

**African American Teacher Leaders: Selections, Supports, Barriers**

by

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## Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the differences, if any, existed in the selection, supports and barriers to teacher leadership between African American and Caucasian teacher leaders based on the perceptions of teacher leaders and elementary school principals. Current research indicates that administrators cannot, and should not, be the only leaders in charge of school improvement. In order to maximize student learning, teachers must assume roles of leadership and take on more responsibility for school-wide change (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Saxl & Miles, 2000).

The Teacher Leadership School Survey (TLSS) developed by Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009) was utilized for this study. The TLSS contains seven dimensions of support for teacher leaders. These supports include Developmental Focus, Recognition, Autonomy, Collegiality, Participation, Open Communication and Positive Environment. Participants in this study consisted of 13 principals and 16 teachers total from the East Alabama Regional Inservice Area, the Black Belt Regional Inservice Area, and the Wiregrass Regional Inservice Area. The research was conducted using a mixed methods design including a survey and open ended questions to obtain demographic data and questions relating to the thoughts and views on teacher leadership from both teachers and principals. Findings suggest that the perceptions of the participants were consistent across both ethnic groupings and there were no statistically significant differences in the selection, supports and barriers to teacher leadership, although these findings are not generalizable due to the small number of participants in this study.

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## CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

### **Introduction**

Each presidential administration has its own view of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) which was enacted to ensure that all children meet academic standards, the achievement gap between diverse populations is closed, and no child is left behind (U.S. Department of Education, 2001). This Act was formerly referred to as the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 under the Bush Administration but has since gone back to the name of ESEA under the 2010 Obama Administration. School systems across the nation have struggled to meet the demands of NCLB/ESEA largely due to the requirement for disaggregation of test data (Simpson, LaCava, & Graner, 2004). When looking at data by demographic categories, it can reveal the struggles and disparities among diverse student populations (U.S. Department of Education, 2001). Using this approach, some previously high performing school systems no longer met adequate yearly progress if there were disparities in how populations in the school performed on accountability measures. State and federal demands for high student achievement, along with the sanctions for not meeting these demands, have drastically changed how schools are structured (Simpson, LaCava, & Graner, 2004). However, improving student achievement involves more than simple organizational changes. Due to the complexity involved, principals and district level administrators cannot be the sole leaders making the decisions for continuous improvement in student achievement. School principals need substantial

participation by other educators (Elmore, 2000; Lambert, 2002; Olson, 2000; Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2001).

The standards-based movement is forcing the question of whether the principal has the knowledge and skills to perform this new instructional leadership role without relying on additional sources of assistance (Elmore, 2000; Lambert, 1998; Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2001). The standards-based movement localizes accountability for student learning to the individual school level rather than the district level (Elmore, 2000). The responsibility for this accountability belongs to the school and the people who work in it. As a result, a basic premise of local education governance may have been undermined because of standards-based reform. If schools are going to improve, principals must focus their efforts not only on student achievement, learning and accountability, but also on facilitating the development of teacher leaders (Mullen & Jones, 2008). In order to maximize student learning, teachers must assume leadership roles and take part in the responsibility for school-wide change (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009; Muijs & Harris, 2003). It is clear that students learn largely as a consequence of what goes on in individual schools (Barth, 2001; Elmore, 2000; Lambert 2002).

Strong leadership is the key to effective schools (Lambert, 1998; Leithwood, 2006; Marzano, 2005; Murphy, 2005). With increased demands on school administrators in the areas of accountability and high stakes testing, shared leadership or the development of leadership capacity in schools has quickly become one vital ingredient in the school improvement movement (Lambert, 2003). The notion of the school principal as the sole instructional leader is quickly changing and school administrators are looking more to teachers to help develop a shared leadership in which teachers take an enhanced role in the improvement of teaching and learning (Bolman & Deal, 2002; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009; Lambert, 2003). Leadership

must be “embedded in the school community as a whole ... this broadening of the concept of leadership suggests shared responsibility for a shared purpose of community” (Lambert, 1998, p. 5). Current leadership roles for teachers include serving as mentors, team leaders, department chairs, grade-level chairs and professional development providers just to name a few. According to Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009); “within every school there is a sleeping giant of teacher leadership that can be a strong catalyst for making changes to improve student learning” (p. 2). In order to have sustained, lasting school improvement, the involvement of all stakeholders is critical (Elmore, 2000; Lambert, 2002, 1998; Olson, 2000; Spillane, et al., 2001).

There are many terms used to identify shared leadership approaches. Distributive leadership, leadership capacity, and teacher leadership are a few of the shared leadership approaches that are discussed in the following sections. Distributive leadership theory supports the need for principals to share leadership with teachers (Gronn, 2002; Muijs & Harris, 2003). Research conducted on high performing schools where there is high student achievement for all often emphasizes the importance of having teachers engaged in the sharing of instructional leadership responsibilities (Barth, 2001; Darling-Hammond, 1995; Lambert, 2003). Other researchers noted that improvements in student achievement can be expected as a result of increased teacher leadership activities and responsibilities (Harris & Lambert 2003; Hart 1995; Murphy, 2005; Schmoker, 1999).

A primary concern of teacher leadership is the development of high-quality learning and teaching in schools (Harris & Lambert, 2003). Harris and Lambert (2003) also suggest teacher leadership as a means of empowering teachers since this empowerment improves teacher self-efficacy in relation to student learning and has positive influences on teachers’ ability to innovate in the classroom and have a positive effect on student learning outcomes.

There are multiple definitions for teacher leadership but all have a common focus which includes changing roles for teachers. For example, Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009) define teacher leadership as “leaders who lead within and beyond the classroom; identify with and contribute to a community of teacher learners and leaders; influence others toward improved educational practice; and accept responsibility for achieving the outcomes of their leadership” (p. 6). Lambert (2003) defines teacher leaders 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” (p. 33).

Fay (1992) defines a teacher leader as a practicing teacher, chosen by fellow faculty members to lead them in ways determined by the context of individual school needs, who has formal preparation and scheduled time for a leadership role which, to preserve the teacher mission, calls for neither managerial nor supervisory duties (p. 1). Pellicer and Anderson (1995) defined teacher leadership as teachers helping teachers in order to better help students. Teacher leadership “involves helping teachers work together to establish and achieve the goals and objectives of the school” (p. 22). LeBlanc and Shelton state that teacher leadership includes:

(a) modeling positive attitudes and enthusiasm; (b) devoting time to doing whatever it takes to make the school work better; (c) enhancing student learning through working with other teachers on improving pedagogy; and (d) being recognized, appreciated, respected, and/or valued for such efforts. (p. 33)

“Leadership is a reciprocal process between leaders and their constituents” (Kouzes & Posner, 2007, p. 28). There are specific qualities that people generally look for in a leader or “one that they would willingly follow” (p. 29). Leaders that people will willingly follow are

honest, forward-looking, inspiring and competent. These qualities complement an exemplary leader.

Kouzes and Posner (2007) describe five practices of exemplary leaders that help organizations achieve extraordinary things. Leadership does not focus on personality but on specific behaviors. The five practices are modeling the way, inspiring a shared vision, challenging the process, enabling others to act, and encouraging the heart. Below is a brief description of each practice.

1. **Modeling the Way** — Modeling the way involves setting the example about what is important. More importantly, modeling the way is about “walking the walk.” Good leaders go first and are judged by their actions and not just deeds or words.
2. **Inspiring a Shared Vision** — Inspiring a shared vision focuses on having a goal or dream that is the driving force behind future successes. Leaders must be able to effectively communicate the vision of the organization and how it relates to the common good of all involved in order to have a viable and sustainable organization.
3. **Challenging the Process** — Challenging the process involves the risk-taking, innovation and creativity that leaders possess. Leaders are not afraid to fail and they learn from their failures as well as their successes.
4. **Enabling Others to Act** — Enabling others to act involves engaging all parties involved in fostering collaboration and building trust of all who have a stake in achieving the vision. This in turn helps others in the group become leaders as well.
5. **Encouraging the Heart** — Encouraging the heart focuses on a leader’s ability to utilize genuine acts of caring to uplift the spirits of the people in their organization.

There are specific skills and characteristics that principal leaders should possess in order to solve the myriad of problems in the schools in which they work. Marzano, Waters and McNulty (2005) suggest that the leadership behaviors that have been researched over the span of 35 or more years “provides strong guidance on specific leadership behaviors for school administrators and that those behaviors have well-documented effects on student achievement” (p. 7). There are 25 factors or categories identified that positively affect student achievement, student attitudes, student behavior, teacher attitudes, teacher behaviors, and dropout rates. Of the 25 factors or categories, the 10 that follow are qualities of effective teacher leaders:

1. High expectations for student learning
2. Communication and interaction
3. Emotional and interpersonal support
4. Collaboration
5. Discussion of instructional issues
6. Classroom observation and feedback to teachers
7. Support of risk taking
8. Monitoring student progress and sharing findings
9. Use of student progress for program improvement
10. Role modeling

Regardless of the numerous theories about which method, curriculum, or philosophy should be used to increase educational accountability measures, an accomplished teacher is, and always will be, essential to student success (Lambert, 2003; Rowley, 1999; Schmoker, 1999). When effective teachers are nurtured and provided opportunities to lead, their success is more likely to be duplicated across the entire school (Rowley, 1999). When effective teachers are



afforded opportunities to improve their own practice and use their expertise to have a positive impact on the larger population, results can include increased and improved student achievement and learning for all students while potentially improving the teaching and learning opportunities for all teachers (Harris & Lambert, 2003). According to the National Commission on Teaching (2003),

... quality teaching requires strong professional learning communities. Collegial interchange, not isolation, must become the norm for teachers. Communities of learning can no longer be considered utopian; they must become the building blocks that establish a new foundation of America's schools. (p. 17)

Several states have developed formal programs for developing teacher leaders such as the Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency Teacher Leadership Academy. This academy is a “customized professional development service designed to enhance leadership skills within the context of the school that requested the service” (p. 1). The state of Ohio has restructured the teacher licensure system by “providing a model for teaching and learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century... providing opportunities for teachers to advance in their careers, and serve as leaders of school improvement” ([http://events.ccsso.org/projects/Five\\_State\\_Teacher\\_Leadership\\_Consortium/](http://events.ccsso.org/projects/Five_State_Teacher_Leadership_Consortium/)). Currently, as many as eleven states have formal teacher leadership programs. These include Alabama, Delaware, Georgia, Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Ohio ([http://www.betterhighschools.org/MidwestSIG/documents/Handout\\_TeacherLeaders.pdf](http://www.betterhighschools.org/MidwestSIG/documents/Handout_TeacherLeaders.pdf)).

The state of Alabama has taken a leading role in developing *Professional Pathways for Teachers* (Thacker, 2008) that creates clear roles and career pathways for teachers. This model “proposes to develop the capacity of interested teachers to serve in such roles as coach, mentor,

facilitator of professional learning, instructional and curriculum designers, and through this work to help strengthen the professional learning community in their schools” (p. 9). On January 17, 2006, Governor Bob Riley convened the Governor’s Commission on Quality Teaching with a challenge for its members “to examine, recommend, and work to implement laws, policies, and practices affecting teachers and teaching effectiveness to ensure student success in Alabama’s public schools” and to “promote the aggressive recruitment, preparation, support, retention and growth of quality teachers in order to raise student achievement in Alabama” (p. 15). The intent of the Pathways initiative, which was developed as part of the Commission’s work, is to transform the teaching profession and the culture of schools across the state of Alabama. The overriding purpose of Pathways is to ensure that every student in Alabama experiences high quality teaching every day. Developers know the importance of collaborative and peer-supported planning, delivery, and assessment of instruction at every career stage. Most importantly, they recognize that improvement of practice occurs when teachers collaboratively examine the impact of their instruction on student learning and makes adjustments based upon findings (p. 12).

The outcomes resulting from innovations in teaching and the teaching profession as a whole include the following as stated in *Professional Pathways for Teachers*:

- **A School Culture that Supports Adult Learning** — In order for every student in Alabama to experience high quality teaching every day, school cultures must change to nurture and promote adult learning. This requires both supportive norms (e.g., the expectation that teachers inquire into the impact of their instruction on student achievement) and structures (e.g., time and processes that support inquiry). Teams of teachers must embrace the question: What difference are we making for student

learning? Not only must teachers be committed to asking this and related questions on an ongoing basis, but also school leaders must ensure that time and other resources enable and facilitate teacher inquiry and continuous improvement.

- **Recruitment and Retention of Talented Individuals** — Among the hallmarks of the Professional Pathways design are career choices, flexibility, teacher ownership of the profession, and expectations of career-long, professional learning within a team-based structure. These features should help attract talented young people into the profession as well as retain teachers at all stages of their careers.
- **Teacher-Driven Process** — If the teaching profession is to achieve the outcomes identified above, teachers must have the opportunity to take greater ownership of and exercise greater responsibility for their profession. This means increased involvement of teachers in recruiting and monitoring new members, opportunities for peer review and assessment resulting in formative feedback, improvement, and advancement. (p. 22)

*Professional Pathways for Alabama Teachers* designates five stages of career development for teachers: Apprentice Teacher, Classroom Teacher, Professional Teacher, Master Teacher, and Learning Designer, each of which is defined below:

- **Apprentice Teacher** is the designation for prospective teachers (i.e., individuals who have been admitted to approved teacher education programs or alternative baccalaureate certification programs) and interns. Apprentice Teachers work with Professional or Master Teachers in approved clinical experiences.
- **Classroom Teacher** is the designation for the individual who chooses to focus exclusively on student learning. While working on teams with colleagues, the

Classroom Teacher chooses not to pursue the work required for the Professional Teacher designation, nor to assume leadership responsibilities associated with that role.

- **Professional Teacher** is the designation for individuals who want to spend most of their time with students in their own classrooms, but who are also interested in leading teams of colleagues as department chair, grade level chair, school improvement committee chair, cooperating teacher, and other similar roles.

Professional Teacher is the gateway into the new roles envisioned by the *Professional Pathways* system.

- **Master Teacher** is the designation for individuals who qualify to assume more complex roles. These roles may focus on either supporting the learning of peers (e.g., mentor, demonstration teacher) or teaching larger numbers of students (e.g., distance learning teacher).
- **Learning Designer** is the designation pursued by the Professional Teacher who is interested in systems design. This designation might incorporate specialists in any one of the following areas: assessment, instructional design, curriculum design and mapping, or instructional technology. (pp. 23–25)

Although there are many efforts to improve teacher leadership opportunities, additional research is needed to identify the supports necessary for the development of teacher leaders and to ensure their success in school improvement initiatives. *Professional Pathways* is not yet in place in Alabama and there are many informal definitions for teacher leaders, each with great variety in the types of roles and responsibilities relative to those definitions, but one thing is

certain, teacher leaders make an important difference in terms of improving teaching and learning.

### **Theoretical Framework**

It is important to carefully consider who is or is not selected as a teacher leader and the types of opportunities and responsibilities offered to those teacher leaders. The theoretical framework used for this study is Critical Race Theory (CRT). Critical Race Theory centers on the notion that race influences life for people of color both in terms of how one interacts with and views their world as well as how one is viewed and treated by others (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). It is further noted that because race and racism is such an everyday occurrence, it is intertwined into every aspect of life so that it becomes unrecognizable. Bell (1992) acknowledges as one major premise that racism is a permanent fixture in American life. Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) began to focus on the notion of CRT in education arguing that race is, and continues to be, salient in American society and serves as a major explanation in the disparities that exist between social and educational inequities. CRT was utilized as a framework to study the opportunities for African American teachers who are selected and provided opportunities to serve as teacher leaders because according to Dee's (2004) research, "racial, ethnic, and gender dynamics between students and teachers have consistently large effects on teacher perceptions of student performance" (p. 11). King (1993) found that by its mere presence, a teacher's racial identity generates a sort of role-model effect that engages student effort, confidence, and enthusiasm. Using CRT as a theoretical framework when conducting educational research allows one to explore ways in which historical structures, policies, practices, and laws that espouse equity perpetuate racial/ethnic inequality (Solorozano, Villalpando, & Oseguera, 2005).

Using this theoretical framework, CRT helped illuminate practices utilized in the development of teacher leaders that may be potential barriers for African American teachers. This study helped ascertain the supports and practices that encourage or discourage diversity in teacher leadership, which in turn influences student opportunities for learning.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this study was to explore the ways in which public school administrators develop teacher leadership capacity within their schools, its effect on teacher roles and classroom performance, and the supports and obstacles to teachers' ability to assume leadership roles within their school. This research also focused on the types of supports and opportunities afforded to African American teachers to serve in the capacity of teacher leader and how those opportunities, supports and barriers are the same or different from those afforded to Caucasian teachers.

The school reform movement focuses on the need for shared leadership and leadership capacity that is lasting and sustainable regardless of the principal leader of the school (Lambert, 2003). Teachers are valuable and essential assets and their role has evolved from classroom teacher to teacher leader (Spillane, et al., 2001). Diverse leadership is required in order for schools to obtain lasting school improvement.

The research question for this study was, "In what ways, if any, are there differences in how African American teacher leaders are identified, the roles they assume, supports they receive and barriers they face when compared to their Caucasian counterparts? The following guiding questions were used to focus this inquiry:

1. How are teacher leaders identified?
2. What supports are provided to teacher leaders?
3. What are the barriers to teacher leadership?

4. How do teacher leaders overcome those barriers?
5. What is the relationship between teacher leaders and their peers?
6. Do the supports provided to Caucasian teacher leaders differ from those provided to African American teacher leaders?
7. How long does it take, on average, for a Caucasian teacher to be classified as a teacher leader?
8. How long does it take, on average, for African American teachers to be classified as teacher leaders?
9. Are there specific barriers that exist for African American teacher leaders that are different from other teacher leaders? If so, what are they?
10. What is the background of the administrators designating teacher leaders and does this make a difference in who is identified as a teacher leader?
11. What are the demographics of the students of the school district?
12. What is the academic standing of the school and district of each participant?

### **Methodology**

An adapted version of the Teacher Leadership School Survey (TLSS) developed by Katzenmeyer and Moller (2007) was the primary instrument used in this study. The original design of the TLSS did not request background demographic information about each participant, did not have open-ended questions, and was intended to be administered by paper copy. Demographic variables were of interest for this research to determine if there was any relationship between these demographic subgroups and teacher leadership. Additionally, school level demographic information was requested to better understand the context of each school. The TLSS was adapted so that it was suitable for electronic administration using

SurveyMethods. Permission to adapt the TLSS was obtained from Katzenmeyer and Moller (see Appendix 2). Results from the electronic survey were input into an SPSS (19.0) data file to conduct descriptive analyses, sub group analyses and first level statistical analyses (t-tests). The t-test was used to determine if the mean scores on survey items answered by African American and Caucasian teacher leaders were significantly different.

### **Significance of the Study**

The information obtained from this research may provide educational leaders and policy makers with information as to the supports deemed beneficial for developing and engaging African American teacher leaders. Most current research on teacher leadership focuses on the importance of teacher leadership as it relates to the greater good of the total school population (Murphy, 2005). It has been reported on the relevance of a teacher's race that by its mere presence, a teacher's racial identity generates a sort of role-model effect that engages student effort, confidence, and enthusiasm (King, 1993; Clewell & Villegas, 1998). Ferguson (1998) concludes that the racial dynamics between students and teachers do appear to influence educational achievement but much can be gained to insure that diversity in teacher leadership is represented in all schools. In the knowledge-intensive enterprise of teaching and learning there can be little success performing the complex tasks required of leadership without widely sharing the responsibility for leadership among the many people in the organization prepared to handle these tasks (Elmore, 2000). Today's educators are facing increasing accountability due to the standards-based movement which is forcing the question of whether the principal has the knowledge and skills to perform this new instructional leadership role without relying on additional sources of assistance. The responsibility for this accountability belongs to the school and the people who work in it (Elmore, 2002). This shift moves from "the falsehood assumption



that teaching is for teachers and leading is for administrators” (Murphy, 2005, p. 7) to “teacher leadership is essential to change and improvement in school” (Whitaker, p. 76). Effective school leaders build capacity for improvement within their schools which makes it necessary to build leadership capacity amongst teachers within their schools to improve teaching and learning for increased student achievement (Lambert & Harris, 2003).

### **Definition of Terms**

For the purposes of this study, the following definitions were used.

**Critical Race Theory (CRT)** — CRT is a framework useful to assist in the examination of the manner in which race and racism affect the practices and policies in education and society

**Teacher Leader** — 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

**Teacher Leadership** — leaders who lead within and beyond the classroom; identify with and contribute to a community of teacher learners and leaders; influence others toward improved educational practice; and accept responsibility for achieving the outcomes of their leadership

### **Limitations of the Study**

This was an exploratory study limited to three different Regional Inservice Center regions in Alabama. Therefore, conclusions cannot be generalized from the targeted populations to other populations (Ary, Jacobs, & Razavich, 2002). This study also asked open-ended questions; therefore, the reader must consider that reliability is in the credibility of the researcher and the openness and honesty of the responders when answering the open ended questions. In addition, all survey data were self-reported so the results are based on the assumption that the participants were thoughtful, honest, and worked independently when giving responses.

## Summary

Due to increased demands placed on schools from the ESEA in the areas of accountability and high stakes testing school personnel are looking more and more to teacher leaders to help share the responsibility for student and teacher learning. Lieberman and Miller (2004) postulated, “Teacher leaders are in a unique position to make change happen. They are close to the ground and have the knowledge and ability to control the conditions for teaching and learning in schools and classrooms” (p. 12). Lambert (2003) notes the development of leadership capacity or shared leadership as a vital ingredient in the school improvement movement. Barth (2001) asserts that the process of leadership and decision making represents the best learning opportunity possible for teachers. As teachers lead, they are reported to grow in their leadership skills and organizational perspectives and some also change, or improve, their instructional practices. The following chapter further elaborates on the review of literature framing this study on the selection, supports and barriers for African American teacher leaders.

## CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Today's educational leaders must act as the leader of leaders within their schools in order to meet the multiple demands resulting from increasing complexity and high stakes accountability (Childs-Bowen, Moller, & Scrivner, 2000). Principals are expected to improve teaching and learning; know academic content and pedagogy; work with teachers to strengthen their skills; collect, analyze and use data to increase achievement; and serve as a cheerleader for students, teachers, parents, and other stakeholders (Blasé & Blasé, 1999; Hale & Moorman, 2003; Hargreaves & Fink, 2003; Sergiovanni & Starrett, 1998; Wasley, 1991). Some researchers claim that due to the onset of the standards-based reform movement, educational demands for teachers and administrators have increased (U.S. Department of Education, 2001). There is an increased emphasis on the testing each state is required to use to establish academic standards for reading and mathematics (Trujillo, 2005). Test-driven accountability has become the norm in schools as a result of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, recently referred to as the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), which is the culmination of 15 years of standards-based reform (Jennings & Rentner, 2006). Standardized achievement tests were once utilized only to measure and compare students and schools, but they have now been turned into high-stakes tests with consequences for all parties involved. The current era of education is being defined by standardized test scores, and standardized testing has become the focus of many debates within and around the nation's education systems (Kohn, 2000).

According to the ESEA, each state is responsible for developing and implementing an accountability system based on academic standards that includes rewards and sanctions to hold schools and school districts accountable for reducing the achievement discrepancies among different sub-populations. These standards must be aligned with what will be assessed, yet the assessments (and what will be tested) are chosen by states based on state standards (Jorgensen & Hoffman, 2003). Each state must formulate a standard by which to measure each child's academic progress by establishing targets at basic, proficient, and advanced levels. Success in meeting standards is measured by the degree that schools and districts meeting adequate yearly progress (AYP) (Carey, 2006; U.S. Department of Education, 2005; NAEP, 2005). When schools fail to make adequate progress, they are categorized for corrective action. Schools receiving Title I funding but failing to make AYP for two consecutive years are labeled "in need of improvement" and are required to offer students the opportunity to transfer to a better performing school within their same school district. Sanctions are progressively harsher for schools that continue to show a lack of improvement (U.S. Department of Education, 2005). Further, the Secretary of Education is authorized to reduce federal funds available to states failing to meet its performance objectives and demonstrate improved academic achievement (Goals, 2000). Other sanctions used may include withholding funds; revoking authority for the school to operate; decreasing decision-making authority; making alternative governance arrangements, such as the creation of a public charter school; reconstituting the school staff; and authorizing students to transfer, providing transportation costs if necessary, to other public schools served by the LEA (U.S. Department of Education, 2005).

Principals are under pressure to improve student achievement and ESEA has made a challenging job even more daunting with its requirements to achieve yearly academic gains

(Brown, 2006). With the increased demands that all children meet academic standards, school systems across the nation have struggled to meet these demands largely due to the requirement for disaggregation of test data (U.S. Department of Education, 2001). Historically minority students, economically disadvantaged, and students with disabilities have not made the same academic gains as majority students (Haycock, 2006). However, the standards-based reform movement as established by ESEA does not address the disproportionately lower funding that schools serving children of color and those who are economically disadvantaged receive (Darling-Hammond, 2004; Karp, 2004; Kozol, 2005; Meir, 2002). ESEA states as a priority the closing of the achievement gap between high-and low-performing children, especially the achievement gaps between minority and non-minority students, and between disadvantaged children and their more advantaged peers; holding schools, local educational agencies, and states accountable for improving the academic achievement of all students; and identifying and turning around low-performing schools that have failed to provide a high-quality education to their students, while providing alternatives to students in such schools to enable the students to receive a high-quality education (Weaver, 2006).

Due to the increasing complexity involved, principals and district level administrators can no longer be the sole leaders making decisions for continuous improvement in student achievement. School principals need substantial participation by other educators which leads to greater commitment toward school improvement initiatives (Elmore, 2000; Lambert, 2002; Olson, 2000; Spillane, et al., 2001). DuFour and Eaker (1998) suggested that effective schools are schools in which teachers are empowered. Capable leaders involve others in decision-making processes and empower them to act on their ideas. Inclusion of teachers in shared decision-making processes can lead to greater commitment toward school-improvement

initiatives. Distribution of leadership is necessary to bring about the type of reforms needed in public schools (Gronn, 2002; Sebring, Hallman, & Smylie, 2003).

### **Teacher Leadership**

There are multiple definitions for teacher leadership but all have a common focus which includes changing informal roles for teachers. For example, Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009) define teacher leadership as “leaders who lead within and beyond the classroom; identify with and contribute to a community of teacher learners and leaders; influence others toward improved educational practice; and accept responsibility for achieving the outcomes of their leadership” (p. 6). Lambert (2003) defines teacher leaders 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” (p. 33).

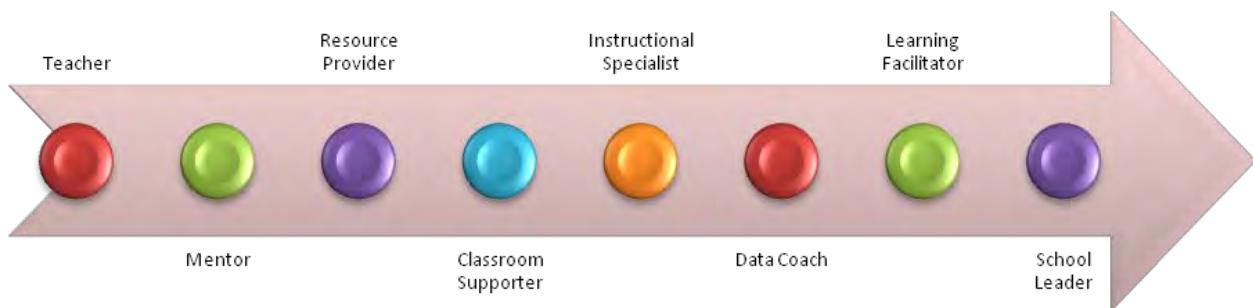
Fay (1992) defines a teacher leader as

a practicing teacher, chosen by fellow faculty members to lead them in ways determined by the context of individual school needs, who has formal preparation and scheduled time for a leadership role which, to preserve the teacher mission, calls for neither managerial nor supervisory duties. (p. 8)

Pellicer and Anderson (1995) defined teacher leadership as teachers helping teachers in order to better help students. Teacher leadership “involves helping teachers work together to establish and achieve the goals and objectives of the school” (p. 22). For the purposes of this study, teacher leadership is operationally defined as when teachers help “sustain changes that enhance student learning, improve instruction, maximize participation in decision making and align resources to the school’s vision and purpose” (Portin, Schneider, DeArmond, & Gundlach, 2003, p. 25).

The emergence of leadership opportunities for teachers has been gaining support as a viable alternative to help meet the growing demands and expectations placed on the education system, particularly the principalship. The concept of teacher leadership is designed to involve and empower classroom teachers so that they play a more pivotal role in what occurs in schools.

Current leadership roles for teachers involve serving as mentors, team leaders, department chairs, grade-level chairs and professional development providers, just to name a few (Barth, 2001) (see Figure 1). A brief definition for each of the teacher leader roles follows.



*Figure 1.* Roles of Teacher Leaders

Figure 1 depicts roles of teacher leaders that increase in responsibilities as teachers move from one role to another. This progression is not to say that all teachers aspire to become school leaders but lists opportunities afforded to teachers who desire to lead in informal and formal roles.

**Teacher:** a person who provides education for pupils (children) and students (adults).

**Mentor:** role model that acclimates new teachers to a new school; and advises new teachers about instruction, curriculum, procedures, practices, and politics.

**Resource Provider:** helps colleagues by sharing instructional resources such as Web sites, instructional materials, readings and other resources to use with students. They might also share such professional resources as articles, books, lesson or unit plans, and assessment tools.

**Classroom Supporter:** supports work inside the classroom to help teachers implement new ideas by demonstrating lessons, co-teaching, or observing and giving feedback.

**Instructional Specialist:** helps colleagues implement effective teaching strategies such as differentiated instruction, lesson planning in partnership with fellow teachers, research-based strategies.

**Data Coach:** lead conversations that engage their peers in analyzing and using data to strengthen instruction.

**Learning Facilitator:** facilitating professional learning opportunities among staff members. When teachers learn with and from one another, they can focus on what most directly improves student learning. Their professional learning becomes more relevant, focused on teachers' classroom work, and aligned to fill gaps in student learning. Such communities of learning can break the norms of isolation present in many schools.

**School leader:** serving on a committee, such as school improvement team, acting as grade-level leader or department chair; supporting school initiatives; or representing the school on community or district task forces or committees. Shares the vision of the school, aligns his or her professional goals with those of the school and district, and shares responsibility for the success of the school as a whole. (Harrison & Killion, 2007)

According to Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009), within every school are opportunities for teacher leadership that, if used properly, could be the catalyst to push school reform to a



successful conclusion during this century. Fullan (2001) asserts that as teacher leadership has become more of an essential element in school improvement, teachers are the key to school change. Fullan (1994) further states that

teacher leadership is not for a few; it is for all. The vast majority of teachers must become new professionals.... We cannot achieve quality learning for all, or nearly all students until quality development is attained and sustained for all teachers. (p. 246)

Recent research on effective leadership reveals that the authority to lead need not be located in one person, namely the principal, but can be dispersed within the school in between and among people (Day, Harris & Hadfield, 2000; Harris, 2002; MacBeath, 1988). Strong principals empower and support teacher leaders to improve practice (DuFour, 2004b; McLaughlin & Talbert, 2006). Principals who empower teachers rather than merely expecting them to implement other people's visions for schools will significantly enhance teachers' work-related decisions (Blasé & Blasé, 1994). Rosenholtz (1989) found that "teachers who felt supported in their own learning and improvement of classroom practice were more committed and effective than those who did not" (p. 51).

In schools where administration recognizes and supports teacher leadership, significant contributions to a positive school culture are visible to the students, staff, and community. Ackerman and Mackenzie (2007) assert that teacher leaders find they can make a difference, not by becoming a leader who leaves the classroom for an administrative position, but by becoming a leader who grows professionally in the classroom and shares that growth with others in the learning community. Teacher leaders actively seek ways to engage in professional development to sharpen their skills both as teacher and as leaders. Hickey and Harris (2005) found "utilizing teachers to present before their peers provides several benefits ... increased collaboration,

teamwork, and teacher leadership ...” (p. 12). Distributing leadership roles and responsibilities throughout a capable staff draws upon the knowledge, talents, and skills of a much larger group and empowers the team to develop professionally.

In utilizing all available resources for continuous school reform we must “help teachers recognize that they are leaders, by offering opportunities to develop their leadership skills, and by creating school cultures that honor their leadership, we can awaken this sleeping giant of teacher leadership” (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009, p. 3). Teachers should have a stake in the decision-making processes in the school, working collaboratively with administration and other stakeholders in order to institute effective change.

Teacher leadership encompasses a wide range of formal and informal functions in schools that aim to support student learning outcomes (Heller & Firestone, 1995). While a significant amount of research has been conducted about how leadership has been distributed in schools (Elmore, 2000; Halverson & Diamond, 2001; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1998; Spillane, 2006), most of the studies to date have emphasized how leadership is distributed to those in formal leadership positions, and does not focus on identifying teachers as leaders.

The concept of teacher leadership is designed to involve and empower classroom teachers so that they play a pivotal role in what actually occurs in schools. Since the publication of *A Nation at Risk* in 1988, there has been a demand for school improvement and change. Teachers have front-line knowledge of classroom issues and their contributions are critical to making education reform efforts succeed. It is through their daily interactions with students, colleagues, and parents that teachers are able to influence others toward better educational performance and make a positive contribution to the profession as a whole (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009). When teachers are allowed to participate in improving education, the changes are more likely to work

for the greater good of the school and community. Without their contributions, classroom changes are not likely to occur. Therefore, teachers must have a stake in the decision-making processes in the school, while working collaboratively with the administrators and stakeholders.

As a part of promoting teacher leadership, Childs-Bowen, Moller, and Scrivner (2000) suggest four strategies to help transform leadership in schools including the ability to:

1) Create opportunities for others to lead; 2) Build professional learning communities; 3) Provide quality, results-driven professional development; and 4) Celebrate innovation and teacher expertise. Based on the work of Childs-Bowen et al. (2000), each of these areas is defined below:

- **Create opportunities for others to lead:** flexibility in implementing curriculum and instruction, planning for school improvement, and designing professional development; engaging teachers in action research to collect and analyze data, research strategies, and continually evaluate results within their classrooms; encourage teachers to participate in external professional teacher networks
- **Build professional learning communities:** Hord (1997) suggests five attributes of schools as professional learning communities:
  1. **Provide supportive and shared leadership:** Administrators and teachers participate democratically sharing power, authority, and decision making.
  2. **Shared values and vision:** Staff members share visions for school improvement and focus on student learning.
  3. **Collective learning and application of learning:** utilized to address student needs.

4. **Supportive conditions:** principal is essential to this to ensure that conditions and capacities support the staff's arrangement as a professional learning community.
  5. **Shared personal practice:** peer reviews and feedback provided on instructional practices to increase individual and organizational capacity.
- **Provide Quality, Results-Driven Professional Development:** professional development is the leverage point for building teacher quality through teacher leadership. Quality professional development can be enhanced when principals invite teacher leaders to examine school improvement data, develop school goals, and establish standards to select the most appropriate content and model of professional development.
  - **Celebrate Innovation and Teacher Expertise:** genuine praise more important to most people than money. Creating opportunities for teacher recognition and celebrating student success is vital to the development of teacher leadership. Effective leaders use rituals, ceremonies, and stories to create this culture.

Professional learning communities can create opportunities for teachers in leadership roles and narrow the chasm between principals and teachers significantly (Childs-Bowen, Moller, & Scrivener, 2000). Strong schools depend on teacher leadership contributions to improve teacher quality and engage in meaningful education reform efforts.

Crowther, Ferguson, and Ham (2009) present a framework from which teacher leaders emerge. The framework is characterized by six statements of values and actions that define the new generation of teachers aspiring to lead. Teacher leaders:

- Convey convictions about a better world
  - Articulating a positive future for all students

- Contributing to an image of teaching as a profession that makes a difference
- Facilitate communities of learning through organization-wide processes
  - Encouraging a shared, school-wide approach to core pedagogical processes
  - Approaching professional learning as consciousness-raising about complex issues
  - Synthesizing new ideas out of colleagues' professional discourse and reflective activities
- Strive for pedagogical excellence
  - Showing genuine interest in students' needs and well-being
  - Continuously developing and refining personal teaching gifts and talents
  - Seeking deep understanding of significant pedagogical practices
- Confront barriers in the school's culture and structures
  - Standing up for children, especially disadvantaged and marginalized individuals and groups
  - Working with administrators to find solutions to issues of equity, fairness, and justice
  - Encouraging student "voice" in ways that are sensitive to students' developmental stages and circumstances
- Translate ideas into sustainable systems of action
  - Working with the principal, administrators, and other teachers to manage projects that heighten alignment between the school's vision, values, pedagogical practices, and professional learning activities
  - Building alliances and nurturing external networks of support
- Nurture a culture of success

- Acting on opportunities to emphasize accomplishments and high expectations
- Encouraging collective responsibility in addressing school-wide challenges
- Encouraging self-respect and confidence in students' communities (p. 3).

This framework serves as a model “of these so-called ordinary people doing what are clearly extraordinary things” (p. 19). This framework also helps to demonstrate the need for leadership throughout the school building rather than focusing solely on the principal as school leader.

### **Distributive Leadership**

According to Elmore (2000) and Spillane (2006), distributive leadership is the most effective way to create leadership throughout the school building. Distributive leadership, according to DuFour (2005), helps to promote effective professional learning communities. Lambert (2004) emphasizes that “a school must build its own teacher leaders if it is to stay afloat, assume internal responsibility for reform, and maintain a momentum for self-renewal” (p. 3). According to Murphy (2005), principals wanting to see visible results in student achievement invest their time and energy in building leadership capacity that focuses on student achievement.

Danielson (2005) notes that every school and school district is stronger when it cultivates teachers as leaders, and that teacher leaders form the backbone of a school. Assertions such as the need for leadership to extend beyond those in formal leadership positions helps us understand that leadership is not solely linked with positions or roles. This concept is known as distributive leadership (Spillane, 2006). Distributive leadership focuses on the need to involve the second largest population in the school, the teachers, in the processes related to school reform (Elmore, 2000; Spillane, 2006; Timperley, 2005). This same notion also helps us understand that the

concept of distributive leadership means more than naming formal leaders throughout the organization.

Distributed leadership is a leadership practice that relies on the guidance and direction of multiple human sources that allows the organization to benefit from the combined expertise and joint interaction of school leaders and their followers as they utilize material and cultural artifacts to work in concert toward a common goal so that the outcome is greater than the sum of their individual actions (Elmore, 2000; Gronn, 2002; Spillane, 2006). Distributed leadership moves beyond the philosophy that leadership is generated solely by the role and position of the principal and instead frames leadership as a practice that involves an array of individuals whose dynamic interactions mobilize and guide teachers in the process of instructional change (Harris, 2005; Spillane, 2006; Timperley, 2005).

The influence of the teacher leader is exemplified by empowering others, building capacity in others, modeling, mentoring, and contributing to research-based decision-making. Teacher leaders are often distinguished not by titles or authority, but by their positive influence on others. Schmoker (2006) asserts that schools who adopt collaborative structures that easily allow teacher leadership to emerge are still in a distinct minority and that we have to make these collaborative structures the norm if we truly desire better schools on a large scale. Barth (2001) suggests that every single teacher not only can lead, but must lead, if schools are going to become places in which all students can learn. It may be this notion of all teachers potentially leading, then, that leads one to consider the concept of distributed leadership.

Distributed leadership is increasingly viewed by some as the leadership model for the accountability age (Elmore, 2000; Spillane, 2006). As previously stated, ESEA has necessitated a dramatic change in the way principals operate within their schools. The role of the school

principal has expanded from managers of the building and staff to that of instructional leader responsible for increasing student achievement. The principal wears many hats such as instructional leader and administrator. This combination of duties has become too broad to still be considered a one-person job with centralized power; however, school leadership capacity is now being extended beyond the boundaries and limitations of an individual. A practical approach to success in distributing instructional leadership is the development of teacher leaders to assist the principal with the monumental tasks of instructional improvement.

Distributed leadership does not, however, take the responsibility of leading the school away from the principal. Distributed leadership does not mean that there is not anyone responsible for the overall organization. Instead, it requires the principal to understand the relationship between leadership and organizational structures, school vision, and school culture (Elmore, 2000). Distributed leadership means that the job of administrative leaders is primarily about recognizing and enhancing the skills and knowledge of people in the organization (Spillane, 2006). Lastly, distributed leadership means cultivating a system that holds various pieces of the organization together in a productive relationship with each other, and holding individuals accountable for their contributions to the collective result (Harris, 2005).

### **Summary of Distributive Leadership**

The need for creating teacher leadership positions has been spurred by the changing demographics and the rigors of preparing students for the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Olson, 2000). Teachers serve as models for one another and play a vital role in the development of high performing schools. Instructional expertise has little chance of spreading among teachers unless some of them are put into positions of greater authority. Teachers who lead help to shape their own schools and, thereby, their own destinies as educators (Barth, 2001). Leading and learning are



interrelated and “teacher leaders grow in their understanding of instructional, professional, and organizational practice as they lead” (York-Barr & Duke, 2004, p.288). Teacher leadership provides the additional person power needed to run the organizational operations of the school, which are too complex for principals to run alone. Indeed, teacher leaders are a source of reliable, useful, and professional help for the principals. “When teachers lead, principals extend their own capacity” (Barth, 2001, p. 445). With this expansion of capacity for teachers, leadership capacity is enhanced.

### **Leadership Capacity Building**

Leadership capacity is the broad-based, skillful involvement of others in the work of leadership. It forms the systemic framework for school improvement, a context in which teacher leadership is invited, supported and appreciated (Harris & Lambert, 2003). Lambert (2002) asserts that learning and instructional leadership become infused into professional practice. Additionally, she claims schools with high leadership capacity have the following important features in common that guide their ways of work:

- **Principals and teachers, as well as many parents and students, participate together as mutual learners and leaders** in study groups, action research teams, vertical learning communities, and learning-focused staff meetings.
- **Shared vision results in program coherence.** Participants reflect on their core values and weave those values into a shared vision to which all can commit themselves. All members of the community continually ask, “How does this instructional practice connect to our vision?”
- **Inquiry-based use of information guides decisions and practice.** Generating shared knowledge becomes the energy force of the school. Teachers, principal,

students, and parents examine data to find answers and to pose new questions.

Together they reflect, discuss, analyze, plan, and act.

- **Roles and actions reflect broad involvement, collaboration, and collective responsibility.** Participants engage in collaborative work across grade levels through reflection, dialogue, and inquiry. This work creates the sense that “I share responsibility for the learning of all students and adults in the school.”
- **Reflective practice consistently leads to innovation.** Reflection enables participants to consider and reconsider how they do things, which leads to new and better ways. Participants reflect through journaling, coaching, dialogue, networking, and their own thought processes.
- **Student achievement is high or steadily improving.** “Student achievement” in the context of leadership capacity is much broader than test scores; it includes self-knowledge, social maturity, personal resiliency, and civic development. It also requires attention to closing the gap in achievement among diverse groups of students by gender, race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status (p. 38).

There is a collaborative action throughout the school resulting from reflection, dialogue, and inquiry. This work results in a feeling that all share the responsibility for the learning of everyone in the school (Lambert, 2002).

Teacher leadership initiatives include national programs as well as state-wide efforts that seek to develop teacher leaders and provide opportunities for them to demonstrate their leadership. Four of these programs are discussed on the following pages.

## **National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS)**

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) began in 1986 from a need outlined in a report from the Carnegie Task Force on Teaching as a Profession, *A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. This report detailed the need for a professional certification process for teachers, enabling them to demonstrate their excellence in the teaching profession. The mission of NBPTS was to “advance the quality of teaching and learning by:

maintaining high and rigorous standards for what accomplished teachers should know and be able to do; providing a national voluntary system certifying teachers who meet these standards; and advocating related education reforms to integrate National Board Certification in American education and to capitalize on the expertise of National Board Certified teachers (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 2003). The goal is not to replace state licensing, which sets entry-level requirements for certification, but to recognize teachers who are experienced and accomplished in their field.

[www.nbpts.org](http://www.nbpts.org)

In addition to the mission, the NBPTS includes a standard by which all teachers should be certified that was developed by teachers, with teachers, and for teachers as a symbol of professional teaching excellence (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 2003). Teachers choosing to apply for National Board Certification must complete a rigorous set of assessments covering subject matter knowledge and teaching methods, completion of a portfolio that represents an analysis of their classroom work, submit videotapes of their teaching as well as participation in exercises designed to tap the knowledge, skills, dispositions and professional judgment that distinguish their practice.

The Five Core Propositions outlined in *What Teachers Should Know and Be Able to Do*, the cornerstone of the system of National Board Certification, has served as a guide to school districts, states, colleges, universities and others with a strong interest in strengthening the initial and ongoing education of America's teachers. This document became the basis for all the standards development work NBPTS has conducted.

- **Proposition 1: Teachers are Committed to Students and Their Learning.**
  - NBCT's are dedicated to making knowledge accessible to all students. They believe all students can learn.
  - They treat students equitably. They recognize the individual differences that distinguish their students from one another and they take account these differences in their practice.
  - NBCT's understand how students develop and learn.
  - They respect the cultural and family differences students bring to their classroom.
  - They are concerned with their students' self-concept, their motivation and the effects of learning on peer relationships.
  - NBCT's are also concerned with the development of character and civic responsibility.
  
- **Proposition 2: Teachers Know the Subjects They Teach and How to Teach Those Subjects to Students**
  - NBCT's have mastery over the subject(s) they teach. They have a deep understanding of the history, structure and real-world applications of the subject.
  - They have skill and experience in teaching it, and they are very familiar with the skills gaps and preconceptions students may bring to the subject.

- They are able to use diverse instructional strategies to teach for understanding.
- **Proposition 3: Teachers are Responsible for Managing and Monitoring Student Learning**
  - NBCT's deliver effective instruction. They move fluently through a range of instructional techniques, keeping students motivated, engaged and focused.
  - They know how to engage students to ensure a disciplined learning environment, and how to organize instruction to meet goals.
  - NBCT's know how to assess the progress of individual students as well as the class as a whole.
  - They use multiple methods for measuring student growth and understanding, and they can clearly explain student performance to parents.
- **Proposition 4: Teachers Think Systematically about Their Practice and Learn from Experience**
  - NBCT's model what it means to be an educated person-they read, they question, they create and they are willing to try new things.
  - They are familiar with learning theories and instructional strategies and stay abreast of current issues in American education.
  - They critically examine their practice on a regular basis to deepen knowledge, expand their repertoire of skills, and incorporate findings into their practice.
- **Proposition 5: Teachers are Members of Learning Communities**
  - NBCT's collaborate with others to improve student learning.
  - They are leaders and actively know how to seek and build partnerships with community groups and businesses.

- They work with other professionals on instructional policy, curriculum development and staff development.
- They can evaluate school progress and the allocation of resources in order to meet state and local education objectives.
- They know how to work collaboratively with parents to engage them productively in the work of the school.

While the NBPTS program is not a leadership program in the sense that it specifically trains teachers to be leaders, it is a program that has established a set of standards by which teachers are considered “experts” in the teaching profession. By virtue of the National Board Certified title, teachers are recognized as experts and thus are more capable of assuming leadership roles. Additionally, the expectation in the Five Core Propositions is that these teachers are already leaders in their school communities. It is expected that these teachers will continue to work in their school communities to foster growth and change ([www.nbpts.org](http://www.nbpts.org)).

### **The National Writing Project**

Another successful external professional development effort for teachers, according to Lieberman and Miller (2004), is the National Writing Project (NWP). This professional development network serves teachers of all grade levels, primary through university, and in all subjects. The NWP has more than 200 sites serving all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The mission of the NWP is to improve student achievement by improving the teaching of writing ([www.nwp.org](http://www.nwp.org)). The NWP is comprised of over 175 local sites hosted by local colleges and universities that work in partnership with area school districts offering high-quality professional development programs. The NWP operates under the following Core Principles:

- Teachers at every level-from kindergarten through college-are the agents of reform; universities and schools are ideal partners for investing in that reform through professional development.
- Writing can and should be taught, not just assigned, at every grade level. Professional development programs should provide opportunities for teachers to work together to understand the full spectrum of writing development across grades and across subject areas.
- Knowledge about the teaching of writing comes from many sources; theory and research, the analysis of practice, and the experience of writing. Effective professional development programs provide frequent and ongoing opportunities for teachers to write and to examine theory, research, and practice together systematically.
- There is no single right approach to teaching writing; however, some practices prove to be more effective than others. A reflective and informed community of practice is in the best position to design and develop comprehensive writing programs.
- Teachers who are well informed and effective in their practice can be successful teachers of other teachers as well as partners in educational research, development, and, implementation. Collectively, teacher-leaders are our greatest resource for educational reform. ([www.nwp.org](http://www.nwp.org))

According to Lieberman and Miller (2004),

The NWP is best understood as a network of educators in which professional development in literacy instruction is intentionally seeded with opportunities to build teacher leadership in literacy development. Teachers learn to become better instructors

of writing and, in so doing, establish the authority to lead others. With a strong foundation in both research and practice, the NWP builds a community of practice and simultaneously builds leaders. (p. 34)

NWP, through its model of developing teacher leaders, enhances the professionalism of teaching.

### **Leadership for Tomorrow's Schools**

Leadership for Tomorrow's Schools (LTS) emerged from within the Southern Maine Partnership (SMP) housed at the University of Southern Maine as a result of superintendents being dissatisfied with the traditional leadership preparation program and the decision to "grow our own leaders"(Lieberman & Miller, 2004, p. 43) . This partnership was a 2-year cohort in which teacher leaders were selected to participate by their superintendents on the basis of leadership potential. Linking learning and leadership through university and district level work, each participant agree to the following set of commitments:

- Teacher participants commit to remaining in the program for the full two years, working in district and cross-district teams, taking leadership roles in the district while in the program, attending eight full-day classes and eight evening classes, completing all assigned work, and working alongside district mentors throughout the program.
- District superintendents commit to selecting LTS participants ensuring meaningful district work opportunities, providing eight full days of release time for participants and paying for substitute coverage, reimbursing all course tuition, identifying appropriate mentors, and attending three seminars designed for superintendents.
- University faculty commit to co-designing and co-teaching all courses with district personnel, holding all courses in a location that is easily accessible to participants,



combining course content across areas to ensure a seamless academic experience, designing performance assessments that connect academic work and district work, leading superintendent seminars, and using the LTS model to redesign traditional university leadership programs. (pp. 44–45)

One organizing idea for leadership development in the LTS is legitimate peripheral participation which has been defined by Wenger (1998) as “the process by which newcomers become included in a community of practice” (p. 100) while also learning to become full participants in and practitioners of new roles. According to Lieberman and Miller (2004), the six key social practices that form the foundation for learning to lead in the program include the following:

- **Having legitimate access to a community of school leaders.** LTS participants are nominated by their superintendent, mentored by their school administrators and other teacher leaders, and provided authentic leadership tasks to complete for their district. As members of two communities of leaders, they have frequent and regular access to school leaders in monthly cohort meetings and in their district and school leadership teams as they become involved in leadership tasks.
- **Engaging in the practice of leadership, first in peripheral ways and ultimately as full participants.** The two-year program is structured to provide graduated entry into the sending district’s community of practicing leaders. Peripheral involvement as an observer, as a student of school culture, and as an investigator of practice evolves into more substantive participation as a member of a district team involved in authentic leadership tasks. By the end of the two years, participants have completed a major leadership task and have regularly attended leadership team meetings.

- **“Performing” the practice of leadership.** Participants have many opportunities to act as leaders, to “perform” leadership, throughout the program. In the first year, they perform leadership in observation cycle, in small leadership projects with other team members, and in the end-of-the-year presentation to their district leadership team. In the second year, opportunities to perform leadership increase. Participants are assigned actual leadership tasks, for which they are fully responsible; they attend leadership team meetings; they work alongside their mentor; and they make presentations to a variety of audiences.
- **Fostering identity as leaders and the motivation to lead.** Because of the nominating process, participants are aware from the beginning that they are expected to wear the mantle of leadership in their school and district. Being a member of an LTS cohort signifies that an individual has leadership potential and that the district is willing to make an investment in realizing that potential. As leadership opportunities deepen over the two years of the program, so does one’s identity as a leader.
- **Helping district leadership to change.** At the end of each year of LTS, participants make a formal presentation or exhibition to the district leadership team. The focus of the first year is on reviewing policies and practices that affect teaching, learning, and assessment and on bringing forward a healthy critique as well as new ideas. The second year’s focus is on policies and practices that affect organizational health, professional development, and district planning and goals.
- **Participating in the reproduction of the community of school leaders.** The LTS experience extends beyond the two-year formal program. When participants leave that portion, they may become fully participating members of the leadership

community in their district. In that role, they engage in the renewal of existing structures and the generation of new leaders. They welcome the new cohort of LTS; they serve as mentors to participants; they oversee initial leadership projects; and they recommend new nominees for the program to their superintendents (pp. 49-50).

Graduates of the LTS become included in a community of practice assuming roles in their districts such as elementary grade-level leader, middle school team captain, high school advisor, mentor for new teachers, school or district coordinator of curriculum or assessment, grant writer, facilitator of professional development, or mentor to new LTS participants (Lieberman & Miller, 2004).

### **Teacher Leaders Network**

The Teacher Leaders Network (TLN), a national initiative of the Center for Teaching Quality, is a network of active communities populated by highly accomplished teacher leaders from across the nation who are dedicated to improving student learning by advancing the teaching profession. More than a virtual space for teacher leaders, the TLN provides educators the opportunities to engage in daily discussions around practice and policy; collaborating on action research and other projects for improved student learning; sharing their content and pedagogical expertise with pre-service and in-service teachers, and refining their policy insights and contributing their voices to the decisions that affect the students and communities they serve ([www.teacherleaders.org](http://www.teacherleaders.org)).

The mission of the TLN is “to promote the powerful potential of teacher leadership and to improve student learning by advancing the teaching profession” ([www.teacherleaders.org](http://www.teacherleaders.org)). It represents a virtual home to a variety of initiatives such as the Teacher Leaders Network Forum, The New Millennium Initiative, National Board Certified Teachers Leadership Initiative,

TeacherSolutions, and Achieving School Success through Empowering Teachers (ASSET) ([www.teachingquality.org](http://www.teachingquality.org)) each of which will be discussed below.

**Teacher leaders network forum.** The flagship community of the Teacher Leaders Network is comprised of more than 250 of the nation's most accomplished educators who work together on projects, publish their writing and action research, participate in focused discussions with national experts, and connect with educational decision makers to advocate for best policy and practice. The TLN Forum has proven to be a powerful venue for organizing a collective voice of accomplished teachers with a focus on what works best for the students they serve, while remaining outside the province of narrow ideological or political interests.

- Many TLN Forum members are state and local educators of the year, National Board Certified Teachers®, Presidential and Milken Award winners, and recipients of other teaching honors. They offer wisdom and insights that seldom surface in the national education policy debates dominated by academics and political think tanks. Currently, TLN Forum members represent 35 states and one Canadian province, and the community will continue to invite new members until the 50-state goal is reached. With a diverse membership now approaching 300, includes a mixture of suburban (45%), rural (20%) and urban (35%) teachers across the PreK-12 spectrum. More than one-third of the TLN Forum members work in Title I schools, including some of the most challenging inner-city schools in America.
- On average, members have been professional educators for 20 years. A significant majority are current classroom teachers. As the TLN Forum has grown and matured, some members are moving into other teacher leadership roles as school-based coaches, lead teachers, teachers-in-residence, and teacher educators.

**New millennium initiative (NMI).** Launched in fall 2009, this initiative seeks to develop a growing network of young teachers to engage with researchers, reformers, administrators, union leaders and their peers in their own communities. NMI works with local and national partners to support teachers as they market their ideas to policymakers, fellow teachers, and other educational stakeholders including members of their own communities. They also help interested participants develop their knowledge, skills and relationships to become the next generation of teacher leaders. As the New Millennium Initiative grows in the future they plan to:

- Target one to two communities where New Millennium teachers will lead deep-down efforts to advance teaching effectiveness reforms;
- Promote a variety of hybrid roles in these target communities so that New Millennium teachers have the time and administrative support to advocate for policy reforms on behalf of students;
- Work closely with local education funds (and other community-based organizations) as community anchors to mobilize New Millennium teachers and connect their ideas to administrators and colleagues as well as community leaders, parents, and families;
- Create and implement a strategic communications plan that promotes the “big ideas” of New Millennium teacher leaders in multimedia “TeacherSolutions toolkits”-which will include an interactive website, policy briefs, blogs, podcasts, and mini-documentaries that engage educators, policymakers, and the public with the work and progress of the teacher cadres; and
- Advance our efforts to help New Millennium teachers develop the skills and policy savvy to serve in a wide variety of leadership roles, including efforts to advance

union efforts to focus more intently on teaching effectiveness and student learning reforms. Teachers of the New Millennium offer a fresh vision for education reform, driven by their classroom knowledge and insights and their commitment to engage stakeholders to create a student-centered profession. Their initiative will equip emerging teacher leaders with the tools they need to be effective both in the classroom and as voices for change.

**National board certified teachers leadership initiative (NBCT).** This initiative provides virtual mentoring support to improve teaching in three high-needs school districts in North Carolina as nearly 13,000 NBCT are teaching in North Carolina. Offers a menu of services to schools and districts which includes any combination of the following:

- Supporting teacher education students and beginning teachers (in years one through three) via online mentoring;
- Creating a cohort of teachers (at any experience level) in high-needs schools to pursue the Take One!® process (where teachers analyze video tapes of their own math and science lessons);
- Organizing a cohort of interested teachers (with at least three years of experience) in high-needs schools to pursue National Board Certification® and;
- Providing online mentoring to mathematics and science teachers out-of-field and assist them to become qualified and effective.

***TeacherSolutions.*** This program is a unique approach to amplify the voices of accomplished teachers in national education policy issues. While TeacherSolutions have now tackled several topics, they all share certain characteristics that make the TeacherSolutions model a particularly effective form of collaboration.

- A team of 10–20 expert teachers, representing a diverse cross-section of America’s best teachers engage in research and analysis around a particular policy area considering both theory and current best practices.
- Team members collaborate with leading researchers and key policy stakeholders to further inform their thinking and refine their insights.
- TeacherSolutions members collaboratively authors a policy paper that is fluent in the foremost research and best practices, but also offers innovative recommendations and insights culled from their teaching expertise.

*ASSET.* Launched in 2005 to address the challenging issue of reducing teacher turnover in high-needs schools, the overall goal of ASSET is to implement new models of distributed leadership in order to improve teacher retention and student achievement in schools throughout the region which targets five middle schools in Orange County and Wake County, North Carolina. As the ASSET initiative has progressed, the Center for Teaching Quality leveraged the thinking of forward-looking researchers to address the challenges that arise with transforming any school culture, particularly cultures in high-needs schools. The ASSET project seeks to provide a spark by increasing schools’ capacities in several key areas identified by Ken Futernick as critical for transformation:

- Teacher teams that can spread teaching expertise;
- Teacher autonomy and shared governance designed to create ownership and commitment for necessary reforms; and
- School leadership that knows how to build learning organizations and is rewarded for doing so.

A critical strategy of the ASSET development was to initiate and grow these skill sets through a virtual learning community. The virtual nature of the new ASSET Online community, now hosted through the Teacher Leaders Network, allowed for external support to develop teachers' leadership knowledge and skills and to promote a long-term, sustained network for mutual support and capacity-building in influencing whole-school reform through PLCs. A two-fold strategy was implemented for building this network. Intense one-on-one work by external facilitators was provided to teachers designated as PLC Fellows, a group initially comprised of one teacher from each participating school. These PLC Fellows are responsible for working with their colleagues, including other ASSET team members, to support efforts to effectively implement PLCs. The second strategy is to connect all teachers at the schools who are interested in joining the virtual learning community via ASSET Online. The PLC Fellows together with their ASSET Online colleagues can form the critical mass of invested educators necessary to initiate a "tipping point" for transformation in their school environments ([www.teacherleaders.org](http://www.teacherleaders.org)).

### **Why Teacher Leadership?**

The following sections include a review of the literature responding to the many benefits of teacher leadership; opportunities provided to teachers for leadership; a review of exactly what it is that teacher leaders do; barriers imposed on teachers seeking leadership opportunities; and the supports that are provided to enable teacher leaders to be successful.

"The most reliable, useful, proximate, and professional help resides under the roof of the schoolhouse with the teaching staff itself" (Barth, 2001, p. 445). Teacher leadership is one of the most powerful ways in which school change and improved student and teacher learning can be attained (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009). Teachers are provided opportunities to take part in the



decision-making about the things that affect them directly creating a greater ownership and commitment to the organization.

Lieberman and Miller (2004) developed the following propositions that characterize the realities of the profession from the teacher's perspective from research conducted in 1992 and 1999:

- “Teacher isolation was the norm, leading teachers to develop unique repertoires of teaching strategies that were seldom shared or made public and often defended and protected.
- The reward system for teachers encouraged this isolation by placing responsibility for feedback on students rather than on colleagues and peers, allowing little room for public discussion and display of teaching.
- A weak knowledge base on learning contributed to individualism and privacy, requiring teachers to take on blind faith that what they were doing made a difference for their students; there were few supports for testing whether what teachers did mattered.
- Competing and conflicting policy directives reinforced these norms, so teachers created a personal rather than a shared sense of goals and expectations.
- The demonstration of control over student behavior functioned as an acceptable proxy for responsibility for student learning; control was visible, and learning was not.
- Teaching was a flat profession, requiring the same of neophytes and veterans and offering little support for professional growth and career differentiation.
- Teaching was construed as technical work to be managed, viewed as a prescribed set of skills, behaviors, and techniques to be mastered and evaluated (pp. 9-10).

A new set of propositions was developed in 2000 by Lieberman and Miller representing “major shifts in perspective and practice have the potential to transform teaching and schools in the directions that the times require” (p. 11) which includes the following:

- **From individualism to professional community:** When teachers view their work as taking place both within and beyond their own classroom, they participate in an authentic professional community. They build capacity for joint work and develop norms of collegiality, openness, trust, experimentation, risk taking and feedback. Teaching becomes more public and more open to critique and improvement; in turn, the teaching community promotes an expanded view of professional responsibility and accountability—a move from concerns about *my* students in *my* classroom to *our* students in *our* school.
- **From teaching at the center to learning at the center:** When teachers shift their attention from the act of teaching to the process of learning, they corroborate for each other that “one size fits few” (Ohanian, 1999). By looking collaboratively at student work and designing curriculum, assessments, and instructional strategies together, they gain the collective knowledge, confidence, and power to co-construct alternatives to standardized approaches and measures.
- **From technical and managed work to inquiry and leadership:** When teachers cast off the mantle of technical and managed worker and assume new roles as “researchers, meaning makers, scholars and inventors” (Lieberman & Miller, 2000), they expand the vision of who they are and what they do. They come to view themselves and are viewed by others as intellectuals engaged in inquiry about teaching and learning. Central to this expanded vision of teaching is the idea that

teachers are also leaders, educators who can make a difference in schools and schooling now and in the future” (p. 11).

“When teachers share in the decision-making, they become committed to the decisions that emerge. They buy into the decision; they feel a sense of ownership; therefore, they are more likely to see that decisions are actually implemented” (Weiss, Cambone, & Wyeth, 1992, p. 350). Teacher leaders influence school culture, build and maintain successful teams, and equip other potential teacher leaders to improve student achievement (Gabriel, 2005).

### **Benefits of Teacher Leadership**

“Teachers are leaders when they function in professional communities to affect student learning; contribute to school improvement; inspire excellence in practice; and empower stakeholders to participate in educational improvement” (Childs-Bowen, Moller, & Scrivner, 2000, p. 28). Enhancing teacher leadership can help schools and districts reach the following goals according to York-Barr (2004):

- **Improve teacher quality:** Teacher expertise is at “the foundation for increasing teacher quality and advancements in teaching and learning” (p. 258). This expertise becomes more widely available “when accomplished teachers model instructional practices, encourage sharing of best practices, mentor new teachers, and collaborate with teaching colleagues” (p. 259). Teacher leaders’ expertise about teaching and learning is needed to lead instructional improvement and increase teacher quality.
- **Improve student learning:** The improvement of student learning requires every leader in the school to focus on that outcome. Teachers who model learning for students can help create a community of learners. Teacher leadership leads to teacher

growth and learning, and when teachers learn, students learn (York-Barr & Duke, 2004).

- **Ensure that education reform efforts work:** The influence of teacher leadership is important to education reform. Teacher leaders can help “guide fellow teachers as well as the school at large toward higher standards of achievement and individual responsibility for school reform” (Childs-Bowen et al., 2000, p. 33).
- **Recruit, retain, motivate, and reward accomplished teachers:** “Acknowledging their expertise and contributions and providing opportunities for growth and influence can support these objectives” (York-Barr & Duke, 2004, p. 259). Teachers want to work in schools that are designed for them to be successful and in which they have influence on key decisions that affect instruction and student access. The opportunity to influence teaching and learning for adults and children through greater involvement in school leadership offers appeal to many accomplished teachers. Teachers find opportunities for continuous learning as they expand the ways in which they contribute throughout their careers. “Teachers who lead help to shape their own schools and, thereby, their own destinies as educators” (Barth, 2001, p. 445).
- **Provide opportunities for professional growth:** A clear effect of teacher leadership is the growth and learning for the teachers themselves. When teachers actively pursue leadership opportunities, their lives are enriched and energized, and their knowledge and skills in teaching increase dramatically, leading to increased confidence and a stronger commitment to teaching. Professional growth also occurs as the result of collaboration with peers, assisting other teachers, working with administrators, and being exposed to new ideas. In fact, studies show that leading

and learning are interrelated, that “teacher leaders grow in their understandings of instructional, professional, and organizational practice as they lead” (York-Barr & Duke, 2004, p. 288).

- **Extended principal capacity:** Teacher leadership provides the additional person power needed to run the organizational operations of the school which are too complex for principals to run alone. Indeed, teacher leaders are a source of reliable, useful, and professional help for the principal. “When teachers lead, principals extend their own capacity” (Barth, 2001, p. 445). In addition, instructional teacher leadership can reduce the principal’s workload. Teacher leaders are able to assume some of the principal’s many responsibilities, including those of instructional leader.
- **Create a more democratic school environment:** When teacher leaders take on important school-wide responsibilities and are centrally involved in school decision making, they are better able to transform their school into a democracy. Students benefit from observing and experiencing democratic, participatory forms of schooling and governance. They also benefit from higher teacher morale because their teachers are involved in democratic decision making and school leadership.

### **School Culture and Teacher Morale**

In creating a more democratic school environment, school culture plays an important role in the work of teacher leadership and increased student achievement (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009). Peterson and Deal (1998) define culture as “the underground stream of norms, values, beliefs, traditions, and rituals that has built up over time as people work together, solve problems, and confront challenges” (p. 28). Fullan (2006) suggests that effective schools rely on principals to foster a culture in which teachers retreat from a paradigm of isolation and alienation

and embrace a culture of collaborative decision making and shared values where the entire staff shares responsibility for improving teaching and learning.

According to Sachs (2003), teaching is a socially responsible occupation which is highly accountable and bureaucratic, demanding intellectually, emotionally and physically. Teachers are stretched to the limit with many expectations placed on them that encompass duties other than teaching (Lumsden, 1998). Miller (1981) asserts that teacher morale

can have a positive effect on pupil attitudes and learning. Raising teacher morale levels is not only making teaching more pleasant for teachers, but also learning more pleasant for students. This creates an environment that is more conducive to learning. (p. 48)

High levels of satisfaction and teacher morale are critical to teacher leadership as Boles and Troen (1994) characterize teacher leadership as a form of “collective leadership in which teachers develop expertise by working collaboratively” (p. 11). As leaders, teachers build trust and rapport with their colleagues, establish solid relationships, and influence school culture through these relationships (Little, 1990).

Teacher leaders are committed to their own professional development and take responsibility for their own learning as well as the learning of everyone in the school (Lambert, 2002). According to Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009),

teachers have an obligation to participate together as learners and leaders ... they must be knowledgeable about effective developmental practices to influence development for themselves and others in the school and district ... accepting this responsibility and learning leadership skills does not happen quickly; it is a career-long commitment. (p. 48)

Fullan (2001) asserts that teachers who have a personal stake in an organization are more likely to commit to improving its performance.

The Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement (CSRI, 2005) summarized research conducted the last several decades that stresses the importance of teachers as an integral component of successful whole-school reform. This research also identified characteristics of teacher leaders. These characteristics include 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 participate in a professional learning curve; social consciousness and political activity; frequent reflection on their work and staying on the cutting edge of what's best for children. Barth (1999) argues that the students, the school, the teachers, and the principals all benefit when teachers lead.

Lieberman and Miller (2004) divide teacher leadership into three broad categories or themes:

- **Individual teacher leader roles and organizational realities:** empirical studies of the roles individual teacher leaders play, what skills the roles require, how these roles bump up against the structures and norms of the bureaucratic school organization, and how teacher leaders earn legitimacy within the school organization
- **Learning in practice:** descriptions of how teachers learn on the job and in specific contexts to become leaders, interpretive accounts of the nature of professional learning, and descriptions of how learning in practice is enacted in new teacher leadership roles

- **Teacher leadership and reshaping school culture:** descriptions of broadened conceptions of teacher leadership, which place it at the center of efforts to renew the culture in schools and build professional communities (p. 15).

Each of the abovementioned characteristics and categories or themes focuses on the teacher leaders working for the betterment of the entire school community, not just in their own personal classrooms. Barth (1999) states “all teachers have the capacity to lead their schools down a more positive path, to enlist their abundant experience and craft knowledge in the service of school improvement” (p. 2). In summary, according to Little (1988, as cited in Murphy, 2005), “Teachers who lead leave their mark on teaching. By their presence and their performance, they change how other teachers think about, plan for, and conduct their work with students” (p. 84).

### **Opportunities for Teacher Leadership**

“Teachers who assume responsibility for something they care desperately about....stand at the gate of profound learning” (Barth, 2001, p. 445). Providing opportunities for teachers to influence the conditions and circumstances of teaching and learning for both adults and children through involvement in decision-making has a special appeal to many teachers (Barth, 2001; Smylie & Brownlee-Conyers, 1992). Teachers are provided opportunities to lead in both formal and informal roles and positions. Danielson (2007) notes the following organizational conditions that promote teacher leadership:

- **A safe environment for risk taking.** Teachers must be confident that administrators and other teachers not criticize them for expressing their ideas that might seem unusual at first. Some of the most effective approaches to solving difficult issues in schools may not be intuitively obvious but may require that educators think



- creatively, which can only happen in a safe environment. School administrators should make it clear that teachers are safe to express ideas and take professional risks.
- **Administrators who encourage teacher leaders.** Administrators' commitment to cultivating teacher leaders plays an essential role in their development. Administrators must be proactive in helping teachers acquire the skills they need to take advantage of opportunities for leadership (data analysis, meeting facilitation, and so on). Unfortunately, some administrators jealously guard their turf, apparently fearing that ambitious teachers will somehow undermine their own authority. In fact, one of the enduring paradoxes of leadership is that the more an administrator shares power, the more authority he or she gains.
  - **Absence of the “tall poppy syndrome.”** It's not only administrators who, on occasion, stand in the way of teacher leaders. Sometimes the teachers themselves resist taking on leadership roles, or make it difficult for their colleagues to do so. In Australia, this is called the “tall poppy syndrome” — those who stick their heads up risk being cut down to size. This phenomenon might take the form of teachers' reluctance to announce to their colleagues that they have been recognized by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. To counteract this syndrome, the school administrator needs to create a culture that honors teachers who step outside their traditional roles and take on leadership projects.
  - **Opportunities to learn leadership skills.** As noted earlier, the skills required for teacher leadership are not part of the preparation program for most teachers. If teacher leaders are to emerge and make their full contribution, they need opportunities to learn the necessary skills of curriculum planning, instructional

improvement, assessment design, collaboration, and facilitation. Teachers can learn these skills through school-level professional development, of course, but they may also build these skills through district-wide or university-based courses and seminars. Whatever the source, the opportunities must be available and sufficiently convenient for teachers to take advantage of them (p. 19).

Acknowledging the expertise and contributions of teacher leaders and providing numerous opportunities for growth and leadership opportunities positively affects the teaching and learning of both teachers and teacher leaders (York-Barr & Duke, 2004). According to Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009), teachers can be leaders of change beyond their individual classrooms by accepting more responsibility for helping their colleagues achieve success for all students and the total school program. “Teachers who choose not to leave the classroom and instead to assume informal leadership roles within the school are equally valued and powerful... drawing from their expertise and passion for teaching, these teachers influence other teachers informally through having casual conversations, sharing materials, facilitating professional development, or simply extending an invitation for other teachers to visit their classrooms” (p. 7).

### **What Do Teacher Leaders Do?**

Teacher expertise about teaching and learning of both adults and children improves the culture and instruction in schools, thus enhancing student learning as well (York-Barr & Duke, 2004). As teachers learn, share, and address problems together, teacher leadership develops naturally (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009). This professional learning creates a level of trust and understanding between and among teachers and “professional learning so constructed is rooted in the human need to feel a sense of belonging and of making a contribution to a community where

experience and knowledge function as a part of community property” (Lieberman & Miller, 2004, p. 23). Childs-Bowen, Moller, and Scrivner’s (2000) conception of teacher leadership states “we believe teachers are leaders when they function in professional learning communities to affect student learning; contribute to school improvement; inspire excellence in practice; and empower stakeholders to participate in educational improvement” (p. 28).

Hord’s (2003) study of professional learning communities reveals that teacher leaders are partners with formal school leaders in the efforts to improve teaching and learning. There are five attributes of schools that are professional learning communities:

1. Supportive and shared leadership: School administrators participate democratically with teachers-sharing power, authority, and decision making.
2. Shared values and vision: School administrators and teachers share visions for school improvement that have an undeviating focus on student learning and that are consistently referenced for the staff’s work.
3. Collective learning and application of learning: Faculty and staff collective learning and application of the learning (taking action) create high intellectual learning tasks and solutions to address student needs.
4. Supportive conditions: School conditions and human capacities support the staff’s arrangement as a professional learning organization.
5. Shared personal practice: Peers review and give feedback on teacher instructional practice in order to increase individual and organizational capacity (Hord, 2003, p. 7).

Organizations that exhibit these attributes allow teacher leaders to thrive in professional learning communities. Professional learning communities promote sustainability of

improvement efforts regardless of the consistency or continuity of school or district leadership (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009). Murphy (2005) notes the examination of research conducted over the past fifteen years on teaching, school improvement, and professional development that “schools benefit from becoming collaborative learning communities or communities of practice” (p. 149).

The origin of the PLC can be traced to the work of Barth (1990) who coined the term *community of learners* which he defines as “adults and children who learn simultaneously, and in the same place to think critically and analytically, and to solve problems that are important to them” (p. 43). Professional learning communities (PLC’s) have emerged as one of the ways for schools to have continuous improvement in student achievement (DuFour, DuFour, & Eaker, 2008; Haberman, 2004; Loertscher, 2005; Schmoker, 2006). In PLC’s, teachers meet regularly to seek the best instructional strategies for assisting their students learn to their highest potential. PLC’s also require teachers to meet regularly to discuss effective instruction, analyze student data, and plan for future instruction based on the analyzed data (Haberman, 2004). Schmoker (2006) lists these concepts as priorities for educators for school improvement. Teachers working collaboratively is the only way that the school improvement initiatives can occur (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; McThige, 2008).

According to the National Commission on Teaching (2005), “quality teaching requires strong professional learning communities. Collegial interchange, not isolation, must become the norm for teachers. Communities of learners can no longer be considered utopian; they must become the building blocks that establish a new foundation for America’s Schools” (p. 1). Individually and collectively, teachers are the key to increased student achievement and total school change. However, the National Commission on Teaching (2003) asserts

quality teaching is the responsibility of the entire school community. Fostering a supportive community that helps new teachers become good teachers—and good teachers become great teachers—is critical to providing a rewarding career path for educators and a quality learning environment for students. (p. 1)

According to Barth (1991), “God didn’t create self-contained classrooms, fifty minute periods, and subjects taught in isolation. We did—because we find working alone safer than and preferable to working together” (p. 128). Using PLC’s in schools and district wide is one way that permits teachers to see themselves as leaders and give them the confidence to take on different and challenging tasks. DuFour (2004) asserts that empowering teachers as leaders promotes higher levels of leadership capacity in teachers.

“Collaboration can affect achievement only when it is used to pursue clear, explicit achievement goals; that collective restraint must be balanced by creative freedom ... and that teams are most effective when their instructional accomplishments are recognized and celebrated” (Schmoker, 2004, p. 86). This type of environment establishes a forum for teachers to grow professionally and take part in deep learning surrounding leadership. Listed below are ways in which teachers may exercise their leadership according to Danielson (2007):

### **Schoolwide Policies and Programs**

- Work with the colleagues to design the schedule so that students have longer periods of time in each subject
- Serve as the building liaison to student teachers
- Represent the schools in a district-wide or statewide program for drug-free schools

### **Teaching and Learning**

- Organize a lesson study to examine the teaching team's or department's approach to a certain topic or concept
- Serve on a school-wide committee to analyze student achievement data
- Help design a teacher mentoring program for the district
- Make a presentation at a state or local conference on alternative assessment methods

### **Communication and Community Relations**

- Publish a department newsletter for parents
- Initiate a regular meeting time to confer with colleagues about individual students
- Develop procedures for specialist and generalist teachers to share their assessments of and plans for individual students
- Serve on the district or state parent-teacher association
- Lead an initiative to formulate methods for students who leave the district to carry information with them about their learning (Danielson, 2007, p. 17)

More and more teachers work unselfishly to share their own vision for teaching and learning beyond their own individual classrooms by building positive, collegial relationships with their peers (Danielson, 2007). "These relationships between teacher leaders and other teachers are critical to building a professional community of learners and leaders within their schools" (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009, p. 91). If these relationships are not nurtured, teacher leadership is less likely to be successful in schools.

### **Barriers to Teacher Leadership**

"Long-standing norms of the teaching profession can significantly challenge the prospects of teacher leadership" (York-Barr & Duke, 2004, p. 272). Katzenmeyer and Moller

(2009) suggest that there are four challenges that teacher leaders experience: deciding to accept a leadership role; building principal/teacher leader relationships; working with peers; and facilitating professional learning for self and others. Table 1 summarizes these factors.

Table 1

*Factors Influencing Success as a Teacher Leader*

<b>Organizational Commitment to Teacher</b>	<b>Teaching Culture</b>
<p><b>Leadership</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the principal understand the value of and support teacher leaders?</li> <li>• Will I have resources and time to perform my leadership role?</li> <li>• What is the extent of my authority in accessing both human and fiscal resources?</li> <li>• What evidence is there of informal teacher leadership?</li> <li>• How do teachers interact with existing teacher leaders in the school?</li> <li>• Are teachers encouraged to authentically participate and give input to critical decisions?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are the teachers open to working with me?</li> <li>• Are the teachers entrenched in their practice, or do they frequently seek professional learning?</li> <li>• What are the relationships between and among teachers?</li> <li>• How do those who all teach within the same content area, or who have different levels of teaching experience, interact?</li> <li>• Are the social networks in the school healthy or dysfunctional?</li> <li>• Is time allocated for teachers to work together? Are they expected to work together on instructional issues?</li> </ul>

(table continues)

Table 1 (continued)

<b>Professional Learning</b>	<b>Personal Balance</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are teachers accustomed to being observed and observing other teachers?</li> <li>• Do teachers currently collaborate with each other to improve teaching and learning?</li> <li>• What is the history of reform initiatives and professional learning in the school?</li> <li>• Is there a functioning professional learning community? Or is the professional learning not taken seriously?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do I have knowledge and skills to effectively teach my subject/grade level?</li> <li>• What is my history of working collaboratively with other teachers?</li> <li>• Have teachers in the past come to me for help in their teaching practice?</li> <li>• Do I have the commitment of family and friends to support me in taking on this role?</li> <li>• What personal obligations do I have that might be neglected?</li> </ul>

Source: Katzenmeyer & Moller (2009)

Crowther, Ferguson, and Hann (2009) developed clear insights regarding “how to build new forms of leadership capacity in schools and the teaching profession” (p. 95). While providing professional development to schools, they utilized exercises called CLASS (Creating Leaders to Accelerate School Success) to identify barriers to teacher leadership within the profession as well as the school. Through the use of the CLASS, “participants identify and come to terms with factors and forces that might prevent teacher leadership from germinating and proliferating in their schools and profession” (p.127). A summary of the findings are listed in Table 2.



Table 2

*Overcoming Barriers to Teacher Leadership*

Barriers to Leadership	Ways to Overcome the Barriers
“I’m just a teacher” mindset	Draw attention to ways in which teachers exhibit leadership in school activities and processes
Lack of confidence	Ask teachers to take a lead role where they will be comfortable
Unclear understanding of the concept	Engage in professional dialogue and analysis, using the Teachers as Leaders Framework snapshots
“I just want to teach” mindset	Explore three-dimensional pedagogy and its links to the Teachers as Leaders Framework
No time for development	Highlight developmental opportunities in daily operations
System that expects only principals to be leaders	Encourage mentoring from teacher leadership (TL) models
Possible encouragement of rabble rousers	Insist that the school’s vision and values be used as a guide to action
Belief that too many cooks spoil the broth	Discuss how to make 1+1=3
No rewards for extra effort	Highlight intrinsic reward systems

(table continues)

Table 2 (continued)

Barriers to Leadership	Ways to Overcome the Barriers
Open to abuse by manipulators	Make projects transparent and accountable
Previous failures with lead teachers	Create new label, without attached baggage
Language that reinforces teachers as subordinates (“bosses” and “staff”)	Devise lists of appropriate and inappropriate language
Not taught in preservice education	Make sure that beginning teachers become aware of TL and its relevance for their careers
Peer pressure	Reiterate that TL is voluntary but a commitment to school success should be obligatory
Lack of principal support	Ask the principal to explore (and critique) metastrategic leadership concepts

Source: Crowther, Ferguson, & Hann (2009)

Barth (2001) recognizes the following impediments standing in the way of teacher leadership:

- **Full plate.** With so many additional responsibilities, the opportunity for school leadership can be seen as an add-on.
- **Time.** Teachers sometimes do not have time for leadership activities and if they do have time, they expect to be paid for it.

- **Colleagues.** Teacher leaders may receive disapproval from fellow teachers and administrators in the form of passive and active resistance that thwart teacher initiatives toward school leadership.
- **Standardized tests.** Teachers are focused on tests and raising student scores rather than taking on leadership responsibilities (pp. 445-446).

The path to teacher leadership is not without obstacles. Johnson and Donaldson (2007) note that teacher leaders “need support to overcome stubborn barriers created by the norms of school culture—autonomy, egalitarianism, and deference to seniority” (p. 8). The principal has the important role of establishing a vision leading toward the common purpose of cultivating a culture ready to handle successful school improvement through the facilitation of teacher leaders (Lambert, 2003).

### **Supports for Teacher Leadership**

The development of teacher leadership rests heavily on the opportunities for professional development and time for planning and preparation of “curricular matters, developing school-wide plans, leading study groups, organizing visits to other schools, collaborating with higher education institutions and collaborating with colleagues” (Harris, 2005, p. 12).

#### **Principal Support**

The support of the principal is extremely important to the success of teacher leaders. Barth (2001) states “the principal has a disproportionate influence upon teacher leadership—for better or worse” (p. 447). According to Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009)

a principal’s willingness to share power and to be a co-learner with teacher leaders to improve classroom practice provides support for teacher leadership ... removing barriers,

providing resources, and actively listening can be the most important tasks a principal does for teacher leaders. (p. 20)

The commitment of the administrator to cultivate teacher leadership is essential to the development of teacher leaders (Danielson, 2007).

York-Barr and Duke (2004) researched the literature on ways in which principals can promote teacher leadership. These include the following:

- Build a school culture and environment that is conducive to teacher leadership, including both formal structures and informal behaviors (Bishop, Tinley, & Berman, 1997; Kahrs, 1996; Lieberman, 1988).
- Expect leadership, relinquish authority, trust teachers, empower teachers, include others, protect teacher leaders from their colleagues, share responsibility for failure, and give credit for success (Barth, 2001).
- Redefine the role of the principal from instructional leader to developer of a community of leaders (Troen & Boles, 1994).
- Create opportunities for teacher to lead; build professional learning communities; provide quality, results-driven professional development; and celebrate innovation and teacher expertise (Childs-Bowen et al., 2000).
- Provide a school environment in which teachers engage in reflective practice and can implement ideas that grow from reflection (Terry, 1999).
- Pay attention to the change process and to human relationships, listen well, communicate respect, perpetuate ongoing dialogue about teaching and learning, and encourage teachers to act on shared visions (Conzemius, 1999).

- Offer “diligent, supportive, visible, and frequent reinforcement of the real power of teacher leaders” (Hart, 1994, pp. 494–495).

The ability or inability of a school organization to sustain lasting school improvement is dependent upon effective leadership (Barth, 2001; Yukl, 2006). This leadership cannot come in the form of a single principal, but instead the principal has the important role of establishing a vision toward the common purpose of cultivating a culture ready to handle successful school improvement through the facilitation of teacher leaders (Lambert, 2003).

Blegen and Kennedy (2000) state “the greatest influence on teacher leadership is the principal” (p. 4). The role of the principal is critical as either a facilitator for or barrier to effective teacher leadership (Blasé & Blasé, 2000). The principal is still viewed as the “official” leader by formal position authority and is a key player in shaping school culture. Barth (1998) states that principals have to clearly communicate that they want to develop a community of leaders, relinquish some of their own power, involve teachers and support them in decision making, and share responsibility for successes and failures. He sums it up best by saying “the best principals are not heroes; they are hero-makers” (p. 146).

### **Creating a Supportive School Culture**

School culture has become widely recognized as a major influence on the success of improvement initiatives in schools (Fullan, 2001) and also influences teacher leadership. A review of research findings from over two decades of study has found that the following school cultural conditions facilitate teacher leadership.

- Schoolwide focus on learning, inquiry, and reflective practice (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009).
- Encouragement for taking initiative (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009).

- Expectation for teamwork and for sharing responsibility, decision making, and leadership (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009; Pellicer & Anderson, 1995).
- Teacher leaders viewed and valued as positive examples for teaching profession (Little, 1988).
- Strong teacher communities that foster professionalism (Caine & Caine, 2000; Talbert & McLaughlin, 1994).

The successful collaboration between teacher leaders and their colleagues depends largely on the relationships that are built among and between colleagues (York-Barr & Duke, 2004). Establishing trusting relationships and creating an environment and “structures that promote teachers learning and working together on a daily basis, with a focus on valued teaching practices, are more likely to result in teacher leadership flourishing” (York-Barr & Duke, 2004, p. 276).

Creating working conditions that encourage positive relationships among faculty members, particularly between teachers and leaders, helps to create a supportive school culture. Research findings over two decades suggest the following roles and relationships that support teacher leadership:

- Colleagues recognize and respect teacher leaders as teachers with subject area expertise
- High trust and positive working conditions prevail among administrators
- Assignment of teacher leadership work is central to the teaching and learning process, as opposed to administrative or management tasks
- Recognition of ambiguity and difficulty in teacher leadership roles

- Principal support for teacher leadership through formal structures, informal behaviors, coaching, and feedback
- Clarity about teacher leader and administrator leadership domains, including common ground
- Attention to interpersonal aspects of the relationship between teacher leader and principal (York-Barr & Duke, 2004, pp. 270–271)

According to Childs-Bowen, Moller, and Scrivner (2000), another way in which a positive culture is created is the recognition of teacher leaders for their contributions and accomplishments. The recognition of teacher innovation and expertise is important to the development of teacher leadership. The school principal is in “the best position to recognize those teachers who break new ground in instruction and leadership, while encouraging others to join the movement” (p. 33). Genuine praise is a simple yet powerful strategy that has proven to be far more important than monetary recognition. Opportunities for teacher recognition and celebrating student success are critical to creating a culture for teacher leadership.

### **Summary**

This review of literature articulates the importance of teachers and principals working collaboratively to not only build upon leadership positions that are currently established in schools, but to also institute new leadership roles. The expectation for schools to create an environment of teaching and learning for all weighs heavily on the shoulders of professionals in the education field. Embracing teachers as leaders is an important step towards achieving this goal but requires change in roles of both principals and teachers. This study explored the perceptions of African American and Caucasian teacher leaders as to the selection, supports, and barriers for opportunities at teacher leadership. This review of literature helped to establish the

rationale for the study and the need for the selection and support of all teacher leaders. Chapter Three describes the research design and methodology including the research questions, population and sample, methods of data collection, and data analysis.



## CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

Chapter three addresses the methodology used in this study. This study investigated the ways in which public school administrators develop teacher leadership capacity within their schools, the effect of teacher leadership on teacher roles and classroom performance, and perceived supports and obstacles to teachers' ability to assume leadership roles within their school. The data collection approach used in this study included the administration of a teacher leadership survey to all teacher leaders identified by their principals and to principals of each school participating in the study. The study was designed to explore differences, if any, in the experiences and opportunities for Caucasian and African American teacher leaders.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework used for this study is Critical Race Theory (CRT). CRT centers on the notion that racism is "an engrained feature of our landscape, it looks ordinary and natural to persons in the culture" (Delgado & Stefanic, 2001 p. xvi). Racism is such an everyday occurrence; it is intertwined into every aspect of life so that it becomes unrecognizable. As principals look to determine who their teacher leaders are as well as those with potential for development, it is important for them to carefully consider who is selected as a teacher leader and the types of opportunities and responsibilities offered to those teacher leaders.

Delgado (1995) asserts that there are five major components or tenets of CRT: (1) the notion that racism is ordinary and not aberrational; (2) the idea of an interest convergence; (3) the social construction of race; (4) the idea of storytelling and counter-storytelling; and (5) the

notion that Whites have actually been recipients of civil rights legislation. Each of these is described below.

CRT begins with the notion that “racism is normal, not aberrant, in American society” and that “it appears both natural and normal to the people of the culture” (Delgado, 1995, p.xiv). Racism is ordinary and promotes a notion of “color-blindness” and “meritocracy.” These two notions are mutually intertwined and serve to marginalize certain groups of people, predominately people of color. Color-blindness and meritocratic rhetoric serve two primary functions: first, they allow Whites to feel consciously irresponsible for the hardships people of color face and encounter daily and, secondly, they also maintain Whites’ power and strongholds within society (Delgado, 1995).

The notion of color-blindness

legitimizes racism’s need for an ‘other group’ in order to flourish and maintain its influence within the moral fabric of society. Racism and White supremacy are not aberrant, insofar as the oppressors exploit the ‘others’ in order to maintain their elitist control.

Meritocracy allows the empowered to feel “good” and have a clear conscience. Many might ask why the powerful would not have a clear conscience since they maintain the majority of both the wealth and power in society. The powerful maintain that power and only relinquish portions of it when they feel as if they have nothing to lose; furthermore they receive praise and compliments when they do choose to dole out portions for their power. (Hartlep, 2009, p. 7)

The second tenet, the theory of interest convergence by Bell (1980), is a critical component within the framework of CRT. Common sense beliefs are formulated by the majority

“status quo.” Beliefs created by the majority, the haves, oppress minority groups, the have-nots and have-too-littles. Interest convergence is the notion that Whites will allow and support racial justice/progress to the extent that there is something positive in it for them. This is otherwise known as a “convergence” between the interest of Whites and non-Whites. CRT focuses on informing the public about how certain stories act and serve to silence and distort certain groups of people and cultures, typically people of color, while simultaneously building-up and legitimizing others-typically the majority.

The third tenet focuses on the social construction of race which has been one of the hallmark mantras and core issues of CRT. This tenet holds that race and races are categories invented, manipulated or retired when convenient by society. This tenet holds that race is a socially constructed concept that is used by the White majority as a social, economic, and educational barrier for people of color. As such, law and policy can be deconstructed, revealing them to have a racist purpose (Lopez, 2003; Lopez & Parker, 2003).

The fourth tenet, “legal storytelling” and “counter-storytelling” was found to be an effective way to counter the master narratives policymakers use to frame an experience or policy outcome that is very different from the reality of experience that people of color experience. Schools are supposed to be neutral spaces that treat everyone justly; however, school curricula continues to be structured around mainstream White, middle-class values thus continuing to widen the racial achievement gap. “Writers analyze the myths, presuppositions, and received wisdoms that make up the common culture about race and that invariably render blacks and other minorities one-down” (Delgado, 1995, p. xiv).

Counter-storytelling is necessary given the curricula inequity in the US educational system. Without counter-storytelling, true stories would never be publicly proclaimed, thus

leading one to believe the stories that are told (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). Legal storytelling offers differing paradigms and counter-narratives, which can be used as tools to readdress the inequities many educational policies serve to perpetuate (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001).

The fifth tenet focuses on the notion that Whites have actually been recipients of civil rights legislation. According to Taylor (2009),

Fifty years post *Brown*, *de jure* separation has been replaced by *de facto* segregation, as White flight from public schools has created a two-tiered system in many cities and student assignments have shifted from mandatory busing to neighborhood preferences. Most children of color currently attend schools with relatively few Whites; very few White children attend schools where they are the minority. Clarenton, South Carolina, one of the case schools used by civil rights lawyers Thurgood Marshall and Charles Houston, remains as segregated as it was before 1954. The educational progress of African Americans that has occurred has thus been allowed only if it is perceived by the majority as cost-free, or nearly so. Preferably, these changes have come incrementally and without social disruptions such as marches, boycotts, and riots. Importantly, for most Whites, advances must come without affirmative action. (pp. 6-7)

Whites have undeniably been the primary recipients of civil rights legislation. According to Guy-Sheftall (1993), White women have been the major recipients of affirmative action hiring policies. Critical Race Theory has been largely used in the area of legal research based on the early works of legal professor Derrick Bell (Delgado, 1995), but was expanded and introduced into other disciplines, including education, by Ladson-Billings (1999). It is argued that race continues to be salient in American society, that the nation was premised on property rights

rather than human rights, and that the intersection of race and property could serve as a powerful analytical tool for explaining social and educational inequities.

### **The Role of Diversity in Teaching**

While our populations of cities become more and more diverse each year, the diversity of our teacher population does not. According to a 2005 study by the National Center for Education Information, eighty-five percent of the teaching profession was White (<http://www.ncei.com/POT05PRESSREL3.htm>).

The body of literature focusing on Black teachers and their teaching (Foster, 1990, 1997; Hudson & Holmes, 1994; Irvine & Irvine, 1983; King, 1993; Milner, 2003; Milner & Howard, 2004; Monroe & Obidah, 2004) is growing. Pang and Gibson (2001) posit that “Black educators are far more than physical role models, and they bring diverse family histories, value orientations, and experiences to students in the classroom, attributes often not found in textbooks or viewpoints often omitted” (pp. 260–261).

The need for diversity in the teaching force is evident in the statistics reporting “nationally, people of color represent 40% of the student population in public schools, whereas only 17% of public school teachers are people of color” (Achinstein, Ogawa, Sexton, & Freitas, 2010, p. 71). “Conventional wisdom among educators is that minority students are more likely to excel educationally when matched with teachers who share their race or ethnicity” (Dee, 2004, p. 1) resulting in the need for aggressive recruitment of minority teachers.

One explanation for the existing achievement gap is the classroom dynamics between teachers and students. The presence of minority teachers in classrooms to help close the achievement gap that exists between minority and non-minority students is one solution to this problem. Dee’s (2005) research on the impact of having “a demographically similar teacher”

and how this influences student behavior and performance suggests that a mismatch of minority students with majority teacher has grave implications for the achievement gaps and underrepresented groups of students. Additionally, the research results of Dee's (2004) "indicate that the racial, ethnic, and gender dynamics between students and teachers have consistently large effects on teacher perceptions of student performance" (p. 11).

### **Situating Self as Researcher**

Conducting this study was especially important to me as an African American elementary school principal seeking to provide more teacher leadership opportunities to all teachers at my school. As an elementary school principal, it is important to continue to explore the selection, supports, and barriers to teacher leadership for all teachers, but especially so for those who are the minority within the school. As a school leader, I "must be prepared to work with individuals who are culturally different and help create learning environments that foster respect, tolerance, and intercultural understanding" (Lopez, 2003, p.71). The prevalence, or lack thereof, of African American teacher leaders could be contributable to many factors. This study was designed to examine if current practices encourage or discourage the representation of African American teacher leaders.

### **Research Question for the Study**

The research question for this study was, "In what ways, if any, are there differences in how African American teacher leaders are identified, the roles they assume, supports they receive and barriers they face when compared to their Caucasian counterparts?" The following guiding questions helped to organize the research process:

1. How are teacher leaders identified?
2. What supports are provided to teacher leaders?

3. What are the barriers to teacher leadership?
4. How do teacher leaders overcome those barriers?
5. What is the relationship between teacher leaders and their peers?
6. Do the supports provided to Caucasian teacher leaders differ from those provided to African American teacher leaders?
7. How long does it take, on average, for a Caucasian teacher leader to be classified as a teacher leader?
8. How long does it take, on average, for African American teachers to be classified as teacher leaders?
9. Are there specific barriers that exist for African American teacher leaders that are different from other teacher leaders? If so, what are they?
10. What is the background of the administrators designating teacher leaders and does this make a difference in who is identified as a teacher leader?
11. What are the demographics of the students of the school district?
12. What is the academic standing of the school and district of each participant?

## **Methodology**

### **Participants**

Elementary teachers and principals representing three diverse Regional Inservice regions in Alabama were invited to participate in this study. The three regions were selected in order to obtain perspectives from teachers in various ethnic settings. The regions selected represent a predominantly African American region, a predominantly Caucasian region, and a region with diverse representation of African American and Caucasian teachers and students. The regions selected are the East Alabama Regional Inservice Area, the Wiregrass Region, and the Black

Belt Region. Permission to participate in the study was requested from 14 of 15 districts in the East Alabama Regional Inservice Area. One district was omitted from the study because to it is where the researcher is employed. From the 14 districts requested only 7 superintendents provided permission to participate. Requests for permission to participate in the study were also sent to 15 school districts from the Black Belt Region. Of the 15 districts requested only 10 superintendents provided permission to participate. Requests for permission to participate in the study were disseminated to 4 superintendents from the Wiregrass Region requesting permission to participate in the study. Of the 4 districts requested 2 superintendents provided permission to participate.

**Teachers.** The participants in the study were teachers identified as teacher leaders by their principals. Elementary school principals were asked to identify 8–10 teacher leaders from their school site to participate in the study. Teacher leaders are classroom teachers but can also include resource teachers, reading coaches, media specialists, or other specialty area teachers. Gender, ethnicity, age, and highest educational level, as well as school and student demographics were collected as part of the survey. The participants were selected from 19 school districts in Alabama. Electronic surveys were distributed to 31 teacher leaders identified by their principals with 16 completing the survey for a return rate of 52%.

Open-ended questions were researcher-designed and constructed in order to solicit additional feedback and insights from teachers about their responses to the survey. The researcher was interested in hearing what teachers had to say in their own words in addition to the information collected through the TLSS. This provided an opportunity to explore the stories of teacher leaders including how they were selected, the types of supports that were provided,



and any perceived barriers to their ability to be effective teacher leaders (see Appendix 1 for a copy of the complete survey).

**Principals.** All elementary principals in the selected school districts were invited to participate in the study. Each principal was asked to identify eight to ten teacher leaders at their school site utilizing the following definition of teacher leader and teacher leadership:

**Teacher Leadership**—Teacher Leadership is when teachers help “sustain changes that enhance student learning, improve instruction, maximize participation in decision making and align resources to the school’s vision and purpose” (Portin, Schneider, DeArmond, & Gundlach, 2003, p. 25).

**Teacher Leader**—A teacher leader is defined as the informal and formal teacher leader, who leads within and beyond the classroom, serves students and/or staff, is in charge of school operational duties, and/or serves in a decision-making role within the school or district (Frost & Durrant, 2003; Katzenmeyer)

In addition to identifying teacher leaders, principals were asked to respond to a survey (see Appendix 2). The purpose of the principal survey was to glean additional information as to how teachers were identified beyond the definition provided and how the principal supported teacher leaders in their role. Electronic surveys were distributed to 62 principals with 13 responding with response rate of 21%.

Open-ended questions on the principal survey were researcher-designed and constructed in order to solicit additional feedback and insights from principals. The researcher was interested in hearing what principals had to say in their own words relative to the selection and supports provided to teacher leaders in their school.

## **Timeline**

The timing of the distribution of the survey may have played a major role in the response rate for this study. Upon receiving approval from Superintendents to conduct the study, 62 principals were solicited via email to participate by completing an online survey consisting of 9 open-ended questions and requests for the email addresses of up to 10 teacher leaders in their building using a definition of teacher leaders and teacher leadership provided by the researcher. Of the 62 principals contacted, only 13 agreed to participate. Principals were contacted 6 times and requested to participate on March 24, March 31, April 12, April 20, June 24, and July 27, 2011. Once teacher leaders were identified by principals, the Teacher Leadership School Survey (TLSS) was disseminated to them on April 20, May 6, June 12, June 18, and again on August 1, 2011. Once identified, teachers were slightly more eager to participate than the principals. Due to the numerous requests sent to principals, the timing of the dissemination of the surveys was less than ideal due to the time of year. The spring of the year is standardized testing time followed by end of the year activities. Teacher responses to the survey could have possibly been greater had I received responses from principals in a more timely manner.

## **Survey Instrument**

The Teacher Leadership School Survey (TLSS) developed by Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009) was the primary instrument used in this study. Permission to use and adapt the TLSS for electronic use was obtained from Dr. Marilyn Katzenmeyer (see Appendix 1). The original survey was distributed on paper, but was adapted for electronic use for this study. This survey categorizes seven specific dimensions of support for teacher leaders. For each of the dimensions, there are seven items identified by the researchers that describe these areas of support. These dimensions or supports included the (a) developmental focus, (b) recognition, (c) autonomy,

(d) collegiality, (e) participation, (f) open communication and (g) positive environment, each of which is described below.

Through extensive research with over 5,000 teachers, Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009) found these dimensions to be characteristic of schools where teacher leadership is successful and thriving. The dimensions are described as follows:

**Developmental Focus:** Teachers are assisted in gaining new knowledge and skills and are encouraged to help others learn. Teachers are provided with needed assistance, guidance and coaching.

**Recognition:** Teachers are recognized for roles they take and the contributions they make. A spirit of mutual respect and caring exists among teachers. There are processes for the recognition of effective work.

**Autonomy:** Teachers are encouraged to be proactive in making improvements and innovations. Barriers are removed and resources are found to support teachers' efforts.

**Collegiality:** Teachers collaborate on instructional and student-related matters. Examples of collegial behavior include teachers discussing strategies, sharing materials, or observing in one another's classrooms.

**Participation:** Teachers are actively involved in making decisions and having input on important matters. Department chairpersons, team leaders, and other key leaders are selected with the participation of teachers.

**Open Communication:** Teachers send and receive information relevant to the effective functioning of the school in open, honest ways. Teachers feel informed about what is happening in the school. Teachers easily share opinions and feelings. Teachers are not blamed when things go wrong.

**Positive Environment:** There is general satisfaction with the work environment.

Teachers feel respected by one another, by parents, students and administrators.

Teachers perceive the schools as having effective administrative leadership. Appointed or informal teams work together effectively in the interest of students.

Each of the seven dimensions of the TLSS contains seven questions that are answered using a Likert-type scale. Participants were asked to respond to survey statements in terms of how frequently each statement is descriptive of their school. The choices included (1) never, (2) rarely, (3) sometimes, (4) often and (5) always. The survey was adapted to accommodate the specific purpose of this study. The original design of the survey did not request identifying background information of each participant such as age, gender, highest educational level, and ethnicity. However, these variables were of interest for this research to determine if there was any relationship between these demographic subgroups and teacher leadership. Additionally, school demographic information was requested of participants including the enrollment, percent of students participating in the Free and/or Reduced meal program, and the percentage of minority students in each school.

This instrument was utilized with teacher leaders. The researcher obtained permission to distribute the survey electronically using SurveyMethods® to collect survey data. When targeting a specific population, surveys are particularly useful. One disadvantage, however, is the low return rate and potential for bias in the early returns (Katz, 1993).

### **Validity and Reliability**

Content validity of the survey instrument was established by Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009). A panel of experts knowledgeable of teacher leadership was used to develop the items that would measure teacher leadership. Over 300 teachers from several schools completed the

survey. Through a series of factor analyses, scales were identified and completed to determine whether factors could be found that exhibited internal consistency and were minimally correlated with each other. The items that did not load any factor and were unrelated were dropped from the survey. Additional items were added to complete the scale to its current form of 49 items with 7 items in each dimension. The original survey is intended for paper distribution but has been adapted for electronic use for this study.

Cronbach's Alpha (internal consistency) was used as the criterion for reliability. A sample of 312 teachers from 12 schools completed the final version of the TLSS. The Statistical Analysis System (SAS) was used to compute the reliability estimates. Table 3 represents the Alpha Reliability estimates indicating above average reliability.

Table 3

*Internal Consistency (Cronbach Alpha) Reliabilities of Dimensions of Teacher Leadership*

Dimensions of Teacher Leadership	Alpha Reliability	Items
Developmental Focus	.87	1–7
Recognition	.88	8–14
Autonomy	.87	15–21
Collegiality	.83	22–28
Participation	.87	29–35
Open Communication	.93	36–42
Positive Environment	.87	43–49

The protocol for data collection is described below. The data from the TLSS survey and the demographic data were downloaded and input into a SPSS® (19.0) data file for analysis. The researcher utilized SPSS® to conduct descriptive analysis, sub group analysis and first level of statistical analysis (t-tests). The t-test was used to determine if the mean scores on survey items between African American and Caucasian teacher leaders were significantly different.

### **Data Collection and Analysis**

In an effort to gain a deeper understanding of the issues expressed in the present study's research questions, the mixed-methodology study utilized both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The survey instrument was utilized to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. The inclusion of both qualitative and quantitative questions helps to strengthen the research design and furnishes validity and credibility to the present study's results (Patton, 1990).

Data from the electronic surveys were input into an SPSS® (19.0) data file to conduct a descriptive analysis by examining the means and frequencies of each survey question and dimension of teacher leadership. The t-test was used to determine if the mean scores on survey items between African American and Caucasian teacher leaders were significantly different. A low mean indicated that the question or dimension of teacher leadership was not observed at a particular school or that it could potentially be considered a barrier to teacher leadership.

In order to assess whether differences between the groups were statistically significant, ANOVA, the analysis of variance procedure was used to assess with ethnicity as the independent variable. Statistically significant differences were considered at the threshold of  $p < .05$ .

Qualitative data from the open-ended survey questions were coded and analyzed by hand, using an emergent theme approach (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003; Merriam, 2002; Patton, 2005). The data represents the perceptions of elementary teachers and principals from the open-ended

survey response items that were researcher created to gain a deeper understanding of the thoughts and perceptions of the survey respondents. The data were used to provide the information needed to analyze the similarities and differences in the selection, supports, and barriers to teacher leadership for African American and Caucasian teacher leaders.

### **Summary**

Chapter three of this study provided an overview of the research methods used in this study. This chapter included the research design and methodology; described the population, participants, the design of the survey instrument; the process used to collect the data; and provided an explanation of the procedures used to analyze the data. This study may add to the available knowledge of teacher leadership in schools. Chapter Four includes an overview of the findings based on the data collected. Chapter five contains a discussion, conclusions, and suggestions for further research.

## CHAPTER 4. RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to explore the ways in which elementary school principals develop teacher leadership capacity within their schools, its effect on teacher roles, performance, and the supports and obstacles to teachers' ability to assume leadership roles within these schools. The study included research conducted with participants in school districts in Alabama representing three diverse Regional Inservice areas. These include the East Alabama Regional Inservice Area which is diverse, the Black Belt Regional Inservice Area which is primarily African American, and the Wiregrass Regional Inservice Area which is primarily Caucasian. The research question used to guide this study was "In what ways, if any, are there differences in how African American teacher leaders are identified, the roles they assume, supports they receive and barriers they face when compared to their Caucasian counterparts?"

Previous research has suggested that when schools empower teachers to assume leadership roles, collaborative cultures flourish and teachers lead in concert with the administration (Crowther et al., 2009; Fullan, 2001; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009). Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009) asserted that teachers have potential to be dynamic leaders in their schools, thereby enhancing the possibility of school reform.

This chapter presents the results based on the quantitative and qualitative data collected. The quantitative data were collected using an adapted version of the Teacher Leadership School Survey (TLSS) (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009) survey. This survey was adapted to allow for the collection of qualitative data in the form of open-ended responses on the teacher survey.



## **Quantitative Research Findings**

The quantitative data for this study were collected through the use of an adapted version of the Teacher Leadership School Survey (TLSS) developed by Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009). Permission to adapt the survey was given by Dr. Katzenmeyer. The adaptation to the survey allowed for questions about demographic information pertaining to the participants as well as information about the school and school system in which each respondent works. Schools were studied across seven dimensions of teacher leadership including developmental focus, autonomy, collegiality, participation, open communication, and positive environment (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009).

An online version of the TLSS was distributed to elementary school principals from three Inservice regions in Alabama selected for participation in the study. These particular regions were selected in an effort to obtain information from school districts with a predominantly Caucasian population, a predominantly African American population, and in the third region there was a racially diverse population.

Once consent was received, each principal completed an online survey that asked questions pertaining to the development of and support for teacher leaders. The final part of the survey asked them to identify 8–10 teacher leaders in their building. Once the principals completed the survey and provided email addresses for their teacher leaders, the survey link was disseminated electronically using the email addresses supplied by the principal to the selected teacher leaders. Of the 31 teachers identified as teacher leaders by their principals, 17 completed a TLSS, for a response rate of 55%. The survey was sent 6 times with follow-up reminders on March 24, March 31, April 12, April 20, June 24, and July 27, 2011. Still, the total number was much lower than the researcher hoped would be the case. Differences between perceptions of

teachers in regards to their leadership roles were analyzed by conducting *t*-tests for independent means. The mean scores for each of the seven dimensions measuring teachers' perceptions of how their own schools reflect these dimensions were collected and identified. The mean scores for each of the dimensions were also analyzed by conducting *t*-tests for independent means. The TLSS used a five-point Likert-type scale allowing participants to rate their perceptions of each dimension of teacher leadership. Higher numerical results on the TLSS indicate a school culture that supports the development of teacher leadership.

### Demographic Data

**Age of participants.** Figure 2 represents the age of the teachers participating in the study. They ranged from 20–60 years of age with 6.7% representing the 20–29 year range; 26.7% representing the 30–39 year range; 40% representing the 40–49 year range; 13.3% representing the 50–59 year range; and 13.3% representing the 60 and over range. Additionally, 2 of the 17 respondents skipped this question representing 11.8% of the population.

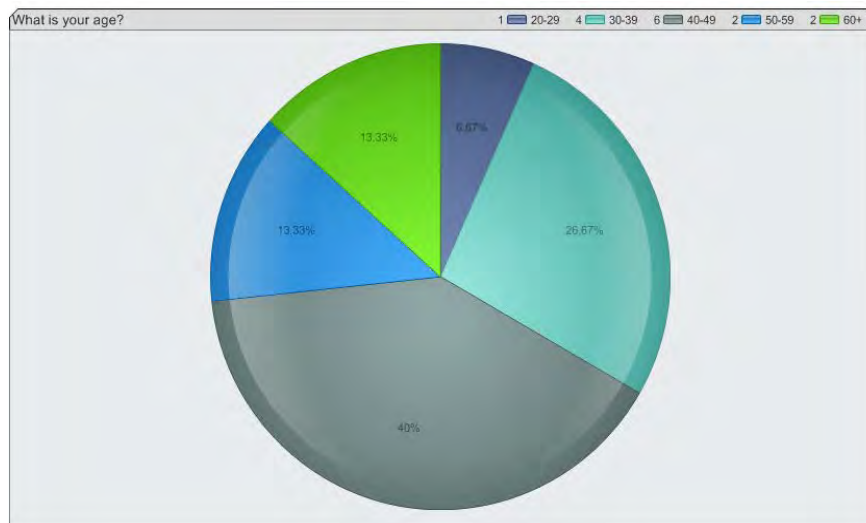
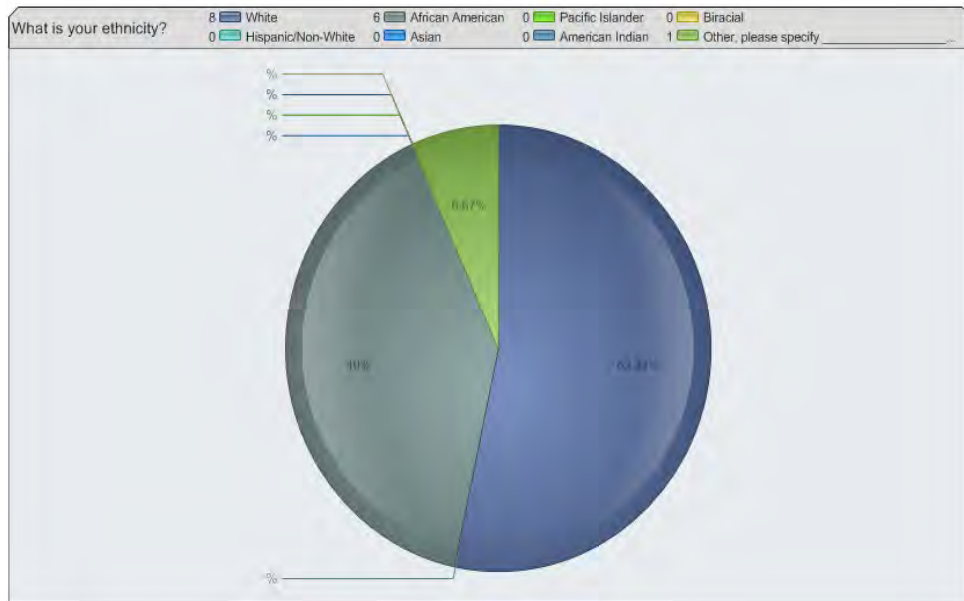


Figure 2. Age Range of Teacher Leaders

**Ethnicity.** Figure 3 represents the ethnicity of the teachers participating in the study. The participants included 40% African American, 53.3% Caucasian, 6.7% responded as Other, and 2 respondents 11.8% did not respond to the question.



*Figure 3. Ethnicity of Teacher Leaders*

**Gender.** Figure 4 represents the gender of the survey responders. Females comprised 93.3% of the survey population with males comprising 6.7%. The actual number of females responding was 15 and the number of males responding was 1. Of the total teachers surveyed, 2 did not respond to this question.

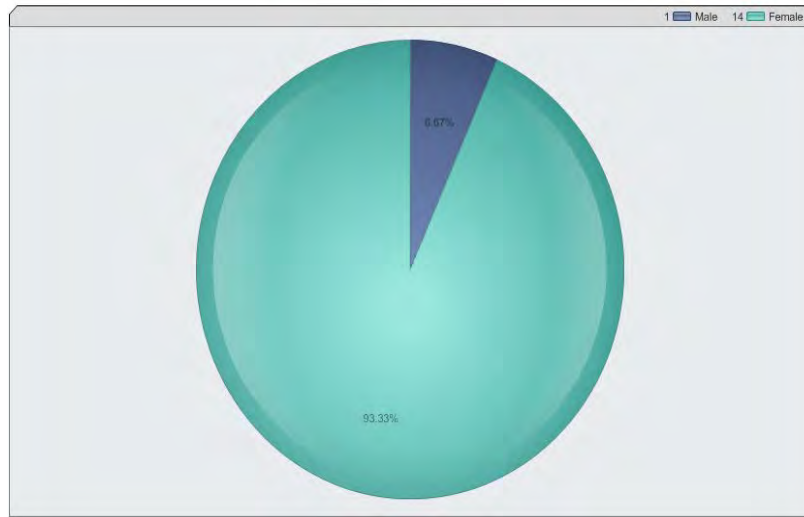


Figure 4. Gender of Teacher Leaders

**Highest degree earned.** Figure 5 illustrates the highest level of education collected from the survey responders. Of the 17 teacher leaders responding to the survey, 6.7% reported having a Bachelor’s Degree, 66.7% reported having a Master’s Degree, and 26.7% reported having a Specialists’ Degree. Of the total number of teachers surveyed, 2 did not respond to this question.

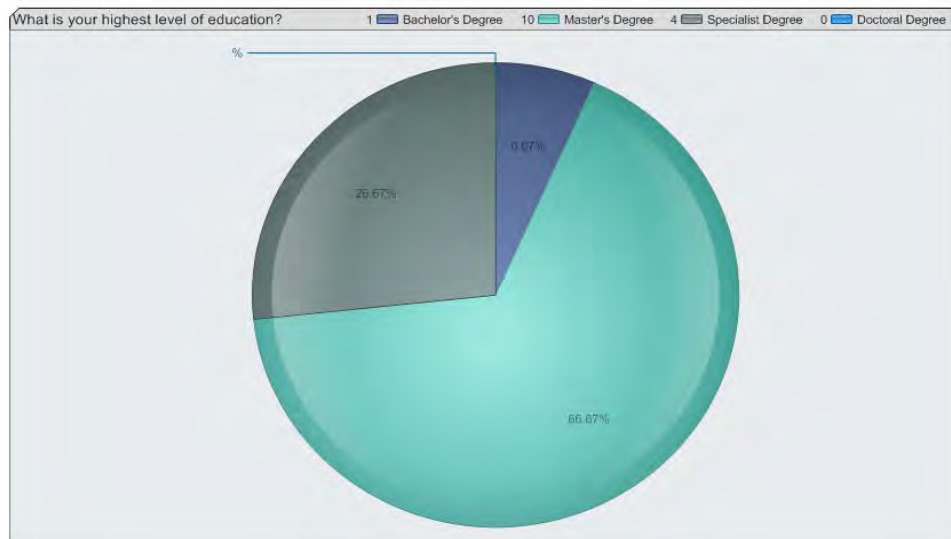


Figure 5. Highest Degree Earned of Teacher Leaders

**Roles of teacher leaders.** Teacher leaders were asked to identify the various roles they currently held or had held within the last three years which designated them as teacher leaders. Those responding to the survey reported that they assumed the roles of Grade Level Leader, Building Based Student Support Team (BBSST) member, School Leadership Team member, Math Coach, and Math Teacher Leader. Additionally, they were asked to designate whether they were National Board Certified Teachers. The majority of the participants listed more than one role. Across all participants, the most common roles were: Building Based Student Support Team member (66.7%), School Leadership team member (66.7%) and Grade Level Leader (46.7%). Figure 6 lists the roles identified by teacher leaders.

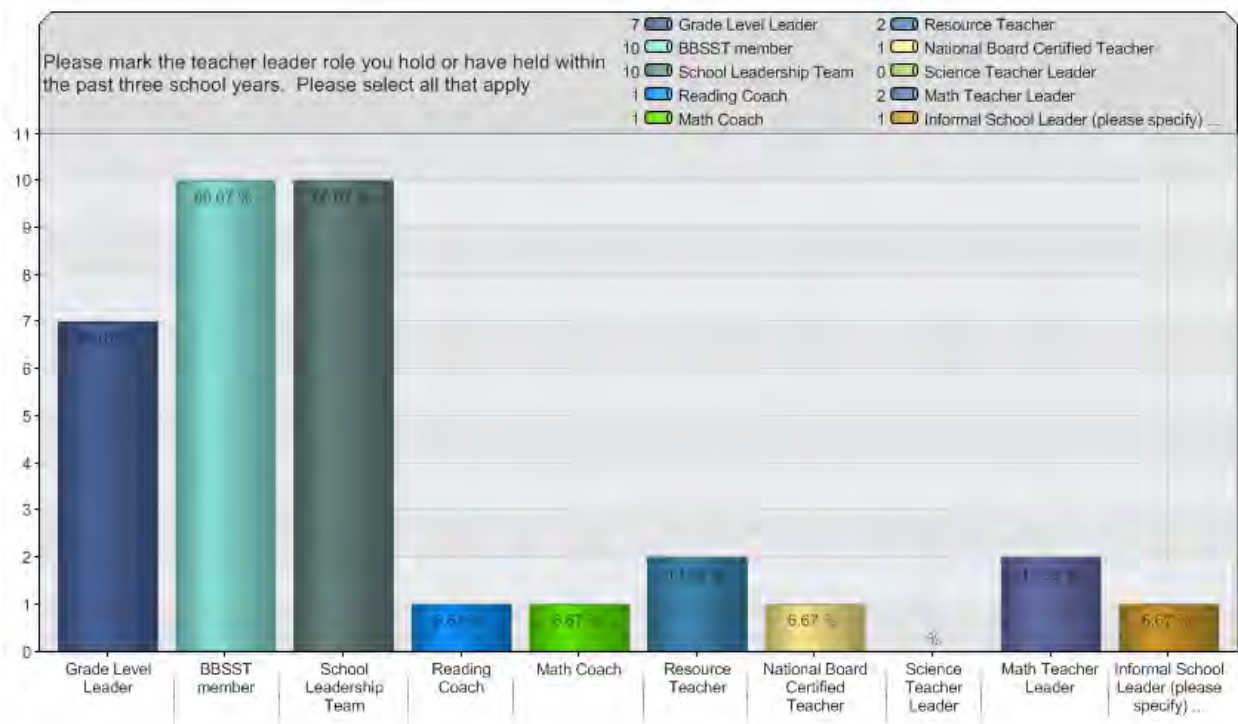


Figure 6. Roles of Teacher Leaders

**School district enrollment.** Figure 7 lists the school district total enrollment of those responding to this question. School district enrollment varied from 2500 to over 6500 students.

The average size of school districts in Alabama is 5,606 students

(<http://teaching.about.com/od/ProfilesInEducation/a/Alabama-Schools.htm>).

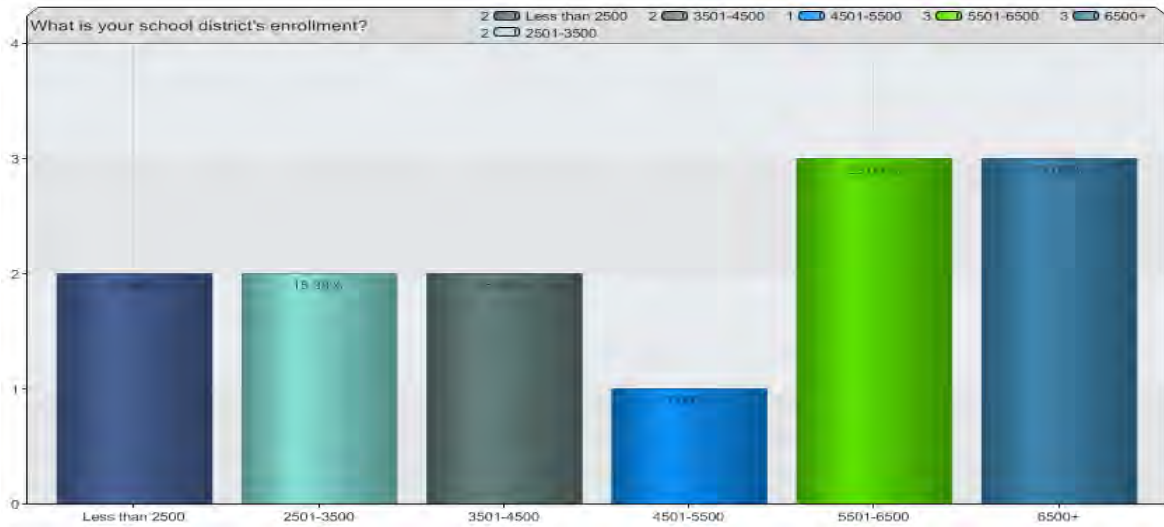


Figure 7. School District Enrollment

**School enrollment.** School level enrollment ranged from 500-1000+ students as illustrated in Figure 8. The average size of Alabama elementary schools is 5,606 students

(<http://teaching.about.com/od/ProfilesInEducation/a/Alabama-Schools.htm>).

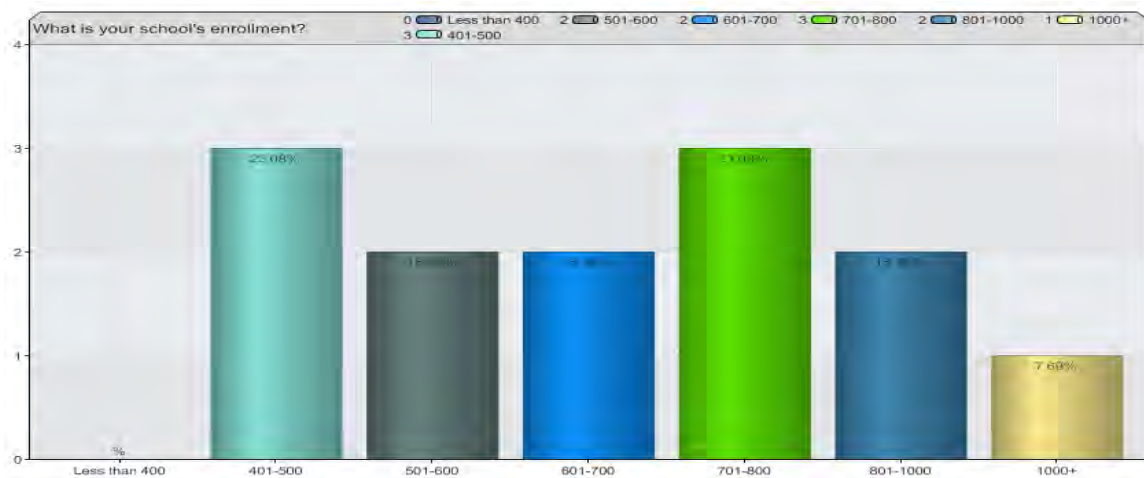


Figure 8. School Enrollment

**Percentage of non-White students.** The racial composition of public schools in the state of Alabama is 58.8% Caucasian, 35.3% African American, 3.9% Hispanic, 1.2% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 0.8% American Indian/Alaskan Native (<http://teaching.about.com/od/ProfilesInEducation/a/Alabama-Schools.htm>). The ethnicity of the teachers participating in the study included 53.3% Caucasian, 40% African American, 6.7% responded as Other, and 2 respondents 11.8% did not respond to the question.

**Percentage of students qualifying for free and/or reduced meals.** In Alabama schools, 52.4% of the students are eligible for free and/or reduced meals (<http://teaching.about.com/od/ProfilesInEducation/a/Alabama-Schools.htm>). The percentage of students qualifying for free and/or reduced priced meals in schools represented in the survey averaged 26–50%.

The demographic data were presented to establish a clearer picture of the study respondents. The next section of this chapter details the quantitative data collected from teachers

### **Teacher Leadership School Survey**

The Teacher Leadership School Survey (TLSS) (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009) is a 49-item survey with seven dimensions each containing seven questions. The seven dimensions, which were defined in Chapter Three, are developmental focus, autonomy, collegiality, participation, open communication and positive environment. A copy of the survey can be found in Appendix 2.

Descriptive statistics were used as the means and frequencies were examined for each survey question from the TLSS. The survey called for Likert-type responses ranging from (1) never, (2) rarely, (3) sometimes, (4) often, and (5) always. The following paragraphs report the

mean for each of the 7 items included in each dimension is reported along with the overall means for each of the seven dimensions.

The overall means for each of the seven dimensions range from 4.1 to 4.5. Developmental Focus was the dimension with the highest means with 4.5; Recognition, Autonomy, and Positive Environment had a mean of 4.4; Collegiality with 4.2; and Open Communication was 4.1 (see Table 4). Participation was the dimension with the lowest mean of 3.6.

Table 4

*Dimensions of Teacher Leadership: Mean Scores and Standard Deviation of African American and Caucasian Teacher Leaders*

Dimensions of Teacher Leadership	Overall Mean	African American Teacher Leaders Mean	Caucasian Teacher Leaders Mean
Developmental Focus	4.5 (.243)	4.7 (.291)	4.5 (.411)
Recognition	4.4 (.401)	4.4 (.515)	4.3 (.379)
Autonomy	4.4 (.398)	4.6 (.474)	4.3 (.301)
Collegiality	4.2 (.415)	4.3 (.472)	4.1 (.357)
Participation	3.6 (.496)	3.8 (.521)	3.5 (.318)
Open Communication	4.1 (.411)	4.6 (.488)	4.5 (.333)
Positive Environment	4.1 (.509)	4.6 (.697)	4.4 (.336)



Table 5

*Overall Inferential Discussion*

Dimension	F(df)	p	n <sup>2</sup>
Developmental Focus	(1,14) = 1.75	.208	.111
Recognition	(1,14) = .127	.727	.009
Autonomy	(1,14) = 1.72	.211	.109
Collegiality	(1,14) = 1.25	.282	.082
Participation	(1,14) = 1.49	.243	.096
Open Communication	(1,14) = .337	.571	.024
Positive Environment	(1,14) = .499	.491	.034

The ANOVA was completed to assess the differences in the perceptions of Caucasian and African American participants (the independent variable) in each of the dimensions of the survey. The ANOVA did not yield statistical significance in any of the seven dimensions.

Effect sizes for the Developmental Focus Dimension (.111), the Autonomy Dimension (.109), and the Positive Environment Dimension (.034) were all large based on Cohen's (1998) criteria. Additionally, the observed power for each of these dimensions was quite low which could possibly be resultant of the sample size being too small to provide reliable answers as to whether statistical significance was reached. This is a limitation of the study and is an area for further study.

**Comparison of Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis**

The open-ended questions on the TLSS allowed the researcher to analyze participant responses and scrutinize data for emerging themes (Patton, 2002). The data gathered from the

principals and teacher leaders helped the researcher develop a deeper understanding of the intricacies of teacher leadership and provided additional richness to the quantitative findings.

The qualitative data were analyzed using a constant-comparative approach (Merriam, 1998). Merriam (1998) defines the constant-comparative method as comparing an incident found in the data with one found in the same or another data set for the purpose of identifying possible categories that may lead to theory formulation. The classification categories used for this study were derived from the literature.

The research questions for this study focused on possible differences between the perceptions of African American and Caucasian teacher leaders relating to the selection, supports, and barriers to teacher leadership. The data were used to answer the following research question which helped guide this study: In what ways, if any, are there differences in how African American teacher leaders are identified, the roles they assume, supports they receive, and barriers they face when compared to their Caucasian counterparts?

### **How and When Teacher Leaders are Identified**

Survey data collected from the open ended survey response items suggest that there were no differences in the perceptions of African American and Caucasian teacher leaders regarding the way in which teacher leaders were selected in their schools.

Table 6

*How and When Teacher Leaders are Identified*

Question	Principal Responses	African American Responses	Caucasian Responses
<b>How and When Teacher Leaders are Identified</b>			
1. How are teacher leaders identified?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify themselves</li> <li>• Willing to try new things and share with others</li> <li>• Naturally evolve</li> <li>• Ability, attitude, and desire</li> <li>• Excited about teaching and learning</li> <li>• Desire to continuously grow and learn</li> <li>• Risk takers</li> <li>• Think outside the box</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No process</li> <li>• Those who take risk</li> <li>• By their ability to lead, not just manage their classroom</li> <li>• Ability to collaborate with colleagues</li> <li>• Education level</li> <li>• Teachers hosting interns</li> <li>• Serving on various committees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers willing to take responsibility for leading or helping others</li> <li>• Administrator observations</li> <li>• Teachers with highest test scores</li> <li>• Teachers willing to go the extra mile</li> <li>• Evaluations</li> <li>• Principal interviews</li> </ul>
7. How long does it take, on average for a Caucasian teacher to be classified as a teacher leader?			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fourth year</li> <li>• Early in my career</li> <li>• Fifth year</li> </ul>
8. How long does it take, on average for African American teacher to be classified as a teacher leader?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First year</li> <li>• Second year</li> <li>• Fifth year</li> </ul>	

Additionally, data from the TLSS focusing on the Recognition and Participation dimensions indicate similar perceptions between African American and Caucasian teacher leaders in terms of the way in which teacher leaders are identified although African American teachers' overall means for these dimensions were higher than those of their Caucasian counterparts, but the differences were not statistically significant.

**Roles Assumed by Teacher Leaders**

Lieberman (1992) claimed that many teacher leadership roles exist, varying from one school to another. However, a review of the open-ended survey response items by ethnicity revealed that the roles for teacher leaders are perceived to be similar between African American and Caucasian teacher leaders. The roles assumed by teacher leaders are represented in Table 7.

Table 7

*Roles Assumed by Teacher Leaders*

	<b>Principal Responses</b>	<b>African American Responses</b>	<b>Caucasian Responses</b>
<b>Roles Assumed by Teacher Leaders</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading coach</li> <li>• Math coach</li> <li>• Reading Specialists</li> <li>• Chair of Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP)</li> <li>• Chair various committees</li> <li>• No “designated” teacher leaders</li> <li>• Grade level leader</li> <li>• Help me understand the mood of the school</li> <li>• Help communicate the vision of the school</li> <li>• Help me remember what it’s like to be a teacher</li> <li>• Provide an open classroom for others to learn and grow</li> <li>• Attend trainings and share with fellow staff members</li> <li>• Curriculum leaders</li> <li>• A “go between” with staff and administrators</li> <li>• Grade level leader</li> <li>• BBSST</li> <li>• Mentor</li> <li>• Work closely with the principal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BBSST member</li> <li>• School Leadership Team member</li> <li>• Math Teacher Leader</li> <li>• Resource Teacher</li> <li>• Grade Level Leader</li> <li>• National Board Certified Teacher</li> <li>• Math Coach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grade Level Leader</li> <li>• BBSST member</li> <li>• Math Coach</li> <li>• Math Teacher Leader</li> <li>• School Leadership Team member</li> <li>• Resource Teacher</li> </ul>

**Supports Received by Teacher Leaders**

The review of literature reveals the major supports for teacher leaders includes professional development, time, and principal support and recognition. The survey items and dimensions of teacher leadership were examined by ethnicity which provided information on the supports provided. The mean for the African American teacher leaders on each dimension of teacher leadership were higher than, but not statistically significant from that of the Caucasian

teacher leaders. Teacher leader responses in terms of the supports provided included professional development, resources, student interns and release time to plan which is consistent with the literature. Table 8 depicts responses from the surveys.

Table 8

*Supports Received by Teacher Leaders*

<b>Question</b>	<b>Principal Responses</b>	<b>African American Responses</b>	<b>Caucasian Responses</b>
<b>Supports Received by Teacher Leaders</b>			
What supports are provided to teacher leaders?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interns</li> <li>• Class coverage</li> <li>• Professional development</li> <li>• Time to meet with others</li> <li>• Strong counsel</li> <li>• Administrative support</li> <li>• Encouragement</li> <li>• Release time</li> <li>• Lab students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None</li> <li>• Professional development</li> <li>• Ability to attend Leadership conferences</li> <li>• Support from administrative team and colleagues</li> <li>• Additional resources</li> <li>• Allocated time</li> <li>• Class coverage to work with other teachers</li> <li>• Lab/practicum students</li> <li>• Ability to make decisions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interns</li> <li>• Release time to plan/prepare</li> <li>• Lab students</li> <li>• Practicum students</li> <li>• Autonomy to plan own meetings</li> <li>• None</li> <li>• Professional development opportunities</li> <li>• Support from administrators</li> <li>• Additional resources</li> <li>• No</li> </ul>
Do supports provided to Caucasian teacher leaders differ from those provided to African American teacher leaders?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No</li> </ul>

**Barriers Faced by Teacher Leaders**

Barriers to teacher leadership noted by survey respondents included a lack of time and reluctant teacher colleagues as noted in the open-ended survey response items. The survey items were examined by ethnicity to provide information as to the barriers to teacher leadership. Both African American and Caucasian teacher leaders noted a lack of time as one of the major barriers

to being effective teacher leaders. Additional meetings after school was mentioned as often being a hardship for some teacher leaders. One teacher leader noted that the one of her biggest barriers was having the planning time to effectively prepare and assist other teachers and suggested that an additional planning period each week would help alleviate this issue. The means for African American teacher leaders on all 7 dimensions of teacher leadership were higher than but not statistically different from the means for Caucasian teacher leaders.

Reluctant teacher colleagues was one barrier noted in the data. Persuading other teachers to try new things was noted as one of the biggest barriers to teacher leadership for one respondent. Encouraging other teachers to change and try new things that are in the best interest of students was a challenging job for one respondent. Another barrier noted was resentment from some teachers to accept advice from teachers that haven't taught as long as they have. Teachers in a leadership role often experience resentment, conflict, and negative comments and attitudes from other teachers (Chrisman, 2005; Gabriel, 2005; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Lambert, 2003; & Ovando, 1996). A listing of the survey responses is presented in Table 9.

Table 9

*Barriers Faced by Teacher Leaders*

Question	Principal Responses	African American Responses	Caucasian Responses
<b>Barriers faced by Teacher Leaders</b>			
3. What are the barriers to teacher leadership?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overcoming inhibitions</li> <li>• Acceptance by peers</li> <li>• They have to “pull teeth” to get others on board</li> <li>• Other teachers</li> <li>• Weak, inconsistent leadership and support from the principal</li> <li>• Time spent outside of their own classroom</li> <li>• Peer support</li> <li>• Being able to keep the “Big picture’ in mind</li> <li>• Having a clear understanding of their role</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Haven’t faced any. I think the approach of the teacher leader is very important-determines if others will receive you in a constructive manner</li> <li>• Time, commitment</li> <li>• Administration not seeing people as the schools greatest resource</li> <li>• Buy-in from colleagues</li> <li>• Getting teachers to view you as a support and a peer, not an authority figure or administration</li> <li>• Persuading others to try new things</li> <li>• Delegating</li> <li>• Resentment</li> <li>• Use a positive approach so no support needed</li> <li>• Professional development opportunities</li> <li>• Extra time to plan</li> <li>• Push on and lead by example</li> <li>• Administration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Few teachers not willing to work with anyone</li> <li>• Teacher resentment of teacher leaders with less experience</li> <li>• Persuading others to try new things-resistant to change</li> <li>• Time</li> <li>• Haven’t faced any-most respect my ideas and opinions</li> <li>• Administration, politics</li> </ul>
4. How do teacher leaders overcome those barriers?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use a positive approach so no support needed</li> <li>• Professional development opportunities</li> <li>• Extra time to plan</li> <li>• Push on and lead by example</li> <li>• Administration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None needed</li> <li>• Administrators step in</li> <li>• Additional time</li> </ul>
9. Are there specific barriers that exist for African American teacher leaders that are different from other teacher leaders?		None noted	None noted

**Relationships between Teacher Leaders and their Peers**

According to Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009), “the relationships between teacher leaders and other teachers are critical to building a professional community of learners and leaders

within the school” (p. 89). Strong, positive relationships was noted to be present in their schools by African American and Caucasian teacher leaders. Additionally, one teacher leader noted that some teachers are jealous of teacher leaders because they are asked to serve on several committees before other teachers are asked.

Table 10

*Relationship between Teacher Leaders and their Peers*

Question	African American Response	Caucasian Response
<b>Relationship between teacher leaders and their peers</b>		
5. What is the relationship between teacher leaders and their peers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peers respect and value the teacher leaders and see us as a support unit</li> <li>• Very good relationship, sharing and caring</li> <li>• Teachers seek advice of teacher leaders, value their opinion</li> <li>• Some jealousy and resentment</li> <li>• Excellent</li> <li>• Very good and professional</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basically positive</li> <li>• Confidence and trust</li> <li>• Great relationship</li> <li>• Work collaboratively with their peers</li> <li>• We have respect for each other</li> </ul>

**Summary**

This chapter presented demographic findings from the study to help establish a clearer picture of the respondents of the TLSS. Results from a series of univariate analyses of variance were presented for each of the seven dimensions of the TLSS. There were no statistically significant relationships found in any dimension although some dimensions had a large effect size and power was small suggesting caution must be used in interpreting the results. Additionally, the qualitative response items were analyzed to determine themes arising from the



literature and data. Chapter Five includes conclusions and implications from the research, recommendations, and suggestions for further research study.

## CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

### **Introduction**

The researcher investigated the perceptions of teachers and principals in regard to the selection, supports, and barriers to teacher leadership for African American and Caucasian teacher leaders. This chapter provides a discussion of the findings and conclusions and discusses the implications for improving opportunities for teacher leadership for African American teachers. Recommendations for further research are also provided.

For the purposes of this study, data were collected through the use of an online version of the Teacher Leadership School Survey (TLSS) developed by Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009) that included open-ended response questions that were researcher developed. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the quantitative data. An emergent theme approach was used when analyzing the qualitative data. This chapter uses an integrated approach to discuss the quantitative and qualitative findings.

The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of African American and Caucasian teacher leaders regarding the selection of teacher leaders, the supports they receive, and the barriers they face and to explore whether there were differences in their perceptions. The study also sought to examine the ways in which elementary school principals develop teacher leadership capacity within their schools, its effect on teacher roles and classroom performance, and the supports and obstacles to their teachers' ability to assume leadership roles within their schools. The research questions used to guide this study were in what ways, if any, are there

differences in how African American teacher leaders are identified, the roles they assume, supports they receive, and barriers they face when compared to their Caucasian counterparts. Guiding questions were used to focus this inquiry.

The Teacher Leadership School Survey (TLSS) was used to measure teachers' perceptions of how their own schools reflect each of the seven dimensions of this survey. The study also sought to examine the types of supports and barriers to teacher leadership and the characteristics of teacher leaders.

### **Review of Findings**

Research supports the premise of shared or parallel leadership practices to guide instructional improvement and develop a school culture of mutual responsibility for student learning (Elmore, 2004). Teacher leadership creates the necessary conditions within a school whereby teachers assume collaborative responsibility for improving their own and each others' practice.

A review of relevant literature revealed the importance of the interactions between teachers and principals and how they both work in leadership positions moving toward school improvement. Influence from teacher leaders is not contained within the confines of individual classrooms, but instead extends to include everyone in the school who is impacted by the innovative leadership skills of teacher leaders who recognize ways to improve schools (Andrews & Crowther, 2002; Childs-Bowen, et al., 2000; Danielson, 2006). By promoting teacher leadership roles, teachers themselves become more active learners, students learn by being dynamic participants of a community of learners, and schools benefit from better decisions (Barth, 2001). However, the role of teacher leaders is seldom effective without the support and encouragement of administrators (Birky et al., 2006). Subsequently, researchers (Andrews &

Crowther, 2002; Barth, 2001; Danielson, 2006; Durrant & Holden, 2006) agree that constructing teacher leadership in schools is vitally important, but equally significant is the idea that in order for teacher leadership to flourish, principals must be prepared to step into a different type of leadership position (Copland, 2001).

Although previous research supports the use of teacher leadership to promote lasting school improvement, little research has been done that looks at racially identified perceptions. Culturally relevant pedagogy is a “broad approach to successful and democratic teaching and learning practices with students and is grounded in the ideological foundations of multicultural education” (Banks, 1991, pg. 25). Researchers (Gay, 2000; Howard, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Shade, Kelly & Oberg, 1997) describe culturally relevant pedagogy as an effective means of meeting the academic and social needs of culturally diverse students. The term culturally relevant pedagogy is also used as a broad concept of reflective, democratic, practices in teaching and learning that are more sensitive to culturally diverse students (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Culturally relevant teaching uses the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference and performance styles of ethnically diverse students.

Research on culturally relevant teaching and pedagogy indicates that effective teachers make teaching meaningful by constructing multicultural representations in the classrooms to help bridge the gap between students, their diverse experiences, and what the school curriculum requires (Banks, Cookson, Gay, et al., 2001). According to Baker and Digiovanni (2005), the objective of a culturally relevant classroom is to use this connection between culture and curriculum, home and school to promote academic achievement. In an effort to meet the instructional and educational needs of students, those within the educational community are calling for a culturally responsive approach to teaching (Howard, 2003; Ladson-Billings, 2005).

Sparks (1994) contends that this follows the natural path for increasing student understanding of cultural diversity. Culturally relevant pedagogy is an important consideration for promoting student achievement. It also makes sense to promote culturally relevant approaches to developing and supporting teacher leaders so that all teacher leaders have a greater opportunity to succeed.

Effective schools research (Marzano, 2003) indicates that sharing instructional decisions for continuous improvement in student achievement is important. However, it is just as important to cultivate leadership in all teachers, including minority teachers. Leadership is distributed not by delegating or giving it away but by weaving together people, materials, and organizational structures in a common cause (Spillane et al., 2001). Critical Race Theory (CRT) proposes that there is a need to take action to change the existing social structure, so good teaching (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995) captures student attention while encouraging academic action linked to a vision for the future. CRT strongly suggests that action is essential in making changes that improve the education of students of color. CRT also suggests current instructional strategies presume African American students are deficient. Dee (2005) states “the racial, ethnic, and gender dynamics between students and teachers have consistently large effects on teacher perceptions of student performance” (p. 163). This claim suggests the need for teacher leadership in schools to be as diverse as the overall student population in order to serve as role models and positive influences on their students thus positively impacting student achievement.

### **Overview of Data Collection**

Data were collected quantitatively and qualitatively from African American and Caucasian teachers. Study findings suggest that the overall perceptions of the supports and barriers for teacher leaders were similar for both groups of teachers. African American teacher

leaders scored higher, though mean differences were not statistically significant, in each of the seven dimensions of the TLSS than their Caucasian counterparts.

The survey was distributed electronically to 62 total elementary school principals with 13 responding for a return rate of 21%. These 13 principals provided email addresses of 31 teacher leaders in their schools who were provided with a link to the teacher survey. From the 31 teacher leaders identified, 16 completed the survey for a return rate of 55%. The demographic data gathered from the returned surveys indicated the ethnicity of survey participants was 40% African American, 53.3% Caucasian, and 6.7% identified as other. Two participants did not answer the question. 93.3% of the participants were female and 6.7% were male. The highest education level of participants was also explored. The highest degree earned was 26.7% had a Specialists' Degree, 66.7% had a Master's Degree, and 6.7% had a Bachelor's Degree. Of the total number of teachers surveyed, 2 did not respond to this question, representing 11.8%. School district enrollment ranged from 2500 to over 6500 students with each school's enrollment ranging from 500 to 1000+ students.

Based on the data from the surveys, teacher responses suggest that collaboration, innovation, leadership, and professional development are needed for effective teacher leadership. Principal data collected through interviews suggest that these are the desired characteristics principals look for in teacher leaders. Teachers also feel these are the reasons that they were identified as teacher leaders. The quantitative and qualitative data suggest that teacher leaders feel that they are assisted in gaining new knowledge and skills by their principals and are encouraged to help others learn. Teacher leaders also perceive that they are provided with needed assistance, guidance and coaching as evidenced by the Developmental Focus dimension of the TLSS having one of the highest mean scores in this study. Additionally, teachers

indicated that they are encouraged to be proactive in making improvements and innovations. Barriers are removed and resources are found to support teachers' efforts as teacher leaders as evidenced by the Autonomy dimension of the TLSS having the same mean score as the Developmental Focus dimension.

The next section discusses the findings collected from the survey items, open-ended responses, and principal interviews examining the selection, supports and barriers to teacher leadership.

### **Discussion of Findings**

One purpose of employing the mixed-method approach to this research was to promote the integration of qualitative research, where the researcher's main goal is developing and discovering theory to explain their data (Maxwell, 2004). With quantitative research, the researcher uses statistical procedures to discover correlations and relationships that may also offer theories (Maxwell, 2004). The data collected in this research provided insight into the perceptions of the principals and teachers in this study in regard to leadership opportunities. In the following section, links between the findings of the study and pertinent research are made.

#### **Research Question Part 1: In what ways, if any, are there differences in how African American teacher leaders are identified when compared to their Caucasian counterparts?**

Some of the quantitative and qualitative data collected from the survey addressed this question. The quantitative portion focused on the Recognition and Participation dimensions of the TLSS survey for teachers. The Recognition dimension was ranked second out of seven and focused on teachers being recognized for roles they take and the contributions they make. Based on the data it appears that mutual respect and caring exists among teachers. There are processes for the recognition of effective work. The identification or selection of teacher leaders was not a

statistically significant concern to either African American teacher leaders or Caucasian teacher leaders. Teachers reported they were motivated by their inner desire and sense of gratification when they shared their talents and abilities with their colleagues and students. By allowing teachers the power of becoming a leader on their own, their morale and sense of self value is heightened, thus motivating them intrinsically. These findings are consistent with previous research which found that true teacher leaders do not wait to be appointed before they offer their expertise, credibility, and influence to others in order to impact the educational experience of all (Hatch, et al., 2005).

The second dimension to which this question corresponds is the Participation dimension which ranked lowest of the seven dimensions. This dimension focused on teachers being actively involved in making decisions and having an input on important matters such as the selection of department chairpersons, team leaders, and other key leaders. Specifically, question #33, *Teachers participate in screening and selecting new faculty and/or staff at my school*, had the lowest mean score, 2.17, of all 49 questions on the survey. Teachers feel strongly that this is an area where they are not included although they are considered to be a teacher leader. African American teacher leaders ranked their schools higher on both the Recognition and Participation dimensions of teacher leadership than their Caucasian counterparts. African American teachers had an overall mean score of 4.4 for the Recognition dimension and 3.8 for the Participation Dimension whereas Caucasian teachers had a mean score of 4.3 and 3.5, respectively. Question 11, *It is apparent that many of the teachers at my school can take leadership roles*, and Question 14, *Many of the faculty and staff at my school are recognized for their work*, were the two questions with the lowest mean score on the Recognition Dimension.



The open ended question that addressed this question asked teacher leaders to describe the process for the selection of teacher leaders in their schools. Analysis of the survey data indicates there were differences in how teacher leaders are identified. Both African American and Caucasian teacher leaders communicated that there was no formal “process” for selection but defined teacher leaders as those willing to take risks, think outside of the box, and as teachers willing to take responsibility for leading and/or helping others.

Principals suggested that teacher leaders hold “jobs” such as coach or grade level leader. The data indicated that principals believed that their style of leadership was allowing teachers to be active in leadership roles. Subsequently, the responses from the teachers, when compared to the responses of principals, suggests that teachers did not believe they were as active in teacher leadership roles as the principals perceived them to be. Teacher leadership is enhanced by leaders who establish collegial structures that facilitate dialogue and the development of the teachers’ voice as a means for developing school goals and visions (Anderson, 2004; Danielson; Moller & Pankake, 2006). For teacher leadership to be successful, both the principals and the teachers must understand and value the importance of the position, and continually strive to communicate the needs of both positions to make them equally successful.

**Research Question Part 2: In what ways, if any, are there differences in the roles African American teacher leaders assume when compared to their Caucasian counterparts?**

This question was addressed through open ended responses for both teachers and principals. A review of the survey data indicates that there were differences in the teacher leadership roles assumed by African American teacher leaders and their Caucasian counterparts. The roles assumed by both African American and Caucasian teachers varied from grade level leader, school leadership team member, and those on the Building Based Student Support Team

(BBSST). Teachers also suggested they were considered teacher leaders due to their innovation, willingness to learn and try new things, ability to communicate effectively with others, leadership skills, knowledge and ability to guide, and willingness to lead and direct others.

Principal data suggested teacher leaders are assigned roles such as reading coach, math coach and reading specialist. Further, they are chairs and members of various committees. Principal data also suggested that teachers attend professional development sessions and share expertise with staff members at faculty meetings. The roles or positions held by teacher leaders are consistent with the survey results of the principals and teacher leaders. One principal stated, “teacher leaders help to hold all stakeholders accountable. They inspire others. They help to relieve the burden and responsibility placed on the principal because they can be relied upon to get things done effectively and efficiently.” Teacher leadership is underdeveloped conceptually and in practice (Murphy, 2005). This is due in large part to the fact that the term teacher leadership has many vague definitions.

Principal perceptions of the benefits of teacher leadership centers on providing supports for other teachers such as by serving as “role models and examples for teachers,” “leading instruction,” and sharing information and new ideas with their grade level colleagues.” These perceptions of principals depict the idea of teacher leadership as a “role to fulfill” so that “when teachers lead, principals can extend their own capacity” (Barth, 2001, p. 443). When teacher leaders take on important school-wide responsibilities and are centrally involved in school decision making, they are able to assume some of the principal’s responsibilities, including those of instructional leader. Further research into the depth of the roles teacher leaders hold would be advised.

**Research Question Part 3: In what ways, if any, are there differences in the supports African American teachers face when compared to their Caucasian counterparts?**

School cultures that support teacher leadership attend to the following dimensions: developmental focus, recognition, autonomy, collegiality, participation, open communication and positive environment (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009). Administrators who work with teachers in a supportive culture identify and encourage norms of practice that help to advance and expand leadership. Purposeful conversations, effective collaboration, willingness to participate, and new working relationships are cultural norms that exist in schools robust with teacher leadership (Lambert, 2002). These norms of practice enable teachers who are respected, trusted, and learning-oriented to assume leadership roles. As teachers are empowered to function as leaders, they often create communities of practice that address teacher practice and student learning (Lambert, 2002).

The Developmental Focus dimension of the TLSS helped to explore perceptions about differences in the types of supports provided. A review of the survey data indicates there were no differences in the supports African American teachers receive when compared with their Caucasian counterparts. Both African American and Caucasian teacher leaders felt that they are provided the assistance, guidance and coaching needed to effectively perform their duties. This dimension was one of two dimensions with the highest overall mean score. It appears that teachers feel supported in the roles they consider to be teacher leadership roles. Additionally, based on the open-ended response items of the TLSS teachers agreed that they are provided professional development, additional resources, and support from their administrative team. Two teachers reported no additional supports and another suggested extra time is provided. According to Johnson and Donaldson (2007), “teacher leaders need professional development

that prepares them to respond to colleagues' resistance respectfully while helping these teachers improve their practice" (pg. 13). Colleague resistance is discussed as one of the barriers to teacher leadership.

According to principal survey data on the supports in place, the teacher leaders are provided interns, professional development, additional time to prepare and conduct some of the additional duties and tasks they are assigned, lab students, release time, encouragement and administrative support. Teacher leaders noted supports received as additional resources, coverage to work with other teachers, opportunities to attend leadership conferences and other professional development opportunities, and an open door policy relationship with the principal. A supportive culture that embraces new ideas and welcomes change is a necessary antecedent to improving a struggling school.

Teacher leaders were also asked to identify ways in which supports were different or similar for teachers. Teachers overwhelmingly reported that there are no differences in the supports provided or they are consistent with the perception of the principals.

**Research Question Part 4: In what ways, if any, are there differences in the barriers African American teachers face when compared to their Caucasian counterparts?**

Scholars in the area of teacher leadership have discovered "that environments that support and nurture teacher leadership are not endemic to many schools" (Crowther et al., 2002, pg. vii). A review of the survey data indicates that there were no differences in the barriers African American teachers faced when compared to their Caucasian counterparts. Teacher leaders and the principals identified the lack of time as a barrier to the development of teacher leadership. The lack of necessary time to successfully implement their positions of teacher leadership was evident in the information gleaned from the open-ended responses. Additionally,

lack of time was noted as one of the barriers faced by both African American and Caucasian teacher leaders. One teacher stated that the greatest barrier for teacher leaders is finding time to perform their teaching duties and the time to perform the duties as a teacher leader. Principals indicated that the additional release time that was provided to teacher leaders was both a support and a barrier due to the fact that teacher leaders spend large amounts of time outside of their own classroom. According to Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009) teachers in the school “usually know which teachers are competent within their classrooms and this naturally establishes them as credible” (p. 14). Murphy (2005) found as teachers are empowered and develop ownership in decisions, they are likely to develop commitment to the organization, resulting in greater motivation. Consequently, teacher leadership positively influences what goes on in schools. However, from their experiences with teacher leaders, not only do students observe and experience democratic leadership, but they are presumably the beneficiaries of higher teacher morale and better decisions about student life in school because their teachers are more centrally involved in decision making and other forms of leadership (Barth, 2001).

### **Dimensions of Teacher Leadership**

The TLSS consisted of 49 survey questions categorized into the seven dimensions of teacher leadership developed by Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009). The seven dimensions had overall mean scores between 3.6 and 4.5 as noted in Table 1 of Chapter 4. African American teacher leader mean scores ranged from 3.8 to 4.7 and Caucasian teacher leaders had mean scores that ranged from 3.5 to 4.5. In all instances African American teacher leaders had a higher mean score than Caucasian teacher leaders in each of the seven dimensions of the TLSS. Although not statistically significant, the African American teacher leaders in this study have a higher perception of teacher leadership for each of the seven dimensions in their schools than

Caucasian teacher leaders as indicated by the on a higher mean score for each item and dimension. The next section includes a detailed discussion on each dimension of teacher leadership.

Independent samples *t*-tests and ANOVA was used for each of the 49 question items on the seven dimensions of teacher leadership to compare the responses of African American and Caucasian teacher leaders. The ANOVA was completed to assess the differences in African American and Caucasian participants in their perceptions of the developmental focus in their schools. Each is discussed in detail on the following pages.

**Developmental Focus: Teachers are assisted in gaining new knowledge and skills and are encouraged to help others learn. Teachers are provided with needed assistance, guidance and coaching.**

African American teacher leaders rated question 1 “*At my school administrators and teachers try hard to help new teachers be successful*” and question 3 “*Administrators at my school actively support professional development of faculty and staff*” as the two survey items in this dimension with the highest mean score (5.00). The Developmental focus dimension ranked highest over all the seven dimensions along with the Autonomy dimension for teacher leadership. This suggests that both African American and Caucasian teacher leaders feel the developmental focus dimension is a strength in their schools. The Developmental focus dimension includes questions 1–7.

**Recognition: Teachers are recognized for roles they take and the contributions they make. A spirit of mutual respect and caring exists among teachers. There are processes for the recognition of effective work.**

Three of the questions within the Recognition dimension had the same mean score. Question 11, "*It is apparent that many of the teachers in my school can take leadership roles,*" question 13, "*At my school we celebrate each others' success,*" and question 14, "*Many of the faculty and staff at my school are recognized for their work,*" all had a mean score of 4.14 for African American teachers and 4.0 for Caucasian teacher leaders. These scores indicate that both groups feel that the Recognition dimension is apparent in their schools. The Recognition dimension consists of questions 8–14 and was ranked second highest of the seven dimensions along with the Positive Environment dimension.

The ANOVA was completed to assess the differences in Caucasian and African American participants in their perceptions of the Recognition dimension in their schools. The ANOVA did not yield significant results.

Teacher leadership has been advanced as an essential component of successful school reform and the professionalization of teachers (Lieberman, Saxl & Miles, 2000). Teachers must participate in leadership in order to advance the progress of school change (Ash & Persall, 2000; Lieberman, 1992; McCray et al., 2001). Kilcher (1992) noted that when teachers felt valued as participants in a cohesive community and were empowered as true decision makers, they passed this empowerment on to their students by giving them a voice in decision making and including them when planning and designing instruction.

**Autonomy: Teachers are encouraged to be proactive in making improvements and innovations. Barriers are removed and resources are found to support teachers' efforts. Teachers collaborate on instructional and student-related matters. Examples of collegial behavior include teachers discussing strategies, sharing materials, or observing one another's classrooms.**

The statement with the lowest mean score was question 17, "*I know that we will bend the rules if it is necessary to help children learn,*" with a mean of 4.29 for African American teachers and 3.22 for Caucasian teachers. Although there may have been multiple interpretations of what the question was asking, the large discrepancy between the African American and Caucasian responses suggests that this may be an important area for further research. This item was thrown out when analyzing data for this study due to the likely misinterpretation of what the question was asking. Even so, this mean was uncharacteristic of all other scores suggesting it may be an area for further research. The autonomy dimension ranked first along with the Developmental Focus dimension.

The ANOVA was completed to assess the differences in Caucasian and African American participants in their perceptions of the Autonomy dimension in their schools. The ANOVA did not yield significant results.

**Collegiality: Teachers collaborate on instructional and student-related matters. Examples of collegial behavior include teachers discussing strategies, sharing materials, or observing one another's classrooms.**

Question 26, "Teachers and administrators work together to solve students' academic and behavior problems" had the highest overall means for the collegiality dimension. This dimension had the third highest mean overall. Question 24, "Teachers in my school observe one



another's work with students," had the lowest overall mean with 3.57 by African American teacher leaders and 3.56 for Caucasian teacher leaders. The collegiality dimension ranked third highest amongst all seven dimensions.

The ANOVA was completed to assess the differences in Caucasian and African American participants in their perceptions of the Collegiality dimension in their schools. The ANOVA did not yield significant results.

**Participation: Teachers are actively involved in making decisions and having input on important matters. Department chairpersons, team leaders, and other key leaders are selected with the participation of teachers.**

The participation dimension ranked lowest of all seven dimensions. This was evident from responses to questions 29–33. Question 33 was “*Teachers participate in screening and selecting new faculty and/or staff at my school.*” Principal data reflected that teachers are a part of the decision-making process but it is evident from the TLSS survey data that teachers do not feel the same way. “Teachers are leaders when they function in professional communities to affect student learning; contribute to school improvement; inspire excellence in practice; and empower stakeholders to participate in educational improvement” (Childs-Bowen, Moller & Scrivner, 2000, p. 8). Question 35, “*We try to reach consensus before making important decisions,*” had a mean score of 3.86 for African American teacher leaders and 3.78 for Caucasian teacher leaders. Principal data reflected teachers having a voice in the way things operate in their schools but it is apparent that both parties do not feel the same way concerning decision making. According to Zehr (2001), schools should be reorganized to give teachers “richer opportunities to be leaders.” If teachers were involved in educational policy matters, for example, states would not have the problem of “having standardized tests that are not aligned

with academic standards.” Seeking input from teachers in developing and implementing test standards and accountability measures would alleviate the alignment problem.

The ANOVA was completed to assess the differences in Caucasian and African American participants in their perceptions of the Participation dimension in their schools. The ANOVA did not yield significant results between the Caucasian and African American teacher leaders’ perceptions of the Participation dimension in their schools.

**Open Communication: Teachers send and receive information relevant to the effective functioning of the school in open, honest ways. Teachers feel informed about what is happening in the school. Teachers easily share opinions and feelings. Teachers are not blamed when things go wrong.**

Question 38, “*Faculty and staff at my school share their feelings and concerns in productive ways,*” and question 40, “*Faculty and staff talk about ways to better serve our students and their families,*” were the lowest ranked questions for this dimension with 4.57 and 4.71 for African American teacher leaders and 3.67 and 3.89 for Caucasian teacher leaders. The research indicated that a positive culture and positive relationships are a must for schools to thrive. This data reflects a discrepancy between principal perceptions and teacher perceptions. Teachers perceived open communication to be a barrier in their school based on the mean score for this dimension. According to Danielson (2007),

School improvement depends on the active involvement of teacher leaders at the classroom level and beyond. In every school, teacher leaders can find numerous opportunities to extend their influence beyond their own classrooms to the department or teaching team, across the school and beyond the school district.

The open communication dimension was ranked 4<sup>th</sup> highest of all the dimensions suggesting it may be an area for further research.

The ANOVA was completed to assess the differences in Caucasian and African American participants in their perceptions of the Open Communication dimension in their schools. The ANOVA did not yield significant results between the Caucasian and African American teacher leaders' perceptions of the Open Communication dimension in their schools.

**Positive Environment: There is general satisfaction with the work environment. Teachers feel respected by one another, by parents, students and administrators. Teachers perceive the school as having effective administrative leadership. Appointed or informal teams work together effectively in the interests of students.**

The positive environment dimension was ranked second overall along with the recognition dimension. Teachers are generally satisfied and have respectful relationships with one another. Question 44, "Teachers at my school look forward to coming to work," was ranked lowest with a mean of 4.71 for African American teacher leaders and 4.11 for Caucasian teacher leaders. This was quite interesting to note that this item was ranked as low as it was considering the dimension was ranked second overall.

Weiss (1999) found schools with a supportive climate characterized by collaboration and teacher participation in decision making were related to a greater commitment to teaching. Hirsch (2004) reports that working conditions of teacher are synonymous with student learning conditions. He further states that there is a "significant and strong connection documented between teachers' overall perceptions of working conditions in their school and their views of leadership" (p. 23–24).

Based on the findings of the study, the perceptions of African American teacher leaders is similar to the perceptions of Caucasian teacher leaders in terms of how their schools reflect each dimension of teacher leadership. While mean scores for African American teacher leaders were consistently higher for each question of the TLSS there was not a statistically significant difference between the ways the scores were rated. Further research is needed to determine the differences, if any, in the perceptions of African American teacher leaders and Caucasian teacher leaders pertaining to school climate, especially since there was such a small number of respondents for this study.

### **Implications of the Study**

Since the mandate of *No Child Left Behind* and the increased attention on educational reform and the added pressures for higher student achievement on mandated tests, effective leadership plays a critical role in the success of the school and has a substantial impact on the lives of the students (Davies, 2005; Yulk, 2006). School administrators, educators and learners must improve test results each year or school districts and their schools will undergo sanctions connected to federal funding (U.S. Department of Education, 2004). It has been determined that sustained school improvement is dependent upon effective leadership (Barth, 2001; Yukl, 2006). Barth (2001) argued the act of leadership itself increases the potential for learning when he stated, “Teachers become more active learners in an environment where they are leaders” (p. 445). Teacher leaders need to be empowered to spread their influence. Mangin (2005) stated “the notion of teachers as leaders builds on the belief that, in addition to being the gatekeepers of instructional change, teachers have a situated perspective on teaching that may make them logical leaders of changed practice” (p. 1). This is one implication from the study suggested by the findings focusing on the need for teacher leadership.

Another implication of this study aligns with research by Davies (2005) that suggested student achievement improves in schools where principals encourage teacher leadership to emerge in areas important to him or her. Fostering teacher leadership demands a culture in which the principal understands and values the importance of teacher leadership (Danielson, 2006). This generates a setting where teachers are more involved and influential in establishing discipline, designing curriculum, and ultimately raising school achievement levels (Barth, 2001).

The unprecedented demands being placed on schools require leadership at every level. However, this movement toward teacher leadership needs to be done as a collaborative effort of principals and teachers. The overall concept of teacher leadership is an important fact to school improvement (Andrews & Crowther, 2002; Barth, 2001; Birky et al., 2006; Danielson, 2006) and ultimately the need to understand the perception of teacher leadership from the perspective of the teachers and principals is necessary in order for substantial school reform to take place in schools.

The results of this study may provide educational leaders and policy makers with valuable insights as to the supports deemed beneficial for developing and engaging African American teacher leaders. Haycock (2001) states proponents of increasing the diversity of the teacher workforce also cite a “democratic imperative” (p. 6) which highlights the failure of schools to serve the educational needs of students of color as evidenced in an achievement and retention gap between White students and students of color.

### **Limitations of the Study**

As with other research investigations, there were several limitations to the study, however, steps were taken to minimize the effects of the limitations. The researcher received guidance and supervision from experienced researchers throughout the study and integrated their

feedback into the study design. The following limitations were recognized by the researcher for this study:

1. The study sample was limited to 3 geographic regions in Alabama. Increasing the number of schools and expanding the geographic locations of the study would provide opportunities for more schools to participate and potentially make way for a comparison study across the state or throughout the country.
2. The study sample reflected a small number of schools and participants that participated in the study.
3. Some of the open ended survey response items were left unanswered including the question requesting email addresses of teacher leaders from principals making it more difficult for the researcher to recruit more participants for the research study.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

Recommendations for future research on the selection, supports, and barriers to teacher leadership are evident throughout the discussion. Recommendations worth noting include the inclusion of a larger sample size. The researcher feels that if the study were to be replicated, there should be fewer open-ended questions for teacher response so that more teachers would complete the TLSS. Perhaps the teachers would complete the TLSS, then follow-up interviews and school-level case studies could be conducted in order to gain a deeper understanding of the participants' thinking.

Another recommendation would be to insure that the identity of the Inservice Center region is included on the survey with the demographic data. The researcher failed to include this

relevant information on this survey which removed one factor that could have been analyzed and may have provided greater detail in terms of geographic location and teacher leadership.

Another recommendation for future research is for the researcher to complete interviews with the teacher leaders and principals to increase the richness of data. The interviews may allow the researcher to better examine the perceptions of teacher leaders and principals. The additional information may strengthen the research due to the use of multiple sources of data to provide rich descriptions in the analysis (Creswell, 2007). By listening to the conversations of the teacher leaders and principals; one could gain a deeper understanding of the supports and barriers provided to teachers in their development as teacher leaders. Additionally, from these conversations one could garner an idea of the perceptions of the teacher leaders and principals about teacher leadership as evidenced in their survey responses.

Another recommendation for future research is to conduct the study based on the gender of the participants. This data could provide information as to the perception of teacher leadership opportunities for males and females. The wealth and size of the school district is another area for future research. The identification of this information could provide insight as to how the ethnic diversity of teacher leaders and students compares to the ethnic diversity of teacher leaders.

### **Summary**

The age of high-stakes accountability has made it increasingly more difficult for schools to meet the educational demands placed on them due to the standards based movement (U. S. Department of Education, 1994). With these and other demands, it is increasingly critical for administrators and educators to encourage talented and successful diverse teachers to recognize their skill and have them step up to the role of teacher leader.

With the emphasis on increased student learning and the role of teachers, administrators today, and in the future, will seek to engage teachers in reform efforts and attempt to build leadership teams within their schools to guide reform initiatives. This supports the research of Barth (2001), Wynne (2001), and Bryk and Schneider (2003) who suggest that administrators make the difference in teachers' perceptions of empowerment.

Research also suggests that minority students identify with minority teachers. Having strong examples of teacher leaders who are minority may result in a positive impact on student achievement (Beckford & Colley, 1993; Dee, 2004; Thompson & O'Quinn, 2001). School districts should focus on the purposeful inclusion of African American teacher leaders to ensure that the diversity of teacher leaders represents the diversity of the student population. As principals empower teachers to lead, they awaken a sleeping giant (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009), the most valuable resource in their school.



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Appendix 1

Teacher Leadership School Survey (TLSS)

**Teacher Leadership School Survey © Marilyn & Bill Katzenmeyer**

Please respond to the following statements in terms of how frequently each statement is descriptive of your school.

Each item had an answer choice of never, rarely, sometimes, often, and always.

1. At my school administrators and teachers try hard to help new teachers be successful.
2. At my school, teachers are provided with assistance, guidance and coaching if needed.
3. Administrators at my school actively support the professional development of faculty and staff.
4. We gain new knowledge and skills through staff development and professional reading.
5. We share new ideas and strategies we have gained with each other
6. Teachers at my school are supportive of each other personally and professionally.
7. Teachers at my school are engaged in gaining new knowledge and skills
8. The administrators at my school have confidence in me.
9. My professional skills and competence are recognized by the administrators at my school.
10. Other teachers recognize my professional skills and competence.

11. It is apparent that many of the teachers at my school can take leadership roles.
12. The ideas and opinions of teachers are valued and respected at my school.
13. At my school we celebrate each others' successes.
14. Many of the faculty and staff at my school are recognized for their work
15. In my role as teacher, I am free to make judgments about what is best for my students.
16. At my school I have the freedom to make choices about the use of time and resources.
17. I know that we will bend the rules if it is necessary to help children learn.
18. Teachers are encouraged to take initiative to make improvements for students.
19. I have input to developing a vision for my school and its future.
20. At my school teachers can be innovative if they choose to be.
21. Administrators and other teachers support me in making changes in my instructional strategies.
22. Teachers at my school discuss strategies and share materials.
23. Teachers at my school influence one another's teaching.
24. Teachers in my school observe one another's work with students.
25. I talk with other teachers in my school about my teaching and the curriculum
26. Teachers and administrators work together to solve students' academic and behavior problems.
27. Other teachers at my school have helped me find creative ways to deal with challenges I have faced in my classes
28. Conversations among professionals at my school are focused on students.

29. Teachers have input to decisions about school changes.
30. Teachers have a say in what and how things are done.
31. Teachers and administrators share decisions about how time is used and how the school is organized.
32. Teachers and administrators at my school understand and use the consensus process.
33. Teachers participate in screening and selecting new faculty and/or staff at my school.
34. My opinions and ideas are sought by administrators at my school.
35. We try to reach consensus before making important decisions.
36. Because teachers and administrators share ideas about our work, I stay aware of what is happening.
37. At my school everybody talks freely and openly about feeling and opinions they have.
38. Faculty and staff at my school share their feelings and concerns in productive ways.
39. Teachers at my school discuss and help one another solve problems.
40. Faculty and staff talk about ways to better serve our students and their families.
41. When things go wrong at our school, we try not to blame, but talk about ways to do better the next time.
42. Faculty meeting time is used for discussions and problem solving.
43. Teachers are treated as professionals at my school.

44. Teachers at my school look forward to coming to work every day.
45. There is a general satisfaction with the work environment among teachers at my school.
46. Teachers and administrators at my school work in partnership.
47. Teachers at my school are respected by parents, students, and administrators.
48. The principal, faculty, and staff at my school work as a team.
49. We feel positive about the ways we are responding to our students' needs.

### **Personal Demographics**

50. What is your age?

- 20-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-59
- 60+

51. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

52. What is your highest level of education?

- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree
- Specialist Degree
- Doctoral Degree

53. Ethnicity

- White
- Hispanic
- African American
- Asian
- Pacific Islander
- American Indian
- Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

54. Please mark the teacher leader role you hold or have held within the past three school years. Please select all that apply

- Grade level leader
- BBSST member
- School leadership team
- Reading Coach
- Math Coach
- Resource Teacher
- National Board Certified Teacher
- Science Teacher Leader
- Math Teacher Leader
- Informal School leader (please specify)

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- Other (please specify)

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**School Demographics**

55. What is your school's enrollment?

- Less than 400
- 401–500
- 501–600
- 601–700
- 701–800
- 801–1000
- 1000+

56. What percentage of students in your school qualifies for free and/or reduced meals?

- 0–25%
- 26–50%
- 51–75%
- 76–100%

57. What percentage of the students in your school are minorities?

- 0–25%
- 26–50%
- 51–75%
- 76–100%



58. What percentage of students in your school are English Language Learners?

0–25%

26–50%

51–75%

76–100%

59. What percentage of students in your school scored at Levels III and IV on the Reading portion of ARMT? \_\_\_\_\_

60. What percentage of students in your school scored at Levels III and IV on the Math portion of ARMT? \_\_\_\_\_

## **Developing the Survey Items and Establishing Content Validity, Scale Names, and Reliability of the Teacher Leadership School Survey (TLSS)**

William G. Katzenmeyer, Professor  
Department of Testing and Research, College of Education  
The University of South Florida, Tampa, Florida, 33620

### The Instrument:

The Teacher Leadership School Survey (TLSS)  
Published by the Professional Development Center, Inc.  
P. O. Box 46609, Tampa, Florida 33647  
Phone: 1-800-332-2268

### Primary Resource:

Katzenmeyer, Marilyn & Moller, Gayle. (2001). *Awakening the sleeping giant: Helping teachers develop as leaders* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press

### **Establishing Content Validity: Identifying the Survey Items**

Content validity is concerned with whether the sample of items on the survey is representative of the population of items that constitute the larger body of knowledge about the subject. In this case, to what extent are the items on the TLSS representative of the population of items that might be used to define the context needed in a school to support the development of teacher leadership? The authors desired to establish the content validity of the TLSS through the process by which they chose the items.

Content validity is usually established by content experts. To identify the items, while at the same time creating content validity, a panel of persons with expert level knowledge of teacher leadership was asked to develop items they believed would be useful in assessing readiness for teacher leadership. The panel included both authors of *Awakening the Sleeping Giant*, and two other education professionals experienced in the development of teachers as leaders. The items developed by each member of the panel were combined and examined by all members of the panel, duplicate items were eliminated, some were dropped, and a few added by the members working together.

A large sample of Teachers ( $n > 300$ ) from several schools then responded to the items. The scales were identified through a series of factor analyses, completed to determine whether clusters of items (factors) could be found that exhibited internal consistency and were minimally correlated with each other. This process ultimately involved principal components analysis, and varimax rotation to simple structure, followed by an oblique (promax) rotation. Seven factors were identified. Items that did not load any factor, and were unrelated to each other were dropped. Items were added where indications of a strong factor were found, but scale length was

too small to support the desired level of reliability. A process involving several iterations of this process led to the development of the 49 item scale now published by the Professional Development Center, Inc. Scale names and definitions are included in the second edition of the Katzenmeyer and Moller book cited above.

While predictive validity and concurrent validity are stronger forms of validity than content validity, they were not judged to be feasible in this case. Predictive validity would require that, on the basis of scores on the TLSS, predictions were made about the likelihood that efforts to establish teacher leadership in a school would be successful, and that there would be a positive correlation between the scores on the survey and success of implementation. Unfortunately, this would also require that implementation be attempted not only in schools with high levels of readiness but also in schools with low levels of readiness. This was not judged to be feasible. Concurrent validity requires demonstration of positive correlation between the instrument in question and other instruments that purport to measure the same constructs. The absence of parallel measures led the authors to pursue content validity from the outset of their effort.

### **Establishing Reliability**

Reliability is a necessary but not sufficient condition for the establishment of validity. Having taken steps to assure content validity, the authors took the following steps to determine the extent to which the scales identified through the process above were reliable. While scale reliability was computed many times during the factor analytic process, the authors decided to draw a separate sample to determine the reliability of the final scales. The choice was made to use Cronbach's Alpha (internal consistency) reliability as the criterion. A sample of 312 teachers from 12 schools completed the final version of the TLSS. The Statistical Analysis System (SAS) was used to compute the reliability estimates. The table below presents the Alpha Reliability estimates. Examination of Table 1 reveals that the scales of the TLSS have above average reliability for scales of this type.

Table 1. Internal Consistency (Cronbach Alpha) Reliabilities of the TLSS Scales

Scale Names	Alpha Reliability	Items
Developmental Focus	.87	- 7
Recognition	.88	8 - 14
Autonomy	.87	15 - 21
Collegiality	.83	22 - 28
Participation	.87	29 - 35
Open Communication	.93	36 - 42
Positive Environment	.87	43 - 49

## Appendix 2

### Permission to Use Teacher Leadership School Survey (TLSS)

**From:** [mkatzen383@aol.com](mailto:mkatzen383@aol.com) [mkatzen383@aol.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, March 22, 2010 9:17 PM  
**To:** Jacquelynn Greenwood  
**Subject:** Re: Permission to use Teacher Leadership School Survey

Sorry for the delay in my reply to you. I have attached the reliability and validity information for you.

Yes, you may have permission to use the Teacher Leadership School Survey and to place the items into Survey Monkey. The permission is limited to purposes of your research and all copyright information for the instrument must be visible on the form that you use. In return I request a copy of your study when it is complete.

Marilyn Katzenmeyer, EdD

Professional Development Center Inc.

-----Original Message-----

From: Jacquelynn Greenwood <[greenja@auburn.edu](mailto:greenja@auburn.edu)>  
To: [mkatzen383@aol.com](mailto:mkatzen383@aol.com)  
Sent: Mon, Mar 22, 2010 8:07 pm  
Subject: Re: Permission to use Teacher Leadership School Survey

Hi Dr. Katzenmeyer,

My proposal has been approved by my committee and I will be submitting to IRB at the end of this month. Before submitting to IRB, I wanted to request use of the TLSS in SurveyMonkey rather than in the paper and pencil form. Also, could you provide, or direct me to, the reliability and validity of the instrument as well?

Looking forward to hearing from you soon.

Jacquelynne

>>> <[mkatzen383@aol.com](mailto:mkatzen383@aol.com)> 02/16/10 8:01 PM >>>

Jacquelynn,

Your study sounds interesting and should contribute to the literature. I can make the TLSS available to you in paper and pencil form for a reduced rate of \$1.00 per survey. When your proposal is approved, you can let me know the number you will need and I can mail them to you along with an invoice. In return I ask for a copy of your study when it is complete.

I will look forward to working with you.

Marilyn Katzenmeyer, EdD

-----Original Message-----

From: Jacquelyn Greenwood <[greenja@auburn.edu](mailto:greenja@auburn.edu)>

To: [Mkatzen383@aol.com](mailto:Mkatzen383@aol.com)

Sent: Mon, Feb 15, 2010 8:06 pm

Subject: Permission to use Teacher Leadership School Survey

Hi Dr. Katzenmeyer,

My name is Jacquelynne Greenwood and I am a doctoral candidate at Auburn University in Auburn, AL. I am writing to request permission to use the Teacher Leadership School Survey. The purpose of my study is to explore the ways in which public school administrators develop teacher leadership capacity within their schools, its effect on teacher roles and classroom performance, and the support and obstacles to teachers' ability to assume leadership roles within their school. This research will also focus on the types of supports and opportunities afforded to African American teachers to serve in the capacity of teacher leader and how those opportunities, supports and barriers are the same or different from those afforded to Caucasian teachers. I would like to use your survey as part 2 of my survey in which part will consist of demographic data relating to the person completing the survey and the district in which they are employed.

Thank you in advance for your consideration. Should you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me at (334)559-1720 or at the email address listed.

Thanks again,

Jacquelynne Greenwood

Appendix 3

Auburn University Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval

**AUBURN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD for RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMANSUBJECTS**  
**RESEARCH PROTOCOL REVIEW FORM**

For information or help contact THE OFFICE OF HUMAN SUBJECTS RESEARCH, 307 Samford Hall, Auburn University  
 Phone: 334-844-5966 e-mail: hsubject@auburn.edu Web Address: <http://www.auburn.edu/research/vpr/irb/>

Complete this form using Adobe Acrobat Writer (versions 5.0 and greater). Hand written copies not accepted.

1. PROPOSED START DATE of STUDY: February 2011
- PROPOSED REVIEW CATEGORY (Check one):  FULL BOARD  EXPEDITED  EXEMPT
2. PROJECT TITLE: African American Teacher Leaders: Selection, Supports, and Barriers
3. Jacquelynne Y. Greenwood 334-5591720 greenja@auburn.edu  
 PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR TITLE DEPT PHONE AU E-MAIL  
8416 Westminster Court Opelika, AL 36804 334-887-0599 jgreenwood@auburnschools.org  
 MAILING ADDRESS FAX ALTERNATE E-MAIL
4. SOURCE OF FUNDING SUPPORT:  Not Applicable  Internal  External Agency  Pending  Received
5. LIST ANY CONTRACTORS, SUB-CONTRACTORS, OTHER ENTITIES OR IRBs ASSOCIATED WITH THIS PROJECT:

6. GENERAL RESEARCH PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

<p align="center"><b>6A. Mandatory CITI Training</b></p> <p>Names of key personnel who have completed CITI:                  Jacquelynne Greenwood <u>7/2010</u> Dr. Cynthia Reed <u>7/2010 +</u>                  Dr. Ivan Watts <u>7/2010 number 1</u> Dr. Paris Strom <u>7/2010 r</u>                  Dr. Betsy Ross <u>7/2010 students, 2010</u></p> <p>CITI group completed for this study: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social/Behavioral <input type="checkbox"/> Biomedical</p> <p>Protocol-Specific modules completed:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Genetic <input type="checkbox"/> Vet.'s Administration  <input type="checkbox"/> International <input type="checkbox"/> Prisoner Research  <input type="checkbox"/> Public School Students <input type="checkbox"/> Pregnant Women/Fetuses                  Other _____</p>	<p align="center"><b>6B. Research Methodology</b></p> <p>Please check all descriptors that best apply to the research methodology</p> <p>Data Source(s): <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New Data <input type="checkbox"/> Existing Data</p> <p>Will data be recorded so that participants can be directly or indirectly identified?  <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Data collection will involve the use of:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Educational Tests (cognitive diagnostic, aptitude, etc.) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interview / Observation <u>see 3G</u>  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Surveys / Questionnaires <input type="checkbox"/> Physical / Physiological Measures or Specimens (see Section 6E.)  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Internet / electronic <input type="checkbox"/> Private records or files  <input type="checkbox"/> Audio / Video / Photos</p>
<p align="center"><b>6C. Participant Information</b></p> <p>Please check all descriptors that apply to the participant population.  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Males <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Females <input type="checkbox"/> AU students</p> <p>Vulnerable Populations</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Pregnant Women/Fetuses <input type="checkbox"/> Children and/or Adolescents (under age 19 in AL)  <input type="checkbox"/> Prisoners</p> <p>Persons with:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Economic Disadvantages <input type="checkbox"/> Physical Disabilities  <input type="checkbox"/> Educational Disadvantages <input type="checkbox"/> Intellectual Disabilities</p> <p>Do you plan to compensate your participants? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p align="center"><b>6D. Risks to Participants</b></p> <p>Please identify all risks that participants might encounter in this research.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Breach of Confidentiality* <input type="checkbox"/> Coercion  <input type="checkbox"/> Deception <input type="checkbox"/> Physical  <input type="checkbox"/> Psychological <input type="checkbox"/> Social  <input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____</p> <p>*Note that if the investigator is using or accessing confidential or identifiable data, breach of confidentiality is always a risk.</p>
<p align="center"><b>6E. Institutional Biosafety Approval</b></p> <p>Do you need IBC Approval for this study? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes - BUA # _____ Expiration date _____</p>	

The Auburn University Institutional Review Board has approved this document for use from 12/31/10 to 12/31/11 Protocol # 10-330 EX 1002

**FOR OHSR OFFICE USE ONLY**

DATE RECEIVED IN OHSR: 1/31/11 by GIB PROTOCOL # 10-330 EX 1002  
 DATE OF IRB REVIEW: 12/3/10 by KTE APPROVAL CATEGORY: 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2)  
 DATE OF IRB APPROVAL: \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_ INTERVAL FOR CONTINUING REVIEW: 1 year  
 COMMENTS: original in 11/3/10, reviewed as APR 12/3/10  
revisions reviewed 2/8/11 SBA

**RECEIVED**  
 JAN 31 2011



7. PROJECT ASSURANCES

PROJECT TITLE: African American Teacher Leaders: Selection, Supports, and Barriers

**A. PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR'S ASSURANCES**

1. I certify that all information provided in this application is complete and correct.
2. I understand that, as Principal Investigator, I have ultimate responsibility for the conduct of this study, the ethical performance this project, the protection of the rights and welfare of human subjects, and strict adherence to any stipulations imposed by the Auburn University IRB.
3. I certify that all individuals involved with the conduct of this project are qualified to carry out their specified roles and responsibilities and are in compliance with Auburn University policies regarding the collection and analysis of the research data.
4. I agree to comply with all Auburn policies and procedures, as well as with all applicable federal, state, and local laws regarding the protection of human subjects, including, but not limited to the following:
  - a. Conducting the project by qualified personnel according to the approved protocol
  - b. Implementing no changes in the approved protocol or consent form without prior approval from the Office of Human Subjects Research
  - c. Obtaining the legally effective informed consent from each participant or their legally responsible representative prior to their participation in this project using only the currently approved, stamped consent form
  - d. Promptly reporting significant adverse events and/or effects to the Office of Human Subjects Research in writing within 5 working days of the occurrence.
5. If I will be unavailable to direct this research personally, I will arrange for a co-investigator to assume direct responsibility in my absence. This person has been named as co-investigator in this application, or I will advise OHSR, by letter, in advance of such arrangements.
6. I agree to conduct this study only during the period approved by the Auburn University IRB.
7. I will prepare and submit a renewal request and supply all supporting documents to the Office of Human Subjects Research before the approval period has expired if it is necessary to continue the research project beyond the time period approved by the Auburn University IRB.
8. I will prepare and submit a final report upon completion of this research project.

My signature indicates that I have read, understand and agree to conduct this research project in accordance with the assurances listed above.

Jacquelyne Yvette Greenwood  
Printed name of Principal Investigator

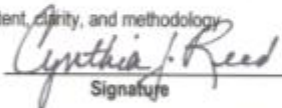
  
Principal Investigator's Signature

10/22/10  
Date

**B. FACULTY ADVISOR/SPONSOR'S ASSURANCES**

1. By my signature as faculty advisor/sponsor on this research application, I certify that the student or guest investigator is knowledgeable about the regulations and policies governing research with human subjects and has sufficient training and experience to conduct this particular study in accord with the approved protocol.
2. I certify that the project will be performed by qualified personnel according to the approved protocol using conventional or experimental methodology.
3. I agree to meet with the investigator on a regular basis to monitor study progress.
4. Should problems arise during the course of the study, I agree to be available, personally, to supervise the investigator in solving them.
5. I assure that the investigator will promptly report significant adverse events and/or effects to the OHSR in writing within 5 working days of the occurrence.
6. If I will be unavailable, I will arrange for an alternate faculty sponsor to assume responsibility during my absence, and I will advise the OHSR by letter of such arrangements. If the investigator is unable to fulfill requirements for submission of renewals, modifications or the final report, I will assume that responsibility.
7. I have read the protocol submitted for this project for content, clarity, and methodology.

Cynthia Reed  
Printed name of Faculty Advisor / Sponsor

  
Signature

10-22-10  
Date

**C. DEPARTMENT HEAD'S ASSURANCE**

By my signature as department head, I certify that I will cooperate with the administration in the application and enforcement of all Auburn University policies and procedures, as well as all applicable federal, state, and local laws regarding the protection and ethical treatment of human participants by researchers in my department.

Sherri Downer  
Printed name of Department Head

  
Signature

11/3/10  
Date

**8. PROJECT OVERVIEW: Prepare an abstract that includes:**

(400 word maximum, in language understandable to someone who is not familiar with your area of study):

- I.) A summary of relevant research findings leading to this research proposal, (Cite sources; include a "Reference List" as Appendix A.)
- II.) A brief description of the methodology,
- III.) Expected and/or possible outcomes, and,
- IV.) A statement regarding the potential significance of this research project.

School systems across the nation have struggled to meet the demands of the No Child Left Behind/Elementary Secondary Education Act largely due to the requirement for disaggregation of test data. Improving student achievement involves more than simple structural changes. Due to the complexity involved, principals and district level administrators must engage teachers and other stakeholders when making the decisions about continuous improvement for student achievement (Elmore, 2000; Lambert, 2002; Olson, 2000; Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2001). Research conducted on high performing schools often emphasizes the importance of having teachers engaged in instructional leadership responsibilities (Darling-Hammond, 1995; Barth, 2001; Lambert, 2003).

An adapted version of the Teacher Leadership School Survey (TLSS) developed by Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009) was the survey instrument used in this study. The original design of the TLSS did not request background demographic information about each participant, did not have open-ended questions, and was intended to be administered by paper copy. Demographic variables were of interest for this research to determine if there was any relationship between these demographic subgroups and teacher leadership. Additionally, school level demographic information was requested to better understand the context at each school. The TLSS was adapted so that it was suitable for electronic administration using Survey Methods.

Open-ended questions are researcher-designed and were constructed in order to get additional feedback from teachers about their responses to the survey. The researcher was interested in hearing what teachers had to say in their own words in addition to the information solicited through the TLSS. Data analysis from the electronic surveys will be input into an SPSS (16.0) data file to conduct descriptive analyses, sub group analyses and first level statistical analyses (t-tests). The t-test will be used to determine if the mean scores on survey items between African American and Caucasian teacher leaders are significantly different.

Although there are many efforts to improve teacher leadership opportunities, additional research is needed to better understand the complex contextual issues influencing the development of teacher leaders and their roles in school improvement initiatives.

**9. PURPOSE.**

**a. Clearly state all of the objectives, goals, or aims of this project.**

The purpose of this study is to explore the ways in which public school administrators develop teacher leadership capacity within their schools, its effect on teacher roles and classroom performance, and the supports and obstacles to teachers' ability to assume leadership roles within their school. In particular, this research focuses on the types of supports and opportunities afforded to African American teachers to serve in the capacity of teacher leader and how those opportunities, supports, and barriers are the same or different from those afforded to Caucasian teachers. The information obtained from this research will provide educational leaders and policy makers with information about the supports deemed beneficial for developing and engaging African American teacher leaders thus increasing student achievement.

**b. How will the results of this project be used? (e.g., Presentation? Publication? Thesis? Dissertation?)**

The research findings will be used in the publication of a dissertation towards fulfillment of a PhD in Educational Leadership and may also be used for professional presentations and publications.

10a. **KEY PERSONNEL.** Describe responsibilities. Include information on research training or certifications related to this project. **CITI is required. Be as specific as possible.** (Attach extra page if needed.) *All non AU-affiliated key personnel must attach CITI certificates of completion.*

Jacquelynne Greenwood  
Principle Investigator \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address greenja@auburn.edu  
Dept / Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

**Roles / Responsibilities:**

Principal investigator and administrator

Dr. Cynthia Reed  
Individual: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: Committee chair E-mail address reedcyn@auburn.edu  
Dept / Affiliation: Educational Foundations Leadership and Technology \_\_\_\_\_

**Roles / Responsibilities:**

Dr. Reed serves as chair of my committee and will assist with data analysis and interpretation as needed.

Dr. Betsy Ross  
Individual: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_  
Dept / Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

**Roles / Responsibilities:**

Dr. Ross serves as research methodologist and will assist with data analysis and interpretation as needed.

Dr. Paris Strom  
Individual: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_  
Dept / Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

**Roles / Responsibilities:**

Dr. Strom is a committee member and will assist with data analysis and interpretation as needed.

Dr. Ivan Watts  
Individual: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_  
Dept / Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

**Roles / Responsibilities:**

Dr. Watts serves as a committee member and will assist with data analysis and interpretation as needed.

Individual: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_  
Dept / Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

**Roles / Responsibilities:**

11. **LOCATION OF RESEARCH.** List all locations where data collection will take place. (School systems, organizations, businesses, buildings and room numbers, servers for web surveys, etc.) **Be as specific as possible. Attach permission letters in Appendix E.**  
(See sample letters at <http://www.auburn.edu/research/vpri/ohs/sample.htm>)

Data will be collected from 7 school systems located in the East Alabama Inservice Center Region with the exception of Auburn City Schools which is being omitted because it is my place of employment; 10 systems from the Blackbelt Region; and 2 school systems from the Wiregrass Region. A list of the districts and the elementary schools in each district is included in Appendix E. Permission letters from these districts are included in Appendix C. Surveys will be distributed to participants via the Internet using Survey Methods at [www.surveyMethods.com](http://www.surveyMethods.com). Research participants may complete this electronic survey at the location of their choice.

12. PARTICIPANTS.

- a. Describe the participant population you have chosen for this project.  
(If data are existing, check here  and describe the population from whom data were collected.)

The participant population consists of elementary school principals and teacher leaders in elementary schools. Each elementary school principal will be asked to identify eight to ten teacher leaders at their school utilizing the following definition of a teacher leader and of teacher leadership: Teacher Leadership is when teachers help "sustain changes that enhance student learning, improve instruction, maximize participation in decision making and align resources to the school's vision and purpose" (Portin, Schneider, DeArmond, & Gundlach, 2003, pg. 25). A teacher leader is defined as the informal and formal teacher leader, who leads within and beyond the classroom, serves students and/or staff, is in charge of school operational duties, and/or serves in a decision-making roles within the school or district (Frost & Durrant, 2003; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009). Participants will be selected from 19 school districts in the East Alabama Regional Inservice Region, the Wiregrass Region, and the Blackbelt Region described in Section 11.

- b. Describe why is this participant population is appropriate for inclusion in this research project. (Include criteria for selection.)

The participant population was selected in an effort to ascertain information from school districts with populations that are of mixed ethnicity, a predominantly white ethnicity, and from predominantly African American ethnicity. A broader view of teacher leadership will be garnered from the prospective of each region offering ways in which opportunities for teacher leadership and improved instruction can be ascertained for all teachers. Additionally, principals are being asked to complete the TLSS in an effort to glean additional information about how teacher leaders are identified and how principals support teacher leaders in their role.

- c. Describe, step-by-step, all procedures you will use to recruit participants. Include in *Appendix B* a copy of all e-mails, flyers, advertisements, recruiting scripts, invitations, etc., that will be used to invite people to participate.  
(See sample documents at <http://www.auburn.edu/teossearch/vpr/bhs/sample.htm>.)

Superintendents from each school district will receive a written request to conduct the study in their elementary schools. Once permission has been granted, all elementary school principals in the participating districts will receive an email correspondence requesting that they identify eight to ten teacher leaders in their schools to participate in the study. Email addresses will be requested in order to distribute the informed consent which includes the survey link to each teacher leader. Lastly, the teacher leaders will receive an e-mail with a cover letter requesting their assistance with this study from the principal investigator (Jackie Greenwood). Principals will identify up to 10 teacher leaders within their building and I will forward the request to participate to those teacher leaders along with the link to the survey included. 5 or 6 of the 8-10 teacher leaders will be selected by the researcher to participate. This approach helps to maintain confidentiality as the principal will not know which teacher leaders were selected for participation thus creating a random selection.

What is the minimum number of participants you need to validate the study? 500

Is there a limit on the number of participants you will recruit?  No  Yes – the number is 2000

Is there a limit on the number of participants you will include in the study?  No  Yes – the number is \_\_\_\_\_

- d. Describe the type, amount and method of compensation and/or incentives for participants.

(If no compensation will be given, check here .)

Select the type of compensation:  Monetary  Incentives  
 Raffle or Drawing incentive (Include the chances of winning.)  
 Extra Credit (State the value)  
 Other

Description:

### 13. PROJECT DESIGN & METHODS.

a. Describe, step-by-step, all procedures and methods that will be used to consent participants.

(  Check here if this is "not applicable"; you are using existing data.)

Upon approval, the researcher will submit letters to the superintendents of each school district requesting permission to conduct the study in their district. IRB approval will be requested to conduct the study. Once this request has been granted, elementary principals will be contacted to identify up to 10 teacher leaders in their building. Once these teacher leaders have been identified, I will send an email to teachers with the informed consent and a link to the survey for completion. The participants will be contacted by the principal investigator to ensure that the principal is not aware of which teachers were selected to participate thus creating a random sample. Each letter of consent is attached in Appendix B and the survey is attached in Appendix C.

b. Describe the procedures you will use in order to address your purpose. Provide a step-by-step description of how you will carry out this research project. Include specific information about the participants' time and effort commitment. (NOTE: Use language that would be understandable to someone who is not familiar with your area of study. Without a complete description of all procedures, the Auburn University IRB will not be able to review this protocol. If additional space is needed for this section, save the information as a .PDF file and insert after page 6 of this form. )

Upon receiving approval from Auburn University's IRB, district superintendents, and elementary school principals; the principal investigator will receive from each elementary principal in each of the schools via email, a list of email addresses for each potential participant. Each teacher, identified by email address only, will receive an email with an explanation as to the purpose of the study with a link to the TLSS from the principal investigator (Jackie Greenwood). The cover letter that each participant receives will explain that the 4 part Teacher Leadership Survey will take less than 1 hour to complete.

1. Principal investigator will seek approval to conduct study from IRB
2. Principal investigator will seek approval from Superintendents in each district to conduct the study in their district
3. Principal investigator will seek approval from each principal and receive the email addresses of up to 10 teacher leaders in their schools
4. Contact teacher leaders via email with consent letter and link to survey
5. Survey teachers and principals
6. Select data from 5 or 6 teachers from each site to use as part of the study. This helps to maintain confidentiality as the principal will not know which teacher leaders were selected for participation
7. Compile and analyze all data
8. Report findings
9. Publish dissertation

**13c. List all data collection instruments used in this project, in the order they appear in Appendix C.**

(e.g., surveys and questionnaires in the format that will be presented to participants, educational tests, data collection sheets, interview questions, audio/video taping methods etc.)

Internet based surveys (TLSS) will be distributed to all elementary school teacher leaders designated as such by their school principals. Each principal will provide up to 10 names. Elementary school principals will also complete the TLSS.

**d. Data analysis: Explain how the data will be analyzed.**

Data from the electronic surveys will be input into an SPSS\* (16.0) data file to conduct descriptive analyses, sub group analyses and first level statistical analyses (t-tests). The t-test will be used to determine if the mean scores on survey items between African American and Caucasian teacher leaders are significantly different. The responses from the open ended questions will be analyzed to gain understanding of the themes related to the perceived supports needed by teacher leaders. The emergent theme approach The quantitative and qualitative data will be integrated into a descriptive narrative.

**14. RISKS & DISCOMFORTS: List and describe all of the risks that participants might encounter in this research. If you are using deception in this study, please justify the use of deception and be sure to attach a copy of the debriefing form you plan to use in Appendix D. (Examples of possible risks are in section #6D on page 1.)**

Possible risks that participants might encounter in this research include Breach of Confidentiality. Although numerous efforts will be made to protect confidentiality, breach of confidentiality is always a risk. Email addresses for each participant will be provided to the researcher, however, when you launch a survey through the SurveyMethods email launch system, SurveyMethods.com then sends each individual a unique encrypted survey URL via email that appears to be coming from my email address. **The researcher will request that the email addresses be removed rather than provided to the researcher to decrease the likelihood of a breach of confidentiality.** This email contains a link for the recipient to click on and take the survey. When using this method of launching the surveys, I will be able to see who has responded, who has not responded, and who has opted-out of taking the survey by email address only. This list will be destroyed after two email reminders have been sent to participants who have not yet completed the survey. No identifying information will be reported in the study and all identifying information will be destroyed. Only anonymous data will be reported and retained.

15. **PRECAUTIONS.** Identify and describe all precautions you have taken to eliminate or reduce risks as listed in #14. If the participants can be classified as a "vulnerable" population, please describe additional safeguards that you will use to assure the ethical treatment of these individuals. Provide a copy of any emergency plans/procedures and medical referral lists in Appendix D.

The researcher and members of her committee will be the only individuals that will have access to the information obtained from the study. All identifiable information will be destroyed. Only anonymous data will be retained. All paper copy information will be shredded once the dissertation has been approved for publishing and electronic files will be deleted using computer programs specifically designed for this purpose. **IP addresses and emails will not be returned to me from SurveyMethods. Survey responses will be the only information received.**

**If using the internet to collect data, what confidentiality or security precautions are in place to protect (or not collect) identifiable data? Include protections used during both the collection and transfer of data.**

*(These are likely listed on the server's website.)*

SurveyMethods.com is extremely secure. An account login is required in order to access the surveys. SurveyMethods.com generates a survey URL that has a 14-digit encrypted suffix. Hence, a person can only take the survey if they are provided the survey link. When users click on the web URL to take the survey, you can not track them. The system does however record their IP address.

16. **BENEFITS.**

- a. **List all realistic direct benefits participants can expect by participating in this specific study.**

*(Do not include "compensation" listed in #12e.)* Check here if there are no direct benefits to participants.

There are no direct benefits to the participants.

- b. **List all realistic benefits for the general population that may be generated from this study.**

Upon completion of the study, elementary principals may have a better understanding of the supports and barriers to teacher leadership. Lessons learned through this research may identify additional supports that can be provided to encourage and support teachers to take on leadership roles in their schools.

17. PROTECTION OF DATA.

- a. Will data be collected as anonymous?  Yes  No *If "YES", skip to part "g".*  
(\*Anonymous\* means that you will not collect any identifiable data.)
- b. Will data be collected as confidential?  Yes  No  
(\*Confidential\* means that you will collect and protect identifiable data.)
- c. If data are collected as confidential, will the participants' data be coded or linked to identifying information?  
 Yes (if so, describe how linked.)  No

d. Justify your need to code participants' data or link the data with identifying information.

e. Where will code lists be stored? (Building, room number?)

Lists will be stored at the home of the principal investigator 8416 Westminster Court Opelika, AL 36804

f. Will data collected as "confidential" be recorded and analyzed as "anonymous"?  Yes  No  
(If you will maintain identifiable data, protections should have been described in #15.)

g. Describe how and where the data will be stored (e.g., hard copy, audio cassette, electronic data, etc.), and how the location where data is stored will be secured in your absence. For electronic data, describe security. If applicable, state specifically where any IRB-approved and participant-signed consent documents will be kept on campus for 3 years after the study ends.

Survey data will be stored in a locked file cabinet at the principal investigator's home at 8416 Westminster Court Opelika, AL 36804. Electronic data will be stored on an external drive with password protection at the principal investigators home. All IRB approved and participant signed consent documents will be stored in Dr. Reed's office, 108 Ramsay Hall, for three years after the study ends.

h. Who will have access to participants' data?

(The faculty advisor should have full access and be able to produce the data in the case of a federal or institutional audit.)

Members of my committee will have access to all data in order to assist with data analysis and interpretation. They include Dr. Cynthia Reed, Dr. Paris Strom, Dr. Ivan Watts, and Dr. Betsy Ross

i. When is the latest date that confidential data will be retained? (Check here if only anonymous data will be retained. )  
Since the data will be treated as anonymous, data will be retained for 3 years following completion of the dissertation.

j. How will the confidential data be destroyed? (NOTE: Data recorded and analyzed as "anonymous" may be retained indefinitely.)  
All confidential information will be destroyed by shredding and using specialized computer software to delete all electronic files





The Auburn University Institutional Review Board has approved this document for use from 12/3/12 to 12/2/11  
Protocol # 10-330 EX 1012

# AUBURN UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS, LEADERSHIP AND TECHNOLOGY

**NOTE: DO NOT AGREE TO PARTICIPATE UNLESS IRB APPROVAL INFORMATION WITH CURRENT DATE HAS BEEN ADDED TO THIS DOCUMENT**

## INFORMATION LETTER

### for a Research Study entitled

"African American Teacher Leaders: Selection, Supports, and Barriers

You are invited to participate in a research study that examines the ways in which public school principals develop teacher leadership capacity within their schools, its effect on teacher roles and classroom performance, and the perceived supports and obstacles to teachers' ability to assume leadership roles within their school. Specifically, the research also focuses on the types of supports and opportunities afforded to African American teachers to serve in the capacity of teacher leader and how those opportunities, supports, and barriers are the same or different from those afforded to Caucasian teachers. This study is being conducted by Jacquelynne Greenwood, a doctoral candidate in educational leadership at Auburn University, under the supervision of Dr. Cynthia J. Reed, Director of the Truman Pierce Institute and Professor, Auburn University. You are invited to participate because you teach at one of the schools selected by the researcher to participate in this study and are age 19 or older. Elementary teachers in the East Alabama Regional Inservice Center region, the Wiregrass Region, and the Black Belt region are being invited to participate in the study. These three regions were selected as a purposeful sample to ensure the state's demographics are fully represented.

As an elementary school principal, you are being asked to participate in this study by identifying up to ten teacher leaders from your site. Teacher leaders are defined as *the informal and formal teacher leader, who leads within and beyond the classroom, serves students and/or staff, is in charge of school operational duties, and/or serves in a decision-making role within the school or district (Frost & Durant, 2003; Katzenmyer & Moller, 2009).* Additionally, you will be asked to complete an 8-question survey asking questions about your perspectives on teacher leaders.

There are minimal risks associated with this study including breach of confidentiality. When using identifiable data, breach of confidentiality is always a risk. However, steps are being taken to ensure the confidentiality of all participant responses. All identifiable data will be eliminated prior to receiving survey results. All survey data from this study will be

4036 Halcy Center, Auburn, AL 3684-5221; Telephone: 334-844-4460; Fax: 334-844-3072

www.auburn.edu

treated as anonymous. All identifying information will be deleted by SurveyMethods, the software used to conduct the survey. All data will be available only to the researcher and her committee for analysis purposes. Information collected through your participation will be used as data for a dissertation, may be presented at a professional meeting, or published in scholarly publications. As a participant, you may withdraw from participation at any time, without penalty. However, after your information has been provided and data are assigned, there will be no way to identify the data you provided and it will no longer be able to be withdrawn.

Participation is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not jeopardize your employment at your school or school system, current or future relations with the Auburn University College of Education, the Truman Pierce Institute, or Auburn University.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Jacquelynne Greenwood at (334)887-4901 ([greenja@auburn.edu](mailto:greenja@auburn.edu)) or Dr. Cynthia Reed at (334)844-4488 ([reedcyn@auburn.edu](mailto:reedcyn@auburn.edu)).

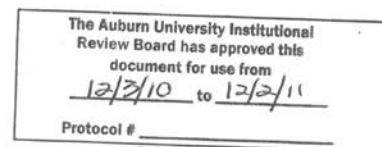
**If you have questions about your rights as a research participant**, you may contact the Auburn University Office of Human Subjects Research or the Institutional Review Board by phone (334)844-5966 or email at [hsubject@auburn.edu](mailto:hsubject@auburn.edu) or [IRBChair@auburn.edu](mailto:IRBChair@auburn.edu).

**HAVING READ THE INFORMATION PROVIDED, YOU MUST DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT YOU WISH TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESEARCH STUDY. YOUR SIGNATURE INDICATES YOUR WILLINGNESS TO PARTICPATE.**

Regards,

*Jacquelynne Y. Greenwood*

February 15, 2011



Jacquelynne Y. Greenwood

Investigator obtaining consent

*The Auburn University Institutional Review Board has approved this document for use from December 3, 2010 to December 2, 2011. Protocol # 10-330 EX 1012*

**[LINK TO SURVEY](#)**

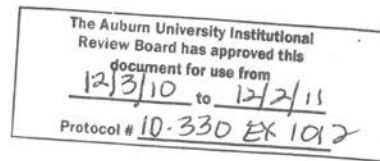
Page 2 of 2



AUBURN UNIVERSITY

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**NOTE: DO NOT AGREE TO PARTICIPATE UNLESS IRB APPROVAL INFORMATION WITH CURRENT DATE HAS BEEN ADDED TO THIS DOCUMENT**

**INFORMATION LETTER  
for a Research Study entitled**

**"African American Teacher Leaders: Selection, Supports, and Barriers**

You are invited to participate in a research study that examines the ways in which public elementary school principals develop teacher leadership capacity within their schools, its effect on teacher roles and classroom performance, and the perceived supports and obstacles to teachers' ability to assume leadership roles within their school. Specifically, the research focuses on the types of supports and opportunities afforded to African American teachers to serve in the capacity of teacher leader and how those opportunities, supports, and barriers are the same or different from those afforded to Caucasian teachers. This study is being conducted by Jacquelynne Greenwood, a doctoral candidate in educational leadership at Auburn University, under the supervision of Dr. Cynthia Reed, Director of the Truman Pierce Institute and Professor, Auburn University. You are invited to participate because you teach at one of the schools selected by the researcher to participate in this study and are age 19 or older. Elementary teachers in the East Alabama Regional Inservice Center region, the Wiregrass Region, and the Black Belt region are being invited to participate in the study.

As an elementary school teacher, you are being asked to participate in this study because you have been identified as a teacher leader by your school administrator. Your participation will include the completion of a 4-part survey on Teacher Leadership. Additionally, I will collect demographic information about you and your school district. Collectively, these instruments should take less than 1 hour to complete. All of the information collected will remain confidential.

There are minimal risks attached to this study including breach of confidentiality. When using identifiable data, breach of confidentiality is always a risk. However, steps are being taken to ensure the confidentiality of all participant responses. All identifiable data will be eliminated from this study prior to receiving survey results. All survey data from this study will be treated as anonymous. Identifiable information will be deleted by SurveyMethods, the software used to conduct the survey.

Information collected through your participation will be used as data for a dissertation, may be presented at a professional meeting, or published in scholarly publications. As a participant, you may withdraw from participation at any time, without penalty. However, once you've submitted anonymous data, it cannot be withdrawn since it will be unidentifiable.

4036 Haley Center, Auburn, AL 3684-5221; Telephone: 334-844-4460; Fax: 334-844-3072

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Participation is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not jeopardize your employment at your school or school system, or current or future relations with the Auburn University College of Education, the Truman Pierce Institute, or Auburn University.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Jacquelynne Greenwood at (334)887-4901 ([greenja@auburn.edu](mailto:greenja@auburn.edu)) or Dr. Cynthia Reed at (334)844-4488 ([reedcyn@auburn.edu](mailto:reedcyn@auburn.edu)).

**If you have questions about your rights as a research participant**, you may contact the Auburn University Office of Human Subjects Research or the Institutional Review Board by phone (334)844-5966 or email at [hsubject@auburn.edu](mailto:hsubject@auburn.edu) or [IRBChair@auburn.edu](mailto:IRBChair@auburn.edu).

**HAVING READ THE INFORMATION PROVIDED, YOU MUST DECIDE IF YOU WANT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT. IF YOU DECIDE TO PARTICIPATE, PLEASE CLICK ON THE LINK BELOW. YOU MAY PRINT A COPY OF THIS LETTER TO KEEP.**

Regards,

*Jacquelynne Y. Greenwood*

February 15, 2011

Jacquelynne Y. Greenwood

Date

Investigator obtaining consent

*The Auburn University Institutional Review Board has approved this document for use from December 3, 2010 to December 2, 2011. Protocol # 10-330 EX 1012*

**[LINK TO SURVEY](#)**

