitate meaningful professional development is through the activities of teacher leaders. According to Lindstrom and Speck (2004), professional development should be a "lifelong, collaborative process that nourishes the growth of individuals, teams, and schools through a daily, job-embedded, learner centered, focused approach" (pg. 22). The goal of professional development, according to Loucks-Horseley (1997) is that it should contribute to a lasting change in our educational system. In order for teachers to be a part of a life-long learning process that makes a difference in improving educational outcomes, they must have identities as learners, in addition to teachers (Miller, Wallace, DiBiase and Nesbit, 1999; DuFour, 1994; Fisher, Frey and Nelson, 2012). However, recent research has found that the professional development in which teachers participate often does little to forward these aims.

Teacher leaders can potentially move professional development in a more positive direction through the ability to increase sustainable learning through collaboration in schools.

Although teacher leaders are well positioned to provide research based professional development, there are many barriers to implementing effective models. At least one barrier to providing effective professional development stems, in part, from how it is funded. Hornbeck (2003) explains that school districts spend much more money on professional development than they think, and most of it is neither actively managed nor explicitly linked to professional development goals of the district. Forty to sixty percent of funds used to provide professional development are external, coming from federal sources, special program, and private funds (Hornbeck, 2003). Hornbeck (2003) suggests that this has contributed to a fragmented professional development effort and lack of long range planning as funds often come with restrictions, directed toward specific goals and activities. He believes that districts should move away from organizing activities around funding sources and instead combine funding streams to support integrated efforts focused on schools' needs. This reexamination would potentially shift professional development models to more cohesive formats.

Researchers have suggested that professional development should move away from one-day workshops, one-way presentations given by long-term consultants with little knowledge about local contexts, and de-contextualized staff development days (Pancucci, 2007; Lieberman and Grolnick, 1997; Reeves, 2010). Since approaches fail to align with what is known about effective professional development and adult learning theory, they do not meet the challenges of reform movements, which have focused on ways to increase student achievement (Corcoran, 1995; Darling-Hammond, 1995; Hiebert, 1999; Lieberman, 1996; Little, 1993; Sparks & Loucks-Horsley, 1989). However, research suggests that effective professional development models are linked to enhanced student achievement, (Darling-Hammond, 1995; Strong, 2010; Ball & Cohen, 1999; Cohen & Hill, 2000;

Corcoran, Shields, & Zucker, 1998; Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995; Elmore, 1996; Little, 1993; National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 1996). In light of the increased focus on the potential to increase student achievement through improved professional development, three high leverage ways to improve professional development have been closely examined: form, duration and participation.

With regard to form, one-day workshops and one-day institutes are two forms of professional development that have been consistently critiqued. Teachers who are sent offsite for one-day workshops or institutes are hardly given the time, activities, and content necessary to increase knowledge and contribute to meaningful change (Lousk-Horsely, 1998; Pancucci, 2007). Linda Darling Hammond, et al., (2009) clearly demonstrated that one-day workshops are not as effective as ongoing, embedded professional development that is deeply contextualized in the day-to-day realities of teachers' work lives (2009). Their study, which included a multi-year survey of professional development offerings in the United States and abroad, illustrated that the United States trails behind other countries in providing professional development that ultimately impacts teacher practice and student learning. From a sample of more than 130,000 teachers in all 50 states and data from over 30 countries, analysis showed that although American teachers took part in workshops and short-term learning experiences for time periods comparable to those in other countries, they lacked opportunities for sustained, collaborative learning. In school environments, it is critical to allow time and opportunities for sustained professional development, which includes consistent follow-up. This gives teachers the time to build knowledge at a deeper level. Professional development activities have greater probability of improving teachers' knowledge when they are part of a broader range of opportunities for teacher learning and development (Birman, Desimone, Porter & Garet, 2000; Holland, 2005; Clark & Hollingsworth, 2002). However, most schools and school districts are lacking structure to support this (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009).

Effective professional development that can lead to reform is typically school-wide and long-term with many opportunities for follow-up and utilizes learning processes that encourage collegiality (for example through learning communities and extended dialogue). It is ideal when participants in professional development activities have a shared vision and goal, which is supported by the school administration (DuFour, et, al., 2006; Darling-Hammond, 2006 & Corcoran, T.B., Shields, P.M., & Zucker, A.A., 1998). According to the International Technology Association (2005), there are five questions that should be considered when constructing standards-based professional development programs for teachers: 1. Where are they now? 2. Where do we want to go? 3. How are we going to get there? 4. What knowledge and abilities must educators possess to get there? and 5. How will we know when we have arrived?

Research also shows that professional development activities of longer duration tend to be more subject specific, with a deeper content focus, and often provide greater opportunities for active learning and collaboration with other teachers; thus making them a more effective approach (Birman, Desimone, Porter & Garet, 2000; Fisher, Frey & Nelson, 2012; Guskey, 2000; Darling-Hammond, 2009; Corcoran, T.B., Shields, P.M., & Zucker, A.A., 1998). A professional development activity in Middle City, Wisconsin illustrates the important role that longer duration professional development experiences play in sustainable reform movements through changed teacher practices. Project Science, an initiative designed to improve science instruction, utilized a team of teachers from various schools who worked together to develop and administer common assessments. The program included a weeklong summer institute and two-hour monthly meetings throughout the school year. These meetings focused on curriculum and learning issues and the development of the assessment tools. In the meetings, teachers met to share progress, challenges, issues, needs and ideas. Overall, it was found that the duration of the teachers' professional

development experience was a contributing factor to its success (Birman, Desimone, Porter & Garet, 2000.)

A third area that has been found to contribute to the effectiveness of professional development relates to participation. Research suggests that collective participation plays a significant role in the effectiveness of professional development (Birman, et al., 2000). Collective participation is when teachers from the same department, subject or grade level work together to improve their practice. When teachers participate together in professional development in this way, they are more likely to have meaningful opportunities for active learning (Guskey, T & Sparks, D. 2004; Darling-Hammond, 2009; DuFour 2006). Professional development that creates a context for teachers to work together has many advantages. Teachers are able to talk through concepts and shared challenges they face with regard to content and instructional practices. Working together also affords the teachers opportunities to learn from each other and gain new insights into their work in classrooms. Collective participation also contributes to a more positive school culture (Birman, Desimone, Porter & Garet, 2000; Fisher, Frey & Nelson, 2012, Ball, D., L & Cohen, D.K., 1999; Elmore, R.F. 1997).

Teacher Leaders as Professional Development Providers

Teacher leaders are well positioned to implement effective professional development, as they are typically those who have both strong leadership abilities and content knowledge. Teacher leaders who function in more formal roles often do not have the responsibility of a classroom. This allows them time to facilitate professional learning opportunities for their colleagues. Quality teacher leadership is important to the overall success of an individual school or school system. As professional development providers, they can plan, observe, model and co-teach in order to improve teacher learning, and ultimately student achievement.

Research shows that teacher leaders can help insure that teachers enhance their professional knowledge. Teacher leaders working alongside their colleagues can engage in activities ranging from providing school-wide support for the implementation of new programs to assisting struggling teachers on an individual basis (Lieberman, 1988, Silva et al., 2000). Regardless of the specific activity, interactions with teacher leaders tend to improve teachers' knowledge (Collet, 2012). Two common strategies that teacher leaders use when fulfilling their role as professional development providers are turnkey training and instructional coaching. Although these strategies are not exhaustive of what teacher leaders do, they are appropriate for focus in the context of this study because they are aligned with research on effective professional development models. Teacher leaders who participate in professional development activities such as those provided by the University Literacy Center, as the participants in this study do, are well positioned to act as turnkey trainers who can share the information they gain with their colleagues. Furthermore, coaching, an effective professional development strategy in which teacher leaders take part while working with their colleagues, is discussed. Coaching can create teacher centered, differentiated professional development that meets multiple needs within the learning community.

Turnkey Training

A teacher leader acting as a turnkey trainer is one way to implement research-based professional development. A turnkey trainer is someone who has been sent somewhere to learn a specific skill or gain new knowledge and is then expected to return and share what s/he has learned with colleagues (Rousse, 2005). The underlying idea of turnkey training is that a trainer turns the keys (of knowledge) over to someone else. Turnkey training creates a "live-in" resource for the school, meaning that the teacher leader presents and is then on hand to support the teachers in adapting new knowledge or skill through modeling, discussion, coaching and critical feedback (Stoelinga & Mangin, 2010; Coburn & Russell, 2008). The value of the turnkey trainer model lies in

the fact that an ongoing support mechanism is put in place by way of the trainer. Thus, in a community of learners, turnkey training can provide an effective framework for supported learning (Stoelinga & Mangin, 2010; Coburn & Russell, 2008) because the trainer doesn't come and go, but rather is on site and part of the school community. While collaborative communities of learners can be effective models for enhancing teacher learning, the importance of imparting expert knowledge via turnkey training is a critical component of effective professional development because it can contribute new input to teachers' content knowledge. According to Stoelinga & Mangin (2010), acquiring increased levels of research-based knowledge is necessary for successful teacher learning. Therefore, teacher leaders, using turnkey training in various formats (coaching, meetings, modeling, and teacher study groups), can help lay the foundation for increased teacher learning. Additionally, collaboration among colleagues (which can be established by teacher leaders via the "live-in" resource" that they provide) enables teachers to reflect on their own practice while learning about effective strategies from others (Finn, Chiappa, Puig, Hunt, 2011; McDougall & Drummond, 2005). In essence, turnkey training serves as a building block for increasing capacity for learning (Pancucci, 2007, Stoelinga & Mangin, 2010; Coburn & Russell, 2008).

Research conducted by the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) in 2006 illustrated a successful model of turnkey training in Title I Schools identified as "Schools in Need of Improvement." Through participating in centralized professional development sessions, it was anticipated by state staff that district leaders would turnkey what they had learned for their colleagues. The training included ongoing structured professional development sessions with communication and collaboration among turnkey trainers from across districts throughout the school year. The training content was specific to the content areas in need of improvement. The project had a reasonable goal of improving teacher quality, which in turn would improve the student achievement. Given research indicating that school leaders who take part in meaningful professional

development, which they in turn share with their staff, are more likely to help build a school environment in which the teachers value learning (Bryk et al., 2010; Pancucci 2007). The NJDOE provided a model of collaboration among content area experts through a training program provided by state appointed professional development specialists; participants also gained access to an online repository of instructional resources. Data indicates that children in the schools of thirty-six (out of fifty one) participants successfully met the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) benchmarks in both language arts and math in the year following this professional development initiative (New Jersey Department of Education, 2005) indicating that this may have been an effective model of professional development. This was an increase from the years before this initiative, which included the turnkey training, monthly meetings, and access to resources.

In addition to this demonstrated effectiveness with regard to student achievement as experienced in New Jersey, turnkey training also eases a financial burden for schools. With decreased budgets, professional development has plummeted to the bottom of the priority list as little more than an “extra” for many districts. According to November (1993), the cost of turnkey training is minimal compared to the potential learning it can generate. Rather than the expense of sending a team of teachers to an off-site professional development opportunity or bringing in consultants and trainers to work with a whole school or district, for the cost of training one teacher leader who can do turnkey training a district can gain benefits for many additional teachers (Pancucci, 2007; Cobourn & Russell, 2008). Thus, turnkey training can help address districts’ professional development needs in spite of budgetary limitations. Although there is limited research regarding the effectiveness of turnkey training in education, it is a promising avenue to explore as the teacher leader is well positioned as the professional development provider who can function as a turnkey trainer.

Coaching

An instructional coach is a teacher leader, often without a classroom or students, who provides support to teachers. Despite this definition, an instructional coach may have a vague job description. Yet, they have significant responsibilities, often working alongside teachers to model new instructional programs and assist them individually as they implement new initiatives (Showers & Joyce, 1996; Deussen et al., 2007). The instructional coach title can be used interchangeably with that of teacher leader. The role of instructional coach is closely aligned with what research has found to be effective professional development; models that promote ongoing, embedded learning opportunities.

One of the ways coaching is enacted is through modeling, which is a process where teachers observe a coach implementing a best practice, can connect new knowledge to the context and their experience, and use their own metacognitive skills for learning to understand better the teaching process (Mikulecky, L., Albers, P., & Peers, M. 1994). To assess teachers' perceptions of the effects of modeling, Knight (2007) surveyed 107 secondary teachers from a Topeka, Kansas school district who had viewed a model lesson from an Instructional Coach the previous year. The survey was an informal measure, containing 10 items addressing five questions, with a Likert-type scale from 1, signifying strongly disagree, to 7, signifying strongly agree. The results suggested that the teachers believed they benefited from observing an Instructional Coach modeling teaching practices in their classroom. Similarly, 13 ethnographic interviews (Fontana & Frey, 1994) were conducted with teachers who had an Instructional Coach at a middle school. In each of the 13 interviews, teachers stated that the model lessons they had observed the Coach teaching were an essential part of the process. One teacher in the study said, "I think it was very important for her to come in and model it. I think the value of actually seeing it happen is you get to see how it works and how she interacts with certain kids that are real problems. It also instills confidence in myself. If we had just sat down

and talked, I might have understood that, but seeing it in practice is a whole different thing. I think her value to me has been immense. I probably would have sunk without her” (Knight, 2007, p. 117).

One important value of coaching is that it can be a support to teachers of all ability levels. Much different than the one-day workshop where a presentation is made to a whole group regardless of need, ability, and capacity to integrate new information, coaching allows an individual to differentiate instruction for teachers based on need and within the context of their own classroom. Aligned with effective models of professional development that are on-going and job-embedded, coaching can involve collaborative dialogue with teachers at all levels of knowledge and experience, building knowledge over time. In addition, coaches can help to facilitate the development of a school vision that is site-based and linked to district goals.

While the educational research focuses on this strategy specific to teachers observing other teachers, it is important to highlight this process as an effective tool teacher leaders use in their role of professional development providers. Observation is congruent with the research on effective professional development because it is job-embedded; additionally it can be easily implemented by teacher leaders. Observation serves as a formative process where teachers observe each other to discuss experiences and engage in non-judgmental, constructive feedback. When teacher leaders act as observers and follow up with productive feedback for colleagues, research indicates it can lead to significant improvement in instructional practices (Brown, 1993; Beaty, 1998; Martin & Double, 1998; Hammersley-Fletcher & Orsmond, 2004; Shorthand, 2004). Observation is a model that attempts to move away from the solitary endeavor teaching has historically been and more toward a collaborative approach to teacher learning.

Observation promotes self-reflection and dialogue amongst colleagues by providing opportunities to watch one another’s teaching practices followed by time to debrief what was observed. This claim is based on the documented evidence of the results of teachers observing

each other in order to improve instructional practices (Stevens & Aleamoni, 1985; Wilson, 1986).

Participants in one study conducted by Menges (1987) reported extremely high levels of satisfaction as a result of participating in peer observations with teacher leaders. Specifically, participants reported increased levels of interactions with other teachers, greater levels of motivation, and renewed interest in teaching. Edgerton (1989) describes these experiences with peer observation as “collegial dialogues” and recommends that the teaching profession move more toward a culture in which this practice is common. Teacher leaders who work with teachers using an observation process can help them plan for specific changes, follow up with subsequent observations, and provide feedback, all for the purpose of learning and improving practice, not evaluating. Much different than that of the required evaluative observations by administrators, teacher leaders can work with teachers to foster a new culture of collaborative teaching that is embedded in the challenges of specific teachers’ classrooms.

Contextual Impacts on Teacher Leaders as Professional Development Providers

The context in which teacher leaders work as professional development providers has an impact on their roles and responsibilities. Principal support and school culture are two factors that directly affect (or can be affected by) how teacher leaders enact their roles in schools. The current culture of accountability and high stakes testing have increased pressure on principals to direct their focus to instructional improvement (Firestone & Riehl, 2005). Therefore, principals are increasingly expected to have some expertise in content areas in order to lead (or at least facilitate leadership of) instructional improvement efforts for teachers. Stein and Nelson (2002) point to the importance of the principal’s content knowledge as the impetus for instructional reform in schools. Given that no principal can have expertise in every instructional area, this focus on instructional leadership has spurred many principals to enlist teacher leaders to assist with enacting this responsibility; in essence delegating teacher leaders as professional development providers to lead instructional improvement.

However, the ways in which the principal supports the teacher leader can significantly affect his/her effectiveness.

The second factor that affects teacher leaders as professional development providers pertains to the school's culture. While the culture of the school can influence the potential of the teacher leader to be effective, the teacher leader can also influence the school culture in ways that contribute to the success of improvement efforts and shifts from factors that affect teacher leaders to those that can teacher leaders can affect. Often times, the school's culture is focused on producing results, specifically the highest possible student test scores. However, teacher leaders as professional development providers can work to shift attention to how and why teachers work together and why that is important for schools. According to Sparks and Hirsh (1997), not only should professional development affect knowledge and attitudes of teachers; the culture and structure should also be examined since they are considered contributing factors to a positive professional learning environment for teachers. High schools, for instance, are often structured around separate departments, leaving teachers with few opportunities to interact with each other (Joyce, Calhoun, & Hopkins, 1999) thereby limiting collaboration, as a form of professional development, in the context of their work. Utilizing teacher leaders as professional development providers can help eliminate the potential barriers for contextualized professional development by creating more opportunities for teachers to participate in collaborative learning experiences; thus positively affecting school culture.

The Principal and the Teacher Leader

The relationship between principal and teacher leaders may become the key to lasting school improvement. How the principal supports and promotes teacher leaders and what role they play will determine the success of teacher leaders. The research literature clearly illustrates that the principal can influence, and be influenced by, the success of teacher leaders. Without them, a principal

working alone is unlikely to be able to respond successfully to the increasing levels of responsibilities necessary to be an effective leader (Darling-Hammond, 1997; Fullan, 2001; Spillane & Louis, 2002).

In addition to administrative and managerial tasks, principals as instructional leaders oversee curriculum implementation and opportunities for professional development. By relinquishing some responsibilities for instructional leadership to teacher leaders, principals can help maximize the capacity for teacher learning (Ballek et al., 2005; Nelson & Sassi, 2005). In other words, using a shared leadership model, principals can utilize teacher leaders (Ballek, O'Rourke, Provenzano, & Bellamy, 2005) as part of their instructional leadership efforts.

In order to understand how principals can influence the work of teacher leaders, it is important to provide some definitional guidelines related to teacher leaders and administrators' relationships and role sharing. Teacher leaders take on the more instructional roles in the school's structure; relieving the principal of some tasks, such as teacher leaders assisting the school administration by carrying out operational tasks or by participating in the decision-making process (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 1996; Malen et al., 1990; Wasley, 1991). In this capacity, they assist in developing the school improvement plan and transferring goals into classroom practices (Day & Harris, 2002; Ingersoll, 1996; Lieberman et al., 1988; Wasley, 1991). Engaging in classroom observations is another role that teacher leaders can undertake which assists the schools' administrators with their role as instructional leader (Harris & Muijs, 2005). Finally, teacher leaders may also participate in curricular meetings at the school and district levels. In this role, they help to establish educational policies, develop plans for staff development, and even monitor, evaluate, and administrate their own teacher leadership programs (Fullan, 1993; Smylie & Denny, 1990).

In establishing new roles for teacher leaders within the school's administration, the traditional hierarchy of leadership in the school becomes more of a spectrum. The deployment of teacher leaders is an outcome of a shared leadership model (Spillane, 2009; Hulpia, Devos, Roseel,

2008). In a shared leadership model, teachers take formal and informal leadership roles by providing support to colleagues through ongoing motivation and stimulation (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978).

Spillane indicates that shared leadership should be more than a principal delegating tasks to teachers; rather, various functions are spread across the leadership team in which expertise from all members is pooled (2009). The team, in a shared leadership model, works collaboratively so that “the leadership functions become an emergent property of a group” (Gronn, 2002).

A reciprocal support system between principals and teacher leaders benefits the entire school. When the principal is a strong supporter of the role of teacher leader, student learning outcomes are increased (Mangin & Stoelinga, 2008; Atkins, 2002). When teacher leaders “pull an oar” for the entire school, they offer valuable assistance to the overworked and overwhelmed principal and to the school as a whole (Mangin & Stoelinga, 2008). Ample evidence suggests that effective principals don't work harder than less effective principals; they work smarter by distributing leadership roles and responsibilities. In other words, principals who encourage and enlist teacher leaders leverage rather than decrease their own impact (Barth, 1990). Successfully designating teacher leaders demands a culture in which the principal understands and values the importance of the role, and creating such an atmosphere determines the extent to which teachers will be able to acquire and exercise leadership skills (Danielson, 2006). Accomplishing this requires that schools' administrative teams need to recognize the key and critical functions of the teacher leader as an important route to school improvement (Barth, 1990). The purpose of establishing such an environment where teacher leaders are maximized should be the ultimate goal of student improvement. For example, Timperley (2001) suggested student achievement improves in schools where principals encourage teacher leadership to emerge in areas important to individual teachers.

Typically a teacher leader's primary role is to work with colleagues for the purposes of teacher learning and increased student achievement (Mangin & Stoelinga, 2008; Searby & Shaddix,

2008; Roby 2011; Phelps, 2008). Principals can play an important role in encouraging this kind of interaction by providing common planning time and collaborative reflection opportunities. Sharing information through the use of meaningful interaction allows teacher leaders to create opportunities that can support professional discourse and collaborative work, which is more likely to emerge from professional development situations led by teacher leaders (Brookfield, 1986; DuFour 2006; Spillane, Healey & Parisi, 2009). Principals who use teacher leaders as a means for facilitating reform have been identified as having higher levels of success than those who do not (Southworth, 1990; Timperley, 2001; Hargreaves, 1994; Leithwood et al, 1999).

The principal's role in promoting effective teacher leadership can be understood as simply relinquishing some routine duties in order to foster more teacher collaboration. However, when teacher leaders are given the responsibility of providing professional development, especially when acting as coaches, facilitators of professional development opportunities, and peer mentors, they are acting not only as a support system for the principal seeking to improve achievement, but for the teachers as well (Spillane, Healey & Parise, 2009; Hulpia, Devos, Roseel, 2009). By working in a collaborative, non-evaluative manner, teachers are encouraged to learn through trial and error with the help of a teacher leader; this is a strikingly different relationship than that which is typical with the principal who often assumes an "evaluator role." It is assumed then that teacher leaders can encourage a more trusting environment for professional learning than can principals. This is extremely important, given that trusting and productive relationships between teachers and teacher leaders are key to collaboration. This helps alleviate the possible perception among teachers that the teacher leader and the principal are their own team, separate from the teachers (Timperley, 2005, Mangin & Stoelinga, 2008). Instead, it affirms the idea that the teacher leader is actually there to help support and improve rather than judge and evaluate.

For effective teacher leaders, relationship building is at the heart of their success (Fullan, 2001). The focal relationships, in this context, are those between principals and teachers leaders, which can in turn affect relationships between teacher leaders and teachers. Stronger collegial relationships are supported by and support collaborative working environments and increased lines of communication regarding learning opportunities. Building stronger relationships between teacher leaders and principals can contribute to increased collaboration among teachers in which teacher to teacher relationships have the opportunity to develop (Fullan, 2001; Wasley, 1991; Leithwood, Seashore-Louis, Anderson & Wahlstrom, 2004).

However, building collegial relationships is often a struggle for teacher leaders (Miles, Saxl and Lieberman, 1998; Wasley, 1991). Miles, Saxl and Lieberman (1998) demonstrated that even though teacher leaders were knowledgeable about their subject matter, they were often challenged by their efforts to build collegial relationships in light of time constraints and resistant teachers. Similarly, Wasley (1991), in a study of three teacher leaders, each with a different focus, geographical location, and role, found that they all shared common problems including teachers' resistance to becoming involved in reform efforts. Wasley concluded that principal support of collegial relationships is needed for the teacher leader role in order for its potential to become a reality. Specifically, principals can arrange release time for teachers to work with teacher leaders, build-in professional development opportunities throughout the week and provide access to professional learning resources.

Review of the research suggests that successful principals can affect student achievement in several ways, especially through their influence on other people. Leithwood, Seashore-Louis, Anderson & Wahlstrom (2004) emphasize the importance of developing people; in school this is enacted when principals enable teacher leaders to perform their jobs effectively by offering

intellectual support and stimulation and providing models of practice and support. Ultimately, principal support has great potential to create a positive school culture.

School Culture

If new models of collective and collaborative professional development such as the deployment of teacher leaders to promote embedded and ongoing professional development are to be successful, it is important to focus on how the culture and dynamics of the organization influence their potential to be successful (Fullan, 2008; Hargreaves, 1994; Schein, 2004). Culture is one lens for understanding the dynamics of an organization. Through this lens, a 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973) can be composed of how people in a context interpret beliefs and assumptions and create focus and clarity from uncertainty. According to Schein (2004), culture is abstract; however it creates social and organizational situations that have a powerful impact. Therefore, if it is misunderstood or its shaping role is ignored, an organization can fall prey to a lack of clarity and focus.

Teacher leadership is a concept that can help assist with fostering a positive culture through a clear focus within the school organizational hierarchy; thus fostering a higher level of effectiveness. Several researchers have found that schools utilizing teacher leaders had an enhanced level of effectiveness (Griffin, 1995; Hargreaves, 1991; Little, 1990; Ovando, 1996; Rosenholz, 1989; Taylor & Bogothch, 1994; Teddlie & Reynolds, 2000). In their longitudinal case study of six schools, Weiss and Cambone (1994) found that school reform was generally more accepted and implemented in schools with teacher leaders. Teacher leadership also has shown strong effects on school-wide policies and procedures. In a study of five teacher leaders from different school districts, Griffin (1995) found positive school-level effects on such issues as student achievement, curricular frameworks, challenging student behavior, and integrating technology as an instructional tool.

Fullan (1995) suggests that increasing the number of teacher leaders can help grow and cultivate a positive school culture by moving toward the creation of a community of learners in a school through the increase of a collaborative environment. Similarly, Lambert (2003), studied “constructivist leadership” which focused on relationships, community, learning, and purpose. The study described the actions teacher leaders engaged in to create a culture of trust. These included approaching every colleague as a valued contributor to the community, creating opportunities for sharing, dialogues and critical feedback, turning ownership of learning over to the learners, rethinking professional identity and situating learning within practice and relationships. In schools undergoing redesign, teacher leaders have assisted their fellow teachers with overcoming resistance to change (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Lieberman & Miller, 2005). Teachers have received assistance from teacher leaders in many other areas as well. In interviews conducted with 12 teachers in three schools, Ryan (1999) reported that teachers in leadership positions “were available to their colleagues as a resource in such areas as instructional practice, assisting with difficult students, helping to plan new programs and even offering advice on personal matters” (p. 26).

When teacher leaders are deployed to encourage collaborative learning they can be instrumental in improving school climates. This is important since research shows that a positive school culture supports teacher learning, while highlighting the value of teachers working as a team and as contributors to each other’s learning experiences (Campbell and Southworth’s 1992; DuFour, 2006, Fullan, 2001; Fullan & Hargreaves, 1992). Hammersley-Fletcher & Brundrett (2005) demonstrate the importance of teacher leaders gently guiding teachers, analyzing, reviewing, and collaborating on a continuous basis as part of the professional development process, another way to improve school culture. Thus, teacher leaders who continually work with colleagues through the use of ongoing classroom modeling, co-teaching, and critical reflection contribute to a positive learning environment.

Some feel that teacher leaders have the greatest potential to make substantive cultural changes to the educational system through a collaborative and collegial approach to professional learning (Silva, et al., 2000). Recently emerging teacher leadership models are anti-hierarchical; instead they focus on collegiality and professionalism. Thus, they influence others by creating contexts for reflection, collaboration, and sharing with colleagues, thereby contributing to instructional improvements (Lieberman & Miller, 2005; Silva et al., 2000; Spillane, 2005). Teacher leaders can help teachers overcome resistance to change and positively influence them by creating a safe and positive learning environment for new and veteran teachers alike based on their content knowledge and their ability to work effectively with others and create a collaborative environment for learning (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Lieberman & Miller, 2005).

Barriers to Teacher Leadership

While it has been made evident that teacher leaders can be well positioned to implement effective professional development models and have a positive impact on school culture and teacher learning, the role is not without its challenges. Teacher leaders strive to help teachers improve their practice by fostering new knowledge and skills. To do this, they may provide professional development workshops, co-plan and model lessons, observe teaching and provide feedback, and collect and analyze data (Mangin & Stoelinga, 2011). The role is not supervisory, despite the title of leader. Teacher leaders do not have an evaluative role; they do not perform evaluation-based assessments used to determine promotions or sanctions. Not being a formal evaluator sometimes causes confusion, and can create a challenge for teacher leaders which may turn into a lack of trust between teacher leaders and teachers. One way teacher leaders can gain the teachers' trust is by maintaining their status as a peer; doing their best to assure teachers they are not an evaluator in any way but more of a support system. If they can accomplish this, teachers may be more likely to seek them out for advice and assistance. Building trust can be a challenge within schools for teachers. It

is important to examine barriers, such as relational and structural types in an attempt to understand an effective model for teacher leadership.

Relational Barriers

According to Mangin & Stoelinga (2011), teacher leaders are often challenged by having a nonsupervisory role coupled with the charge to help teachers improve practice. On the one hand, teacher leaders need to assure teachers they are not functioning in an evaluative role. It is their responsibility to offer advice while avoiding evaluative judgments about their colleagues' teaching practices. Consequently, a challenge presents itself, as the teacher leader's ultimate goal is to move teachers towards improved instructional practice as way to increase student achievement. It is a careful balancing act for a teacher leader to be both a trusted colleague and a resource for instructional improvement. Often times, teacher leaders face resistance from teachers while trying to accomplish this goal. The reluctance of some teachers toward the efforts of teacher leaders is deeply engrained in traditional school culture, as pointed out by Mangin (2005) who states, "Teacher leadership runs contrary to the culture of schools and the norms of teaching" (p.3). Her study of twelve teachers in five different districts found that most of the teacher leaders struggled with gaining access to classrooms due to teachers' resistance to accept help from a colleague. Furthermore, Firestone and Martinez (2009) note that tension may exist during the observation process if teachers perceive the teacher leader as monitoring their behaviors and/or instructional methods. These studies point to the importance of teacher leaders finding ways to cultivate an environment of trust within the school community.

In order to foster trust, teacher leaders must nurture positive relationships with the other teachers in their schools, for these are the ones they are charged with "leading." However, teacher leadership roles may violate norms of the teaching profession, including those of autonomy, equality, and privacy (Lortie, 1975; Rosenholz, 1989). This can threaten the collegial basis upon

which school relationships among staff are built (Conley, 1991; Little, 1988; Smylie & Denny, 1990).

Norms suggest that teachers share an equal professional status, make independent judgments concerning their classrooms, and do so in private with minimal external intrusion. According to Smylie and Denny (1990), these norms suggest a “professional collegium in which members share similar experiences and the same status, where conversation about classroom practice is rarely engaged in and judgement regarding practice is rarely rendered” (pp.253-254). In other words, teachers, for the most part, are used to and comfortable with what Hallett (2007) refers to as an autonomy-based order. Traditional arrangements of cellular classrooms, individualized teaching assignments, and occupational norms of personal autonomy tend to obscure both the commonalities and the differences among teachers, as well as place cultural constraints on teacher communication (Little, 1999). Thus, the isolated culture of teacher autonomy serves as a major barrier to the efforts of teacher leaders.

Teacher leaders are confronted often with obstacles pertaining to helping to create an equal professional environment. In a study of 17 teacher leaders, Liberman et al. (1988) found one of the challenges perceived by teacher leaders was the norm of equality among educators. In other words, teachers did not feel they were equal and therefore willing to share struggles and challenges with teacher leaders. Similarly, in their interviews with 50 teachers, Duke et al. (1980) found some teachers were “suspicious of colleagues who identified closely with the school authority structure” (p. 97). The potential for this kind of negative perception among colleagues may make teachers less willing to take up leadership roles (Duke et al., 1980; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 1996; Malen & Ogawa, 1988; Smylie, 1992; Stone, Horejs, J.; Lomas, A., 1997). The demands of teacher leadership combined with the desire for collegial affiliation often create conflicts for teacher leaders (LeBlanc & Shelton, 1997). In their interviews with teacher leaders, Boles and Troen (1996) documented just this

tension. One teacher pointed to the cost of becoming a teacher leader in the changed relationships she experienced:

Being a teacher leader – it costs you! You can never be totally in with the other teachers.

What it costs is, I can't be in the teacher's room. I don't belong in the same way. You give up your friends, but I say it's for a higher purpose. (Boles and Troen, 1996, p.20)

This negative feeling experienced by teachers is often based on very real experiences.

Teachers often resent teacher leaders because they feel they will be evaluated by them (Hart, 1995).

While teachers may be able to recognize their highly effective contemporaries, they are less willing to accept these colleagues in leadership positions (Little, 2002). They may even actively undermine them. For example, colleagues may exhibit jealousy toward a teacher leader by challenging his/her ideas or decisions (LeBlanc & Shelton, 1991). This assertion is supported by the fact that in case studies with three teacher leaders, Wasley (1991) found high levels of tension between teacher leaders and their colleagues. What were once congenial relationships may become strained or entirely lost as teachers take on leadership roles (Little, 1990; York-Barr & Duke, 2004). The research is at a more general level related to finding a solution to these barriers; meaning it is better at demonstrating the problem than in offering a solution.

Structural Challenges

Certain physical and conceptual structures inherent to how schools are organized can pose barriers to building effective teacher leadership structures. In a study of 6,000 teachers, Lortie (1975) found that the physical compartmentalization of schools kept teachers isolated from one another. The architectural and organizational structures typical of many schools can perpetuate teacher isolation and limit the effectiveness of teacher leaders (Coyle, 1997; Fullan, 1994). The manner in which teachers are organized can further frustrate the efforts led by teacher leaders. Arranging

teachers by grade, by team, or by subject matter presents a significant barrier to promoting teacher collaboration, which is a major component to teacher leadership (Harris & Muijs, 2005).

Time, or rather the lack of time, is one of the most often cited barriers to teacher leadership (Carter & Powell, 1992; LeBlanc & Shelton, 1997; Rutledge, 2009; Smylie & Denny, 1990). Teacher leaders have reported that they have less time for lesson planning and preparation once they have taken on leadership roles (Ovando, 1994). The time spent on leadership activities interferes with the time needed for students, and the time spent on classroom and other teacher responsibilities curtails their leadership efforts (Carter & Powell, 1992; Smylie & Denny, 1990). Even when extra time is provided for leadership duties, it usually is not enough (Wasley, 1991). The majority of opportunities for teacher leaders to engage in collaborative efforts with their fellow teachers are at the end of the day after students have been dismissed. At this point, teachers' energy, both physical and intellectual, are at their lowest points, and the willingness and ability to engage in collegial activities are limited (Cooper, 1988)

Effective Literacy Instruction

The professional development content that teacher leaders in this study are providing is all focused on effective literacy instruction. Therefore it is appropriate to conclude this with a brief description of research in this area. Research has confirmed that effective teachers improve educational outcomes much more than curriculum materials, pedagogical approaches, or programs that are demonstrated as effective in a research setting (Allington & Johnson, 2001; Darling-Hammond, 1999; Duffy, 1997; Sanders, 1998). Whether it be in hiring decisions or professional development, investing in teachers' capacities to teach well is the most effective and important strategy available in order to assure our children are "not left behind". In order to determine what factors contribute to student success, Allington, et al. (2001) observed a large number of teachers identified as effective and pinpointed the most successful strategies shared among them. First and

fourth grade teachers were selected from six states, based on diversity in race, ethnicity and language.

The following were common categories where the teachers yielded successful classroom results: adequate literacy instructional time, appropriately leveled and varied texts, effective teaching strategies, meaningful discourse opportunities, meaningful tasks, and formative assessment. Each of these elements will be described briefly here.

Time to read extensively is critical as this is essential to the development of reading proficiency (Krashen, 2001; Stanovich, 2000). Regarding time, these exemplary teachers had the students reading and writing for as much as half the school day. In typical classrooms, it is not unusual to find that students read for as little as ten percent of a school day (30 minutes of reading and writing activity in a 300 minute, or five hour school day). Effective literacy instruction relies on a combination of developing important background knowledge and devoting enough time for students to spend reading. Another important element of effective literacy instruction is time spent activating students' prior knowledge (Pearson & Fielding, 1991) and generating discussion after reading in order for them to make meaningful connections among text, prior knowledge and as well as other texts (Fall, Webb & Chudowsky, 2000). Extensive practice provides an opportunity to consolidate skills and strategies teachers often work hard to develop in their students. Effective literacy teachers provide ample time for students to partake in guided reading, independent reading, and reading across the content areas (Allington, 2002).

A second key element in effective literacy instruction relates to the texts available for students to read. Students who are given a lot of time to read need a rich supply of texts. They need to be given choice within the varied texts. While there is a substantial research base supporting the need to supply children with books of appropriate complexity (Allington, 2001), districts often utilize a "one-size-fits-all" mandate that requires all students be taught using the same text. This contradicts what research has reported about effective literacy instruction (Allington & Johnston,

2002; Pressley, et al, 2001). Exemplary teachers often have to teach against the organizational grain, rejecting this kind of district policy for all students to be using the same text. Instead, they need to differentiate the instruction by varying the text according to the students' interests and abilities.

Active instruction, that is, the modeling and demonstration of strategies which good readers employ goes hand in hand with giving enough time and providing appropriate resources for effective literacy instruction, as reported by Allington's study (2001). While many teachers consider providing an assignment and then assessing learning to be adequate, the exemplary teacher is one who is active (Allington, 2002; Duffy, 1998). Active teachers offer useful suggestions such as decoding, composing, and self-regulating strategies all targeted at the individual needs of students. These exemplary teachers understand that commercial instructional packages should not be a teacher's only instructional approach because they offer little that can help students develop useful strategies while interacting with text (Allington, 2002).

There were huge differences noted regarding the way in which teachers talk in exemplary and typical classrooms. Exemplary teachers foster much higher levels of student talk, teacher – student talk, and student-student talk. In essence, exemplary teachers encouraged, modeled, and supported discussions throughout the school day which were purposeful and focused on problem solving related to curricular activities (Allington & Johnston, 2002; Johnston, Woodside & Day, 2001). The talk was different than what is commonly heard in classrooms because it tends more toward the conversational rather than interrogational. It was not like the talk Cazden (1988) and Nystrand (1997) described and that has been documented in many other studies where teachers posed questions, children responded, and teachers verified or corrected. In exemplary literacy classrooms, teachers and students discuss ideas, concepts, hypotheses, strategies and responses with others. Teachers pose more open-ended questions to which there is no one correct answer. Yet the nature of talk is complicated and not often understood. While there is evidence that thoughtful

classroom talk leads to improved reading comprehension (Fall, et al, 2000; Johnston, et al, 2001; Nystrand, 1997), there remain few interventions or resources to help teachers develop instructional expertise to create classrooms in which “conversational rather than interrogational” talk is common (Allington, 2002).

Exemplary teachers also give their students fewer, longer tasks as opposed to filling the day with more and shorter tasks. In the exemplary classrooms, students often worked on writing tasks lasting more than ten days. They read whole books, collaborated on group projects in addition to doing individual work, and completed interdisciplinary research projects and tasks. As a result, these classrooms produced more substantive, complex work, which required higher levels of self-regulation to complete than is necessary in typical classrooms. Also, the tasks included a lot of student choice within a managed system. The teacher ultimately controlled the broad range of choices, but students were given the liberty to choose from within them. Choice has been documented as leading to greater student ownership and engagement (Turner, 1995).

Lastly, exemplary teachers utilized an evaluation system with an emphasis on effort and improvement in addition to achievement. Evaluating in this manner gave students equal opportunity to succeed, based on effort and levels of engagement. This instructional environment was quite different than that of a typical classroom where grades are solely based on the final product. Similar to their providing a broad range of and large quantity of text specific to the students’ individual interests, this requires exemplary teachers to know the students at a much deeper level than those in typical classrooms. They need to be able to recognize growth and track student effort and engagement closely in partnership with the student. Also, exemplary teachers rarely engage in typical “test preparation” activities because they believe that by providing effective, active and rich instruction, test results will naturally increase (Allington & Johnston, 2002; Pressley, Allington, Wharton-McDonald, Collins- Block & Morrow, 2001).

Allington's research identified important and effective strategies of literacy instruction implemented by a variety of successful teachers. The broad and comprehensive list undoubtedly relied on the individual teacher's instruction methods. With Allington's detailed study, professional development providers have a model of essential teaching skills and strategies they can use to help teacher leaders support the learning of teachers in their school. While not an exhaustive list, it provides a frame of reference for understanding the type of professional development related to literacy which teacher leaders may focus on in collaborating with teachers to improve practice and improve student achievement.

Conclusion

As the role of teacher leader has become more formalized and institutionalized in many schools and school districts, it has sparked the field to examine more closely what factors influence enactment of their role as professional development providers. Investigation of the literature points to factors as both important and necessary when discussing the range of influences in which teacher leaders perform their responsibilities. These factors include the role of the principal and the culture of the school. Sharing leadership responsibilities with capable and knowledgeable teacher leaders through a shared leadership model enables a principal to work collaboratively with a team to improve teacher learning and student outcomes (Spillane, 2009; Hulpia, Devos, Roseel, 2008). The success of a shared leadership model is strongly influenced by the level of principal support for the teacher leaders. The more support principals give teacher leaders, the more likely the professional development they provides will be effective and sustainable (Mangin, 2007). As a result of these factors, it is likely that a positive school culture will develop which can ultimately improve teacher quality and student achievement. The ultimate purpose of the teacher leaders' role is to increase student achievement. This can be achieved by improving teachers' learning opportunities (Smylie,

Conley & Marks, 2002). When teacher leaders are effectively deployed, research indicates they can play an important role in improved teacher practices and increased student achievement.

The existing body of research suggests a promising role for teacher leaders as professional development providers. However, there are no/few in-depth studies of teacher leaders as professional development providers who are also participating in their own professional development. My qualitative study adds to the body of research by examining formal teacher leaders who function, in part, as in-house professional development providers. In particular, I focus on the factors that influence the professional development they provide as a way to deepen our understanding of the teacher leader in this role. Uncovering factors that contribute to teacher leaders' abilities to provide effective professional development will help district leaders and planners of resource centers like the University Literacy Center develop successful teacher leader models and effective professional development opportunities for teacher leaders.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The purpose of this study is to examine the factors influencing professional development that teacher leaders provide. It is intended to highlight the challenges and supports that accompany these educational experiences. The research in this study supports the idea that such an understanding may offer a more plausible insight into the work that teacher leaders assume as professional development providers. This understanding could be beneficial to leaders, at all levels, schools and institutions of higher education that are focused on teacher leadership, as well as educational policy makers. Research questions included: What do teacher leaders who receive professional development through a Literacy Center do as professional development providers once they return to their schools? What influences their activities? What are the supports and obstacles they face in doing so?

The research design described here was selected to generate data that would inform educators about the practice of teacher leaders, who take part in a university-run literacy center, as they provide professional development to their colleagues. The questions were aimed at understanding the supports and challenges the teacher leaders faced through this process. Examining this data can provide information about how to better develop and support teacher leaders in their role as on-site professional development providers.

A case study (Creswell, 1998) was used to describe what influences the professional development that teacher leaders have provided within their schools. More specifically, a case study was used so that units of analysis in the “bounded system” were studied “over time through detailed, in depth data collection involving multiple sources of information rich in context” (Creswell, 1998, p. 61). In order to examine the factors affecting the professional development teacher leaders provide, an inductive investigative strategy (Patton, 2008) was used. Inductive reasoning, often referred to as a bottom-up approach, is the process by which broader generalizations are derived

from specific observations. Using an inductive approach was logical in this study since the broader concepts were determined as a result of the data collected. This case study sought to describe what teacher leaders did in their role as professional development providers, what factors influenced these choices, and what supports and obstacles they faced in carrying out the professional development. In order to complete this study, interviews with teacher leaders and building principals, and observations of professional development sessions were conducted. My main sources of data collection were observations of professional development sessions as well as teacher leader and principal interviews. In addition, I kept a research journal to record information about factors affecting professional development that teacher leaders provide. A research journal was used to record my thoughts and decision-making regarding data collection, my reactions to the research experiences, and memos of my impressions when transcribing and working through data (Merriam, 2009; Miles & Huberman, 1984.) Data collection took place over a five-month period.

Sample

Because I was not aiming to produce generalizations from my findings, but rather to discover what occurred in a particular setting (Honihmann, 1982 in Merriam, 2009), a purposeful sample was acceptable and appropriate to address my research questions. By using this approach, I sought and was able to secure participants that provided information-rich cases, rather than those who would have provided generalizable findings (Patton, 2002; Creswell, 1998; Merriam, 2009).

To select the participants through a purposeful sampling process (Merriam, 2009), I began by selecting a district that is a member of a University Literacy Center and also has a formal, designated teacher leader role in their schools and for which a major aspect of the job is to work as a professional development provider within their assigned building. Selecting participants from a school district that is a member of the literacy center is important because I am aware, to some degree, of what professional training the teacher leaders receive and I am attempting to ascertain if

the information the center provides is used in their work as professional development providers.

This was key in my selection process, for the data collected needed to be as closely aligned as possible to the research questions. This was important since the research question focused on the teacher leaders who receive professional development from the university literacy center. There were eight teachers with the teacher leader role in the selected district; the only district in the literacy center with a formal teacher leader role. From within this group, I selected three participants to achieve maximum variation with regard to the following characteristics: number of years each teacher leader had been a member of the Literacy Center, number of years in their current position, the number of Literacy Center meetings each attended, and in what capacity each teacher leader worked as a professional development provider in her building. Critical to the selection criteria development was to link it closely to the research questions (Merriam, 2009; Gall, Gall & Borg, 2010 & Patton, 2008). I picked one participant who had more than fifteen years of experience as a teacher leader, one who had more than seven years as a teacher leader and a third participant who had less than five years as a teacher leader. Additionally, they all took part in the university literacy center as well as being formally designated teacher leaders in their schools. The principals interviewed were chosen by default, as they were the principals in the schools where each of the selected teacher leaders worked.

Setting

This case study was conducted in three public elementary schools located in a suburban community in New Jersey: Grant Primary School, Harrison Primary School, and McKinley Primary School in the Brewster School District. The district has been designated by the New Jersey Department of Education as a District Factor Group GH. This is a ranking system used for

comparison of socioeconomic conditions of school districts in the state that range from A (lowest) to J (highest). The district enrolled 8,900 students during the 2010-11 school year; 93.4% of the students speak English as their first language. They are served from Pre-Kindergarten through twelfth grade in seven primary schools, two intermediate schools, one middle school and one high school that.

The district promotes and supports a strong commitment to professional development, demonstrated in part by the appointment and job description of their teacher leaders. While many New Jersey districts employ Reading Specialists, there is a tendency to use them *solely* as a resource for struggling literacy students, and rarely for teacher development. However, in this district, there is recognition of the importance of teacher leaders as a foundation and necessity for effective support and ongoing learning of the instructional staff (Wasley, 1991; Stoelin & Mangin, 2010; Searby & Shaddix, 2008). Their reading specialists (known as Elementary Teaching Specialists, ETS) act as teacher leaders, spending a large amount of time as professional development providers to their colleagues, in addition to fulfilling their other job responsibilities such as coordinating state testing and overseeing resource and gifted programs.

The Brewster School District has been a member of the Rutgers Center for Literacy Development since the center began six years ago. The district sends one ETS from each of its eight elementary schools to each meeting. Each ETS is a certified Reading Specialist who provides teacher support, conducts student assessment, coordinates state testing, and acts as a direct line of communication between teachers and school and district administrators.

Within the Brewster School District, the official ETS job description falls under the Educational/Teaching Personnel Department. In order to qualify for the position, a New Jersey Elementary Teaching Certification, Reading Specialist Certification, and Reading Recovery

Certification are required. Three years are given to obtain the Reading Specialist Certification, if not previously earned at time of hire. The ETS reports directly to the building principal.

To gain an understanding of the purpose of the ETS position, it is relevant to describe the ETS role in relation to this study. The ETS is positioned as a teacher leader whose role is to work with teachers through professional development experiences. Ideally, the ETS's mission is to increase teacher quality and ultimately student achievement. The ETS works directly with the building principal, in consultation with the District Director of Basic Skills, subject area supervisors, and the Reading Recovery Teacher Leader. The ETS assists in the development, integration, and assessment of the K-5 literacy curriculum. In addition, the ETS performs the duties of a Reading Recovery Teacher or Reading Recovery Teacher in Training as applicable. The ETS is granted a ten-month contract, consistent with the agreement negotiated with the applicable bargaining unit, and must make a minimum commitment of two years in the position or pay back Reading Recovery training costs. Evaluation of the ETS is based on the performance of responsibilities identified in this position description.

According to the Brewster School District website, the ETS is responsible for the following, at the building level:

1. Acts as a liaison between the Director of Basic Skills and subject area supervisors and the building principal and faculty.
2. Assists the Director of Basic Skills and subject area supervisors in developing district goals
3. Attends periodic meetings deemed necessary by the Director of Basic Skills or the subject area supervisors.
4. Curriculum and Instruction
 - a. In cooperation with principals, teachers, the Director of Basic Skills, and

subject area supervisors, coordinate the integration of the curriculum and assessment program.

- b. Participates in the interpretation and analysis of individual, group, district, standardized, and state assessments.
- c. Assesses individual pupils including those referred by principals and staff for instructional purposes.
- d. Works closely with the media specialist in the selection and dissemination of instructional materials.
- e. Is available for conferences with principal, teachers, supervisor, parents/guardians and/or students to discuss instructional programs and the interpretation of test data.
- f. Utilizes the services of the building teacher assistant for clerical and inventory duties.

5. Reading Recovery

- a. Performs the duties and responsibilities required of a Reading Recovery Teacher by the host university Reading Recovery Program, such as:
 - i. Conducts screening and selection of Reading Recovery children.
 - ii. Works with four children individually on a daily basis (half-day).
 - iii. Monitors progress of discontinued children.
 - iv. Communicates with parents/guardians, teachers and other staff.
 - v. Keeps records and administers tests to Reading Recovery and random sample children.
 - vi. Receives and makes at least two colleague visits.
 - vii. Attends four to six in-service days conducted by the site Reading Recovery Teacher Leader.

- b. Communicates and shares Program information with building staff and parents/guardians.
- c. Works with small groups of students where appropriate.
- d. Conducts model lessons.
- e. Conducts staff development.
- f. Attends ongoing contact sessions with Reading Recovery Teacher Leader.
- g. Participates in peer coaching with other Reading Recovery Teachers.
- h. Coordinates the Reading Recovery Program where appropriate.
- i. Performs other duties and responsibilities as established by the host university.

B. General Professional Responsibilities

1. Demonstrates proficiency in the use of English by communicating with reasonable clarity, conciseness, and precision in both speaking and writing.
2. Participates in solving classroom and school problems and seeks resolutions through appropriate channels.
3. Cooperates in the total school program by:
 - a. Sharing responsibility for care of materials, equipment, and classroom;
 - b. Sharing responsibility for students' behavior throughout the building;
 - c. Working with colleagues to improve the effectiveness of the total school program;
 - d. Participating in school activities.
4. Cooperates in curriculum development and evaluation activities by participating in the planning and implementation of programs.
5. Establishes and follows an individual program of professional renewal in such areas as:
 - a. How children learn;
 - b. Current approaches to discipline;

- c. Alternative instructional strategies;
- d. Updated curriculum materials;
- e. Current theory and practice in his/her field.

The Elementary Teaching Specialist is responsible for a plethora of instructional duties. However, the task they are expected to spend the majority of their time on, according to the teacher leaders, is providing ongoing literacy related professional development to teachers in their buildings. Professional development includes facilitating grade level meetings, providing whole school workshops, modeling instructional strategies, providing resources, and observing lessons as an opportunity to provide critical feedback (although an ETS is not responsible for any formal evaluation observations). The ETS is not a supervisory role; that is, each works under the union's negotiated teachers' contract, but does not have an assigned classroom. The function of the ETS, a type of teacher leader, is to act as a source of knowledge and instructional support for the teachers as a way to improve instruction in the classrooms (Stoelinga & Mangin, 2010; Roby, 2011). Professional development is provided to the Elementary Teaching Specialists through the University Literacy Center.

Sample

Teacher Leaders. After careful consideration of teacher leaders who were professional development providers, three were chosen, and agreed to participate. Combined, they had over 40 years of teaching experiences and over 20 years as professional development providers. As part of a district membership, they have been a part of the University Literacy Center since its inception in 2006.

Luann

At the time data was collected for this study, Luann had been a teacher for thirty years, seventeen of which had been as an Elementary Teaching Specialist (ETS) serving in the role of teacher leader. She holds her Bachelor of Arts Degree and Master's Degree in Education and is a certified Reading Specialist. Prior to working in the Brewster School District, Luann taught in both the private and public sector for nine years.

Luann described her teacher leader role as one that is very complicated and complex. She is the professional developer for the staff as well as the schools' reading specialist, which entails completing all reading assessments of students. In addition, she is the curriculum liaison for the district and on many building and district wide committees; communicating district-level information to the schools in which they work. Consistent with the ETS job description, Luann is responsible for both communicating district curricular goals to her school and working to ensure that they are met. Given the size of the district, this is a large task. Within the building, Luann is on the Intervention and Referral Service (I&RS) committee that handles all cases referred for review to identify special needs students. As the professional development provider, Luann handles this task on a district, grade level, and individual level. She helps teachers with curriculum and student issues, with regard to both behavioral and academic challenges.

Luann stated that her teacher leader position has morphed into something else each year, depending on district and school mandates and goals. For example, this year, she did not pull out any small student groups for instruction as she had the previous year. While the previous year she had selected students based on need, this year she felt it was not necessary. Another example of how her job changed from year to year is that during the year the study was conducted, she implemented a new extended day literacy program she learned about from another district's teacher leaders. Through observing the program in action, she saw the value, gained approval from her principal to

try it out, and has since implemented it in her school. She described the beauty of her role as having the ability to implement what the school needs and that is always changing.

As the school's sole professional development provider, Luann conducted two grade-level meetings a month for each grade. Their focus, based on curriculum needs, was often dictated by the district supervisors, although the specific content could have been customized. As part of the process of setting the agenda for these meetings, the district's teacher leaders met monthly as a group with the Director of Language Arts who provided topics to be covered in individual school professional development sessions. Luann then planned the professional development sessions for the grade-level meetings in a way that addressed the assigned topics. Conversely, some grade-level meeting topics were generated by teachers in the building. For example, a new writing initiative was implemented in the year previous to the study and has continued. Teachers have requested additional professional development on this topic during grade-level meetings. As it got closer to the time when state testing was done, grade-level meetings were typically focused on how to prepare the kids for success on these. Luann ran all of her grade level meetings the same, regardless of who or what dictated the topic. She used the first half of the meeting to cover the assigned topic and then she allowed the teachers to discuss something, perhaps unrelated, that they needed to meet about during the second half. An example of this was when the fourth grade teachers had an upcoming field trip and used the second half of the meetings to finalize the details.

In addition to the monthly meetings, Luann also conducted demonstration lessons in teachers' classrooms. In an effort to institutionalize the writing initiative, Luann went into classrooms to model teaching strategies aligned with the mission, based on teacher requests and classroom observations she made. The teacher observed as she taught, and then the teacher and Luann met to debrief the lesson. She did this often to follow-up with grade-level meetings pertaining to district and school goals.

As the professional development provider, and in addition to running the grade-level meetings, Luann also implemented monthly Response to Intervention (RtI) meetings in each grade level team. At these meetings, Luann helped teachers develop effective teaching strategies for at-risk students by offering ideas, observing, sharing materials and providing feedback. These meetings were specifically focused on supporting individual students' learning who had been flagged as struggling readers and writers. Their progress was carefully monitored and plans were created and discussed in an effort to move the students forward, with the end goal being to avoid classification.

Luann also had a role at faculty meetings, which were held three times a month. She was responsible for presenting instructional materials or strategies selected by her principal for two of them and by the district supervisor during the third.

Allison

At the time of this study, Allison had been teaching for thirteen years. She spent six years in the classroom and had been serving in the teacher leader role as an Elementary Teaching Specialist for seven and a half years. She holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Elementary and French Education and a Master's Degree in Reading; she is certified as a Reading Specialist. She also has fifteen credits above her Master's Degree. Allison taught for six and a half years in New York before coming to the Brewster School District. She stopped working for five and a half years in between her jobs in New York and Brewster while she was home with her two children.

Allison defined the role of teacher leader as someone who helps implement curriculum and provides staff development. She views herself as a coach who enables teachers to become better versed and more comfortable with the curriculum content. Being a trained Reading Recovery Teacher and Reading Specialist, she has a strong literacy background which she believes had a significant impact on her understanding of the learning process and her ability to assist teachers so

that they can get the most from their students. She sees improving instruction through teacher professional development as her ultimate goal as teacher leader.

In describing her role as a professional development provider in her school, Allison reports that she looks at the school year as a whole. During the year data was collected for this study, she spent most of her time providing professional development from September through February. Once March came, she still worked with the teachers in that role, but her responsibilities as the school's assessment leader took up much of her time until the end of the year. As a result, overseeing all of the state testing, through planning to implementation, overshadowed other responsibilities during this time.

One of the responsibilities specific to Allison's role as professional development provider was working with newly hired teachers. She worked with them one-on-one and in small groups. An example of this was providing professional development on the school's literacy assessment program to new teachers. Allison offered an overview of the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) that all teachers were required to administer to students on a continuous basis in all grades, Kindergarten through grade four. The first session gave an overview, which provided the rationale for using the DRA, the steps involved, and how to manage the implementation for all students in the classrooms. Allison then arranged follow-up meetings with each of the new teachers during which she actually modeled how to implement DRA in their classrooms. The teachers observed her going through the process during a model lesson in the classrooms. After that, Allison observed each teacher completing a DRA with a student, and then the two met to discuss the process. In that meeting, they debriefed what went well and the challenges the teacher faced as well as ways to overcome them. Most importantly, Allison confirmed that the teacher has completed the DRA correctly and that the teacher could successfully interpret the results to help effectively inform

instruction for the students. As the school's teacher leader, this gradual release of responsibility is one type of professional development Allison provided.

A second form of professional development Allison provided was implemented in after-school sessions. These sessions were attended by the entire school faculty and focused on big picture content areas and how to best improve student learning; they were not typically strategy-specific sessions. Rather, they covered broader concepts such as the importance of using Inquiry Circles to improve comprehension skills for students. In general she provided examples of what teachers were already doing in their classrooms that promoted this skill, and how to best align that with current teaching practices to produce better results. These meetings were sometimes offered jointly with another school, and then the teacher leaders co-presented.

Allison also joined in on grade-level meetings, much like Luann. Allison sat with each of her grade-level teams when they met, as often as she could. Typically, she brought student data for the group to analyze. She then proceeded to facilitate discussion based on teachers' interpretation of the data, and then the group collaboratively shared teaching strategies to address student challenges as identified through the data analysis activity.

Mindy

Mindy has been teaching for ten years. She has been in the teacher leader role as an Elementary Teaching Specialist for the past four years. Prior to this position, Mindy spent three years teaching in the fourth grade academically enriched classroom for talented and gifted students in district and three years as the school-wide enrichment teacher for fifth and sixth grades. Mindy holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Psychology, a Master's Degree in Education (with a specialization in literacy), a K-12 Supervision Certification, and a K-12 Reading Specialist Certification.

Mindy views her role of teacher leader as one who facilitates grade-level and school wide meetings. She sees herself as a communicator of messages from the district supervisors and enactment of her role as a way of collaboratively working on curriculum, co-planning, and analyzing student assessments. She sees nearly one hundred percent of her role as teacher leader as working with teachers on some kind of professional development.

In addition to facilitating grade-level and faculty meetings, Mindy spent a lot of time in classrooms. She would often be found observing students with the intent to find effective strategies to help the teacher improve instruction. After an observation, Mindy would either meet with the teacher outside the classroom to debrief and monitor a teacher's progress toward a goal or model the new strategies she felt were appropriate within the classroom. Mindy, much like Allison, also spent time supporting the development of newly hired teachers. However, she also worked with experienced teachers who were working in regular education classrooms without literacy training. This had occurred due to the push for more co-taught classrooms which had yielded special education teachers running guided reading groups with no formal training. In these instances, Mindy trained the teacher on the appropriate instructional strategies to ensure they had the suitable knowledge to carry out the curriculum successfully.

Principals. The three building principals of the focal teacher leaders were asked to participate by default; they each agreed to take part in the study. Since one aim of the study was to examine the factors that influence the teacher leaders' ability to provide professional development as well as the supports and obstacles they may face in doing so, I felt it essential to interview the principal of each school. As the schools' administrators, these individuals play a key role in determining the blueprint for their schools' professional development opportunities and in creating a context for the development in their schools. When the principal is a strong supporter of the role of teacher leader and professional development providers, student learning outcomes are increased

(Mangin & Stoelinga, 2008; Atkins, 2002). Therefore, they likely have an influence on the professional development that the ETs provide and it is important to understand their perspective on this.

Mr. Fisher is the principal at Harrison Primary School, which houses 394 students. He has been in the position for three years. Before becoming a principal in Brewster, Mr. Fisher taught fourth, fifth and sixth grades over a seven-year span. Before assuming the principal role, he was an assistant principal in the Brewster School District. His school's teacher leader is Luann.

Mr. Leeds serves at the principal for McKinley Primary School, which accommodates 501 students. He has been in this position for six years. Prior to becoming principal, Mr. Leeds worked as a school counselor and school psychologist in a nearby district. This district did not have an intervention system in place for at-risk students, so he was an integral part of creating one. While working on the new intervention system, Mr. Leeds worked as a professional development provider in order to have all teachers trained on the new system. He is the principal in the school at which Allison is a teacher leader.

Mr. Walton is the principal of Grant Primary School, which serves 404 students. He has been in this position for the past ten years. Before becoming a principal there, Mr. Walton taught for three years as a Gifted and Talented Language Arts Teacher in an urban district and two years as a professional development teacher trainer for Kindergarten through twelfth grade teachers and served as assistant principal. He earned his Bachelor's of Arts in Business and Economics from a state university and a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership. Mindy is the teacher leader in his school.

All three principals are the sole building based administrators in their schools. In the Brewster School District, the primary school principal is responsible for promoting the district mission and vision by providing instructional leadership including curriculum implementation and

relevant professional development. He or she is also responsible for ensuring the well-being of students and staff by providing a safe, pleasant, and appropriate educational atmosphere through the effective use of school and district policies.

Table 3.1 District Composition

	Harrison Primary School	McKinley Primary School	Grant Primary School
Teacher Leader	Luann	Allison	Mindy
# Years in TL Position	17	7.5	4
Principal	Mr. Fisher	Mr. Leeds	Mr. Walton
# Years in Principal position	3	6	10
School Configuration	K-4	K-4	K-4

Data Collection Procedures

According to Creswell, 1998), the researcher herself is the primary instrument of data collection in qualitative research. This highlights the significance of making meaning as well as the inductive process of building concepts and hypotheses (Merriam, 2009). In doing so, it is important to note that the researcher, as the main data collection instrument, has its advantages and disadvantages. While an advantage is the researcher develops the research design to fit the research questions (Merriam, 2009), a shortcoming is that data interpretation could be biased as a result of the researcher's subjectivities (Creswell, 1998; Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2008). Therefore, in order to confirm and validate findings, qualitative research utilizes a triangulation process by deploying various methods of data collection (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2010) This study will employ observations,

interviews, and the collection of artifacts in an attempt to develop and provide rich description of the professional development provided the teacher leaders in an attempt to uncover the factors that affect them.

Observations. Observations of teacher leaders' professional development sessions occurred monthly, from November through April. Teacher leaders were observed in the following professional development sessions: grade level meetings, classroom modeling, and whole school professional development sessions, as these are three types of opportunities the teacher leaders facilitate most often. I sat in on the professional development sessions as an observer. The 10 sessions were videotaped and field notes were recorded to provide both a highly descriptive account as well as a reflective component for each of the observations (Merriam, 2009; Creswell, 1988). Luann contacted me toward the end of the data collection phase with an opportunity that I had not been able to observe previously. She was modeling a lesson for a teacher; hence, Luann was observed four times. In preparation for each observation, I interviewed (via email) the teacher leaders prior to each of the professional development sessions I observed to understand the goals of the activity and how it came to take place, as well as to become familiar with the topics and processes that were a part of the session. The videotapes were transcribed as soon as possible to provide an accurate description of the professional development sessions. While I transcribed, I jotted brief notes in my research journal (Merriam, 2009; Miles & Huberman, 1984) that focused on factors I observed affecting professional development. The field notes of all sessions were arranged chronologically to give a complete picture of the professional development sessions. Professional development sessions were observed which included a combination of whole school, grade level and one-to-one presentations, coaching and modeling. Which sessions to observe were mutually agreed on by each teacher leader and me. Through email exchanges we reviewed the types of professional

development opportunities she would be providing and selected those that were not repetitive in format or type to ones previously observed and that spanned the various grade levels.

Luann and Mindy were observed on November 26, 2012 in an after school joint meeting. The teachers from both Harrison and McKinley Primary Schools and a third district primary school met at McKinley School for a workshop scheduled from 3:30-4:30pm. Luann and Mindy presented a session on a comprehension strategy, *Using Inquiry Circles in the Classroom* for third and fourth grade teachers. The teacher leader from the third school, who was new to the position, observed the presentation as well. The content was taken from Daniels and Harvey's, *Inquiry Circles in Action: Comprehension and Collaboration*. They used a PowerPoint presentation with embedded video to share ideas and facilitate discussion. The meeting began at approximately 3:45pm with an introduction from the McKinley School principal and concluded promptly at 4:30pm. There were approximately 45 teachers in the session, and snacks and drinks were provided for the teachers. Mr. Walton, Mindy's principal, was present.

The second professional development session of Luann's that I observed occurred on December 19, 2012. It was a second grade meeting that addressed the new spelling program that was being piloted in two second grade classrooms. In order to plan the session, she referred to the Spelling Connections Student Edition and Teacher's Manual. Luann used a discussion format to run the meeting. The third professional development session was on January 28, 2013. This was a first grade team meeting which covered three topics. The first topic was revisiting a unit on argumentative writing which included checking the students' progress, addressing teachers' concerns, and sharing student writing samples. Luann distributed a handout which addressed writing responses to reading. The second topic was Guided Reading; more specifically, the addition of the writing response to written pieces. This was geared toward higher achieving students. The third focus of the meeting was strategies to incorporate student writing into science lessons. This meeting

lasted approximately 30 minutes. My fourth observation of Luann occurred on April 4, 2013. She was modeling an in-class lesson in an Academically Independent (gifted) fourth grade classroom. The topic was writing a composition as a response to a poem using a planning structure for the state assessment NJASK 4. Luann used the NJ ASK Training information provided by the New Jersey Department of Education, Brewster curriculum, the book *The Most Wonderful Writing Lessons* by Barbara Marinak, and her own resources that she created to help implement the session. This last meeting lasted approximately 40 minutes.

Allison was observed during three of the professional development sessions she provided. The first session took place on December 6, 2012, and lasted approximately 40 minutes. In this session, I observed Allison modeling a small-guided reading lesson, in her office, while the students' teacher observed. The observer was an ELL teacher who is co-teaching in a second grade classroom, but does not have a literacy background. To prepare for the session, Allison referred to the book, *The Continuum of Learning* by Fountas and Pinnell, which had the descriptors of Guided Reading lessons and graphic organizers. She used guided reading books from the students' classrooms to create and implement the demonstration lesson. During the same day, Allison met with the ELL teacher to review what she had observed, debrief the process, and answer any questions the teacher had. When she found out the ELL teacher did not have training in guided reading, she scheduled another professional development session with her in order to increase her knowledge and skills.

My second observation of Allison as a professional development provider occurred on January 9, 2013, and lasted approximately 40 minutes. This was for a kindergarten team meeting where the focus was reading assessment and reader's response to text, which are topics included in the school's professional development plan. Allison used a current event article from NJ.com, materials from a university literacy center session on Reader's Workshop she attended with Dr.

Frank Serafini, and the kindergarten assessment and scoring rubrics created previously by the kindergarten team and her.

Allison's third professional development meeting I observed was on March 1, 2013. It was with four fourth grade teachers and lasted approximately 35 minutes. During this session, Allison reviewed newly revised information for the state assessment (NJASK) of which the teachers were unaware. The resources Allison used to plan and implement this session were a PowerPoint from the New Jersey Department of Education, a copy of the Common Core State Standards, an NJASK writing sample from 2012, and information from a professional development company that has worked with the district on test preparation strategies.

Mindy was observed three times as she provided professional development sessions to teachers at her school. The first session I observed was on November 26, 2013 when she co-presented with Luann (see Luann's sessions). The second session was on January 29, 2013. Initially Mindy had planned to work one-on-one with a third grade ELL teacher who was new to being in the classroom full time (Previously, she was in a pull-out situation, but she was now co-teaching in the regular classroom). However, another teacher also attended the meeting at the last minute, changing Mindy's plan to work with just one teacher. The meeting focus was on the school's literacy assessment program, Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA). Mindy's goal was to model how to score and analyze student work using the DRA and then use the data to inform instruction. As resources, Mindy relied on the following: *Words Their Way* by Invernizzi, Bear, Templeton, and Johnston, the DRA materials and teacher's manual as well as PowerPoint slides that had been presented when all district teacher leaders attended a training on the topic. This session lasted approximately 40 minutes. The third observation was on March 11, 2013 when Mindy worked with four first grade teachers on "anchoring" writing samples in preparation for the NJASK. This was planned as a working session where each teacher read and scored, using the district scoring rubric,

TEACHER LEADERS AS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROVIDERS: A CASE STUDY

69

anonymous student writing samples. This meeting stemmed from a district –wide initiative to include anchoring as a form of assessing standard-based writing samples. The resources Mindy used to help prepare for this professional development session are four writing samples from the first grade team, the 24 point district rubric, which is based on the 6+1 traits of writing taught through the district’s adopted writing program, *Good Habits, Great Readers*. This session lasted approximately 40 minutes.

Table 3.2: Luann’s Professional Development Sessions

	Session #1	Session # 2	Session # 3	Session # 4
Date	November 26, 2012	December 19, 2013	January 28, 2013	April 4, 2013
Grade Level	3-4	2	1	4
Topic	Using Inquiry Circles to Improve Student Comprehension	Spelling Pilot Program	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Argument Writing 2. Guided Reading 3. Science Curriculum 	Response writing in preparation for the NJASK 4.
Resources	Inquiry Circles in Action: Comprehension and Collaboration by Harvey Daniels and Stephanie Harvey	Spelling Connections (Student and Teacher’s Manual	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Handouts for writing responses to reading 2. Power point Curriculum guide 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NJ ASK Training info 2. Brewster curriculum The Most Wonderful Writing Lessons by Barbara Mariconda,
Format	Large Group Meeting (combination of three schools	Small group, grade level meeting	Small group, grade level meeting	In-Class Modeling

Table 3.3: Allison's Professional Development Sessions

	Session #1	Session # 2	Session # 3
Topic	Development Reading Assessment	Reading Assessment and Reader's Response	NJASK Test Preparation
Date	December 6, 2012	January 9, 2013	March 1, 2013
Grade Level	2	Kindergarten	4
Resources	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Continuum of Literacy by Ilene Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell 2. Guided Reading Descriptors 3. Graphic Organizers 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Current Event Article from NJ.Com 2. Materials from a Reader's Workshop by Frank Serafini 3. Kindergarten assessment and scoring rubrics 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NJDOE power point 2. Common Core State Standards 3. NJASK 2012 Writing Samples 4. Outside Professional 5. Development Company resources
Form	Demonstration Lesson	Small group, grade level meeting	Small group, grade level meeting

Table 3.4: Mindy's Professional Development Sessions

	Session # 1	Session #2	Session #3
Topic	Using Inquiry Circles to Improve Student Comprehension	Developmental Reading Assessment	Anchoring Writing Sample
Date	November 26, 2012	January 29, 2013	March 11, 2013
Grade Level	3-4	3	1
Resources	Inquiry Circles in Action: Comprehension and Collaboration by Harvey Daniels and Stephanie Harvey	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Words Their Way by Marcia Invernizzi, Donald Bear, Shane Templeton, and Francine Johnston, 2. DRA materials and teacher's manual 3. power point from previously attended training 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Writing samples from the first grade team 2. 24-point district rubric
Form	Large Group Meeting (combination of three schools)	Small group (two teachers)	Small group, grade level meeting

Interviews. Before professional development for the current school year began, teacher leaders (see Appendix A) were interviewed using a semi-structured interview protocol. Principals (see Appendix B) were also interviewed toward the end of the data collection period. Open-ended questions were used to gain insight into factors that affected teacher leaders' experiences as professional development providers. Interviews were also conducted with teacher leaders before and after each professional development session. The interviews were conducted at a time that was convenient for the teacher leaders and principals and all interviews occurred in their respective

classrooms and offices. Initial interviews lasted approximately fifteen to twenty minutes and were audiotaped. Additionally, I used my research journal to take field notes to capture the responses and record the reactions and impressions I had during the interviews. The interviews were transcribed as soon as possible after they took place to ensure that I captured the teacher leaders' and principals' thoughts accurately. The data was organized by date and filed by participants' names.

Teacher leader interviews occurred before and after each professional development observation to understand what influenced the teacher leaders to provide the particular professional development session and factors that both shaped and challenged the way it was provided. I asked them to write down the reasons why each session was developed and the goals they hoped to accomplish. The post-observation interview served as a debriefing session following the professional development sessions where they were asked to record how they felt the professional development session went, including the supports and challenges they faced while providing each of the sessions. I was able to collect as many as the teacher leaders completed. I used these interviews to understand all of the professional development provided throughout the five months.

Artifacts. According to Merriam (2009), qualitative data collection using interviews and observations can be enriched with the collection of relevant documents. In response to this, I collected all training documents that the teacher leaders provided to their colleagues for each professional development session. Additionally, in order to understand the individual professional development sessions in depth, I asked each teacher leader to share her school's overall professional development plan, of which I collected a paper copy for each school. Teacher leaders shared with me the school's professional development plan so that I was able to familiarize myself with the overall goals for the year.

The school-wide professional development plan was a document outlining the professional growth goals throughout the year. It contained a mission and specific goals aimed at instructional

achievement. A professional development committee at the school level created the plan, with input from the district supervisors. Each teacher leader was a part of the committee and referred to it throughout the year when planning professional development opportunities.

The documents were used in comparison to the interviews and observations of the teacher leaders. Physical traces of data supplemented the data derived from the interviews and observations (Merriam, 2009). I sought the permission of the teacher leaders to use the documents as data.

Role of Researcher

My role as researcher was both enhanced and challenged by my being the Co-Director of the Literacy Center which coordinated some of the professional development the teacher leaders received. While I was not the person presenting the information, I was responsible for coordinating each of the meetings; meaning I was responsible for planning every aspect of the meetings pertaining to the venue, speaker, materials, and participants. It was a benefit to be very familiar with the three teacher leader participants, as I have worked with them since 2006; they did not see me as an outsider. There was a level of comfort between each teacher leader and myself which was advantageous as it allowed me to gain access easily and understand easily a lot of the resources they used with their teachers. I also found it helpful that I was familiar with the professional development they participated in at the Center. Conversely, there was potential for the participants to plan professional development sessions that they thought I wanted to see rather than what they would have normally done. In order to avoid these situations, I tried to make extremely clear that this study was not an evaluation of them, the professional development they provided, or the Literacy Center. I informed them that I was studying professional development in their “natural habitat” in order to understand the challenges and supports they faced when providing professional development in order for the Center to be able to better support their work and that of other teacher leaders. I was careful to approach each professional development observation as objectively

as possible, even if Literacy Center materials were used. This occurred through conversation at each of the professional development sessions where I assured each teacher leader I was not conducting an analysis of the center; rather, what factors influenced the professional development they provided.

Data Analysis

Qualitative research favors analysis through an inductive approach, although a deductive approach can also be used. Rather than analyzing deductively by testing theories and assumptions through the analysis of data, the preferred method for qualitative analysis requires using the data to derive new concepts and theories. Data from the teacher leader and principal interviews, observations of professional development sessions, and examinations of relevant documents were used in order to discover emerging patterns (Merriam, 2009; Creswell, 1998). Data collection and analysis occurred simultaneously, as is the preferred and effective strategy in qualitative research design (Merriam, 2009; Creswell, 1998).

Data analysis began with a general inquiry that sought to uncover findings at a broad level. The first phase of data analysis consisted of reading and rereading the transcripts, viewing the video recorded professional development sessions, alongside my research journal to gain a sense of the data as a whole (Creswell, 1998, Merriam, 2009). Interview transcripts from teacher leaders and principals were compared and contrasted to professional development observations and artifacts in order to identify patterns dictated by the research questions. Analytic memos were also incorporated (Patton, 2001) to connect current literature to field collection samples in order to gain a deeper understanding of the findings. Data from observations were compared to data from interviews and artifacts with the purpose of identifying categories for analysis.

Simultaneously analyzing and collecting data is a recommended strategy in qualitative research (Bogden & Biklen, 2007, in Merriam, 2009). For example, if I saw patterns emerging that

reflected teacher leaders providing professional development to a resistant group of teachers, subsequent observations may have focused on ways in which the teacher leader handled professional development sessions with resistant teachers. By conducting interviews with teacher leaders early in the process, I was able to identify their perceptions of factors affecting the professional development they provided. The data from these interviews were entered, coded and cross-coded through a qualitative software analysis program, Dedoose. In addition to Dedoose, a physical codebook was created with cut and pasted transcripts divided into subsections, or general headings. In order to form general headings across the data, codes were established inductively, which enabled me to identify emerging patterns and generalizations. Some of the codes included how professional development needs were identified, resources the teacher leaders used, teacher leaders' internal resources, and the challenges associated with these sessions. These examples were derived from, but not limited to the research questions, including: how teacher leaders planned for professional development sessions, how principals viewed the role and expectations of the teacher leader, and supports and challenges in conjunction with teacher leaders as professional development providers.

As a result of the data collection methods, and in line with attempting to answer the research question, the more general code looked at what shaped the professional development that teacher leaders provided. For example, a general code, was the identification of the professional development needs. I began by classifying the different reasons for the professional development sessions and after a number of completed observations and a general understanding of how and why the professional session topics were determined, the data analysis then looked toward an examination of the resources teacher leaders utilized in the professional development sessions. This helped me to answer the research question, in part, pertaining to the supports the teacher leaders have in place. While it is understood the resources were only a part of the supports, it was important to identify them subsequent to the identification of professional development need as it helped to

explain what was used to support the need. Resources used pointed to the University Literacy Center, the New Jersey Department of Education, outside professional development companies and the training the teacher leaders participate in with each other and the district supervisor. Through interviews and video recorded sessions of the way in which each teacher leader acted during their professional development sessions, I felt it necessary to move toward an examination of the teacher leader attributes. Since the need and resources were established, it was critical to analyze how the teacher leader's attributes affected the professional development session. I felt a need for a more in-depth analysis of the data looking at the attributes of each teacher leader; ie, their ages, experience in the position, training they have had as well as continue to have, delivery presentation approaches, attitudes, roles and relationships, both with their respective principals, each other, and colleagues. This allowed me to begin to gain a better sense of the overall picture of teacher leaders' professional development sessions. Once I had established the aforementioned factors, it was a natural transition to tie in the overall culture of the school, related to professional development. Analysis of interviews and recorded professional development sessions exhibited factors related to the teacher leaders' attributes and school culture. School culture, while referencing teacher leaders, is prevalent in the existing research in an extremely general manner; therefore adding research on specific ways in which they can affect school culture is needed.

A final report of findings derived from the data analysis was shared with the school's central administration, building principals and teacher leaders. Incorporating quotes were used to illustrate the findings helped create a vivid picture of the professional development experiences the teacher leaders sought to provide. It was helpful for the teacher leaders to gain a clear understanding of the factors affecting their professional development, while a heavier emphasis on practice and results in the report was useful for the district's administration team. Lastly, the Center for Literacy Development received the report to inform them of the ways to better support the center.

Validity

Specific strategies are used in qualitative research to verify findings. Verification begins with data collection and continues during data analysis and writing of the findings (Creswell, 1998; Merriam, 2009; Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2010). One key strategy for accomplishing this is triangulation, a powerful technique used to increase the credibility and reliability of the data used. Methodological triangulation involves the use of multiple methods in one research project. In the case of this study, teacher leader and building principal interviews, observations, and artifacts enabled me look across different data sources to find consistencies and contradictions as a way to verify the trustworthiness of my findings. For instance, I observed that teacher leaders and principals share the same view of the school's professional development culture. Rich and thick description of the findings (Creswell, 1998) served as a verification process in two ways. Keeping a research journal provided me with detailed observations, thoughts, and descriptions during the data collection and analysis period. My research journal served as a data source to verify my decision-making during the study (Merriam, 1998). Observation of the professional development sessions over a six-month period was a significant amount of time to document occurrences relevant to my research questions. These strategies enabled me to create detailed, rich descriptions that can allow the reader to gain a sense of the factors affecting teacher leaders' abilities to provide professional development. Rich description increased the study's credibility by providing more reliable evidence of the factors affecting professional development that teacher leaders provided. The third strategy I employed to increase the credibility of my findings was member checking, which was done during the entire collection and analysis process to ensure correctness of information. I built a rapport with the interviewees in an effort to elicit honest responses. At the conclusion of each interview, I summarized their answers with each participant and subsequently shared preliminary analysis findings and asked for feedback. A draft of the final study report was shared with all participants so they were able to provide

feedback on the findings and validate whether it described an accurate representation of the factors affecting professional development the teacher leaders provided.

Limitations

There are several limitations inherent to this study. This first is the realization that the teacher leaders in the Brewster District are not positioned in a common role compared to other school districts. The way in which Brewster appoints this formal teacher leader role can be described as rare. While districts have classroom teachers they assign to a leadership role, whether it is informal or formal, it lacks similar characteristics of the teacher leader in Brewster. Since Brewster is the only district that designates a teacher leader role whose primary responsibility is to provide professional development, the information may be difficult to generalize to a larger population that may not necessarily utilize a teacher leader in a similar fashion.

This information led to a limitation pertaining to the University Literacy Center and to what extent participants are using information they are learning at the meetings they attend. A large majority of the University Literacy Center's participants are Reading Specialists, classroom teachers, and administrators; not formal teacher leaders positioned as professional development providers (like the teacher leaders in Brewster). The various roles assumed by Center participants creates another set of limitations in that they were not necessarily using the meetings materials to turnkey to their colleagues.

Furthermore, I was limited to the professional development sessions I was able to observe since I was not working in the district. Having to rely on the teacher leaders to coordinate times to record the professional development sessions with me could have excluded me from potential sessions that could have strengthened my data collection and analysis procedures.

Chapter 4: Findings

Increasingly, school districts and individual schools are formally designating teacher leaders as professional development providers to help maximize teacher performance, increase their return on investment for continuing education, and ultimately, strengthen and improve the performance of individual schools and districts. Researchers commonly define teacher leaders as those individuals who have the ability and commitment to contribute to their educational communities in ways that extend beyond each individual's classroom (Mangin & Stoelinga, 2011) to "influence others toward improved educational practice" (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001, pg. 88). In other words, the teacher leader role is generally understood to include either explicit or implicit responsibilities for providing professional development to colleagues and influencing schools or district policies vis à vis continuing education and professional responsibilities. (Fullan & Hargreaves 1996; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Miller, Moon, & Elko, 2000; Childs-Bowen, Moller & Scrivner, 2000; Youitt, 2007; York, Barr & Duke, 2004; Wasley, 1991). While there is no singular articulation of the purpose of a teacher leader, most point toward improving, reforming, and strengthening the educational system within each leader's individual school and district.

Not surprisingly, given their job description and general understandings of the role, all of the teacher leaders interviewed for this study, similar to definitions in the literature, saw themselves as professional developers. However, all expressed that they often find themselves assuming many different kinds of responsibilities. Given that there are various duties associated with the position, the ability to remain flexible regarding the content and format of the professional development they provide and with whom they work is essential. This is aligned with the study's theoretical framework of adapting leadership styles (Hersey and Blanchard, 1970). Given the situation each of the teacher leaders is faced with, their approach to professional development as an enactment of their leadership style changes to best suit the needs and conditions they encounter. Mindy, a teacher

leader, demonstrated the need for flexible leadership when she said, “It’s hard to quantify [the roles and responsibilities of a teacher leader]. It’s different every week. I think that everything I do is related to professional development, even if it’s not those formal sort of presentation pieces, because the rest of the day I might be in classrooms working with teachers on how students are performing, what we are doing now, and what can we do to help them.” In addition to the many different kinds of tasks they do, teacher leaders also vary in the ways in which they design and implement their various responsibilities; however, those interviewed all agreed that a key role is helping the teachers become better at implementing the curriculum. Allison described her role as follows:

I am the Elementary Teaching Specialist at McKinley Primary School. I see my role as ... [helping]with curriculum implementation and staff development. Primarily, I work in the coaching role with helping teachers to become better implementers of curriculum... Ultimately, that [is] the goal of my job.

Based on their perspectives and experiences as teachers themselves, the Brewster teacher leaders are well situated to understand other teachers’ needs. Furthermore, these teacher leaders possess extensive content area knowledge (in this case regarding Language Arts Literacy) and experience that informs and enhances the professional development and training work they do. As such, teacher leaders function as key drivers in the Brewster School District working toward maximizing teacher quality and effectiveness and creating improved learning environments for students.

Analysis of the data focused on describing what the teacher leaders do as professional development leaders in their schools and the primary factors that influence this work. These factors are their internal resources, which include being a lifelong learner, having deep content knowledge, and effective interpersonal skills. Additionally, the identification of professional development needs, availability of resources, positive relationships with others in their building, and the challenges inherent to their school settings were identified as external factors affecting the professional

development they provide. In the first part of this chapter, I describe what it is they actually do.

The second part of this chapter focuses on describing both the internal and external shaping factors of their work. Recommendations based on these findings will be discussed in the final chapter.

What Teacher Leaders Do

Luann, Allison, and Mindy all provided similar descriptions of the role they played in their schools, including professional development providers, as teacher leaders. While they reported that what they spent most of their time doing varied from week to week, month to month, and even year to year, they each viewed themselves as mainly helping teachers improve their ability to effectively implement the curriculum by providing professional development, as described in the district job description for their position. They do this by meeting with teachers individually or in small groups when they see a specific need or when teachers ask them for help. In addition, each teacher leader led weekly grade level meetings to address grade-specific needs. The teacher leaders also used the grade level meetings to share information from the district supervisors regarding the curriculum and district initiatives and policy changes. Each teacher leader structured the grade level meetings in generally the same way, using a combination of presentation and discussion. The common planning time block that teachers in the district have built into their schedules is forty minutes in duration. The teacher leaders also worked with teachers during one-hour monthly faculty meetings (on Mondays) for which the Language Arts District Supervisor frequently dictated the topics. The format of these meetings varied in the sense that the teacher leaders presented material or facilitated discussion, depending on the meeting's objective.

Although they could not capture the full range of sessions the teachers leaders offered, during my observations the session topics were in response to district mandates, based on their own knowledge and professional learning experiences (including as a result of their participation in University Center meetings), or because they saw teachers either they identified or who self-

identified as particularly struggling to implement some aspect of the curriculum. Out of the 10 PD sessions I observed, six topics stemmed from district mandates; specifically, four related to the NJASK assessment, one focused on the district's reading assessment, and one pertained to the new spelling program, which was in its pilot stage. Two of the ten sessions were based on information teacher leaders brought back to their schools from attending sessions at the Center, and two sessions were a result of teachers requiring extra assistance, as identified by the teacher leader. Because the observations were scheduled at the convenience of the teacher leaders and me, it was not possible to see everything the teacher leaders provided. Unfortunately, the data were not available to know how what I saw compares to what the teacher leaders did over the course of the year. Luann, Allison, and Mindy confirmed that it was reasonably representative of the professional development they provided.

A description of one day of Luann's professional development activities illustrates the long day she works and the flexibility she needs to meet the diverse needs, settings, and topics she responds to. It begins before the contractual start of the school day because this was the only time available to meet with a teacher and continues beyond the final bell. During this time she primarily works with teachers to meet their professional development needs, ranging from those driven by district mandates to those identified by the teachers themselves (see Table 4.1). Luann began her day when she met with a novice first grade teacher who was unfamiliar with writing prompts on the upcoming NJASK test. This informal meeting was in response to a professional development session Luann had facilitated the previous day on the same topic. The novice teacher had additional questions and requested the follow-up meeting. Luann obliged; both agreed that before the start of school the following day would be best for both of their schedules. At approximately 9:30am that same day, Luann conducted her regularly scheduled third grade team meeting by presenting information followed by a discussion she facilitated. The topic Luann introduced was the changes to

the district's current word study program, implemented to align it with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The topic was in response to a charge made by the district's Supervisor of Language Arts to cover the information. This meeting lasted approximately forty-five minutes. At 11:15am Luann presented a professional development session, also initiated by the Supervisor of Language Arts, during a regularly scheduled grade level meeting for fourth grade teachers. At this session, Luann presented the upcoming requirements for the pilot writing program being implemented the following year. She used a Power Point presentation she had created to communicate these changes. At 12:30 pm, Luann met with the principal to help him plan an upcoming staff meeting, which was going to explain the new teacher evaluation program (EE4NJ) they would be implementing in the following academic year. Mr. Fisher requested this meeting because he felt he needed Luann's expertise with both the design and the content of this professional development session. By 1:45pm Luann was in a classroom in response to a teacher asking her for help. This teacher was struggling to execute effective guided reading lessons. As a way to tailor the help she gave to meet the teacher's specific needs, Luann had previously observed her during a guided reading lesson. Luann spent forty-five minutes in the room modeling a guided reading lesson with a group of children. She then met with the teacher to discuss the lesson observed and answer any questions. They planned a follow-up session during which Luann would observe the teacher to see if she was able to successfully implement what she had seen Luann do.

Luann's day consisted of five professional development activities which she facilitated. Out of these five, two were in response to district mandates, two were in response to teacher requests related to district mandates, and one was in response to a request for assistance by the building principal regarding a state mandate. In this example, the four sessions covered topics related to EE4NJ, NJASK, The Common Core State Standards, and the new word study program, which accounted for eighty percent of her day. The remaining twenty percent was designated to help a

struggling teacher with a guided reading lesson, a required district approach. In terms of format, she facilitated two discussions, gave one presentation, participated in a collaborative working meeting, and modeled an instructional strategy. The topics were never initiated by Luann; rather, she was always providing professional development topics in response to others (see Table 4.1). While this day is specific to Luann's work context, Allison and Mindy reported similar schedules. In essence, the typical day for these teacher leaders consists of delivering professional development focused on helping teachers effectively respond to state and district mandates (See Table 4.1), through regularly scheduled meetings and teacher initiated requests, delivered through presentations, modeling, and discussions.

Table 4.1: Brewster Teacher Leader Professional Development Activities on A Typical Day

Time	Task	Reason for activity	Audience	PD Activity/Format	Who Initiated PD?
7:30 am (before school begins)	Meet with a new first grade teacher to review changes to NJASK writing prompts presented the previous day	The teacher, new to the grade, had questions and requested a follow-up meeting.	One first grade teacher new to the grade and the NJASK test	Question and Answer Session	Teacher
9:30 am	Introduce changes to the Word Study program that aligns with the Common Core State Standards	District response to adopting the Common Core State Standards	Third grade team	Presentation and Discussion	District Language Arts Supervisor

TEACHER LEADERS AS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROVIDERS: A CASE STUDY

85

11:15 am	Review the upcoming requirements for the pilot writing program.	District response to adopting the Common Core State Standards.	Fourth grade team	Presentation	District Language Arts Supervisor
12:30 pm	Collaboratively plan a staff meeting to review the new teacher evaluation system (EE4NJ).	The principal needed the teacher leader's assistance.	Teacher leader and principal	Meeting	Building Principal
1:45 pm	Implement guided reading lessons	A novice teacher feels she is struggling to effectively implement guided reading lessons.	Second Grade novice teacher	Implement model guided reading lesson (prepared by observing the struggling teacher); debriefed and conducted follow-up observation subsequent to modeled lesson.	Teacher

Each teacher leader described taking up similar roles and responsibilities. This is not surprising given that they are all working in the same district with the same job description.

However, in one way Allison's description was different from the others because she reported that her role changes depending on the time of year and her school's shifting needs. Specifically, from September through February, Allison is primarily a professional development provider. During this time, she works with teachers on a daily basis to help them improve classroom instruction by providing direct instruction, giving feedback on classroom observations, and modeling. Starting in February, however, she oversees all of the state test scheduling, implementation, coordination, and management. In March, she is responsible for overseeing the administration of the Measure of

Academic Progress (MAP) test, which is then followed by the NJASK (New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge) state assessment in May. Allison's additional responsibility may be attributed either to the fact that her building houses over one hundred more students than the other two, making the testing season more of an administrative burden which then gets passed on to her, or her principal has a somewhat different vision of her role than Luann and Mindy's principals.

In addition to working with teachers on an individual and group basis, Luann, Allison and Mindy's roles as teacher leaders include serving on a number of school committees, such as the Safety Committee and the Cultural Committee. Additionally, they all were members of their schools' Intervention and Referral Services Committee (I&RS) which helps develop educational plans to assist struggling students as a way to avoid classification. As a result of the teacher leaders' unique expertise in literacy and learning styles, they served as an integral members of their I & RS committee. As adaptive leaders (Hersey and Blanchard, 1970), here they shift their instructional leadership from professional development providers to instructional resource people who help guide the work of the committee.

What the teacher leaders do is well aligned with their job descriptions. In the area of curriculum and instruction, they are responsible for working with the principals, teachers, Director of Basic Skills, and subject area supervisors to coordinate the integration of the curriculum and assessment program as well as participate in the interpretation and analysis of the state and standardized test results, all of which they do. However, there are duties in the job description that the teacher leaders do not actually fulfill. For example, although it is included in the job description, none of the teacher leaders were actually expected to assist the Director of Basic Skills in developing district goals. In reality, the teacher leaders act as vehicles to communicate Brewster's goals, as defined by the subject area supervisors, rather than as developers of them. Another responsibility that is in the job description but that is not being done by teacher leaders is to work closely with the

media specialist in the selection and dissemination of instructional materials. This is explained by the fact that the teacher leaders simply do not have time to do this.

In a sense, all the details of what they do can be summarized as responding to classroom and school instruction-oriented problems by working with teachers in a variety of ways to improve their practice. While they are not directly responsible for addressing student behavioral issues, working with colleagues to improve the effectiveness of the instructional program can, in turn, contribute to improved behavior. A part of learning and knowing how to solve instructional problems is for the teacher leaders to take part in their own professional development growth. All three teacher leaders do so, as directed by the job description, to establish a program of professional renewal; a majority of which occurs through participating in The Center's offerings.

All teacher leaders explained that most of their efforts go into delivering information as a result of district mandates and curricular changes; however, each teacher leader stressed the importance of her role in helping struggling teachers improve. During every interview, they described ways in which they foster learning and support for teachers who require assistance beyond the school's standard professional development offerings (although only two of the ten professional development sessions observed reflected this). They often do this using a combination of direct and indirect instruction (in the form of a presentation or modeling) combined with more interactive activities such as discussions during grade level meetings and question and answer sessions after classroom modeling experiences and observations.

This multi-pronged approach is exemplified by a series of professional development activities that Allison implemented to assist ESL teachers co-teaching in a general education classroom who struggled because they were not adequately trained to be effective literacy instructors. To address this need, first Allison implemented a model lesson for them to observe; she taught a guided reading lesson to third grade students. After the lesson, Allison sought to turn the

experience into learning when she and the ESL teacher debriefed the observation. This session consisted of the ESL teacher recounting what she had noticed Allison do in the model lesson, asking questions about what she had seen, and discussing how she would use what she had learned in her own classroom. Allison also offered resources to which the ESL teacher could refer when working in her classroom. Despite the variety of activities, as described by the teacher leaders, Allison was largely using a leadership style that was geared towards what Hersey -Blanchard (1970) call in their Situational Theory “telling” information to the teacher as well as “selling” what she wanted the teacher to do in her classroom. She was sharing information pertaining to what an effective guided reading lesson looks like and how the teacher should be implementing this with her students; there was little opportunity for discussion between the teacher and herself. The teacher did not have the opportunity to construct a new understanding through talk and reflection, but rather was expected to learn and then be able to act on that learning by watching a model lesson. This was a common leadership approach. Although it got the information across, it did not encourage a more constructivist, meaning making, or collaborative approach to learning.

Influences on Teacher Led Professional Development

The previous section, focusing on what teacher leaders do, highlights that their job description is a key driver in how they enact their role. Because they have a formal appointment and job title and a well elaborated job description, their responsibilities are clear. In this section I describe the key influences on the content of the professional development they provide as well as other contextual factors that support their capacity to enact their role. These influences are their internal resources reflected in their content knowledge, their commitment to advancing their content knowledge in a quest to remain lifelong learners, and their interpersonal skills. In addition, external influences play an important role. These influences are how professional development needs are

identified, the resources they draw on, their relationships, and the challenges they face; each plays a significant role in shaping their work

Internal Resources

The teacher leaders' internal resources were key in shaping what teacher leaders did as professional development providers. They regularly demonstrated a deep level of content knowledge and a commitment to adding on to and deepening it by being lifelong learners. At least as importantly, they demonstrated their ability to create healthy and supportive relationships with colleagues. Effective interpersonal skills (reflected in their good communication and listening skills) and their ability to be flexible are important contributors to this, as is their tirelessness in helping teachers improve their practice. Based on interview data from the teacher leaders' building principals, Luann, Allison, and Mindy used these resources to foster, support, and maintain teacher learning. They align well with Hersey-Blanchard's Situational Theory (1970), which suggests that teacher leaders' delivery, and/or facilitation of professional development should be determined by the situation in which they participate.

The teacher leaders' capacity to provide professional development was influenced by their content knowledge and their commitment to remaining current on changing educational practices; hence they have the resources of lifelong learners from which to draw in identifying needs, planning, and implementing professional development. Each teacher leader's principal reported that the teacher leader in his/her building was constantly developing and drawing upon evidence-based knowledge to inform her work as a professional developer. They agreed that they possess a strong sense of intellectual curiosity, which helps them successfully fulfill their roles as teacher leaders.

All three teacher leaders affirmed that being a lifelong learner contributes to their content knowledge, as well as their ability to update and stay current in their field. For example, Mindy reported that she continually increases her knowledge of research based literacy instruction by

participating in what the district calls, “Brewster Teacher’s College.” This is an on-going staff development program for in-district educators, including teachers and paraprofessionals. The program was designed to encourage quality instruction, provide effective instructional leadership training, ensure clear instructional focus, promote high expectations for staff, and provide training to maintain a conducive climate for students’ learning. Mindy completed four courses as a participant and then became an instructor. She reported that her knowledge of effective writing strategies increased tremendously as a result of teaching a course on this topic for “Brewster Teacher’s College” because of the large amount of reading she did to plan and implement the course. In turn, Mindy incorporated this new knowledge into professional development sessions she presented at her school on this topic. Mindy’s experience with Brewster Teacher’s College is just one example of how the teacher leaders act as lifelong learners. While the University Center is not the sole source for their ongoing learning, it emerged as a major one. Luann discussed the way the Center helps support her professional development work and deepens her professional knowledge when she reported, “Every time I attend a University Center meeting, I take something away, at some level. Sometimes, I can take away a new topic that I’d like to introduce to my staff, while other times I use a strategy I learned to support what our school already has in place. I am always learning something.” This quote illustrates how being lifelong learners deepens content knowledge and, in turn, impacts the teacher leaders’ work as professional development providers.

Additional data highlighted how their willingness to learn influenced the professional development teacher leaders provide. For example, Mr. Walton described Mindy’s planning process for a professional development session she ran on the changes for the 2013 NJASK assessments. In order to do this, she had to educate herself on the topic. First, she visited the New Jersey Department of Education’s website to learn about the changes in the Language Arts section of the test. Next, she selected examples of the changes and reviewed them during the session so that the

teachers would have concrete examples of typical new questions. Mindy also provided a session with up-to-date information and statistics on the test and testing procedures which she had gathered directly from the Department of Education's (DOE) website.

It is important for teacher leaders not only to be knowledgeable but also adept at *how* they deliver information, or transmit knowledge. Being able to impart content knowledge in a non-threatening manner is a skill that can contribute to teachers accepting teacher leaders' expertise and being open to change. As with any type of facilitator, these teacher leaders' demeanor and ability to work with others in a non-threatening and supportive way was a critical influence on their work. The teacher leaders demonstrated, and the principals asserted, that they use these positive personal qualities as tools to accomplish their jobs. Luann, Mindy and Allison all designed and facilitated sessions I observed where participants seemed to feel supported, compelled to participate, and included.

All of the teacher leaders also possessed the ability to communicate an understanding of each participant's mindset. For example, Mr. Walton described a time when Mindy used her ability to sympathize and empathize with her session participants at the same time that she effectively informed teachers of significant changes to DOE's testing procedures and requirements in a way that convinced them of the importance of adjusting their practice as a result. According to Mr. Walton, Mindy clearly explained what the NJASK was measuring, how it fit into the Common Core, and ways teachers could make the transition as seamlessly as possible as the district transitioned into the PARCC testing the following year.

In addition to Mindy's ability to communicate well, her affective skills are equally strong. Through my own observations, I would describe Mindy's style as calm, empowering, comforting, and supportive. She effectively connected to her teachers in a way that gained their trust. She never portrayed an air of superiority; instead she encouraged her teachers to feel free to ask her questions

by often telling them, “No question is ever a dumb one.” Mindy recognized that with the tremendous number of accountability measures put on teachers, they are likely to get frustrated. In response, she assured the teachers that she was there to assist them in meeting the onerous expectations. This kind of supportiveness was evident during the professional development session I observed on the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA). Throughout the session, Mindy provided her colleagues with constant reassurance that they would learn and be able to implement what was required, but that they should not expect it to happen overnight.

Mindy’s calm and reassuring demeanor and style seemed to build optimism among participants who attended this session as she assured them that the challenges were not insurmountable. She provided concrete techniques which teachers could use to meet them, and often offered to observe teachers in their classrooms when they are trying new practices as a way to give concrete and specific assistance to them. Her supportiveness is sustained following every observation that Mindy conducts when she holds a debriefing session to discuss the positive and negative aspects of the lesson and how to move forward successfully. Ultimately, Mindy’s personality and approach to professional development seem to contribute to a collegial culture in which teachers did not hesitate to ask for assistance. This was evidenced by the number of times I observed teachers approaching Mindy with requests for help in their classrooms. On four out of the six occasions I was in the building, I witnessed teachers asking Mindy to either visit their classrooms to help with a certain lesson or schedule a time to meet, in addition to their regularly scheduled meetings. Similarly, at the completion of Developmental Reading Assessment professional development session, both teachers who participated asked her to observe them implementing the assessment with students.

Similarly, Luann works with her teachers in a gentle, reassuring way. Because she has been a teacher leader for seventeen years, Luann has a wealth of literacy knowledge which, according to

Luann's principal, she successfully shared with the teachers in her school in a way that made them excited to try new things in their classrooms. For instance, Luann facilitated a grade level meeting regarding a newly piloted writing program. At the conclusion of the meetings, two of the teachers stated that they wanted to try it in their classrooms, even though they were not among the original teachers invited to pilot the program. Thrilled with their enthusiasm, Luann set up a subsequent meeting with both teachers to get them ready to begin the new program. It is likely that if Luann had approached the writing program with a more authoritarian, "no choice" approach, teachers would have been less likely to volunteer.

In addition to having a style that invited a willingness to try new practices, Lauren also allowed for differences of opinion about the material she presented; this seemed also to contribute to collegiality and trust among the group. For example, Luann described a time when she presented a strategy to use in Writer's Workshop. When a teacher said the technique had not worked for her, Luann did not try to change that teacher's mind or argue with her. Having observed her, she concluded that her instructional strategies, while different from those Luann presented, were, nonetheless, effective. Although Luann accepted diverse opinions and approaches in situations like this, she was also determined to create the most effective learning environments for all students. Therefore, she used a more insistent approach with some teachers in order to help them improve literacy instruction. When teacher leaders have good interpersonal skills, they share knowledge and promote new practices in a non-threatening and accepting manner to help teachers buy in to new ideas. The teacher leader study participants demonstrated respect for others' opinions and experiences, but when it was needed, they worked with teachers in a way that was intended to be empowering yet persuasive, encouraging rather than authoritarian. They bring a great deal of expertise and knowledge to the teachers, and seem to be able to do so in a friendly, non-threatening

and supportive manner. This likely contributes to what seems to be considerable buy-in from teachers.

Identifying Professional Development Needs

It is ideal when teachers identify a shared vision and goal for professional development activities that they are supported by the school administration (DuFour, et, al., 2006; Darling-Hammond, 2006 & Corcoran, T.B., Shields, P.M., & Zucker, A.A., 1998). In reality, professional development needs are often identified by others. In the Brewster district, very little professional development was provided based on teacher initiated and identified needs. Instead, professional development topics and activities were identified by district level analysis of assessment results, were mandated by the district to support implementation of new curriculum or state policy initiatives, or were identified by the teacher leaders based on their professional judgment of what was needed. Although teachers sometimes asked the teacher leaders for assistance, it was generally as a follow up to previous professional development on a required topic or a felt need related to implementation of district or state mandates. Therefore, teacher leaders were primarily communicators and supporters of top down change to which classroom teachers were expected to respond as effectively as possible. Neither the teacher leader nor the teacher had much say in topic selection.

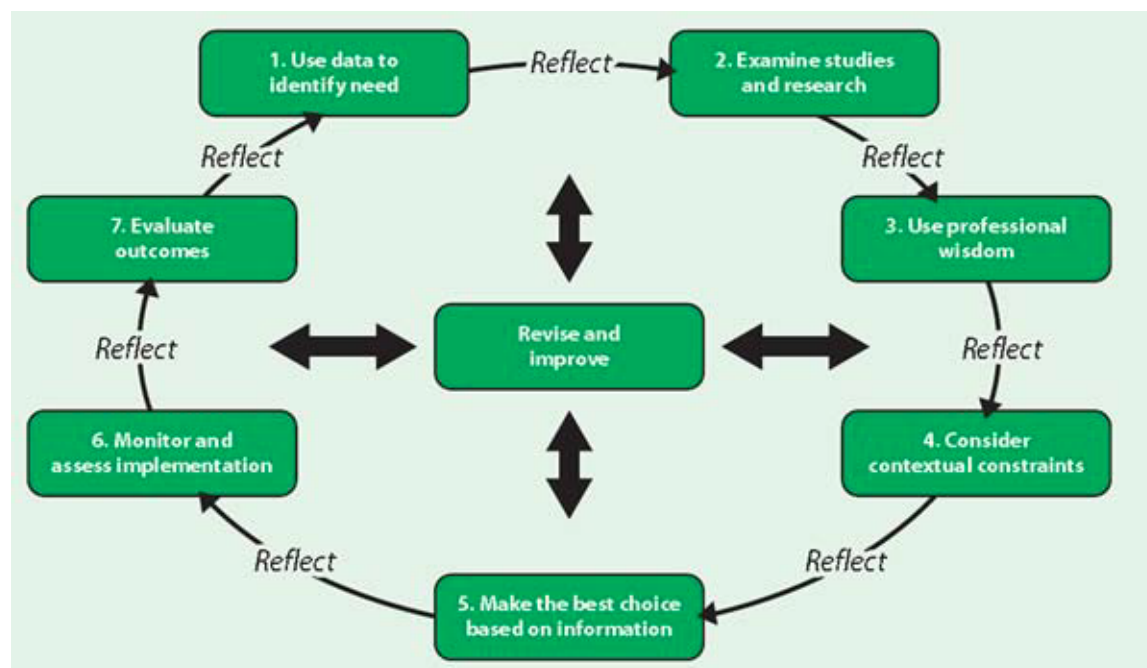
Analysis of Assessment Results. Analysis of assessment results played a key role in shaping the topics for teacher leaders' professional development offerings. The process of moving from assessment to professional development in Brewster can be explained using the Evidence-Based Decision Making Cycle (EBDM) (REL-Southeast, 2007). This cycle begins by analyzing assessment data to identify professional development needs and appropriate research-based and context sensitive strategies and programs to address them, and is followed by formative and summative assessment (see figure 1). At Brewster this was a process that left teachers out; central administrators charged the Language Arts Supervisor with examining data in two areas to identify

professional development needs: the Common Core State Standards and the NJASK Assessment.

The Language Arts Supervisor, in collaboration with the district's team of teacher leaders, examined the current curricula and its alignment to the Common Core State Standards; they also looked at the NJASK writing section results. Brewster ranked below the proficient level in two K-4 schools, causing a clear and immediate charge for professional development to address the problem. The results of their analysis heavily influenced the teacher leader's professional development offerings during the study year. This was evidenced by analysis of a typical day for Luann during which three out of five professional development opportunities addressed these two areas.

The EDBM cycle suggests that data generated should also inform the needs assessment for the next professional development cycle. Information collected at any stage of this cycle may be used to revise or improve professional development. The Brewster district's work towards informing professional development sessions followed the EDBM cycle to guide the teacher leaders in planning professional development. Specifically addressing instructional challenges in teaching to the Common Core and NJASK, the team of teacher leaders, under the direction of the Language Arts Supervisor, used data to identify specific needs, then examined studies and research and used their professional wisdom and their understanding of contextual constraints to make choices about what topics and instructional approaches to use to address professional development needs. This was all done simultaneously with monitoring and assessing professional development implementation of the NJASK changes. Additionally, the teacher leaders were working on how the district could align current curricula to the Common Core Standards and evaluating these outcomes as a way to continuously revise and improve professional development. The teacher leaders, charged with developing professional development based on analysis of assessment data, meet regularly to reflect and plan as a group on how to provide optimal learning opportunities to address identified needs.

Figure 1: Evidence-Based Decision Making Cycle (EBDM) (REL-Southeast, 2007)



Initiatives and Mandates. While data analysis is an important driver of professional development for Brewster teacher leaders, new initiatives at the school, district, or state level were another major driver. During the study year, for example, the new state-mandated teacher evaluation initiative, Excellent Educators for New Jersey Program (“EE4NJ”), provided an example of a new state policy driving PD at the school level. The EE4NJ is the newly introduced teacher evaluation system in the state that is designed to help districts identify each educator’s professional development needs and support his/her growth. All three principals reported that its upcoming implementation had a significant impact on the teacher leaders’ professional development plans for the school year. Although by chance, I did not observe any professional development on this topic, preparing teachers for its implementation was reportedly the impetus for numerous professional development sessions in Brewster. For example, Mr. Fisher explained that a district committee, of which his teacher leader Luann is a member along with two teachers from his school, helped identify professional development needs for the school related to EE4NJ. They attended district-wide meetings to learn about the new teacher evaluation system, which they then provided turnkey

training on for their colleagues. The urgency to share the EE4NJ information was obvious because the new evaluation system was to be in place at the beginning of the subsequent school year. Given the tight timeline for implementing EE4NJ, these professional development sessions were given higher priority than other topics. According to Mr. Leeds, “For the first time this year, our professional development was impacted dramatically by outside agencies The new changes to the teacher observation process, the evaluation process, EE4NJ came down from the state. The way that Brewster managed that was to pretty much take all of our monthly Monday meetings that were previously dedicated toward professional development on [the] school level [and use them to train the teachers for EE4NJ.]” Out of the six monthly meetings held during the data collection phase, five were focused on EE4NJ. The frequency of school-wide professional development on this new state initiative provides a substantive example of how the broader policy context influenced the selection of professional development topics that teacher leaders provided.

Another example of how professional development needs are driven by outside forces was evidenced by new policy related to the state assessment, NJASK. However, in one case the impetus for PD came from a teacher in response to state level policies rather than top down from the district office. Luann recounted that Ms. Z, a teacher new to the fourth grade classroom, asked for help on how to prepare her students for the NJASK. Previously Ms. Z had taught second grade, where students do not take the NJASK. She was aware of the pressure from district supervisors to prepare the students adequately for the assessment, and she recognized her struggle with preparing them for the writing component; this prompted her request. Luann responded by modeling relevant instructional strategies in Ms Z’s classroom. She taught a lesson which focused on effective responses to writing prompts while Ms. Z observed her. As a follow-up, Luann and Ms. Z met to debrief the process and discuss any questions that emerged from observing the modeled lesson.

Professional development offerings by teacher leaders are also driven by curricular changes and revisions at the district level. For example, Brewster recently adopted *Good Habits, Great Readers*™ (Klein, Fisher, and Nancy Frey, 2008), a new comprehensive balanced literacy program. It is designed to provide a balance of flexibility and structure to support literacy learning through whole-group (shared) and small-group (guided) instruction. When the program was first introduced in 2006, the teachers received professional development, run by the teacher leaders, to learn how to implement the program. In 2010, when New Jersey adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), the district realized the program was not completely aligned with the new standards. Rather than purchasing a new program to address this, Brewster charged the teacher leaders with tweaking the *Good Habits, Great Readers*™ program to align it with the standards. The teacher leaders worked as a group to add elements to the program to align it with the newly adopted standards. Next, the teacher leaders provided professional development to their colleagues to help them adapt to the adjustment.

Professional Judgment. Helping teachers who are considered “struggling” was an important driver of the teacher leaders’ professional development activities. Teacher leaders used their professional judgment to identify teachers who needed additional help. One population of struggling teachers they identified is Special Education and English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers assigned to co-taught classrooms. All teacher leaders reported that an increase in the number of co-taught classrooms created specific professional development needs for these teachers. In particular, with the growing practice in Brewster of teaming ESL teachers with general education teachers in classrooms blending native and nonnative English speaking students, professional development needed to support effective co-taught classrooms has sharply risen. In many teacher preparation programs, ESL pre-service courses have a heavier emphasis on language acquisition for non-English speaking students than on instructional needs in the general education classroom.

TEACHER LEADERS AS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROVIDERS: A CASE STUDY

100

Conversely, general education teachers have little training in how to work effectively with ESL students. This same situation occurs with the increase of Special Education and general education teachers working together in co-taught classrooms. The teacher leaders recognized that ESL and special education teachers lack the literacy training that general education teachers have; therefore, ESL and Special Education teachers need additional support. Both Allison and Mindy were observed conducting professional development for ESL teachers in this situation.

Allison identified the need for this professional development after observing in a classroom co-taught by an ESL and general education teacher. She noted that the ESL teacher was struggling to conduct a guided reading group. Because guided reading is the Brewster District's mandated method of teaching reading, it concerned Allison when she saw this. As a result, she set up a model lesson with the teacher, Ms. X and a small group of four ESL students for the following week. She modeled an exemplary guided reading lesson while the teacher observed and took notes. After the lesson ended, they discussed what she had noticed. Later that week, Allison returned to the co-taught classroom to observe the ESL teacher in subsequent guided reading lessons and later provided feedback.

Similarly, Mindy provided professional development to an ESL teacher because of a gap between her training and her teaching assignment. In this case, however, the ESL teacher, Ms. Y, approached Mindy for help. She was new to the general education classroom even though she had been in the school for several years. Ms. Y reported that she was struggling with the scoring and analysis of the district mandated literacy assessment tool (for traditional classrooms), the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA). In order to place students in the appropriate guided reading groups, the DRA results had to be scored and analyzed correctly. However, having previously worked in a pullout environment, Ms. Y had not been required to complete the DRA process with her students, and therefore, had not learned how to do it. Now that she was co-

teaching in an inclusive classroom, Ms. Y needed help in this area. Mindy met with her one day after school to provide individualized professional development on scoring and analyzing DRA results. Mindy demonstrated the proper procedures to administer the DRA, the scoring process, and the steps to follow in analyzing the information. As a follow-up, Mindy observed Ms. Y administering the DRA and worked with her to score, analyze and eventually place the student in the appropriate guided reading level for effective literacy instruction.

Focusing on another population of struggling teachers, all three teacher leaders reflected on their own experiences as new teachers and recognized the importance of providing additional help and support for new teachers. To address this need in her school, Mindy tailored some of her professional development sessions and work specifically for new teachers by devoting time to observe them, provide them with constructive feedback on effective classroom instruction, and model effective literacy strategies in their classrooms. Based on her previous experiences with new teachers, Mindy also included lessons on effective classroom management for the Language Arts Block, a skill that she had learned is not often mastered until some time after teachers are in their own classrooms. Additionally, Mindy worked with first year teachers in a small group setting to help them learn how to implement the word study program they were required to use. To do this, Mindy included demonstration lessons and created a “pseudo- classroom” for the teachers to practice the required components of the program before implementing them in their own classrooms.

At times, the teacher leaders use their professional development to identify and provide professional development for teachers who are unaware they are struggling with a particular practice. For example, a novice fourth grade teacher, Ms. G, approached Allison with the great news that she had learned how to manage her guided reading groups from a more experienced fourth grade teacher who had told her to meet with each of her guided reading groups one time per week. This information was a red flag for Allison because researchers suggest, in fact, that students who are

reading below grade level and considered at-risk should be in a guided reading group at least three times a week (Fountas and Pinnell, 2006). Additionally, Allison noticed when she went to observe in Ms. G's classroom that the at-risk readers were given guided reading books that were too difficult for them to read. As Allison explained to me, the purpose of implementing a guided reading model is to support readers so that they become independent when they are not in the teacher-led guided reading group. In this instance, based on the interaction with Ms. G, she recognized that she had two teachers who were in need of professional development—the more experienced and the novice. As a result, Allison met with the teachers after school and steered them towards effective guided reading practices. She later modeled an effective guided reading lesson for them, and debriefed with the teachers afterward by reviewing what the teachers saw Allison do, questions they had, and a plan for using these strategies with their students. Allison stressed the importance of meeting with the students in guided reading groups at least two to three times a week. This example highlights the importance of the teacher leader's role and responsibility in improving classroom instruction and the ability to influence others in need of improvement. The teacher leaders enact these processes through their identification of challenges, problems, and weaknesses and then address them by presenting new strategies and materials. In turn, they support the intended changes by observing and debriefing with the teachers with whom they work.

Not all professional development is provided based on identified need or requests for help. Teacher leaders also used their own knowledge and experiences as teachers to identify relevant professional development topics. At times, they provided professional development they thought would be beneficial, even if it did not address a specific problem or challenge that the teachers face. For example, teacher leaders drew on sessions they had participated in at the University Literacy Center to select topics for some sessions they offered. Luann and Mindy co-presented a joint, after-school meeting focused on improving comprehension strategies through the use of Inquiry Circles

subsequent to their participating in a Center presentation given by Harvey Daniels, an expert on this topic. The teacher leaders reported that they believed their colleagues would greatly benefit from learning the same things they had been taught at the meeting. Allison explained “Harvey Daniels was engaging and, as a group, [the ETSs] felt the students would benefit from this type of activity/instruction in literacy and other content areas. The idea of collaboration and research as it pertains to curriculum and students is an exciting classroom opportunity we did not want to pass up sharing with our teachers.”

There are many sources that drive the professional development topics the teacher leaders will present, ranging from personal experience, assessment data, to district and state policy initiatives and mandates. However, during the study year, it was state policy that had the most impact on professional development topic selection. In particular, the introduction of the newly adopted teacher evaluation program, EE4NJ, was identified as the most common influence on professional development topics in all interviews with the teacher leaders and principals. Furthermore, curricular changes and state assessments were also the source of many PD sessions the teacher leaders implemented. It is important to note that external influences may ebb and flow depending on the policy climate. However, when major initiatives that will lead to significant change are brought to the district, whether they originate at the federal or state level, it seems likely that they will typically drive a majority of the topics for teacher leader facilitated professional development offerings.

Resources

A wide range of resources helped shape the planning and implementation of the professional development that the teacher leaders offered. According to the teacher leaders, the two resources they drew upon most frequently were experiences they had, materials they received as a result of attending meetings at the University Literacy Center, and each other. The University Center provided topics and resources from which the teacher leaders planned professional development

sessions, and the cohort of teacher leaders offered a built-in support network for them to communicate and collaborate with as a team. This group work was the source of topics, strategies, and feedback from which they often drew to shape the professional development they provided.

University Literacy Center

All three teacher leaders reported that the professional development sessions they attended as a result of their district's affiliation with the University Literacy Center were a source of ideas for professional development offerings at their schools that complemented, but was not planned to be directly responsive to district or state mandates and initiatives. During the year in which the data was collected and the previous year, Luann, Mindy, and Allison attended eight professional development sessions provided by the Center. Topics, resources, and information from three of the sessions were used in the observed teacher leaders' professional development offerings at their schools, while interview data showed more was used but not observed.

Mindy and Mr. Walton decided to use the materials from Carl Anderson's presentation at The Center on conferring with student writers because it was closely aligned with the school's yearlong professional development focus on writing. More specifically, it provided new strategies for addressing a specific challenge they had been encountering in teaching writing. Mr. Walton reported that, prior to Anderson's presentation, Mindy had been working with the teachers on helping students develop effective opening and closing paragraphs. Through observation, Mr. Walton and Mindy discovered that when teachers felt that a student's written piece lacked adequate description, typically they would ask the student to add more colorful language by using more adjectives. Anderson's presentation at The Center gave them additional strategies for encouraging students to write more descriptively. Mr. Walton and Mindy brought these ideas back to their school to share with the staff. Specifically, they held professional development sessions for teachers that expanded on the information they had previously distributed on adding detail to written pieces.

The sessions focused on ways to help students take compositional risks by including more thoughts, feelings, actions and dialogue. According to Mr. Walton, the teachers were excited to try these new strategies in their classrooms and communicated their appreciation of the commitment both the principal and teacher leader had to creating learning opportunities for them. Mindy continued to work on this issue with teachers by grade level, in small groups and individually. She visited classrooms, talked with teachers, and modeled lessons for those who requested it. As a culminating activity, Mr. Walton arranged for Anderson to present at his school the following fall.

Mr. Walton reported that the teachers felt he and Mindy had treated them as professionals; they appreciated that there had been focus and depth in the PD offerings for the year rather than an overwhelming host of initiatives they had to implement right away. One teacher declared that she had learned, “It’s not only the thoughts, feelings, action, and dialogue but *how* to teach it, what a good example looks like.” The teachers appreciated that the process unfolded over a period of time, and that they were given the opportunity to try out strategies in their classrooms and then build on their knowledge through observation and feedback. Mr. Walton referred to this type of professional development as “traction in the classroom.” He reported during an interview that he feels professional development has an impact on practice when it is implemented this way. It may not have happened without the exposure to the concepts they gained by participating in Anderson’s presentation at the University Literacy Center.

Although it was not her school’s professional development focus, Luann also saw the value in Anderson’s work after attending his session at The Center because she understands the importance of providing effective writing instruction and believed this information could contribute to teachers improving their skills in this area. As a result, she designated this topic as a professional development focus, making use of Anderson’s materials, which had been distributed at the session. Throughout the year, Luann worked with teachers in large and small groups, as well as individually,

on this topic. She presented whole school sessions on how teachers could incorporate Anderson's strategies into their teaching. She followed up at grade level meetings to delve more deeply into the topic and address any questions from the teachers that had emerged. Luann also spent time in individual classrooms observing, modeling and providing feedback on the conferring component of the writing process. The main resources which she drew on to fuel the activities for this yearlong focus were Anderson's Power Point presentation and instructional videos from The Center meetings.

The teacher leaders also used resources from The Center to help plan professional development sessions that were the result of numerous directives from the district to align the current curriculum to new standards. For example, Donald Bear, co-author of the book, *Words Their Way: Word Study for Phonics, Vocabulary and Spelling*, presented a full-day session at The Center on strategies to improve phonics, vocabulary and spelling instruction in the elementary classroom. Luann, Allison, Mindy, and Mr. Walton all attended the meeting. Coincidentally, the Brewster School District uses the *Words Their Way* book as a guideline for administering, scoring, and analyzing word study assessments in order to determine appropriate word study group placement and instructional foci for students. The teacher leaders reported that this meeting was an important resource for them; each used the PowerPoint and instructional videos from the session to take information back to their colleagues. This was facilitated for the teacher leaders because it provided them with ready-to-use materials. The Power Point also provided research-based strategies, which they could use to easily communicate to teachers.

While the Anderson and Bear presentations are two examples of The Center's activities that served as a major resource for teacher leaders' professional development sessions, I also observed The Center activities and experiences being used as a resource in more informal ways. For example, during one observation I conducted, Allison worked with a group of Kindergarten teachers during a

grade level meeting on responses to reading passages and used a handout from The Center for the session which contained effective comprehension strategies to use while conducting a Reader's Workshop for students. Allison used the material to offer the teachers ideas to use in their classrooms provided by one of The Center presenter's, Frank Serafini, a national literacy consultant and author of the book, *The Reader's Workshop: Creating a Space for Readers*. The workshop she drew from described strategies to monitor comprehension skills. Additionally, According to Allison, and through my observation I saw that she relied on The Center's resources in an *informal* way to support a session she ran for kindergarten teachers on comprehension. Allison used a current event article to facilitate an opening discussion that was designed to help the Kindergarten teachers encourage students to respond to reading and activate prior knowledge by experiencing this activity themselves. She included the Kindergarten assessment and scoring rubrics she and the teachers had created to outline various comprehension levels. During this meeting, Allison discussed assessment results from the reading responses, which highlighted where instructional strategies could be improved. This led into different ways to elicit responses from students. The materials she had gotten from the Center from Serafini's session on Readers' Workshop did not drive the professional development she designed; they merely served as evidence-based support for her planning the session. The handout she used acted as a resource to assist the teachers in learning more about effective responses to increase comprehension skills.

Teacher leaders provided turnkey training on the information they attained at Center meetings in various venues, some for large group meetings and other times for individually targeted instruction. The teacher leaders reported that the topics of the Center's meetings sometimes influenced their choice of topic for professional development sessions they provided; at other times information they gathered from these sessions were used to add research-based support to a session topic they would have offered anyway. The resources from the University Literacy Center they used

most often were the materials provided by the presenters, including their PowerPoint slides, sample videos, and speaker's publications. Teacher leaders drew on Center topics for the professional development they planned either because it fit with their schools' goals, addressed an observed need, felt it would benefit the teachers' practice, or was aligned with a district mandate.

Teacher Leader Monthly Meetings

In addition to the support and resources the Center provides to the teacher leaders, Allison, Mindy and Luann reported that they view their teacher leader colleagues as important resources. The Brewster District created context in which this could occur by making it a part of their job to attend monthly meetings for them and the Director of Language Arts. As a result they have come to count on each other to generate ideas, get suggestions on how to deal with obstacles they experience, and create strategies to facilitate professional development. The "two heads are better than one" approach of these meetings allows teacher leaders to increase their knowledge and improve their abilities to provide professional development by incorporating observations, experiences, and feedback from their colleagues into their own practices. Equally beneficial are the cost savings realized by school districts when teacher leaders receive the time and resources to develop collaborative programs that maximize their capacity.

The teacher leaders reported that at these meetings they collaborate effectively to address agenda items that range from new curricular issues to preparation for state testing. For example, Mindy reported, "The ETs rely on each other. I've been doing this for four years and I've been in the district for ten. There are certainly people that have been around a lot longer than I have, so I am constantly going back and forth with them with ideas. I am lucky that I have them. Meeting with the other ETs is a huge influence on me and my work as a professional development provider". These meetings are often facilitated by the district's Director of Language Arts and vary in structure depending on the topic. When there is a new state mandate, the format of the meeting is simply

information dissemination, although subsequent meetings might be dedicated to strategizing about how to address it. If the meeting is focused on how to increase student test scores on the Language Arts section of the NJASK exam, the group uses student data to discuss various ways to address professional development needs for teachers in an effort to increase the student achievement. There is no set structure to these meetings; the format is dependent on the meetings' goals and objectives.

The teacher leaders also work as a group to plan professional development sessions in response to changes brought about by district mandates. For example, at one district-wide meeting, they discussed New Jersey's adoption of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). With the adoption of CCSS, Brewster realized the Word Study Program they were using was not fully aligned with the CCSS requirements. Under the direction of the Director of Language Arts, the teacher leader group worked with the standards and the Word Study Program to align the two. Rather than adopt a brand new program, they collaborated to tweak the current program and align it with the CCSS standards. As a result, the District was able to retain a successful program, saving both money and the time that teachers would have had to spend on learning how to implement a new program in the classroom. In turn, this work impelled the professional development the teacher leaders provided, as they needed to bring teachers in their schools up to speed on the changes they had made.

In other monthly meetings, the teachers shared their experiences as professional development providers and planned for future sessions by listening to and learning from the experiences of their colleagues. For example, Mindy described a well-received session that she presented to teachers in her school on how to assess students using the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA). During Mindy's presentation to the teacher leader group, she outlined the process she used to plan and implement the session, so that others could benefit from her work. During a follow up interview, I learned that three other ETS's used Mindy's presentation for their

teachers. They also discussed obstacles and developed strategies to overcome difficulties faced by individual teacher leaders and the group as a whole. Again Mindy provides an example of this. At one meeting when she described challenges she faced with a group of novice teachers she was trying to help, she received feedback from the group on how to deal with them. Specifically, she was struggling to find an effective way to show the novice teachers how to score the DRA that would not take up too much instructional time. Another ETS suggested she show them how to score it with a “cheat sheet” she had created to quickly and easily keep track of the students’ miscues. Mindy followed this advice and later reported to the other ETSs that it had been highly effective.

Monthly meetings also included time to debrief what they had learned at Center meetings. The Brewster teacher leaders use this time to identify what is aligned with their district’s professional development goals and how they may transfer information they gained at The Center meetings back into classrooms. This type of collegial interaction seemed to strengthen a sense of community and encourage collaboration within the ETS group. Research on effective professional development highlights the importance of this kind of collaborative and collegial learning environments that help develop communities of practice; they can promote school change beyond individual classrooms (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995; Hord, 1997; Knapp, 2003; Louis, Marks, & Kruse, 1996). The teacher leaders were unanimous in reporting that the monthly meetings serve this purpose for them.

Relationships

The theoretical framework undergirding this research indicates that the teacher leader’s ability to adjust leadership styles to various situations can influence a school’s culture of professional development by fostering strong relationships (Hersey and Blanchard, 1970). Similarly, Fullan (1995) suggests that collegial relationships can help grow and cultivate a positive school culture by moving toward establishing a community of learners. In fact, the relationships they had directly influenced

the professional development that the teacher leaders provide. In this case study, the role that relationships play in shaping school culture in general, and on professional development work in particular, was a focus of analysis on three levels. The relationships the teacher leaders have affects their ability to provide effective professional development and as a result, strengthen the following school relationships: teacher leader to principal; teacher leader to teacher; and teacher leader to other teacher leaders. Each kind of relationship contributed to the way in which the teacher leader could function as a professional development provider.

Principal and Teacher Leader Relationships

Each teacher leader and principal had a positive relationship; that is, based on what they said about each other, they genuinely seemed to like and respect each other and work well together and this was implicitly and explicitly communicated to teachers. This appeared to help create a more positive environment in which collaboration and participation in professional development sessions is encouraged. Additionally, the principals demonstrated support in the way they organized the school schedule, by systematically making time built in to their schedules for teacher leaders to work with teachers. I observed that Mr. Walton and Mindy collaborated more often than the other two principal-teacher leader teams. This could have been because Mr. Walton had served as a professional developer in his former position or even that their offices were next to each other. Mr. Walton and Mindy took a collaborative approach to creating a positive professional development environment in their school. According to Mr. Walton, “The way we work is extremely collaborative. I would say it’s a flattened hierarchy; that is, Mindy and I plan together, [although] Mindy often presents the information. I respect and depend on her high level of expertise as a Reading Specialist, a curriculum expert, and someone who has the requisite skills to work with a variety of people on a variety of levels in terms of a professional continuum and needs.” This

expression of respect and confidence in her surely contributes to the way in which Mindy is able to enact her role.

Similarly, Mr. Fisher demonstrated support and respect in the positive relationship he built with Luann. This was evidenced by his participation in the professional development sessions she presented. Of the four sessions Luann presented in her school, which I observed, Mr. Fisher was present at three of them. In the sessions where he attended, he was non-intrusive; he engaged in the conversation when necessary, but often simply sat quietly, seemingly as an observer. His agreement with and support of what she was doing was evident through his body language. He reported that, as a new principal, he sat in on professional development sessions in order to build his literacy content knowledge from Luann, a seasoned teacher leader. He indicated that their relationship is built, to some extent, on his commitment to learning from her. Mr. Fisher believed that his relationship with Luann would carry over into successful relationships between her and the teachers in the building. The fact that he was present for professional development sessions communicated that the teacher leader's work is important; his support influenced the opportunities to lead instructional improvement for both the teacher leader and the principal. In addition to participating in her professional development events, he and Luann worked together to establish professional development goals and decide on priorities for grade levels and school initiatives.

Similarly, Mr. Leeds expressed his belief that it is critical to support and maintain a positive relationship with Allison in order for her work to be respected by the teachers as they strive to improve their instruction as a result of her leading professional development in the building. In other words, he was working on the premise that when teachers see that the principal is supportive of the teacher leader, they are more likely to buy in to and use what they are learning through professional development. He purposefully seeks to demonstrate his support. When he had to get involved in a situation where Allison was struggling with a teacher who was not improving some

unsuccessful instructional strategies despite her help, he was careful not to jeopardize their relationship. He said, “When issues with a teacher come up, then she’ll share some things with me, either directly or indirectly, and that gives me enough to follow up with the teacher, either directly or indirectly. However, I am very careful not to say, ‘Allison told me this’” so it does not breach the relationship between the teacher and Allison.” Using this approach helped Mr. Leeds and Allison maintain a positive relationship with each other, and in turn, with the teachers in their school.

By generating schedules that allows teacher leaders to work with teachers on a regular basis the principals influenced their capacity to lead professional development. Rather than having to find time in the teachers’ already overloaded schedules, having a consistent, scheduled time committed to professional development allowed this to be part of their daily, weekly, and monthly routines. At Allison’s school, for example, a schedule was created that allows for each grade level team to share the same preparation period three days a week, creating time for Allison to work with teachers during the school day. According to Mr. Leeds, “My role as the building principal is to ensure that teachers are given the time and resources to work with Allison. I think the positive school culture is directly related to Allison and her excitement, passion, and her energy. I often hear her talking about teachers as learners and I think they get that, and feel that, and aspire to that. I want to believe part of that reason [she is successful] is a result of me creating a schedule that allows for teacher interaction with each other and Allison.”

Mr. Walton also made clear that he values the importance of professional development for his staff and communicates this through a positive relationship with Mindy. Mr. Walton explained the importance with which he regarded professional development in his school’s vision by saying,

[We] keep it at the forefront of everything we do. That is, continuous improvement of teacher and student learning. And make it the rudder, make it the mission, make it the goal, make it the vision, make it any word you want to use, that everything we do ... the question could be turned around and say if something happens in the school and there is an issue, I could ask what does this have to do with student learning? It's all about a focus on professional learning in relation to student outcomes. That is, my role is to ensure that there

are opportunities for those conversations, to carve out the most precious commodity that we are all in short supply of, which is time. To manage that time in such a way to ensure that whatever is delivered models good instruction, isn't 40 pounds of sausage in a 10 pound bag, that [it] is a manageable piece that can then be applied, and most importantly, followed up on, to not only monitor student progress but to monitor and get feedback from teachers in terms of how this works for our kids.

Mr. Walton acted on his beliefs by attending each of The Center's sessions with his teacher leader, Mindy, while Mr. Fisher attended two of the four with Luann. They sat together and often stayed after the sessions to discuss the information that was presented and create action plans for bringing it back to their schools. Mr. Walton viewed Mindy as his instructional leader who was there to enact his mission. His clear focus on student learning was evident in the way he embraced professional development and recognized the connection between student achievement and teacher learning. His physical presence at Center meetings added a dimension to the teacher leaders' work as PD providers in that it showed he believed in the significance of what was being done.

Principals also demonstrated the importance of professional learning in their buildings and facilitated teacher leaders' capacity to function as professional developers by providing resources for teachers, such as substitutes who could cover for them while attending professional development or doing an observation. For example, Mr. Leeds reported that if, after a small group meeting during allotted professional development time, there was a teacher struggling with a particular aspect of what had been covered, he arranged release time for the teacher to continue to work with Allison. Coordinating a substitute teacher to allow extended opportunities for teachers to work with the teacher leader sent a message to the staff that professional development is an important element in reaching the school's objectives and long-term goals. By extension, it also communicates the importance of the teacher leader.

With the current demands on principals in the Brewster District to respond to district mandates, curricular changes, and administrative tasks, all three described the importance of their teacher leaders being able to share responsibility for instructional leadership with them. In addition

to relieving them of some of their increased duties, the principals all strongly believed working with and supporting the teacher leaders as professional development providers created a more collaborative and collegial school culture and communicated the important role they play in reaching school and district goals. The teacher leaders are not building administrators who wear the “evaluator”, supervisor, or boss hat; therefore, the principals believed that teachers were more open to learn, and share their successes and concerns more freely with them. The principals were not only themselves supportive of the teacher leaders; they were also instrumental in facilitating supportive relationships between the teacher leaders and their teachers.

Teacher Leader and Teacher Relationships

The principals all seemed to feel that when they set a tone that shows respect for and trust in the teacher leader, it puts the teacher leader on a secure footing with the staff, which in turn fosters a positive learning environment. However, the relationships that teacher leaders themselves fostered with teachers also seemed to play an important role in the work they could achieve. For example, when co-teachers asked Mindy to help model a series of writing lessons, Mindy noted, “These two teachers could easily teach writing, but I think they like the idea— the three of us collaborating on something where we are really going to raise the bar. With the three of us, we can do that — that’s a great thing.” Opportunities like this would not be sought without good relationships between the teacher leader and teachers.

Mindy did not take positive relationships with teachers as a given, however. She strived to create and maintain a positive attitude among teachers regarding her role as the school’s professional development provider. She had to do this within the context of teachers having to deal with the stress of multiple new district and state mandates including the new CCSS and its accountability system for Language Arts/Literacy Standards. These new standards required a major overhaul to current lesson plans. In addition to the language arts/literacy programs, the district adopted brand

new math, science, and social studies programs with increased content and higher expectations for both teachers and students. Mindy understood that the teachers at her school were overwhelmed by so many changes in one year. To be responsive to this and maintain a climate conducive to learning, Mindy realized that she had to communicate new information and promote the implementation of new ideas and strategies incrementally so as to avoid adding to the stress. While her ultimate goal was to improve student achievement by improving teacher quality, she recognized that teachers cannot generally be expected to make big changes all at once, but may be more willing to make a series of small changes over time. To achieve her goal, Mindy was careful not to introduce anything new (unless district mandated) in her professional development sessions. Instead, she tried to give teachers strategies, materials, and ideas that would improve what they were already doing or what they would need to do. For example, when Mindy co-facilitated a workshop aimed at improving comprehension strategies using Inquiry Circles, she carefully framed the lesson around the suggestion to try this strategy as an experiment so as not to threaten or overwhelm the teachers by asking them to make a major paradigm shift. While she was confident that the teachers and their students would benefit from this strategy, Mindy asked teachers to attempt just a few new strategies at a time and then report back on how they worked. This process went on over a few months by which time the teachers liked what they were seeing in the classroom and felt comfortable and willing to try more new things. Mr. Walton reported that teachers developed a collaborative relationship with Mindy as a result of her strategy and frequently requested that Mindy visit their classrooms to observe them implementing the newly learned strategies. Mindy's incremental approach to changing instructional strategies within the classrooms helped create a stronger, more positive learning culture during a year when teachers were feeling extremely overwhelmed. She planned her work in a way that was responsive to the conditions under which the teachers were working. In exchange, the teachers were willing to try new things and seek her help in doing so.

Allison also worked to cultivate a positive relationship with teachers which she believed would encourage risk taking and a willingness to try new things. Mr. Leeds reported that Allison treats the teachers as professionals and provides them with many opportunities to share ideas within and across grade levels. Allison's leadership approach included encouraging teachers to work collaboratively to provide critical feedback and share strategies with colleagues. Within these professional development opportunities, Mr. Leeds worked with Allison to increase the level of accountability for what teachers were doing in the classrooms and make that practice public by setting up release time to observe other teachers in action.

As a result of these efforts to foster a positive professional development culture, Allison worked alongside a staff of teachers who were willing to try new ideas and ask for help when needed. Allison's efforts helped to eliminate the "isolated classroom" and created a collaborative environment where teachers expressed interest in growing as educators to hone their skills and improve their techniques. During my visits to Allison's school, I witnessed teachers approaching her with questions. For example, at the conclusion of a Kindergarten grade level meeting, two of the three teachers stayed to discuss what was presented. They asked Allison to set time aside to work with them in the classroom on the strategies shared in the meeting. Additionally, I observed informal conversations about curricular topics between teachers and Allison while passing in the hallway, and I also observed teachers asking for advice. Allison always stopped to engage with the teachers and either answer the question or set up a follow up meeting to enable more in depth conversation and assistance. Through Allison's efforts, the teachers in her school share ideas, ask for and receive assistance, and generally work together to create an environment conducive to teacher learning.

Teacher Leader to Teacher Leader Relationships

In line with the previous discussion on teacher leaders working as a cohesive unit of professional development providers, it is apparent that the relationships they have built with each other shape their work. The relationships influence the work both in the way they act as their school's professional development providers as well as the way they work with each other. These teacher leaders have established productive working relationships as a result of their time together during regularly scheduled meetings and on their own.

This was apparent during an observation of monthly teacher leader meeting, when the teacher leaders worked collaboratively and effectively to focus on aligning the current Language Arts program to the Common Core State Standards. They were each assigned a section of the current curriculum and worked in small groups to create alignments. When the small group work was complete, they reconvened in the larger group to share their ideas. Everyone listened intently and made substantive comments, indicating mutual respect and a strong bond among the group members.

Interactions among teacher leaders outside of their monthly meetings vary. Allison is extremely close to one of the teacher leaders in another school, Lainie. She reported that their relationship goes above and beyond what is expected of them, in terms of collaboration. They run instructional and administrative questions by each other often, asking for advice, direction, and affirmation. For example, when Allison was planning a professional development session for teachers on improving comprehension strategies, she called upon Lainie to co-plan the session. Luann and Mindy also have this kind of relationship with other teacher leaders in the district. These relationships influence the professional development they provide because the collaboration contributes to instructional design in ways not possible when working in isolation.

Since these teacher leaders all attend the University Center meetings, they often draw on these experiences when they work together. At the meetings, the teacher leaders sit together as a group. This is not unusual among participants that come from the same district; what is unusual is that they stay afterwards to discuss the ways they could incorporate what they have learned into their work as professional development providers. Often times, they work long after the end of the session. The collaborative and collegial relationship they have built over time extends outside their school and district responsibilities and into their participation in their own professional development opportunities. This collegiality seems unlikely to have developed without the solid foundation of supportive and committed relationships.

Challenges

Along with the factors discussed that positively influence the professional development teacher leaders provide, they experience challenges that hinder implementation and jeopardize the collegial relationships that teacher leaders work to cultivate and maintain. This study captured two critical challenges that teacher leaders faced while providing professional development: resistant teachers and a lack of time.

Hersey and Blanchard's (1970) primary assertion regarding their Situational Theory is that effective leadership is based on a deep understanding of the context and the audience with whom a leader works (1970). Once they have defined these situational factors, their leadership style can be adapted to meet the needs successfully. Specific to the teacher leaders, Situational Leadership Theory suggests that they should constantly be rethinking and adjusting their instructional leadership approach to best meet teachers' professional development needs. This is especially critical when teacher leaders are planning and implementing their work with resistant teachers. A key challenge that teacher leaders face is to counteract resistance to change and gain buy in from teachers so that they are willing to try out new instructional strategies. To accomplish this, they draw on their

communication skills to transmit both content knowledge and caring responsiveness, but also develop strategic responses that are tailored to the specific resistance they experienced.

Resistant teachers were the most prevalent hindrance to providing professional development reported by the teacher leaders. One source of resistance may be teachers who are convinced that their instructional practices are effective and are therefore not open to learning and trying new ideas and strategies. Another possible source of resistance, expressed by an unwillingness to have teacher leaders observe in their classrooms, may be a perception of the teacher leader as an evaluator and a critic rather than a resource and a supporter. Allison recounted an instance of a resistant teacher who seems to illustrate this latter possibility. She was not meeting district expectations, but was refusing to try a new instructional practice that Allison believed would help her overcome her difficulties. Initially, the teacher, Ms. M, sought Mr. Leed's guidance as she struggled with both instructional and classroom management issues. He responded that Allison would observe her teaching so as to be better able to offer assistance. However, the teacher was so resistant to having Allison observe her that she threatened to file a complaint with the teachers' union because she believed that being observed by anyone who is not a designated evaluator is a violation of her rights. Allison attempted to assure her that she would be observing in order to be able to give her feedback to help her improve, not to evaluate her. She ended up doing the observation, in spite of the teacher's obvious discomfort, and then offered a coaching session afterwards. She reported that the teacher used her suggestions. Then, with improved instructional methods, improved classroom management followed. Although she did not usually do it, because of the teacher's resistance and threats, Allison felt compelled to document the observation as well as the recommendations she made. In future professional development sessions, Allison approached this teacher more carefully; she wanted to avoid a future confrontation and at the same time, gain the teacher's trust. In this

case, Allison needed to be sensitive to and alter her approach somewhat to address the teacher's resistance.

Mindy also recounted an example of resistance which she had to take special care to overcome. In this instance, teachers in a co-taught classroom setting with a large number of struggling students were overwhelmed by the situation; instruction and classroom management were suffering. The teachers were unable to cover the required material and often lost control for the entire period. Based on her observation, Mindy felt strongly that the teachers were lacking effective classroom management techniques. She knew of another co-taught classroom with similar students that functioned successfully. Mindy arranged for the overwhelmed team of teachers to observe the teachers in the effective classroom. This seemed like a simple fix to Mindy who remembered thinking, "They are going to walk in that other classroom and think, 'of course, how did we not think of that?'" However, that is not what occurred. The teachers were resistant to trying the techniques they observed. As an alternative, Mindy set up a series of meetings with the resistant teachers. In small increments, she outlined the pros of incorporating the new techniques. She then told them, "Do me a favor and try it. Give me six weeks. What you are doing is not working. You don't think this is going to work, but we're not going to know unless you try. Can we agree- give me 6 weeks? Try it. Let's meet again and see." Mindy felt that by simply asking them to give it a try and pointing out the low risk in doing so, the resistant teachers would feel more in control of the situation instead of directed. She hoped this would help disarm their resistance. After six weeks, Mindy revisited the teachers to find the classroom management had improved as a result of them trying her suggestions. She continued to meet with the teachers every two weeks in an effort to sustain ongoing willingness to use her suggestions and try new strategies. Resistant teachers call for special care and attention, which is a notable influence on the work of teacher leaders. In these

cases, Allison and Mindy's time was devoted to planning an approach that would be well received by the struggling teachers as well as developing the professional development experiences they needed.

In addition to resistant teachers, the other significant challenge that all three teacher leaders reported was not having enough time to meet all their responsibilities and address all the needs they identified. Teacher leaders had to work strategically with the time they had in order to maximize their impact. During grade level meetings, each teacher leader theoretically had a 40-minute time block to work with a grade level team. These sessions are of critical importance as they are the only regularly scheduled time when teacher leaders meet with teachers. In Brewster, students are in the library or technology room during this time period. By the time the teachers walk their students to the class, get a drink, use the lavatory, or address issues that may come up, the teacher leaders may only have 25-30 minutes to accomplish their goals. Therefore, the teacher leaders had to be resourceful and flexible to address the needs during this very limited timeframe. Luann got around this when working with teachers with whom she is most comfortable by using lunch times to share information in the staff room. While she knows they complained about her interfering with their scheduled lunchtime, she saw this as a way to get a little more done, even if only for a few minutes, and because of her good relationship with them, they were receptive to her. Luann also reported that she works before and after her contractually obligated workday in order to accommodate their schedule when teachers request assistance. She could often be found working with teachers from 7:30 am to 8:25 am (when the first bell rings) and from, as she said, "3 pm to G-d knows when!"

Another area when limited time influenced the professional development that teachers leaders could provide is during Brewster's whole school professional development sessions, which occur on Mondays after school when teachers were contractually obligated to stay until 4 pm. Allison expressed, and I observed, that using this whole time for professional development was often a struggle. For instance, I observed a session in November at Mindy's school that she and

TEACHER LEADERS AS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROVIDERS: A CASE STUDY

123

Luanne jointly facilitated. The two schools are a distance apart from each other, which meant that because Luann's teachers had to travel to Mindy's school and arrived late, the start time was delayed and the time to actually meet was decreased. Even when no travel time is involved, Monday meetings are typically cut short by late arriving teachers who have been tending to other obligations such as meeting with a student, finishing up work from the day, or handling a personal issue. This affects the teacher leaders' work as it significantly cuts down the actual time devoted professional development.

A lack of time was also a challenge when it came to planning and covering all relevant information. For example, Mr. Fisher expressed a desire to have more time to plan professional development sessions with Luann. However, between his administrative responsibilities and Luann's duties, there was little time left for them to plan together. Through my discussion with Mr. Fisher, I learned that a lack of time was often the reason the professional development sessions may not have been as collaborative as he had wished. Often, Luann had a large amount of content she had to cover, due to demands from district supervisors, state assessments, or school wide objectives, and not much time in which to cover it, which greatly influences her work as the school's professional development provider. Mr. Fisher recognized that learning is more successful when teachers have time for discussion, reflection, and discovery, yet the volume of content that needed to be covered did not allow enough time for this approach; he felt he had to choose covering the material over a preferred learning approach. The lack of time, therefore, influenced not only how much material could be covered in professional development, but also what kind of learning opportunities teachers were given. A presentation approach took less time than the more time intensive and more interactive and collaborative discussion and exploration type approaches that are indicated by research on effective professional development.

Summary

The study's findings suggest that although the teacher leaders have little leeway in the professional topics they cover with their teachers, there are factors that greatly influence their work. As defined by the Brewster School District, the role and expectations of the teacher leaders are strongly supported by the District Language Arts Supervisor and building principals. The teacher leaders rely on their internal resources such as their flexibility, ability to both communicate listen effectively. They also demonstrate a deep level of content knowledge and a commitment to adding on to and deepening it by being lifelong learners.

The teacher leaders rely on external resources, which influence their professional development experiences. Participating in a University Literacy Center allow them access to highly effective research based professional development topics, content, and strategies. Additionally, the teacher leaders view their fellow colleagues as important resources. Meeting regularly allow the teacher leaders to increase their knowledge and improve their abilities to provide professional development by incorporating observations, experiences, and feedback from their colleagues into their own practices. Lastly, the relationships the teacher leaders have affects their ability to provide professional development and as a result, strengthen the following school relationships: teacher leader to principal; teacher leader to teacher; and teacher leader to other teacher leaders. Each kind of relationship contributed to the way in which the teacher leader could function as a professional development provider. Chapter five will discuss the findings while implications for both practice and research will be explored.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

Teacher leadership development has been a growing area of educational research over the past three decades (Smylie & Mayrowetz, 2009). Researchers suggest that a transformation of professional development undergirds this trend. The delivery of continuing education and professional development for teachers is shifting from a traditional emphasis on one-day workshops (often provided out of district, or by outside consultants that come in) to a more innovative and increasingly common in-district, teacher-led, and sustained professional learning approach (Harwell, 2003; DuFour, DuFour, Eaker, & Many, 2006; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Darling-Hammond, 2009). Correspondingly, districts are relying on teacher leaders, rather than outside trainers, to provide professional development. With their insider and practical perspectives, teacher leaders are able to create content-rich, supportive, and meaningful learning environments for teachers in schools (DuFour, 2006, Stoelinga & Mangin, 2010; Coburn & Russell, 2008). An additional benefit of teacher-led professional development is that it tends to be more embedded and sustainable as a result of the teacher leader being familiar with specific needs of colleagues and students, policies and procedures, and the culture of the school.

In 2006, the Graduate School of Education at Rutgers University established the Rutgers Center for Literacy Development (The Center). The Center is a multi-faceted professional development organization whose mission is to provide ongoing learning opportunities for educators in order to enhance literacy achievement in schools. One of The Center's initiatives originated in increasing interest in professional development which places an emphasis on providing educational leaders with the tools and resources necessary to turnkey effective professional development opportunities in their school contexts. This study underscores the importance of The Center's work because the findings demonstrate that it contributes in significant ways in both content and resources to the work of teacher leaders as professional development providers. In particular, The

Center, among other shaping factors, assists teacher leaders in developing research-based learning opportunities for teachers with whom they work in their schools. What this study uncovered, in part, was the manner in which the teacher leaders rely on The Center as a resource in both formal and informal ways when planning professional development sessions.

This study examined what the shaping factors are of professional development that is planned, designed, and implemented by three teacher leaders in a particular school district that designates a staff member for this position in every school. I assumed, in designing the study, that it would deepen understanding of how an affiliation with The Center influences their work, but it also gave me a broader and more comprehensive view of the factors that shape the enactment of their roles. The following research questions guided this study:

- What do teacher leaders who receive professional development through a university-affiliated literacy center, such as The Center, do as professional development providers once they return to their schools?;
- What influences their activities?; and
- What are the supports and obstacles they face as professional development providers?

I collected data to address these questions over a five-month period using a combination of direct observation of professional development sessions the teacher leaders led and interviews with teacher leaders and their respective principals. In addition, I kept a research journal in which I recorded my own observations and reflections about factors affecting professional development that teacher leaders provide.

I recruited the three teacher leaders from the Brewster New Jersey School District, all of whom agreed to participate in both the observational and interview phases of data collection. All three teachers were formally designated as teacher leaders within the school district, and their level of experience in this role ranged from just over four years to just over fifteen. The job description

for the teacher leader position focuses in particular on providing professional development for their teacher colleagues in their schools. Each teacher leader used a variety of delivery styles and worked with both large and small groups as well as with individuals. In addition, each of the teacher leaders had been participating in her own professional development at The Center for six years.

Summary of Findings

This study identified teacher leaders who served as professional development providers in their schools, as well as being active participants in their own professional development experiences, as a way to understand what influenced their work. It is important to understand how professional development needs are identified and how teacher leader roles and internal resources, external assets, and relationships, as well as challenges, influence their work. Understanding these factors will help teacher leaders and others maximize the success of their work with teachers.

For the purposes of this study, teacher leadership refers to the process by which teachers, individually or collectively influence their colleagues, principals, and other members of their school communities in order to improve teaching and learning practices. Teacher leaders are facilitators of teacher learning within the school and can be seen as an important element in strengthening and sustaining school improvement efforts (Center for Comprehension School Reform and Improvement, 2008). Teacher leaders are uniquely positioned to work with teachers as a constant support within the school. Wasley (1991) identified teacher leaders as those who possess "the ability to encourage colleagues to change, to do things they wouldn't ordinarily consider without the influence of the leader" (p. 64). This concept is strikingly different from the off-site consultant offering a one-day workshop with no follow-up. On-site teacher leaders, who are a part of the school's culture, are well positioned to facilitate the learning process which leads to teacher change and improvement.

Similar to the definitional research on teacher leadership, each of the study's participants viewed herself as a professional development provider whose main purpose was to support teachers in her school in effectively implementing the curriculum, delivering content knowledge and using research-based instructional strategies, and assisting novice and struggling teachers by helping to identify and then overcome their challenges. Each teacher leader participant conducted professional development workshops in whole school, grade level, and individual meetings. Regardless of the format, however, the ultimate goal remained the same for each teacher leader participant -- to provide professional learning experiences for teachers with the aim of improving teacher quality.

The majority of professional development offerings provided by the teacher leaders was driven by district mandates and state policy: the NJASK Assessment, the Common Core State Standards, and the newly introduced teacher evaluation system in the state, The Excellent Educators for New Jersey Program (EE4NJ). Communicating information about EE4NJ was urgent because the new evaluation system needed to be in place by the start of the subsequent school year. Given the tight timeline, professional development sessions on this topic were given higher priority than all others. District directed curricular changes were another factor that significantly influenced the professional development which teacher leaders provided. Less frequently, professional development opportunities were created as a result of teachers asking the teacher leaders for assistance as well as teacher leaders observing problematic instructional practices in teachers' classrooms. The Center was another impetus for professional development topic selection and activities in the Brewster District. When teacher leaders felt the information presented at meetings there was aligned with their district's curricular goals or was based on sound, evidence-based effective instructional strategies that they believed would be helpful to teachers, they turnkeyed the information to their colleagues in subsequent sessions.

Teacher leaders' internal resources were critical in developing and supporting positive relationships with teachers in their schools. The teacher leaders' demeanor and ability to work with others in a non-threatening and supportive way had an impact on their relationships with teachers, and consequently the learning opportunities they provided. The fact that they were able to act as instructional resources and supports rather than evaluators was a critical factor affecting their roles as professional development providers. The teacher leaders in this study share many of the same fundamental internal resources: persuasiveness, open-mindedness, optimism, enthusiasm, flexibility, confidence, and expertise in their fields. They have these qualities in common with the effective teacher leaders in a study conducted by Mangin and Stoelinga, (2004) who were found to be open-minded and respectful of others' views. These are important characteristics in helping them overcome resistance. They persevered and did not permit setbacks to derail an initiative they were pursuing, and responded to obstacles with flexibility and willingness to try a different approach if the first effort ran into roadblocks.

However, the teacher leaders' expertise extends beyond their innate, internal characteristics and traits to areas which include curriculum planning, assessment design, and data analysis, all of which were important factors affecting the professional development experiences they provided. They used their knowledge and skills to provide content rich professional development sessions through presentation, discussions, and in-class modeling formats. They demonstrated that they have the ability to listen actively, facilitate meetings, keep a group discussion on track, decide on a course of action, monitor progress, and importantly, overcome resistance from teachers. These are all qualities identified as key for teacher leaders (Yoon, Duncan, Lee, Scarloss & Shapley, 2007; Little, 1994).

External resources available to the teacher leaders were another important factor affecting the professional development they provided. The data indicated that the two resources they most

frequently drew upon were The Center and each other. The Center provided current, research-based professional development sessions from which the teacher leaders often planned subsequent learning opportunities for their teachers. Research on teacher change shows those who are involved in networks that are both social and academic are more likely to implement change in instructional practices than teachers who are not (Coburn & Russell, 2008; Pannucci, 2007). As a result, their affiliation with The Center supported the teacher leaders' efforts to change instructional practice. Teacher leader expertise as communicated through professional development workshops is an important contributing factor for improvements in teacher quality and advancement in teaching and learning, (Blasé & Blasé, 2004; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Lieberman & Miller, 2008) and their participation in The Center activities made a meaningful contribution to this process. The Center meetings were often the source of topics for specific professional development sessions when they were aligned with the school's professional development goals or added research-based support to a session that would have been presented anyway.

When teacher leaders develop their expertise with each other through programs like those offered at The Center, they can become more effective at communicating their expertise to their teacher-students. They do this by modeling exceptional instructional practices, encouraging sharing of best practices, providing professional development to new and struggling teachers, and collaborating with colleagues.

These teacher leaders were also able to cultivate and support their knowledge and skills as professional development providers through their collaboration with other teacher leaders. The teacher leaders reported that their peers throughout the district were another important resource with whom they co-planned and co-presented professional development sessions. They worked as a cohesive unit within the district to solve problems and meet needs. Monthly planning meetings allowed the group to discuss issues regarding (but not limited to) district mandates,

curricular changes, and Center meetings. The “two heads are better than one” approach allows teacher leaders to strengthen their knowledge and improve their processes by working with others in the same role. Working together also affords the teachers opportunities to learn from each other and gain new insights into their work (Birman, Desimone, Porter & Garet, 2000; Fisher, Frey & Nelson, 2012, Ball, D., L & Cohen, D.K., 1999; Elmore, R.F. 1997). Having colleagues as a resource may not have been possible had it not been for the time allotted for these monthly meetings. This gave them the time and place to develop relationships which supported their collaborating and learning from each other. Teacher leaders depended heavily on each other for support, advice, and guidance. Equally beneficial are the cost savings realized by school districts when teacher leaders receive the time and resources to develop collaborative programs that maximize the capacity for all involved.

Cultivating, supporting, and sustaining positive relationships was an influence on each of the teacher leader’s work as professional development providers. The way in which they interacted with their teachers during professional development sessions seemed to create an environment more conducive to learning. The existing research is not well developed on how teacher leaders acting as professional development providers support a positive school culture through relationships; however, this study helps fill in the gap. These teacher leaders, who are acting as professional development providers, supported the learning process for teachers through their actions.

The principal is an essential component to promoting positive relationships in the school (Stein and Nelson, 2002). In the schools observed, the principals demonstrated the ability to help work toward positive relationships by fostering a collaborative environment in which the teacher leaders could nurture and support learning through professional development opportunities. They did so by attending professional development sessions with their teacher leaders, co-planning meetings, securing coverage for teachers who need extra help, and developing a schedule that allows for teacher leaders to meet with teachers on a regular basis. While this study described teacher

leaders as professional development providers who were able to cultivate and sustain positive relationships, there is still more to be learned about re-culturing schools in order to work toward more adaptive norms for collective learning and continuous improvement. The relationships forged in a school can influence the ability to cultivate professional learning opportunities for teachers.

Discussion of Findings

Although this study set out to uncover the universe of possibilities related to what influences the professional development created and driven by teacher leaders, the reality is that much of what they do is determined for them. The teacher leaders have a clear job description and little leeway in the topics they focus on. They spent a majority of their time as professional developers delivering information and supporting teachers in response to state and district mandates and curricular requirements. Their path for doing so was relatively smooth because the Brewster district is enacting much of what is known about creating a context in which teacher leaders can function successfully in their school settings. Drawing on their internal and external resources, along with the relationships they have nurtured, it is apparent Brewster is a place where teacher leaders can succeed as professional development providers.

The teacher leaders were able to draw on both their internal and external resources, as well as their relationships with colleagues, which affected their role as professional development providers. Their abilities to leverage their internal resources by adapting to the needs of the district, principal, and teachers is supported by Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Theory (1970) which suggests that teacher leaders' delivery, and/or facilitation of professional development should be determined by the situations in which they participate. The teacher leaders' affiliation with The Center has provided them the resources to create and support research-based professional development sessions in an effort to improve teachers' instructional practices as well as contribute to their drive to be lifelong learners. Because it functions as a network of teachers across the state, it

can provide access to expert knowledge that otherwise may not be available within the district (Adler & Kwon, 2002). The relationships nurtured by teacher leaders with building principals, teachers, and other teacher leaders were key to their work as professional development providers. The value of these relationships is affirmed by Fullan (1995) who suggests that collegial relationships can help grow and cultivate a positive school culture by moving towards establishing a community of learners.

Even though it is clear The Center played an important role in the work of the teacher leaders, it may not have always hit its mark in terms of immediate application. The teacher leaders did not always have permission or time to turnkey the information they gained from The Center's meetings. Analysis of the data suggests that the teacher leaders who are positioned as professional development providers and take part in their own learning experiences through The Center were not always able to use what they learned when working with their colleagues. The information they deliver is most often dictated by district and state mandates. A smaller fraction of the time they spend with teachers is a result of teacher leader or teacher generated topics.

Although the findings illustrate most professional development sessions the teacher leaders provided were both collegial and congenial, they were seldom collaborative. The literature points to how a more constructivist approach helps teachers learn and change, but these teacher leaders spent more time disseminating "knowledge for practice" (Cochran- Smyth & Lytle, 1999), the formal knowledge generated by research and passed on by external consultants, trainers, and publishers representatives to other educators in order to improve practice. The imperative to impart this type of knowledge established and selected by others seemed to overtake any other type of knowledge building experiences.

Using teacher leaders as expert educators to transmit knowledge to other teachers is one way to provide professional development, but researchers are suggesting a more constructivist and

reflective learning approach would help the teachers truly learn, change, and improve instructional practice (Harwell, 2003; Fullan, 2006). Using an approach in this vein entails the teacher leader being more of a facilitator by guiding the teachers in an effort to bring about change in instructional practice. It is important to examine the teacher leader phenomena as it directly relates to their role as a professional development provider. This role could be a powerful impetus for learning experiences that take a “knowledge in practice” (Cochran- Smyth & Lytle, 1999) approach through inquiry and reflection, an approach which generates new knowledge and can encourage improved practice through long term and substantive change. If the teacher leader role is constructed more as a facilitator of learning rather than an expert transmitter of information, this has implications for The Center and the way in which it addresses their professional development needs.

The findings of this study suggest that the teacher leaders use topics, information, and materials from The Center when planning and providing professional development to their colleagues. However, they did not automatically use everything they learned about at meetings. They did so when meeting topics, information, and materials were aligned with already established professional development goals, or added to sessions teacher leaders would have presented for their colleagues anyway. They sometimes used information that seemed like it would be relevant to teachers, even if it did not fit with an established professional development topic, but they did not always have the latitude to do this. The teacher leaders participating in this study illustrated that The Center serves as a viable and crucial resource for the schools with which the teacher leaders are affiliated. The teacher leaders showed that, given the increased levels of responsibilities for teacher leaders without an increase in time available, they are happy to have and use their connection to The Center. They perceive that it provides high quality, evidence-based professional development and materials that they can turn around and easily use in their every day practice. This is helpful to them in their roles as teacher leaders because it helps maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of their

training design; they find the resource extremely helpful because it provides them with topics, information, and materials without having to hunt them down. By providing resources and models The Center offers resources for teacher leaders who are then able to turnkey what they learned for their colleagues. Additionally, university-based literacy centers financially benefit school districts because they provide training for a single delegate, the teacher leader, to attend off-site professional learning opportunities and then bring that knowledge back to the staff of the individual schools. The advantage to school districts is that they do not have to pay for an outside trainer to train an entire staff, a much costlier option.

Limitations

One limitation of this study is that the findings can not be generalized because of the specific circumstances within which the teacher leaders who are the focus of this study work. Brewster has its own way of designating and utilizing teacher leaders. The district in which the participants are employed promotes and robustly supports professional development, clearly demonstrated, in part, by the appointment and job description of their teacher leaders. While many New Jersey districts employ reading specialists, there is a tendency to use them *solely* as a resource for struggling literacy students, and rarely for teacher development. However, in Brewster, the district leadership recognizes the importance of teacher leaders as a necessary foundation for effective support and ongoing learning of the instructional staff (Wasley, 1991; Stoelin & Mangin, 2010; Searby & Shaddix, 2008). The reading specialists there act as teacher leaders, spending a majority of their time as professional development providers for their colleagues, in addition to fulfilling other job responsibilities, such as coordinating state testing and overseeing resource and gifted programs. Other districts may not have a formal teacher leadership role (or not one with the same job description), a supportive principal, or a positive school culture. The participants have clearly

articulated roles within their schools, enthusiastic support from principals, and a positive school and district culture within which they work.

Another unique contextual element of this study is that the teacher leaders in this study all participated in professional development on evidenced-based literacy strategies provided through The Center. The teacher leaders have been building their content knowledge through their participation for the past six years. They demonstrated that their participation has an impact on their work by doing turnkey training for teachers at their schools based on what they learned there. Teacher leaders in other districts may not have the same resource available; they may lack an affiliation with a similar university partner. Furthermore, limiting this study to one suburban district may limit applicability for teacher leaders who operate in different areas under different conditions.

Another limitation was my inability to generalize about the teacher leaders' activities because I only saw a small sample of the professional development opportunities they provided. Unfortunately, although they kept activity logs, they did not have enough detail to gain a larger picture of how they spent their time. However, member checking gave me some assurance that what I observed was typical, thus increasing the trustworthiness of the conclusions I have drawn. I was also limited in my ability to understand how the teacher leaders were perceived because I did not collect data from the teachers. However, I was able to observe how teachers interacted with teacher leaders in formal and informal settings and this gave me an opportunity to describe the nature of their relationships and how these impacted the work of the teacher leaders. It could be argued that ultimately, the most important area of study with regard to teacher leaders is the impact they have on student learning. Although it would be useful to understand more about the relationship between what the teacher leaders do, the resources they draw on, and the actual impact of their work my focus was on the process of their work rather than the outcomes, this was beyond the scope of the study. Despite these limitations, the findings and implications may resonate and be

helpful for other districts, teacher leaders, and resource centers and therefore be useful to a broader audience.

Recommendations

The findings from this study have implications specifically for The Center and Brewster School District administrative leaders. These may also be of use to other similar resource centers, school district leaders and teacher leaders. Given the research questions and purpose of this study, the recommendations primarily focus on how The Center delivers professional development and what topics are offered in order to align itself with district and state mandates and curricular requirements. Also, recommendations for school districts who utilize teacher leaders focus on ways in which they can effectively make use of the time within the given school day in an effort to help teachers improve instructional practice.

Given that the majority of professional development activities the teacher leaders offered is related to school, district, and state mandates, future planning of professional development for teacher leaders should be framed explicitly around implementing research based topics that are related to current state mandates and initiatives. This study highlighted that a university-based literacy center can be an important resource for teacher leaders who plan professional development sessions in response to mandates as well as the practical experiences and recommendations by teachers in the field. Knowing that the teacher leaders are frequently messengers and supports for implementing new practices driven by initiatives and mandates, The Center should explicitly plan professional development that will support them in these efforts. Offering professional development sessions aligned with the mandates teacher leaders are required to provide professional development around would help both The Center and the teacher leaders. This would involve being responsive to the needs of the teacher leaders rather than The Center just picking from an array of interesting and seemingly timely topics and would likely increase the usefulness and application of its offerings.

Selecting a single focus for the year has its challenges, given that there are over 600 districts in New Jersey, each with its own professional development plan, curricular goals, and mandates. However, a close working relationship with state education staff could point the Center toward “hot topics” that would be relevant in most districts.

Teacher leaders need an array of skills to successfully help improve teachers’ practices. These are in addition to having content knowledge, intellectual curiosity, and the ability to effectively turnkey (transmit) information. Therefore, in addition to offering content rich learning experiences, The Center should also provide sessions that help teachers leaders become better facilitators of learning. For example, because resistance was one of the factors affecting the professional development provided by teacher leaders, The Center should consider focusing some of its meetings on trainings that emphasize how to deal with teachers who exhibit resistance to change. In addition to content, meetings can incorporate strategies that deal with building trust, buy-in, and cooperation for teacher leaders to utilize in their work. Topics that help teacher leaders create clear visions for facilitating instructional change seem likely to benefit both the center and the teacher leaders’ PD work in their schools.

Another way in which The Center could help teacher leaders develop their skills while it helps deepen content knowledge is in the area of learning formats. The Center generally uses a transmission model of professional development. At each of the meetings there is a presenter; the participants are relatively passive listeners. While there is time for discussion woven into the sessions, it is extremely limited. Basically, the teacher leaders are receivers of information. Noted throughout the study was the way the teacher leaders used this same format in the professional development they offered. In spite of their apparent success, the way in which they usually try to help teachers improve their practice is mostly through a one-way line of communication from teacher leader to teacher. While this model of learning yields certain benefit, such as teachers gaining

research-based content knowledge that has been proven to be effective, teacher leaders seem more likely to have a deeper impact on practice if they used a more collaborative and constructivist approach to professional development. A transmission delivery model for learning does not allow for the teachers to be active learners in the process. They are unable to construct meaning by incorporating new knowledge into existing practices and collaborate with others in order to deepen their understanding of new concepts and practices.

When they used it back at their schools, most of what the teacher leaders learned at The Center was turnkeyed through the same transmission format through which they had received it. This is an aspect of The Center that requires re-examination. In order to provide professional development opportunities to benefit teacher leaders' work as PD providers, learning formats should be better aligned with the research on effective professional development. Researchers suggest that, in order for professional development to be effective it should provide support, focus on instruction, and be job-embedded, collaborative, and ongoing (Hunzicker, 2010). According to Lindstrom and Speck (2004), professional development should be a "lifelong, collaborative process that nourishes the growth of individuals, teams and schools through a daily, job-embedded, learner centered, focused approach" (pg. 22). The goal of professional development, according to Loucks-Horseley, (1997) is that it should contribute to a lasting change in our educational system. Therefore, the Center should offer learning opportunities for teacher leaders that engage them both in up to date, research based content knowledge as well theoretical underpinnings and practical tools of designing and implementing effective professional development. For example, in addition to content-rich sessions, The Center's offerings could include sessions focused on helping teachers leaders develop their skills in effective active training approaches, learning about tools to facilitate data driven, collaborative, knowledge generating professional development sessions, as well as increasing their knowledge of effective observation and instructional coaching strategies that

encourage participation, collaboration, and reflection. Although the teacher leaders clearly gain a great deal that they can use at their schools, using a more research based approach to professional development at The Center and helping them understand how to implement this at their schools would add an important dimension to their work.

Not only is the learning approach The Center uses a transmission model, it also has a rather scatter shot selection of topics, paralleling the much derided one-shot workshop approach common in many school districts. Although this format is useful for covering content efficiently, it often lacks depth or continuity, as the topics shift quickly and disjointedly from one area to another. The Center should re-examine this approach to the topics it presents. Rather than offering four different speakers covering four different topics each year, it could choose one speaker/topic to work with the participants over the four sessions they offer each year or offer four different speakers on the same topic. Or there could be several follow up sessions between major speakers on a presented topic that extend and deepen knowledge through collaborative, data driven experiences and ongoing discussions that relate the teacher leaders' professional experiences to the information they learned about in the presentation. Either way, the point is to offer more depth, increasing the opportunity for substantive learning. Additionally, The Center could create more sustained professional development opportunities that promote ongoing learning by offering activities such as study circles or continuous online discussions that respond to a range of needs and interests from the participants. Both learning formats used at The Center meetings and sessions focused explicitly on developing facilitation skills should be consistent with adult learning theory and research on professional development best practices.

Because this study is not generalizable and no claims can be made about best practices, no recommendations can be derived for a broader audience. However, given that Brewster created a context that seemed to make it possible for teacher leaders to fulfill many helpful and important

responsibilities in terms of trying to improve teaching practices, it is worth noting the key elements of that model: teacher leaders attend all meetings at The Center and participate in regularly scheduled meetings for the cohort of district teacher leaders. This gives them an opportunity to participate in their own learning experiences with their colleagues. Additionally, Brewster teacher leaders have supportive principals providing regularly scheduled time to meet with teachers, a clear job description and expectations. The teacher leaders all worked with principals who provided common planning time, allowing the teacher leaders to meet regularly with each grade level, substitute teachers when needed, resources for the teacher leaders to use in PD sessions, and full backing of the teacher leaders when working with resistant teachers. As identified by the job description and expectations, the teacher leaders were placed in an environment where professional development was valued and supported by the district. These elements seemed to help the Brewster teacher leaders carry out their roles as their schools' professional development providers and may be helpful in other contexts as well.

Future Research

Additional research is needed in the area of teacher leaders positioned in formal roles as professional development providers. Because this study focused on the factors that influenced the professional development that teacher leaders provide, the next logical step is to further explore how classroom teachers perceive their professional learning interactions with designated teacher leaders. More specifically, research could examine teachers' responses to teacher leaders' as professional development providers in order to deepen understanding of the formal teacher leadership role and the factors that increase effectiveness and maximize positive outcomes. Additionally, the impact of the professional development provided by teachers leaders could be examined in terms of teachers' reactions (did they like the PD) learning, behavior (did they change as a result of the PD), and the results (did the PD improve student outcomes in any measurable way) (Kirkpatrick (1994).

Investigating what other participants from The Center use from the meetings would help gain an understanding of The Center's utility on a broader scale. While this study was completed in a middle class, suburban district, looking at schools ranging from urban to rural and low to high socioeconomic levels can offer insight on the ways in which The Center's content and materials work in various settings. Researching more diverse populations can uncover other aspects The Center may need to cover related to topics and processes.

Lastly, examining the importance of district and university partnerships as a means of helping teacher leaders provide professional development is another avenue to explore. High-quality professional development is a central component in nearly every current proposal for improving education. Policy-makers increasingly recognize that schools can be no better than the teachers and administrators who work within them. While professional development programs vary widely in their content and format, not to mention quality, most share a common purpose — to alter the professional practices to improve teacher quality and academic achievement. Professional development models are systematic efforts to bring about change in the classroom practices of teachers, in their attitudes and beliefs, and in the learning outcomes of students. Linking districts with universities whose research focuses on effective professional development and/or content knowledge can provide a helpful connection to promote such efforts. Further research on the benefits and challenges of partnerships between university-based literacy centers and school districts would assist professional development organizations working in this arrangement more fully understand how to best serve teacher leaders and, ultimately, how to effectively support efforts to improve schools and teachers.

Conclusion

As the educational pendulum has shifted toward a focus on improving teacher quality as an essential component to bolstering student achievement, it has caused a closer examination of the

means by which this may be accomplished. One area of focus related to improving teacher quality requires a thorough examination of professional development models. Given today's current climate of high stakes accountability and the related emphasis on teacher quality, it is more important than ever for teachers to define their roles, in part, as lifelong learners through participation in professional development (Reeves, 2010). This, in turn, creates an urgency to increase the effectiveness of professional development, a critical component in advancing student achievement (Strong, 2010; Darling-Hammond, 1996). However, professional development in education is often overlooked and/or poorly implemented because of a lack of funding, lack of resources, and lack of support. While many federal, state, and local mandates require that teachers have professional development plans, the ways in which those professional development plans are carried out is not always given adequate attention.

Professional development in many schools and districts has been undergoing a transformation—changing from the traditional emphasis on one-day or shorter workshops often led by outsiders with little knowledge of specific needs in the local context to a more innovative and increasingly common, in-district, teacher-led, embedded, and consistently sustained professional learning (Harwell, 2003; DuFour, DuFour, Eaker, & Many, 2006; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Darling-Hammond, 2009). This has been a catalyst for engaging teacher leaders as in-district professional development facilitators. When schools have an effective professional development provider onsite, the potential for enhanced learning opportunities is increased (Harwell, 2003; Fullan, 2006).

In the most successful schools, teacher leaders supported by administrators take initiative to improve school-wide policies and programs, teaching and learning, and communication. Analysis of the data showed that positive relationships in a shared leadership system with principal support influenced the way in which the teacher leaders were able to cultivate professional learning

opportunities for teachers. By understanding the phenomenon of teacher leadership and helping teachers develop the skills required to act as leaders, schools are more likely to improve as they help teachers realize their full potential. With information about how teacher leaders positioned as professional development providers function, schools may be more able to implement an effective approach to supporting and effectively utilizing teacher leaders who can promote sustainable and collaborative professional development practices that can improve teacher quality and, ultimately, academic achievement. Teacher leaders act as a catalyst for classroom change and improvement in an embedded professional development model that nurtures a collaborative approach to teacher learning.

This study attempted to develop a better understanding of factors influencing professional development that teacher leaders provided to their colleagues. The data have shown that there are various elements shaping the professional learning opportunities that teacher leaders provide. These are their role perceptions, internal resources, including the knowledge they possess, coupled with the process and methods by which they share information. Teacher leaders also must respond to district mandates, curricular changes, and state assessments in developing their professional development sessions. Finally, teacher leaders worked to identify and respond to the articulated needs of individual teachers to inform the content of professional development workshops. Teacher leaders identified teacher needs indirectly through observations and directly through the types of assistance individual teachers requested from them.

For the teacher leaders in this study, a critical element in the professional development experiences they provided was that they participated in their own professional development experiences through their participation in The Center. Data revealed that it was an important influence on their work and it provided them with information, topics, new strategies, and resources

from which they drew to develop professional development opportunities for their school colleagues.

According to Lindstrom and Speck (2004), professional development should be a “lifelong, collaborative process that nourishes the growth of individuals, teams and schools through a daily, job-embedded, learner centered, focused approach” (pg. 22). In order for teachers to be a part of a life-long learning process that makes a difference in improving educational outcomes, they must have identities as learners, in addition to teachers (Miller, Wallace, DiBiase and Nesbit, 1999; DuFour, 1994; Fisher, Frey and Nelson, 2012). Teacher leaders positioned as professional development providers are influenced by many factors, such as their knowledge and expertise, their willingness and ability to adapt to different situations, the external resources they use to improve instructional practices, as well as their ability to cultivate, and maintain positive relationships. In sum, schools willing to take advantage of what teacher leaders can offer are in a unique position to empower educators to view themselves as learners leading to increased capacity and resulting in increased student achievement.

References

- Ackerman, R., and Mackenzie, S. (2006). Uncovering teacher leadership. *Educational Leadership*, 63(8), 66-70.
- Adler, P. & Kohn, S.W. (2002). Social capital: Prospects for a new content. *The Academy of Management Review*. 27(1). 17-40.
- Argyris, C., & Schön, D. A. (1974). Theory in practice: increasing professional effectiveness (1st ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Ball, D. L., & Cohen, D. K. (1999). Developing practices, developing practitioners: Toward a practice-based theory of professional development. In G. Sykes & L. Darling-Hammonds (Eds.), *Teaching as the learning profession: Handbook of policy and practice* (pp. 30–32). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Bass, B. M. (1985). Leadership and performance beyond expectation. New York: Free Press.
- Ballek, K., O'Rourke, A., Provenzano, J., Bellamy, T. (2005). Seven keys in cultivating principals and teacher leaders. *Journal of Staff Development*, 26(2), 42-29.
- Barth, R. (1990). Improving schools from within: Teachers, parents, and principals can make a difference. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Barth, R. (1991). Restructuring schools: Some questions for teachers and principals. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 73(2), 123-128.
- Barth, R. (2001). Teacher Leader. *Phi Delta Kappa*, 443-449.
- Bass, B. M. (1985). Leadership and performance beyond expectations. New York: Free Press.
- Beaty, L. and McGill, I. (1995). *Developing Reflective Practice: using peer observation of teaching*. Moulscombe: University of Brighton.

- Beatty, L. (1998) The professional development of teachers in higher education: structures, methods and responsibilities, *Innovations in Education and Training International*, 35(2), 99-107.
- Berry, B., & Ginsberg, R., (1990). Creating leader teacher: from policy to implementation. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 71, 616-621.
- Birman, B. F., Desimone, L., Garet, M. S., & Porter, A. C. (2000) Designing professional development that works. *Educational Leadership* . 57(8), 28-33.
- Blase, J., & Blase, J. (2004). Handbook of instructional leadership: How successful principals promote teaching and learning (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.
- Boles, K., & Troen, V. (1994, April). Teacher leadership in a professional development school. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA.
- Brookfield, S. (1986). Understanding and facilitating adult learning. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Brown, S., G. Jones, and S. Rawnsley (eds.). 1993. Observing Teaching. Birmingham: S.E.D.A. Publications.
- Bryk, A.S., Sebring, P.B., Allensworth, E., Luppescu, S. & Easton, J.Q. (2010). Organizing schools for improvement: Lessons from Chicago. Chicago, IL University of Chicago Press.
- Burns, J. M. (1978). *Leadership*. New York: Harper & Row.

- Campbell, P., & Southworth, G. (1992). Rethinking collegiality: Teachers' views. In N. Bennett, M. Crawford, & C. Riches (Eds.), *Managing change in education: Individual and organizational perspectives* (pp. 61-79). London, UK: Paul Chapman.
- Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy. (1986). *A nation prepared: Teachers for the 21st century. Report of the Task Force on Teaching as a Profession*. Washington, DC: Author.
- Childs-Bowen, D., Moller, G., & Scrivner, J. (2000). Principals: Leaders of leaders. *NASSP Bulletin* (616), 84, 27-34.
- Chubb, John E. and Moe, Terry M. (1990). *Politics, Markets and America's Schools*. Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution.
- Clarke, D J , & Hollingsworth, H (2002) Elaborating a model of teacher professional growth *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 18 (8), 947-967
- Coburn, C. E. & Russell, J. L. (2008). District policy and teachers' social networks. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 30(3), 203-235.
- Cohen, D.K. & Hill, H.C. (2001). *Learning policy: When state education reform Works*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Collet, V. (2012). The Gradual Increase of Responsibility Model: Coaching for Teacher Change. *Literacy Research and Instruction*, 51:1, 27-47.
- Conley, S. (1991). Review of research on teacher participation in school decisionmaking. In G. Grant (Ed.), *Review of research in education* (Vol. 17, pp. 225-265). Washington, DC: American Educational Research Association.
- Corcoran, T. B., Shields, P. M., & Zucker, A. A. (1998). *The SSIs and professional development for teachers*. Menlo Park, CA: SRI International.

- Coyle, M. (1997). Teacher leadership vs. school management: Flatten the hierarchies. *The Clearing House*, 70(5), 236–239.
- Creswell, J.W. (1998). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Traditions*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Crowther, F., Kaagan, S., Ferguson, M., and Hann, L. (2002). *Developing teacher leaders: how teacher leadership enhances school success*. Thousand Oaks: Corwin Press.
- Danielson, C. (2006). *Teacher leadership that strengthens professional practice*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Dansereau, F., Graen, G.B., & Haga, W. (1975). A vertical dyad linkage approach to leadership in formal organizations. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*, 13, 46-78.
- Darling-Hammond, L., Andree, A., Richardson, N Wei, R. C., & Orphanos, S. (2009). *Professional Learning in the Learning Profession: A Status Report on Teacher Development in the U.S. and Abroad*. Dallas, TX. National Staff Development Council.
- Darling-Hammond, L. & Richardson, N. (2009). Teacher learning: What matters? *Educational Leadership*, (2009, February), 46-53.
- Darling-Hammond, L. (Ed.). (2005). *Professional development schools: Schools for developing a profession* (2nd ed.). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Darling-Hammond, Linda. (1996). The quiet revolution, rethinking teacher Development. *Educational Leadership*, 44(3). 26-41.
- Darling-Hammond, L., & McLaughlin, M. W. (1995). Policies that support professional Development in areas of reform. *Phi Delta kappan*, 76(8), 597-604.

- Day, C., & Harris, A. (2002). Teacher leadership, reflective practice and school improvement. In K. Leithwood & P. Hallinger (Eds.), *Second international handbook of educational leadership and administration* (pp. 957–977). Dordrecht, Netherlands: Kluwer.
- Deussen, T., Coskie, T., Robinson, L., & Autio, E. (2007). *“Coach” can mean many things: five categories of literacy coaches in Reading First (Issues & Answers Report, REL 2007–No. 005)*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Educational Laboratory Northwest. Retrieved from <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs>.
- Donahoe, T. (1993). "Finding the way: Structure, time, and culture in school improvement." *Phi Delta Kappan*, 75(4): 298-305.
- Donaldson, G. (2006). *Cultivating leadership in schools: Connecting people, purpose, and practice* New York: Teachers College Press.
- DuFour, R., DuFour R., Eaker, R., Many, T. (2006). *Learning By Doing: A Handbook for Professional Learning Communities at Work* 2nd Ed. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree Press.
- DuFour, R., and Eaker, R. (1998). *Professional learning communities at work: best practices for enhancing student achievement*. Bloomington: National Education Service.
- DuFour, R & Marzano, R. (2011). *Leaders of learning: How district, school, and classroom leaders improve student achievement*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree Press.
- Duke, D. L., Showers, B. K., & Imber, M. (1980). Teachers and shared decision making: The costs and benefits of involvement. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 16(1), 93–106.
- Durant, J. and Frost, D. (2003). Teacher leadership: rationale, strategy, and impact.

School Leadership and Management 23(2): 173-186.

Edgerton, R. (1989, June). Report from the President. *AAHE Bulletin*, 14(17), 8.

Edgerton, R. (1992, January). Unes of work: Forum on faculty roles and rewards.

Unpublished paper circulated to participants in the AAHE Teaching Initiative.

Elmore, R.F. & Burney, D. (1998). Continuous improvement in Community District #2, New York City. School variation and systemic instructional improvement in Community School District #2, New York City. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh, Learning Research and Development Center.

Elmore, R.F. & Burney, D. (1997). School variation and systemic instructional improvement in Community School District #2, New York City. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh, Learning Research and Development Center.

Elmore, R. F. (1996). Getting to scale with good educational practice. *Harvard Educational Review*, 66 (1), 1-26.

Finn, K., Chiappa, V., Puig, A., & Hunt, D. (2011). How to become a better clinical teacher: a collaborative peer observation process. *Medical Teacher*. 33. 151-155.

Firestone, W.A., & Riehl, C. (Eds.). (2005). *A new agenda for research in educational leadership*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Firestone, W., & Martinez, M. C. (2009). Districts, teacher leaders, and distributed leadership: Changing instructional practice. In K. Leithwood, B. Mascal, & T. Strauss (Eds.). *Distributed leadership according to the evidence* (pp. 61-86). New York, NY: Routledge.

Fisher, D., Frey, N. and Nelson, J. (2012), Literacy Achievement Through Sustained Professional Development. *The Reading Teacher*, 65: 551–563.

Fontana, A & Frey, J (1994) The Art of Science. pp. 361-76 in The

Handbook of Qualitative Research, edited by N. a. Y. L. Denzin. Thousand Oaks:
Sage Publications.

Fullan, M. (2001). Leading in a culture of change. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Fullan, M. (2006). The new meaning of educational change (4th ed). New York:
Teachers College.

Fullan, M. & Hargreaves, A. (1992). Teacher development and educational change. In M.
Fullan and A. Hargreaves (eds). *Teacher development and Educational Change*, London,
Falmer.

Fullan, M., & Hargreaves, A. (1996). What's worth fighting for in your school (2nd ed.). New
York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Furman, G. (1999). School as community: Editor's forward. *Educational Administration
Quarterly*, 35 (1), 6-12.

Garet, M.S., Porter, A.C., Desimone, L., Birman, B.F., & Yoon, K.S. (2001). What makes
professional development effective? Results from a national sample of
teachers. *American Educational Research Journal*, 38(4), 914-945.

Gall M.D., Gall J.P., Borg W.R. (2010). *Applying Educational Research 6th Ed*. Boston,
MA: Pearson.

Garet, M.S., Porter, A.C., Desimone, L., Birman, B.F., & Yoon, K.S. (2001). What
makes professional development effective? Results from a national sample
of teachers through peer coaching. *American Educational Research Journal*,
38(4), 914-945.

- Geertz, Clifford. (1973). Thick description: Toward an interpretive theory of culture. In *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*. New York: Basic Books. 3-30.
- Goldenberg, C and Gallimore, R. (1991). Changing teaching takes more than a one-shot workshop. *Educational Leadership*. 49(3). 69-72.
- Goleman, D., Boyatzis, R., & McKee, A. (2002). Primal leadership: Realizing the power of emotional intelligence. Boston, MA: Harvard Business Press.
- Gronn, P. (2002a). Distributed leadership as a unit of analysis. *Leadership Quarterly*, 13, 423-451.
- Graen, G.B., & Cashman, J. (1975). A role-making model of leadership in formal organizations: A developmental approach, In: J.G. Hunt & L.L. Larson (Eds.), *Leadership Frontiers* (pp. 143-166). Kent, OH: Kent State University Press.
- Graen, G.B., & Uhl-Bien, M. (1991). The transformation of professionals into self-managing and partially self-designing contributions: Toward a theory of leader-making. *Journal of Management Systems*, 3(3), 33-48.
- Griffin, G. A. (1995). Influences of shared decision making on school and classroom activity: Conversations with five teachers. *Elementary School Journal*, 96(1), 29-45.
- Gusky, T. (2000). Evaluating professional development. Thousand Oaks, Ca: Corwin Press.
- Hallinger, P. (2003). Leading educational change: Reflections on the practice of instructional and transformational leadership. [Electronic version]. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 33(3), 329-351.
- Hallman, S.R., Wenzel, S.A. & Fendt, C.R. (2004). *CMSI/CUSP elementary school Development, 2003-04: The Specialist Report-Report B*. Chicago: University of Illinois-Chicago, CMSI Evaluation Project.

Hammersley-Fletcher, L., & Orsmond, P. (2004). Evaluating our peers: is peer observation a meaningful process? *Studies in Higher Education*, 29(4), 489-503.

Hammersley-Fletcher, L., & Brundrett, M. (2005). Leaders on leadership: the impressions of primary school head teachers and subject leaders. *School Leadership and Management* 25(1), 59-75.

Hargreaves, A. (1991, April). Restructuring restructuring: Postmodernity and the prospects for educational change. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago, IL.

Hargreaves, A. (1994). *Changing teachers, changing times: Teachers' work and Culture in the postmodern age*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Harwell, S.H., (2003, July) Teacher professional development: It's not an event, it's a process. *CORD Communications, Inc.*

Harris, A., & Muijs, D. (2002). Teacher leadership: A review of the research. Retrieved February 10, 2010, from www.ncsl.org.uk/researchpublications

Hart, A. W. (1995). Reconceiving school leadership: Emergent views. *Elementary School Journal*, 96(1), 9-28.

Hawley W.D. & Valli, L. (1998). The essentials of effective professional development. In L. Darling-Hammond & G. Sykes (eds.), *Teaching as the learning profession: Handbook of policy and practice* (pp. 127-150). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Hersey, P., and Blanchard, K. (1982). *Management of Organizational Behavior*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall.

Hickey, W., and Harris, S. (2005). Improved professional development through teacher

- leadership. *The Rural Educator*, 26(2), 12-16.
- Hiebert, J. (1999). Relationships between research and the NCTM Standards. *Journal for Research in Mathematics Education*, 30, 3-19.
- Holland, H. Research Brief: Professional Development to Improve Student Achievement (2005). *Research Points*, American Educational Research Association. Summer 2005.
- Hulpia, H., Devos, G., & Rosseel, Y. (2009). The relationship between the perception of distributed leadership in secondary schools and teachers' and teacher leaders' job satisfaction and organizational commitment. *School Effectiveness & School Improvement*, 20(3), 291-317.
- Hulpia, H., Devos, G., & VanKeer, H., The relation between school leadership from a distributed perspective and teachers' organizational commitment: Examining the source of the leadership function. *Educational Administrative Quarterly*. 47(5). 728-771.
- Ingersoll, R. M. (1996). Teachers' decision-making power and school conflict. *Sociology of Education*, 69(2), 159-176.
- Joyce, B. & Showers, E. (2002). *Student Achievement Through Staff Development* (3rd Ed). Alexandria, VA, ASCD.
- Joyce, B., Calhoun, E., & Hopkins, S.D. (1999). The new structure of school improvement: Inquiring schools and achieving students. Philadelphia, PA: Open University Press.
- Katzenmeyer, M. & Moller, G. (2001). *Awakening the sleeping giant: Helping teachers develop as leaders*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Killion, J., & Roy, P. (2009). Becoming a learning school. National Staff Development Council/MetLife Foundation.

TEACHER LEADERS AS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROVIDERS: A CASE STUDY
156

- Knapp, M.S. (2003). Professional Development as a Policy Pathway. *Review of Research in Education*, 27, 109- 157.
- Knight, J. (2007). *Instructional Coaching: A Partnership Approach to Improving Instruction*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Krisko, M. (2001). Teacher leadership: a profile to identify the potential. Paper presented at the Biennial Convocation of Kappa Delta Pi.
- Kull, J., and Bailey, J. (1993). Perceptions of recent graduates: leadership and standing out. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of American Educational Research Association.
- Lambert, L. (1998) Building leadership capacity in schools [NetLibrary version]. Alexandria, VA: ASCD. Retrieved from <http://www.netlibrary.com.proxy.lib.utk.edu:90/Details.aspx>
- Lambert, L. (2003). Leadership Redefined: an evocative context for teacher Leadership. *School Leadership & Management*, 23 (4). 421–430.
- LeBlanc, P. R., & Shelton, M. M. (1997). Teacher leadership: The needs of teachers. Action in Teacher Education, 19(3), 32–48.
- Leithwood, K., & Duke, D. L. (1999). A century's quest to understand school leadership. In K. S. Louis & J. Murphy (Eds.), *Handbook of research on educational administration* (2nd ed., pp. 45–72). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Leithwood, K., and Riehl, C. (2003). What we know about successful school leadership.
- Leithwood, K., Louis, K.S., Anderson, S., & Wahlstrom, K. (2004, September). How leadership influences student learning. Retrieved July 13, 2005, from <http://www.wallacefoundation.org/WF/KnowledgeCenter/KnowledgeTopics/EducationLeadershipInfluencesStudentLearning.htm>.
- Leithwood , K. & Jantzi, D. (1999). Transformational school leadership effects: a

- Replication. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 10(4), 451-479.
- Lieberman, A. (1988). Teachers and principals: Turf, tension, and new tasks. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 69(9), 648–653.
- Lieberman, A. (1996). Creating intentional learning communities. *Educational Leadership* 54(3). 51-55.
- Lieberman, A. & Grolnick, M. (1997). Networks, reform, and the professional development of teachers. In A. Hargreaves (ed.) *Rethinking educational change with heart and mind*. (ACSD Yearbook 1997) (pp. 192-215). Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Lieberman, A., & Miller, L. (2005). Teachers as leaders. *The Educational Forum*, 69, 151–159.
- Lieberman, J., and Walker, D. (2007). Connecting curriculum and instruction to national teaching standards. *The Educational Forum*, 71, 274-282.
- Lieberman, A. & Miller, L. (2008). *Teachers in Professional Communities: Improving Teaching and Learning*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Lindstrom, P., Speck, M. (2004). *The Principal As Professional Development Leader*. California: Corwin Press.
- Little, J. W. (1988). Assessing the prospects for teacher leadership. In A. Lieberman (Ed.), *Building a professional culture in schools* (pp. 78–106). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Little, J. W. (1990). The persistence of privacy: Autonomy and initiative in teachers' professional relations. *Teachers College Record*, 91(4), 509–536.
- Little, J.W. (1993). Teacher's professional development in a climate of educational Reform. *Educational Evaluation & Policy Analysis*, 15(2), 129-151.
- Little J. W. (2002). Locating learning in teachers' communities of practice: Opening up

- problems of analysis in records of everyday work, *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 18(8), 917–946.
- Lord, B., and Miller, B. (2000). *Teacher leadership: an appealing and inescapable force in school reform?* : Education Development Center.
- Lortie, D. (1975). *Schoolteacher: A sociological study* (2nd ed.). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Loucks-Horsley, S. (1997). Teacher change, staff development, and systemic change: Reflections from the eye of a paradigm shift. In S.N. Friel & G.W. Bright (Eds.), *Reflecting on our work: NSF teacher enhancement in K–6 mathematics* (pp. 133–149). Lanham, MD: University Press of America.
- Malen, B., Ogawa, R. T. & Krantz, J. (1990). What do we know about school-based management? A case study of the literature – a call for research. In W. H. Clune & J. F. Witte (Eds.) *Choice and control in American education*, Vol. 2: The practice of choice, decentralization, and school restructuring. New York, NY: Falmer Press.
- Mangin, M.M & Stoelinga, S.R. (2008). *Effective teacher leadership: using research to inform and reform*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Mangin, M. (2007). Facilitating elementary principals' support for instructional teacher leadership. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 43 (319). 320-357.
- Martin, J. (2002). *Organizational culture : mapping the terrain*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Martin, G. & Double, J. (1998) Developing higher education teaching skills through peer observation and collaborative reaction, *Innovations in Education and Training International*, 35(2), 161-169.

- Mayo, K. (2002). Teacher leadership: the master teacher model. *Mayo Management in Education*, 16(3), 29-33.
- McDougall, J., & Drummond, MJ. (2005). The development of medical teachers: an inquiry into the learning histories of 10 experienced medical teachers. *Medical Education*. 39:1213-1220.
- Menges, R.J. (1987). Colleagues as catalysts for change in teaching. *To Improve the Academy*. 6: 83-93.
- Merriam, S. (2009). *Qualitative research: a guide to design and implementation*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.
- Mikulecky, L., Albers, P., & Peers, M. (1994). Literacy transfer: A review of the literature (Technical Report TR 94-05). Philadelphia, PA: National Center on Adult Literacy.
- Miles, M., Saxl, E., & Lieberman, A. (1998). What skills do educational “change agents” Need? An empirical view. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 18 (2), 157-193.
- Miller, A.S., Wallace, J.D., DiBiase, W.J., & Nesbit, C.R. (1999). Pebbles in the ocean or fountains of change? New insights on professional development: Examining the links—Professional development, teacher leaders, and school change. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the National Association for Research in Science Teaching, Boston, MA.
- Miller, B., Moon, J., & Elko, S. (2000). Teacher leadership in mathematics and science: Casebook and facilitator’s guide. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Muchmore, J., Cooley, V., Marx, G., and Crowell, R. (2004). Enhancing teacher leadership in urban education: The oak park experience. *Educational Horizons*, 82(3), 236-244.
- National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future (1996). *What matters most:*

Teaching for America's future. New York: Author.

Nelson, B.S., & Sassi, A. (2005). *The effective principal: Instructional leadership for high quality learning*. New York: Teachers College Press.

New Jersey Department of Education (2006). Project Plan Title I: Turnkey training. Trenton: Office of Title I Program, Planning and Accountability

New Jersey Department of Education. (2005). Retrieved from

<http://www.state.nj.us/education/data/title1/>

Newmann, F., & Wehlage, G. (1995). *Successful school restructuring*. University of Wisconsin-Madison: Center on Organization and Restructuring Schools.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) (2007). *Teacher to Teacher Initiative: Fact Sheet*. Retrieved June 10, 2009 from <http://www.ed.gov/teachers/how/tools/initiative/factsheet.html>

Nichols, Sharon L.; Glass, Gene V.; Berliner, David C.(2006). High-Stakes Testing and Student Achievement: Does Accountability Pressure Increase Student Learning?. *Education Policy Analysis Archives/ Archivos Analíticos de Políticas Educativas*, 1-175.

Nicholson, B. Harris-John, M. Schimmel, C. (2005). Professional development for principals in the accountability era. Charleston, WV: Edvantia.

O'Connor, K., & Boles, K. (1992, April). Assessing the needs of teacher leaders in

Massachusetts. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, CA.

Ovando, M. (1994, October). Effects of teacher leadership on their teaching practices. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the University Council of Educational Administration, Philadelphia, PA.

Pancucci (2007). *Train the trainer: the bricks in the learning scaffold of professional development*. Brock University. St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada. Manuscript submitted for publication.

Patton, M. Q. (2008). *Utilized Focused Evaluation: The New Century Text*. Sage Publications, 4th Edition. Sage Publications Inc: Thousand Oaks, CA.

Pearman, R. (1998). *Hard wired leadership: unleashing the power of personality to become a new millennium leader* Palo Alto, CA: Davies-Black Publishing.

Phelps, P. H. (2008). Helping teachers become leaders. *Clearing House*, 81(3), 119-122.

Pugalee, D., Frykholm, J. and Shaka, F. (2001). Diversity, technology, and policy: key considerations in the development of teacher leadership.

Reeves, D. (2010). *Transforming professional development into student results*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Reeves, D. (2008). *Reframing teacher leadership to improve your school*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

Roby, D. E. (2011). Teacher leaders impacting school culture. *Education*, 131(4), 782-790.

Rosenholz, S. (1989). *Teachers' workplace: The social organization of schools*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Schein, E. (1996). Culture: The Missing Concept in Organization Studies. *Administrative Science Quarterly*. 41(2): 229-240.

Searby, L., & Shaddix, L. (2008). Growing teacher leaders in a culture of excellence. *Professional Educator*, 32(1), 35-43.

Sergiovanni, T.J. & Starratt, R.J. (1998). *Supervision: A redefinition* (6th ed.). Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill.

Showers, B., Joyce, B., & Bennett, B. (1987) Synthesis of research on staff development:

A framework for future study and a state-of-the-art analysis. *Educational Leadership*, 45(3), 77-87.

Showers, B. & Joyce, B. (1996). The evolution of peer coaching. *Educational Leadership*.

56(6). 12-16.

Silva, D.Y., Gimbert, B., & Nolan, J. (2000). Sliding the doors: Locking and

unlocking possibilities for teacher leadership. *Teachers College Record*, 102(4), 779-804.

Smylie, M. A., & Denny, J. W. (1990). Teacher leadership: Tensions and ambiguities in

organizational perspective. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 26(3), 235–259.

Smylie, M. A. (1992). Teacher participation in school decision-making: Assessing willingness

to participate. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 14(1), 53–67.

Smylie, M. A., & Mayrowetz, D. (2009). Footnotes to teacher leadership. In L. J. Saha & A.

G. Dworkin (Eds.), *International handbook of research on teachers and teaching*

(pp. 277–289). New York, NY: Springer Science + Business Media.

Smylie, M.A., Conley, S., & Marks, H.M. (2002), Exploring new approaches to teacher

leadership challenge: redefining leadership in the 21st century; 101st first yearbook of

the National Society for the Study of Education. Vol. 101, pp 162-188. Chicago:
University of Chicago Press.

Southworth, G. (1990). Leadership, headship and effective primary schools. *School
Organization*, 10(1), 3-16.

Sparks, D., and S. Loucks-Horsley. (1989). Models of Staff Development. *Journal of Staff
Development* 10, 4: 40-59.

Spillane, M & Harris, A. (2008). Distributed leadership through the looking glass.
Management in Education. 22(1). 31-34.

Spillane, J.P, Healey, K., & Parisi, L.M. (2009). School leaders opportunities to learn: a
descriptive analysis from a distributed perspective. *Educational Review*, 61
(4). 407-432.

Spillane, J. P. and Louis, K. S. (2002). School improvement processes and practices:
Professional learning for building instructional capacity. Yearbook of the National
Society for the Study of Education, 101: 83–104

Stein, M.K. & Nelson, B. (2002, November). Leadership content knowledge. Paper
Presented at the annual meeting of the University Council for Educational
Administration, Pittsburgh, PA.

Stevens, J. J., & Aleamoni, L. M. (1985). The use of evaluative feedback for instructional
improvement: A longitudinal perspective. *Instructional Science*, 13, 285-304.

Stone, M., Horejs, J., & Lomas, A. (1997). Commonalities and differences in teacher
leadership at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. *Action in Teacher Education*,
19(3), 49–64.

- Strodl, P. (1992). A model of teacher leadership. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Eastern Educational Research Association.
- Stoelinga, S.R. & Mangin, M.M. (2010). *Examining effective teacher leadership: a case study approach*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Strike, K. (2007). Ethical leadership in schools: Creating a community in an environment of accountability. Thousand Oaks: Corwin Press.
- Strong, J. (2010). Effective teachers = student achievement. Larchmont, NY: Eyes on Education.
- Suranna, K. and Moss, D. (2002). Exploring Teacher Leadership in the Context of Teacher Preparation. Annual Meeting of the Educational Research Association. New Orleans, LA.
- Swanson, J. (2000). What differentiates an excellent teacher from a teacher leader? Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association.
- Taylor, D. L., & Bogotch, I. E. (1994). School-level effects of teachers' participation in decision making. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 16(3), 302–319.
- Teddlie, C., & Reynolds, D. (Eds.). (2000). *International handbook of school effectiveness research*. London: Sage.
- Timperly, H. (2005). Distributed leadership: developing theory from practice. *Curriculum Studies*, 37(4). 395-420.
- Wasley, P. (1991). *Teachers who lead: The rhetoric of reform and the realities of Practice*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Weiss, C. H., & Cambone, J. (1994). Principals, shared decision making, and school reform. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 16(3), 287–301.

- Wenger, E. (1999) Communities of practice: the key to a knowledge strategy. Knowledge Directions, Volume 1, Number 2, pp. 48-63.
- Wetig, S. (2002). Step up or step out: Perspectives on teacher leadership. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association.
- Whitsett, G., and Riley, J. (2003). Defining and applying leadership: perceptions of teacher leader candidates. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of Midsouth Educational Research Association.
- Wilson, R. C. (1986). Improving faculty teaching: Effective use of student evaluations and consultants. *Journal of Higher Education*, 57(2), 196-209.
- Wynne, J. (2001). Teachers as leaders in education reform [Electronic Version]. Eric Digest from <http://www.ericdigests.org/2002-4/teachers.html>.
- Yoon, K. S., Duncan, T., Lee, S. W.Y., Scarloss, B., & Shapley, K. (2007). *Reviewing the evidence on how teacher professional development affects student achievement* (Issues & Answers Report, REL 2007–No. 033). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Educational Laboratory Southwest. Retrieved from <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs>.
- York-Barr, J., & Duke, K. (2004). What do we know about teacher leadership? Findings from two decades of scholarship. *Review of Educational Research*, 74(3), 255–316.
- Youitt, D. (2007). Teacher Leadership: Another way to add value to schools. Perspectives on Educational Leadership. Winmalee, New South Wales: Australian Council for Educational Leaders. Retrieved from

http://www.acel.org.au/fileadmin/user_upload/documents/perspectives_in_education/Perspectives_November_2007.pdf

Appendix A

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed for this study. We are speaking today because are identified as a teacher leader in your school who provides professional development to your colleagues. For this interview, I would like to ascertain your experience as a professional development provider.

Teacher Leader Interview Guide

- 1) Please state your job title and description?
 - a. Tell me about your job as it relates to teacher training and professional development
 - b. What percentage of your position do you think accounts for this?
- 2) How long have you been in your position?
- 3) Describe 3-4 specific professional development sessions that you provided in your school either this year or in the past?
 - a. How did they come to be?
 - b. What did you do and why?
- 4) Describe the culture of your school re: PD?
 - a. Explain how teachers feel when PD is presented? Describe what you see when you go into the teacher's classrooms, in small group meetings and whole school professional development sessions.
- 5) What if you had a teacher struggling with a teaching practice? Explain the process you may follow to help him/her
- 6) What would I see as an observer one of your staff meetings?
- 7) Describe how you determine if a teacher or team of teachers needs specific help with a certain teaching/management area- can you cite a specific example?
- 8) Tell me how you would handle a resistant teacher/novice/struggling teacher?

- 9) Can you describe some factors that challenge your delivery of teacher training? Can you cite specific examples? Are there resources that you can go to help overcome these challenges?
- 10) Explain your “go-to” resources
 - a. Tell me about how outside resources have influenced the way you provide teacher training/PD.

Appendix B

Pre/Post Professional Development Interview Guide

Pre Interview

1. What will I see when I observe you on _____?
2. Tell me how you came to provide professional development on this topic
3. Tell me what resources helped you form/guide the session

Post Interview

1. How did you feel about the session
2. Tell me how any challenges may have hindered the session
3. Tell me how any supports may have helped the session

Appendix C

Principal Interview Guide

- 1) Please state your job title and description
- 2) How long have you been in your position?
- 3) Please explain the way that professional development by teacher leaders is run in your school.
- 4) Please explain the culture of professional development in your school.
- 5) Please explain who runs the professional development sessions.
- 6) Can you let me know what role teacher leaders play in how the professional development sessions are created; as in, who determines topics? Audience? Length of time and number of sessions?
- 7) Can you explain if and/or what professional development is mandated by outside agencies other than your school; ie, district, state agencies, federal government?
- 8) Can you explain the teacher leaders' role in planning and implementing professional development?
- 9) Can you tell me about a specific professional development session that you attended that was provided by a teacher leader? What were some of the strengths? Challenges?
- 10) Regarding the specific professional development session you told me about, how did you support the success or help overcome the challenge? Or both?
- 11) Can you let me know about challenges that you see standing in the way of your school's professional development that is provided by teacher leaders?
- 12) How do you handle a situation if the teacher leader comes to you with an issue regarding a resistant teacher not accepting or moving forward after professional development sessions?

13) Can you explain ways in which you support the teacher leader in her role as professional development provider?

14) How do teacher leaders delivery of professional development impact or enhance your efforts as an instructional leader?