Teacher Leaders' and Administrators' Perceptions About a Leadership Capacity Building Program

by

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Abstract

This study examined teacher leaders' and administrators' perceptions of a leadership capacity building program. The need for developing teacher leaders and enhancing the skills of practicing school administrators has gained the attention of policymakers, school administrators, and education professors. Reform initiatives suggest that there is a need for teachers to share in the leadership of schools. Teachers and principals both need to develop their own professional skills and the organizational capacity to be engaged in collaborative leadership roles. Further, for teachers to engage in these leadership efforts, they need to feel empowered to do so.

This study examined a leadership capacity building program in four Alabama county school systems referred to throughout the study as District A, District B, District C, and District D . The program provided services for students' leaders, teachers leaders, assistant principals, principals, and central office administrators. However, this research focused on the perceptions of the adult participants and included superintendents, central office administrators, principals, assistant principals and teachers. The four counties studied are rural with few economic or industrial resources.

The research was conducted using a mixed methods design including a survey, focus groups with participants, and researcher field notes. Findings indicate that participants were receptive to the concepts and activities in the leadership capacity building program and that participation was beneficial. The benefits of the program included increased collaboration among

teachers and administrators; job embedded professional development, and the identification and recognition of teacher leaders.

The findings concluded that the program was beneficial because teachers and principals are able to better utilize skills and new knowledge to improve student learning conditions. However, the extent to which each of the leadership skills was developed in participants varied according to the participant. This study has implications for policymakers and other school districts interested in developing teacher leaders.

The leadership development opportunities for leaders appear to be cost effective for districts. Findings indicate that this leadership capacity building program provided opportunities for professional growth, formally and informally, which in turn may improve working conditions and relationships within the schools. This program may also be beneficial in resolving some of the unemployment concerns for viable administrative candidates residing within these school districts.

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CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

One of the most important challenges facing schools today is the effective

implementation of change (Fullan, 2005; Gabriel, 2005; Lambert, 2003). By identifying teacher

leaders and gradually beginning collaboration with administrators regarding topics of concern a

shared leadership environment can evolve. Teacher leaders are defined as "…those whose

dreams of making a difference have either been kept alive or have been reawakened by engaging

with colleagues and working within a professional culture" (Lambert, 2003, p. 33).

In 1983, the Secretary of Education, T. H. Bell created the National Commission on

Excellence in Education (NCEE) to examine the quality of education in the United States. His

charge to the Commission was to "provide leadership, constructive criticism, and effective

assistance to schools and universities" (NCEE, 1983, p. 1). "One of the specific charges was to

define problems which must be faced and overcome if we are to successfully pursue the course

of excellence in education" (NCEE, 1983, p. 1). This charge assisted the researcher in exploring

participant perceptions of a leadership capacity building program conducted in four rural school

districts.

The study sought to examine outcomes and perceptions of a leadership capacity building

program funded through an Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) Grant titled Sustaining

School Success (S^3). A goal of the program was to strengthen the capacity of rural areas of

Alabama's Appalachian Region to compete in a more global economy. The program was

developed in response to the projected growth of vacant administrative positions anticipated within the next 5 to 10 years.   The school districts involved in this study were identified as District A, District B, District C, and District D. All four districts are rural, impoverished areas of the state with little industry and few economic opportunities. All of the counties where the districts are located have a high percentage of families living under the federal poverty level. The Sustaining School Success (S^3) program was an outgrowth of previous leadership academies in these four school districts where a coalition of administrators, teacher leaders, and student leaders engaged in leadership capacity building activities. These four school districts have experienced difficulty recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers and administrators. Superintendents, principals, and assistant principals have been supportive of past leadership training projects and indicated interest in continuing professional development in this content area. The Sustaining School Success Program (S^3) included teachers, administrators, and students in an effort to develop educational leadership networks within the four school districts.

Research Questions

The research questions in the study explored how teachers and administrators perceived themselves as emerging change agents and leaders as they engaged in the leadership capacity building program. The research questions in this study included:

1.   Do teachers and administrators perceive themselves as implementing effective leadership behaviors and knowledge as measured by the Sustaining School Success (S^3) Survey Instrument?

2.   What are the perceptions of teacher leaders and administrators about the effectiveness of leadership behaviors as measured by the Sustaining School Success (S^3) Survey Instrument?

3.	What are teacher and administrator self-perceptions about their confidence as a leader as measured by the Sustaining School Success (S^3) Survey Instrument?

4. What are teacher and administrator participants' perceptions of the leadership capacity building program?

Context of Program

The Leadership Capacity Building Program for which teachers and administrators are being asked to give their perceptions was a collaborative partnership between the identified school districts and Auburn University. The program was designed to initiate a developmental leadership capacity building process for aspiring teacher leaders, practicing administrators, and students. Other program participants included new teachers, assistant principals, central office administrators and superintendents. The goals of the program included providing relevant job-embedded professional development, mentoring, and collaboration opportunities for current administrators; developing leadership skills, content knowledge, mentoring, and collaboration opportunities for teacher leaders and assistant principals aspiring to become principals or central office administrators, and developing leadership skills and strategies for active engagement in school renewal for school leaders. Participants in each of the groups engaged in collaborative decision making with a leadership capacity building program administrative team and in pertinent research related to best practices as needed. The partnership provided an opportunity for professors and graduate students from a prominent higher education institution leadership program, practitioners from K–12 districts, and student leaders to learn from each other. The program was designed for implementation for one school year based on funding availability.

The program provided monthly professional development sessions for students, teachers, and administrators. Educational conferences were held for all four school districts. These

conferences were designed to enable collaboration, sharing of ideas, and exploration of school improvement possibilities. The program provided monthly half-day sessions for teachers and administrators. Teachers also participated in a mentoring program and received a mentoring handbook. Principals and superintendents were provided mentors, who were deemed highly successful in their area of expertise. Although the Sustaining School Success Program included student leaders as well as teachers and administrators, this research focused on the perceptions of adult participants.

Program Implementation

The university facilitator of the program made contact with each district to provide information and gain support for the program. A conference call was then held with each superintendent to further discuss the program and any underlying questions or concerns. Upon acceptance of the grant proposal, a project director was hired. Once the director was hired, extensive planning and curriculum development began.

The initial planning meeting convened during late Spring 2006 with superintendents, the project director, and the supervising director (Director of the Truman Pierce Institute) to work out the logistical arrangements and identify priority areas for professional development related to leadership capacity building that would begin in the fall. The meeting was held at a central location, and all superintendents were asked to sign a statement of participation for their district.

Four district level coordinators already employed by the school district were hired on a part-time basis to schedule meetings, communicate with all district participants, and to make the necessary arrangements for the monthly meetings. The coordinators met bi-monthly with the project director to assess the program needs, co-plan events, and address any problems or concerns as they arose.

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Meetings were generally held on a monthly basis for administrators, teacher leaders, and student leaders. Adjustments for summer scheduling and the month of December were made to accommodate most of the participants. The monthly meetings for the administrators included areas of need such as action planning, effective communication skills, and mentoring. The monthly half day training sessions for the teachers included identified areas of need such as instructional improvement, action planning, how to become effective mentors, and effective communication skills. A teacher and student mentoring handbook was developed to reinforce the skills taught in the program.

During October 2006, all team members were invited to participate in a two-day educational conference. This was a time for sharing lessons learned, professional development, evaluation, and collaborative planning. Local and state educational leaders were invited to be speakers for the event. A second educational conference was held in mid-April 2007. This was the culminating conference based on the yearlong activities which included the two coalition-wide and the monthly training sessions. Participants were supposed to apply what they learned throughout the month between trainings and beyond. Formative evaluations, group planning, and grant writing sessions were held. A nationally recognized educator was invited to provide professional development. An evaluator was hired to develop research instruments and collect the perceptions of the program through surveys so that the enhanced effectiveness of leadership within the districts could be determined. Each of the districts was similar in some ways, but they also had unique characteristics. A more detailed description of the four districts is provided in Chapter Three.

Program Context

The four districts that participated in the study are located in the Appalachian Region. The Appalachian Region Commission (ARC) follows the spine of the Appalachian Mountains from southern New York to northern Mississippi. It includes all of West Virginia and parts of 12 other states: Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia. Forty-two percent of the Region's population is rural, compared to 20% of the national population. In 1965 one in every three Appalachians lived in poverty. In 2000, the Region's poverty rate was 13.6 percent. The number of Appalachian counties that were considered economically distressed was 223 in 1965; in fiscal year 2010 the number of economically distressed counties is 82 (http://www.arc.gov. distressedcounties). These gains have transformed the Region from one of widespread poverty to one of economic contrasts. Some communities have successfully diversified their economies, while others still require the basic infrastructures such as roads, water, and sewer systems.

District A and District B are located in the West Alabama Regional Commission. District C is located in the South Central Alabama development Commission, and District D is a part of the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission.

There were 100 participants invited to be part of this study. They included teachers, assistant principals, central office administrators, and superintendents.

Instrument Design

A survey instrument was designed to obtain the perceptions of teachers' and administrators' attitudes towards leadership capacity building programs (see Appendix 1). The survey instrument was developed by the researcher, a graduate student colleague, and two university professors. The survey used was titled *Sustaining School Success: Auburn*

University/the Truman Pierce Institute Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) 2006–2007

Teachers and Administrators Survey. The survey consisted of 67 items divided into five

sections: The first section of the survey covered educational background and other demographic

data. The second section presented findings collected from yes/no responses to questions on the

survey. The third section presented findings from 10 questions on a Likert-type scale that were

part of the same instrument. The Likert-type scale items were rated using a five point rating

scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree, and 5 = don't know. The

last section of the survey presented open response questions that allowed participants to use their

own words to talk about the program. The survey instrument design was selected over others

because it provided an opportunity for analysis across many factors. Additional information was

provided through open-ended responses which were used to further expand upon the quantitative

responses. The use of open ended responses is rich and valuable as data is collected and

analyzed (Merriam, 2002).

Focus group discussions were held with three groups: teachers and assistant principals,

principals and other administrators, and superintendents. The protocol for the focus groups was

developed elicit illustrative comments about the S^3 Program that would enrich the quantitative

findings. Focus group questions were developed by the researcher, graduate student, two

educational leadership professors, and a facilitator and recorder was assigned to each focus

group. Questions were developed based upon the Sustaining School Success objectives.

The computer program used to analyze the quantitative data was the Statistical Package

for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 16.0. Coding schemas were used to organize and analyze

qualitative data. Through the use of coding, theory is built versus being tested (Patton, 2002).

The validity of the survey instrument was addressed in two ways. First, there was a thorough

review of the leadership literature, and secondly a panel of experts composed of K–12 counselors, teachers, university education leadership professors, and K–12 administrators reviewed the survey items for wording accuracy and appropriateness of the content being addressed.

Research Methods

The data were collected through the distribution of surveys to teacher leaders, assistant principals, principals and superintendents in districts that were participants in the Sustaining School Success Program. Survey questions prompted participant responses about the perceived effectiveness of teacher leadership capacity building programs. Focus groups were conducted with separate groups of teachers, assistant principals, principals, and superintendents during a two-day conference that was part of the leadership capacity building programming. Focus group questions were designed to clarify and add richness to the survey data.

Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the information obtained from the surveys. When surveys were returned, quantitative data were entered into SPSS for analysis. Qualitative data from open-ended responses and focus groups were coded and analyzed by hand, using an emergent theme approach (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003; Merriam, 2002; Patton, 2005).

Significance of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of a leadership capacity building program among those who participated in it. According to Fullan (2010), once people are on the job, continuous learning equates to continuous capacity building.

The State of Alabama Department of Education (2009) provided a draft defining a quality teacher leader education program (see Appendix 2). The rationale for this draft was to enhance school leadership among teacher leaders in Alabama, which should result in the improvement of

academic achievement for all students. This draft of the teacher education program components include admission to a teacher leadership program, program requirements, collaboration, curriculum of a teacher leader's program, requirements for Class AA certification in teacher leadership, testing for certification in teacher leadership, and faculty members that shall teach required courses for the teacher leadership preparation programs.

As the Executive Director of Human Resources in a small city school district, I embrace the concept of teacher leadership capacity building programs such as the one examined here because it may be an avenue to foster such leadership. In light of my professional role, I often reflect on whether I should continue to proactively provide guidance to teachers through capacity building opportunities, or allow teachers to exercise self-initiative in taking on leadership roles. Although this study should be significant for many groups, such as K–12 educators, college and university faculty, and policymakers, as the researcher, I also have a vested interest in the findings. As teacher leaders are becoming more visible throughout schools and in an effort to encourage shared decision making, it will become increasingly important to identify useful strategies to support teacher leaders and the professional growth of practicing administrators.

Assumptions

This research design was based on the following assumptions:

1. All survey participants would respond honestly and appropriately;

2. Teachers value the opportunity to become teacher leaders;

3. Administrators and teachers want to build leadership capacity within their systems;

4. Teacher leaders will be more prepared for administrative positions based on program participation.

Limitations

1. There was no variance between the yes/no responses, which created a ceiling effect with the responses.

2. The missing data are more significant than that of the respondents. There is an extensive amount of data missing due to incomplete or blank responses on the surveys.

3. The population of participants varied throughout the research process, which limited the opportunity for data consistency.

4. The researcher was unable to be in the field consistently to collect data from the participants.

5. The participants were not from diverse socioeconomic districts.

6. Some of the participants did not complete the qualitative responses on the survey with complete and well developed thoughts and opinions.

7. The response rate of administrators responding to the survey instrument was minimal.

Definition of Terms

1. Administrators: For the purposes of this study, all central office administrators, building principals and others in a leadership role who provide instructional leadership or manage the daily activities in schools or district offices were included.

2. Capacity building program: Sharing one's knowledge and expertise as a means of empowering others.

3. Distributive leadership: Leadership that distributes decision-making to teachers and others throughout the school or district. Distributive leadership provides opportunities for

teachers, students, parents and community members to participate in meaningful decision making.

4. **Effective school:** A school that meets the district's mission and vision for students. A school that exceeds the defined annual yearly progress goals as defined by the State of Alabama.

5. **Empowerment:** Taking the initiative to be creative and share one's ideas with others while accepting responsibility for growth, development and problem solving. The sharing or displacement of control from one to another.

6. **Mentoring relationships:** A close working relationship between a teacher and administrator, teacher and teacher, or administrator and administrator in which relationships are developed based on the strengths, knowledge, and skills of the mentor and the knowledge of these areas that are needed by the mentee.

7. **New definition of successful mentoring:** Drs. Kochan and Pascarelli (2003) have defined successful mentoring as "having two or more individuals willingly form a mutually respectful, trusting relationship focused on goals that foster the potential of the mentee, while considering the needs of the mentor and the context in which they both must function."

8. **Self-efficacy:** An individual's perception of how he or she can make a positive difference.

9. **Teacher leaders:** Teachers who are supported and respected by their peers and administrators and who assume leadership roles within their school or district.

10. **Teacher leadership:** The development of teachers' leadership skills in order to enable the empowerment of teachers by helping them understand and share their professional

knowledge with others. Engaging in professional development and sharing best practices with others are typical strategies for developing teacher leaders.

Summary

This chapter presented an overview of the study which explored teachers' and administrators' perceptions about the Sustaining School Success leadership capacity building program. The demographics of the participants, the research questions and an overview of the research instrument were provided to give the reader a better understanding of the study. A description of the program was offered to help readers better understand the context for the study. Assumptions and limitations were presented so the reader would be aware of the challenges that may have been encountered during the process of conducting this study. The significance of the study was also included in this chapter along with the definition of terms to provide an understanding of the language used throughout the study. Chapter Two provides a review of the literature that was used as a framework for the study.

CHAPTER II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

"Teachers who are leaders lead within and beyond the classroom, identify

with and contribute to a community of teacher learners and leaders, and influence

others toward improved educational practice."

(Katzenmeyer & Moeller, 2005 p. 5)

This chapter provides a review of literature to help the reader understand the principles

and prior research that guided this research. This chapter is divided into three sections. The first

section addresses teacher leadership, the next section focuses on building leadership capacity,

and the final section focuses on democratic leadership.

Historical Perspective

For decades public perception has noted that something is seriously remiss in our

educational system. In 1983, the Secretary of Education, T. H. Bell created the National

Commission on Excellence in Education to examine the quality of education in the United

States. His charge to the Commission was to "provide leadership, constructive criticism, and

effective assistance to schools and universities" (NCEE, 1983, p. 1).

The Commission's charter contained several specific charges to which particular

attention was given. These included the following: 1) assessing the quality of teaching and

learning in our Nation's public and private schools, colleges, and universities; 2) comparing

American schools and colleges with those of other advanced nations; 3) studying the relationship

between college admissions requirements and student achievement in high school; 4) identifying educational programs which result in notable student success in college; 5) assessing the degree to which major social and educational changes in the last quarter century have affected student achievement; and 6) defining problems which must be faced and overcome if we are to successfully pursue the course of excellence in education (NCEE, 1983, p. 1). Over the past decades instructional leadership has become the focus of educational researchers and practitioners to determine the relationship of leadership to student success.

Leadership roles are shifting with the implications that the responsibility for instructional leadership be shared with teachers in an effort to fill the gaps not addressed by the school principal who must attend to managerial, political, and economic concerns in addition to school curriculum issues (Fullan, 2002; Hoerr, 1996; Peterson & Kelly, 2003; Sherrill, 1999). Unless someone closes the gap in instructional leadership, schools may not be able to implement strategies to insure that all children will succeed (Evans, 1996; Fullan, 2002; Fullan & Miles, 1992; Hallinger, 2003; Lambert, 2002). The Carnegie Forum on Education's response to *A Nation at Risk* was a publication titled, *A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century*. This report "called for "sweeping changes in education policy." The foundation of economic growth would "depend on achieving far more demanding educational standards than have ever been attempted before" (NCEE, 1983, p. 1).

Historically, in the United States the school principal has been seen as the primary leader in the school. However, the responsibilities of the school principal are changing and expanding (Fullan, 2002; Hargreaves & Fink, 2003; Sergiovanni & Starrett, 1998; Wasley, 1991). School leadership is shifting from a top-down managerial leadership style to one of shared or distributive leadership (Fullan, 2003; Hargreaves & Fink, 2003; Kochan & Reed, 2004;

Whitaker, 1995). For teacher leadership to become established within the school culture the head of the school will need to create a climate conducive to teacher participation (Harris & Muiji, 2003; Lambert, 2003). Although most leadership positions are not formal leadership positions, every school has teacher leaders who may not serve as official leaders. This lack of a formal role is one of the most unique components of teacher leadership (Gabriel, 2005).

Today, our society is facing a "second wave" of school reform with the restructuring of schools and professionalization of teaching. Reports from businesses, educators, state and local policy groups are continuously seeking changes in the way schools do business and teachers are involved in the decision making process (Darling-Hammond, 1987). An effort is being made to change the organizational culture of schools from one that fosters privatism and adversarial relationships to one that encourages collegiality and commitment (Lieberman & Miller, 1984; Little, 1986; Lortie, 1975; Rosenholtz, 1989). To bridge the gap from a report to reality is a difficult challenge because there are few procedures, few models, and no guidelines. Our education stakeholders are learning by doing.

"To live is to change, and to live long is to change often," wrote Augustine more than 1600 years ago. The thought remains applicable today to national, state and local educational leaders, as well as to stakeholders who have a vested interest in change and view themselves as agents of change. Political agendas and national standards have dominated school reform issues since the early 1980s (Hertert, 1996). National legislation has created an accountability system for America's schools that will be difficult to achieve without some major changes to the way administrators lead and teachers teach (Coile, 2001).

Teacher Leadership

As educators continue to work and establish effective instructional strategies for educational reform, the need for teacher leaders continues to surface (Lambert, 2002; Moller & Katzenmeyer, 2001). Teacher leadership continues to be defined and redefined in a variety of ways. According to Stone and Cuper (2006), teacher leaders are described as teachers who continue to seek professional development, utilize resources available through universities, colleagues, businesses, and others in the community because of their valuable contributions to a teacher leader educational growth. Teacher leaders learn the curricula and stay abreast of any institutional changes that affect instruction. Teacher leaders embrace all functions of the school and show their love for every aspect of student involvement. They share and collaborate with others, but more importantly, teacher leaders' love what they do.

Table 1

Characteristics of Teacher Leadership

Researcher	Characteristics
Sirotnik & Clark, (1988)	- School-centered decision making schools - Strong teacher involvement in decisions about structures and programs in their schools - Teachers with conflict resolution and communications skills
Holmes, (1988)	- Professional Development School preparation - Implementation of mentoring programs - Knowledge of school-based management skills - An array of peer teamwork approaches - Various inquiry methods - Innovative leadership styles - School-university collaboration

(table continues)

Table 1 (continued)

Researcher	Characteristics
Lieberman, Saxl, and Miles (1988)	• Rapport building • Organizational diagnosis • Dealing with the change process • Finding and using resources • Managing the leadership work of an administrator • Building skills and confidence in others
Devaney (1987)	• Organizing and leading peer reviews of school practice • Continuing to teach and improve one's own teaching • Providing curriculum development knowledge • Participating in school level decision making • Leading in-service education and assisting other teachers • Participating in the performance evaluation of teachers
Gardner ( )	• Constructivist leader • Constructs knowledge through social interaction • Reflect on learning experiences to make meaning of their learning • Teacher roles change according to interest, expertise, purpose of school, the needs of children, adults and the community
Darling-Hammond et al. (1995)	• Career lattices approach or collaborative leadership • Teacher empowerment • Leadership opportunities • Planning and improving curriculum • Developing instructional skills and strategies • Conducting action research • Flexible and fluid leadership style

Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) note teachers can be leaders of change beyond their classrooms by accepting more responsibility for helping colleagues achieve success for all students and the total school program. Lambert (2003) states that teacher leaders are those whose dreams of making a difference have either been kept alive or have been reawakened by engaging with colleagues and working within a professional culture. According to the Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement (CSRI, 2005) a number of research studies

have identified the characteristics of teacher leaders, including: collaboration with peers, parents, and communities that engages them in dialogues of open inquiry; risk taking and participation in school decision making; demonstrated expertise in instruction and the willingness to share that knowledge with other professionals, engage in continuous action research, and consistently participating in a professional learning curve; and social consciousness and political activity (Wynne, 2001). Crowther, Kaagan, Ferguson, and Hann (2002) state that teacher leadership is principled action to achieve whole-school success. It applies the distinctive power of teaching to shaping meaning for children, youth, and adults and contributes to the long-term, enhanced quality of community life.

"As we move from simpler times to a more complex world, our schools must be able to use the best that science and technological advances offered in order to educate a diverse group of learners for satisfying and rewarding lives in a global society" (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2002 p. 3). As schools strive to enable all students to meet high standards it is "critical for teachers to have the skills, knowledge, and dispositions to serve as expert teachers in their classrooms and leaders in their schools" (Clemson-Ingram & Fessler, 1997, p. 96).

Since 2002, Governor Mike Easley and the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards Commission have worked to improve student learning and teacher retention — the conditions under which teachers work (CTQ, 2006). According to the Center for Teaching Quality (CTQ; 2006) previous data obtained from surveys in 2002 and 2004 indicate that improving teacher working conditions which include time, professional development, leadership, empowerment, facilities and resources will improve student learning conditions and help retain teachers. Research has consistently demonstrated that teachers make a greater impact on student achievement than any other school factor. Throughout the nation, many districts have difficulty

finding and keeping the quality teachers necessary for all students to learn at high levels (CTQ, 2006). Teacher working conditions matter, and district administrators need to consider and respond to data from those whose perceptions matter most, their classroom teachers, so that they can assess the successes and areas of concerns in their own schools and communities (CTQ, 2006). Table 2, according to the trends obtained from the 2006 North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions Survey Interim Report provide percentages on items related to school leadership efforts working conditions for teachers. As stated in the report, teacher perceptions are generally substantially different from their principals.

Table 2

Teacher and Principal Perceptions of School Leadership Efforts to Address Working Conditions in North Carolina

School leadership makes a sustained effort to address teacher concerns about:	Teachers Agreeing	Principals Agreeing
The use of time in my school	60%	98%
Facilities and resources	68%	99%
Empowering teachers	58%	98%
Leadership issues	57%	97%
Professional development	69%	98%
New teacher support	62%	97%

(Table 2 information: CTQ, 2006).

North Carolina teachers were positive regarding leadership issues related to communicating clear expectations, holding teachers to high professional standards, and handling teacher performance evaluations effectively (CTQ, 2006). Overwhelmingly, principals agreed that they make a sustained effort to address teacher concerns regarding working conditions.

The State of Alabama implemented a number of initiatives to recognize and support teacher leaders at the building level. The Teacher Leader Network (TLN) was developed to provide opportunities for teachers, with guidance from their principals, to build leadership responsibilities and therefore, building capacity in Alabama's schools (TLN, 2005). In fiscal year 2005, the TLN was piloted in 66 Alabama schools that did not make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) on the spring 2004 state assessments as required by the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). The program was a three-year pilot with Year One focusing on school improvement; Year Two focusing on action research; and Year Three focusing on coaching and mentoring. Lessons learned from the pilot were intended to enable the TLN to be expanded to all schools statewide by fiscal year 2007 (ALSDE, 2006). The Alabama Standards for Instructional Leaders were implemented to foster the mission of enhancing school leadership among principals and administrators in Alabama resulting in improved academic achievement for all students (www.ALSDE.edu). Instructional leaders are held accountable to the standards as specified in the Alabama Standards for Instructional Leaders. The State of Alabama also developed Alabama Quality Teaching Standards pursuant to the mission of improving academic achievement for all students enrolled in K–12 public schools in the State of Alabama (www.ALSDE.edu). Teachers are required to align their professional learning and practice with the identified quality teaching standards. Additionally, the Alabama State Board of Education adopted Twelve Standards for Effective Professional Development (June, 2002).

Alabama Standards for Effective Professional Development

The following Standards for Effective Professional Development were adopted by the

Alabama State Board of Education on June 13, 2002. These state standards are embedded in the

NCLB definition of professional development in Title IX, Section 9101 (34). They are used as a

guide in developing Local Education Association Professional Development Plans and

implementing activities under the plan.

Standard 1: Effective professional development organizes adults into learning communities

whose goals are aligned with those of the school, the district, and the state.

Standard 2: Effective professional development requires knowledgeable and skillful school

and district leaders who actively participate in and guide continuous instructional

improvement.

Standard 3: Effective professional development requires resources to support adult learning

and collaboration.

Standard 4: Effective professional development uses disaggregated student data to determine

adult learning priorities, monitor progress, and help sustain continuous

improvement.

Standard 5: Effective professional development uses multiple sources of information to guide

improvement and demonstrate its impact.

Standard 6: Effective professional development prepares educators to apply research to decision

making.

Standard 7: Effective professional development uses learning strategies appropriate to the

intended goal.

Standard 8: Effective professional development applies knowledge about human learning and

change.

Standard 9:   Effective professional development provides educators with the knowledge and skills

                to collaborate.

Standard 10:   Effective professional development prepares educators to understand and appreciate

                all students, create safe, orderly and supportive learning environments, and hold high

                expectations for their academic achievement.

Standard 11:   Effective professional development deepens educators' content knowledge, provides

                them with research-based instructional strategies to assist students in meeting

                rigorous academic standards, and prepares them to use various types of classroom

                assessments appropriately.

Standard 12:   Effective professional development provides educators with knowledge and skills to

                involve families and other stakeholders appropriately.

(ALSDE, 2002)

The State Department of Education in Alabama implemented these standards so school districts could identify acceptable job-embedded professional development. Providing job-embedded professional development along with the identification of teachers who are respected by their colleagues and providing them an opportunity to lead may be an effective strategy for bringing about change within a school (Barth, 2001; Darling-Hammond, 2003; Harris & Muijs, 2003; Whitaker, 1995). According to Whitaker (1995), teachers are the "essential link" to instructional strategies; therefore administrators need to seek ways to generate teamwork between themselves and teachers to circumvent the obstacles that hinder teachers from being instructional leaders (Frost & Durrant, 2003; Hoerr, 1996; Lambert, 2003).

Research shows that teacher leaders tend to be most effective when there is support from the principal, opportunities to engage in parallel decision making, and shared leadership that evokes a sense of empowerment and autonomy (Katzenmeyer & Moeller, 2001; Lieberman &

Miller, 2004; Moller & Pankake, 2006). According to Katzenmeyer and Moeller (2001), teacher leaders are defined as "teachers who are leaders within and beyond the classroom, as those who identify with and contribute to a community of teacher learners and leaders, and influence others towards improved educational practices" (p. 5). However, Crowther, Kaagan, Ferguson, and Hann (2002) define teacher leadership as facilitating principled action to achieve whole school success. Teacher leadership applies the distinctive power of teaching to shape meaning for children, youth, and adults, while contributing to the long-term, enhanced quality of community life according to Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001).

Teacher leaders tend to be focused on the classroom, the school, the school district, the state, or the national level. They identify and relate to a specific discipline or are defined as a generalist, or involved in group or team interactions. Teacher leadership may be considered a highly formalized role or simply a one-time contribution. They may be chosen by their peers, appointed by an administrator, or identified through their own self-selection (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Spillane, 2006; Scheurich & Skrila, 2003).

Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) state that teacher leadership is often divided into three functions: 1) a teacher leader may offer leadership to students or colleagues in carrying out their responsibilities; 2) teacher leaders may be asked to carry out functional tasks inside or outside the school setting. As a teacher leader, they work to keep the school organized and moving towards its goals; or 3) teacher leaders may function in governance or in decision-making roles in or outside the school setting. Most teacher leaders cross over their expected and clearly defined roles and responsibilities and assume multiple tasks. Often teachers assume leadership roles in the classroom as a facilitator and counselor. However, beyond the classroom teacher

leaders strive to be mentors, peer coaches, curriculum specialists, teacher trainers, grade level leaders, or simply good listeners (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Lambert, 2003).

Teacher leaders tend to have confidence and the belief that they can make a difference which is known as self-efficacy (Bandura, 2000). Bandura (2000) describes self-efficacy as "one's capabilities to organize and execute the course of action required to produce given attainments" (p. 21). Most teacher leaders rely on their knowledge and strengths and the knowledge and strengths of their colleagues to promote success within their building.

The mission of the school district and the vision of the building administrator often define the role of teacher leaders (Fullan, 2002; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Lambert, 2003; Leithwood & Miller, 2004). Culture plays an important role in regards to teacher leadership when assessing factors that influence teacher leadership and building leadership capacity within a district. Culture is defined as "the deeper level of basic assumptions and beliefs that are shared by members of an organization that operate unconsciously and define a basic "taken-for-granted" fashion of an organization's view of itself and its environment" (Schein, 1996, p. 41). Through changes in organizational beliefs lasting reform can be achieved (Fullan, 2001b; Lieberman & Miller, 2006). Evans (1996) indicates that culture change is systemic and involves beliefs and attitudes that have been developed over a substantial period of time. Fullan (2001b) ascertains that schools should strive to transform, "the way we do things around here" (p. 44) by creating a culture, not just a structure of change. This method of "reculturing" is "one that activates and deepens more purpose through collaborative work cultures that respect each others' differences and constantly build and test knowledge against memorable results—a culture within which one realizes that sometimes being off balance is a learning moment" (Fullan, 2001b, p. 44).

The more ownership teachers have, the more likely they will be committed to implementing decisions. A downside to principal initiated teacher empowerment is that the administrator can take away the teacher leaders' power when they are not pleased with a suggestion or action the teacher leader makes (Glasser, 2005; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Lambert, 2003; Senge, 1990).

Building Leadership Capacity

Principals can create space and programs for building leadership capacity in others by upholding these assumptions and beliefs, by remaining silent and allowing others' voices to resonate through dialogue and conversation. Principals also need to provide time for teachers to deal with difficult issues of concern, with frequent reminders that what they agree upon is important, and always keeping the value agenda on the table. Principals should refrain from turning a concern into a question for teachers to respond. An administrator should accept incorrect responses with candor, grace, and humility. However, it is important to be explicit and public about strategies, since the principal's overall purpose is to model, demonstrate, and teach them to others (Lambert, 1998). Research suggests that excellence in education is dependent upon having highly qualified teachers providing quality instruction to all students (English, 2006).

According to Linda Lambert (2003), as the demands for schools to continue to pursue ways to improve student performance increase, the need for principals to cultivate broad-based participation in leadership is essential. The following core principles are shared by principals who commit to build and sustain leadership capacity (Lambert, 2003):

1. Teachers, parents, and students can be skilled leaders when given an opportunity to lead;

2. School community members must experience success in leadership roles;

3. Leadership capacity will be enhanced when the principal supports the leadership experience of others;

4. Building the individual leadership capacity of many, builds organizational leadership capacity; and

5. The ability to commit to this challenge lies with school stakeholders.

To begin building leadership capacity, a principal must collaborate with teachers, parents, students and community leaders regarding leadership roles and responsibilities (Lambert, 2003). The principal is the catalyst initiating dialogue regarding shared leadership. Support and encouragement can be offered through basic modes of communication such as e-mail, handwritten personal notes, verbal communication, body language and recognition (Lambert, 2003). According to Lambert (2003), the principal models, coaches, and provides leadership training through professional development opportunities to the staff so that they become more skilled in their leadership skills. These are the type behaviors principals should engage in as they build, develop, and sustain leadership capacity in others:

1. Know oneself and clarify one's values. This understanding becomes a mental model from which decisions and behaviors can emerge and the basis for actions.

2. Extend understandings to the school and staff. Present the history, strengths, needs of the school, and staff leadership qualities to the staff.

3. Formally and informally assess the leadership capacity of the school.

4. Make a commitment to work from the school's current state and walk side-by-side with the school staff for continued improvement.

5. Build trust. As a result of honesty, respect and follow through.

6. Develop norms. This is accomplished by establishing professional boundaries of mutual respect and working agreements.

7. Establish mutual understanding with staff about decision roles. These roles clarify which decisions are made through consultation, achievement, consensus, individual choice, or not at all. The principal still has the responsibility to make certain personnel, legal, and emergency decisions.

8. Develop a shared vision. The vision is the shared tombstone for all other actions. This evokes questions and conversations from staff members.

9. Develop leadership capacity in others. As leadership is developed, participants will develop their own theories of leadership.

10. Establish the leadership team as a design team. A major task of the leadership team is to design the conversations. This includes the design of faculty meetings, study groups, teams, and other patterns of participation.

11. Establish as cycle of inquiry. A cycle of inquiry continues conversations based on questions, evidence, reflection, and action.

12. Create goals and plans of action for student learning. The inquiry process establishes an internal accountability system that enables staff members to continually monitor and evaluate their actions.

13. Have communication processes. By questioning, coaching, breaking dependencies, being open, confronting conflict, and challenging norms. The process is designed to build trust, relationships, and leadership, provide quality performance, implement community decisions, and ensure student learning.

14. Develop a reciprocal relationship with district personnel. Both support and pressure

    is mutual.

<div align="center">(Lambert, 2003, pp. 51–52)</div>

As the principal develops relationships with teachers trust must be developed along with respect for the ideas and opinions of others. Trust is the assurance that one can count on the good will of another to act in one's best interest (Baier, 1994). Trust is also defined as one's willingness to be vulnerable to another based on the confidence that the other is benevolent, honest, open, reliable, and competent (Mishra, 1996; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1998, 2000). Most parents trust schools and educators to provide the best educational practices and safety for their children while they are in their care. Schools foster and protect ideals of respect, tolerance, and democracy, as well as the vision of equity in our society (Macedo, 2000). Schools need trust to foster communication and facilitate efficiency (Tschannen-Moran, 2004). School leaders can overcome the power differences imposed by hierarchical relationships that add complexity to interpersonal interactions through genuine caring and steadfast commitment combined with thoughtful action and initiative (Tschannen-Moran, 2004).

Research suggests that for teachers to accept a leadership role they must be empowered to do so (Berry & Ginsberg, 1990; Darling-Hammond, 1994; Glickman, 1991; Harris, 2004; Lieberman et al., 1988; Wynne, 2001). Empowering leaders take the initiative for engaging followers (Burns, 2003). Research states that instead of identifying individuals as leaders or followers, the entire process can be seen as a system in which the function of the leadership is palpable and central, but individuals move in and out of leader and follower roles. Therefore, individual leadership is no longer present, but leadership is the basic process of social change, of causation in a community, an organization, a nation, or even the globe (Burns, 2003).

Engagement in a leadership role allows individuals to develop and build unified relations through common interest and beliefs. Therefore, as engagement relationships are strengthened, followers become empowered. Michael Fullan (2003) states,

> The teachers we need are immersed in disciplined, informed professional inquiry and action that results in raising the bar and closing the gap by engaging all students in learning. There is no greater moral imperative than revamping the principal's role as part and parcel of changing the context within which teachers and students learn. (p. 11)

Principals are embracing the idea of shared teacher leadership. As administrators develop relationships and embrace leadership ideas of teachers their trust of one another becomes more profound. This outcome benefits all stakeholders, but especially the students.

The need to develop teacher leaders through capacity building programs has gained the attention of policy makers, school districts administrators, community leaders, and university/ college professors across the nation in an effort to resolve issues pertaining to changes in administrative leadership preparation. The impending shortage of quality future administrators has allowed some district leaders to explore other options to enhance internal administrative leadership development (Easley, 2006). Some reasons for teacher leadership development include empowering teachers to be accountable for improving their working conditions (Easley, 2006), and consequently, lowering teacher attrition rates and changing how teachers teach while developing teams of leaders able to address the complex issues facing today's schools (Easley, 2006; Fullan, 2002; Lambert, 2003; Reed & Kochan, 2002).

By engaging in shared leadership and building cooperative relationships (Moller & Pankake, 2006; Reigeluth & Garfinkle, 1994), administrators and teachers can begin the process of working collaboratively. It is through these types of changes in beliefs and understanding

about the value of teacher leadership that a foundation can be laid for achieving lasting reform (Fullan, 2001b; Fullan, 2005; Lambert, 2003). According to Rosenholtz (1989), "if new and stable forms of organizational behavior emerge, transformations of meanings invariably accompany them" (p. 3). Teachers develop new conceptions of their work through communications in which their principal or colleagues point out new aspects of experiences to them with fresh interpretations. It is only when teachers adopt fresh perspectives that their behavior becomes subject to change.

Some policymakers believe it is important to empower teachers because it allows the principal to build capacity among stakeholders, permitting teachers to make sound decisions affecting their school (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Moller & Pankake, 2006; Spillane 2006). The more ownership teachers have, the more likely they will be committed to implementing decisions. A downside to principal initiated teacher empowerment is that the administrator can take away the teacher leaders' power when they are not pleased with a suggestion or action the teacher leader makes (Glasser, 2005; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Lambert, 2003; Senge, 1990). Capacity building principals align their actions to the belief that everyone has the right, responsibility, and capability to work as a leader (Bass, 1977; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Lambert, 2003). According to Linda Lambert (2003), principals confront leadership capacity building from many different perspectives, but most often from one of these:

(1)   A directive principal engages in command and control behavior. This type of leadership style is a synthesis of prior experience and reinforces the top-down system of management. This type of leader gets the job done, but undermines the growth and development of those that are directed to get the job done. Therefore, teacher leadership and building leadership capacity within the school is greatly

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diminished. Innovations, risk-taking, and real world experiences about teaching

and learning would not be part of this principal's leadership style.

(2)   A laissez-faire principal's leadership style is fragmented and individualistic.

Therefore, this leadership style leads to an incoherent program. There is no

shared purpose or vision to focus one's commitment and programs. Procedures

are disconnected and no common learning goals exist. This type of principal

makes decisions based on situations at hand without looking at the big picture

within its context. Rarely will groups or teams be involved in decision making.

(3)   A collaborative principal can transition into a capacity building principal. This

principal uses a four step process of reflection, dialogue, inquiry, and action to

build leadership capacity by first building a community within the school. This

type of principal changes the school culture from dependency to one of

responsibility, teamwork, and efficacy.

(4)   A capacity building principal provides open communication with respect to

teacher voices while enabling them to experience and appreciate shared

leadership.

Figure 1 provides a model of Lambert's framework as to how people confront leadership

capacity building from different perspectives.

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┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐
│  Directive                              │
│                                          │
│  ↓                                       │
│                                          │
│  Collaborative → Capacity Building       │
│                                          │
│  ↑                                       │
│                                          │
│  Laissez faire                           │
│                                          │
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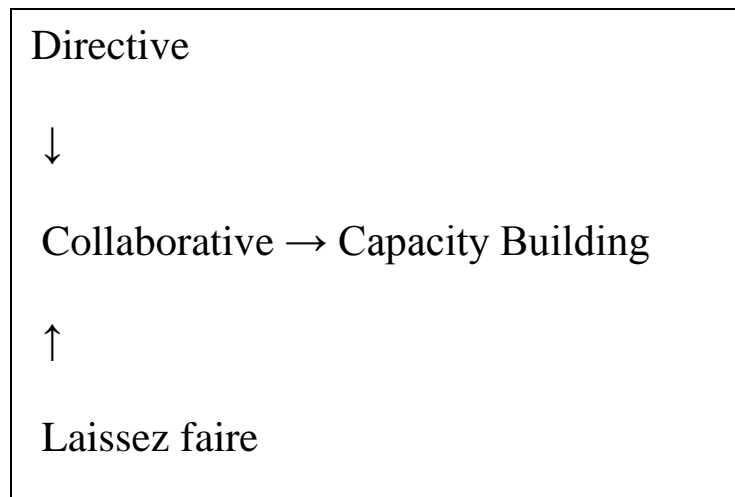
Figure 1. Principal Leadership Styles (Lambert, 2003).

While the evolution of an effective leadership style is developmental, the four types mentioned do not follow a linear pattern (Lambert, 2003).

The dimensions and behaviors that proved effective in schools were grouped into three sets by Leithwood et al. (1994, 1999) to form their model (see Figure 2). Leithwood (1999) determined that school districts should strongly advocate transformational practice to principals in restructuring secondary schools and that principal preparation programs should actively teach strategies. He posited that transformational leadership is the best fit for success in accomplishing the demands of restructure and reform, especially at the secondary level.

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┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│ Setting Developing Redesigning the                                   │
│ Directions                              People Organization          │
│                                                                       │
│                                                                       │
│   Building                          Offering Creating a              │
│   School                          Individualized Productive          │
│   Vision Support School                                              │
│                                              Climate                  │
│                                                                       │
│ Demonstrating High                    Providing Developing           │
│  Performance Intellectual Structures to                              │
│  Expectations Stimulation Foster                                     │
│                                          Participating in            │
│                                          School Choices              │
│                                                                       │
│                                                                       │
│   Establishing School                   Modeling Best                │
│    Goals Practices and                                               │
│                                          Important                    │
│   Organizational                                                     │
│                                          Values                       │
│                                                                       │
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Figure 2. Leithwood's Model of School Transformational Leadership

Distributed Leadership

Distributed leadership has gained considerable attention in the United States and abroad

(Spillane, 2005). This term is often used interchangeably with "shared leadership," and

"democratic leadership". Distributed leadership is often used to make reference to multiple

leaders involved in school leadership decision-making. Some school leaders' use distributed

leadership to define a way of thinking about the practice of school leadership (Grogan, 2002;

Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2001, 2004). Distributed leadership trends have been elevated

among educational leaders because educators often use it to relate to familiar leadership practices

and approaches. Distributed leadership is about leadership practices rather than leaders or their

roles, functions, routines, and structures. Leadership practice includes the interactions of school leaders, followers, and their situation. It is also perceived as a distributive perspective of interactions between people and their situations, rather than a product of a leader's knowledge and skill (Spillane, 2005). Principals are faced with a lot of responsibilities that come with an enormous amount of accountability. If positively approached with some general guidelines, principals would probably embrace the idea of distributive leadership among teacher leaders. Although distributed leadership is a popular topic regarding school leadership, there has not a great deal of empirical research (Smith & Piele, 2006, p. 249).

Spillane (2006) states that the distribution of leadership evolves among leaders over time as principals develop relationships with their staff get to know their skills, knowledge, abilities and weaknesses, and trust develops. As a result, a surge of interest in distributive leadership develops according to Smith and Piele (2006) from a variety of sources. During the mid-1980s, school reformers promoted the professionalization of teaching, emphasizing the potential for teacher leadership; school reformers have been humbled by the difficulty and complexity of their task, with few leaders at the top, regardless of how talented, can individually bring about the kind of change needed. The principal ship is often viewed as an "impossible" job with unrealistic demands on school leaders; however, with the distribution of the workload it may become more manageable, and the idea that everyone can be a leader appeals to the beliefs about equity and democracy (Story, 2004, p. 251).

A distributive perspective is first and foremost about leadership practice (Spillane, 2006, p. 3). A distributive view of leadership shifts its focus from the school principal and other formal and informal leaders to a collective group of leaders, followers, and situations that determines the leadership practice that is needed. Trust enables a shift from the school principal

as sole leader to a web of leaders, followers, and their situations that give form to the leadership

practice known as distributive leadership (Spillane, 2006). According to Spillane (2006), "a

distributive perspective includes the collective interactions among leaders, followers, and their

situation which is paramount; not just the context within which leadership practice unfolds, but a

defining element of leadership practices" (p. 89). As an advocate for distributed leadership, the

National College for School Leadership (2003) states that principals will have less stress, less

isolation, and greater professional stimulation when embracing distributive leadership practices.

Spillane (2006) states that the following three elements are essential to a distributive

leadership prospective. First leadership *practice* is the central and anchoring concern. Second,

leadership practice is generated with the *interactions* of leaders, followers, and their situation;

each element is essential for leadership practices. Third, the *situation* both defines leadership

practice and is defined through leadership practice (p. 4).

As stated by Spillane (2006), distributed leadership is not a blueprint for effective school

leadership, but it is a way to generate insights into how leadership can be practiced more or less

effectively. Spillane and Sherer (2004) place emphasis on the "web" of interaction as "stretched

over people and places" as a source of information for distributed leadership practices.

According to the National College of School Leadership (2003), there are three

distinctive elements of the concept of distributed leadership. First, distributed leadership

highlights leadership as an emergent property of a group or network of interacting individuals.

People work together in a way to pool their initiative and expertise. The outcome is a product or

energy that is greater than the sum of their individual actions. Second, distributed leadership

suggests openness to the boundaries of leadership. That is, it is predisposed to widen the

conventional net of leaders with no limits to the concepts. Finally, distributed leadership entails

the view that a variety of expertise is distributed across the many, not the few. When brought together it is possible to forge a conservative dynamic which represents more than the sum of the individual contributors. Initiatives may be inaugurated by those with relevant skills in a particular context, but others will then adopt, adapt and improve them within a mutually trusting and supportive culture (NCSL, 2003). As principals incorporate the practice of distributive leadership, a framework for thinking about and framing investigations about leadership practices, collaboration is encouraged among their staff and this action inadvertently promotes capacity building.

Research suggests that for teachers to accept a leadership role they must be empowered to do so (Berry & Ginsberg, 1990; Darling-Hammond, 1994; Glickman, 1991; Harris, 2003; Lieberman et al., 1988; Wynne, 2001). Empowering leaders take the initiative in engaging followers (Burns, 2003). Instead of identifying individuals as leaders or followers, the entire process can be seen as a system which the function of the leadership is palpable and central, but individuals move in and out of leader and follower roles. According to Burns (2003), individual leadership is no longer present, but leadership is the basic process of social change.

Engagement in a shared leadership role allows individuals to develop and build unified relations through common interest and beliefs. Distributive leadership is expressed through a realignment of leadership roles when shared partnerships are formed. This broadens the decision-making process and creates organizational structures such as action teams, specialty teams, temporary teams, permanent teams, management teams, leadership teams, multifunctional teams, vertical teams, study groups, and task forces (Smith & Piele 2006). Each team is designed to meet the specific needs of the organization with identified goals and objectives.

Distributive leadership sometimes requires leaders to begin to think and respond in new ways, with a lot of intuitive forethought into situations. A district must be prepared to provide support, commitment and resources to support distributed leadership for the implementation and continuation of change. Disagreements on a variety of school issues will arise as with any leadership, but principals should establish a core set of operational principles such as school vision, priorities for the school year, a division of responsibilities based on ones' strengths, predetermine how differences will be resolved, modes of communication to ensure consistency, and policies and practices to guide school operations (Smith & Piele 2006).

Distributive leadership allows decision-making authority to spread throughout the school, creating a "flatter," more representative governance structure. Unlike traditional, principal-dominated school leadership models, distributive leadership provides opportunities for everyone—including teachers, students, parents and community members—to participate in key decisions (Smith & Piele, 2006). There are many advantages to this type of organization. It fosters community engagement, provides opportunities for professional and personal growth, and enables sustained progress despite inevitable changes in leadership over time. According to research, principals who engage in collaborative practices to get advice and opinions from teachers while also praising them better motivate teachers to improve their instructional strategies (Spillane, 2006).

Researchers may find distributed leadership worthwhile to look at when strengthening teacher leadership. The benefits of teacher leadership include improved moral commitment and professional growth (York-Barr & Duke, 2004). Teachers have the instructional intuition and expertise to move schools forward. As an advocate for teacher leadership, Linda Lambert (1998)

sees this change as a transformative effect, suggesting that teacher leadership is at the heart of high capacity schools.

Distributed leadership is probably present in almost every organization although it may not be recognized or labeled as distributive leadership. Traditional leadership paradigms are successful practices that have endured throughout history, but it brings reservations from traditional leaders that leadership can be shared and the organization be successful.

The Carnegie Report on Teaching, "A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century" (1986), presents an overview of goals for the future of the teaching profession. The goals in the report were:

1. To remind America of its economic challenges

2. To assert the primary of education as the foundation of economic growth, equal opportunity, and a shared national vision

3. To reaffirm that the teaching profession is the one best hope for establishing new standards of excellence, and

4. To point out that the next decade provides a very special "window of opportunity" for education reform.

The task force report supported teacher leadership and envisioned schools of the future would be run by teachers, with administrators doing administrative paperwork. However, the vision ended because the perception is that all organizations need a leader who can set directives, diffuse disputes, take responsibility and assume accountability for organizational decisions (Carnegie Report, 1986).

Research states that traditional structures and assumptions inhibit the development of shared leadership (Smith & Piele, 2006). Lambert (2003) suggests that principals can help break

long term patterns of traditional leadership when teachers request permission to do something, by simply asking the teacher to provide advantages and disadvantages with input from coworkers to see the full scope of why it's important to consider the change being requested. While some teachers learned effective collaboration skills in educational leadership programs others may not have had opportunities to develop them (Lambert, 2003). Lambert identifies the "primary dynamic of professional practices" as social sensitivity and hard cognitive work which are best learned through observation and participation. Therefore, if a teacher leader lacks strong collaboration skills they can still learn by observing others and actively participating with each opportunity that is presented. Smith and Piele (2006) state that enlisting teacher participation and developing leadership skills are key steps in building collaborative leadership skills and providing on-going support. Murphy (1992) describes what principals can do to facilitate the process. First, they can link shared leadership to the school's mission, vision, and core goals so that teachers and other stakeholders see shared leadership as a path to their goals; and therefore, they would willingly embrace it. Secondly, they need to publicly discuss, promote, and support shared leadership by the principal to teachers and stakeholders. Thirdly, they must identify potential teacher leaders and actively recruit them into the process, because every teacher has leadership potential; they just need to be asked or gradually persuaded. Next, building relationships with teachers initiated by the principal is a major contributor to the teacher's willingness to accept. They must then build a supportive infrastructure by gradually removing barriers for collaboration, rethinking power relationships because shared leadership removes the authority to lead by the principal, but instead the principal becomes engaged in the negotiation process. Finally, keep the focus on instruction because that is the expertise of the teacher leader — teaching and learning — and the needs of the students.

According to Smith and Piele (2006), in many ways distributed leadership is an unnatural act. For principals to shared their limited decision-making power with others is difficult for them because ultimately the principal is accountable. As discussed previously, shared leadership takes a lot more time because of the number of individuals that are involved in the decision making process. Stephen Covey (2004) says that you share leadership rather than give up control. Leadership transforms into self-control by empowering others to unleash their passions, energy, and drive which not only brings about satisfaction but success as well.

Summary

Teachers who choose the path of teacher leadership … become owners and investors in their schools, rather than mere tenants.

Linda Lambert, 2003 p. 32

This literature review explained the need for leadership capacity building programs and attempted to capture the ongoing struggle of developing administrators and teachers from within the organizational structure. A more collective effort between principals and teacher leaders is needed to positively encourage leadership capacity building programs. The more opportunities principals and teacher leaders are provided to share in decision-making, the better the chance schools will have to sustain leadership, particularly in the Appalachian Region. Shared decision making opportunities may change how principals and teacher leaders perceive their roles and change the way others perceive them. This perceptual change focus on roles and responsibilities may impact school culture over time. This study explored these issues and the perceptions of participants in a leadership capacity building program. The review of literature helped to establish the rationale for the study and the need for the leadership capacity building program

which focused on enhancing the skills of practicing administrators and developing the skills of

teacher leaders. Chapter Three presents the methodology used to conduct this research.

CHAPTER III. METHODS

Educational researchers also frequently employ surveys to learn more about how

specific variables, such as leadership belief systems, are applied in the real world.

Ross, 2006, p.984

Introduction

This chapter presents the research design for the study including a description of the data

sources, the instrument, and focus group protocol used, and data collection, and analysis

procedures. The Leadership Capacity Building Program for which teachers and administrators

were being asked to give their perceptions was a collaborative partnership between four school

districts and Auburn University. The program was designed to initiate a developmental capacity

building process for aspiring teacher leaders and practicing administrators. This study examined

perceptions about this leadership capacity building program conducted in four K–12 Alabama

school districts, which the researcher identified as: District A, District B, District C, and District

D. The superintendents in Districts A and D were elected, and the Superintendents in Districts B

and C were appointed by their District School Board Members. The participants in this study

included superintendents, principals, assistant principals, and teacher leaders. The Sustaining

School Success (S^3) Program was made possible by a grant funded by the Appalachian Regional

Commission and written by the Director of the Truman Pierce Institute and the Auburn

University College of Education.

Appalachian Regional Commission

The four districts participating in the study are located in the Appalachian Region. The Appalachian Region Commission (ARC) follows the spine of the Appalachian Mountains from southern New York to northern Mississippi. It includes all of West Virginia and parts of 12 other states: Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia. The demographics in the Appalachian Region is 94% White. Of these, 82% are poor Whites. Forty-two percent of the region's population is rural compared to 20% of the national population which is considered to be rural (http://www.ac.gov/appalachian6.16.2010). The Appalachian region in Alabama has higher rates of rural and non-metro population than in any other state (http://www.warc.info/). The Appalachian non-metro population, "the rural people left behind", were highlighted in the war on poverty during the 1960s and 1970s (Wimberly & Morris, 1996). In 1965, one in every three Appalachians residents lived in poverty. In 2000, the region's poverty rate was 13.6 percent, compared to the Alabama poverty rate of 16.1%. The number of Appalachian counties that were considered economically distressed was 223 in 1965; in fiscal year 2010 the number of economically distressed counties is 82 (http://www.arc.gov/distressed counties). According to Wimberly and Morris (1996) there are a number of factors identified that impact the quality of life for those living in Appalachia. These factors include:

- *Poverty* which determines ones' quality of life.
- *Education* emerged as the primary means for achieving social, economic and employment opportunities. Low levels of education result in fewer opportunities for a higher overall quality of life. A high school diploma is a level of special

significance as for as quality of life. One out of nine people does not complete high school in Appalachia.

- *Unemployment* impacts a lot of people even when socio-economic conditions improve when jobs are available. Everyone cannot work due to their inadequate education and skill levels, poor health, age or the responsibility they may have for providing primary care to the dependents in one's household.

- *Dependence* is rarely included in the analysis of quality of life issues. Dependence may be social, economic, or physical/health related. Dependence occurs when a person, household or community must rely on others for their basic needs. An important part of social dependence is age related or demographic dependence. Nearly all children and many elderly rely on others for their basic needs or support. As the number of dependents increases relative to the active population, the burden of dependency increases and resources are spread more thinly over larger numbers of people within a household. All of these factors influence the poverty level in the Appalachian Region.

According to Smith, Kimberly and Morris (2000), it is hard to be poor and harder to escape poverty in depressed communities. The Appalachian Region has symbolized poverty, exploitation, and regional underdevelopment (Billingsly & Techamyer, 1993). The report received by the President of the Regional Commission in 1964 characterized Appalachia as "a region apart—geographically and statistically." The Commission found that the Appalachia trails the nation in income, educational level, population, unemployment growth, and surpassed the nation in poverty and employment rates.

The Sustaining School Success Program provided leadership capacity building to traditional and non-traditional student leaders, teacher leaders, and administrators from District A, District B, District C, and District D. Monthly professional development and student leadership training sessions were held in each district. The student objectives included decreasing the dropout rates, improving high school graduation rates, promoting teaching as a career choice, promoting college enrollment, enhancing their leadership skills, and improving the academic achievement of the students. The teacher and administrator objectives included enhancing leadership capacity building, teacher quality and instructional effectiveness, promoting mentoring opportunities, providing training to support these efforts, and increasing grant writing skills of the participants and grant writing capacity in the participating districts.

The purpose of this study was to explore and analyze teachers' and administrators' perceptions about the leadership capacity building program, Sustaining School Success (S^3). Although S^3 also provided programming to student leaders, this research focus on the perceptions of adult participants. Surveys were used to collect both quantitative and qualitative responses. Data were collected from program participants: teachers, assistant principals, principals, central office administrators, and superintendents in four school districts. The researcher obtained permission to conduct the study through the Auburn University Human Subjects Research protocol process. Fifty-three participants responded out of the 100 surveys that were distributed yielding a 53% return rate. Additionally, there were three focus groups which consisted of teachers, principals and assistant principals, and superintendents.

Research Questions

The following research questions provided the framework for this study:

1. Do teachers and administrators perceive themselves as implementing effective leadership behaviors as measured by the Sustaining School Success (S^3) Survey Instrument?

2. What are the perceptions of teacher leaders and administrators about the effectiveness of leadership behaviors and knowledge as measured by the Sustaining School Success (S^3) Survey Instrument?

3. What are teacher and administrator self-perceptions about their confidence as a leader as measured by the Sustaining School Success (S^3) Survey Instrument?

4. What are teacher leader and administrator participants' perceptions of the leadership capacity building program?

Research Methods

This section on research methods provides a description of the research instruments and the participants in the study. A description of the process used to develop the survey instrument, and information on reliability and validity is provided. Then, the process used for data collection and analysis are presented. When surveys were returned, quantitative data were entered into SPSS 16.0 for analysis. Qualitative data from open-ended survey questions and the focus groups were coded and analyzed by hand, using an emergent theme approach (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003; Merriam, 2002; Patton, 2005).

Instrument Design

Research was conducted to gain insight on teachers' and administrators' perceptions of the S^3 leadership capacity building program. Data were collected using a survey distributed to participants in four school districts from the Appalachia Region in Alabama. Fifty-three surveys

were returned and analyzed using descriptive statistics and qualitative analysis. Emergent themes were generated from the open-ended survey responses and the focus group data (Merriam, 1998). Data were collected to determine teachers' and administrators' perceptions of the leadership capacity building program in which was an effort to develop "locally grown" administrators. Demographic information were collected from the participants. The data collected focused on teachers' and administrators' perceptions of the leadership capacity building program; their perceptions of the knowledge, skills, and behaviors needed by leaders; whether they are implementing effective leadership skills: and how a comparison of teacher and administrator perceptions about the effectiveness of the leadership capacity building program.

A survey was developed by the researcher to assess the perceptions listed above (see Appendix 1). The first section of the survey focused on demographic information, including the number of years as an educator, current position, highest degree held, goals, number of years in current district, mentoring, the number of times faculty presentations were made, and the frequency of opportunities to stay abreast of best trends and practices. The second part of the survey consisted of 32 yes/no questions dealing with perceptions of their own leadership responsibilities. Reverse coding was applied to any question that was framed negatively. The third part of the survey consisted of ten questions using a Likert-type scale with 1 representing strongly agree and 5 representing do not know. These questions addressed existing perceptions of the leadership capacity building program compare.

The final part of the survey consisted of ten open response questions asking about the perceptions of the leadership capacity building program. Participants in each of the four districts completed surveys which were administered to superintendents, principals, assistant principals and identified teacher leaders.

The uses of surveys for collecting data are both cost and time efficient. According to Dillman, Clark, and Sinclair (1993), it is important for surveys to be respondent friendly, easy to complete, questions clearly stated, and that the survey leaves the respondent feeling positive or neutral after completing it.

There were three focus groups that were made of teachers and assistant principals, principals and other administrators, and superintendents. The questions were developed by two graduate students and two university professors. The focus groups met during the last two-day conference sessions which were held in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. A focus group facilitator and a recorder were assigned to each focus group. Participants' illustrative comments were used to provide feedback about their overall perceptions, benefits of the leadership capacity building program, and areas for future growth.

Validity and Reliability

The validity of the item content was addressed in the following two ways: First a thorough review of the leadership literature was completed, and second a panel of experts, composed of K–12 counselors, teachers, university education leadership professors and K–12 administrators determined that the content was appropriate. The validity of the interpretations was based on scores from the instrument.

Item level analysis items are distinct, therefore there was no reliability at the item level since reliability is based on a group of items. Content validity was addressed through the use of a panel of experts, consisting of university professors, school counselors, teachers, and administrators, and a thorough review of the leadership literature.

Quantitative analysis was based on individual items therefore it was not necessary to construct a scale so that items could be internally consistent. It is not always required for there

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to be an assumption that the individual items need to be correlated with each other (Streiner, 2003).

Population

According to the Alabama State Department's State Board of Education School Report Card (2006–2007), District A's average daily membership for student enrollment was 2,518 students. Forty-six percent of the students were eligible for free and reduced meals, an indicator of the level of poverty in the district. The district had 43.3% teachers with a bachelor's degree, 52.2% with a master's degree and 3.5% with a six year through doctorate degree. One percent of the teachers in the district had an alternative or emergency certificate. The percentage of teachers that were highly qualified as defined by the State of Alabama is 99.3% and .07% are not highly qualified. There are a total of 324 employees in the district, of which 172 have a State of Alabama teaching certificate. Sixty-six and four tenths percent (64.4%) of the school district revenue sources are from the state, 15.5% is from local tax, and 11.5% from federal funds. Of the total revenue sources, 66.9% is used for instruction. The mills equivalent is 23.71% mills compared to the state average of 31.83% mills.

District B's average daily membership for student enrollment was 3,207 students with 72% of their student population eligible for free and reduced lunch. The district had 38.6% teachers with bachelor's degrees, 54.9% held master's degree, and 3.3% held a six year through doctorate degree. There were 3.2% teachers in District B that had an alternative or an emergency certificate. The district had 91.8% highly qualified teachers that taught core academic subjects as defined by the State of Alabama and 8.2% of teachers were not highly qualified as defined by the State of Alabama. There were a total of 394 staff members in the district of which 212 were certified teachers. The State of Alabama provided 65.9% of the schools district's revenue

sources, 10.1% came from local tax sources and 18.5% from federal sources. Of the revenue

sources, 67.5% was used for instruction. Each system was required to pay 10 mills tax

equivalent to the State of Alabama. The mills equivalent was the total amount of revenue

collected locally for public school purposes, divided by the value of one regular system mill of

ad valorem tax. The state average was 31.83 mills equivalent and District B was 15.35 mills

(www.alsde.edu).

In District C the average daily membership was 3,264 students in 2006–2007. Nearly

eighty-two percent of the students were eligible for free and reduced lunch. The district had

37.6% teachers with a bachelor's degree, 45.1% with a master's degree, and 9.7% with a six year

through a doctorate degree. There were 7.6% of the teachers that had an alternative or

emergency certificate. District C had a total of 422 staff members with 214 being certified

teachers. The district had 85.5% highly qualified teachers teaching core academic subjects and

14.5 % which were not deemed highly qualified as defined by the State of Alabama requirements

for highly qualified. Sixty-two and four tenths percent of District C's revenue sources came

from the State of Alabama, 16.5% came from local tax and 18.5 % came from the federal funds.

Nearly 59% of the system's funds were used for instructional purposes. District C's mill

equivalency was 39.31% compared to the state average mill equivalency which was 31.83%

(www.alsde.edu).

The final district where the researcher collected data from was District D. The district

average daily attendance was 3,181 students. The percent of students eligible for free and

reduced lunches was 60.2 %. The district had 45.0% teachers that held a bachelor's degree,

44.7% that held a master's degree, and 5.7% that held a six year degree which is equivalent to an

educational specialist degree or a doctorate degree (www.alsde.edu). The district had a total of

438.8 employees of which 227 had teacher certificates. There were 87.4% highly qualified core academic teachers in the district and 12.6% that were not highly qualified core academic teachers. District D's sources of revenue included 57.4% from the state, 20.5% from local tax, and 13.5% from federal funds. Instructional resources were 67.5% of the school district's use of funds. The district's mills equivalent was 21.08% funding compared to the state average of 31.83%. See Table 3 for descriptive information about each of the four districts that was retrieved from the Alabama State Department of Education Report Card for the 2006–2007 school year (www.alsde.edu).

Table 3

Percentage of Students on Free and Reduced Lunches, Dropouts and Local Taxes

District	Percentage of Free and Reduced Lunch	Projected Dropout Percentage	Percentage of Local Tax
District A	45%	18%	16%
District B	73%	11%	11%
District C	90%	15%	15%
District D	58%	8%	20%

Participants

Thirty-three (n = 33) principals and district level administrators, twenty-three (n = 23) assistant principals, and forty-seven (n = 47) teacher leaders representing these four school districts participated in one or more parts of this mixed methods research design. Of the approximately 100 participants, there were approximately 60% females and approximately 40%

males. Of the 60% females there were approximately 40% White females and 20% African-American females who participated in the study. Of the respondents, 40% were males; 25% were White males and 15% were African-American males. Participants' postsecondary degrees ranged from a Bachelor degree to a Doctoral degree. The majority of the participants had twelve or less years of K–12 public school experience. The superintendents in Districts A and D were elected, while the superintendents in Districts B and C were appointed by their local School Board of Education.

Research Procedures

This study was designed to assess the perceived effectiveness of leadership capacity building programs through the use of a mixed methods research design. Data were collected through the use of surveys and focus groups.

The researcher-developed survey instrument was and focus group protocols were submitted for approval to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Auburn University. After approval, the survey instrument was distributed to teachers and administrators at the beginning of the last two-day conference. The surveys were distributed to all participants at the conference. The participants returned the surveys anonymously by placing them in a large box located on each side of the conference door as they left the session. Surveys were collected and data imputed into SPSS 16.0. Data were also collected through three different focus groups: the first group included teachers and assistant principals; the second group included principals and other central office administrators; and the third group comprised of superintendents. A pre-determined set of questions was prepared to guide the focus group discussions. There was a facilitator and note taker assigned to script the responses in each focus group. The focus groups questions were thematically clustered.

Session evaluations were conducted after all monthly sessions and consisted of two binary choices (yes/no) items and two open-ended questions. Items on the session evaluations varied based on the topic presented, but generally asked the participants about the usefulness of the session and elicited feedback and suggestions for future sessions.

Role of the Researcher

The researcher describes herself as a doctoral candidate, an educator, an employee in a small city school district, an active member of local, state, and national professional organizations, and as a parent. As an Executive Director of Human Resources, it is important to continue to explore additional programs that will enhance recruitment, retention, and the sustainability of employees through job-embedded professional development.

Prior to beginning the research, the researcher took her biases into consideration when organizing the design of the study in such a way that the opportunity for bias would be limited. A team developed the survey and focus group protocol. Two people conducted each of the three focus groups. One person facilitated the focus group while the other person recorded was said. Data were re-analyzed by team mentors after the researcher did or as an attempt to lessen bias in the interpretation of findings. All of the data were obtained directly from the surveys containing open-ended and closed ended questions, from the focus groups, and from the session evaluations.

Summary

Chapter three provided a thorough overview of the research methods used in this study. The purpose of this chapter was to describe the research methodology used in this study, describe the population and the participants, the design of the survey instrument, the process used to collect the data, and to provide an explanation of the procedures used to analyze the data (Peterson & Kelly, 2003). Chapter four presents the findings from the study.

CHAPTER IV. FINDINGS

Introduction

Chapter Three presented the methodology used in this study inclusive of the setting, participants, instrument development, instrumentation procedures, data analysis, and the limitations of the study. The purpose of this study was to identify teacher and administrator perceptions of leadership capacity building programs which were an effort to develop teacher leaders in four rural Alabama school districts. The study included research conducted with participants in four rural Alabama school districts. This chapter presents the findings of the study.

The following research questions provide structure to the presentation of the findings from the study:

1.   Do teachers and administrators perceive themselves as implementing effective leadership behaviors and knowledge as measured by the Sustaining School Success (S^3) Survey Instrument?

2.   What are the perceptions of teacher leaders and administrators about the effectiveness of leadership behaviors as measured by the Sustaining School Success (S^3) Survey Instrument?

3.   What are teacher and administrator perceptions about their confidence as a leader as measured by the Sustaining School Success (S^3) Survey Instrument?

4.   What are teacher leader and administrator participants' perceptions of leadership capacity building programs?

Data related to the perceptions of leadership capacity building programs are presented in five sections. The first section addresses the educational background and demographic data of the research participants. The second section presents findings collected on 39 yes/no items of the researcher- developed survey instrument. The third section presents findings from the rating scale of 10 Likert-type questions that were also part of the researcher-developed instrument. The Likert-type scale items were scored on a five point rating scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree, and 5 = don't know. In an effort to obtain a more realistic picture of the data, the data were reconfigured to eliminate all fives since the "don't know" rating skewed responses . The computer program used to analyze the quantitative data was the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 16.0. The fourth section of this chapter presents findings from qualitative questions that were asked of teacher leaders and administrators on the survey. The data from this section were analyzed by identifying emerging themes (Patton, 2002). The final section of the chapter includes the findings that emerged from other qualitative data sources including audio recordings and researcher notes from focus group discussions among administrators and identified teacher leaders. Although the researcher made an effort to capture the exact words used during the focus groups, comments within the study are generally paraphrased to capture the essence of the comments made by one or more of the participants. According to Patton (2002),

The purpose of interviewing is to allow us to enter into the other person's perspective.

Qualitative interviewing begins with the assumption that the perspective of others is

meaningful, knowable, and able to be made explicit. We interview to find out what is in and on someone else's mind, to gather their stories. (p. 341)

Educational Background and Demographic Data

The data for this study came from 53 participants who completed surveys and approximately 46 participants in three focus groups with administrators and teacher leaders. There was some overlap in those completing the surveys and participating in focus groups, but it is not possible to identify the exact number participating in both because surveys were completed anonymously. One focus group included three superintendents, the second focus group included approximately twelve administrators, and the third focus group was comprised of approximately 19 teachers and assistant principals.

There were approximately 100 surveys distributed to program participants. These surveys were distributed to participants during the Fall of 2006 and Spring of 2007. Of the 100 surveys distributed, 53 (53%) were completed and returned. Of these 53 surveys, 39 were completed by teachers and 14 were completed by administrators.

Table 4 depicts the educational background of the survey respondents. The respondents' educational level was categorized by highest degree held: bachelors, masters, educational specialist and doctorate. Of the 53 completed surveys, only 22 teachers and 6 administrators responded to this item. The results indicate that of those responding twelve teachers participants (54.5%) held a masters degree, eight (36.4%) held a bachelors degree, and two teachers (9.1%) held an educational specialist degree. None of the teachers (0%) held a doctorate degree.

Table 4

Degree Held by Respondents

	Educational				
Respondents	Bachelors	Masters	Specialist	Doctorate	**Total**
Teachers	8 (36.4)	12 (54.5)	2 (9.1)	0 (0%)	**22 (100%)**
Administrators	0 (0%)	4 (66.7)	2 (33.3)	0 (0%)	**6 (100%)**
Combined Totals	**8**	**16**	**4**	**0**	**28 (100%)**

There were 14 surveys completed by the administrator group which included assistant principals, principals, central office administrators and superintendents. The administrator survey indicates that four participants (66.7%) held a masters degree, two (33.3%) held a specialist degree, and none of the participants (0%) held a doctorate degree. The entry degree for instructional leadership certification in Alabama is the master's degree.

Table 5 provides the current position of the respondents at the time of the study. Of the 53 survey respondents, thirty-nine (74%) were teachers, eight (15%) were assistant principals, three (6%) were principals, two (4%) were other administrators, and one (1%) was a superintendent.

Table 5

Current Position of Respondents

		Assistant			Other	
Respondents	Teacher	Principal	Principal	Superintendent	Administrator	**Total**
N	39 (74%)	8 (15%)	3 (6%)	1 (1%)	2 (4%)	**53 (100%)**

Table 6 reflects the years of teaching experience of the respondents. Fifty-nine percent of the teachers had twelve or more years of experience. The largest percentage of teachers had three years or less of experience. Sixty-five percent of the administrators had twelve or fewer years of experience. Thirty-seven percent (5) administrators had 3 or less years of experience. The data suggest that non-tenured teacher leaders and administrators were selected to participate in the leadership capacity building programs as well as tenured teachers and administrators. Table 6 reflects that 53 teachers and administrator surveys were returned indicating 4 or more years of experience.

Table 6

Participant Years of Teaching Experience

Respondents	0–3	4–6	7–9	10–12	13–15	16–18	19–25	26+	**Total**
Teachers	8 (21%)	6 (15%)	4 (10%)	5 (13%)	4 (10%)	2 (5%)	5 (13%)	5 (13%)	**39 (100%)**
Administrators	5 (37%)	2 (14%)	1 (7%)	1 (7%)	2 (14%)	0 (0%)	2 (14%)	1 (7%)	**14 (100%)**
Totals	**13**	**8**	**5**	**6**	**6**	**2**	**7**	**6**	**53 (100%)**

Table 7 illustrates the number of participants representing each of the four rural counties in which the research was collected. *County A* had twenty (51%) teacher participants respond to the survey, which was the highest number of teacher respondents. Both *County A* and *County B* had five (36%) administrator participants respond to the survey, which was a greater return rate than the other participating districts. Sixty-one percent of the teachers had twelve or fewer years of experience. The largest percent with experience had three years of experience or less. Sixty-

five percent of the administrators had twelve or fewer years of experience. Thirty-seven percent

(5) had three or less years of experience.

Table 7

Counties in which Survey Respondents Work

					County	
Respondents	County A	County B	County C	County D	Unknown	**Total**
Teachers	20 (51%)	4 (10%)	8 (21%)	5 (13%)	2 (5%)	**39 (100%)**
Administrators	5 (36%)	5 (30%)	3 (21%)	1 (7%)	0 (0%)	**14 (100%)**
Totals	**25**	**9**	**11**	**6**	**2**	**53 (100%)**

Findings

Survey responses were divided into categories based on the four research questions: 1.)

Do teachers and administrators perceive themselves as implementing effective leadership

behaviors as measured by the Sustaining School Success (S^3) Survey Instrument? 2.) What are

the perceptions of teacher leaders and administrator about the effectiveness of leadership

behaviors as measured by the Sustaining School Success (S^3) Survey Instrument? 3.) What are

teacher and administrator perceptions about their confidence as a leader as measured by the

Sustaining School Success (S^3) Survey Instrument? and 4.)What are teacher leader and

administrator participants' perceptions of leadership capacity building programs? The teacher

and administrator survey participants did not respond to the majority of the qualitative section

and the yes/no survey items. Therefore, limited data are reported.

Teachers and Administrators Implementing Effective Leadership Behaviors

The first theme was addressed through thirteen survey items (see Appendix 1). The items addressing this question are 10, 11, 12, 13, 19, 23, 24, 25, 29, 33, 34, 35, and 36. The question is: Do teachers and administrators perceive themselves as implementing effective leadership behaviors? Table 8 shows the findings related to effective leadership behaviors. According to these findings, the majority of the teachers and administrators have not presented at conferences. State and local budget constraints may have impacted their ability to travel to conferences for presentation opportunities. However, as illustrated in Table 9, both teacher leaders and administrators did provide professional development and present at faculty meetings. Presenting at faculty meetings provided a leadership opportunity in their area of expertise. Although the findings show that most teachers and administrators have not presented at conferences, that between teachers and administrators over half have presented at faculty meetings.

Table 8

Conference Presentations

Item	Respondent	Yes	No	Missing Data	**Total**
10. During the past year did you present at any conferences?	Teacher	1 (3%)	15 (44%)	18 (53%)	**34 (100%)**
	Administrator	1 (8%)	1 (8%)	10 (84%)	**12 (100%)**
	Unknown Role	1 (14%)	5 (72%)	1 (14%)	**7 (100%)**
Totals		**3**	**21**	**29**	**53 (100%)**

Table 9

Presentations at Faculty Meetings

Item	Respondent	Yes	No	Missing Data	Total
11. During the past year did you present at any faculty meetings?	Teacher	9 (26%)	7 (21%)	18 (53%)	**34 (100%)**
	Administrator	2 (17%)	0	10 (83%)	**12 (100%)**
	Unknown Role	4 (57%)	2 (29%)	1 (14%)	**7 (100%)**
Totals		**15**	**9**	**29**	**53 (100%)**

Teacher leaders (47%) and administrators (17%) helped teachers with classroom instructional strategies as illustrated in Table 10. The teachers who responded all believe they have influenced another teacher with their instructional strategies. The findings suggest that teachers and administrators are perceived as instructional leaders by their peers.

Table 10

Assisted with Instructional Strategies

Item	Respondent	Yes	No	Missing Data	Total
12. During the past year did you help teachers with instructional strategies?	Teacher	16 (47%)	0	18 (53%)	**34 (100%)**
	Administrator	2 (17%)	0	10 (83%)	**12 (100%)**
	Unknown Role	5 (72%)	1 (14%)	1 (14%)	**7 (100%)**
Totals		**23**	**1**	**29**	**53 (100%)**

In Table 11 the findings suggest that teacher leaders were permitted to represent an administrator on a leadership team during the administrator's absence. The findings suggest that

63% (15) of the teacher and administrator respondents have been an administrator representative

during on a leadership decision making team, while on 38% (9) teachers and administrators

responded that they had not represented an administrator on a leadership decision making team.

Table 11

Administrative Representative During Leadership

Item	Respondent	Yes	No	Missing Data	**Total**
13. During the past year did you represent administrators on a leadership decision making team?	Teacher	11 (32%)	5 (15%)	18 (53%)	**34 (100%)**
	Administrator	2 (17%)	0	10 (83%)	**12 (100%)**
	Unknown Role	2 (29%)	4 (57%)	1 (14%)	**7 (100%)**
Totals		**15**	**9**	**29**	**53 (100%)**

Table 12 provides data indicating that teacher leaders and administrators enjoy helping

others with instructional strategies. According to the teacher and administrator responses 96% of

those who responded engage in leadership capacity building behaviors by helping others to

implement effective teaching strategies in their classrooms.

Table 12

Implementation of Instructional Strategies

Item	Respondent	Yes	No	Missing Data	**Total**
19. I enjoy helping others to implement effective teaching strategies.	Teacher	15 (44%)	1 (3%)	18 (53%)	**34 (100%)**
	Administrator	2 (17%)	0	10 (83%)	**12 (100%)**
	Unknown Role	6 (86%)	0	1 (14%)	**7 (100%)**
Totals		**23**	**1**	**29**	**53 (100%)**

As illustrated in Table 13, the findings suggest that the teacher leaders (47%) and administrators (17%) responding to the survey believe they exercise good emotional control. Good emotional control is defined as being able to remain calm and make professional decisions during a crisis. Based on the number of respondents 100% of those who responded indicated that the teachers and administrators are confident in their ability to exercise emotional control.

Table 13

Exercise Emotional Control

Item	Respondent	Yes	No	Missing Data	**Total**
23. I exercise good emotional control.	Teacher	16 (47%)	0	18 (53%)	**34 (100%)**
	Administrator	2 (17%)	0	10 (83%)	**12 (100%)**
	Unknown Role	6 (86%)	0	1 (14%)	**7 (100%)**
Totals		**24**	**0**	**29**	**53 (100%)**

Data in Table 14 indicates that teachers and administrators consider themselves to be aware of the ethical and legal issues associated with professional leadership responsibilities. Based on those responding, 100% of teachers and administrators feel that they are aware of ethical and legal issues with professional relationships.

Table 14

Ethical and Legal Issues with Professionals

Item	Respondent	Yes	No	Missing Data	**Total**
24. I am aware of ethical and legal issues with professional relationships.	Teacher	16 (47%)	0	18 (53%)	**34 (100%)**
	Administrator	2 (17%)	0	10 (83%)	**12 (100%)**
	Unknown Role	6 (86%)	0	1 (14%)	**7 (100%)**
Totals		**24**	**0**	**29**	**53 (100%)**

Data in Table 15 indicates that teachers and administrators consider themselves to be aware of the ethical and legal issues concerning relationships with students. Based on the teachers and administrators who responded, 100% of the respondents state that they are aware of the ethical and legal issues concerning relationships with students.

Table 15

Ethical and Legal Issues with Students

Item	Respondent	Yes	No	Missing Data	Total
25. I am aware of ethical and legal issues concerning relationships with students.	Teacher	16 (47%)	0	18 (53%)	**34 (100%)**
	Administrator	2 (17%)	0	10 (83%)	**12 (100%)**
	Unknown Role	6 (86%)	0	1 (14%)	**7 (100%)**
Totals		**24**	**0**	**29**	**53 (100%)**

Table 16 findings indicates that 78% of teachers and administrators who responded share what they have learned in professional development with their colleagues so that it might promote their professional growth and enhance student performance.

Table 16

Share Personal Growth

Item	Respondent	Yes	No	Missing Data	Total
29. I share my personal growth with colleagues through professional development.	Teacher	11 (32%)	4 (12%)	19 (56%)	**34 (100%)**
	Administrator	2 (17%)	0	10 (83%)	**12 (100%)**
	Unknown Role	5 (72%)	1 (14%)	1 (14%)	**7 (100%)**
Totals		**18**	**5**	**30**	**53 (100%)**

Table 17 illustrates that 100% teachers and administrators who responded believe they have a vision for student learning. According to Lambert (2003), learning and leading are

strongly linked; a school with a high leadership capacity develops students who both learn and

lead.

Table 17

Vision for Learning

Item	Respondent	Yes	No	Missing Data	**Total**
33. I have a vision for successful student learning.	Teacher	11 (32%)	0	23 (68%)	**34 (100%)**
	Administrator	2 (17%)	0	10 (83%)	**12 (100%)**
	Unknown Role	5 (71%)	0	2 (29%)	**7 (100%)**
Totals		**18**	**0**	**35**	**53 (100%)**

Table 18 indicates that 100% of the teacher and administrators who responded believe

they have a vision for acquiring successful leadership characteristics. According to Brubaker

(2005), the very essence of leadership is you must have a vision. Further, a leader must be able

to clearly and forcefully articulate that vision on every occasion.

Table 18

Leadership Characteristics

Item	Respondent	Yes	No	Missing Data	**Total**
34. I have a vision for successful leadership characteristics.	Teacher	16 (47%)	0	18 (53%)	**34 (100%)**
	Administrator	2 (17%)	0	10 (83%)	**12 (100%)**
	Unknown Role	6 (86%)	0	1 (14%)	**7 (100%)**
Totals		**24**	**0**	**29**	**53 (100%)**

Data in Table 19 indicate that the 91% of teachers and administrators responding believe they have clear objectives, plans, and a timeline for when a project is recommended.

Table 19

Clear Objectives, Plans, and a Timeline

Item	Respondent	Yes	No	Missing Data	**Total**
35. When I recommend a project, I have clear objectives, plans, and a timeline.	Teacher	13 (38%)	2 (6%)	19 (56%)	**34 (100%)**
	Administrator	2 (17%)	0	10 (83%)	**12 (100%)**
	Unknown Role	6 (86%)	0	1 (14%)	**7 (100%)**
Totals		**21**	**2**	**30**	**53 (100%)**

Data in Table 20 indicate that fifteen teachers and two administrators prioritize their "to do list" with the most important items listed first. All but two of the twenty-three participants answering this question responded that they are able to prioritize.

Table 20

Priority List

Item	Respondent	Yes	No	Missing Data	**Total**
36. I prioritize the most important tasks on my "to do" list.	Teacher	15 (44%)	0	19 (56%)	**34 (100%)**
	Administrator	2 (17%)	0	10 (83%)	**12 (100%)**
	Unknown Role	4 (57%)	2 (29%)	1 (14%)	**7 (100%)**
Totals		**21**	**2**	**30**	**53 (100%)**

Teachers' and Administrators' Perceptions about Their Confidence as a Leader

The next cluster of survey item addressed: What are teachers and administrators perceptions about their confidence as a leader? The 5 items addressing this research question were items 15, 21, 37, 38, and 39. (See Appendix 2 for survey items related to the research.) Table 21 suggests that 47% of the teacher respondents and 17% of the administrator respondents feel that based on the factors that were looked that define confidence, they can change negative situations into positive. The researcher looked at findings related to the confidence of teachers and administrators. The findings presented in the following tables show that participants reported confidence in their leadership ability to change negative situations to positive; teachers and administrators enjoy providing professional development; teachers and administrators find it difficult to make decisions under pressure; teachers and administrators can make good decisions during a crisis situation; and leadership responsibilities can be assumed immediately if necessary.

Table 21

Can Change Situations from Negative to Positive

Item	Respondent	Yes	No	Missing Data	**Total**
15. I can change negative situations in my professional career to positive situations.	Teacher	16 (47%)	0%	18 (53%)	**34 (100%)**
	Administrator	2 (17%)	0%	10 (83%)	**12 (100%)**
	Unknown Role	5 (72%)	1 (14%)	1 (14%)	**7 (100%)**
Totals		**23**	**1**	**29**	**53 (100%)**

The survey results from the teachers (21%) and administrators (17%) responding (see Table 22) indicate that these respondents enjoy providing professional development to teachers. Based on their open responses on this survey and their focus group responses, providing professional development empowers them with a desire to continue to foster learning others.

Table 22

Enjoy Providing Professional Development

Item	Respondent	Yes	No	Missing Data	Total
21. I enjoy providing professional development to teachers.	Teacher	7 (21%)	7 (21%)	20 (59%)	**34 (100%)**
	Administrator	2 (17%)	0 (0%)	10 (83%)	**12 (100%)**
	Unknown Role	6 (86%)	0 (0%)	1 (14%)	**7 (100%)**
Totals		**15**	**7**	**31**	**53 (100%)**

The teacher survey results indicates that 21% of the teacher respondents have a hard time making decisions under pressure, whereas, 26% reported that they do not have a hard time making decisions under pressure (see Table 23). The administrator survey results indicate 8% of the administrators have a hard time making a decision under pressure, and 8% of the administrators indicated that they do not have a hard time making a decision under pressure. Based on the responses from the respondents, almost half (41%) felt that they have a hard time making decisions under pressure and the others stated that they do not have a hard time making decisions under pressure.

Table 23

Difficulty Making Decisions Under Pressure

Item	Respondent	Yes	No	Missing Data	Total
37. I have a hard time making decisions under pressure.	Teacher	7 (21%)	9 (26%)	18(53%)	**34 (100%)**
	Administrator	1 (8%)	1 (8%)	10(84%)	**12 (100%)**
	Unknown Role	3 (43%)	3 (43%)	1(14%)	**7 (100%)**
Totals		**11**	**13**	**29**	**53 (100%)**

The survey responses (Table 24) indicate 38% of the teachers believe they can make a good decision during a crisis, while 21% of the teachers responded that they have a hard time making a decision under pressure. Seventeen percent of the administrators responded that they can make a good decision during a crisis, while 8% responded that they have difficulty making a decision under pressure.

Table 24

Can Make Good Decisions During a Crisis

Item	Respondent	Yes	No	Missing Data	Total
38. I can make good decisions during a crisis.	Teacher	13 (38%)	3 (9%)	18 (53%)	**34 (100%)**
	Administrator	2 (17%)	0 (0%)	10 (83%)	**12 (100%)**
	Unknown Role	5 (72%)	1 (14%)	1 (14%)	**7 (100%)**
Totals		**20**	**4**	**12**	**53 (100%)**

All respondents report at one hundred percent that they could immediately assume

leadership responsibilities if needed (see Table 25).

Table 25

Can Assume Leadership Responsibilities If Needed

Item	Respondent	Yes	No	Missing Data	**Total**
39. I can immediately assume leadership responsibilities if needed.	Teachers	15 (44%)	0 (0%)	19 (56%)	**34 (100%)**
	Administrators	2 (17%)	0 (0%)	10 (83%)	**12 (100%)**
	Unknown Role	6 (86%)	0 (0%)	1 (14%)	**7 (100%)**
Totals		**23**	**0**	**30**	**53 (100%)**

Teachers and Administrators Effectiveness of Leadership Behaviors

The next question theme by the survey was: What are the perceptions of teachers and

administrators about the effectiveness of leadership behaviors? (See Appendix 2 for the related

questions). The survey items that address this question are items 26, 27, 28, and 40. The survey

results indicate that 47% of the teacher respondents believe effective communication with

teachers is important. The survey results also state that 17% of administrator respondents

believe that effective communication with teachers is important.

Table 26

Effective Communication Is Important

Item	Respondent	Yes	No	Missing Data	Total
26. Effective communication is important with teachers.	Teachers	16 (47%)	0 (0%)	18 (53%)	**34 (100%)**
	Administrators	2 (17%)	0 (0%)	10 (83%)	**12 (100%)**
	Unknown Role	6 (86%)	0 (0%)	1 (14%)	**7 (100%)**
Totals		**24**	**0**	**29**	**53 (100%)**

The survey results indicate that 47% (See Table 27) of teacher respondents believe that effective communication is important with faculty and staff while 17% of the administrator respondents agreed. However, the majority of the teacher and administrator participants did not provide a response for this item.

Table 27

Communication Is Important for Teachers and Staff

Item	Respondents	Yes	No	Missing Data	Total
27. Effective communication is important with faculty and staff.	Teachers	16 (47%)	0 (0%)	18 (53%)	**34 (100%)**
	Administrators	2 (17%)	0 (0%)	10 (83%)	**12 (100%)**
	Missing	6 (86%)	0 (0%)	1 (14%)	**7 (100%)**
Totals		**24**	**0**	**29**	**53 (100%)**

The survey results indicate that 100% of those who responded feel that communication is important for parents and community leaders.

Table 28

Communication is Important for Parents and Community Leaders

Item	Respondents	Yes	No	Missing Data	Total
28. Effective communication is important with parents and community leaders.	Teachers	16 (47%)	0 (0%)	18 (53%)	**34 (100%)**
	Administrators	2 (17%)	0 (0%)	10 (83%)	**12 (100%)**
	Unknown Role	6 (86%)	0 (0%)	1 (14%)	**7 (100%)**
Totals		**24**	**0 (0%)**	**29**	**53(100%)**

The survey results indicate that 92% of teachers and administrators indicate that faculty collaboration and input is needed prior to implementation of new programs. However, 2% of the teachers feel that no input is needed prior to the implementation of new programs.

Table 29

Faculty Collaboration Is Needed Prior To New Programs Being Added

Item	Respondents	Yes	No	Missing Data	Total
40. Faculty Collaboration and input is needed prior to implementation of new programs.	Teacher	14 (41%)	2 (6%)	18 (53%)	**34 (100%)**
	Administrators	2 (17%)	0 (0%)	10 (83%)	**12 (100%)**
	Unknown Role	6 (86%)	0 (0%)	1 (14%)	**7 (100%)**
Totals		**22**	**2**	**29**	**53 (100%)**

Teachers' and Administrators' Perceptions of the Leadership Capacity Building Program

The last section of the survey addressed: What are teachers' and administrators' perceptions of the leadership capacity building programs? These perceptions were measured

using ten questions that were rated on a five point Likert-type scale. In Table 30 the majority of

the data from the participants is missing. Therefore, the researcher's findings are based on the

actual responses provided by the participants. The responses from teachers and administrators

suggest that they agree or strongly agree that there is a need for leadership capacity building

programs. Item 4 states that: New administrators are selected from the leadership capacity

building program *only*. Twenty-three percent of the respondents responded that they strongly

disagree. Item 8 states: Participants in leadership capacity building programs are no more

prepared than non leadership capacity building participants. Teachers and administrators

overwhelming responded strongly disagree and disagree to item 8. According to Lambert

(1998), building leadership capacity, like any important endeavor, is developmental, but there

will be indications of progress at different stages of the journey.

Table 30

Capacity Building Program Likert-type Frequency Scale

Item	Group	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Missing Data	**Total**
1. A leadership capacity building program is beneficial to the development of an administrator.	Teachers	1 (2.9)	1 (2.9)	3 (8.9)	12 (35.3)	17 (50.0)	**34 (100%)**
	Administrators	0	0	1 (8.3)	1 (8.3)	10 (83.3)	**12 (100%)**
2. I would recommend the leadership capacity building program to others interested in administrative training.	Teachers	1 (2.9)	4 (11.8)	4 (11.8)	8 (23.5)	17 (50.0)	**34 (100%)**
	Administrators	0	0	1 (8.3)	1 (8.3)	10 (83.4)	**12 (100%)**
3. Participants in a leadership capacity building program enhance their leadership skills.	Teachers	1 (2.9)	1 (2.9)	4 (11.8)	11 (32.4)	17 (50.0)	**34 (100%)**
	Administrators	0	0	0	2 (16.7)	10 (83.3)	**12 (100%)**
4. New administrators are selected from the leadership capacity building program only.	Teachers	8 (23.5)	3 (8.9)	4 (11.8)	2 (5.8)	17 (50.0)	**34 (100%)**
	Administrators	0	0	1 (8.3)	0	11 (91.7)	**12 (100%)**
5. A leadership capacity building program does influence a leader's ability to lead.	Teachers	1 (2.9)	2 (5.8)	4 (11.8)	8 (23.5)	19 (56.1)	**34 (100%)**
	Administrators	0	1 (8.3)	1 (8.3)	0	10 (83.4)	**12 (100%)**
6. All school systems should have a leadership capacity building program.	Teachers	1 (2.9)	1 (2.9)	6 (17.1)	7 (20.0)	19 (56.1)	**34 (100%)**
	Administrator	0	0	1 (8.3)	1 (8.3)	10 (83.4)	**12 (100%)**
7. I would accept an offer to be a presenter for a leadership capacity building program.	Teacher	0	2 (5.7)	3 (8.6)	4 (11.4)	25 (74.3)	**34 (100%)**
	Administrator	0	0	1 (8.3)	1 (8.3)	10 (83.4)	**12 (100%)**

Table 30 (continued)

Item	Group	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Missing Data	Total
8. Participants in leadership capacity building programs are no more prepared than non leadership capacity building participants.	Teachers	7 (20)	6 (17.1)	1 (2.9)	0	20 (60.0)	**34 (100%)**
	Administrator	0	2 (16.6)	0	0	10 (83.4)	**12 (100%)**
9. Leadership capacity building participation should be required for aspiring administrators to be considered for leadership positions.	Teachers	1 (2.9)	2 (5.7)	5 (14.3)	5 (14.3)	21 (62.8)	**34 (100%)**
	Administrator	0	0	0	1 (8.3)	11 (91.7)	**12 (100%)**
10. Participation in a leadership capacity building program does not influence the success of a novice practicing administrator.	Teachers	1 (2.9)	2 (5.7)	5 (14.3)	5 (14.3)	21 (62.8)	**34 (100%)**
	Administrator	0	0	1(8.3)	1 (8.3)	10 (83.4)	**12 (100%)**

Qualitative Findings

The purpose of interviewing, then, is to allow us to enter into the other person's

perspective. Qualitative interviewing begins with the assumption that the perspective of

others is meaningful, knowable, and able to be made explicit. We interview to find out

what is in and on someone else's mind, to gather their stories.

(Patton, 2002 p. 341)

The qualitative method used in this study was the grounded theory approach (Creswell, 2009). With the grounded theory approach, the researcher attempts to develop a general abstract theory of a practice or relationship which is established or grounded on the opinion of the participants involved in the study (Creswell, 2009). Patton (2002) acknowledged that the grounded theory approach is a dominant approach for qualitative research. This section presents a summary of the findings from open response survey items and focus groups addressing the perceptions of the program components, leadership behaviors, and capacity building program benefits. There are open-ended survey items 11, 12, 13, and 14 that address program effectiveness and item 18 and 19 addresses their leadership behaviors. However, items 17 and 20 are more general in nature and were not a part of this analysis.

The key for Table 31 is represented by Y = yes and N = no to reflect the research participants perceptions of the related themes.

Table 31

Focus Group and Open-ended Survey Findings Related to Benefits and Outcomes

Themes	Teachers		Principals/Asst Principals		Superintendents	
	Focus Group	Survey Group	Focus Group	Survey Group	Focus Group	Survey Group
ProgramComponents						
Stronger Relationships	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
Increased Confidence as a Leader (Self)	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Increased Confidence as a Leader (Others)	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Growth in Leadership Knowledge Skills	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
LeadershipBehaviors Most Significant of program: grant writing; networking; Mentoring etc.	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Professional Development	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Note. Y = Yes, N = No

Open-ended Survey Findings

Approximately 75% participated in the focus group discussions and about 50%

participated in the open-ended survey items. This data is a result of the teachers and

administrators responses to the open response survey items and the focus group discussions.

In Table 31, open response survey items and the focus group items were organized into

three groups: teachers, principals and assistant principals, and superintendents. A comparison

was made of their thematic responses to see the similarities and differences in their perceptions

of program components and leadership behaviors for the following survey items: *Item 11*:

During the past year did you present at any faculty meetings? Approximately half of the teachers

responded "yes" to this item. The other half may not have been asked, don't feel comfortable

presenting to colleagues, or a topic in which they consider themselves an "expert" may not have been addressed during that time. *Item 12:* During the past year did you help teachers with instructional strategies?; and *Item 19:* I enjoy helping others to implement effective teaching strategies. The responses to items 12 and 19 overwhelmingly were yes. While the theme from the open-ended survey question items and the focus groups stated they increased their confidence as a leader in others, the teacher group responded "no". The factors that could have evoked this response could have been that the item presented in the survey was not clearly presented for their understanding, perhaps they could not assess at the time if they had increased the confidence of someone else, or perhaps they were too modest to acknowledge that they had increased the confidence as a leader in others. Nevertheless, further research would be needed to really know why. The overall findings show the emergent themes positively overlapped throughout the survey items and focus groups questions among each identified group.

The responses in Table 31 received from the survey question items and the focus groups seem to support most of the benefits that the teachers and administrators identified in their survey items responses. The data from this section of the research reflect that the teachers participating in this study feel that the most significant components of the leadership capacity building program can be clustered into the emergent themes as reflected in Table 31. These themes are presented from the survey items as program components and leadership behaviors.

Program Components

Most of the teachers and administrators perceptions received from the open response survey items in regards to the program components that were of value to them included: relationship development, collaboration, motivational speakers, future programs to consider, and student leadership. They perceived relationship development of value to them because it

provided an opportunity to share ideas with someone what works and what doesn't and receive

feedback as to why or why not. They also embraced the mentoring component so they could

continue to have on-going communication after leaving the meeting.   Collaboration initiated

through small group interactions provided participants a chance to acquire a level of comfort that

promoted other learning opportunities. The motivational speakers put it back into perspective as

to why they were educators, but more importantly why it was so important to be an effective

educator. When they discussed future programs they wanted to see how they could cost

effectively meet once a month without the expense of traveling and leaving their students their

instruction over a substitute. They discussed how to include all the teachers in their building,

instead of just a few. They were excited and brainstorming a lot of potential ideas for future

programs as an extension of the leadership capacity building program. Student leadership was

powerful. Through the student leadership component teachers and administrators were able to

hear student voices of their own perceived educational needs, school programs, and suggestions

of things they could do differently.

Leadership Behaviors

Teachers and administrators perceptions of leadership behaviors through the open-ended

survey questions and focus groups were: grant writing, professional development, conference

sessions, networking, mentoring, and sharing. Grant writing was important because of classroom

needs and school needs they foster improvements by utilizing granting writing information

learned. The professional development was perceived as a value to the participants because they

may not have been able to travel a lot due to funding concerns in their respective districts. This

provided a learning opportunity for them through each meeting. Conference sessions were

meaningful to them in ways such as working with parents, alternative instructional strategies for

meeting student needs, and preparing students for leadership roles, as well as for college preparation.

<p align="center">**Focus Group Findings**</p>

Focus group interviews were conducted with three different groups: teachers, assistant principals and principals, and superintendents. The questions presented to the participants addressed how the program components, leadership behaviors and the Leadership Capacity Building Program would serve as a benefit to them. A facilitator and a recorder were assigned to each focus group in order to facilitate accurate recording of responses.

Focus Group Themes

Academics and attendance

1. Students were encouraged to promote college enrollment, take part in college on site visits, and how to begin the college application process.

Student Dropout

1. Student leaders participated in two leadership retreats and monthly sessions in each school system. The sessions emphasized the benefits of school enrollment and completion.

Student Involvement and Sense of Belonging

1. Students learned new skills that they could apply now and in the future to help them feel more connected to other students, faculty, and staff in their district.

2. Through focus groups students shared their perceptions of school with administrators in at least one of the participating school districts.

The teachers felt that the program was a benefit to them overall because of the changes they experienced, and the changes they saw to make their academic programs more rigorous and being able to involve students that are usually not involved in school functions and activities. Teacher leaders are usually respected and listened to by other teachers in their building (Kayzenmeyer & Moeller, 2002).

Principals and Assistant Principals: The response statements were provided as illustrative comments from the participants.

Participant Statements

- *What are your thoughts or reflections of the leadership capacity building program?* Realistic stories from experienced practitioners. The sessions in which participants had an opportunity to share what works and what doesn't work was really good. The student leadership program was really a good thing for students, especially for those that would not have an opportunity at school. Sustaining School Success Grant helped get us started with learning communities.

- *How has student roles changed as a result of participating in the student leadership program?* The students confidence increased just by being involved. As the school climate became more positive, student attitudes towards school improved. Non-traditional students improved their behaviors and academic progress.

Leadership Behavior

- *In what ways has your daily routines changed, if any?* We have implemented book study groups; listened to reflective ideas from teachers as to what can be done to improve student achievement;

- *How has your leadership style changes as a result of participating in the program?* The principal is not the sole problem solver in the building. The discomfort of asking other principals or central office questions when unsure about something has changed. I call whenever I'm not sure about something or need clarification now. Much more open to suggestions from teachers and students than before participating in the program.

- *What do you see as the role of the teacher?* A novice teacher needs to step forward and get involved in the teaching, learning, and leading process. The use of professional development to help train others to be better. New teachers are of value in assisting veteran teachers with new technology innovations.

Superintendents:

The illustrative comments from the respondents that participated are as follows:

- *How can the program be improved so that the funding agency would fund it again?* Continue the professional development, teacher leadership institutional leadership, and have a forum where teachers come together and share best practices with others. Teaching ownership and personal responsibility so that teachers don't bring every problem to the principal or central office. They need problem solving strategies

- *Would you like to continue mentoring programs in the future?* Yes! It was very useful and I learned a lot.

Leadership Behaviors

- *In what ways, if any has the Sustaining School Success grant changed your daily routine as a leader?* I now focus more on student needs and administrative needs

for students. There is more positive collaboration between the administrators and students. Our schools are so spread out that there is little to no interaction between us. We have been told to look for more ways to interact more with the teacher leaders, students, and administrators throughout the district.

- *In what ways did your style of leadership change?* One administrator said their style did not change because he had been involved in previous programs and this was a continuation so more teachers could be involved. A few administrators were first year principals and wasn't able to respond to this question. Another stated that his style didn't change, but the behaviors did. The opportunity to interact with other district administrators throughout the state provided different perspectives from others. The administrative retreat was good, since modeling appropriate behavior was so well received by the participants.

- *How have you seen the roles or behaviors of teachers change?* Teachers are thinking like leaders. They have an idea they call me now, they've never done this before. They are promoting a positive learning community, with on-going reflection.

- *What changes or outcomes have you seen differently in the students?* There has been a decrease in office referrals. Students are motivated by other students in other districts, and have become more motivated.

- *Has your level of tolerance increase towards people who are different?* It's more the same, but some degree tolerance, but more of a deeper understanding of tolerance. It also knocked down barriers or misconceptions.

- *Have you noticed anything particularly power about with non-traditional students?* You have a better chance for change with non-traditional students than traditional students. They now feel valued.

Principals stated that they did not feel that there was adequate time during the sessions for collaboration with colleagues. If collaboration would routinely become part of a daily reflective session, it would be helpful with developing new ideas and addressing issues of concern.

Summary

According to Katzenmeyer and Moeller (2009), "as teacher leaders grow and develop as individuals, they expand their spheres of influence by focusing attention on growth and development of not only themselves, but also others in their schools..." (p. 67). The impact of the leadership capacity building program for teachers and administrators can be a continuous learning process for all stakeholders. Chapter IV provided a detailed description of the quantitative and qualitative findings. In Chapter V, findings are discussed in relationship to each of the research questions. The discussion in Chapter V also explores the implications of the study, recommendations, and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER V. CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to look at teachers' and administrators' perceptions about a

leadership capacity building program. This chapter provides a discussion of the key findings and

emergent themes presented in Chapter IV and the implications of those findings. This chapter

also includes a discussion of areas for future research. The following research questions provided

the framework for this study:

1.   Do teachers and administrators perceive themselves as implementing effective

leadership behaviors and knowledge as measured by the Sustaining School Success (S^3) Survey

Instrument?

2.   What are the perceptions of teacher leaders and administrators about the

effectiveness of leadership behaviors as measured by the Sustaining School Success (S^3) Survey

Instrument?

3.   What are teacher and administrator perceptions about their confidence as a leader

as measured by the Sustaining School Success (S^3) Survey Instrument?

4. What are teacher leader and administrator participants' perceptions of leadership

capacity building programs?

For the purpose of this study data were collected through the use of a researcher-

developed survey, focus groups, and session evaluations with leadership capacity building

program participants in four rural Alabama school districts, referred to as District A, District B, District C, and District D. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze quantitative data. An emergent theme approach was used with qualitative data.

Review of Findings

According to Kochan and Trimble (2000), elements employed in mentoring relationships require collaboration, shared decision making, and systems thinking. These concepts are being engaged in through businesses and educational organizations to develop cultures that promote partnerships, mentoring (Robinson & Darling-Hammond, 1994), and shared governance structures (Bennis, 2003; Shedd & Bacharach, 1991). In education, the focus is on collaboration and co-mentoring (Kochan & Kunkel, 1998; Mullen & Lick, 1999), recognizing the need for interdependence (Kochan & Reed, 2004), and building a sense of community (Kochan & Reed, 2004; Sergiovanni, 1994). Changes at the organizational level require paradigm shifts in the way that individuals think about themselves, their relationships with others, and their place in the work environment (Senge, 1990).

After conducting an analysis of the survey data both quantitatively and qualitatively, it appears that the overall perceptions of teachers and administrators were that there is a need for a leadership capacity building program. One hundred surveys were distributed to participants and fifty-three were returned (53% return rate). The demographic information gathered from the returned surveys indicated that of the fifty-three teachers and administrators returning the surveys 57% held master's degrees, 74% were teacher leaders, 15% were assistant principals, 6% were principals, 1% was a superintendent, and 4% were classified as other central office administrators. Districts A and District D have elected superintendents, and Districts B and C have appointed superintendents. District A had 45% free and reduced lunch, an 18% projected

dropout rate, and 16% local tax revenue. District D had 58% free and reduced lunch, an 8%

projected dropout rate, and 20% local tax revenue. District B had 73% free and reduced lunch,

an 11% projected dropout rate, and 11% local tax revenue. District C had 90% free and reduced

lunch, and 15% projected dropout rate, and 15% local tax revenue. This high poverty rate,

indicated by the high percentage of students eligible for free and reduced lunches, might

contribute to the difficulty these districts face when recruiting and retaining teachers and

administrators. Consistent with findings from research focusing on the needs of rural school

districts (Barley & Beesley, 2007; Beesley & Barley, 2006), the generational poverty in these

rural districts likely influences recruitment and retention of teachers and administrators.

It may be beneficial to conduct research to see if student, teacher or administrator

leadership capacity building programs impact the recruitment and retention of teachers and

administrators, the percentage of students that drop out of school, and the percentage of students

that attend college. Based on the feedback from study participants who returned the surveys,

their responses suggest that the professional development, mentoring, networking opportunities,

and grant writing training provided by S^3 are very much needed in their districts. The

quantitative and qualitative data further suggest that the districts are using the skills learned

through the leadership capacity building program. The next few pages review the findings which

are organized according to the four research questions.

1.   Do teachers and administrators perceive themselves as implementing

effective leadership behaviors and knowledge as measured by the Sustaining School

Success (S^3) Survey Instrument?

Some of the quantitative and qualitative data collected through the use of this instrument

looked at teachers' and administrators' perceptions of effective leadership behavior. The overall

findings related to this research question suggest that "yes" they perceive themselves as implementing effective leadership, knowledge, and behaviors. Participants recognize that it is important to act in these ways and to exhibit these behaviors to better meet student needs. In reviewing the study results, perhaps the most interesting finding was from the teacher and administrator responses about participation in conference presentations. This research suggests that most teachers did not present at conferences, but about half of the teachers who responded to the survey items presented at faculty meetings, and about half of the administrators presented at conferences. All administrators presented at faculty meetings.

One reason for the lack of presentations at professional conferences may be due to funding shortages, traditional organizational structures, at the schools, or other factors. Many districts currently lack the funds for teachers and administrators to attend or present at conferences. Some suggestions for the districts to support professional development are to use their professional development money, encourage teachers and administrators to present at the district level, and write grants that cover expenses for professional development presentations. Professional development presentations should be encouraged to promote continuous teaching and learning. Perhaps superintendents and principals can brainstorm ways to encourage involvement and provide other support in this area. As cited in Fullan (2009), Rosenholtz's study of 78 elementary schools found that they were "stuck", "moving", or "in-between". In her study, she found that a large number of "stuck" schools were in less progressive districts, and "moving" districts were from progressive areas. An excerpt from Rosenholtz (1989) states that "if districts take no responsibility for the in-service needs of principals, then principals become less able colleagues, less effective problem solvers, more reluctant to refer school problems to central office for outside assistance, more threatened by their technical knowledge, and

substantially less help to teachers (as cited in Fullan, 2009 p. 1). Additional research may be needed to determine why teachers and administrators do not present at conferences and to identify creative, low cost strategies for providing meaningful professional development.

   All of the teachers and administrators who responded to the survey stated that they did help teachers with instructional strategies. This finding supports research that a leadership capacity building program helps to build a collaborative environment, and supports the sharing of participants' knowledge and skills. After reflecting on the stated purposes for S^3 and examining the outcomes of the leadership training program, it is clear that the program's objectives were met.

   Based on the participants' responses, a few of the S^3 session topics that especially enhanced leadership behaviors and skills included a session emphasizing grant writing, the development and implementation of future teacher programs, mentoring, and action planning. These sessions provided teachers and administrators an opportunity for professional development in these areas of leadership and enhanced behaviors that directly related to improved conditions in their schools.

   2.   What are the perceptions of teacher leaders and administrators about the effectiveness of leadership behaviors as measured by the Sustaining School Success (S^3) Survey Instrument?

   A leadership program can be helpful with acquiring knowledge and skills regarding legal and ethical issues, a vision for student learning, leadership characteristics, providing clear objectives, developing plans and timelines, and prioritizing needs. There were positive responses from most participating teachers and administrators about these items, suggesting a need to continue the leadership capacity building program in their schools and districts.

3.   What are teacher and administrator perceptions about their confidence as a leader as measured by the Sustaining School Success (S^3) Survey Instrument?

When evaluating the survey items related to confidence as a leader, the majority of responses were positive, although teachers' responses related to confidence in providing professional development were divided. This disparity in responses could be a result of not feeling comfortable presenting in front of their colleagues, not wanting to share their knowledge with others, or perhaps a topic in which they feel they have expertise has not been requested as a presentation. The findings reinforce that long term professional development which is conducted in a collaborative manner can help others become more effective leaders. The most perplexing outcome related to this research question was the teachers' and administrators' responses when asked if they could exercise emotional control. Both groups overwhelmingly stated "yes". However, in item 37 of the survey they were asked about their ability to make difficult decisions under pressure and about half the teachers and administrators responded "no". Yet, over 50% of the respondents stated "yes" to item 38, which asked if they can make good decisions during a crisis. Further research might be needed to gain a better understanding as to perceptions about the differences between making difficult decisions under pressure and making good decisions during a crisis.

4.   What are teacher leader and administrator participants' perceptions of the Sustaining School Success S^{3}leadership capacity building program?

The teachers' and administrators' perception of the S^3 program is that it worked. There appears to be long term and intense collaborative relationships that developed due to participation in the program.

This is an important finding because both teachers and administrators view leadership capacity building as part of their responsibility. This finding supports previous research according to Lambert, Kent, Richert, Collay, and Dietz (1997), that "district office administrators and principals need to explicitly release authority and the staff needs to learn how to enhance personal power and informal authority" (pp. 122–143). Based on the study findings, the relationships developed between teachers and administrators show greater support of one another after participating in the leadership capacity building program. An interesting area for further research would be to explore how those relationships developed, who benefitted from those relationships, and how relationships were sustained after programming ended.

Discussion of the Findings

Research suggests that teacher leaders are usually respected and listened to by other teachers in their building (Kayzenmeyer & Moeller, 2002). Sometimes teacher leaders' and administrators' knowledge of subject matter helps to build confidence and self-esteem when making presentations to faculty members or at conferences. Information from survey respondents show that only 3% of the teachers presented at conferences during the last year, while 47% presented at one or more faculty meeting during the last year. Based on these results, most teachers were provided an opportunity to offer professional development at the building level, but did not have this opportunity beyond their own school or district environment. The survey results show that approximately equal percentages of the district administrators may or may not have presented at conferences. This finding might be due to insufficient funds for out of state travel, therefore limiting opportunities for presenting at conferences for teachers and administrators.

Teacher and administrator survey responses indicate that they strongly agree that this leadership capacity building program is beneficial to the development of an administrator, that this leadership capacity building program would be recommended to those interested in administrative training, and overall, the participants in the program enhanced their leadership skills. Item four of the survey asked for perceptions about the selection of new administrators from participants in the leadership capacity building program. The majority of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that participation in S^3 should be a requirement for administrative employment. The wording of the question may have interfered with their responses since survey item one, "a leadership capacity building program is beneficial to the development of an administrator" received mostly ratings of agree and strongly agree. Survey participants' responses to items five and six also reflect that they agree or strongly agree that this leadership capacity building program influenced a leaders' ability to lead and that all school districts should have a similar leadership capacity building program. Another interesting yet seemingly contradictory finding is that teachers and administrators both disagreed that that participants in this leadership capacity building program were more prepared than non-leadership capacity building program participants. This item stood out, especially in comparison to the responses to other items. Survey item nine results suggest that teachers and administrators both agree that a leadership capacity building program should be required for aspiring administrators to be considered for leadership positions. Responses to item ten on the survey reflect that teachers and administrators disagree that participation in a leadership capacity building program does not influence the success of a novice practicing administrator. In other words, respondents believe that the success of novice administrators was positively influenced by participation in S^3. The overall perception of teachers and administrators towards the S3 leadership capacity

building program was positive and nearly all respondents indicated that they believed the program should be continued.

Implications of the Study

At the beginning of this study the researcher indicated that if the perceptions of teacher leaders and administrators were positive towards the capacity building program, then opportunities for collaboration made available through the program structure, sessions, and applied problem solving situations could lead to the development of more positive relationships and shared leadership opportunities. Shared opportunities for learning, renewed purpose, action research, and increased responsibility demand the realignment of power and authority (Lambert, 1998). One implication from this study suggested by the findings is that teacher leaders and administrators both believe that leadership capacity building within the school districts is valuable for individuals and for the organization. This implication is consistent with research conducted by Blasé and Blasé (1994, 2001), Earl and Fullan (2003), and Kochan and Reed (2004).

Research suggests that for teachers to be prepared to accept shared leadership in the decision making process, teachers must feel empowered (Blasé & Blasé, 2001; Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1998). The results of this study indicate that teacher leaders and administrators benefited from this leadership capacity building program because it helped them to feel empowered. After participation in the program, administrators were more likely to encourage teacher leaders to engage in shared decision making by allowing them the opportunities to be on leadership teams, providing professional development, and by letting them know that they are trusted as teacher leaders.

Responses to open-ended survey questions suggest that teachers feel more professional and empowered as a teacher leader; however, training is needed to be better prepared to make decisions, especially when making decisions quickly or under pressure. Participants also expressed a need for more collaboration between school districts that are similar to their district in addition to those that are unlike their district. Groups with a shared leadership purpose and skills get things done (Fullan, 2010). When these situations arise, teacher confidence, self-esteem, and sense of empowerment soar. Survey results from teachers suggest that more opportunities for collaboration and communication in shared leadership decision making made them feel more confident as leaders. The more confident teachers become, it is more likely that they will make good sound decisions when provided opportunities to do so (Fullan, 2010).

Although there was a low response rate to the open-ended survey questions the participants appeared to be excited about participating and committed to the program based on anecdotal data collected at impromptu meetings in which they expressed opinions about how worthwhile the program had been and their anticipation for a similar program continuing where S[3] left off.

As administrators hire new employees and work to develop existing teacher leaders to their potential, it may allow administrators to get the right person in the right position to build additional organizational capacity (Fullan, 2010). Teachers and administrators in this study noted that continuous training, collaboration, team work, and team building are needed to develop their individual and organizational leadership capacity.

Funding is necessary in all four districts to be able to continue the professional development needed to develop new leadership capacity building programs. Findings from this

study suggest that participants want to be able to continue capacity building training opportunities and not have to stop due to the lack of funding.

The study findings strongly supported the need for mentoring programs throughout the leadership capacity building program. Mentoring in S^3 was not limited to just the teachers, but was also available for all participants. Mentoring allowed for continuous development of professional relationships and collaboration among colleagues. Furthermore, with university and community partnerships, the practicing superintendents were able to engage in learning opportunities that continued to develop and enhance skills for teachers and administrators as well as themselves.

This research has explored the benefits of developing leadership capacity building programs. The need to look for other methods of developing teacher leaders and administrators reflects a concerted effort to address recruitment and retention in rural and economically distressed districts. As a researcher and Executive Director of Human Resources, I believe it is critical that the research does not end here, if stakeholders are sincerely interested in preparing teacher leaders and administrators to become shared decision makers. Teacher working conditions such as having strong building level leaders and having opportunities to engage in meaningful professional development and shared decision making help to establish organizational cultures that support recruitment and retention of teachers and administrators (Easley, 2006). The Sustaining School Success program incorporated these school characteristics and others into its implementation.

The complexity of today's schools requires a focus on collaborative leadership (Kochan & Reed, 2005), the empowerment of teachers (Short & Greer, 1997), and ongoing opportunities for examination of teaching practices and collaboration with other professionals (Wiggins &

McTighe, 2006). A leadership capacity building program such as S^3 helped to enhance or facilitate the development of organizational environments that supported these practices for dealing with increasing complexity in schools while simultaneously addressing personnel recruitment and retention concerns.

<div align="center">**Recommendations Based on Survey Responses**</div>

As part of the survey responses, the teachers and administrators gave their recommendations for future leadership capacity building programs. The teachers and administrators felt that their recommendations as participants may enhance leadership capacity programs for future participants.

Teachers

A recommendation for teacher leaders would be to continue to seek leadership enhancement through professional development. Some of the areas identified for continuous professional development needs were: decision making, collaboration, communication skills, team building, capacity building, mentoring, and conflict resolution. Teacher leaders feel that there is a need to recognize and celebrate community stakeholders. Reflection on prior experiences is important for teacher leaders as they build confidence and develop deeper professional relationships with their peers. It is also important that they embrace technology and other systems facilitating their development as change agents.

Administrators

The literature suggests that administrators' use of "power" may very well play a role in the way shared leadership and decision making is perceived by teachers (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009). It is important for administrators to listen to teacher leaders so that teacher leaders will feel that their voice is important. This belief may make a difference in terms of teacher readiness

to participate in the decision- making process. Drake and Roe (1999) state that when an administrator demonstrates his or her expertise and model effective collaboration, they are helping teacher leaders grown grow and learn professionally. As a result, teacher confidence, self-esteem, and sense of empowerment may soar. The survey results from teacher leaders suggest that more opportunities for collaboration and communication in shared leadership decision making in their schools may make them feel more confident in their own leadership skills. The more confident they become, the more likely it is that they will make sound decisions when provided with leadership opportunities.

Limitations of the Study

This study examined teacher leader and administrator perceptions of a specific leadership capacity building program implemented in four rural, high poverty school districts. The culture, experiences, and opportunities to apply leadership skills in each of the four rural Alabama districts were different. All survey data were self reported and the data collected were interpreted based on the assumption that the participants surveyed were honest and responded independently without the influence of their colleagues. Further, there was an expectation that focus group responses reflected the participants' point of view. The limitations to the study follow.

1.   The study was limited to teacher leaders and administrators from four rural Alabama school districts.

2. There was limited opportunity for teacher leaders or administrators to reflect on open-ended survey questions, so some were left unanswered.

3. There were different teacher leaders and administrative participants involved throughout the program in order to curtail excessive absenteeism, so those responding in this study may not have been the core group of participants.

4. The ceiling effect was also determined to be a limitation. The ceiling effect is when a measurement cannot take on a value higher than some limit or ceiling which is set by the measuring instrument. There was no variance for the yes/no responses; therefore, the majority of the survey respondents answered "yes" because it was more closely related to their belief system.

5. The researcher-developed survey needed additional information that the demographics section did not provide, the Likert-type rating scale needed to be reversed, and more Likert-type scale questions were needed. It would have been useful to reduce the number of yes/no responses that caused the ceiling effect discussed above.

6. There were many missing data chunks, particularly from the open-ended survey question participant responses, which affected the thoroughness and accuracy of the findings.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study examined teacher leaders' and administrators' perceptions of a leadership capacity building program in four rural Alabama school districts. The researcher feels that if this study were to be replicated, there should be fewer open-ended questions on the survey. Few participants completed all of the open-ended questions, yet their comments were overwhelmingly positive on other areas of the survey and in the focus group responses. Non-response should not

be interpreted as negative response. Six other recommendations for future research are offered below.

A first recommendation is to gather more background information about the teacher leaders and administrators such as age, gender, race, grade level, subject area taught, and the number of years as a practicing administrator. The data from this research did not provide enough informational differences in teacher and administrator demographics which could have been used to analyze responses related to perceptions about the leadership capacity building program. Additional demographic information might refine or enhance findings related to teacher leaders' and administrators' perceptions regarding the S^3 leadership capacity building program.

A second recommendation is to conduct follow up site visits to obtain additional understanding regarding teacher leaders' and administrators' perceptions of this leadership capacity building program. Due to the limited responses on the open-ended survey items, the researcher may have received only "surface" level information instead of more detailed responses. Conducting a site visit would help to provide insightful information.

A third recommendation is to identify effective school leaders in the researcher's community as well as in these four rural Alabama communities. An ethnographic study could be conducted to assess effective leadership characteristics of the identified leaders in different types of school districts.

A fourth recommendation is to complete a follow-up study in five to ten years to determine if any of the program participants became administrators after participating in the leadership capacity building program. If so, it would be interesting to explore what major factors contributed to them becoming administrators. If they did not become administrators, it would be

interesting to explore their perceptions of the factors that contributed to them not becoming an administrator.

A fifth recommendation is to identify the ethnicity and the gender of administrators who participated in the leadership capacity building program. The researcher suggests that there may be a correlation between the educational success of African American students and the ethnicity and gender of their K–12 administrative leaders.

A sixth recommendation is to compare comparable leadership capacity building program effectiveness in low and moderate socioeconomic school districts as well as rural and urban school districts. Providing data that can document why a leadership capacity building program is beneficial in specific low socioeconomic rural or population dense school districts is important. Identifying practices that work even in the most challenging of districts opens the doors for continued research in hard to staff school districts that are continually challenged with filling teaching and administrative positions. Urban districts receive attention related to their staffing difficulties, but rural school districts are faced with challenges relative to their own culture and community which also need to be addressed. Further research in this area could help to identify context-specific and context-neutral approaches for developing organizational leadership capacity.

Summary

This research was conducted to obtain information about teacher leaders' and administrators' perceptions about a specific leadership capacity building program. The Sustaining School Success research suggests that teacher leaders and administrators want more professional development and training focused on building leadership capacity within their schools. Further findings suggest that administrators and teacher leaders need to work

continuously towards developing trusting relationships. Once that has been achieved, it can lead to on-going capacity building within the schools and promote shared decision making.

Policymakers need to include resources in their educational budget for continuous improvement for teacher leaders and administrators programs. Policymakers can set an example by building leadership capacity through the involvement of teachers and administrators as part of the decision making and governing bodies at the State Department of Education. Since most policymakers are not practitioners, it could promote a collaborative effort in K–12 education if teachers and/or administrators were invited to be a voice on state-level committees and subcommittees. For successful change to occur in the 21st Century, the change must be embraced from all stakeholders and constituents including those administrators in the K–12 district, teachers, parents, community leaders and policymakers.

By engaging teacher leaders in the day-to-day leadership of school operations, it may bridge the efforts that are needed to work together, and begin resolving teaching and learning concerns for students. By collaboratively embracing these efforts, a new level of respect and trust may evolve when stakeholders realize it is not about teacher leaders and administrators, but doing what is in the best interest of their students. It is important that teacher leaders and administrators sustain leadership capacity building so that their students can reach their fullest potential. As stated by Andy Hargreaves et al. (2003), "sustainable leadership maintains improvement from one leader to the next and spreads across many leaders and schools in a district not just one or two" (p. 32). Administrators can no longer be the sole decision makers if they are committed to successfully implementing leadership capacity building programs. A shared leadership relationship must be developed, nurtured, and sustained.

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Appendix 1

Auburn University Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval Letter

Auburn University

Auburn University, Alabama 36849

November 6, 2006

MEMORANDUM TO: Dr. Cynthia Reed, Director
Truman Pierce Institute

PROTOCOL TITLE: "Sustaining School Success"

IRB FILE NO.:   #06-216 EX 0611

APPROVAL DATE: November 1, 2006
EXPIRATION DATE: October 31, 2007

The referenced protocol was approved "Exempt" from further review under 45 CFR 46.101(b)(1) by IRB procedure on November 1, 2006. You should retain this letter in your files, along with a copy of the revised protocol and other pertinent information concerning your study. If you should anticipate a change in any of the procedures authorized in this protocol, you must request and receive IRB approval prior to implementation of any revision. Please reference the above IRB file number in any correspondence regarding this project.

If you will be unable to file a Final Report on your project before October 31, 2007, you must submit a request for an extension of approval to the IRB no later than October 10, 2007. If your IRB authorization expires and/or you have not received written notice that a request for an extension has been approved prior to October 31, 2007, you must suspend the project immediately and contact the Office of Human Subjects Research for assistance.

A Final Report will be required to close your IRB project file. You are reminded that consent forms must be retained at least three years after completion of your study.

If you have any questions concerning this Board action, please contact the Office of Human Subjects Research at 844-5966.

Sincerely,

Niki L. Johnson, JD, MBA, Director
Office of Human Subjects Research
Research Compliance Auburn University

cc: Dr. José Llanos

Appendix 2

Teacher Survey

This survey asks questions about your professional experiences as related to your current employment. The information you provide will be used to improve conditions that contribute to learning, and to support and encourage sustained and substantive school improvement. To assist in data analysis, please provide the last four digits of your social security number. _ _ _ _   Thank you.

Instructions: Please circle your best response in dark ink or pencil.

1. Your number of years of teaching experience:

    ____ 0-3
    ____ 4-6
    ____ 7-9
    ____10-12
    ____13-15
    ____16-18
    ____19-25
    ____26+

2. Your highest degree awarded:

    ____Bachelors
    ____Masters
    ____Specialist
    ____Doctorate

3. Your current position (check all that apply):

    ____Superintendent
    ____Assistant Superintendent
    ____Department Director
    ____Principal
    ____Assistant Superintendent
    ____Teacher
    ____Other
(specify)_____

4. What are your career aspirations 5 years from now?_____

5. What are your career aspirations 10 years from now?_____

6. Do you have a professional mentor?
Yes   No

7. How many years have you been in your current school system?

    1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 <15 >15

8. Do you have a home computer with internet access?   Yes   No

9. Education is important to me? Yes   No

10. During the past year did you present at any conferences?   Yes   No

11. During the past year did you present at any faculty meetings? Yes   No

12. During the past year, did you help other teachers with instructional strategies?
Yes   No

13. During the past year did you represent teachers on a leadership decision making team? Yes   No

14. Do you read and stay abreast of best leadership practices for k-12?
Yes   No

15. I can change negative situations in my professional career to positive situations.
Yes   No

16. My school is a great place to teach.
Yes   No

17. My opinions, concerns, and suggestions are valued by my principal.
Yes   No

18. I am a leader.   Yes   No

19. I enjoy helping others to implement effective teaching strategies.   Yes   No

20. I attend school activities even when I'm not the designee to attend.   Yes   No

21. I enjoy providing professional development to teachers.   Yes   No

22. Decisions are made for effectiveness and re-evaluated periodically.   Yes No

23. I exercise good emotional control.
Yes   No

24. I am aware of ethical and legal issues with professional relationships.
Yes   No

25. I am aware of ethical and legal issues concerning relationships with students.   Yes   No

26. Effective communication is important with students.   Yes   No

27. Effective communication is important with faculty and staff.   Yes   No

28. Effective communication is important with parents and community leaders.
Yes   No

29. I share my personal growth with colleagues through professional development   Yes   No

30. I use technology to improve teaching and learning.   Yes   No

30. I am proficient in using electronic communication devices.   Yes   No

32. The school's mission drives the instructional strategies for teachers.

33. I have a vision for successful student learning.   Yes   No

34. I have a vision for successful leadership characteristics.   Yes   No

35. When I recommend a project I have clear objectives, plans and a timeline.
Yes   No

36. I prioritize the most important tasks on my "to do" list.   Yes   No

37. I have a hard time making decisions under pressure.   Yes   No

38. I can make good decisions during a crisis.   Yes   No

39. I can immediately assume leadership responsibilities if needed.   Yes   No

40. Faculty collaboration and input is needed prior to implementation of new programs.   Yes   No

41. I support faculty and staff recognitions.
Yes   No

41. Teachers are experts in specified   content areas.   Yes   No

43. Teachers build capacity with their grade level.   Yes   No

45. Teachers build capacity among students.   Yes   No

44. Teachers build capacity within their school.   Yes   No

46. All teachers make good administrators.   Yes   No

For each of the following statements below please place an X in the box that best reflects how you feel:

     1 - Strongly Disagree
     2 - Disagree
     3 - Agree
     4 – Strongly Agree
     5 - Don't know

	1	2	3	4	5
1. A leadership capacity building program is beneficial to the development of an administrator.					
2. I would recommend the leadership capacity building program to others interested in administrative training.					
3. Participants in a leadership capacity building program enhance their leadership skills.					
4. New administrators are selected from the Leadership Capacity Building Program only.					
5. A leadership capacity building program does influence a leaders ability to lead.					
6. All school systems should have a leadership capacity building program.					
7. I would accept an offer to be a presenter for a leadership capacity building program.					
8. Participants in leadership capacity building program are no more prepared than non leadership capacity building participants.					
9. Leadership capacity building participation should be required for aspiring administrators to be considered for leadership positions.					
10. Participation in a leadership capacity building program does not influence the success of a novice practicing administrator.					

11. What were the three most significant components of the leadership capacity building program for you?

   a.

   b.

   c.

12. What was the least significant component of the leadership capacity building program?

13. What suggestion (s) would you have to make leadership programs more effective?

14. Should a Leadership Capacity Building Program be a vital training ground for practicing and aspiring administrators?

   Yes or No; If yes, what issues/topics would you like to see addressed?

15. Would you be interested in being a presenter? Yes or No; If, yes please specify topics of interest to you.

16. Would you be interested in being a presenter? Yes or No; If, yes please specify topics of interest to you.

17. How would being a teacher leader benefit you as a prospective administrator?

18. What area of expertise do you possess as a teacher leader to be a facilitator for other teachers in your district?

19. What do you consider your strengths as a leader to be?

20. What do you consider your area (s) of growth as a leader?

21. What one word would best describe you as a leader?

22. What do you consider your strengths as a leader to be?

23. What do you consider your area (s) of growth as a leader?

24. What one word would best describe you as a leader?

Thanks to all of you for participating and completing this evaluation survey for the enhancement of future programs.

Addie C. Swinney
6-01-06

Appendix 3

Administrator Survey

Sustaining School Success
Auburn University/The Truman Pierce Institute Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) 2006-2007 Administrators' Survey

This survey asks questions about your professional experiences as related to your current employment. The information you provide will be used to improve conditions that contribute to learning, and to support and encourage sustained and substantive school improvement. To assist in data analysis, please provide the last four digits of your social security number. _ _ _ _   Thank you.

Instructions: Please circle your best response in dark ink or pencil.

1. Your number of years of as school administrator:

    ____ 0-3
    ____ 4-6
    ____ 7-9
    ____10-12
    ____13-15
    ____16-18
    ____19-25
    ____26+

2. Your highest degree awarded:

    ____Bachelors
    ____Masters
    ____Specialist
    ____Doctorate

3. Your current position (check all that apply):

    ____Superintendent
    ____Assistant Superintendent
    ____Department Director
    ____Principal
    ____Assistant Superintendent
    ____Teacher
    ____Other
    (specify)_____
    ____

4. What are your career aspirations 5 years from now?_____

5. What are your career aspirations 10 years from now?_____

6. Do you have a professional mentor?
    Yes   No

7. How many years have you been in your current school system?

    1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10   <15   >15

8. Do you have a home computer with internet access?   Yes   No

9. Education is important to me.   Yes   No

10. During the past year did you present at any conferences?

    Yes   No

11. During the past year did you present at any faculty meetings?

    Yes   No

12. During the past year did you help teachers with instructional strategies?

    Yes   No

13. During the past year did you represent administrators on a leadership decision making team?
    Yes   No

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Instructions: Please circle your best response in dark ink or pencil.

14. Do you read and stay abreast of best leadership practices for k-12?
　　　　　Yes　　No

15. I can change negative situations in my professional career to positive situations.
Yes　　No

16. My school is a great place to work.
　　Yes　　No

17. My opinions, concerns, and suggestions are valued by my superintendent.
　　Yes　　No

18. I am a leader.　　Yes　　No

19. I enjoy helping others to implement effective teaching strategies.　Yes　　No

20. I attend school activities even when I'm not the designee to attend.　Yes　　No

21. I enjoy providing professional development to teachers.　Yes　　No

22. Decisions are made for effectiveness and re-evaluated periodically.　Yes　No

23. I exercise good emotional control.
　　Yes　No

24. I am aware of ethical and legal issues with professional relationships.
　　Yes　　No

25. I am aware of ethical and legal issues concerning relationships with students.
　　Yes　　No

26. Effective communication is important with teachers.　　Yes　　No

27. Effective communication is important with faculty and
　　　　Yes　　No

28. Effective communication is important with parents and community leaders.
Yes　No

29. I share my personal growth with colleagues through professional development .
　Yes　　No

30. I use technology to improve school operation.　Yes　　No

31. I am proficient in using electronic communication devices.　Yes　　No

32. The school's mission drives the instructional strategies for teachers.

33. I have a vision for successful student learning.　Yes　　No

34. I have a vision for successful leadership characteristics.　Yes　　No

35. When I recommend a project, I have clear objectives, plans and a timeline.
　　　　Yes　　No

36. I prioritize the most important tasks on my "to do" list.　Yes　　No

37. I have a hard time making decisions under pressure.　　Yes　　No

38. I can make good decisions during a crisis.　　Yes　　No

39. I can immediately assume leadership responsibilities if needed.　Yes　　No

2

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Instructions: Please circle your best response in dark ink or pencil.

40. Faculty collaboration and input is needed prior to implementation of new programs.   Yes   No

41. I support faculty and staff recognitions.   Yes   No

41. My teachers are experts in specified content areas.   Yes

43. My teachers build capacity with their grade level.   Yes   No

44. My teachers build capacity within their school.   Yes   No

45. My teachers build capacity among students.
Yes   No

46. My teachers make good administrators.   Yes No

3

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For each of the following statements below please place an X in the box that best reflects how you feel:

1 - Strongly Disagree
2 - Disagree
3 - Agree
4 – Strongly Agree
5 - Don't know

	1	2	3	4	5
1. A leadership capacity building program is beneficial to the development of an administrator.					
2. I would recommend the leadership capacity building program to others interested in administrative training.					
3. Participants in a leadership capacity building program enhance their leadership skills.					
4. New administrators are selected from the Leadership Capacity Building Program only.					
5. A leadership capacity building program does influence a leaders ability to lead.					
6. All school systems should have a leadership capacity building program.					
7. I would accept an offer to be a presenter for a leadership capacity building program.					
8. Participants in leadership capacity building program are no more prepared than non leadership capacity building participants.					
9. Leadership capacity building participation should be required for aspiring administrators to be considered for leadership positions.					
10. Participation in a leadership capacity building program does not influence the success of a novice practicing administrator.					

4

Instructions: Please write in dark ink or pencil your best responses

16. How would the presence of teacher leaders benefit you as an administrator?

17. What area of expertise do you possess as an administrator to be a facilitator for the teachers in your district?

18. What do you consider your strengths as a leader to be?

19. What do you consider your area (s) of growth as a leader?

20. What one word would best describe you as a leader?

Thanks to all of you for participating and completing this evaluation survey for the enhancement of future programs.

Addie C. Swinney
6-01-06

Appendix 4

Superintendents' Focus Group Protocols

1. What are your reactions or general comments about the leadership program?

2. What were the programs intended and unintended benefit to you?

3. In what ways has the leadership program changed your daily routine if any? Principals? Teachers?

4. How was your assigned mentor beneficial to you as Superintendent?

5. Do you feel that mentors should be continued in future leadership program proposals?

6. In what ways, if any has your leadership style changed or been enhanced as a result of participating in the leadership program.

7. Have you seen a change in any of your students, teachers or building principals that participated in the leadership program?

8. Do you feel that you have an increased sense of tolerance and understanding for people that are socially, culturally, socioeconomically and racially different as a result of participating in the leadership program?

9. Compare and contrast your perceptions of traditional and non-traditional students leadership abilities after participating in the program.

10. What impact if any, will participation in the leadership program have on your school improvement plans and your school action plans?

11. Which program or session was most beneficial to you? Why?

12. What suggestions do you have for improving the leadership program?

13. What "coaching" programs would you like to see implemented into future leadership programs?

14. Is there anything else that you would like to share that would improve or enhance similar leadership programs in the future?