TEACHER LEADERS IN A RURAL SCHOOL SETTING:
A LOOK AT ONE APPALACHIAN SCHOOL

A Thesis
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By
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ABSTRACT

Every school has teachers who stand out and are willing to take on leadership roles. These teachers enable the school to run more effectively. This study examines the perceptions of teacher leaders at a rural school. It will take a look at the attributes that these teacher leaders possess. Qualitative data was collected from teachers and teacher leaders through surveys. The findings provide teacher viewpoints on what makes a good teacher leader and provides insight into how those leaders lead in their school.
Dedicated to my family
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank Dr. Stephanie Starcher for educational advice and discussions on teacher leadership which made this thesis possible.

I thank Dr. William Bauer, my adviser, for support and advice.

I am grateful for my husband Scott and my son Ethan for all the sacrifices our family had to face while I completed my graduate classes.

Thank you to my dad for all the support to help me get through my Master’s classes.

Thank you to Mary Ann Ware for help in the proofing and revising of this thesis.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Do teachers go to school only to teach their students, or do some have other responsibilities as well? Are the principals the only leaders in the school building? There is a common misconception that leadership in education still rests in the hands of school administrators (Silva, Gimbert & Nolan, 2000). In reality, teachers are now being perceived as part of the solution to school revitalization (Keddy, 1999). While the quality of teacher most strongly influences levels of pupil motivation and achievement, it has been demonstrated that the quality of leadership matters in determining the motivation of teachers and the quality of teaching in the classroom (Sergiovanni, 1999; Fullan, 2001). Teacher leaders, since they are in the trenches with the other teachers, can offer a more hands-on approach to leadership than administrators.

Throughout nine years of teaching, this researcher has seen various types of teachers. Some teachers just come to work and teach, while others are active participants in the decision-making process.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this research is to examine what the perceptions of teacher leaders in a rural Appalachian school are and what attributes those teacher leaders have that make them effective.
Research Questions

What is teacher leadership like in an Appalachian rural school? What are the perspectives that teachers have about teacher leaders? And specifically, what are the attributes these teachers possess?
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

“A leader leads by example, whether he intends to or not” (Author unknown). The growing number of teacher leaders in schools reveals the truth of this statement today. Not only are teachers required to help their students learn and be successful, but they are now being encouraged to take on leadership roles in their schools. Although teachers have taken on these roles in the past, now there is “increased recognition of teacher leadership, visions of expanded teacher leadership roles, and new hope for the contributions these expanded roles might make in improving schools” (Smylie & Denny, 1990, p. 237). According to Hallinger and Heck (1996), ‘This recognition of leadership is critical to school improvement in studies of school reform’.

Teachers are leaders every day in their classrooms, but what does it mean to be a leader in the school at large? Danielson (2006) defines teacher leaders as “teachers not typically appointed to a designated position, yet they complement administrative leaders.” Another view is that teacher leadership “occurs within and outside the classroom and it influences instructional practice” (Katzenmyer and Moller 2001). Patterson and Patterson (2004) define a teacher leader as “someone who works with colleagues for the purpose of improving teaching and learning whether in a formal or an informal capacity” (p.74). While all of these definitions are slightly different, they all state that teacher leadership happens outside of the teacher’s classroom.

“For the last 30 years, significant investments have been made in educational initiatives focused on improving the quality of teacher and the conditions of teaching” (Berry and Ginsberg 1990). Teachers are now being educated on effective teaching strategies that improve student achievement. Also, technology is becoming more advance and teachers are finding that it has a
place in the classrooms. According to Silva, Gimbert, and Nolan (2000), these initiatives have started a need for teacher to take on leadership roles, these roles can be described in three waves. The first wave involved teachers who had formalized leader roles such as being department heads or having other official titles within the school. The second wave, as Silva described it, was when the “leadership took on a more instructional focus.” Teachers during this wave were still department heads, but other teacher leaders came into the picture as mentors to new teachers or curriculum developers. The final wave “reflects an increased understanding that promoting instructional improvement requires a culture that supports collaboration and continuous learning and recognizes teachers as primary creators and re-creators of school culture” (Darling-Hammond, 1988; Silva et al., 2000). Simply stated, this wave, suggests that you must have a collaborative staff who understand that they are responsible for their school culture.

*There is a need for teacher leaders*

Teachers in leadership roles have become more of a necessity in the school system in the past few years because principals have more demands than ever before. School administrators have to manage the budget, be role models for teachers and students, liaise between administration, teachers, and parents, and be accountable for the school’s performance. “The principal’s job in schools is becoming more complex, and it has been established that school leadership can no longer reside in one person” (Ballek, O’Rourke, Provenzano, & Bellamy, 2005). Schmoker (1999) argues that “principals cannot accomplish their goals, the school’s goals, or the community’s goals for greater achievement without the help of teacher leaders.” He also states that
change has a much better chance of going forward when principals team up with teachers who help to translate and negotiate new practices with the faculty. The combination of principals and teacher leaders is a potent combination, as so many schools demonstrate (p. 116).

Teachers may perceive suggestions from a mentor teacher as constructive advice, while the same suggestion from a principal may be interpreted as a rebuke.

While demands on school administration can contribute to a need for teacher leaders, the teachers themselves can have a sense of self-efficacy and a desire to be leaders in their field. The “teachers that tend to take on these roles are viewed as achievement and learning oriented and willing to take risks and assume responsibility” (Wilson, 1993). Research also shows that "these teachers demonstrated high levels of instructional expertise, collaboration, reflection, and a sense of empowerment, they became leaders or, were allowed by their peers to lead” (Snell and Swanson 2000). York-Barr & Duke (2004) report that “teachers become leaders because of their success teaching and because of that their colleagues gain trust and respect for them”.

Once teachers take on leadership roles "they feel empowered which enhances their self-esteem and work satisfaction which lead to higher performance and motivation and possible longer retention in being a teacher"(Katzenmeyer and Moller 2001; Ovando 1996). Barth (2001) states that “teachers who become leaders experience personal and professional satisfaction, a reduction in isolation, a sense of instrumentality, and new learnings- all of which spill over in their teaching." He also states that
"Teacher’s lives are enriched and energized in many ways when they actively pursue leadership opportunities. Rather than remain passive recipients— even victims— of what their institutions deal to them, teachers who lead help to shape their own schools, and thereby, their own destinies as educators” (p. 445)

Still other teachers want to take on leadership roles so they will “break from the routines of the classroom” (Katzenmeyer and Moller 2001). They also want to gain confidence in what they are doing or what they are trying to do. Being involved in teacher leadership “staves off feelings of boredom” (Gitlin 2005) and it “fills a need for growth that maintains motivation in the profession” (Gajda & Cravedi 2006).

**Teacher leadership is effective**

Teachers become leaders for their own self-efficacy or because it is important to administrators, but research has shown that effective teacher leadership can raise student achievement. Muijs and Harris (2007) state, “effective or purposeful leadership is generally accepted as being a central component in securing and sustaining school improvement.” This leadership doesn’t have to be from school administration, it can be from teachers who step up to leaders.

Teachers are leaders in their own classrooms of students, but teachers who show a willingness to assume a teacher leader role can "function as a school’s conscience” (Ackerman and Mackenzie 2006). Smylie’s (1994) research explains the influence of teacher leadership in the classroom and its effects. He explained that when teachers take part in decision making on a
building level, these teachers would know when and why changes in classroom practice would have to occur to help enhance student learning. Second, “changes in the classroom practice were more likely to occur when initiatives were collective, as opposed to individual, and when initiatives targeted changes in the instructional practices of teachers as opposed to organizational-level practices.”

Danielson’s (2006) research provides a framework to help understand the teacher leaders’ influence. He broke the types of influence into three of the following areas: “schoolwide policy and programs; teaching and learning; and communications and community relations” (p.25). Teacher leaders can start a new program in school, learn and implement an effective teaching strategy, or build relations with parents.

Danielson’s research provides information about how teachers being leaders can influence others. Similarly, Lieberman and Miller’s (2004) research shows what roles these leaders take and how these roles help with student achievement. The first role is an “advocate.” These teachers “speak up for what is best for student learning” and make learning the key focus. The role of the “advocate” relates to Danielson’s framework on teacher leaders influence in communication. The advocate will share ideas on effective teaching practices and why these practices are effective to other teachers. “Innovator” is a role in which teacher leaders are creative in what they do in the classroom and out. Teacher leaders who have the “innovator” role will promote teaching and learning. Lastly, “stewards” are teachers who “constantly serve as models and positively shape the teaching profession itself”. Liberman and Miller’s “steward” can influence school wide policy and programs because they are showing how the next big idea can be incorporated into the classroom.
“Teachers who lead extend their influence beyond their individual classrooms” (Phelps 2008). Teachers who become leaders apply their new knowledge to make an impact in their school as well as in the classroom working with individual students. Having teacher leaders in a school “is seen as a good way to retain teachers, attract new teachers, and nurture teachers’ professional identity as curriculum makers and change agents” (Clandinin and Connelly, 1992).

Purpose of the study

The literature concludes that teacher leadership is important in schools today. Teachers being leaders help take on leadership roles and adopt duties previously assigned to the administration. Some teachers accept this role because they want to be leaders themselves. Being a teacher leader breaks up the day-to-day responsibilities of the classroom teachers. Teachers can learn about the school as a whole and make their ideas known while making student achievement even more possible. While literature has shown teacher leadership roles, administration views, the conditions that influence teacher leadership, and how these leaders are prepared, not much has been said about teacher leadership in rural schools. In an Appalachian school, what are the perspectives that teachers have about teacher leaders? And specifically, what are the attributes these teachers possess?
CHAPTER 3

METHOD

This study is designed to explore participant perceptions of who they consider are teacher leaders in one Appalachian school. This study also looked at the participant views regarding attributes that the teacher leaders in their school possess. This study will be limited to teachers who teach at Barlow-Vincent Elementary School- a rural Appalachian school located in southeast Ohio.

Population

The subjects of this study are teachers who teach at Barlow-Vincent Elementary School. Participants consisted of teachers of grades Kindergarten through eighth grade along with teachers who teach art, music, physical education, and intervention specialists. The sample included approximately 40 teachers.

Instrumentation

Teachers were given a survey to be answer about what qualities make teacher leaders and what perceptions these teachers have. Also, the teachers responded to value statements on how much they see a certain kind of teacher leadership happening in their school. All surveys will be given to all teachers with the same questions. The information will be complied and examined.

Methods

Permission to conduct this study was obtained by the school’s principal to survey teachers. This study is qualitative research design by which the researcher will survey teachers. The researcher
sent out a survey to every teacher in the school asking for them to fill in out and then sent back. The information from the survey was then gathered. After materials were collected, organization and data analysis was completed.

**Ethics**

Each teacher had an understanding of the survey. The researcher wrote the survey so that it is easily understood by each participant. The researcher gained permission from the school’s principal before conducting the research. Each survey was anonymous so the teachers’ views will be protected.
CHAPTER 4
RESULTS

A survey was placed in forty-two certified teachers’ mailboxes at Barlow-Vincent Elementary School during the spring of 2011. The researcher encouraged teachers to participate by giving them money to receive a free soda in the teacher’s lounge. A copy of the teacher leadership survey is provided in Appendix A. The survey asked teachers to answer sixteen questions that gage experienced and views of their school. The survey also had four open-ended questions requiring each teacher to add his or her opinion with some details.

Description of Respondents

Thirty-two out of forty-two surveys were collected (76%) over a two-week period. Out of the thirty-two respondents, twenty-eight teachers (87.5%) indicated that they had eleven or more years of teaching experience. Table 4.1 displays the years of teachers at Barlow-Vincent Elementary who responded to the survey.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years of Teaching Experience</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-5 Years</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 Years</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15 Years</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20 Years</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-25 Years</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-30 Years</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 + Years</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1 Years of Teachers Barlow-Vincent Elementary who responded to the survey.
Having a large number of teachers who are experienced in the classroom is an asset to leadership in schools today. These teachers are not novices to teaching; they know what they are teaching and know how the school operates. They can also share their experiences and guide younger teachers through buildings issues.

While having a large percentage of experienced teachers can encourage teacher leadership, it can also provide a challenge for a school when trying to establish teacher leadership in the building. The more experienced teachers may not be volunteering to take courses or professional development in the areas of teacher leadership to stay abreast of current issues in the school. These teachers usually do not need more coursework to renew licenses or there is no incentive for them to take classes. Experienced teachers may also be set in their ways and not open to new ideas.

From the surveys, it was discovered that the school building had many experienced teachers, but the majority of these teachers had not been at their present assignment for more than ten years. Out of thirty-two respondents, twenty (62.5%) stated that they have been teaching the same grade/subject for ten or less years. Table 4.2 displays years at present assignment at Barlow-Vincent Elementary.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years at Present Assignment</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-5 Years</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 Years</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15 Years</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20 Years</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-25 Years</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-30 Years</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 + Years</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2 Years at Present Assignment at Barlow-Vincent Elementary

The significant changing of roles and assignments of teachers at this school is due to state budget cuts which led to a reduction of teachers. The reduction of teachers as a school district led to teacher reassignments based on seniority. State budget cuts in education were due to Ohio’s fiscal situation.

Teachers changing roles may be a negative for teacher leadership. If teachers move around quite a bit they may never get to become an expert at a certain grade or a subject area. They might not feel comfortable enough with what they are doing to lead other teachers or take on a leadership role at the school.

Changes in teacher assignments may influence teacher leadership. Teacher leadership may be fostered because teachers have to learn new content every time they change assignments. Teachers will then be on different grade level teams and have a role change in their grade level or department. Having to learn a new area may force teachers who are set in their own ways
branch out and try new things. Those teachers may take on some sort of leadership positions or leadership roles within their teams to try to get to know the new content or procedures.

Open-Ended Discussion of Teacher Leadership

A survey of views of teacher leadership at Barlow-Vincent Elementary revealed a wide range of what teachers think leadership looks like in their building and a explanation of what those leaders do.

Participants were asked to discuss their leadership roles in an open-ended format. From the questions, specific leadership roles in this school were gleaned as well as teachers’ self-evaluation of their leadership. Further, teachers discussed means in which they assume leadership roles.

*Do you think of yourself as a leader?*

When asked this question, eighteen out of 28 teachers (64%) considered themselves to be a leader. Teachers responded the following to this question:

• “I have that type of personality. I like to be very involved with the decisions made.”

• “I take charge of various responsibilities.”

• “I am on the building leadership team.”

• “I am given many opportunities to serve as a leader in my school. Our principal does a good job of empowering us to lead.”
• “Experience has taught confidence and being asked to lead various events or volunteer to assist.”

• “I think I am professional and conduct myself in that manner. I think being a hard worker also garners respect.”

• “I am led by example and encouraged to take on leadership tasks. I am treated a leader/expert in my instruction area.”

• “I consider myself as a leader on several levels. I am a team leader for my grade level, a building leader through school improvement efforts and a district leadership team member.”

Teachers thought that they were leaders in school because they were representatives on building and grade level teams. Teachers also thought the present school administration models and encourage leaders to rise in the school. Lastly, teachers thought that having the right type of personality or being an experienced teacher helped them assume leadership roles.

While the majority of teachers thought that they were leaders in the school, nine out of twenty-eight (32%) did not assume teacher leadership roles. The following are their responses:

• “No, I do not take part in extra activities- also not very outgoing.”

• “No, I just go with the flow.”

• “No, I would just rather follow and research ideas.”
• “No, I don’t push myself into that role and I find that there are too few places for me to be a leader.”

The teachers that did not consider themselves as leaders thought that it was not their personality to lead. They also did not feel that they wanted that role.

**What have you done that constitutes leadership at the school?**

Several teachers who were surveyed stated that they were leaders in the school building and have been leaders on many committees. One of the most frequently stated positions was team leader on a grade-level team. These leaders are representatives for grade levels and they create agendas for team meetings, schedule students, conduct meetings, and keep team members accountable and on-track. Teachers on these teams are a part of the Building Leadership Team at the school. The Building Leadership Team is comprised of a teacher leader from every grade level and specialty area. These teachers have to attend meetings, but current administration allows other teachers to volunteer to be a part of this team. The Building Leadership Team makes school-wide decisions based on school and district goals, student data, and building data. Members on this team discuss and make goals and procedures that affect all the teachers and students in the building.

Teachers who were surveyed also responded that they are leaders in other ways. Some teachers reported that they facilitate workshops and in-services. Others reported that they are representatives at a district-level, are on textbook committees, or create short-cycle assessments for the teachers in the district.
What roles do teacher leaders assume?

When asked to list the roles that teacher leaders assume, twenty-one out of twenty-eight teachers (75%) listed that they participate as team leaders for their grades and on the Building Leadership Team. Ten out of twenty-eight respondents (35.7%) reported that they serve as teacher leaders on a district wide team. Twelve out of twenty-eight (42.9%) teacher respondents reported that they are facilitators during teacher in-services.

How do they assume these roles?

When asked how teachers take on leadership roles in the school, teachers felt that leaders assume this role in a variety of ways. The following means were reported:

- “By appointment”
- “Volunteering”
- “Informal ways”
- “Having experience”
- “Earned respect”
- “Forced volunteer”
- “By succession”

Having a range of ways that teachers gain leadership positions in a school may be a benefit. Teachers at this school have opportunities to become leaders because the current
administration allows teachers many ways to participate in leadership roles. Teachers at this school are not fixed on one way to become a leader.

Rating Scale to Measure Teacher Leadership Experiences

Teachers responded to fourteen value statements about teacher leadership. They rated their responses as “1” being never happening in the school to “5” being always happening in the school. The results are in Table 4.3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Never “1”</th>
<th>Almost never “2”</th>
<th>Sometimes “3”</th>
<th>Almost always “4”</th>
<th>Always “5”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Teachers are encouraged to participate in professional leadership activities.</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
<td>46.9%</td>
<td>40.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Teachers are recognized as educational experts.</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
<td>59.4%</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Teachers have leadership roles in school improvement planning.</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
<td>78.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Teachers have input in determining budget priorities.</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
<td>45.2%</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Teachers deliver professional development to peers as coaches or train the trainers.</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Teachers view themselves as possible role models.</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Teachers lead/facilitate school committees.</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>43.8%</td>
<td>46.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.3 Value Statement Rating Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never “1”</th>
<th>Almost never “2”</th>
<th>Sometimes “3”</th>
<th>Almost always “4”</th>
<th>Always “5”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8. Teachers help mentor teachers.</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
<td>46.9%</td>
<td>40.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Teachers work in committees and small groups with community members.</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>43.8%</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Teachers facilitate parent and school relationships.</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
<td>62.5%</td>
<td>28.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Teachers are encouraged to reflect on their own practice.</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>46.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Teachers work collaboratively with their peers.</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>58.6%</td>
<td>34.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Teachers have a role in selecting textbooks or instructional materials.</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
<td>75.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Teachers have a role in setting new discipline policies.</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>41.4%</td>
<td>27.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the survey results, twenty-eight out of thirty-two teachers (87.5%) responded that they are always or almost always encouraged to participate in professional leadership activities. Twenty-four out of thirty-two teachers (75%) feel like they have almost always or always had the opportunity to be professional development leaders or take part in training other teachers. Teacher leaders train other teachers on a variety of topics which may include the following: bullying, using technology, school improvement plan ideas, Marzano’s instruction strategies, Ohio’s new content standards, and using formative assessment. With these programs, teacher leaders mentor other teachers through these new ideas.
When asked if teachers lead or facilitate school meetings, twenty-nine out of thirty-two teachers (90.6%) responded almost always or always. These teachers lead their fellow teachers through the State of Ohio’s School Improvement Process by being on the school’s Building Leadership Team. The teachers on this team are representatives from each grade level and specialty area. These teacher leaders make decisions on current school data and develop school-wide goals to increase student achievement.

Teacher leaders also work with parents and community members to help facilitate cooperative relationships and ideas. Twenty-one out of thirty-two teachers (65.6%) reported that they sometimes to never work with groups or teams when working with these stakeholders. Teachers report that they prefer working in one-on-one relationships with parents. Twenty-nine out of thirty-two teachers (90.6%) responded that teachers facilitate parent and school relationships almost always or always.

Overall teachers feel that they have quite a few opportunities to be teacher leaders in a variety of ways at the school; there are a few ways that teachers feel that they do not lead. One aspect that teachers feel that they do not have control over is the school’s budget. Twenty-one out of thirty-one teachers (67.7%) do not feel like they are involved in determining priorities in the budget. From the researcher’s personal experience, the budget is controlled by Warren Local School District and the Board of Education. The budget is also determined by how much money the school receives in property taxes and from the State of Ohio. Teachers at this school have minimal discretionary spending, so they may not feel that they have input in deciding how money is spent.
Another area in which teachers feel that they are not leaders is in determining discipline. The percent of teachers who feel that they never or almost never see teacher leadership in this area is higher than for any other value statement besides budget issues. Warren Local School District has adopted Sulzman’s Behavior Plan and all of the schools in the district are required to use this approach. Personnel have changed in each of the buildings since the discipline/behavior plan was first introduced. Teachers may feel that they do not have input on this issue because of so many administrative and teacher placement changes. Also, the administrator at one building may be more forceful in applying this discipline policy, while an administrator at another building may be more lenient in regards to student discipline. If teachers transfer from one building to another, they may have to change their style of discipline and may not have a say to add suggestions to the plan.
CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Having teachers complete the survey on teacher leadership gave insight into how they think that teacher leadership looks at their school, what teacher leaders do, and in some part how the administration acts towards teacher leaders.

The researcher was not surprised by the responses received from the teacher surveys. The researcher agrees that this particular school has many teacher leaders on various committees. The researcher also agrees with the respondents that they are either asked by the administration to be involved or can volunteer on their own.

Future Questions

If this survey were sent to teachers again, it might be interesting to examine how the results from the three other schools in the district would compare to the results of the teachers surveyed at one particular school. The same questions could be asked and a comparative study could follow. Do these schools share similar views on teacher leadership? Do teacher leaders emerge at other schools, and if so what are the various roles they are assigned? Do these teacher leaders volunteer, or are they appointed to their positions? Different schools operate in different ways, and it would be important for the district to see how teachers and administrators work together on the topic of teacher leaders in their schools.
APPENDIX

Appendix A

Participant Information: Please circle the only one that best describes your current status.

Years of teaching experience:

0-5 years  6-10 years  11-15 years  16-20 years  21-25 years  26-30 years  30+

Years at present assignment:

0-5 years  6-10 years  11-15 years  16-20 years  21-25 years  26-30 years  30+

Respond to the following statements in terms of how frequently each statement is descriptive of your school. Place an “X” in the appropriate box.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never “1”</th>
<th>Almost never “2”</th>
<th>Sometimes “3”</th>
<th>Almost always “4”</th>
<th>Always “5”</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Teachers are encouraged to participate in professional leadership activities.</td>
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<td>2. Teachers are recognized as educational experts.</td>
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<td>3. Teachers have leadership roles in school improvement planning.</td>
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<td>4. Teachers have input in determining budget priorities.</td>
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<td>5. Teachers deliver professional development to peers as coaches or train the trainers.</td>
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<td>6. Teachers view themselves as possible role models.</td>
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<td>7. Teachers lead/facilitate school committees.</td>
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<td>8. Teachers help mentor teachers.</td>
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<td>9. Teachers work in committees and small groups with community members.</td>
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<td>10. Teachers facilitate parent and school relationships</td>
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<td>11. Teachers are encouraged to reflect on their own practice.</td>
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<td>12. Teachers work collaboratively with their peers.</td>
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<td>13. Teachers have a role in selecting new textbooks or instructional materials.</td>
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<td>14. Teachers have a role in setting new discipline policies.</td>
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Do you think of yourself as a leader in school? Why or why not?

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________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

What have you done that constitutes leadership at the school?

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________________________________________________________________________

What roles do teacher leaders assume?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
How do they assume these roles? Appointment, volunteer, informal, or other ways?
REFERENCES


