“Visible but not Noisy”:

A Continuum of Secondary Mathematics Teachers’ Thinking about Teacher Leadership

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Teacher leadership is a relatively new construct. Most of the literature has been theoretically based with few focusing on teachers’ thinking around teacher leadership and even fewer talking to teachers. Also, most research studies have looked at teacher leadership in the elementary school and without concentration on a specific content area.

This study attempts to broaden the literature by talking to secondary mathematics teachers about teacher leadership. The research question that guided this study was *How do secondary mathematics teachers define, perceive, and enact teacher leadership?*

Participants included twelve secondary mathematics teachers who graduated from the same Masters of Education program. Predominantly qualitative in nature and using a phenomenological lens, the study followed the teachers for one-year after completing the program. Data collection included a teacher leadership narrative, a pre- and post-teacher leader survey, three individual interviews and two focus groups.

The teachers were grouped and placed along a teacher leader continuum. Then, sociotransformative constructivism (Rodriguez, 1998) provided the theoretical framework with which to view the teachers’ words. The four elements of sociotransformative constructivism (dialogic conversation, authentic activity, metacognition, and reflexivity)
provided a framework with which to delve deeper into the teachers’ thinking about teacher leadership.

Teacher definitions of teacher leadership broadened throughout the year and most, having started the year with a somewhat clear idea of teacher leadership, completed the year feeling overwhelmed by its vastness. Teacher perceptions of teacher leadership fell along a continuum stretching from visible but not noisy to instigator creating conflict. Much like teaching, teachers did not see teacher leadership as a stagnant ideal to be reached, but one that changed based on the situation. Whereas one situation may call a teacher leader to be visible but not noisy, another situation may call for the same teacher leader to be an instigator creating conflict. As teachers’ ideas of teacher leadership broadened throughout the year, their enactments also expanded and covered a wide range of activities and roles.
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

‘Educational leadership’ I read in the email delivered from an educational listserv to which I subscribe. Hmmm…. ‘educational leadership’…that sounds interesting.

“I’m studying to be a school administrator,” was the reply to my inquiry to the author of the posting. No, no, no, I thought, I don’t want to be a school administrator. I want to be a teacher who has the knowledge of an administrator but teaches kids. I searched for a program where teachers could learn about leadership, yet not have to leave their classrooms to do so.

As a National Board certified teacher, I was aware that National Board certified teachers are often pulled from the classroom; teachers become teachers of the year and are taken out of the classroom for a year. Once good teachers are identified, they leave the classroom. What sense does that make?

Three years after my search began, I found a masters program designed for teacher leaders—not designed to pull teachers out of the classroom but to allow them to learn alongside future administrators and then return to their classrooms to be a more informed party in their school and district. Still not perfect, the program required full time attendance so I had to take a leave of absence from my classroom to complete the degree. (Yow)

Initially feeling as if my journey was unique, I have come to realize that many other classroom teachers find themselves in the same situation. Educational leadership is still considered a degree for administrators and superintendents, not teachers. Teacher leadership is distinguished from that of educational leadership, as if it is somehow separate. As teacher leadership has evolved as a field of study, more is understood about how it fits into the broader goals of educational leadership and more importantly, how it can benefit teachers and the students they teach. It is the goal of this study to contribute to that growing body of
research by talking to the very individuals who will be the ones to implement teacher leadership—teachers.

A 2003 report released by the National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future (NCTAF) compared the teaching profession to a bucket full of holes: “The number of teachers entering the schools increased steadily during the 1990s. The problem is that teacher attrition was increasing even faster. It is as if we were pouring teachers into a bucket with a fist-sized hole in the bottom ” (p. 8). The more teachers poured into the bucket, the more teachers leak out of the holes. In 1996, NCTAF determined that teacher recruitment was a major factor in the national shortage of teachers; however, in 2001, a follow-up report was completed that concluded that recruitment was not as large a factor as teacher retention. Teachers were entering the profession; however, they were not staying in the profession.

Teacher leadership holds the potential to help retain teachers. Throughout the literature, teacher leadership has a variety of descriptions and definitions. It is the goal of this research to help clarify and better inform those descriptions and definitions by talking with secondary mathematics teachers about their views of this phenomenon called teacher leadership. I proposed the following research question: How do secondary mathematics teachers define, perceive, and enact teacher leadership?

**Importance of Teacher Leadership**

Many have defined teacher leadership broadly. While some say that all teachers are leaders (Barth, 2001), others say that teacher leaders are excellent teachers who influence others (Dozier, 2004; Lieberman & Miller, 2004; Miller, Moon, & Elko, 2000). Promoting teacher leadership may be a potential way to retain teachers in the classroom. Many teachers who are leaving the classroom are women. With so many opportunities presently available
to women in other fields, the historically flat professional structure of teaching must be modified in order to attract and keep talented women, not to mention men.

Even though teacher leadership has appeared in the literature for over thirty years (Andrews 1974; Rogus, 1988; York-Barr & Duke, 2004; Zimpher, 1988), a concise definition has yet to be agreed upon. Another dilemma in the field of teacher leadership is that many ask the question, why an organized study around teacher leadership? Teacher leaders already exist in our schools: grade level chairs, department chairs, and curriculum developers. Yet to be developed are non-traditional roles available to teacher leaders: leaders of teacher research inquiry groups in their schools, co-leaders of lesson study projects in their district (MacLean & Mohr, 1999; Stigler & Hiebert, 1999). Schools have realized that the traditional roles and designs of schooling need to be changed in order for schools to work for all children. Similarly, the teaching profession needs to realize that traditional roles and designs of teaching need to be changed in order for schools to work for all teachers. As Pellicer and Anderson (2001) proclaim, “Without question teacher leadership is more important today to the success of America’s schools than it has ever been before” (p. 1).

**Study Contributions to the Literature**

Change needs to begin by talking with teachers about teacher leadership. My study expands the recent conversation with teachers about their definitions, perceptions, and enactments of teacher leadership. Many teachers do not see themselves as leaders nor do they see actions they take as leadership actions (Ohlson, 1997). As my study addresses these three aspects of teacher leadership, it also begins to fill the gap in the literature of secondary teacher definitions, perceptions, and enactment of teacher leadership. Current studies include
voices of elementary teachers (O’Connor & Boles, 1992; Miller et al., 2000). The thoughts and voices of secondary teachers rarely appear in reports of teacher leadership.

Historically, most of the literature around teacher leadership has been theoretical removed from classroom teaching and practice (Barth, 2001; Fullan, 2002; Rogus, 1988; York-Barr et al., 2004; Zimpher, 1988). Only recently has that conversation moved into the classroom to profile teacher leaders. Pat Wasley’s 1991 book *Teachers Who Lead* provided a glimpse into the classrooms of three teacher leaders for one of the first times in the teacher leadership literature. Since her groundbreaking work, others have followed in asking teachers their views of teacher leadership (O’Connor & Boles, 1992; Huth, 2002). I believe only when teachers are included in the conversation about teacher leadership will it become a field in which teachers are interested. If we expect teachers to become teacher leaders, their voices must be included in its research. With their voices included, teachers can become agents of school change. It is with this belief that I began my study, listening to whom I believe to be the most important voices in the literature—the classroom teachers.

**Overview of Chapters**

This dissertation consists of five chapters. Chapter Two provides a review of the literature beginning with the broader topic of leadership, pulling from both business and educational literature. Research more specifically related to teacher leadership is discussed next; then, the mathematics teacher leadership literature is presented. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the theoretical framework that guides my study. Chapter Three explains the methodology of the study by first presenting a brief discussion of the phenomenological lens. Next, the study participants are described; then, the masters of education program that all participants completed is explained. Finally, the chapter discusses the data collection and
how the data was analyzed. Chapter Four reports the findings for the study, addressing the research question. The chapter, guided by the theoretical framework, explores the definitions, perceptions, and enactments of teacher leadership discussed by the participants, including vignettes of each teacher. Chapter Four also analyzes the data and offers a teacher leadership continuum as a basis for understanding the answers to the research question. The participants are placed along this continuum. Chapter Five includes the conclusions explaining the implications of the study. The chapter also discusses the limitations of the study and recommends areas for further research.
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

With the Soviet Union launch of Sputnik I in 1957, the United States feared that their educational programs in mathematics and science were behind. The space race began as many tried to decide if the Soviet Union or the United States was “ahead” (Kranz, 1987, p. 727). In 1981, U.S. Secretary of Education T. H. Bell created the National Commission on Excellence in Education (NCEE) to prepare a report on the state of education. In 1983, the commission presented A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform.

If an unfriendly foreign power had attempted to impose on America the mediocre educational performance that exists today, we might well have viewed it as an act of war. As it stands, we have allowed this to happen to ourselves. We have even squandered the gains in student achievement made in the wake of the Sputnik challenge. (NCEE, p. 2)

The report further specified that “on the positive side is the significant movement by political and educational leaders to search for solutions--so far centering largely on the nearly desperate need for increased support for the teaching of mathematics and science” (NCEE, 1983, p. 20).

In response to A Nation at Risk, the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) published the Curriculum and Evaluation Standards for School Mathematics in 1989 and the Professional Standards for Teaching Mathematics in 1991. In 2000, the NCTM revised these documents publishing the Principles and Standards for School Mathematics.

The Professional Standards for Teaching Mathematics (1991) was written based on two key assumptions:
1. Teachers are key figures in changing the ways in which mathematics is taught and learned in schools.
2. Such changes require that teachers have long-term support and adequate resources. (p. 2)

Also in response to *A Nation at Risk*, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) was created in 1987. The Board was charged with continuing to develop solutions presented in the report *A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century* (1986) released by the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy's Task Force on Teaching as a Profession. In an attempt to meet the call put forth in *A Nation at Risk* of “the nearly desperate need for increased support for the teaching of mathematics and science,” the Board designed a program to recognize, reward, and advance accomplished teaching with an advanced certification (NBPTS, 2006).

Finally, with President George W. Bush’s 2001 enactment of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) policy, the federal government has stepped in once again to meet the charge of *A Nation at Risk*. A key component of the NCLB policy is that “every child in America deserves a high-quality teacher” (NCLB, 2001, p. 41). Our nation continues to search for ways to relieve the critical need for high school mathematics teachers (NSF, 2002). As the NCTM standards, the NBPTS propositions, and the NCLB legislation address the concerns first articulated in *A Nation at Risk*, universities are also answering the call to improve mathematics teaching.

As both the NBPTS has identified accomplished teaching and the NCLB has called for high-quality teachers in every classroom, the phrase “teacher leader” and “teacher leadership” have become more prevalent. University graduate degrees in education are emerging with teacher leader as part or all of their titles. Research articles such as *What Do We Know About Teacher Leadership? Findings from Two Decades of Scholarship* (York-
Barr & Duke, 2004) have surfaced in an attempt to compile and review how this term is being defined. As the U.S. moves more and more in the direction of high stakes testing and accountability for student achievement, teachers are being asked to take leadership roles within their classrooms to lead their colleagues to higher student achievement.

In order to further understand secondary mathematics teacher leadership, it is important to review relevant literature. The topic of leadership has been a subject of research for the last 100 years (Parker, 2005; Rost, 1991). Teacher leadership has been in the literature for over thirty years (Andrew, 1974; York-Barr, 2004), with mathematics teacher leadership only recently being discussed (Miller et al., 2000; Langbort, 2001). In this literature review, I begin by presenting the literature on leadership, narrow to the literature on teacher leadership, and then, narrow to mathematics teacher leadership. I discuss the lack of literature pertaining to secondary mathematics teacher leadership and how this study contributes to that void. Finally, I explain the theoretical framework chosen for the study.

**Leadership**

For the last 100 years, research has been done on leaders and leadership in an initial effort to define these terms and in continuing efforts to detail what leaders do and how leadership is enacted (Parker, 2005; Rost, 1991). For most of the twentieth century, leadership studies focused in one discipline and on minute components of leadership rather than its relational aspect (Rost, 1991). In 1978, a paradigm shift began from viewing leadership as a one-dimensional occurrence to viewing it as a multi-dimensional relational phenomena (Burns, 1978). Where leadership had been viewed more as transactional, followers following leaders because of duty and order, leadership now viewed more as transformational, followers following leaders because they agreed with their cause (Bass,
Avolio, Jung, & Berson, 2003). Transactional leadership exists in a well-ordered society; transformational leadership exists in times of distress and is more likely to reflect societal values (Bass, 1985). Transformational leadership “occurs when one or more persons engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality” (Burns, 1978, 20).

As the definition of leadership has evolved over the years, and scholars still struggle to completely conceptualizing it. Leaders in the field over the years have provided important groundwork, and I think, an important foundation and history to the definition of leadership. Burns (1978) used the definition, “Leadership is the reciprocal process of mobilizing by persons with certain motives and values, various economic, political, and other resources, in a context of competition and conflict, in order to realize goals independently or mutually held by both leaders and followers” (p. 425). Three years later, Bass (1981), accepted the following view of leadership in his revised Stogdill’s Handbook of Leadership: “For the purposes of this Handbook, leadership must be broadly defined. Leadership is an interaction between members of a group. Leaders are agents of change, persons whose acts affect other people more than other people’s acts affect them. . . . Leadership occurs when one group member modifies the motivation or competencies of others in the group” (p. 16). Ten years later, Rost (1991) argued that each of these definitions was too long. He settled on the definition: “Leadership is an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes” (p. 102). Rost further explained his definition in four essential elements. First, the relationship is based on influence. Second, the leaders and followers are the people in this relationship. Third, the leaders and followers intend real changes. Fourth, the leaders and followers develop mutual purposes (Appendix A).
Differences in gender and leadership have also been noted (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Bass, Avolio, & Atwater, 1996; Parker, 2005). Although differences are small, significant differences do exist. A meta-analysis review of the literature comparing male to female leadership styles found that “most differences were relatively small, but there was a tendency for women to be more interpersonally oriented, less autocratic, and more participative” (Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2000, 283). Women were rated as more transformational than their male equivalents (Bass et al., 1996).

Avolio, Sosik, Jung, and Berson (2004) define leadership as “a social influence process that can occur at the individual, dyadic, group, or strategic level, where it can be shared within a top management team” (p. 277). The field of leadership will become less model specific and more integrated across subdisciplines and transdisciplinary as little is known about how leadership changes people and organizations (Avolio et al., 2004).

The idea of leadership as a process rather than a one-time event is also becoming more prevalent in the field (Avolio et al., 2004). This process must be inclusive of the followers. No longer are the followers seen as merely empty-vessels (Freire, 2003) to be led blindly by one leader, but as individuals that are a part of and frame the leadership process. In order for the leadership process to be successful, leaders must link the follower’s identity to the identity of the collective group (Salzer-Morling, 1998; Avolio et al., 2004). Griffin further explored this idea of leadership as an emergent process (2002). He discusses leadership as a “participation in systems” and a “social interaction.” Griffin views leadership as an emergent process whereby multiple parties take part in its formation.

Leadership is evolving to not only look at the individual as leader occurring in one event, but also see leadership as a collective process that occurs over time. Burns (1978)
initial work has continued to shape more recent scholars’ articulation about the leadership process (Bass, 1981; Rost, 1991; Avolio et al., 2004) as the discussion over the definition of leadership continues.

**Teacher Leadership**

As the broader definition of leadership is evolving from an individualistic definition to a more participative the educational definition of leadership is also changing. In the past, school leader referred to the principal; now, school leadership has broadened to include teachers as well. Just as principals are being called to be more instructional leaders, teachers are being called to be “high-quality teachers” (NCLB, 2001, p. 41).

In response to the first call issued by the 1983 *A Nation at Risk* report, the Carnegie Task Force was created. One of the main recommendations by the Carnegie Task Force was to create a national certification for teachers founded on high standards and addressing the prompt: *What teachers should know and be able to do*. The Carnegie Task Force report argued that “teachers should become leaders in curriculum, instruction, social redesign, and professional development and that the real power to improve achievement lay with teachers” (Lieberman & Miller, 2004, p. 8). Upon the recommendation of the Carnegie Task Force, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) was created as a national certification process for classroom teachers. The Carnegie Task Force, and ultimately the NBPTS, knew that high quality teaching existed and needed to be nationally recognized and documented. The NBPTS offers five propositions followed by more specific detail to answer the central focus of *What teachers should know and be able to do*.

These five propositions provide a possible profile for teacher leaders (See Appendix B for the complete list). Proposition 1 states, *Teachers are committed to students and their*
learning. Teachers recognize that all students are unique, understand how students learn, treat students equitably, and change their practice accordingly. Proposition 2 says, *Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students.* Teachers know the complexities of their subject, how to present those complexities to students, and provide multiple paths to student understanding. Proposition 3 states, *Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning.* Teachers invoke multiple methods of teaching, promote collaborative learning, and consistently check student progress. Proposition 4 says, *Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience.* Teachers make difficult choices and call on colleagues and research to inform their practice. Proposition 5 states, *Teachers are members of learning communities.* Teachers collaborate with other professionals, parents, and the community (NBPTS, 2006).

In 1991, Pat Wasley was one of the first researchers to use data from teacher interviews and observations when she published a book entitled *Teachers Who Lead.* In interviewing and observing three teachers leaders, Wasley profiled each to allow others to see how teacher leadership was enacted. In these three in-depth case studies, Wasley was shocked at the complexity of the teacher leader role. The roles involved power, authority, decision-making relationships, different kinds of collaboration, and communicating beliefs about teaching and learning. Factors that allowed these teacher leaders to be successful with their colleagues also constrained them.

Related to Wasley’s work, other researchers have surveyed, interviewed and observed teachers in order to better understand teacher leadership. Several common themes have emerged throughout research findings: trust and relationships, political understanding, knowledge of change, and teaching and learning expertise.
Trust and the importance of building relationships is a shared characteristic across the research. Teacher leaders employed a set of skills that involved building both trust and rapport in addition to creating a confidence in others (Miles et al., 1988). Management of interpersonal relationships and communication skills were characteristics of teacher leaders (O’Connor & Boles, 1992).

In addition to trust, teacher leaders also are aware of the political climate in which they work. They understand how power and authority contribute to decisions made in education (O’Connor & Boles, 1992). Teacher leaders recognize that schools operate as organizations that deal with power dynamics (Miles et al., 1988). Teacher leaders use their knowledge of the political climate in making decision and building relationships (Lieberman & Miller, 2004). Connected to trust, Fullan (2002) says teacher leaders embody a sense of “moral purpose” which he defines as a “principled behavior connected to something greater than ourselves that relates to human and social development” (Fullan, 2002).

As change is inevitable, teacher leaders understand its impact on schools and the teaching and learning that take place within them. Research shows that teacher leaders have a clear knowledge of how change happens (Fullan, 1994). They can also deal with change as well as adapt when it occurs (Miles et al., 1988; O’Connor & Boles, 1992). This adaptability prevails in teacher leaders’ characteristics.

Another characteristic of teacher leaders is their expertise of teaching and learning. Teacher leaders not only understand the complexities of teaching and learning (Fullan, 1994), but also influence their peers in teaching and learning (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001). They understand that teaching and learning is a lifelong endeavor. Teacher leaders engage in self-
Researchers agree on characteristics seen in teacher leaders. Many agree on the importance of building trust among colleagues and being a part of a learning community. Also, many mention the importance of understanding how organizations work and the political arena within which schools operate. Several researchers mention the understanding of the change process and the willingness to take risks as key components to teacher leadership.

Mathematics Teacher Leadership

As the literature on teacher leadership has grown over the years, some researchers are beginning to concentrate on more specific forms of teacher leadership. In this section, I narrow the literature review again, looking at literature that specifically addresses teacher leadership in the context of mathematics education.

In 1991, the NCTM’s publication of the Professional Standards for Teaching Mathematics was an attempt, as was the NBPTS, to set a national precedent for how “good mathematics teaching” is enacted to help students, teachers, parents, administrators, teacher educators, and policy makers “see” high quality teaching. With the publication of these standards, the conversation regarding high quality mathematics teaching became possible. This document contains four different sets of standards, all addressing quality mathematics teaching (See Appendix C for the complete list). The first set, Standards for Teaching Mathematics, includes worthwhile mathematical tasks, both the teacher and student role in discourse, and the analysis of teaching and learning. The second set, Standards for the Evaluation of the Teaching of Mathematics, addresses teacher participation in evaluations,
mathematical concepts, mathematical dispositions, and mathematical understanding assessment. The third set, *Standards for the Professional Development of Teachers of Mathematics*, includes experiencing good mathematical teaching, knowing mathematics and school mathematics, and developing as mathematics teachers. Finally, the fourth set, *Standards for the Support and Development of Mathematics Teachers and Teaching*, addresses the responsibilities of policy makers, schools, universities, and professional organizations in improving mathematics education (NCTM, 1991). Similar to the literature on teacher leadership, this body of literature also finds that teacher leaders must build relationships and understand the change process (Miller et al., 2000). More specifically, this body of literature focuses on the teacher leader’s expertise of mathematics and the mathematics classroom (Langbort, 2001; Webb, Heck, & Tate, 1996). In her list of *Who are Teacher Leaders?*, Langbort (2001) lists eighteen attributes of a mathematics teacher leader including being a mentor to other mathematics teachers, a spokesperson for mathematics education, and an active member of the mathematics education community. As active members in the mathematics community, teachers participate in self-identified professional activities and extend further beyond formal professional development activities such as peer observation (Webb et al., 1996).

Being a teacher leader involves understanding the complexities of the change process. Research into professional development of mathematics and science teachers has revealed just how complex the change process can be. The Concerns Based Adoption Model (CBAM) outlines the stages that teacher leaders experience when implementing changes such as new curricula (Hall & Hord, 1987; Loucks-Horsley, 1996). CBAM “applies to anyone experiencing change” and holds that “people considering and experiencing change
evolve in the kinds of questions they ask and in their use of whatever the change is” such as “What is it? How will it affect me?…Is this change working for students? Is there something that will work even better?” (Loucks-Horsley, 1996). With assumptions such as the importance of understanding the change process from the participant’s view and change is a process and not an event, the complexities of mathematics teacher leadership are clear.

The literature on mathematics teacher leadership calls teacher leaders to develop relationships and build a “critical mass for change” (Miller et al., 2000). A crucial factor that both Miller et al. and Fullan (1994) address is the need to build relationships with individuals who hold different opinions or may disagree with one another. Sustainable change does not occur when the critical mass of participants for change all look alike and think alike. Langbort (2001) talks more specifically to the classroom teaching practice of mathematics teacher leaders and also to their responsibility to represent mathematics education to the larger community.

**Study Rationale**

Literature on leadership offers insight into what researchers have found. The literature on mathematics teacher leadership is beginning to grow. A greater deficiency exists in the area of secondary mathematics teacher leadership. Historically, teacher leadership literature has focused more in the elementary school level and less on content specific teachers.

With the 1983 *A Nation at Risk* report came the call to improve mathematics education and “the nearly desperate need for increased support for the teaching of mathematics and science” (NCEE, 1983, 20). The NBPTS and the NCTM addressed those calls with national descriptions of what teacher leaders do. The recent NCLB federal act by President Bush furthers the call for highly qualified teachers.
Much progress has been made in the last thirty years in the potential of teacher leadership to help improve our educational system. However, more research must be done in the field of secondary mathematics teacher leadership to find ways to improve support for mathematics teaching and teachers so that ultimately, the holes in the teaching profession bucket will fill and student mathematic achievement will improve.

**Theoretical Framework: Sociotransformative Constructivism**

This study adds to the needed research in secondary mathematics teacher leadership by listening to teacher definitions, perceptions, and enactments of teacher leadership. The theoretical framework used to view teacher responses is sociotransformative constructivism (Rodriguez, 1998).

Coming originally from the literature on social learning theories and multicultural education, sociotransformative constructivism merges social constructivism with multicultural education. Rodriguez (1998), who identifies himself as both a science and multicultural educator, developed this framework as a way to view pre-service teacher preparation. Since his first publication in 1998, the framework has been more widely used, addressing topics from pre-service teacher training to gender issues.

In later publications, Rodriguez abbreviates sociotransformative constructivism (sTc) in order to emphasize his belief in the transformative nature of the theory. In teacher leadership, transformation of teachers occur through both their own awareness of themselves as leaders and their realization that other view them as leaders. A key component in sTc ultimately, is the transformation of teachers into agents of change. Rodriguez also highlights the idea of agency within this theory, defining agency as a “conscious role that we choose to
play in helping to bring about change for the benefit of all” and the recognition of “teaching and learning as political acts” (Rodriguez & Berryman, 2002, p. 1020).

SSTC has four closely connected elements: the dialogic conversation, authentic activity, metacognition, and reflexivity. The dialogic conversation is more complex than common dialogue and entails a much richer understanding of how each voice in a conversation works with the others to create a “context-relevant meaning” (Rodriguez & Berryman, 2002, p. 1021). The dialogic conversation moves beyond what is being said to a deeper understanding behind the reason a speaker chooses certain words in specific contexts. Trust is a “central construct meaning” (Rodriguez & Berryman, 2002, p. 1021) with trust between individuals coming from different hierarchical and sociocultural locations (Glazier, 2005). In the context on my study, these different hierarchical locations include student, beginning teacher, veteran teacher, grade level chair, principal, and superintendent. Different sociocultural locations are teachers in a smaller, rural county and teachers in a larger, urban county.

An authentic activity is similar to authentic learning in that it is meaningful to a learner long after the “event” of learning ends. Rodriguez refers to Dewey’s description of authenticity in an activity or in learning. Dewey describes an authentic activity as being one that learners can experience, yet not grow numb to future experiences with similar activities. That numbness in the learners essentially robs them from learning anything more from a potentially invaluable activity simply because they cannot get past its redundancy. Therefore, an authentic activity is two fold: one, once the activity is over, the learners continue to reap from what was learned, and two, another variation of the activity will still be cherished by and valuable to the learners. Rodriguez says authentic activity is one way that SSTC differs from other forms of constructivism. Authentic activity is a “hands-on, minds-on
activity” and is a space “in which students explore how the subject under study is socially relevant and connected to their everyday lives” (Rodriguez & Berryman, 2002, p. 1021). Such is necessary in teacher leadership because authentic activities “provide opportunities for students to observe, engage in, and critique the common practices and the discourses typical of the community of practice that they are studying” (Rodriguez & Berryman, 2002, p. 1022), or in the case of teacher leaders, “where they are working.”

*Metacognition* is self-reflection on how one learns. It involves asking questions such as: *What am I meant to be doing? What is the purpose of the task? What control [voice] do I have in how to proceed?* Rodriguez describes the goal of metacognition as being able to “move closer to a sense of consciousness and agency in one’s own ways of learning” (Rodriguez & Berryman, 2002, p. 1022). Teacher leadership, much like teaching, requires constant reflection on goals and direction: thinking about possible actions to pursue and potential relationships to build demand teacher leaders to examine their own thinking.

The fourth element in sTc is *reflexivity*. Rodriguez & Berryman (2002) define reflexivity as the “critical process by which we explore how our social location (ethnic, cultural, socioeconomic status), ideological location (beliefs), and academic location (educational level and skills) affect our perceptions of what is worth learning” and “how we can act on new knowledge [for] social change” (p. 1022). As issues of power and authority are central in teacher leadership, it is imperative to have discussions of “how knowledge is produced and reproduced…who decides what research is worth funding, and whose interests are served by that research” (p. 1022).

sTc provides a framework for my study because it addresses four critical areas of teacher leadership. The dialogic conversation addresses the skills teacher leaders need in
communicating with student, colleagues, administrators, and policy makers in listening carefully to not only what they say, but also why and how they say it. Trust in leadership, which results from the dialogic conversation, is central to colleagues working together to affect change. Authentic activity must be meaningful to teacher leaders as well as the teachers who will be led. As is seen in research on professional development (Loucks-Horsley et al., 2003), teachers grow and practices change much more when activities are closely tied to teacher practice. Extended meaningful professional development, authentic activity, affects change. As teacher leaders need to reflect on their own thinking, visions and goals, metacognition plays a key role in how teachers think about and act on teacher leadership. Finally, sTc provides the fourth element of reflexivity as the ability to see oneself as part of a larger cultural context. Teacher leader perceptions of how teacher leadership is enacted provide a product of where they see themselves in the social, ideological, and academic locations.

Sociotransformative constructivism provided an appropriate theoretical framework for this study because its origins began with looking at preservice teacher preparation. As teacher leaders go through another transition, preservice teacher leader preparation, sTc provides four elements from which to examine teacher definitions, perceptions and enactments. As an ultimate goal of teacher leadership is to provide avenues for teachers to remain in the profession and improve mathematics teaching and learning, sTc offers a way to organize teachers’ thinking about teacher leadership.
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Following the shift in educational research, this study invokes the use of qualitative research methodologies (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Qualitative research focuses on the participant constructions of reality and offers their insight into the phenomena being studied (Teppo, 1997). Descriptive research uses qualitative procedures and is useful in building theory. Descriptive research cannot prove or validate but provides a clearer picture of the phenomena being studied (Carnine & Gersten, 2000). My study focuses on exploring the definitions, perceptions, and enactments of teacher leadership from the teacher’s perspective; therefore, qualitative research methodologies are appropriate for data collection. Through a phenomenological approach, I predominantly use interviews in addition to focus groups, a teacher leader narrative, and a pre- and post-survey to gather data. The following section expands the phenomenological approach, followed by sections that speak more specifically about each data collection method.

Phenomenology

Qualitative research encompasses several different methodological frameworks. One framework is phenomenology. With origins in philosophy, phenomenology concentrates on participant experiences and perceptions of the studied phenomena (Glesne, 1999; Johnson & Christensen, 2000). In the mathematics teacher leadership literature, more phenomenological studies are requested where scholars not only listen to teacher experiences but also involve teachers in the research (Lawrenz, 2001). With the recent trend of qualitative mathematics educational research followed by the call to use more phenomenological studies in teacher
leader research, my study uses a phenomenological framework. My personal interest in teacher leadership further supports the use of this framework in my study. Ertmer comments that

the researcher often has personal experience with the phenomenon and aims to heighten his or her own awareness of the experience while simultaneously examining the experience through the eyes of the participants…. Simply put, phenomenologist hope to gain a better understanding of the meaning an experience has for others as well as for themselves. (1997, p. 161)

**Participants**

The thirteen teachers invited to participate in this study are recent graduates of a masters program at a large southeastern university. The masters program designed for teachers who have at least three years of teaching experience was integrated with their teaching practice. Twelve of the thirteen teachers agreed to participate. All twelve teachers remained full-time secondary mathematics teachers throughout the program and ten are still currently teaching full-time. One participant (Anna) became a testing consultant in the neighboring city in the middle of the data collection year. Feeling her opinion was still valuable, I decided to keep her in the study. I worked with these teachers for two and a half years as their masters program teaching assistant. The teachers work in four different counties ranging from urban to rural and range in years of experience from four to thirty-five. Table 1 provides more demographic information about each participant.
Table 1. Teacher Participant Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher (Pseudonyms are use to protect anonymity)</th>
<th>Grade(s) Taught (the year of the study)</th>
<th>Years of Teaching Experience (not including the year of the study)</th>
<th>Bachelor’s Degree/ Master’s Degree (Prior to M.Ed. program)</th>
<th>Honors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Hannah                                           | 9-12                                   | 35                                                                | BA, Mathematics                                           | • Local Public Education Network Teacher Initiative Grant Recipient (1997)  
• University Fellow in Mathematics (1992-1997)  
• County Teacher of the Year (1991) |
| Ciara                                            | 6-8                                    | 22                                                                | BS, Elementary Education with a Mathematics concentration   | • Professional Educators Association State Development Scholarship Recipient (2003)  
• School Teacher of the Year (1999)  
• County Academically and Intellectually Gifted Teacher of the Year (1999) |
| Miles                                            | 9-12                                   | 8                                                                 | BS, Secondary Mathematics Education                       | • County First Year Teacher of the Year  
• Awarded full scholarship for college in return for four years of teaching service to state |
| Anna                                             | 9-12                                   | 4.5                                                               | BA, Mathematics                                           | • National Board Certification, Adolescent/Young Adult Mathematics (2003)  
• University Outstanding Senior Award in Mathematics Education (1998)  
• Awarded full scholarship for college in return for four years of teaching service to state |
| Sally                                            | 9-12                                   | 8                                                                 | BS, Secondary Mathematics Education                       | • County First Year Teacher of the Year  
• Awarded full scholarship for college in return for four years of teaching service to state |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Awards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Jim  | 9-12  | 10  | BA, Secondary Mathematics Education | - County First Year Teacher of the Year (1996)  
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology Teacher Recognition Award (2003, 2004)  
- Presidential Scholar’s Teacher Recognition Award (2004)  
- Edith May Sliffe Award for Mathematics Teaching (2004)  
- School Teacher of the Year (2006) |
| Mitch| 9-12  | 10  | BS, Secondary Mathematics Education | - National Board Certification, Early/Young Adolescence Mathematics (2002)  
- State Finalist for Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics Teaching (2002)  
- School Mathematics Department Teacher of the Year (1997)  
- School Teacher of the Year (1996)  
| Bev  | 9-12  | 13  | BA, Mathematics | - National Board Certification, Adolescent/Young Adult Mathematics (2003) |
| Debra| 9-12  | 14  | BS, Major not listed | - National Board Certification, Adolescent/Young Adult Mathematics (2003) |
| Dinah| 9-12  | 20  | BS, Mathematics | - School Teacher of the Year (2005) |
| Bess | 9-12  | 12  | BS, Mathematics | - School Teacher of the Year (2005) |
| Oliver| 9-12 | 27 | BA, Chemical Engineering MA, Education | - School Teacher of the Year (2005) |
Masters of Education Program

The two-and-a-half year Masters of Education (M.Ed.) program is tailored for full-time teachers. The program is both a distance education program, where classes meet away from the university campus in area schools, as well as a hybrid program, where courses meet face-to-face and online. The M.Ed. program had several content specialty areas including K-12 literacy and 6-12 social studies running concurrently with the 8-12 Mathematics. A total of 56 students were enrolled from all three specialty areas. The program has a core set of courses that all students take regardless of specialty area. In addition, each specialty area students take content specific courses. The program has three guiding foci: teacher as content specialist, teacher as researcher, and teacher as change agent. These three foci are woven throughout the program courses with the first course entitled Reinventing Teaching and the final course entitled Teacher Leadership and Democratic Schooling.

My role in the M.Ed. program began in the fall of 2003, after the students had completed the first summer session. For the remaining two years of the program, I served as the cohort teaching assistant including a variety of roles including co-teaching courses, supporting the cohort members in administrative needs such as registering, providing feedback on course assignments, and scoring final portfolios. Starting in the fall of 2003, I served as the teaching assistant for every course taken by the students.

Procedures

Instruments and Data Collection

The twelve teachers participated in five areas of data collection: (1) teacher leader narrative, (2) a pre- and post- teacher leader survey, (3) three individual interviews, (4) two focus groups, and (5) an open online discussion forum. Data collection took place over a
year, beginning in the last summer course the teachers took before graduation and continuing throughout the academic year immediately following their graduation. The study duration of one year was chosen in order to be able to follow the participants through one complete year, their first year after graduating from the M.Ed. program, to explore their thinking of teacher leadership throughout the entire year. Each of the five areas of data collection is discussed in more detail below.

**Teacher Leader Narrative.** In the last summer course taken by the students entitled *Teacher Leadership and Democratic Schooling*, each teacher wrote a response to the prompt: Write a story that comes to mind when you hear the term "teacher leadership." This assignment was given to all 56 students enrolled in the course (the total number of teachers in the M.Ed. program across content areas), which included these twelve study participants. The students wrote a two-to-three page response and posted it in the online course platform prior to the first day of class. The purpose of this first point of data collection is to explore how the teachers, prior to the course, conceptualize and describe teacher leadership.

**Teacher Leader Survey.** In the middle of the *Teacher Leadership* summer course, all 56 teachers, including the twelve in this study, completed a survey about teacher leadership (Center for Teacher Leadership, 2003). The survey (Appendix D) was originally used in a study conducted by the Center for Teacher Leadership (CTL) at Virginia Commonwealth University, *Teacher Leaders: Self-Perceptions and Training Needs*. The Center administered the survey to Teachers of the Year, National Board Certified Teachers, Milken Educators, and other recognized teachers through established teacher leader listservs and networks. One hundred and seventy-nine teachers of the 300 distributed surveys were returned.
The same teacher leader survey was administered to the twelve teachers at the end of the study. The survey was given to each participant at the close of the last interview. The pre-survey’s purpose was to gather data on teacher demographics, areas of teacher leadership in which they already participate, challenges they see to teacher leadership, and their current definitions of teacher leadership. The purpose of the post-survey administration was to gather data on what new teacher leader roles, if any, they participated throughout the year of study and to allow them a final opportunity to articulate their teacher leadership definition.

**Individual Interviews.** The primary data collection method for phenomenological studies is interviewing (Johnson & Christensen, 2000), which allows the participant to articulate their descriptions and understandings of teacher leadership (Glesne, 1999). As teacher leadership is the phenomena being studied, interviews allow teachers to make their consciousnesses transparent and their experiences open (Johnson & Christensen, 2000).

During the academic year, three individual interviews were conducted. One in the beginning of the year (September), one in the middle of the year (January), and one at the end of the year (May). The first interview asked general questions about teaching backgrounds and moved to more specific questions about teacher leadership. Data gathered from each interview was used to develop subsequent interview protocols with the intention of growing more specific and inquiring in more detail about what the teachers specified about teacher leadership. The purpose of each interview, scheduled at the beginning, middle, and end of the year, was to monitor how teachers are thinking about teacher leadership, if those views change, and how their enactment occurred throughout the year. All three interview protocols can be found in Appendices E, G, and I, respectively.
Focus Groups. As the cohort structure is a key conceptual foundation to the M.Ed. program, two focus groups were held to allow participants to reconnect with classmates in a discussion around teacher leadership. Initially I had planned to hold the focus groups on line for three reasons. First, as a hybrid program that used an online discussion forum often, I felt the students would be comfortable and accustomed to dialoguing on line. Second, students who spoke less often in face-to-face meetings were more articulate in on-line meetings. Third, with participants in a various locations and busy schedules, I felt that an online discussion forum would allow the teachers to participate more flexibly and reduce commute time to focus group locations.

At the end of each first interview, I asked the teachers whether they would like to participate in a online or face-to-face discussion group. Overwhelmingly (only one participant preferred online), the teachers said they wanted to meet face-to-face. First, they wanted to reconnect with their classmates. Second, they felt that one hour dedicated to the focus group, although they had to drive, would be better than finding time on their own to visit an online discussion forum. Third, they said that it is much easier to “talk than to type.” Fourth, they were “discussion-boarded-out.” Finally, they would be more talkative “feeding off each other” in a face-to-face meeting.

Each of the two focus groups was held in between the series of three interviews, one in November and one in March. Two focus groups met to make the data collection and analysis process more manageable. The focus group participants were assigned geographically so as to minimize driving for the participants. Therefore, one group had seven participants and the other group had four participants. All but one participant were able to attend the first focus group. Six participants attended the second focus group, resulting in three participants
present at each focus group meeting. Both focus group protocols can be found in Appendices F and H, respectively.

**Open Online Discussion.** In response to the one participant who preferred an online discussion focus group and in support of the literature around online discussion forums (Bourdillon & Burgess, 1998; Caskey, Burt, & Bullock, 2001), I decided to establish an open online discussion forum. The purpose of this discussion forum was to offer an open (twenty-four hour) platform for extended discussion if the teachers wanted to talk more about topics that surfaced in their interviews or in the focus groups. Research has shown that discussion forums allow for extended discussions because they are not bound by time or location (Bourdillon & Burgess, 1998; Caskey et al., 2001). Participants never accessed the open discussion forum but knew space existed to reflect if ever comments emerged outside of interview or focus group meetings. Because no one utilized the forum, it was not used as a point of data collection in the study. Table 2 below presents the data collection timeline.

**Table 2. Data Collection Timeline**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Data collection method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>Teacher Leader Narrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>Teacher Leader Survey (Pre)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>Interview #1 (Twelve teachers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>Focus group #1 (Two groups of six and four)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>Interview #3 (Twelve teachers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>Focus group #2 (Two groups of three each)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>Interview #3 (Twelve teachers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>Teacher Leader Survey (Post)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Open online discussion forum for any lingering thoughts throughout the year.
Data Analysis

Analysis in a qualitative study occurs throughout the data collection process. As data is collected in the form of field notes and transcriptions, the researcher continues to learn more about what is being studied (Noblit, 2005). If data analysis does not begin until after data collection is complete, the researcher has begun too late (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996). In this study, I analyzed the data in seven phases, each described below. Table 3 presents each phase separately as well.

Phase 1. The teacher leader narrative was coded and the survey results were tallied and recorded on one document. The teacher leader narrative was read and codes were identified and recorded on a Code List. Initially, the sTc framework was not considered in the coding. All codes were recorded regardless of their potential addressing of the sTc framework. The initial narratives and surveys were reviewed to learn more about how the teachers were thinking about teacher leadership and helped to create the interview guide for interview 1 (Appendix F). Interview 1 served the purpose of an introduction and gathering initial impressions and thoughts about teacher leadership. The interview guide begins by asking teachers about themselves more generally and then moves into more specific questions about themselves as teachers and as teacher leaders.

Phase 2. Interview 1 was conducted with all 12 participants. All interviews were recorded and transcribed. Field notes were also taken. Member-checking (Glesne, 1999) was employed by emailing each teacher his or her transcript along with the following email:

Thank you so much for your time and thoughts during our interview. I'm attaching the transcript to make sure it sounds correct to you. Please feel free to add more or change things to clarify or make them clearer. I used some shorthand and abbreviations throughout (such as because = because, dept = department). Please let me know if you run across something that doesn't make sense.
Each transcript was coded and compared to codes from the narratives (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982). If the codes were repeated I placed a tally mark beside each initial code. If a new code appeared, I listed it under the New Code List for Phase 2. From that interview, the narrative, the pre-survey, and the literature, focus group questions were generated for the first focus group (Appendix F). For example, participants talked about teacher leadership as being both quiet and also more about activism, so the following question was asked in the first focus group: *Some see teacher leadership as quiet and focusing on positive while others see it more of an activist role…. how do you see it and why?* Also, in the narrative and first interview, participants discussed other people as teacher leaders. Therefore, this question was included: *I found it interesting that so many of you mentioned other people in your narrative as well as in your interview. Why do you think that is? How do other people (colleagues and administrators) see you as a teacher leader?* Two phrases appeared to be common and descriptive across all teachers so I wanted to member check them with the participants in the first focus group: *visible but not noisy* and *instigator creating conflict*. I was beginning to see a continuum develop and checked that initial analysis with the participants.

**Phase 3.** For the first focus group, two groups were conducted. Eleven participants attended: six in one focus group and four in the other focus group. One participant who had moved out-of-state joined the focus group via speaker-phone. Each focus group was recorded and transcribed. Field notes were taken. Member checking occurred by asking participants about initial codes and themes I was hearing across participants. For example, we discussed the idea of a continuum. Each transcript was coded and codes were compared with codes from the previous three data collection points. If the codes were repeated I placed
a tally mark beside each initial code. If a new code appeared, I listed it under the New Code List for Phase 3. Those three previous data collection points and this focus group created the protocol for Interview 2. Some questions from the first focus group were unable to be asked because of time so were included in Interview 2.

**Phase 4.** Interview 2 was conducted with each of the 12 participants. Member checking occurred by asking participants about initial codes and themes I was hearing across participants. All interviews were recorded and transcribed. Field notes were also taken. Member-checking (Glesne, 1999) was also employed by emailing teachers their transcript along with the following email:

> Thank you so much for your time and thoughts during our second interview. I’m attaching the transcript from our interview to make sure it sounds correct to you. Please feel free to add more or change things to clarify or make them clearer. I used some shorthand and abbreviations throughout (such as because = because, dept = department, TL = teacher leader/leadership). There may be other typos as well. Please let me know if you run across something that doesn't make sense.

Each transcript was coded and compared to codes from the narratives, first interview, and first focus group (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982). If the codes were repeated I placed a tally mark beside each initial code. If a new code appeared, I listed it under the New Code List for Phase 4. During Phase 4, I began to include the sTc framework in the code analysis. I used the four sTc elements as organizers for the identified codes. I printed all transcripts collected to date and physically cut out each quote that addressed each code. According to participant, I placed each quote under one of the four elements: the dialogic conversation, authentic activity, metacognition, or reflexivity. All quotes were numbered and placed on a master classification matrix. The total number of quotes for each participant were tallied and listed under the teacher name and sTc element. An excerpt is shown in Figure 1. Note that the teacher classifications in this phase are different from those in the final data analysis phase.
These initial classifications were based on preliminary findings and changed once all data was considered at the end of the study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Continuum Category</th>
<th>Visible but not Noisy</th>
<th>Visible with Noise</th>
<th>Instigator with Conflict</th>
<th>Instigator creating Conflict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Bev, Miles, Hannah, Debra, Ciara</td>
<td>Anna, Sarah, Oliver, Dinah, Bess, Mitch, Jim</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>sTc Element</th>
<th>Authentic Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quote Frequency</td>
<td>4 3 4 5 5 3 6 4 5 5 5 5 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>sTc Element</th>
<th>Dialogic Conversation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quote Frequency</td>
<td>2 2 3 0 3 3 1 4 4 2 3 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 1. Matrix 1 by sTc Elements**

From both interviews, the narrative, and the literature, focus group questions were generated for the second focus group (Appendix H). For example, participants had previously talked about teaching and teacher leadership. Therefore, the following question was included in Focus Group #2 Protocol: *A number of you have talked about teaching and teaching responsibilities as related to teacher leadership. What, if any, teaching or teaching responsibilities do you consider to be teacher leadership? For example, is teaching a part of teacher leadership or just part of your job? Could answers be different depending on the person or situation?* At this point the idea of a teacher leadership continuum was emerging. One person in Interview 2 had suggested a circle as a better representation than a continuum. In an effort to triangulate what was being heard as well as check with participants about what they were saying, the following question was asked: *In continuing to develop the idea of a continuum as a way to represent the range of teacher leadership perceptions among the cohort, it seems I am hearing that people see it as more than one dimensional and also*
dependent on the situation. Or if continuum is not the best way to represent the perception range. One person suggested a circle and the degrees of teacher leadership. What do you think?

**Phase 5.** The second focus group was held. Two focus group meetings were held. A total of six participants were able to attend: three in each group. Member checking occurred by participants about current codes and emerging themes I was hearing across participants. We continued to discuss the developing continuum. Each focus group was recorded and transcribed. Field notes were taken at each meeting. The focus groups were coded and codes were compared to the previous data collection points. If the codes were repeated I placed a tally mark beside each initial code. If a new code appeared, I listed it under the New Code List for Phase 5. From this focus group and all previous data collection points, Interview 3 Protocol (Appendix I) was created.

**Phase 6.** Interview 3 served three purposes. The first purpose was to address any lingering questions from previous data collection points. The second purpose was to talk specifically with each participant about one teacher leader role or activity they discussed in previous interviews. Questions were created based on the four elements of the sTc. The third purpose was to allow time for participants to reflect on the year and to conduct a member-check. Participants were given their teacher leader narratives and a one-page teacher profile on themselves written based on the previous data collection point and asked to offer any reactions now, a year later. In preparation for the third and final interview, participants were emailed both copies of their first and second interview transcripts again with the following email:

*I'm attaching the transcripts from our last two interviews. If you would please read those before our final interview, that will refresh your memory as to what we've
talked about before. I'll probably start our last interview asking you for any reactions you had to re-reading your previous words. Thank you so much for all the time and thoughts you have given to me thus far. I am thoroughly enjoying our conversations!

Each interview was recorded and transcribed. Field notes were taken. Each interview transcript was emailed to each participant with the following email:

Thank you so much for your time and thoughts during our last interview. I'm attaching the notes (these will sound much more choppy than the transcripts because I was typing as you spoke but did not record) from our interview to make sure they sound correct to you. Please feel free to add more or change things to clarify or make them clearer. I used some shorthand and abbreviations throughout (such as because = because, dept = department, TL = teacher leader/leadership). There may be other typos as well. Please let me know if you run across something that doesn't make sense.

All interviews were coded and compared with codes from the previous data collection points. If the codes were repeated I placed a tally mark beside each initial code. If a new code appeared, I listed it under the New Code List for Phase 6.

Phase 7. Finally, each participant was given the post-teacher leader survey (the same survey they had filled out before) to complete during the last part of our final interview. Survey results were tallied and recorded on one document. Once all data was coded, the codes were placed on a matrix. Based on the research question, each code was categorized as addressing the definition, perception, or enactment of teacher leadership. Based on the sTc elements, each code was categorized as the dialogic conversation, authentic activity, metacognition, or reflexivity.

The first matrix listed all 12 participants along the vertical axis subdivided by Teacher Leader Narrative, Pre-survey, Interview 1, and Focus Group 1, Interview 2, Focus Group 2, Interview 3, and Post-survey. Each code was assigned a numerical value to
conserve space on the matrix document and then the each code was tallied by person and by
data collection point. Figure 2 provides a sample excerpt.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Self/Others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>See self as TL; Others see me as TL or I see others as TL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Relationships/ Caring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sharing/helping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TL as sharing, helping others, mentoring; TL needs to be in group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bev</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narat</td>
<td>X1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>X1</td>
<td>X1</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FG 1</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int 2</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FG 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int 3</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narat</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FG 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FG 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int 3</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FIGURE 2. Matrix 2 by Codes**

The next matrix utilized the sTc framework as both an organizational and analysis tool. The numbering system developed in Matrix 2 was used to compare code across the larger emerging continuum groups. Matrix 3 began to organize similarities among teachers within the same categories. At this point, teachers were solidifying their clustering themselves into categories. The horizontal axis of the revised matrix included these headings subdivided by the teachers who clustered themselves into that heading. The vertical axis was
divided by the research question: definition, perception, and enactment. Each part of the research question was again subdivided into the sTc addressed elements. A sample excerpt is shown below in Figure 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Perception</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dialogic Conversation</td>
<td>Metacognition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VNN</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bev</td>
<td>I2</td>
<td>N, I1, I2, I3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miles</td>
<td>FG1:2</td>
<td>I2, I3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanna</td>
<td>I1, FG1</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debra</td>
<td>N, I2:2</td>
<td>I2, I3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ciara</td>
<td>I2</td>
<td>FG1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 3. Matrix 3 by Research Question**

The last matrix, Matrix 4, included the code descriptors and tallied the number of times that code appeared. The reason for Matrix 4 was to allow me to look across codes and across teachers to develop what would eventually be named the Teacher Leader Continuum Rubric. A sample excerpt is included below in Figure XX. (Note: DC = the dialogic conversation, M = metacognition)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Perception</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DC</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bev</td>
<td>longevity</td>
<td>“the kids”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ciara</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hannah</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miles</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oliver</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FIGURE 4. Matrix 4 by Code Descriptors**
The vignettes of each teacher were reread several times looking for consistencies among the teachers, their definitions, perceptions, and enactments, and the four sTc elements. From our yearlong conversation and data analysis, a teacher leader continuum emerged and will be discussed in further detail later.

### Table 3. Seven Phases of Data Collection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Analysis Phase</th>
<th>Data Being Analyzed</th>
<th>Data Analysis Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Teacher Leader Narrative</td>
<td>Read each story, highlighting key points made by each author. Tally the responses to the survey and read the free responses. Used both the teacher leadership story and survey results to inform development of the first interview protocol.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher Leader Survey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Interview #1 (and previous data collection points)</td>
<td>Recorded each interview in addition to taking field notes. Listened to and transcribed each interview. Read each transcript looking for points that needed clarification for next interview, common themes that emerge across interviews (Miles &amp; Huberman, 1994), and for development of the first focus group protocol. Sent each transcript by email to participant to allow for member-checking (Glesne, 1999) asking them to clarify any points and add or edit their responses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Focus Group #1 (and previous data collection points)</td>
<td>Recorded each focus group in addition to taking field notes. Listened to and transcribed each focus group. Employed the constant-comparative method (Bogdan &amp; Biklen, 1982) in examining all four previous data collection points (this focus group transcript, the first interview transcripts, the teacher leader survey, and the teacher leadership story). Looked for themes that continue to emerge across data points. Used preliminary findings to develop second interview protocol.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Interview #2</td>
<td>Recorded each interview in addition to taking field notes. Listened to and transcribed each interview. Read each transcript looking for points that needed clarification for next interview, common themes that emerge across interviews, and for development of the second focus group protocol. Sent each transcript by email to participant to allow for member-checking asking them to clarify any points and add or edit their responses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Focus Group #2</td>
<td>Recorded each focus group in addition to taking field notes. Listened to and transcribed each focus group. Employed the constant-comparative method in examining transcripts in comparison with all five previous data collection points. Looked for themes that continue to emerge across data points. Continued to refine codes. Used these themes to develop the third and final interview protocol.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Interview #3</td>
<td>The purpose of this interview was to clarify what I am finding. The interview protocol will consist of preliminary findings that I wish to share with the participants in the form of a teacher leader profile. Each interview was recorded in addition to my taking field notes. I listened to and transcribed each interview, sending transcripts to participants to employ member-checking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Final Teacher Leader Survey</td>
<td>At the close of our last interview, each participant was given the post-teacher leader survey. The final phase of data analysis occurred by reviewing all eight data collection points. At this point, I reviewed the teacher leadership literature to compare what I was finding with what others have found. I synthesized my findings into a written report that was distributed to all participants to allow for one more member-check. The final analysis was written once all participants have had a chance to respond.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

The year began with all teachers offering similar definitions on teacher leadership. Our year ended at a much different level. Our conversations around teacher leadership had diversified and broadened the definitions. During the year, we found as the definitions broadened, perceptions and enactments emerged along a continuum. This chapter describes the teachers and their views on teacher leadership. I begin with the teachers’ original definitions, followed by a discussion of how the continuum rubric helped in framing the data along the continuum. I then present the continuum rubric followed by discussion of each position along the teacher leader continuum, the characteristics of that position, and vignettes of each teacher who fell into that position. I end with a concluding section.

Teacher Leadership Definitions

Teachers began the year with similar definitions of teacher leadership. As scholars themselves continue to debate over one definition for teacher leadership, the similarity in the teacher definitions was initially surprising (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Murphy, 2005). While some scholars say all teachers are leaders (Barth, 1999), others say teacher leaders are excellent teachers who influence others (Dozier, 2004). With further thought, I believe these similarities resulted from their common experience in the M.Ed. program as well as their writing the definitions while taking the capstone course for the program. Based on the teachers’ pre- and post-surveys, ten teachers began the year with a clear definition and only seven ended the year with a clear definition.
Findings from both the narratives and pre-surveys showed that participants consider teacher leaders to be teachers who stepped to the “forefront” and “advocated” for both students and teachers. As sTe’s authentic activity discusses the importance of meaningful work, the participants see teacher leaders as “influencing and challenging others” through “collaboration.” Teacher leadership “impacts the educational setting at the classroom, school, district, state, or national level” (Hannah, Pre-Survey, July 11, 2005).

Two teachers began the year with these representative definitions. “A teacher leader is someone who advocates for the rights and working/learning conditions of teachers and students. This can be done at the classroom, school, district, state, or national level” (Jim, Pre-survey, July 11, 2005). “A teacher leader is one who through study and research, steps to the forefront and collaborates with others of the educational community to create an educational environment that always stresses policy or methods for the betterment of all students” (Dinah, Pre-survey, July 11, 2005). Teacher definitions spoke of teachers who influenced the educational community at different levels for teachers and students.

As the year came to a close, teacher definitions of teacher leadership had broadened. Some felt they gained a more clear idea of teacher leadership while others felt “confused” and “perplexed by [its] vastness.” At our second focus group meeting, teachers had just left a troubling faculty meeting. Much of the focus group conversation returned to faculty meeting concerns and their relationship to teacher leadership. As the focus group ended, Dinah made a pivotal comment. “I’m actually more confused when I think about teacher leadership than when I got started” (Dinah, Focus Group 2, March 27, 2006). Upon further exploration, Dinah’s confusion came from her realization that teacher leadership was more complex than she first thought.
The main thing is teacher leadership is never an absolute. I think that was what I was trying to tell you. It changes, the definition of it changes as climate changes. Because my idea of teacher leadership last semester is different from teacher leadership. I’m more confused about it this semester and it is because of the climate I am operating under now. (Dinah, Focus Group 2, March 27, 2006)

Dinah further explained the complexity of teacher leadership. After a year spent thinking and talking about teacher leadership, Dinah felt that we were just “getting to the meaty part of it.”

I think the more I think about this stuff, the more reflective I am about it. That’s why I think it is harder to talk about now because I think I am getting to the meaty part of it; we’re deeper into the project now. And if you think about it, it’s not as easy as it appears to be on the surface. It’s a big topic and the more I think about, the more I understand about that. I am evolving as we go along. (Interview 3, May 18, 2006)

With her definition, Dinah now, along with Anna, included non-teachers in her definition.

A teacher leader can take many forms, from administrators, superintendents, Boards of Education (because they lead teachers in policy that directs the way teachers deal with students), to classroom teachers who lead colleagues and students in achieving educational success. (Dinah, Post-survey, May 18, 2006)

The other ten participants, although some entertained the idea of a teacher leader not being a teacher, remained steadfast in their definitions that teacher leaders were teachers. Debra became more aware of teacher leadership throughout the year.

Actually I think I have thought about it more. I think I just never thought about it much before until we really started talking about the definition and how we perceive teacher leadership. I think before I thought it’s something you do to be helpful, it’s part of the job, but now I think I tend to analyze it more. If I see anything going on around the school I think I’ll stop and say, ah, an example of teacher leadership. (Debra, Interview 2, January 25, 2006)

She ended the year feeling that she was clearer about teacher leadership because she was more aware of it, but, like Dinah, agrees teacher leadership is not an absolute.

Other than I think I am more aware of teacher leadership. It was there before, not only in me but other teachers, but I didn’t notice it. I didn’t give it a name but now I feel like I am more aware of it… It’s like what I said earlier, I never even thought about teacher leadership until last year and I think, like Dinah, my definition is an ongoing, changing process. (Debra, Interview 3 & Focus Group 2, May 22, 2006 & March 27, 2006)
Like Dinah, Jim was feeling the “daunting task” of teacher leadership.

I think it is the daunting task of trying to do something is more evident now than it was. That is probably the amount. You are seeing, first hand, if you really get behind something, the amount of work and time and energy it takes to implement the smallest of change in enormous so if it is going to take that long to do this, how long is it going to take us to get better pay, how many arms do you need to twist…. I think it’s just that, depending on what you want to do, it is a huge investment of time and energy, it has to be something you are passionate about if you are going to pick something to get behind, or you’re not going to see that it is worthwhile, probably simplest. (Jim, Interview 3, May 23, 2006)

As the year ended, teachers realized the “vastness” and the time commitment of teacher leadership. They had completed their first year of teaching following their graduation from the M.Ed. program. The teachers were in the classroom without M.Ed. regularly class meetings. The reality of teacher leadership had surfaced.

**SocioTranformative Constructivism: Guiding Framework**

Whereas teacher definitions of teacher leadership began at similar places, their perceptions and enactments of teacher leadership proved to be more divergent. The sTc theoretical framework provided both a research tool to analyze the data as well as a presentation tool to organize the data. Teacher views on perception tended to fall into the dialogic conversation and the metacognition. The dialogic conversation centers on conversation, the deeper meanings within that conversation, and the need for trust in relationships. The teachers spoke of longevity and trust as characteristics in their teacher leader perceptions. Eight teachers spoke of both longevity (how long they had been teaching and how long they had been teaching at their current school) and trust as factors in their teacher leader perceptions. Some teachers were veteran teachers starting at new schools (who tended to fall further to the left of the continuum) while others were veteran teachers who had taught at their school for years (falling further to the right). Within metacognition,
teacher perceptions emerged around their sense of agency and responsibility. Teachers reflected on their own thinking and learning about teacher leadership asking questions such as *What am I meant to be doing?* and *What control or voice do I have in how to proceed?* In sTc, the goal of metacognition is to gain a deeper sense of agency and consciousness in one’s own learning (Rodriguez & Berryman, 2002). Teacher views on enactment tended to fall into reflexivity and authentic activity. Thinking about their own social, ideological, and academic locations as related to teacher leadership brought the teachers into thinking about reflexivity along the continuum. Teachers spoke of both recognizing their own power and influence as teachers. It should be no surprise that sTc’s authentic activity element addressed the teacher enactments of teacher leadership; authentic activity deals with meaningful events, much like enactments are events. An authentic activity is being one that learners can experience, yet not grow numb to future experiences with similar activities. Within authentic activity, teacher enactments address both work and scope. Hannah initially noted the varying enactments of teacher leadership along this continuum of teacher leaders working curricularly as well as institutionally.

The teacher leadership that I see basically, on regional or statewide level, would be things I see as advocacy pieces, through the association. But then I take that back because I know that teachers are dealing with the curriculum issues and dealing with curriculum changes in the state. Teachers are taking the initiative and teachers are responding to the call so it is not just a curriculum, or the set up given to us.

(Interview 3, May 25, 2006)

Looking through the sTc lens, enactments and perceptions were viewed through these four elements. The next two sections discuss these perceptions and enactments and their emergence into a continuum.
Perceptions & Enactments

Teacher definitions of teacher leadership began at similar places; however, perceptions and enactments proved more complicated. Perception means how do participants think more deeply about teacher leadership: how do they see themselves and others as teacher leaders? where do they find conflicts in their thinking? As one participant said, “Perception is in the eye of the beholder” (Mitch, Interview 2, January 23, 2006). Perception is the bridge between definition and enactment; perception is the operationalization of a definition resulting in the enactment. Participants explained the difference between a definition and a perception.

I think definition is the big idea and the perception is the branches. If you think about a web, I think the definition is the central idea and the perception is the branches that come out from the central idea. I think the definition is more absolute where I think the perception is more relative. What works in one situation may not work in another. It depends on a lot of different factors. (Dinah, Focus Group 1, November 22, 2006)

Enactments, like perceptions, were also more divergent among teachers than definitions. Enactment means what teachers do that they or others see as teacher leadership. Initially, I assumed teachers would speak mainly of teacher leader roles they held. Teachers did speak of roles (Table 4), but enactments were broader, and also fell along the teacher leadership continuum.
TABLE 4. Pre- and Post-Survey Results for Areas of Teacher Leadership.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas in which teacher currently plays a role</th>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre-Survey Results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Recruitment</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Preparation</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum Development</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring New Teachers</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coaching Experienced Teachers</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff/Professional Development</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action Research</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Driven Instruction</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Policy and Issues</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outreach to Parents and Communities</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade Level Chair/Department Chair/Team Leader</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advisor to Policymaking Group</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The teachers’ words created the continuum positions and the sTc framework provided the lens with which to view the teachers’ words resulting in a rubric. It is important to remember that these teachers toggled between describing teacher leaders in general and describing themselves as teacher leaders. Based on the data, I made the final decision as to where to place each teacher.

**Continuum & Rubric**

At the culmination of the pre-survey and first interviews, I was beginning to see the similarity in the definitions of teacher leadership, but a difference in the way the teachers perceived these definitions from Dinah who described teacher leadership as “visible but not noisy” to Debra who saw teacher leadership as a possible “both/and” rather than an “either/or” (Griffin, 2002).

I’ve been thinking about that [teacher leadership]. One side of me, when I was listening to our instructors encouraging us to be teacher leaders, I think in the back of my mind, they are encouraging us to be instigators and I think about trouble-maker and I kind of wish it wasn’t like that because in my own view, I’d like to think of teacher leaders as somebody who is helpful to other teachers and students, somebody who attempts to do good things like implement new programs that are beneficial. So I guess one side of me
sees teacher leaders as someone who complains and wants to change everything about the
school and then somebody else on the other hand, teacher leader being somebody who
wants to improve and do good for the school. So probably a true teacher leader is
somebody who is in between so you would have the gumption to stand up and complain
when things are not right but not just always be a complainer. (Debra, Interview 1,
September 30, 2005)

Based on these perceptions, in the first focus group and second interview, I proposed
this idea of a continuum to hear their ideas and critiques. The continuum proved to be a
central theme throughout the year that was constantly revisited and refined. It is imperative
to make three key points before I proceed. First, the continuum is not value-laden; neither the
teachers nor I believe that one position along the continuum is better than another. Hannah
emphasized the need for all teacher leaders and Dinah related teacher leadership to a Biblical
example.

And you have to have people working on both ends of that spectrum and all the way
through to get changes made. You’ve got to have people on the inside, you know, and
you have to have people on the inside working and people on the outside who are
agitating. You’ve got to have both groups of people and everybody in between to get the
changes made or to get the things done as far as our profession is concerned. (Hannah,
Interview 2, January 30, 2006)

This is kind of a Biblical example too, it works like a body. I don’t know if you
remember that example or not but you’ve got the eyes and the fingers and the toes and
the arms and the legs and they are different, but they all work together for a common
cause. (Dinah, Interview 2, January 25, 2006)

Mitch agreed that all positions along the teacher leader continuum are needed. He related his
experience as an athletic coach. Some teacher leaders may be the “rah-rah” leader while
others are “behind the scenes… But it takes both. It takes both…. We all have a part of it
and I guess that’s why I said it is a product of the sums” (Interview 2, January 23, 2006).

Secondly, the continuum is “situational.” Whereas a teacher may typically fall on
one position along the continuum, situations may arise that causes the teacher to move to
another position along the continuum. I chose to place teachers along the continuum based
on where the data placed them overall; however, teachers did show evidence of moving away from their position in certain situations. For example, Debra typically finds herself in the Visible with Noise position along the continuum. However, when asked to sign a School Improvement Plan (SIP) with which she disagreed, she moved to the Instigator with Conflict position. She shared with her colleagues that they were signing a SIP that waived the 150 student per teacher limitation. Eleven out of the 65 teachers on her staff voted against the SIP.

Third, “noisy,” “instigator,” and “conflict” usually have negative connotations. The reader of this research is asked to suspend those negative connotations. Great thought and discussion surrounded the decision to include theses words in the continuum headings. While other, less potent words were considered, I decided to return to these words, the original words of the teachers, to maintain the integrity of the data.

The continuum spans five positions (framed by the participants) and the rubric spans two areas (framed by the research question) and four elements (framed by the sTc). The continuum spans from Visible but not Noisy to Instigator creating Conflict. The middle three positions are Visible with Noise, Noisy without Conflict, and Instigator with Conflict. The rubric spans two areas from the research question: perception and enactment and the four elements of the sTc: the dialogic conversation, metacognition, reflexivity, and authentic activity. The teacher leader continuum and rubric is graphically presented below (Figure 1) including the teacher positions along the continuum. Important to note is that even though the Figure appears to be physically divided into static, distinct cells, all cells are interconnected and fluid. The Teacher Leader Continuum Rubric is the major finding and theme from this research.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Continuum →</th>
<th>Visible but not Noisy</th>
<th>Visible with Noise</th>
<th>Noisy without Conflict</th>
<th>Instigator with Conflict</th>
<th>Instigator creating Conflict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>Bev, Ciara, Hannah, Miles, Oliver</td>
<td>Anna, Debra, Dinah, Sally</td>
<td>Bess</td>
<td>Jim, Mitch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Research Question**

**sTc elements**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perception</th>
<th>The dialogic conversation: Longevity &amp; Trust</th>
<th>Trying to find place at a new school</th>
<th>Prefers to be quiet but will speak up if forced</th>
<th>Is diplomatic in garnering support</th>
<th>Is not afraid of being labeled for being loud but aware of stigma attached</th>
<th>Is proud of being labeled loud</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Metacognition: Agency &amp; Responsibility</td>
<td>Sees self as part of larger group; often mention others as teacher leaders</td>
<td>Wants to be involved in teacher leadership but feels pulled away from teaching</td>
<td>Is Sensitive to different perspectives of other teachers and teacher leaders</td>
<td>Has newfound agency as a teacher leader and feels a responsibility</td>
<td>Considers self as teacher leader and acts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enactment</th>
<th>Reflexivity: Power &amp; Influence</th>
<th>Likes to be behind the scenes</th>
<th>Actions seen as teacher leadership but by other colleagues</th>
<th>Makes sure voice is heard</th>
<th>Will stand against or for action based on its harmfulness to students and/or teachers</th>
<th>Creates a cause towards which to work (more proactive than reactive like “with persistence” previously)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authentic Activity: Work &amp; Scope</td>
<td>Works to guide other teachers curricularly in schools</td>
<td>Works to guide other teachers curricularly in schools</td>
<td>Works to represent teachers in the school and district</td>
<td>Works to protect teachers and/or students from unfair policy in the school, district, and state</td>
<td>Works to protect teachers and/or students from unfair policies in the school, district, and nation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 5. Teacher Leader Continuum Rubric**
Visible but not Noisy: Bev, Ciara, Hannah, Miles, and Oliver

Visible but not Noisy teachers tend to be new to their schools, trying to find their place. They see themselves as part of a larger group and often mention other colleagues as teacher leaders. These teachers like to be “behind the scenes” when it comes to leadership. They work within their schools primarily to guide other teachers curricularly.

Perception

Four of the five teachers in this position were teaching at new schools and therefore felt they had to earn some level of respect, acceptance and trust before becoming teacher leaders. “There are all these things on the burner and they have the potential but I am hesitant because I am brand new on the block. I have to earn a little respect” (Ciara, Interview 2, January 26, 2006). Beginning at a new school, Oliver agrees, “I’d like to play that role [as a teacher leader] and when you come to a new place, you can’t just step in and do that” (Interview 1, November 21, 2005). Bev, Ciara, Hannah and Oliver are new to their schools this year and do not have longevity. Although Miles was not new to his school, I still chose to place him in the visible but not noisy position due to his matching the other three characteristics in the position that will be discussed later. Like Miles, Hannah too may initially seem misplaced as she has taught for 35 years. However, she moved this year to help open a new school. With her many years in education, Hannah has come to value the importance of being quiet and listening.

Teachers who found themselves on the visible but not noisy position on the continuum saw themselves as a part of a larger group and often spoke of others as teacher leaders. They saw their own agency as being a result of work with a broader group of individuals to affect change. Hannah strongly believes that teacher leadership happens in a
larger setting; it is not solely an individualistic activity. Like Hannah, Bev sees herself as part of a larger group of individuals. Her school is currently working to implement Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and although she is the leader of the geometry PLC, she sees herself as a part of the larger group. Miles also is not comfortable with the word agency or being referred to as the leader of curricular groups.

I wasn’t making the rules, I was helping. And there were times when we had discussions and people made suggestions and we changed what we were doing based on that. Being the guru [of an algebra I curricular group] did not make my word law by any means. I wouldn’t be comfortable with that anyway…. What I said about it wasn’t like it was rules or laws when I was doing things it was more like I was helping and that comes to my beliefs, I really wasn’t comfortable being the expert. So my hope was that everybody’s feelings and opinions could be factored in and worked into what we were doing. (Interview 3, May 18, 2006)

Teachers who find themselves in the Visible but not Noisy position of the continuum often mention others as teacher leaders. Bev mentioned others she considers teacher leaders, “Teacher leadership to me is probably smaller things, like seeing Mitch and Jim as teacher leaders, they are whom we go to or watching people around you who coordinate an afternoon tutorial program” (Bev, Interview 1, September 27, 2005). Oliver also mentions other cohort members, “I think Jim is a teacher leader. I think Bess is a teacher leader” (Interview 2, January 30, 2006). Oliver also strongly believes in the collaborative nature of teacher leadership and is part of a seed group working to start a lesson study group with other M.Ed. alumni.

Teacher leadership includes a partnership with others. … I think that true teacher leadership is the ability to develop lots of sources and interact with them and that is how I would change this quite a bit. I still think that you need to have a vision and a purpose and a definition of what you’d like to see happen or occur but it is unlikely that you could do it on your own in any fashion or shape. … The ability to construct a body of people who are dialoging and thinking and streaming in the same direction. That would be teacher leadership. (Interview 3, May 23, 2006)
Enactment

While seeing themselves as part of a larger group, visible but not noisy teacher leaders enact teacher leadership from behind the scenes. Bev considers herself a behind the scenes person.

I’ve never been on the spectrum of changing things, a Gummellist [Gummel was an M.Ed. course instructor] kind of person. I admire those people and I would, and I would probably be the visible but not noisy, I’m the person behind them helping them, I’m just not the one out there doing it. I’m always the person, that’s why it always surprises me when people put me in charge of something because I’m usually the person putting it all together for somebody else to do. That’s why I enjoy stories that Ciara would tell or Hannah would tell about going out and doing stuff and it’s like OK, I couldn’t, I would not be able to do that. Because I think to do that you have to be willing to stand on your own and be the activist on your own. If everybody left you would you still continue it? Hannah would. I wouldn’t. (Interview 2, January 23, 2006)

It is interesting that Bev mentions Ciara and Hannah as individuals who would “stand on your own and be the activist on your own” because Hannah and Ciara also fall into this same position on the continuum. As a teacher with 35 years of experience, Hannah finds herself at a new school involved in a project that will “last past me” and her experience has taught her the “great power of sitting and listening” (Interview 3, May 25, 2006). She seems uncomfortable with colleagues referring to her as “a master teacher.” Like Hannah, Ciara finds herself at a new school keeping a low profile as she learns the culture. She is listening to her new colleagues to better understand how they do things in the school and the state. “I'm still on the quiet side because I haven't had the courage yet to step over that line because I’m still new” (Interview 2, January 26, 2006).

Teachers spoke of enactments of teacher leadership as authentic activities, activities where they found passion and meaning. For the teachers who found themselves in this position along the continuum, many of their enactments involved guiding fellow teachers
curricularly. For example, Miles served as the “guru” for the algebra I teachers at his schools. As part of his role, Miles reflected on his own work in algebra I before the group met as a whole to discuss best practices (Interview 3, May 18, 2006). Like Miles, Oliver is working to create a curricular study group among the M.Ed. graduates where teachers come together with the common goal of discussing their practices, the curriculum, and ways to improve both. When Ciara becomes more comfortable at her new school she hopes to introduce her use of calculators to her colleagues to show their benefits in mathematical explorations and learning. She is already filling a folder with calculator integration research in preparation for further discussion with colleagues. As Bev’s school is working to enact PLCs, she serves as the geometry lead teacher. Also, Bev uses the PLC as an interview criterion when she helps interview prospective mathematics teachers for her school: “Who’s going to work well with other people? Who’s going to be willing to share their ideas?” (Interview 3, May 23, 2006).

Finally, Hannah chuckles as she explains her “pseudo department chair” (Interview 3, May 25, 2006) status at her new small school: “I tell her [other mathematics department member] you cannot have a department chair if you only have two people. You can’t have a chair with two people.” Hannah and her mathematics colleague “have conversations and we decide by consensus” (Interview 1, September 29, 2006).

**The Teachers**

**Bev.** If an event or activity needs to be planned, Bev is the person people call. That very quality is why Bev has changed schools three times. She became the “go-to” person feeling overburdened with too much responsibility. Bev has planned proms, created reading and math nights for parents, and developed a Saturday tutorial program.

It’s a lot of responsibility. And like me at Stenson, it burns you out. If you’re good at something, everyone calls you. That’s how I got on so many committees. Oh, Bev,
Bev would be good at this, Oh, let’s get Bev to do that. Oh remember when Bev suggested such and such. I think that’s when not everyone wants to be involved; it falls on a few people…. One of the reasons when I left Stenson and went to Cedville, it was to sort of be anonymous for a little while.

Similar reasons drove Bev from Cedville to Eaton High. In her second year, her organizational and leadership skills are gradually being recognized but she is trying to hold onto her anonymity a while longer.

Bev considers herself a teacher leader and believes most teachers are. “If they have any conversation with their fellow teachers, they are leading them. Oh, I saw you do this and that was cool, could I try that?”. As the year has progressed, Bev’s thinking on teacher leadership has evolved. “When you ask me the questions, that’s why I feel like I go in circles because when you first ask it I give my answer, then as I’m talking and listen to the things I say I think it sounds more like this and that’s why I think I go in a circle or I’m contradicting myself.” Her formal definition reads: “a person who has an impact in a school or educational setting.” Currently at Eaton High, Bev has managed serves as only the Geometry Team leader but knows that her anonymity is limited.

Bev is also quick to identify other teacher leaders from among the masters cohort as well as other faculty members. She sees what characteristics and activities her fellow teachers engage in and label them as teacher leadership. “Teacher leadership to me is probably smaller things, like seeing Mitch and Jim as teacher leaders, they are who we go to or watching people around you who coordinate [an after school assistance program].”

Coming from a middle school background, Bev is student-centered and receptive to trying new things. Eaton is implementing Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) this year in which, theoretically, teachers who teach the same subject come together to discuss
lessons and design common assessments. Although Bev sees the potential benefit, the realities of scheduling and end-of-course exams have forced theory to cower to reality.

Bev’s openness and gift of organization makes her feel like a behind-the-scenes leader. Again she calls attention to other teacher leaders.

I think it [visible but not noisy teacher leadership] means being involved and being a part of the processes going on whether it is change or development, but being a part of it. But that probably also comes from my personality because I don’t like to rock the boat because I don’t ever feel comfortable going up and going da-da-da-da-da-da-da at a school board meeting…. I admire those people and I would, and I would probably be the visible but not noisy, I’m the person behind them helping them, I’m just not the one out there doing it…. That’s why I enjoy stories that Ciara would tell or Hannah would tell about going out and doing stuff and its like OK, I couldn’t, I would not be able to do that. Because I think to do that you have to be willing to stand on your own and be the activist on your own. If everybody left you would you still continue it? Hannah would. I wouldn’t.

At her new school, Bev’s current leadership role as the lead teacher for the geometry is allowing her to utilize some of her skills. She is able to mentor a new teacher who “just wants to be like Bev” and to work with a volunteer parent in improving instruction for all students.

Ciara. After 20 years teaching in one state, Ciara recently married and relocated to a different state. She finds herself working in a new environment with teachers who do not share her same thoughts on teaching. Coming from a school where graphing calculators were used to enhance instruction, Ciara is now in a school where graphing calculators are not used. She is working to set an example by using what she has in her classroom but not creating barriers with her colleagues by saying, “Where I come from, we do it this way.”

Coming from a school where teachers talked about their teaching, Ciara is now in an environment where gossip is the conversation of choice. Fortunately, a colleague of Ciara’s
also relocated to the same school. She hopes their professional conversations will be a positive influence on their new co-workers and encourage them to engage.

I walked into a whole new situation in a whole new state. I was, it was, how can I say this? It could have been easy to be intimidated, a little bit, but if you quietly and subtly do what you do best, people will slowly look at you and say, maybe not directly, but they might think you might be somewhat of a leader and it has taken me a few, how long has it been, August, I think it is just the way that you, like I’ve already made some statements, in the algebra classes they don’t use graphing calculators and so that is one of my goals is to show them that graphing calculators are pretty beneficial in algebra 1 classrooms.

In years past, Ciara has not considered herself a teacher leader and if she does, she sees it on the “quiet side. There’s a line when you perceive an issue and I think the noisiness of the leadership basically depends upon how quiet or how active you are about the issue. I'm still on the quiet side because I haven’t had the courage yet to step over that line because I’m still new.” However, she does not think she will be in teaching for more than five more years and does want to make a difference. “I see myself as I’ve got the teaching down, probably lots more I need to do there, so probably now time to make more of a social change in education, that’s my hope.” Ciara defines a teacher leader as “an expert in her content area, a life-long learner who understands and practices the associated pedagogy who is a role model in her community and shares her knowledge of excellence and equity in an ethical and respectful manner.” She also thinks teacher leaders are “defining or articulating where a change needs to take place, recognizing, defining and then articulating. And then carefully approaching the situation so that the positive change occurs. But it has to be a methodical kind of thing and have to recognize that different things call for different actions.”

“Passion plays a large role in what activities teacher leaders take part. I look at teachers who have a passion about something, like questions about something and then they do something about it…. I think we all have our passions and our niches and what we do
with those determines whether or not we are teacher leaders.” Ciara contrasts that with leadership roles that are forced on teachers. “I think a lot of times we try to force leadership where it can be kind of a natural manifestation of sorts.”

Ciara was excited when a colleague asked if she knew anything about action research. Having had two classes on action research in the masters program. Ciara was thrilled to be asked to help prepare a presentation to the faculty. Ciara’s principal hopes to help teachers learn about action research as a meaningful alternative to the traditional annual professional growth plans.

I think action research is one of the easiest ways to turn informal leadership into formal leadership…. Because I think a lot of times the things we look at everyday, these common place things in the classroom can become formal topics of discussion if we approach it the right way and if we steer it the right way and communicate our questions and all that stuff. So there are roles of course that are formal and we’ve all been there but I think action research is an easy way to formalize informal.

**Hannah.** Hannah describes herself as EF Hutton, “When EF Hutton talks, people listen.” An experienced teacher with 34 years in the classroom, Hannah is a thoughtful woman who cares deeply about improving mathematics instruction for all students and raising the voice of teachers. Hannah has taught all levels and topics in mathematics. She has served in numerous leadership roles within the state and national chapters of the educators association. Hannah has been a part of a new school recently opened to help prepare the underrepresented populations for college. Her past experience has proven crucial for the development of the school as even her principal turns his head towards Hannah when she speaks, looking for her feedback.

Certainly I am a teacher but my opinion is also very valued and sought…. Sought and also valued. And I’ve tried to employ some of that quiet that we talked about because I have lots of after school conversations, principals, guidance counselors, assistant principals, about various things. Sometimes you think those conversations are going
or just been accepted or listened to but then I find later on that I can see some results or can see how they impacted something.

Hannah’s stature commands respect just as her soft yet powerful voice does. With the wisdom and experiences she has had, one cannot help but stop to listen when she speaks.

Hannah defines teacher leadership as “an excellent teacher who advocates for her students, her peers, and her profession. She serves in many roles including motivating, mentoring, guiding her students and her peers. She is confident in her abilities and is comfortable speaking up, questioning, and role modeling for her students and her peers.”

Hannah also cautions against placing a phrase such as teacher leadership in a box.

So I don’t see it as being one thing but multi-faceted. I think teacher leadership is not embodied in one person but is/should be prevailing throughout our ranks that ought to be evident at the building level, ought to be evident at the district and I think that anything that affects education ought to have teacher input. More than just conducting staff development but also a part of staff development. More than just being on the site-based team but actually having an impact there. Being listened to. Anything that affects education and our children, I think the input of teachers needs to be there, more than just on the committee it needs to be listened to. Teachers need to be a part of the decision-making and the governing bodies.

As she speaks, it is obvious the number of years Hannah has given as a teacher leader, lessons learned, and her continued passion to persevere and improve her profession. Hannah sees herself as a teacher leader not only because she has had so many experiences but also because she is still willing to learn from others.

I consider myself to be a teacher leader and I think it is because I feel empowered. I feel that I am knowledgeable about some things and particularly knowledgeable enough to go find resources, not that I am knowledgeable enough to know all the answers but feel that I know where to look. Making use of those resources. I feel that I am comfortable, I think I have enough spine to be able to voice an opinion, but also be able to ask a question. I think that I’ve had enough experience at different places where I can see something, not, just have enough insight as to, that comes from experience or listening, and make myself available to listen.
Hannah’s district is currently struggling with a divided mathematics curriculum where some schools offer a traditional teaching approach and others offer a reform-based teaching approach. The district wants to have one way of teaching mathematics, the traditional approach, throughout the district which is causing great turmoil among the teachers who championed and believe in the reform-based curriculum. Having been in the district for a long time, Hannah has taught both ways, feels the pressure, and sees the damage the dispute is creating among teacher relationships with colleagues. She continues to struggle with what to do and what is indeed best for her students.

Miles. Miles is an enthusiastic teacher with seven years of experience. He teaches at the same high school he attended as a student and admits to not being “a big fan of unnecessary change,” for which he feels his district, is notorious. He cites one of his main strengths as well as weakness as his “sense of humor, joking around and playing and not being serious when a lot of times I should. I actually had a kid the other day ask me Are you serious Mr. Womble and another kid said This is Mr. Womble; he’s never serious.”

Miles keeps himself busy. In addition to a wife, three-year-old daughter, newborn baby and renovating a historic home, Miles also teaches mathematics at the local community college sometimes four nights a week. “People laugh at me for doing so much. I guess I’m only happy when I’m pulled in four directions.”

Miles defines a teacher leader as “an educator taking control of having policies and things, regulations, that govern our jobs as well as leading others, I guess peers, in order to help them, help us all be as good a teacher as we can be.” Frustration sets in when Miles feels a lack of a voice…administration and central office [know] we are teachers and especially the ones who are teachers for the right reasons are going to do what they
have to do to get their jobs done. Teachers are coerced into doing a lot of things that they don’t want to or shouldn’t have to and it for, it’s because it needs to be done and teachers are the people who are doers.

Miles feels that often times teacher leadership is a result of longevity rather than any particular leadership trait.

The first qualification is sticking around for more than two years. If you walk around here, most, I’d say at least one-third of the teachers would have less than two years of experience. We find a way to cycle them in and out. I’ve been here seven years and that puts me toward the top, not that that makes anybody a leader but that makes people perceive you as a leader….The downside to tenured teachers being the ones called on to lead is the potential for burn out. The bad side is that it is always going to be the same few people that do everything. More of us are just going to get tired.

Modeling teacher leadership is a responsibility Miles feels. His department takes part in a lot of collaboration to make curricular and assessment decisions. A specific example came from the end-of-course test. His department discussed items where students performed poorly; therefore, those sections would be emphasized more this year along with better ways of teaching those weak areas. Modeling helps Miles become a better leader.

It is exactly the same as you say you don’t really learn something until you teach it, the math material, leading the algebra 1 teachers has made me a better algebra 1 teacher because I’m teaching them and that by far, has helped.

Having grown up in the same community where he now teaches, Miles feels a strong pull for teacher leadership impacting the community as well. “When I go out into the community, I feel like I am observed as a leader because of what I do. I go out and I see kids and their families and I’m still a leader in the community as well.”

As a longtime member of the surrounding community as well as a veteran teacher within his school, Miles participates in a variety of teacher leadership activities. This year he has become the co-chair for the student assistance team as well as co-chair for the faculty social committee. He is continuing in his role as a mentor for new teachers in his building.
Another role that has taught him a great deal about leadership has been his role as the “guru” for the algebra I teachers. In this role, he is charged with defining algebra curriculum and facilitating discussion around the algebra I teachers about what they are teaching and how they are assessing their students.

**Oliver.** Never one to shy away from conflict, Oliver enjoys a good debate. At the same time, he is a veracious reader and thinks deeply about his pedagogy and how to improve his teaching. Having begun his career as an engineer, Oliver came to teaching through coaching.

His love for coaching brought him into the classroom.

My soccer teams were very successful. We went to the NCAA four times so I learned the art of command style speaking and talking very well. But it didn’t matter, that’s what expected of you. You give a command, it’s followed, you do what’s necessary and that’s part of the teaching cycle. You don’t have time during the middle of a game to have a discussion over the effectiveness of your strategy. You tell it like you want it to happen and they either do it or you put someone else in that will. That part of who I was did not go away easily.

Oliver taught at a charter school for five years before moving to a public school.

Now at his second public school, Oliver sees his role as a teacher leader as something that will come only after he has established himself at a new school. He defines a teacher leader as “a teacher who makes a difference in the life of the school or for individual students.”

Even though Oliver does not see himself as a teacher leader in the present, he considers teacher leadership as trouble and sees its parallel to student struggles.

I’d like to play that role and when you come to a new place you can’t just step in and do that. I don’t know that I’m going to stay there. But wherever I go next, I’m staying….

It [teacher leadership] means conflict, it means resolution of conflict, it means spending time over what teachers think are important. Which isn’t any different than the conflict teachers and students face. Students think they know a lot and they do. If you want them to get involved and feel important and get involved in the classroom you listen to them and allow them to have a lot of say.
Oliver believes strongly in putting money behind teacher leadership. “You have to give them [teacher leaders] an opportunity to talk about things they can do to enrich the environment of their students.” He also realizes that current time structures in schools do not allow for teachers to collaborate nor do administrators truly want to offer teachers that time.

Oliver is passionate about the work that has come out of Japan around lesson study. He values the rare opportunity to see his colleagues teach as well as invite them into his classroom to dialogue about his pedagogy. Dedicated to improving his instruction, Oliver is currently compiling his National Board portfolio. In addition, one of Oliver’s teacher leadership activities comes as an extension to the M.Ed. program. Having hoped to see more lesson study-style conversation in the M.Ed. program, Oliver has joined with a former professor to create a lesson study-style group with other interested graduates across cohorts. The group will watch two different videos of Oliver’s instruction and be given the opportunity to dialogue and discuss what they see. Oliver is looking forward to addressing questions such as:

What would you do? What do they do? … To me, we could have spent a month contrasting the lessons and three different publishers talking about how do you introduce ratio and proportions? This text does it this way; this text does it this way. Which do you think is the most valuable and the best approach?

Summary

Bev, Ciara, Hannah, Miles, and Oliver find themselves in the visible but not noisy position along the continuum. With the exception of Miles, all these teachers were new to their schools and working to find their voice without defying the existing culture. Ciara and Hannah, the two teachers in this position with the most years of experience, were articulate about how their experience had taught them the value of being “not noisy” or quiet. Leadership can occur quietly and in time, others may listen. That quietness calls these
teachers to be “behind the scenes” and often to work guiding teachers curricularly within their schools.

**Visible with Noise: Anna, Debra, Dinah, & Sally**

The next group of teachers along the continuum is teachers who are Visible with Noise. Teachers in this position are not new to their school but still prefer to be quiet. However, these teachers will speak up if they feel strongly about the topic. They want to be involved in teacher leadership but often feel it “pulls them away from” their main responsibility of teaching. These teachers comment that others see their actions as teacher leadership which in turn, makes them consider themselves as teacher leaders. Like teachers who fall into the visible but not noisy position, these teachers also choose to guide teacher curricularly at a local level.

**Perception**

The Visible with Noise teachers tend to prefer to remain quiet but will speak up if they feel forced. For the most part, they felt trusted and respected by their colleagues and have been at their schools for several years. Sally, as department chair, generally feels trusted by her department although sometimes wonders. With her role as department chair changing this year from being less administrative to more instructive, she further discussed trust.

I hope people trust me but I’ve had times this year where I feel like people don’t trust me…. Just someone can make a face. You are sitting in a meeting that you are leading and you say something and two people look at each other and they make a little smirk. Automatically think that it is something about me. It might be; it might not. I’ve had a few times this year where I felt I was working really hard to get some stuff done as a department chair and I felt like a resolution was made. Things just come back up again and people are just asking me all the time, did that get done? Did that get done? And I’m just like, yes, it got done. You don’t trust that I, but at the same time. I feel like my department does trust me.  (Interview 3, May 25, 2006)
Sally also spoke of feeling both quiet and having voice. “I am more quiet than I should be, sometimes. Sometimes, I’m not. I just have to feel comfortable in a situation” (Interview 2, January 19, 2006). Sally’s comment also supports the situational nature of the continuum. Like Sally, Debra classifies herself as generally quiet, “the teacher leader activities I do are more on the quiet side like mentoring” (Focus Group 2, March 27, 2006). However, when she feels forced on an issue like an unacceptable SIP, Debra evidenced she also has a voice. Like Sally and Debra, Dinah tends to be visible but quieter. However, when too many students were placed in her classroom, she found her voice and approached every administrator in her building until the problem was corrected.

In her new position as a testing consultant and as the youngest teacher in this study, Anna tends to be on the quiet side. As visiting teachers help construct test items, Anna remains quiet as often as possible even when the teachers ask for assistance. Much like teachers do with their students when a project is assigned, Anna tries to guide but not dictate to the teachers writing test items. “The deeper meaning in that is that we don’t want a cookie cutter question in that slot. We want you coming up with a good question, but we don’t want to tell you that all 101 should look like this in Algebra I” (Interview 3, May 25, 2006). However, like the other teachers in her position, she finds her voice when necessary. At a recent staff meeting when a senior member of her department began a discussion about providing formula sheets for the final state geometry exam, Anna pushed him to explain his reasoning for not providing the formulas. Once explained, Anna better understood his point. Finally, although often quiet, Anna feels trusted by the teachers with whom she works. The teachers working on test items “trust that I know my job and I do it well. They look at me as the authority on that subject whenever they have a question” (Interview 3, May 25, 2006).
Teachers in the Visible with Noise position on the continuum want to be involved in teacher leadership but feel it “pulls them away from” their teaching responsibilities. When they think about their own learning and agency, they see “the 80-20 rule. I am wearing out because of the 80-20 rule. 20% of the people do 80% of the work” (Dinah, Focus Group 2, March 27, 2006). Dinah and Sally talk about losing planning periods when serving as teacher leaders; Dinah spends “more time doing this peripheral stuff than I do preparing to teach my classes” (Focus Group 2, March 27, 2006). Debra agrees with Dinah, “I think she is right; it takes away from teaching.” Surprisingly, Debra, a National Board Certified Teacher (NBCT), felt her work on the certification, seen as a prominent teacher leader activity, as “taking away” from her teaching. “I felt National Boards hindered my teaching and people have asked me did that make me a better teacher and I say no. I think it took time away from time I could have been planning and being a better teacher” (Interview 3, May 22, 2006). Like Dinah, Sally feels pulled in different directions and has asked in the past to be relieved of certain teacher leadership roles because she felt “burned out” and was not enjoying them. As lead teacher for two curricular groups and department chair, Sally chuckles as she explains her perception of a teacher leader.

During your planning period, you’re not doing anything related to your classroom. You are doing things related to other people’s [classrooms]. …And that means after school, before school, during planning periods, weekends, whatever because it is involved in going to a meeting or preparing whatever it is, a workshop presentation, an agenda for a meeting, whether it is talking with other teachers to give feedback or whatever council or committee you sit on, that sort of stuff.” (Interview 1, May 25, 2006)

Enactment

Teachers wrote and spoke about themselves and others as teacher leaders. Teachers were aware of both their hierarchical location and the location of others, which welcomed the
categorization of reflexivity. Eleven teachers spoke of themselves and others as teacher leaders. In their teacher leader narrative, five teachers spoke of themselves as a teacher leader and six teachers spoke of others as teacher leaders. On the pre-survey, eleven teachers considered themselves teacher leaders and nine teachers said that others consider them a teacher leader. On the post-survey, eleven teachers still considered themselves teacher leaders and ten said that others considered them teacher leaders. Although in the survey, more teachers spoke of others considering them teacher leaders, the teachers in the Visible with Noise position spoke more in their interviews about others seeing them as teacher leaders. Others seeing these teachers and their enactments as teacher leadership were a large part of why they considered themselves teacher leaders.

As the year began, Debra was “not sure” she considered herself a teacher leader and believed that others did not consider her a teacher leader. At the end of the year, she believed that she was a teacher leader and that others saw her as a teacher leader. Like Debra, Anna began the year saying that she did not believe she was a teacher leader (however in the pre-survey she did consider herself a teacher leader). Unlike Debra, Sally considered herself a teacher leader and that others considered her a teacher leader. However, Anna and Sally spoke of considering themselves teacher leaders because others thought they were teacher leaders.

I do see myself as a teacher leader because people see me as one, if that makes sense. I see myself as a teacher leader because other people see me as one. Other people, they see me as somebody who they can come to with questions and concerns about stuff whether it’s planning a lesson or dealing with students or policies or whatever it is. (Sally, Interview 1, October 3, 2005)

I don’t see myself as a teacher leader. But if you would probably talk to other people, they would probably say I am a teacher leader. (Anna, Interview 1, September 28, 2005)
Colleagues seeing Sally and Anna’s enactments as teacher leadership allowed Sally and Anna to see themselves more as teacher leaders. If their colleagues could see them as teacher leaders, then they saw themselves more as teacher leaders.

Like the teachers who are Visible but not Noisy, teachers who are in the Visible with Noise position also enact teacher leadership by guiding other teachers curricularly. Sally leads several curricular groups. As department chair, her role recently changed from being less of an administrator and more of a curricular leader. Department meetings centered on curriculum rather than administrative decisions that can be decided by email or memo. She also leads two smaller curricular groups at her school formed around a reformed-based mathematics curriculum. As the teacher with the most experience, she guides the teachers in planning lessons and designing common assessments. Debra chooses to use her experience to guide teachers on a more individual basis. In the past, she has worked with student teachers. She currently serves as a new teacher mentor. As a NBCT, she also volunteers her time to work with prospective candidates including Oliver. She talks with them about their portfolio, reads their entries, and offers comments for improvements. In Anna’s work as a testing consultant, she uses her teaching experience to guide teacher volunteers creating problems for state final exams.

The Teachers

Anna. By her friends’ description, Anna has a Napoleon’s complex. “Napoleon was that little short dictator who always thought he was right, always up in people’s faces…. Meaning I don’t really listen to anybody else and I’m short.” A young teacher of five years experience, Anna is open to new experiences and eager to learn more. One of the most
exciting parts of her job is discovering a new mathematical concept for herself. “The kids think I’m crazy because I’ll be doing a proof and finish and say Dang I’m smart.”

Much like Napoleon might have, Anna enjoys questioning others and “pushing back” on what people think and why. Her definition of teacher leadership demonstrates that characteristic: “A teacher leader is someone who influences/challenges those around them. “

She adds

I would explain teacher leadership as the person or a person who influences others to do things differently. And that’s why I think all teachers are leaders because whether you are a good or bad teacher leader, you are going to influence your kids, other teachers, principal, colleagues, whomever to do something differently, to make a change in their action somehow…. The ability to change or challenge someone.

Although Anna recalls her “short history as a teacher,” she has had numerous experiences. After college, Anna taught in a rural, predominantly white county before moving to a more urban county to start a new college preparatory school for underrepresented students. After having had predominantly white experiences at both her college and first teaching job, Anna was ready to work with minority students.

Although a “go-getter,” Anna does not consider herself a teacher leader but like Sally, thinks others may consider her one.

I don’t see myself as a teacher leader. But if you would probably talk to other people, they would probably say I am a teacher leader. As I said, my weakness is that I really don’t step up like I should but you know I’m already trying to evoke some change somewhere, trying to get people to rally behind an idea, make some change…. Things I volunteered for even though I did not have to do but I chose to do. When you make decisions and choices like that, people tend to think that you’re some form of a leader.

Anna is quick to name other teacher leaders who helped her become the teacher she is today. She lists all the other cohort members from the masters program whom she feels are teacher leaders. She also worked with Hannah, whom she also holds in high regard.
Anna recently changed positions and is now working as a mathematics educational consultant for a local testing company. She enjoys the new hours and the opportunity to actually have a lunch break. She knows that her time in the classroom enabled her to be realistic and practical in preparing test items for students.

Debra. Debra received her degree in mathematics and teaching license at the age of 42. Upon graduating, she sent resumes to various counties but because there was no teacher shortage, decided to take her job search a step further and began visiting high schools. When she came to one high school, the receptionist said, “You must have heard about our math opening.” To which Debra replied, “Well no I didn’t.” And that is how she received her first job.

Debra’s view of a teacher leader has changed throughout the year. In the beginning, Debra saw two sides to teacher leadership. Debra still sees two sides to teacher leadership but she thinks that it is a “balance scale where you have the activist on one end and then somebody who does helpful things on the other end and I think maybe my attitude has changed somewhat in that now I think you have to do a little bit of both.” She sees a teacher leader as “someone who devotes their whole life to it.”

As a NBCT, Debra has worked with others pursuing national certification. She also worked with student teachers in the past and, this year, is working as a mentor teacher to a new teacher. She sees sharing her knowledge with the new teacher as “being a teacher leader in a very quiet way.” To demonstrate her thinking about the balancing scale of teacher leadership, she talked of her refusing to sign her school improvement plan (SIP). For years her SIP waived class size limits. In years past, Debra signed the SIP reluctantly. This year,
She refused. She thinks “perhaps instigating a revolt against the school improvement plan would be a very noisy way [of teacher leadership].”

Debra sees herself as a teacher leader among her students and her colleagues. She considers teacher leadership with her students as being more passive whereas teacher leadership with her colleagues as more active. Passive in the sense that she makes herself available to her students if they want to come to her. “In high school we let it be known that we are available, if you need help, I’m here.” [Debra does not consider teaching a part of teacher leadership; she sees it as her job.] Active teacher leadership among colleagues she sees as “mentoring this teacher and observing, giving advice, offering assistance, things like that.”

Dinah. Dinah has served in schools in a numerous ways while spending ten years at home raising her children. She started teaching high school, then moved to a private school, worked as the SIMMS (a student information management system) operator, moved back to teach middle school and work with the Academically or Intellectually Gifted, then returned to teach high school mathematics. In a recent observation by her principal, Dinah was told she was a “teacher wrapped around a mommy” as she offers hugs and tries to “bandage their boo-boos.”

Dinah defines a teacher leader as “one who through study and research, steps to the forefront and collaborate with other to the educational community to create an educational environment that always stresses policy of methods for the betterment of all students.” She sees teacher leadership as a support role and something that happens both inside and outside the classroom. Teacher leadership, to Dinah, “has to be visible but it doesn’t have to be noisy.” Dinah considers herself a teacher leader. Leadership needs to direct people in a
positive way. Talk to them about what they are doing well and build on that success. She also highlights difference. “I think more or less, this is kind of a Biblical example too, it works like a body. I don’t know if you remember that example or not but you’ve got the eyes and the fingers and the toes and the arms and the legs and they are different, but they all work together for a common cause.”

Visibility on campus is important to Dinah. She attended every football game, advises the National Honor Society, sponsors the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, and attends High Impact (a Friday morning Christian based club). Her family also volunteers at events: “We are a volunteer family. If they’ve got a new program they usually try and give it to me to try it out. I mean, really. I don’t think I’m afraid to say so, to say this is not working. I’m not embarrassed about that. This is not working, give me an idea.” Dinah is eager to try new strategies in her teaching and in her professional life. She feels the masters program made her a “more reflective, more adaptable practitioner of the craft.”

As involved as Dinah stays in her school, being assigned to committees concerns her. She feels during the masters program she learned about teacher leadership but trying to enact it proves difficult. If her main responsibility is teaching, when will she find time for the peripheral?

I haven’t had time to teach lately because I have been so busy taking care of clubs and got an email I’m on two committees I didn’t know I was on and then we were talking about attendance, I was on the attendance appeal committee. There are things wrong with that but it is like, we are in such a hurry that we are not going to fix that, we are just going to put a band-aid on that because we are in such a hurry. So I have found that kind of frustrating, knowing what it should look like and being able to implement it are two different things.

Dinah feels like a “hamster on a wheel” and is not sure if she is contributing in a “positive or negative way, I just know I am doing stuff.”
Dinah chose to interview a minority parent as one of four goals for her Individualized Growth Plan this year. She conducted a similar interview for a class project during the masters program. Based on the positive experience and amount she learned from her class assignment, she hopes to encourage other teachers to do the same. She sees this encouragement as a teacher leader enactment. “I think bringing people in from the community into our schools can only benefit the school.”

Sally. Sally returned to graduate school because she wanted to be a student again: “It did originally start I just wanted to be a student again. I wanted to go to class, take notes, study, as sick as that sounds. I was just like I want to learn. I really did. I had a thirst to just learn again.” Having taught for six years (now eight), Sally wanted to become a better teacher and did not want to have to stop teaching to do so.

Sally admits that she is an “all or nothing person.” She either puts in 100% or none at all. She earned National Board certification the first year of the program and serves as the department chair for her mathematics department (a position she was assigned as a second year teacher). This year, the role of department chair has taken on new responsibilities. Sally has been charged to not only handle administrative duties, but also to involve more pedagogical discussions during department meetings. Her district has asked her to use email for administrative tasks as much as possible and to spend more time during meetings talking about teaching. Sally is excited and “apprehensive” about her new role. As an eight-year veteran, Sally believes she has wisdom to share with her colleagues. However, she recognizes many of her colleagues have comparable experience and feels awkward entering their classroom and offering instructional feedback.

And for me to go in and say to them, Let’s think about this. Some of them are open to it. They’ve said to me, I understand your new role and I’m open to it. And then
other people are set in their ways and that’s a big obstacle to me is dealing with, as a teacher leader, who themselves are teacher leaders.

Sally defines a teacher leader as “one who works with teachers, parents, administrators, and policy makers to improve the status of education.” A deep belief is the teacher leader’s responsibility to share her reflections on her own practice. Sally’s definition exhibits this sense of responsibility.

Take what you do in the classroom and share what you do with other people; I think that is the teacher leader part. Just, there are parts of personal leadership in terms of what you are going to do and reflection but if you take what you’ve done in the classroom and you share it with the person next door to you, that to me is teacher leadership.

Sally sees herself as a teacher leader “because people see me as one, if that makes sense. I see myself as a teacher leader because other people see me as one. Other people, they see me as somebody who they can come to with questions and concerns about stuff whether it’s planning a lesson or dealing with students or policies or whatever it is.” She offers her opinion when ask but does not want to be seen as outspoken or argumentative.

I’m the type of person that I’m there, people know that if they need a response from me I will give my response and it will, not to sound conceited, but it will probably be a good response, well thought out and knowledgeable and intelligent response but I don’t feel like I always have to share mine.

At midyear, Sally was feeling good about her new department chair responsibility although the challenge to keep administrative tasks out of meetings had been difficult.

The beginning of the year meetings we had really did, we had some good conversations about stuff. The first meeting we had, we just made list of things we need to talk about, and we just started throwing things out there. I think that we, things we want to see improved, increased or changed, whatever the study habits of students…. And then the intention was for future meetings to have more discussions about that, but as the year goes on those administrative and business stuff start leaking in. There’s been a lot of controversy within the district and within the school about the status of our math program and what’s going to happen with it and so a lot of our discussion recently has been about what are we going to do about that so still
good discussions but kind of getting back more towards old kind of discussions rather than discussions that are more open.

**Summary**

Anna, Debra, Dinah, and Sally are teacher leaders who are Visible with Noise. They prefer to remain quiet but are able to find their voice. In this position, teachers want to be involved in teacher leadership but perceive it as detracting from their main responsibility of teaching. Although not convinced of their own teacher leadership, colleagues see their enactments as teacher leadership; therefore, these teachers see themselves as teacher leaders. Their work to guide other teachers curricularly includes leading curricular groups and mentoring teachers.

**Noisy without Conflict: Bess**

Teachers in the Noisy without Conflict position use their voice consistently and are strategic in garnering support. These teachers are sensitive to different perspectives and their colleagues appreciate their balanced views. In regard to their power and influence, they ensure colleagues and superiors who can make changes hear their consistent voice. These teachers work to represent fellow teachers in the school and district level.

**Perception**

Bess was the only teacher in this position. Having been at her school for several years, Bess is “diplomatic in garnering support.” She “tend[s] to be a little bit more visible, a little bit more loud” (Interview 2, January 30, 2006). In her many roles, she credits her longevity and ability to be trusted in her success.

I think some of that [teacher leadership] has just been over time. I don’t think when I first started teaching I was a teacher leader. I was a good teacher, maybe, but I don’t think I was a teacher leader. And I don’t know how that happened; it just sort of
evolved. I think part of it was being willing to take on responsibilities that weren’t necessarily part of being a teacher and some of that came with age and time. I think some of it came after I have stayed in the building; I’m not going anywhere. I’m not going anywhere. (Bess, Interview 2, January 30, 2006)

In her role serving on the Superintendent Advisory Council (SAC), Bess must maintain a high level of trust. In sending a monthly report to the Superintendent, the teachers in Bess’s school must feel comfortable approaching her with concerns.

I think there has to be an element of trust there because I am keeping their comments confidential so when people come to me, no one else knows who made that comment, except for me, so when I send all that off to Dr. Pence in report form, all the names are dropped and I don’t really talk about it with anybody so nobody really knows who said what, sometimes people can guess, but I am very very careful so I think that I have to be a trustworthy person to be in this position or I don’t think it would be as effective. I feel like I have done a really good job about trying to keep communication lines open. I always send reports out to faculty so they know what is going and make sure that superintendent responses get back in a fairly timely way, depends on how fast he returns comments…. I think people for the most part trust me. I think that is the trust part. (Interview 3, May 22, 2006)

Bess feels she is “very good at building relationships with each and every kid, with staff members, and creating positive repoire between people” (Bess, Interview 1, September 30, 2005). In her work with the SAC, Bess has found her ability to garner support and care about her colleagues has improved.

The other experiences will be good too because I’ll feel all the more connected to the faculty and staff here. Anytime I do anything leadership oriented I feel even more connected to the faculty and staff and even the people who used to get on my nerves I’m beginning to learn the good things about every single person. And I think that is what is beautiful, like even the people that used to drive me bananas in a meeting even now I have a soft spot in my heart for them and so I like that. The fact that I feel something good about every single person in the building no matter how ornery they could be. That’s been a positive. And then that makes me more protective so when the board of education is making an ugly comment you tend to be more protective of the your faculty. (Interview 1, September 30, 2005)
Bess’s diplomacy is evidenced by her readiness for a conversation no matter when it may arise. Bess works to communicate with her colleagues “strategically” and is “level-headed” and “calm.”

You’re OK with interruptions, you know that, you look for opportunities; you’re strategic with what gets thrown at you. If an opportunity for a conversation arises, you don’t wait for later, you do it then. So you know how to handle or negotiate interruptions. You’re strategic. You are wise enough to recognize when opportunities are coming at you to take them. You know how to navigate those circumstances. … Because I am a relationship person, I try really hard to frame it the right way and I don’t deliberately try to make waves or deliberately try to cause reaction. That’s not my goal. (Interview 1, September 30, 2005)

Although teachers in the Noisy without Conflict position have opinions of their own, they are sensitive to different perspectives of other teachers and teacher leaders. Bess is able to listen to differing opinions and represent those to outside individuals. In her teacher leader narrative, Bess addresses the need to remain open-minded.

This [teacher leadership] obligates us, as educators, to remain open-minded about new ideas and practices and thoughtful, even critical of our current ideas and practices in order to see ourselves as we really are. This careful examination is both reflective and intellectual in nature requiring the use of one’s head and one’s heart. Even though positive growth can be painful and uncomfortable at times, if we are to become teachers who make a profound difference on the next generation, we must reform the areas that need improvement and refine what is already good. (June 23, 2005)

As a cooperating teacher for a student teacher, Bess is excited to have someone to “collaborate with” and who “brings a whole basket full of good ideas to the table so I can talk with her and we bounce ideas off each other” (Interview 1, September 30, 2005).

In her SAC work and reflecting on the question What am I meant to be doing?, Bess feels agency in being able to bring all perspectives to the superintendent. She describes one situation a teacher brought to her attention that she included in the monthly superintendent report. However, Bess expressed concern that sometimes she feels being open to so many
different perspectives and including them in the report may distort the true magnitude of the whole faculty perspective. If one teacher expresses concern, it may not be representative of the entire faculty.

**Enactment**

Teachers in the Noisy without Conflict position ensure people hear their voice with the ability to make changes. Bess demonstrates her power and influence by making sure her voice is heard. She recognizes by serving on the SAC and as the SIP coordinator, she is afforded interactions with people at different hierarchical levels (teachers, administrators, and the superintendent). Bess’s voice is exemplified in her determination to be heard by the superintendent.

> You have to vie for his attention and I do. I dominate that meeting a lot of times. People, I’m sure, think, “Goodness, she is talking again,” but I feel like if you don’t jump in there and force an issue you are not going to bring it to his attention. What I am hoping, tomorrow, after the meeting to talk with him. I’m just going to stand there and wait for him and talk to him about the morale issue and maybe even the equity issue. (Interview 3, May 22, 2006)

Bess’s persistence ensures that administrators hear her voice and the voice of her fellow teachers.

Working to represent teachers at the school and district level demonstrates the authentic activity of teachers who are Noisy without Conflict. Although Bess also guides teachers curricularly (for example, working with student teachers), her teacher leadership enactments this year come in the form of school and district level policy making. Serving as both the SIP chair and as a SAC member, Bess works to represent others at the school and district level. By the end of the year, Bess recognized the impact that both her teaching in the classroom and her leadership outside the classroom had on her teacher leadership enactments.
In the past [I] always said all this other stuff on the outside was teacher leadership and not thought so much about my role in the classroom but the longer I’ve been in the classroom, the longer I’ve been a teacher, the more I realize how powerful and important just being in the classroom is too. …I think it is important not to devalue the classroom part. That is just as important as the outside stuff. I think for me it is both and I have lots of teacher leadership on the outside of the classroom. (Focus Group 2, March 14, 2006)

The Teacher

Bess. Bess considered going into constitutional law, but decided to complete a teacher certification program once she graduated from college. After teaching for three years at a small town middle school, she moved to a larger city high school. Graduate school had always been in her plan so a move closer to a university was a necessity.

Her personal drive is matched by her professional competence. Bess’s current role as SIP chair demonstrates her desire to do the best accompanied by her sometimes-frustrating push towards perfection. Extremely savvy in working with people, Bess is strategic in “getting people on board.”

Bess’s newest role is serving on the SAC where she “has to represent a faculty that I don’t always agree with so I try my best to represent them to the best of my ability the way they want me to represent them but at the same time to be true to myself.” After years of working with the faculty through the SIP, Bess found positives in all faculty members and grown even more connected to them.

Bess does consider herself a teacher leader, although she sees it as an identity that has come over time. “I think some of it came after I have stayed in the building; I’m not going anywhere. I’m sort of a, I’m not going anywhere. And I think people know that. I’m not just a fly by night.” According to Bess, “teacher leadership involves courageously making positive changes in the lives of students and their parents, making positive change sin the lives of teacher, and advancing education for the better at the district, state, national, and
international levels.” Evident from her comments, Bess believes in emphasizing the positive in all situations. Her largest frustration is the “tendency for teachers to feel like victims all the time. I have just no patience for that. Yes, I realize we have a lot on our plates, but being a victim gets you nowhere.”

Bess’s work with the SIP and her new role on the SAC have proven not only to be learning experiences but also leadership development. She has learned more about her faculty and about her superintendent through the process. Bess works hard to garner consensus and wisdom in knowing how to work with people for change. “You can’t bully your way into change so you have to build rapport, build relationships, and then through that process engender change.”

**Summary**

Bess is the only teacher who falls into the Noisy without Conflict position. Her ability to be “diplomatic in garnering support” and sensitive to different perspectives placed her in this middle position along the continuum. Teachers who are Noisy without Conflict, like Bess, make sure their voice is heard in the hierarchical structure of schools. They use their voice to speak for the teachers whom they represent at the school and district level. Bess’s unique ability to match all these criteria makes her the only teacher in this position.

**Instigator with Conflict: Jim & Mitch**

The next position along the continuum is the Instigator with Conflict. Teachers in this position are not afraid of being labeled loud but are aware of the stigma that is attached to such a label. These teachers feel a newfound sense of agency and feel responsible as teacher leaders to improve teaching and learning. Teachers who are Instigator with Conflict
will stand against an action that they see as harmful to their students or fellow teachers as well as support actions they see as beneficial. Teachers in this position use more of a language containing words like “protect.” These teachers work to protect teachers and students against unfair policies and curriculum.

**Perception**

The two teachers who are in the Instigator with Conflict position of the continuum (Mitch and Jim) have been at their school for several years and are not afraid of being labeled loud. Jim “definitely think[s] I am on the louder less passive end” (Interview 2). However, they are aware of the stigma attached to being loud. Trusted by their colleagues, Mitch and Jim must deal with conflict at times when their views differ from others.

Jim’s persistence has been evident in three situations where he exhibited advocacy. Jim has recently had to deal with expensive medical bills for his son and has been raising his voice about teacher healthcare coverage. Because of his newborn son’s medical problems, Jim has been trying to transfer sick leave to his wife who teaches in another county. He had to untangle conflicting opinions in his district that sick leave could not be transferred across districts; Jim finally was able to transfer the sick leave. In addition, Jim dealt with his district’s not wanting to reimburse teachers who had completed the M.Ed. program.

I was nice enough to be the one volunteering to make all the initial calls. They are going to yell at me because my name got signed to each of them. We all signed it but we could only send in one so it was my name. They wouldn’t answer our questions when I emailed so I would put the byline as National Board so I could see if they opened it. They would open that one. Then I would say, “My question is ______ but first I want to ask you about our tuition reimbursement.” Because Central Office would not answer our emails. So then I thought, we’ll do it this way. They would not even open it. National Board they would answer right away. Then I questioned, why aren’t you opening my other email that has these titles. We got our money and I think they are tired of hearing from us. And now they’ve been hearing from me about this insurance. My wife is on a leave of absence and we were trying to figure out how to donate sick leave across districts. I think I have a record of 86 calls I have
made to Central Office since May. Finally got it all approved. Paperwork is done. Days have been transferred. Our school donated 108 days so far. She will largely get paid for the majority of this whole school year. But that is another one that I never let it rest. Central Office and I: we’re close. When she stopped answering my emails, I started going down to Central Office in person and you know, I hate to use reputation but I’ve met Mr. Pence several times when I have won an award here or there and I just went down and said, “Look, you know who I am, what’s the problem.” I hated to go above people’s heads, but after I had dealt numerous times not getting anywhere, I just moved up. My principal is as contact; my superintendent is a contact. The school board is a contact who had to approve it so we got it done. I’ve been loud and outspoken. They probably don’t even want me to come to Central Office. My next one is I want a day that we’re getting our pay because I know the district has cut our check so we’re going to contact the state department and find out if they have sent forms to Central Office and when we find out that has been set we’ll be on the phone saying we need an exact date for when you will award our salaries for retroactive pay for August and September. That’s our next calling. We’ll start that on Monday. That’s where actually my planning is going because I’ve been contacting them all the time. We’ve got things worked out. If nothing else, they know me by name over there. Now they know I might as well just answer his calls. (Interview 1, September 30, 2005)

Mitch recognizes that “you wrinkle some feathers” with teacher leadership. People in education have opinions.

Obviously when you become a teacher leader, you are making yourself more vulnerable to criticism because you sometimes are put in positions where you have to express your opinions and those are not opinions shared by everybody. …And those are the times when you wrinkle some feathers because everybody—I don’t know anybody who doesn’t get into teaching that doesn’t have an opinion about something. (Mitch, Interview 1 & 2, September 21, 2005 & January 23, 2006)

When Mitch’s district proposed extending the school day, he circulated a faculty email and spoke with students to make sure everyone was aware of the proposal. He also attended the school board meeting to express his concern. Jim and Mitch recognize that others’ perceptions of their being loud may cause others to see them in an advocate role, and possibly seen as “trouble-makers” (Debra, Interview #1, September 30, 2005).

A newfound feeling of agency and an accompanying sense of responsibility also characterize a teacher leader in the Instigator with Conflict position. Jim and Mitch spoke of
their newfound agency as teacher leaders and subsequently, the responsibility they felt to be agents of change. Jim says taking the *Teacher Leadership and Democratic Schooling* course made him more conscious of his own agency.

You take for granted, you have mentored, you are doing leadership things helping people out but you are not bringing any cause. No one is rallying me to say I need to take a stand for this or we need to walk out here and then you have me after listening to Dr. Gummell talk on this other end of the spectrum, there are a lot of things that make you think you should be outspoken about. And I guess people are scared to get labeled in that end of it depending on if you speak, once you’ve made that comment, you, at that point, how well do you know your principal, are you tenured, where do you fall. I think that [continuum] is right on. And I think I would have been on the lower, less vocal end, even prior to the program just not even thinking about it. I would do things and help but not really think about it. Now, I have become much more irritable on the other end of speaking I have no problem throwing my name if I think it is something worth throwing out there. But before I wouldn’t have emailed school board members or called on this or put my name on this or signed a document that somebody is going to look at and say, “Hell, my god, you are a part of this.”

*(Interview 2, January 24, 2006)*

Like Jim, Mitch has increasingly been involved in leadership activities. However, he now feels more of a responsibility to lead. This year Mitch found himself attending a school board meeting to express his concern of a proposed extended day. After speaking with faculty and his students to ensure they were aware of the proposal, Mitch felt obligated to his students to attend the meeting. He felt responsible to show his students that individuals did have the agency to voice disapproval. Another new policy troubling Mitch is a portfolio element to the algebra II classroom. Because he had concerns, he volunteered to serve on the committee that was developing the portfolio.

**Enactment**

Along with their metacognitive sense of agency and responsibility, teachers in the Instigator with Conflict position also recognize their power and influence and sometimes their feelings of lack of power in enacting teacher leadership. Teachers who find themselves
in the Instigator with Conflict position along the continuum will stand against an action seen as harmful to teachers and students as well as support an action they see as beneficial. On the beneficial side, when students came to Mitch wanting to begin a club that made crafts, he thought it was a great idea if those crafts benefited others. Therefore, he agreed to be the advisor to the club now called “Crafts for Care” where students take their created crafts to local nursing homes. However, on the harmful side, Mitch attended the board meeting when he felt a proposed extended school day was not in the best interest of either students or teachers. Like Mitch, Jim and his co-department chair Mick are collecting data in support of a mathematics department member whom they feel is being unfairly targeted by the administration.

Mick and I decided we are standing up for the teachers in our department and she is being railroaded and so the first thing we figured we could do is provide a mathematical analysis to show that she is not in the bottom. In fact, there are two other people if you really want to start singling people out you need to single them out even though you are friends with them. They are coming to tenure; this is their third year so tenure will come next year so it is like they are trying to provide all the grounds for not offering them tenure and there is no justification for that. So that is Mick and I stepping on toes. So that is pretty much my day, settling one crisis for something else. That is all I do. It is crisis and damage control. (Jim, Interview 2, January 24, 2006)

Teachers who find themselves in the Instigator with Conflict position along the continuum enact teacher leadership in similar ways. Teachers work to protect teachers and students from unfair policies. When Mitch was concerned about the extended school day, he sent an email to his faculty as well as discussed it with his students. The scope of his work needed to extend beyond the classroom and therefore, attended the district school board meeting. Like Mitch, Jim felt the need to become involved when his students may be in danger of not graduating.

I think largely a lot of those things [educational association state lobbiiest] are for the teacher’s benefit, pay, insurance, dropping those workdays, a lot of those things they
are advocating for us. I don’t, I’m not saying they wouldn’t lobby for the kids but that is the educator’s association; they’re the people who are helping our working conditions. I don’t know who is the advocate for the kids; I guess that is us. (Jim, Interview 3, May 23, 2006).

**The Teachers**

*Jim.* Jim never considered himself a teacher leader before completing the M.Ed. program. He had coached several sports and academic teams and had been the mathematics department chair for years but had not considered himself a teacher leader. After completion of the M.Ed. program, he had a newfound sense of responsibility and of empowerment to utilize his assets as a high school mathematics teacher. Upon being asked if he considered himself a teacher leader, Jim responded:

> I like to think so. I never really thought so. If you had asked me that before we started this whole program, I would have said no. Absolutely no. Even though I do a lot of the same things, I don’t think I would have ever really thought about it because I’m envisioning the teacher leader as the one lobbying outside the state department: they’re doing this and they’re doing that. I see that it takes on a different role. From what I’ve seen now, I don’t even think that I’d even known what to say, what it was, until after doing this.

Jim defined a teacher leader as “someone who advocates for the rights and working/learning conditions of teachers and students. This can be done at the classroom, school, district, state, or national level.” He sees teacher leaders as individuals who need to lead by example and take an active role. Teacher leaders need to be “willing to be outspoken and walk the walk as well as talk the talk.”

Sharing the responsibility of the department chair with his co-chair, Jim credits a collective loud voice that does not allow their department to “get pushed over.” Calling his co-chair “more diplomatic,” Jim and his co-chair have stronger relationships with respective administrators so decide to work closely with that individual: Jim with the principal and his
co-chair with an assistant principal. He recalls being impressed by other teachers from the M.Ed. program who advocated for the bell schedule they wanted at their school.

I am impressed that they took the amount of time they did in voicing opinions, that to me is teacher leadership at heart. They cared enough about an issue to not just complain about it. They did something about it. They brought in the superintendent; they brought in students. I think that’s what teacher leaders are doing to make the profession better.

Jim grows increasingly frustrated with the amount of paperwork he feels infringes on his time to teach students and collaborate with colleagues. Based on low Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) scores, his district recently instigated a new procedure for charting the progress of African American and Hispanic children. Jim’s concern is not in the charting of the students. He knows someone is hired for that purpose and does not see his time well spent doing the same analysis again.

In addition to serving as the department co-chair, Jim has taken leadership roles in trying to set a precedent for transferring sick leave days across counties and for holding the district to their promised tuition reimbursement. Another example of Jim’s teacher leadership this year has been the result of another challenge in his district. To earn a level four diploma, students must complete four years of mathematics. The highest level of mathematics offered at Jim’s school is calculus. “I always envisioned that I would be teaching seniors Calculus. I never envisioned my classroom being sophomores.” So as sophomores complete the highest level of mathematics available, Jim has had to “call in every favor I ever had with the [university] math department.” While working to help the state modify this requirement for students who complete all possible high school mathematics courses early, Jim is working with the university to create an afternoon section
appropriate for high school students. Jim has not only worked with his own school but also the other high schools in the district and state to coordinate efforts to benefit students.

**Mitch.** Mitch exudes confidence as a New York native and varsity baseball coach. A potential choice of his classmates to serve as their graduation speaker, Mitch speaks with passion and drive about his convictions. He prides himself “on knowing my kids and establishing relationships” and “being real.”

Mitch did not specifically call himself a teacher leader when asked.

On terms on whether or not I believe I am a teacher leader, I know that I have leadership qualities and if I bought into, more of the system, I think I would be more of a leader in some people’s eyes. Ultimately the people who are my critics are those who I teach…. I do now think that I am a little more aware of the fact that I have other people that I work with every day that are also leaders and critics and I also know that I have needed to take a more interest in what is going on rather than just being in Room 208 every day.

Admitting leadership is a tough word to define, Mitch sees leaders in two categories.

There are some teachers who are vocal leaders; they’re the rah! rah! people in the locker room or the people who tend to take on more of the jobs in the department and are more assertive. I think there are also leaders who show up everyday and try and do their job and do it the best they can and try to do it with as little fanfare as possible. I think I’m kind of morphing from being the person who came into work every day and was committed to students and now realizing that there is another role of leadership and it is to be more involved in the bigger component that makes up the school, things like activities that the school is involved in, that the students are involved in.

“Making yourself more vulnerable to criticism” is seen as a challenge of teacher leadership. Mitch believes everyone who chooses to work in education has an opinion about education.

You can certainly alienate people at times and it is hard to make changes when you deal with the bureaucracy of the school system. Ultimately it is a business run corporation and you are a little fish at times. So, you can feel like you get beat up a lot if you put yourself out there and a lot of people don’t put themselves out there because they don’t want to feel beat up.
As a teacher with longevity, Mitch is realizing he is attempting more leadership roles.

Now I’m finding since I have been here for eight years, a senior member of this department, that I can’t just turn a blind eye to everything. I’m getting more information from the district office and then I have to share that with my team and I share that within the department and we try to come up with ideas that hopefully in the long run will benefit both sides, both students and teachers.

In addition to being the baseball coach, Mitch leads the algebra II and pre-calculus teacher teams. When approached by some female students to advise their proposed club, Mitch is now the advisor for the “Crafts for Care” club. When informed that his district would now be administering benchmark tests to algebra II, rather than complain, Mitch volunteered to chair the writing of the assessment. And when his district decided they would begin a portfolio review process for students who failed the final course test, Mitch again volunteered to sit on the committee to determine what those portfolios would look like. One of Mitch’s most recent acts of teacher leadership centers on his districts decision to add an additional period to the school day. It all started by his sending out an email to his fellow faculty members about his concern and resulted in his attending a school board meeting to voice those concerns.

So it’s a little discouraging that that happens because there is a process that we all go through and to be honest with you this is the first board meeting that I went to, but there is a process to all of this and I just felt like we were, this is an example of top down kind of business, politics for that matter. If you are going to make a change, good leaders tend to go and get the opinions of the people who are working for them and this was fed to us, as this is what we are going to do… I think that [is] being a voice of information and communicating information you know. It was important for my kids to understand that there was a seven period day being discussed and they did not know about it. Some of the numbers came back and 80% of the teachers opposed a seven period day and 65% of the students opposed a seven period day and yet we’re going to have a seven period day.
Summary

Unlike teachers in the previous three positions, teachers in the Instigator with Conflict position have a “louder,” more prominent perception and enactment of teacher leadership. Jim and Mitch both are not afraid of being labeled loud. They do, however, recognize that such a label may come with a stigma of being a “trouble-maker.” As an advocate, they feel a new sense of agency and a responsibility to serve and protect students and teachers. That feeling encourages them to stand against actions they see as harmful and for actions they see as beneficial. They work to protect teachers and students from unfair policies as a criterion for being in the Instigator with Conflict position.

Instigator creating Conflict

The fifth and final position along the continuum is the Instigator creating Conflict. This teacher leader is proud of being labeled loud and unconcerned with the attached stigma. A teacher who is an Instigator creating Conflict strongly perceives themselves as a teacher leader and acts on that perception. These teachers are not largely reactive to harmful or beneficial actions taken by others like an Instigator with Conflict, but rather create a passionate cause towards which to work. Finally, like an Instigator with Conflict, these teachers work to protect teachers and students from unfair policies.

Perception

No teachers in this study found themselves at the right extreme of the teacher leader continuum; however, based on the data, I extended from the previous four categories to the fifth position on the continuum. Although no teachers in this study are Instigators creating Conflict, they spoke of teachers who were. As the data was analyzed and reanalyzed, Jim and
Mitch sometimes found their way to this fifth position. The key difference between the fourth and fifth position is that teachers are more reactive in the fourth position and more proactive in the final position. In the fourth position, teachers deal with actions that are already in existence. In the fifth position, teachers are creating causes based on their own passions and drive to see a change. The final decision to place Jim and Mitch in position four was based on this key difference. Generally speaking, Jim and Mitch were advocating against conflicts that were already in existence rather than creating causes of their own. An Instigator creating Conflict would be proud to be labeled loud and may or may not have been a longtime faculty member. In fact, the very nature of their tendency to create change may necessitate their moving to different schools periodically.

Teachers who find themselves in the Instigator creating Conflict position along the continuum consider themselves teacher leaders and act. These teachers create causes for which they are passionate and call others to join their cause. Some teachers in the study referred to these teachers as “activists” or as Debra did initially in the study as “instigators” or “complainers” perceiving teacher leadership as two sided, one side as positive and one side as negative. As the year progressed and our conversations continued, she continually reevaluated her perception.

**Enactment**

Teachers at the Instigator creating Conflict position see themselves as active participants in the hierarchical locations. Based on their passions, they will create conflicts or work towards causes they believe will improve education. Whereas teachers in the Instigator with Conflict position often deal reactively with conflicts or issues that arise, teachers in the Instigator creating Conflict position are proactive in trying to address issues that may arise.
For example, a teacher or group of teachers may believe that creating a lesson study group would improve teacher instruction as well as comradery. Therefore, they create the structure (meeting times and class observations, for example) that would allow this implementation to occur. This example provides an example where a teacher in the Visible but not Noisy, Oliver, finds himself in the Instigator creating Conflict position for this situation. Oliver’s work to form a lesson study group exemplifies the situational nature of the continuum.

Both the teachers who fall into the Visible but not Noisy position and those who fall into the Visible with Noise position along the continuum discussed their work in guiding fellow teachers curricularly. Similarly, teacher who fall into the Instigator with Conflict position and those who fall into the Instigator creating Conflict position along the work in working to protect teachers and students from unfair policies. Like Jim and Mitch, teachers in the Instigator creating Conflict position protect against such unfair policies in the state and district, and possibly at the national level.

Summary

Even though no teacher from this sample fell into the Instigator creating Conflict position, the teachers spoke of other teacher leaders who would fall into this position. Teachers spoke of outspoken teachers, they believe exemplified teacher leadership. They spoke of teachers who were Instigator creating Conflict that sought data within their district to strengthen their argument for why a reform-based mathematics curricula was best for their students. These teachers worked within the hierarchical structure of their school and district by sharing findings with administrators and speaking to national mathematics commissions of why this curriculum best served their students and provided data to support their claims.
For this reason, the fifth position was warranted even though no teachers in this study fell into that position.

Conclusion

In response to the research question that began this study, “How do secondary mathematics teachers define, perceive, and enact teacher leadership?”, I found that teachers began the year with similar definitions of teacher leadership and ended the year with much broader, and in some cases, less certain definitions of teacher leadership. During the year, teacher perceptions and enactments of teacher leadership fell along a continuum with five positions: Visible but not Noisy, Visible with Noise, Noisy without Conflict, Instigator with Conflict, and Instigator creating Conflict. The data provided a rubric of criteria that further described each position. Three important factors to remember are that the continuum is not value-laden, situational in nature, and not necessarily negative. No one position is considered “better” than another; certain situations can move teachers to a different position along the continuum; “noise,” “instigator,” and “conflict” do not always connote negative examples. On the basis of a phenomenological lens, the sTc theoretical framework provided both a research tool to analyze the data as well as a presentation tool to organize the data.

Phenomenology concentrates on the lived experiences of people and how they perceive those experiences (Glesne, 1999; Johnson & Christensen, 2000). A phenomenological lens provides an “excellent opportunity for the participants to be involved in the evaluation process” (Lawrenz, 2001, p. 280). This study was not only for the teachers to learn more about the teacher leader phenomenon, but also for me to learn more (Ertmer, 1997). This phenomenological lens allowed us to learn alongside one another as we developed the teacher leader continuum rubric.
The sTc provided the organizational tool with which to further understand the data. As the sTc was originally used to better understand pre-service teacher development, I used it to better understand in-service teacher leader development. The last two components of the research question (perception and enactment) were further explained by the dialogic conversation, metacognition, reflexivity, and authentic activity. Through these four elements, the teachers’ lived experiences were more deeply understood across the continuum. With regard to the dialogic conversation and metacognition, teachers more specifically spoke of longevity and trust and agency and responsibility, respectively. With regard to reflexivity and authentic activity, teachers spoke more specifically about power and influence and work and scope, respectively.

The first group of teachers included those who were visible but not noisy. Making up the largest group in the study, these teachers tended to be new to their school and working to find their place among the existing culture. They did not speak quickly and risk being ostracized before they had the opportunity to become teacher leaders in that school. Seeing themselves as part of a larger group of teachers and teacher leaders provided them with support to lead themselves, although quietly. These teachers prefer to enact teacher leadership from behind the scenes, letting others be seen as the main leaders while they work in a support role. While they do like to be behind the scenes, the teachers worked to lead other teachers in curricular groups.

The second group of teachers found themselves in the Visible with Noise position along the continuum. Although quiet by preference, these teachers would use their voice when forced. They wanted to be involved in teacher leadership activities but often perceived that those activities detracted from their teaching. Others often saw the teachers’ enactments
as teacher leadership; therefore, these teachers thought of themselves as teacher leaders. Like the Visible but not Noisy position, these teachers worked to lead other teachers in curricular groups.

The third position along the continuum was the Noisy without Conflict position. Only one teacher was in this category. While diplomatic in garnering support, she was also sensitive to different perspectives of other teachers. This sensitivity helped her gain the support of her colleagues. In enacting teacher leadership, she was vocal and made sure her voice was heard throughout the hierarchical locations of the school district. As an active participant in that hierarchy, she worked to represent teachers in the school and in the district.

The fourth group of teachers along the continuum was the Instigator with Conflict. Although aware of the possible stigma attached, these two teachers voiced their opinions, loudly at times. As teacher leaders, they found both a sense of agency and an increased burden of responsibility to improve teaching and learning. This newfound responsibility provided the courage to stand against harmful actions and for beneficial actions. The scope of their work extended to the school, district, and sometimes state level.

The fifth and final group of teachers, who had no members in this study, was the Instigator creating Conflict. These teachers are proud of being labeled loud, perceive themselves as teacher leaders, and act on that perception. Teachers are advocates who create a cause based on passion and drive. Their actions are more proactive in nature than reactive as in the fourth group. Similar to the fourth group, these teachers work to protect students and teachers from unfair policies at the state, district, and national level.

All five positions along the teacher leader are necessary and all twelve participants’ teacher leadership contributions needed. The continuum is not value-laden with one position
being more valued than another. Inherent in the fluid nature of a continuum and exhibited by 
teachers such as Debra and Oliver in this study, different situations can move teachers to 
different positions along the continuum. As we learn more about teacher leadership and its 
development, this continuum informs how teachers themselves view teacher leadership. 
Understanding how teachers define, perceive, and enact teacher leader deepens the 
conversation around how to develop more teacher leaders in the teaching profession and a 
potential partial solution to improving teacher retention.
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS

This chapter offers a summary of the study, implications, trustworthiness and limitations, implications and directions for future research. The summary of the study reviews the purpose, the methodology, and the findings. Next, trustworthiness and study limitations are discussed. Then, implications for teachers, administrators, and teacher educators are presented. Finally, I conclude with directions for future research.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to investigate the definitions, perceptions, and enactments of teacher leadership from the perspective of secondary mathematics teachers. I began the study with the research question *How do secondary mathematics teachers define, perceive, and enact teacher leadership?* This question remained the guiding question throughout the study. The goal was to include the voices of teachers in the operationalization of the phrase *teacher leadership*, and specifically, the voices of secondary mathematics teachers.

sTc provided the theoretical framework for this study because it acknowledges the intersection of the social, transformative, and constructivist nature in teacher leadership. The four-fold framework of the dialogic conversation, authentic activity, metacognition, and authentic activity provide appropriate lenses with which to view the voices of the teachers in this study. The understanding of teacher leadership is a complicated endeavor and sTc not
only honors the complicated process, but also offers four concrete categories to help organize the complication (Rodriquez & Berryman, 2002).

A phenomenological research methodology was used because it allows the researcher to investigate a phenomenon through the personal experiences of the participants (Glesne, 1999). The researcher’s personal experience in the phenomena increases the researcher’s awareness of the phenomena while examining it through the participants’ perspective (Ertmer, 1997). The primary data collection method for phenomenological studies is interviewing (Johnson & Christensen, 2000). In addition to interviews, I used focus groups, a teacher leader narrative, and a pre- and post-survey to gather data.

The findings showed that while most teachers began the year with the same definition of teacher leadership, they ended the year with much broader, less certain definitions. I was initially surprised at the definition similarity as the literature was clear that teacher leadership definitions were typically ambiguous (Murphy, 2005). I believe this similarity was a result of their all graduating from the same M.Ed. program. As the year progressed, however, teachers became more aware of the complexities of teacher leadership and their definition changes reflected that awareness.

Unlike the definition similarities, perceptions and enactments of teacher leadership proved more diverse. Soon after the first interview, a continuum became apparent where the teacher discussions of perceptions and enactments tended to fall. Much of the remainder of the year of data collection and analysis was spent with the teachers working to refine the continuum. Teacher perceptions of teacher leadership were best framed by the sTc elements of the dialogic conversation and metacognition. Teacher perceptions of teacher leadership began with the perception that part of teacher leadership was remaining in the building for
longer than two years. At the other end of the continuum, teachers perceived teacher leaders as those who not only were tenured faculty, but also faculty who would voice their opinions, loudly if necessary. Teacher perceptions of teacher leadership along the continuum began with seeing themselves as a part of a larger group of teacher leaders and feeling more like a teacher leader when others saw them as teacher leaders. The other extreme, however, on the continuum not only perceives themselves as a teacher leader, but also feels the responsibility to act. That responsibility to act leads to the enactment of teacher leadership. Teacher enactments were best viewed through the sTc elements of reflexivity and authentic activity.

On the left side of the continuum, teachers would rather lead from behind the scenes. As the continuum progresses towards the right, teacher enactments become more apparent and noisy. Teachers have a passion for a cause, for example a mathematics curriculum they believe is best for students, and become a driving force towards ensuring that curriculum’s implementation. Lastly, teacher enactments reflect the work and scope of their activities. Teachers on the left side of the continuum tend to work more in their schools guiding teachers curricularly, for example, as the geometry course lead teacher. Moving further along the continuum, teacher enactments expand to outside their schools into their counties and districts, for example, serving on the district superintendent’s advisory council or collaborating with teachers across the state to offer appropriate mathematical courses to students who have advanced past the typical high school offerings.

One point of interest from the findings that must be mentioned is related to gender. The two individuals who fall on the right end of the continuum, Mitch and Jay, are both male. Differences in gender and leadership have been noted (Bass et. al, 1996; Bass et. al, 1994; Parker, 2005). Although differences are small, significant differences do exist. In a
meta-analysis conducted by Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt (2000), a review of literature comparing male to female leadership styles found that “most differences were relatively small, but there was a tendency for women to be more interpersonally oriented, less autocratic, and more participative” (Avolio et. al., 2004, p. 283). Bass et al. (1996) also found that women were rated as more transformational than their male equivalents. This study supports these previous findings as the women tended to be more relational and less autocratic whereas the men tended to be more instigative. However, it is important to point out that the other two male participants, Oliver and Miles, fell into the visible but not noisy position.

**Trustworthiness**

In qualitative studies where interviews are the primary data source, trustworthiness is imperative. “Trustworthiness of the human instrument is assessable in much the same way as is the trustworthiness of any paper-and-pencil instrument” (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, 192) Participants may misunderstand a written question in much the same way they may misunderstand a verbal question. A “yes” response to a survey question may be as easily misunderstood as a “yes” response to an interview question. Second, “the human instrument is as capable of refinement as any other variety” (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, 194). Furthermore, the human instrument has the “ability to learn and profit from experiences” (p. 194) and even the Educational Testing Services find that extensive trial and revision is needed before an instrument can be regarded as minimally acceptable in the paper-and-pencil realm.

Various procedures were employed to insure the accuracy of the results. Triangulation involved the comparison of multiple data sources. For example, responses
from first interviews were triangulated with the second two interview responses, focus group responses, teacher leadership narratives, and pre- and post-survey responses. The second technique used was peer debriefing. My advisor critically reviewed the study report throughout the data collection and analysis process. Member checking was used as a third technique. Interview transcripts were emailed to every participant to allow for clarification. Each narrative in Chapter 4 was reviewed by its respective teacher and changes were made based on their feedback. Finally, the final report was emailed to all participants to ensure the researcher had accurately captured their voices.

**Limitations**

Four limitations of the study are noted and described in further detail below. The first limitation that is also an advantage is the two-year relationship I, the researcher, had with the participants upon beginning the study. Each participant had been a member of a cohort of graduate students with whom I had worked. The limitation is that having been with the participants for such an extended period, I have formed relationships and opinions. In caring for each participant, I may have an “idealized” view of them or a “protector” stance around wanting to keep them safe that may interfere with my objectivity towards the data. The advantage is that being with the participants for such an extended period, I have formed relationships and opinions. The participants already knew and trusted me. We have spent time in classes and in dialogue, both written and verbal, so I was familiar with them as individuals as I began my work.

Some researchers have acknowledged the imperfection of self-reporting (House, Shane, & Herold, 1996; Morrison, 1994). I do not argue that just as pencil-and-paper and human instruments are imperfect, so too are human reporters. Being objective about one self
is probably just as unattainable as a perfect data collection tool when it comes to understanding and perceptions. However, the goal of my study is to listen to how teachers define, perceive, and enact teacher leadership, so self-reporting is not only unavoidable, but also the basis of my study.

A third limitation comes in the form of implicit theory (Rosenburg & Jones, 1972). The implicit theory, like Glesne (1999) addresses, recognizes the power dynamic in the research process. As one is deemed the researcher and the other is deemed the researcher, the researcher is seen to be “looking for something” or “holding all the answers” and the researched implicitly feels that he/she must help the researcher find what he/she is looking for or offer the “correct answers” to the researcher. When the participant becomes preoccupied with wanting to be as helpful as possible to the researcher or afraid of giving the wrong answers, that preoccupation may distract them from simply answering interview questions honestly.

A fourth limitation is the early emergence of the Teacher Leader Continuum. The early emergence of the continuum may have framed interview and focus group questions that resulted in furthering its evolution more intentionally than naturally.

Finally, although part of the nature of qualitative research, the mathematics teachers with whom I worked are a convenience sample in the sense that they are all graduates of the same program at the same university. The findings of my study will be specific to their experiences and therefore, not generalizable to other groups.

**Implications**

As the pressure for improved mathematics teaching and learning grows, teacher leaders are being called to step forward (NCEE, 1983; NCLB, 2001). In order for teachers to
meet this call, teachers must better understand teacher leadership. Similarly, administrators, and teacher educators must also better understand it. Others have offered helpful teacher leader continuums that address teachers from across content areas (Lambert, 2003). Some have begun to look more closely at how content areas affect teacher leadership (Sato, 2002).

Unlike Lambert’s continuum with the goal of all teacher moving to its right extreme, this continuum merely describes teacher leaders in their current position. Like Lambert’s continuum, the Teacher Leader Continuum Rubric advances the literature by involving teacher voices and understandings into the development of the field. This continuum rubric allows teachers, administrators, and policy makers to determine the landscape of teacher leaders in their schools and utilize their strengths to improve the teaching and learning of mathematics.

Furthermore, this study offers a teacher leader continuum for mathematics teacher leaders. It used the voices of mathematics teachers to provide concrete examples of secondary mathematics teacher leadership. Through a better understanding of mathematics teacher leadership, teachers can assume leadership roles. Administrators can better articulate to teachers what their expectations are for teacher leaders. Teacher educators can better prepare pre-service mathematics teachers to become teacher leaders.

**Direction for Future Research**

While this study begins to answer the question of how teacher leadership looks with respect to secondary mathematics teachers, there is still much to be learned. During data collection, one participant stated she was more “confused” about teacher leadership now than she was at the beginning of the year. As we spoke further, I discovered what she meant by “confused.” Now that she had a year to think about, talk about, and observe teacher
leadership, she began to realize its complexities. Feeling we were just reaching the “meaty part” of teacher leadership, the teachers determined that teacher leadership was “not an absolute” and heavily depended on the situation. Much like pre-service teachers go through a process to become teachers, in-service teachers experience a process in becoming teacher leaders. Based on these findings, future research that continues to involve mathematics teachers in the determining this process is needed. As the teaching and learning of mathematics is in crisis with under qualified mathematics teachers in classrooms, more research is needed on how to build mathematics teacher leaders, support them in the classroom and help them cultivate other highly qualified mathematics teachers (Copland & Knapp, 2006). Ultimately, research in mathematics teacher leadership needs to be connected to student achievement and answer the questions What skills do mathematics teacher leaders need in order to improve the teaching and learning of mathematics for all students? How does the support of mathematics teacher leaders impact student achievement?

Another direction for future research would center on the asynchronous online discussion forum that was available to the teachers throughout the study but never used. Therefore, more research is needed to investigate the impact of asynchronous online discussion forums on mathematics teacher leadership education, both at the pre-service and in-service levels. My past research on asynchronous online discussion forums and teacher education has shown four themes in the literature: enhancing teacher reflection, reducing teacher isolation, extending classroom discussions, and increasing mentoring opportunities. Future research is needed to build on these findings and the unique needs in the mathematics community. For example, during the M.Ed. program, teachers often were unable to fully represent their thoughts because the online platform was unable to support mathematical
symbols and notation, only text. Therefore, possible research questions include: How can asynchronous online discussion forums reduce isolation in remote learning communities? How can mathematical software be used to enhance online discussions, which have previously only been able to support words and not mathematical symbols often needed in discussions around mathematical ideas?

A third area of future research would be to better illustrate the difference between a mathematics teacher leader and another content area teacher leader. The teaching of mathematics is a unique endeavor and requires a specific skill set (NCTM, 1991). In the current educational environment, the high stakes testing of mathematics also places a level of responsibility on mathematics teacher leaders. Mathematics teacher leaders in a school that is high performing may look different than their counterparts in a school that is low performing. Future research is needed to determine how these differences affect mathematics teacher leaders.

**Postscript: What I Learned**

A Vincentian man told me in the course of an interview, “I tell you things I’ve never told myself.” Given the amount of time qualitative researchers spend with their respondents, the research experience can affect the respondents’ thoughts and behaviors. Questions raise consciousness. Respondents learn about themselves, you, and the research. (Glesne 1999, p. 92)

People, and more specifically teachers, rarely can find the time to reflect. In the hectic hours of their day, they think quickly and construct theories in different ways than researchers who have more time to think (Ball & Bass, 2000; Lampert, 1990). With the constant call to connect theory to practice, educational researchers must include practitioners in the research process so that theory and practice develop together. My research question centered on gaining a better understanding of how secondary mathematics teachers define,
perceive, and enact teacher leadership. The goal of my research was to benefit the research community and the participating teachers in the study: the research community by furthering the understanding of teacher leadership and the participating teachers by furthering their self-understanding of teacher leadership. What I did not expect was the great amount I would learn and grow as an individual during this work. Mitch concluded our second interview, “it is good to think about our goals and reflect upon it because during the grind, it’s just the grind.” Researchers, too, experience the grind and these twelve mathematics teachers willingly took time away from the grind to share their time and thoughts with me. And for that, I am truly grateful.
Appendix A

Four essential elements of Rost (1991) leadership definition:

1. The relationship is based on influence
   
   (a) The influence relationship is multidirectional
   
   (b) The influence behaviors are noncoercive

2. Leaders and followers are the people in this relationship
   
   (a) The followers are active
   
   (b) There must be more than one follower, and there is typically more than one leader in the relationship
   
   (c) The relationship is inherently unequal because the influence patterns are unequal

3. Leaders and followers intend real changes
   
   (a) Intend means that the leaders and followers purposefully desire certain changes
   
   (b) Real means that the changes the leaders and followers intend must be substantive and transforming
   
   (c) Leaders and followers do not have to produce changes in order for leadership to occur. They intend changes in the present; the changes take place in the future if they take place at all
   
   (d) Leaders and followers intend several changes at once

4. Leaders and followers develop mutual purposes
   
   (a) The mutuality of these purposes is forged in the noncoercive influence relationship
   
   (b) Leaders and followers develop purposes, not goals
   
   (c) The intended changes reflect, not realize, their purposes
   
   (d) The mutual purposes become common purposes (p. 102).
Appendix B

The Five Propositions of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards

Proposition #1: Teachers are committed to students and their learning.
- Teachers recognize individual differences in their students and adjust their practice accordingly.
- Teachers have an understanding of how students develop and learn.
- Teachers treat students equitably.
- Teachers' mission extends beyond developing the cognitive capacity of their students.

Proposition #2: Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students.
- Teachers appreciate how knowledge in their subjects is created, organized and linked to other disciplines.
- Teachers command specialized knowledge of how to convey a subject to students.
- Teachers generate multiple paths to knowledge.

Proposition #3: Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning.
- Teachers call on multiple methods to meet their goals.
- Teachers orchestrate learning in group settings.
- Teachers place a premium on student engagement.
- Teachers regularly assess student progress.
- Teachers are mindful of their principal objectives.

Proposition #4: Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience.
- Teachers are continually making difficult choices that test their judgment.
- Teachers seek the advice of others and draw on education research and scholarship to improve their practice.

Proposition #5: Teachers are members of learning communities.
- Teachers contribute to school effectiveness by collaborating with other professionals.
- Teachers work collaboratively with parents.
- Teachers take advantage of community resources. (NBPTS, 2006)
Appendix C

NCTM Professional Standards for Teaching Mathematics

Standards for Teaching Mathematics:

- **Standard 1**  Worthwhile mathematical tasks
- **Standard 2**  The teacher’s role in discourse
- **Standard 3**  Students’ role in discourse
- **Standard 4**  Tools for enhancing discourse
- **Standard 5**  Learning environment
- **Standard 6**  Analysis of teaching and learning

Standards for the Evaluation of the Teaching of Mathematics:

- **Standard 1**  The evaluation cycle
- **Standard 2**  Teachers as participants in evaluation
- **Standard 3**  Sources of information
- **Standard 4**  Mathematical concepts, procedures, and connections
- **Standard 5**  Mathematics as problem solving, reasoning, and communication
- **Standard 6**  Promoting mathematical disposition
- **Standard 7**  Assessing students’ understanding of mathematics
- **Standard 8**  Learning environments

Standards for the Professional Development of Teachers of Mathematics:

- **Standard 1**  Experiencing good mathematical teaching
- **Standard 2**  Knowing mathematics and school mathematics
- **Standard 3**  Knowing students as learners of mathematics
- **Standard 4**  Knowing mathematical pedagogy
- **Standard 5**  Developing as a teacher of mathematics
- **Standard 6**  The teacher’s role in professional development

Standards for the Support and Development of Mathematics Teachers and Teaching:

- **Standard 1**  Responsibilities of policy makers in government, business, and industry
- **Standard 2**  Responsibilities of schools and school systems
- **Standard 3**  Responsibilities of colleges and universities
- **Standard 4**  Professional organizations’ responsibilities (NCTM, 1991)
## Teacher Leader Survey
**Developed by the Center for Teacher Leadership**  
**Virginia Commonwealth University**  
http://www.ctl.vcu.edu

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Choices (Check appropriate choice)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>What is your gender?</td>
<td>Female, Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Number of years teaching experience</td>
<td>0-5 years, 6-10 years, 11-15 years, 16-20 years, 21-25 years, 26-30 years, 30+ years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>To the best of your knowledge, what percent of students in your school receive free or reduced lunch?</td>
<td>50% or more, 16% to 49%, 15% or less, Not applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>City and State in which you work</td>
<td>Disney Teacher, Milken Educator, National Board Certified Teacher, Presidential Math and Science Awardee, Teacher of the Year, Other (please specify below)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Please select the category for which you have received recognitions. Check any that apply.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>If you have received recognition in other areas, please specify.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please provide information about yourself in the area of teacher leadership from items 7-19.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7  I consider myself a teacher leader.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8  Others consider me a teacher leader.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9  I have a clear definition of a teacher leader.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 I have the knowledge and skills needed to</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
provide effective professional development for
teachers.

11 I have the knowledge and skills needed to be an
effective public speaker.

12 I have the knowledge and skills needed to write
curriculum for my content areas.

13 I have the knowledge and skills so work with
adult learners.

14 I am knowledgeable of the needs of educational
policymakers and skilled at discussing
educational policy with them.

15 I have the knowledge and skills needed to work
collaboratively with parents, business leaders,
and other educational stakeholders.

16 I am knowledgeable of my states’ procedures
for adopting educational policy

17 I am knowledgeable of the No Child Left
Behind Act.

18 I have the knowledge and skills needed to serve
as a mentor for new teachers.

19 I have the knowledge and skills needed to serve
as a coach for experienced teachers.

Items 20-30 are characteristics that others have identified as critical for effective teacher
leaders. Please select the response that most closely corresponds with YOUR view of the
importance of each item.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Statement</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Teacher leaders must be excellent teachers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 21   | Teacher leaders must be articulate about their
teaching practice. |
| 22   | Teacher leaders must be advocates for students
and the teaching profession. |
| 23   | Teacher leaders must be knowledgeable about
current education issues. |
| 24   | Teacher leaders must know how to conduct
action research in their classrooms |
| 25   | Teacher leaders must understand how public
opinion is shaped, how policy is created, and
how to insert the teacher’s voice into that
process. |
| 26   | Teacher leaders must have strong
communication and listening skills. |
| 27   | Teacher leaders must know how to access and |
use tools of communication and resource acquisition (i.e. grant writing, research, media training.)

28 Teacher leaders must know how to work with policymakers.

29 Teacher leaders must know how to work with the media.

30 Teacher leaders must understand the needs of adult learners and how to work with colleagues as mentors and coaches.

Please provide information about your current and past leadership experience for items 31-41.

<p>| 31 | Please select all of the areas in which you have played or currently play a leadership role. | Teacher Recruitment | Teacher Preparation | Curriculum Development | Mentoring New Teachers | Coaching Experienced Teachers | Staff/Professional Development | Action Research | Data Driven Instruction | Educational Policy and Issues | Outreach to Parents and Communities | Grade Level Chair/Department Chair/Team Leader | Advisor to Policymaking Group |
| 32 | Please write any leadership roles you have played or currently play that were not included in the list above. | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 33 | Have you received training for ALL of the leadership roles you have played? | Yes | No |
| 34 | If you answered “NO” to the question above, please identify the leadership roles for which you have received NO TRAINING. | Teacher Recruitment | Teacher Preparation | Curriculum Development | Mentoring New Teachers | Coaching Experienced Teachers | Staff/Professional Development | Action Research | Data Driven Instruction | Educational Policy and Issues | Outreach to Parents and Communities | Grade Level Chair/Department Chair/Team Leader |
| 35 | Please write in leadership roles for which you receive no training but were not listed above. | Advisor to Policymaking Group |
| 36 | Please select the TOP THREE areas in which you have NOT served as a teacher leader but would live to serve as one. | Teacher Recruitment |
| | | Teacher Preparation |
| | | Curriculum Development |
| | | Mentoring New Teachers |
| | | Coaching Experienced Teachers |
| | | Staff/Professional Development |
| | | Action Research |
| | | Data Driven Instruction |
| | | Educational Policy and Issues |
| | | Outreach to Parents and Communities |
| | | Grade Level Chair/Department Chair/Team Leader |
| | | Advisor to Policymaking Group |
| 37 | Please select the TOP THREE aspects of teacher leadership of which you feel you need additional training. | Public Speaking |
| | | Working With Adult Learners |
| | | Understanding Educational Policy and Issues |
| | | Mentoring New Teachers |
| | | Coaching Experienced Teachers |
| | | Leading Groups |
| | | Interpreting Educational Research |
| | | Facilitating Workshops |
| | | Writing Curriculum |
| | | Working Collaboratively With Parents |
| | | Working Collaboratively With Community |
| | | Working Collaboratively With Educational Policymakers |
| 38 | Please write in any areas of teacher leadership for which you need additional training that were not listed above. | |
| 39 | In your experience, what has been the greatest barrier to teacher leadership? | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>If you could attend a workshop on teacher leadership, what topics would you want to be addressed?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>What experience, if any, have you had a teacher leader in the area of educational policymaking?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>In the space below, please write your personal definition of a TEACHER LEADER.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix E

Teacher Leader Interview 1 Protocol

1. Tell me about yourself.
   - Background, education, experience, etc.
   - What you do outside of school
   - Strengths, weakness

2. Tell me about your history as a teacher.
   - Why you wanted to become a teacher?
   - Why you pursued your masters in education?
   - Largest frustration as a teacher?
   - Biggest joy as a teacher?

3. How would you define teacher leadership (how would you explain it to someone else)?

4. What do you see as the benefits and challenges of teacher leadership?

5. Describe a teacher leader. [or WALK ME THROUGH THE DAY IN A LIFE OF A TEACHER LEADER.]

6. How you see yourself as a teacher leadership? [or DO YOU SEE YOURSELF AS A TEACHER LEADER? WHY or WHY NOT?]

7. Do you see yourself participating in any “teacher leadership” activities this year? If so, what? What do you foresee as the potential benefits and obstacles?
Appendix F

Focus Group 1 Protocol

*How do secondary mathematics teachers define, perceive, and enact teacher leadership?*

1. Repeat research question and ask teachers what they see as the difference between “define” or “definition” and “perceive” or “perception”?

**definition:** a statement of the exact meaning of a word, especially in a dictionary

**perception:** the state of being or process of becoming aware of something in such a way

2. What have you done since our last conversation that you would consider to be teacher leadership? Why do you consider that teacher leadership?

3. What do you see other people do that you consider teacher leadership? Why? Would you do that? Why or why not?

4. I found it interesting that so many of you mentioned other people in your narrative as well as in your interview. Why do you think that that is? How do other people (colleagues and administrators) see you as a teacher leader?

5. **What do you do during the day other than teach? (may be in or out of the classroom)**

6. How do you think mathematics teacher leaders are different (if they are) from other teacher leaders? The same? And then how are they different from each other?

7. How do you think secondary teacher leaders are different (if they are) from elementary teacher leaders? The same? And then how are they different from each other?

8. How do you think secondary mathematics teacher leaders are different (if they are) from other teacher leaders? The same? And then how are they different from each other?

9. Researchers have classified teacher leadership into different categories like informal and formal. What would you consider formal vs. informal teacher leader roles? (teacher research, lesson study) What other categories do you see of teacher leadership? Why?

Other things to talk about:

*some see teacher leadership as quiet and focusing on positive while others see it more of an activist role…. how do you see it and why?*
Appendix G

Teacher Leader Interview 2 Protocol

BEGIN WITH BELOW SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

1. What do you do during the day other than teach? (may be in or out of the classroom)

2. What have you done since our last conversation that you would consider to be teacher leadership? Why do you consider that teacher leadership?

3. Some see teacher leadership as quiet and focusing on positive while others see it as a nosier activist role…. how do you see it and why?

4. Some researchers say all teachers are teacher leaders while others say that “good teachers who influence others” are teacher leaders? What do you think and why?

4. How do you think mathematics teacher leaders are different (if they are) from other teacher leaders? The same? And then how are they different from each other?

5. How do you think secondary teacher leaders are different (if they are) from elementary teacher leaders? The same? And then how are they different from each other?

6. How do you think secondary mathematics teacher leaders are different (if they are) from other teacher leaders? The same? And then how are they different from each other?

Sally: Ask about how department meetings are going with different focus

Anna: Ask about new job and do you think you have to be a teacher to be a teacher leader?
Appendix H

Focus Group 2 Protocol

1. How did your experience in the M.Ed. program affect your ideas about teacher leadership? Class conversations? Readings? Assignments?

2. A number of you have talked about teaching and teaching responsibilities as related to teacher leadership. What, if any, teaching or teaching responsibilities do you consider to be teacher leadership? For example, is teaching a part of teacher leadership or just part of your job? Could answers be different depending on the person or situation?

3. In continuing to develop the idea of a continuum as a way to represent the range of teacher leadership perceptions among the cohort, it seems I am hearing that people see it as more than one dimensional and also dependent on the situation. Or if continuum is not the best way to represent the perception range. One person suggested a circle and the degrees of teacher leadership.

4. (a) A school system was changing and one man was asked if he considered himself an activist? He said yes because he placed people of color in key administrative roles. Have you had any experiences like that … not loud, but affecting change?
(b) In talking about the continuum, it seems that the activist, louder end of the continuum is seen as better teacher leadership. What is your thinking around that value statement?

5. It seems sometimes when people describe teacher leadership, it sounds like they are describing good teaching. How do you see them as different if you do?

6. Do you learn from your teaching? Do you learn from things you do that you consider teacher leadership? How? Do you ever get bored with either (teaching or teacher leadership)? If not, how do you feel about both (teaching and teacher leadership)?

7. time = teacher leadership?
Appendix I

Teacher Leader Interview 3 Protocol

1. Questions specific to one person
   1. What local, state, and national positions have you held?
   2. Ask Oliver, Sally, and Bev about National Board and Teacher Leadership?
   3. Ask Oliver about Teacher Leadership at previous school?
   4. Ask Sally about “national conference for math TL last summer” that she spoke of in her narrative?
   5. Ask Jim if teacher from Teacher Leader Narrative was hired in August for math department position?
   6. Ask Anna about Emerging Leaders program for state educators association?

2. Offer these teacher leader roles or activities as possible focus for following questions. Allow teachers to offer another role or activity if another exists they prefer.

JIM: Sophomores in calculus dilemma
MITCH: School board attendance
MILES: Goroo for Algebra I teachers
SALLY: New responsibilities as department chair
CIARA: Action research or Calculator push
HANNAH: District math situation or EF Hutton role at school
DINAH: Individual Growth Plan about interviewing minority parent
DEBRA: Not signing School Improvement Plan or sending email about paper
ANNA: Emerging Leaders or National Board experience or new job?
BESS: Superintendent Advisory Council or School Improvement Plan chair
BEV: Lead teacher for geometry teachers
OLIVER: Work with lesson study group

QUESTIONS TO ASK EVERYONE:

1. [dialogic conversation] What is the meaning of that? Thinking about conversations held in relation to that activity, talk about deeper meanings behind what was said (on your part and on the part of those you were in contact with). Also, how does trust play a role in that situation?
2. [authentic activity] What was done? How has this situation been beneficial to you (if it has) and in thinking about future situations that might arise, how could this situation be beneficial? What have/are you learning?
3. [metacognition] Who is in power? Where is your agency? How has this situation allowed you to move closer to thinking about your own power and learning? How have you reflected on the situation or if not, how would you reflect on it now?
4. [reflexivity] How did you think about it? How do you think your own experiences, beliefs and educational level affected your dealing with the situation? How will what you learned from this situation help you to work towards future change?
3. Reread Teacher Leader narrative and offer reactions? How has your thinking changed or has it? Why?

4. Reactions to re-reading transcripts? Thinking that has changed or not? Why? Other experiences you have had around teacher leadership to add?

5. At the last focus group, someone ended by saying they were confused about teacher leadership. They started out the year feeling like they had a pretty good grasp of it, but now they were confused. What are your thoughts around that statement?

6. Read teacher leader profile: Do you feel it is an accurate description of you?

7. Complete Teacher Leader Survey
REFERENCES


