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A Qualitative Investigation of the Development of Teacher Leaders in the Implementation of Grade-Level and/or Departmentalized Professional Learning Communities Across Eight Parochial Schools

By:

Adrienne Leigh Govero

A Dissertation submitted to the Education Faculty of Lindenwood University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

degree of

Doctor of Education

School of Education

A Qualitative Investigation of the Development of Teacher Leaders and Administrator Guidance in the Implementation of Grade-Level and/or Departmentalized Professional Learning Communities Across Eight Parochial Schools

by:

Adrienne Leigh Govero

This dissertation has been approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education

at Lindenwood University by the School of Education

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Declaration of Originality

I do hereby declare and attest to the fact that this is an original study based solely upon my own scholarly work here at Lindenwood University and that I have not submitted it for any other college or university course or degree here or elsewhere.

Full Legal Name: Adrienne Leigh Govero

Signature: ____Adrienne Leigh Govero _____ Date: __01/07/2022_

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Abstract

The purpose of this qualitative methods research is to study the development of teacher leaders in the implementation of grade-level and/or departmentalized professional learning communities across eight parochial schools. When working with teacher leaders in the leading of grade-level or departmentalized professional learning teams, there are many facets involved in the growth and development of teacher leaders. Teacher leaders will be given the guidance and tools to lead their grade-level or departmentalized professional learning team effectively. Teacher leaders will use the knowledge and skills they possess related to leadership and professional learning communities with the help of building administrators to engage their professional learning teams in talking about teaching and learning within their own classrooms. They will develop structured meetings, present current research, and guide collaborative discussions that bring their teams together in collaboration of the best practices in education and the problems of practice within their own classrooms. The study will identify the teacher leaders' leadership skills and effectiveness of their roles as teacher leaders in their individual professional learning communities.

Research Question 1: How do teacher leaders grow and develop their leadership skills, based on Domains I and III, with the exception of F in Domain III, of the Teacher Leader Model Standards developed by the Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium (2010), in collaborating with building principals and professional learning community teams among teachers in grade-level or departmentalized teams through participation in a teacher leader program?

Research Question 2: How do teacher leaders utilize their leadership skills to effectively collaborate with their professional learning communities, based on Domains I and III, with the exception of F in Domain III, of the Teacher Leader Model Standards developed by the Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium (2010), in collaborating with building principals and professional learning community teams among teachers in grade-level or departmentalized teams through participation in a teacher leader program?

The qualitative results will be identified by examining and comparing the teacher leader surveys-pre-teacher leader program, administrator observation and feedback forms, and teacher leader surveys-post-teacher leader program. The results will show that teacher leaders grow and develop their leadership skills, based on Domains I and III, with the exception of F in Domain III, of the Teacher Leader Model Standards developed by the Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium (2010), when collaborating with building principals and professional learning community teams among teachers in grade-level or departmentalized teams through participation in a teacher leader program. In addition, the results will show that teacher leaders utilize their leadership skills to effectively collaborate with their professional learning communities, based on Domains I and III, with the exception of F in Domain III, of the Teacher Leader Model Standards developed by the Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium (2010), in collaborating with building principals and professional learning community teams among teachers in grade-level or departmentalized teams through participation in a teacher leader program.

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Chapter One: Introduction

Professional learning communities have become an integral part of many of our states' schools. However, because of the dynamics of our parochial schools, professional learning communities have been a challenge to introduce into their professional development practices. For some parochial school settings, as focused on in this study, professional learning communities have become a part of their practices, but because of the dynamics of joining educators, not just within a school but with multiple school, there is a great need to identify teachers who can assume the role of teacher leaders in the professional learning communities.

Statement of Issue

In the researcher's role as building principal, the theories and practices of educational leadership have been instrumental in the development of common curriculum and collaboration of educators among eight distinct parochial schools. Historically, the researcher has experienced parochial school systems as individualized institutions supporting teachers working in isolation. With the implementation of professional learning communities and the transformation of the parochial institution moving from an isolated system to one that is now interconnected, the researcher has found herself questioning her current application of leadership theory and practice when working to create a unified system and support her teachers.

Purpose of the Dissertation

The purpose of this study is to investigate the development of teacher leaders in the implementation of grade-level and/or departmentalized professional learning communities across eight parochial schools. When working with teacher leaders in the

leading of grade-level or departmentalized professional learning teams, there are many facets involved in the growth and development of teacher leaders. Teacher leaders need to be given the guidance and tools to lead their grade-level or departmentalized professional learning teams effectively. Teacher leaders will need to use the knowledge and skills they possess related to leadership and professional learning communities with the help of building administrators to engage their professional learning teams in talking about teaching and learning within their own classrooms. They will need to develop structured meetings, present current research, and guide collaborative discussions that bring their teams together in collaboration of the best practices in education and the problems of practice within their own classrooms. This study will identify the teacher leaders' leadership skills and effectiveness of their roles as teacher leaders in their individual professional learning communities.

Rationale

As related to the Statement of the Issue, in the researcher's role as building principal, the theories and practices of educational leadership have been instrumental in the development of common curriculum and collaboration of educators among eight distinct parochial schools. Historically, the researcher has experienced parochial school systems as individualized institutions supporting teachers working in isolation. With the implementation of professional learning communities and the transformation of the parochial institution moving from an isolated system to one that is now interconnected, the researcher has found herself questioning her current application of leadership theory and practice when working to create a unified system and support her teachers.

Through this study, the researcher will do a qualitative investigation of the development of teacher leaders in regards to the implementation of professional learning communities among eight distinct parochial schools. While the administration and faculties have been involved in a modified Professional Learning Community model and have been researching the new Common Core State Standards, the questions of "where are we heading now" and "what do we do" have been at the forefront of our principals' and teachers' minds. One of the many facets of being an administrator is being able to identify and utilize teachers who possess leadership skills within their buildings. Administrators must also foster the growth of teacher leaders and provide them with the tools to lead a collaborating group of educators within a professional learning community.

According to Michael Fullan (2002),

> Creating and sharing knowledge is central to effective leadership. Information, of which we have a glut, only becomes knowledge through a social process. For this reason, relationships and professional learning communities are essential. Organizations must foster knowledge giving as well as knowledge seeking. (Fullan, 2002, para. 13)

Educational leaders in administrative positions who support and encourage creating teacher leaders, require a change in leadership skills that promote collaboration. Sheninger (2011) stated, "Education has been moving from a profession that hoards ideas, lessons, and successful strategies to one that is willing to share this bounty with as many passionate educators as possible" (para. 7). The researcher has experienced a shift in the current professional learning communities function as it pertains to their own

professional growth. To help hinder the resistance to continuation of the professional learning community, a focus will be placed on the guidance and fostering of selected teacher leaders by building administrators to aide in and promote the collaboration among peer teachers within the professional learning community. According to Searby and Shaddix (2008), "The guiding paradigm is that the principal is only one leader in the school community, and schools in which teacher are becoming significant leaders have structures in place that provide opportunities for broad participation in teams" (para 5). The researcher believes as administrators provide guidance and professional development to the selected teacher leaders, the already existing professional learning communities will engage in a type of collaboration that offers the possibility of growth to all educators in the professional learning community. Hord and Hirsh (2009) stated that the principal's role in fostering and supporting a learning community must include an emphasis that teachers know that they can succeed together, expect teachers to keep knowledge current, guide communities towards self-governance, make information accessible, teach discussion and decision-making skills, show teachers what the research says, and take time to build trust amongst the professional learning communities (pp. 22-23). According to Harrison and Killion (2007), the teacher leader will assume several roles while leading the grade-level or departmentalized professional learning community, including resource provider, instructional and curriculum specialist, classroom supporter, learning facilitator, mentor, school leader, data coach, the catalyst for change, and the most important, the learner (pp. 74-77).

The researcher's intent is to investigate the growth and development of teacher leaders and practices needed to develop teacher leaders that lead professional learning

communities with the leadership and guidance from administrators in a parochial school setting focusing on eight distinct parochial schools. Leadership skills pertaining to leadership amongst a professional learning community are those identified by Domains I, Fostering a Collaborative Culture to Support Educator Development and Student Learning, and III, Promoting Professional Learning for Continuous Improvement, in the Teacher Leader Model Standards published by the Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium (2010). The administrators' observations will reflect the level at which the teacher leader has achieved the standards in Domains I and III, with the exception of standard F in Domain III. Standard F advocated for sufficient preparation, time, and support for colleagues to work in teams to engage in job-embedded professional learning, is being omitted on the basis that the teachers in the professional learning teams do not work in the same facility and the schedule is prepared by administration, based on open times for each of the eight schools.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

I investigated the following research questions:

Research Question 1: How do teacher leaders grow and develop their leadership skills, based on Domains I and III, with the exception of F in Domain III, of the Teacher Leader Model Standards developed by the Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium, in collaborating with building principals and professional learning community teams among teachers in grade-level or departmentalized teams?

Research Question 2: How do teacher leaders utilize their leadership skills to effectively collaborate with their professional learning communities, based on Domains I and III, with the exception of F in Domain III, of the Teacher Leader Model Standards

developed by the Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium, in collaborating with building principals and professional learning community teams among teachers in grade-level or departmentalized teams?

Hypothesis 1:

I believe that with support provided prior to each PLC meeting in the form of teacher leader program meetings, where they have access to resources and professional development, the teacher leaders in the PLC leadership role will grow as leaders and be able to effectively collaborate with the other teachers in their PLC, as they will have created a climate of collaboration, respect, understanding, and a place that focuses on student success.

Hypothesis 2:

I believe that with ongoing support provided by administration during the teacher leader meetings and throughout the teacher leader program, the teacher leaders in the PLC leadership role will grow as leaders and be able to effectively collaborate with the other teachers in their PLC, as they will have created a climate of collaboration, respect, understanding, and a place that focuses on student success.

I believe that with support provided prior to each PLC meeting in the form of a teacher leader program meeting, ongoing support provided by administration throughout, and access to resources and professional development, the teacher leaders in the PLC leadership role will grow as leaders and be able to effectively collaborate with the other teachers in their PLC, as they will have created a climate of collaboration, respect, understanding, and a place that focuses on student success.

Participants

This study consisted of 18 participants, made up of nine administrators and nine selected teacher leaders from the eight parochial schools in the study.

Data Gathering Instruments

The researcher initially collected secondary data that indicated previous knowledge selected teacher leaders possessed in regard to leading a grade-level or departmentalized professional learning community. A copy of the survey utilized can be found in Appendix B of this document. Throughout the study, the researcher kept an ongoing journal of the information shared, questions, and suggestions during the collaboration process involving administrators and selected teacher leaders.

Limitations

The limitations in this study were as follows: the amount of time the professional learning teams met and the locations of buildings of each teacher leader and administrator and the researcher. These were limitations because the teacher leaders met as a group five times during the course of the first year and two times during the course of the second year of the teacher leader training sessions. The time of meeting decreased because of the lack of availability of each teacher at each of the eight parochial schools. The teacher leaders were only able to meet with their professional learning communities five times during the course of a year as well. This was because all eight schools were coming together at one time; it would have been a challenge to schedule weekly team meetings and was not wanted by the administrators or the teachers when the professional learning teams were originally established.

Definition of Terms

Archdiocesan Catholic School: For the purpose of this document, an Archdiocesan Catholic School is a private, tuition-based school rooted in the Catholic faith that falls under the jurisdiction of an archdiocese of a certain region.

Communities of Practice: "Groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly" (Wenger, 2014, p. 1).

Departmentalization: For the purpose of this document, departmentalization refers to the teaching of the same subject matter.

Domain I: Fostering a Collaborative Culture to Support Educator Development and Student Learning. These represent the leadership skills required for fostering a collaborative culture to support educator development and student learning according to the Teacher Leader Model Standards published by the Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium (2010).

Domain III: Promoting Professional Learning for Continuous Improvement: These are the leadership skills required for the promotion of professional learning for continuous improvement according to the Teacher Leader Model Standards published by the Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium (2010).

Grade-Level Teams: For the purpose of this document, grade-level teams refer to collaboration that happens amongst teachers that teach the same grade level.

Federation: For the purpose of this document, the Federation was the name given for the eight parochial schools and parishes in an area of north St. Louis County that

joined together to build collaboration between the schools and the parishes in order to promote growth and success in the eight school and parish communities.

Parochial School: For the purpose of this document, a parochial school refers to a school that is Catholic in faith and financially maintained by a parish.

Professional Learning Communities: "A learning community is a place where the faculty has come together and has a sense of shared purpose, and a sense of the school they are trying to create, and they've made collective commitments to creating that school" (DuFour, 2010, p. 1).

Professional Learning Team Meetings: For the purpose of this document, this is the name given to the meeting in which all educational leaders and educators from the Federation come together to collaborate on education issues.

Shared Leadership: "Shared leadership is the maximizing all of the human resources in an organization by empowering individuals and giving them an opportunity to take leadership positions in their areas of expertise" (Goldsmith, 2010, para. 2).

Teacher Leader: Teacher leaders are those that lead in areas that include providing resources to peers, being instructional and curriculum specialist, supporting other peers in the classroom, being a learning facilitator, data coach, and mentor to peers, being a visible school leader that is a catalyst for change and a life-long learner (Harrison & Killion, 2007, pp. 74-77).

Summary

The strength of collaboration between administrators and teacher leaders influences the success of a professional learning team between its team teacher leader and all teachers in the professional learning community, which, in return, impacts the success

students have in each of their classrooms. This chapter introduced leadership skills as identified in the Teacher Leader Model Standards in Domains I and III. This study identifies the teacher leaders' leadership skills and effectiveness of their roles as teacher leaders in their individual professional learning communities. Chapter Two, the Literature Review section, outlines the Professional Learning Community model and characteristics of professional learning communities that are successful. In addition, Chapter Two identifies characteristics of an effective teacher leader, the importance of collaboration in an educational setting, and the roles administrators and teacher leaders have in a professional learning community.

Chapter Two: The Literature Review

Introduction

Over the past several years, the importance and need of collaboration amongst teachers teaching the same content or grade level has been highly stressed in our nation's schools. In addition, much time has been spent on developing our schools' teachers to lead grade-level or departmentalized professional learning communities effectively. Research shows the importance of having good quality teachers and administrators at the forefront of the PLC model in every school. In addition, this study focuses on eight parochial (Catholic) schools educating students in preschool through eighth grade that participate in an adapted region-wide professional learning community model.

The PLC Model

A professional learning community (PLC) is about the synergy of collaborative action. Effective PLCs provide the conditions necessary for the synergy that drives school improvement. Students, teachers, and school leaders are the recipients of the powerful effects of collaborative action as a practiced in a professional learning community" (Ontario Principals' Council, 2008, p. 5). "Growing numbers of schools have implemented professional learning communities as a method for bringing about sustainable change" (Teague & Anfara, 2012, p. 58). Richard DuFour (2004) explains a professional learning community as the way in which "people describe every imaginable combination of individual with an interest in education-a grade level teaching team, a school committee, a high school department, and entire school district, a state department of education, a national professional organization, and so on" (DuFour, 2004, para. 1).

Laura Servage (2008) responds to Richard DuFour and Robert Eaker's professional learning community framework by saying,

> The professional learning community is one model within a constellation of models and theories characterized by a number of core beliefs: that staff professional development is critical to improved student learning, that this professional development is most effective when it is collaborative and collegial, and that this collaborative work should involve inquiry and problem solving in authentic contexts of daily teaching practices. (Servage, 2008, p. 63).

Rentfro (2007) states that, "The professional learning community (PLC) model gives the schools a framework to build teacher capacity to work as members of high-performing, collaborative teams that focus on improving student learning" (Rentfro, 2007, para. 1). The professional learning community model has not only had substantial gains in the United States, but has also been at the center of teacher development and student learning across the world. Professor Dr. Alma Harris, the director of the Institute of Educational Leadership at the University of Malaya, (2013) states,

> Professional collaboration is increasingly being used in various countries to raise the performance of teachers and to improve student achievement and outcomes. Different countries are inevitably approaching this in their own way but the common denominator factor is inter-dependent professional learning. (Harris, 2013, para 1).

Harris (2013) then goes on to state, "In some countries, like Singapore, Wales, Finland, and parts of Canada, professional collaboration, in the form of professional learning communities, is a mandated part of the school reform process supported at the Ministerial

level" (Harris, 2013, para 2.). There are three big ideas that professional learning communities focus on: They ensure students learn, they create a culture around collaboration, and they are results oriented (DuFour, 2004). DuFour's (2004) first big idea, ensuring that students learn, states that, the professional learning community model flows from the assumption that the core mission of formal education is not simply to ensure the students are taught but to ensure that they learn. This simple shift-from a focus on teaching to a focus on learning-has profound implications for schools (DuFour, 2004).

Three crucial questions arise with the first big idea: What do we expect students to learn, how will the teacher know they have learned it, and how will the teacher respond to a student that is having difficulties learning? (DuFour, 2004). DuFour (2004) states that, "The answer to the third question separated learning communities from traditional schools" (DuFour, 2004, para. 7). DuFour states, "When a school begins to function as a professional learning community, however, teachers become aware of the incongruity between their commitment to ensure learning for all students and their lack of coordinated strategy to respond when some students do not learn" (DuFour, 2004, sec. 2). DuFour further states (2004), "In addition to begin systematic and school wide, the professional learning community's response to students who experience difficulty is timely, based on intervention rather that remediation, and directive" (DuFour, 2004, para. 10).

The second big idea of a professional learning community is that a culture of collaboration must exist (DuFour, 2004). DuFour (2004) explains the importance of collaboration by stating that, "Educators who are building a professional learning

community recognize that they must work together to achieve their collective purpose of learning for all. Therefore, they create structures to promote a collaborative culture" (DuFour, 2004, para. 15). Du Four (2004) then goes on to state,

> The powerful collaboration that characterizes professional learning communities is a systematic process in which teachers work together to analyzed and improve their classroom practice. Teachers work in teams, engaging in an ongoing cycle of questions that promote deep team learning (DuFour, 2004, para. 17).

The collaboration part of the professional learning team helps with the school improvement process and in breaking down barriers or individual teacher success (DuFour, 2004).

The third big idea brings the conclusion that the end result is the main judging factor in the success of a group's professional learning community (DuFour, 2004). Teachers develop common assessments and compare the benchmarks of their students to others teachers' students in order to show progress or identify issues. In doing this, DuFour states, "this focus on continual improvement and results requires educators to change traditional practice and revise prevalent assumptions; educators must begin to embrace data as a useful indicator of progress" (DuFour, 2004, para.34). In addition, by looking at the end results, evidence of hard work and commitment is found (DuFour, 2004). DuFour (2004) states, "When educators do the hard work necessary to implement these principals, their collective ability to help all students learn will rise" (DuFour, 2004, para. 37).

Success in Professional Learning Communities

In the Ontario Principals' Council's review of literature, they determined that there are seven key attributes of effective professional learning communities: student learning, shared purpose, collaborative teamwork, teacher capacity, leadership capacity, professional development, and continuous learning (Ontario Principals' Council, 2008, p. 8). Leclerc et al. (2012) write about the factors that promote progression in schools that function as a professional learning community by stating,

> Throughout the world, schools seek to improve the achievements of students because an education of the high-quality is recognized as a crucial element for the success of people and for society. From now on, schools must develop a culture supported by the partnership of all participants, bringing the principal and the teachers together to work as colleagues while seeking to continuously learn from one another. (Leclerc et al., 2012, para. 1)

These ideas and actions help bring success to professional learning communities at work. Several reports have been published about school communities who have found success in using the professional learning community model. Rentfro (2007) stated,

> Due to increased accountability and the growing needs of students, South Elementary in Eldon, Missouri, decided that it would benefit from enacting a PLC. A leadership team was selected an attended training in the summer of 2003, and the implementation of the PLC began during the 2003-2004 school year. (Rentfro, 2007, para. 3)

Over the course of the implementation, Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) data showed a 24.1% gain in advanced and proficient scores for communication arts between

2001 and 2005; the percentage of first-grade students scoring on grade level on the Developmental Reading assessment end-of-the-year test increased 12.2 percent between 2001-2002 and 2006-2007; South Elementary was also recognized nationally by All Things PLC, locally as a Missouri Model PLC, and serves as a host model for other districts to observe the PLC model at work and its practices (Rentfro, 2007). Etienne Wenger (2014), refers to the term "Community of Practice," which she identifies as communities that are formed by people who engage in a process of collective learning in a shared domain of human endeavor. Wenger (2014) continues to state, Communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern or passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly. While Wenger uses the term "communities of practice" to align with everyday practices in our business, social, and personal world, the connection to the work in professional learning communities is comparable to her explanation of communities of practice. Based on the research, Teague and Anfara, (2012) summarize the attributes of an effective professional learning team based on his research to include shared values and vision, which focuses on student learning, high expectations for teacher and students, and shred visions for teaching and learning; shared and supportive leadership which includes nurturing school administrators, shared power and authority, broad based decision-making; collective learning an application to practice which includes sharing information , seeking new knowledge and skills, and working collaboratively; shared personal practice, which included peer observations, coaching and mentoring; supportive conditions that encompass both relationships and structures which include trust, respect, risk taking, resources of time, money, people materials and communication. In an article by Rob

Kriete, he states, “PLCs must find ways to share the workload, not increase it.” He goes on to say, “Effective PLCs must focus on student learning” (Kriete, 2012, p. 1). In a study by Linder et al. (2012, p. 20),

> Through our involvement in the formation of these PLCs, we increased our knowledge about establishing relationships with area schools. We learned the importance of providing guidance to the groups, keeping them on task, and focused…but not directing every action of the members. Allowing for autonomy was essential, with the teachers begin responsible for making decisions and choosing their own paths for professional development. Building a sense of community was also critical to the success of the groups (Linder et al., 2012, p. 20).

Linder et al. (2012) go on to state that PLCs allow teachers to customize and personalize their own professional development as well as develop their own sense of ownership through their own directed learning, and once PLCs have been established appropriately, the teachers can move forward with the work that needs to be done.

Challenges of Professional Learning Communities

While Professional Learning Communities offer great way for teachers to grow in their craft, PLCs can often be met with challenges that must be overcome in order to be successful. Teague and Anfara identified from Oper and Pedder’s (2011) work that, “Creating systems, supports, and norms that encourage both individual and organizational learning and getting the balance between internal and external resources of learning are difficult for most schools” (p. 61). Teague and Anfara (2012) goes on to state that based on his research, “building professional learning communities that will bring about change

in the classroom and thus student achievement is challenging due to the amount of work and time involved and the cultural changes that are necessary" (p. 61). In an article by Winchester (2013), he suggests that we need to be careful with the buzzword "collaboration," and we must be able to work through the idea that collaboration may be mandated and keep a focus on that it is necessary and needed and the teacher's commitment is key.

Characteristics of Effective Teacher Leaders

Thomas J. Diana, Jr. (2011) defines teacher leaders as "individuals who, through these experiences, develop the requisite knowledge and skills to become effective classroom teachers that are capable of implementing the current reform agenda" (Diana, 2011, p. 170). Diana (2011) also states, "A primary goal shared by all teacher educators is to provide pre-service teachers with meaningful professional development opportunities so that they can become effective teacher leaders" (p. 170). A main component of the professional development opportunities is taking a role in a professional learning community. In research by Killion and Harrison, they identify the characteristics of effective teacher leaders based on the teacher leader's belief system, teaching expertise, coaching skills, relationship skills, expertise of content teaching, and leadership skills (Killion & Harrison, 2006). Under each section, Killion and Harrison identify the traits of each type of leadership. Effective teacher leaders' beliefs include: willing to learn, having passion for ongoing development and learning, holding the attitude that everyone is important, believing in the idea that others are capable of growth and development, not assuming to have all the answers, committing to continuous improvement, having a moral compass, being able to let go of being responsible for

another's behaviors as if in charge of them (Killion & Harrison, 2006). Effective teacher leaders' show expertise in teaching by being skilled in instructional planning, having strong organization and classroom management, being fluent with multiple methods for delivering instruction and or assessing students, demonstrating success in their own work as a classroom teacher, articulating their personal practices when observed or when collaborating, and by reflecting on their own practices as an educator (Killion & Harrison, 2006). Effective teacher leaders demonstrate coach skills that show an understanding of applied knowledge, by listening skillfully, communicating effectively, using effective questioning skills, shows an understanding and can employ a specific reflection process, by diagnosing the needs of other teachers, and by aligning support to the identified needs of teachers (Killion & Harrison, 2006). Effective teacher leaders demonstrate good relationship skills by desiring to be a part of the team, working effectively with teachers and principals, building trusting relationships, when they are shown to be respected by their peers, and having patience for the entire learning process (Killion & Harrison, 2006). Effective teacher leaders are expert in their content and this is demonstrated by possessing and applying appropriate in-depth content knowledge and using extensive research and theory to support instructional decisions (Killion & Harrison, 2006). Effective teacher leaders demonstrate good leadership skills by understanding and applying knowledge about change, communicating the visions of the school, aligning work with goals of the school, using data to drive decisions, engaging others in developing plans for improvement, and maintaining a culture that is productive (Killion & Harrison, 2006). Speaking of effective school leaders, Fullan (2013) states, "Effective school leaders are key to large-scale, sustainable education reform. For some

time, educators have believed that principals must be instructional leaders if they are to be the effective leaders needed for sustained innovation" (Fullan, 2013, para. 1). According to Searby and Shaddix (2008), Dr. Charles Mason, the superintendent of Mountain Brook Schools, developed a list of how teachers could lead without being in a formal role as leader. Serby and Shaddix (2008) go on to include Dr. Mason's list: Leaders ask the right, touch questions; Leaders can set the tone for meetings and discussions with their energy level, attitudes, and encouragement; Leaders anticipate needs and meet them without being asked; Leaders support other leaders emotionally and professionally; Leaders establish their own credibility through competence; Leaders lean what they need to know and are willing to share it; Leaders interpret reality for others; Leaders always ask, "What is purpose?"; Leaders ask the questions, "Is this consistent with our values and beliefs?" Used in this study, the Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium (2010) created a list of domains and functions of the teacher leaders called the Teacher Leader Model Standards that focused on the teacher leader in a professional learning community. Domains I and III of the Teacher Leader Model Standards focus on the effective practices of teacher leaders in a collaborative environment, such as in a PLC. According to the Teacher Leader Model Standards (2010), in Domain I, Fostering a Collaborative Culture to Support Educator Development and Student Learning,

> The teacher leader understands the principals of adult learning and knows how to develop a collaborative culture of collective responsibility in the school. The teacher leader uses this knowledge to promote and environment of collegiality, trust, and respect that focuses on continuous improvement in instruction and

> student learning. (Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium [TLEC], 2010, p. 41)

Domain I identifies the teacher leaders functions as utilizing group processes to help work in a collaborative manner in solving problems, decision making, managing conflict, and promoting positive and meaningful change; modeling effective skills in listening, presenting ideas, leading discussions, making clarifications, mediating for others, and identifying the needs of self and others in order to promote shared goals and professional learning; employing facilitation skills to create and gain trust among members in the group, developing collective thoughts, building ownership and actions that support student learning; by striving to create and inclusive atmosphere that welcomes diverse perspectives in addressing challenges; and using knowledge and understanding of different backgrounds of all team members to promote positive and effective interactions and collaboration (TLEC, 2010). Domain III, Promoting Professional Learning for Continuous Improvement, of the Teacher Leader Model Standards (2010) states,

> The teacher leader understands the evolving nature of teacher and learning, established and emerging technologies, and the school community. The teacher leader uses this knowledge to promote, design, and facilitate job-embedded professional learning aligned with school improvement goals (TLEC, 2010, p. 41).

The functions of the teacher leader according to Domain III include collaborating with team members and school administrators to plan professional learning that is team-based, job-embedded, sustained over time, and linked to school/district improvement goals;

using information about adult learning to respond to the different needs of the team members; facilitating professional learning among the team members; identifying and using appropriate technologies to promote collaboration and differentiate for team members; working with team members to collect, analyze, and disseminate data related to the professional learning and its effect on teaching and student learning; advocating for sufficient time needed; providing constructive feedback for team members so to help build up teacher practices and improve student learning; and using information about emerging education, economic and social treads, and in facilitating professional learning (TLEC, 2010). In the Journal of Staff Development, Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium (2011) goes on to further explain, "Teacher leaders believe that all students can succeed. They also believe that all teachers need collaborative support to help students realized success" (TLEC, 2011, para. 7). The Ontario Principals' Council states, "PLC advocates have written extensively on the role of the leader in creating and sustaining professional learning communities" (Ontario Principals' Council, 2008, p. 13). "Teachers who are effective leaders, leading beyond the walls of the classroom without being removed from direct student contact, have identifiable characteristics. All aspects of life experiences provide opportunities to acquire the demeanor and skills to assume leadership responsibilities" (Krisko, 2001, p. 3). Krisko (2001) goes on to identify these qualities as interpersonal skills, being a life-long learner, those that find humor, creative, flexible, efficacious, take responsible risks, and have good intrapersonal senses. Margolis and Huggins (2012) affirm how there is a high demand on the educational system to bring to the helm teacher leaders who can help schools enact ambitious, reform in the

classrooms, and that teacher leader engagement in classroom-based inquiry are central to the success in every school so that every child learns.

Importance of Collaboration

One of the main components of a professional learning community is the collaboration piece. The word community stands out as to identify a group working towards the goal of learning. Ontario Principals' Council states,

> Collaborative teamwork, according to the literature, is the most significant attribute of professional learning communities. Teachers work together collaboratively in schools in a variety of permutations, such as learning teams, whole-faculty study groups, grade or division teams in elementary schools, and department teams in secondary schools. Research studies consistently report that collective teacher and leader inquiry results in improved instructional practice, which has a positive influence on student achievement. (Ontario Principals' Council, 2008, p. 11)

"Professional collaboration is increasingly being used in various countries to raise the performance of teachers and to improve student achievement and outcomes" (Harris, 2013). "Teacher leaders benefit from belonging to a cohort in which they are able to collaborate with other teacher leaders to realize the mission and vision of the school. The cohort acts not only as a means for ongoing professional learning, but also as a powerful team capable of leading and sustaining change in a school" (Suescun et al., 2012, p. 33). Teague and Anfara (2012) state that the literature on professional learning communities has three implications for practice. The first is the significance of professional and personal relationships in schools. The second implication for practice deals with the

principal's support in developing and sustaining the professional learning community. His third implication for practice based on his research is the necessity to create structures that support the work of the professional learning community. In an article by Judy Kingsley, she states, "Teacher PLCs provide both the structure and the process for teachers to come together as professionals to identify and work on what Richard Elmore of Harvard calls "problems of practice" (p. 24). Rather than having such problems being left to individual teachers, every teacher becomes part of a broader community that learns to address challenges together by examining systems and practices both inside and outside the classroom" (Kingsley, 2012, p. 24). According to the Ontario Principals' Council's (2008) research, evidence-based teacher collaboration improves the quality of instructional practice that ultimately has a great impact on the increase in student learning. Silva, Gimbert, and Nolan (2000) identify that teacher leadership comes in three stages. The first stage includes teacher leaders being school appointed in the areas such as department heads or master teachers that are assigned to oversee as such other teachers. In the second stage, teacher leaders play a larger role as instructional leaders or in curriculum development. The third stage has teacher leaders working with peers to improve professional practices in ways such as mentoring colleagues, helping to solve school-wide issues, and engaging and leading professional development activities that focus on collaboration. "Teacher leaders working with colleagues can transform schools and classrooms into learning laboratories where every student participates in relevant and well-designed curriculum, benefits from learner-centered instructional strategies, and completes authentic assessments to show evidence of learning" (Lumpkin et al., 2014, p. 59). Danielson (2006) states that teacher leaders use the data and evidence collected in

their decision making, recognized opportunities and take initiative, move other around them to focus on a common purpose, identify resources and take action, monitor any progress and adjust as changes occur, sustain their commitment to others, and continually contribute to the learning within their organization. “It is well recognized, but little acted upon, that the greatest professional resource available in every school is the expertise of its teachers” (Danielson, 2006, p. 55). In an article by Cathy Owens, she states, “As leaders of learning communities, they can engage in deep collaborations that contribute to the overall effectiveness of schools. They can assume leadership roles that will effect positive change in how other teachers teach, how all students learn, and how professional learning communities operates” (Owens, 2008, p. 58). Owens (2008) continues to state, “Collaborating with colleagues and principals through shared leadership roles will push new teacher leaders to do more and help them develop skills to become more effective.”

In an article by Pamela Mink (2014), she includes that “becoming more effective begins and ends with a Professional Learning Community, and that effective teachers know and understand the importance that collaboration holds in educating their students. Kezar states, “One distinctive characteristic of educationally effective institutions is that various groups share responsibilities for student learning and student success and are committed to their school’s mission, vision, and philosophy” (Kezar, 2005, p. 2). In an article by Lorna Idol, she states, “Collaboration in the schools forms an umbrella that protects all aspects of programming within the collaborative and inclusive school. This umbrella is held up by all adults in the school: administration, faculty, and support faculty and staff” (Idol, 1998, p. 155).

Role of Administrators in a Professional Learning Community

In order for professional learning communities to be successful, administration's presence is key to the development of teacher leaders and the success of a professional learning community. According to Teague and Anfara (2012), "We must not forget that developing and sustaining professional learning communities in schools requires leadership and direction. School administrators have the opportunity to perform a vital. Role in developing these structures" (p. 58). Suescun et al., (2012) suggests, "Teacher leaders need support from many angles, through a network of skillful, committed, and purposeful educators both within and outside of their schools" (Suescun et al., 2012, p. 33).

Weiner (2011) states, "While there are various ways that principal leadership can help to ensure effective teacher leadership, I focus on three: vision, resource allocation and alignment, and ongoing support of teacher leaders. I do so because these issues are frequently cited as strongly affecting teacher leaders' success" (Weiner, 2011). Weiner (2011) continues to say regarding the support of teacher leaders, "If the principal is unclear about the teacher's role within the larger context of the school, it is unlikely that the principal could provide the teacher leader meaningful support toward a goal" (Weiner, 2011).

In regards to an administrator's vision, they must be able to form a "coherent, high-quality vision that includes the teacher leader" and "has real implications for how the role is actualized" (Weiner, 2011). Weiner (2011) adds, "Intricately linked to a principal's ability to create a quality vision of reform is whether one can appropriately align and allocate resources to enact that vision" (Weiner, 2011).

According to Sheninger (2011), there are five areas principals must help teacher leaders overcome in order to be successful with the changes and challenges that can be found in Professional Learning Communities: I do not have time for this, fear of collaboration, overly directive approach by principals, poor professional development, and not being open and willing to persevere. In an article by Nancy Akhavan (2015), she puts in perspective the idea that the administrator's role is one of coaching in regards to an educator's professional development and learning.

Akhavan (2015) explains, "Most coaching models fall into two types: districts and schools that implements coaching tied to one or more incentives, and those that implement to improve teacher practice and teacher efficacy." (Akhavan, 2015, para. 2). Akhavan (2015) then continues by sharing that her experience involves the second practice saying that "coaching that improves teachers' beliefs in themselves and their ability to affect student learning, often employing a cycle of planning, modeling, observing, reflecting, and conferencing" (Akhavan, 2015, p. 34). Akhavan (2015) concludes, "This is the type of coaching that creates connected, caring teachers with the highest resiliency for making sure all students are learning." (Akhavan, 2015, p. 34).

The Ontario Principals' Council writes, "Principals who work with their learning teams in a collaborative manner build trust and facilitate the positive experiences of increased teacher and leader learning. Leadership capacity within the school grows and future school and district leaders are nurtured in professional learning communities" (Ontario Principals' Council, 2008, p. 130. According to the literature by Akhavan (2015), "coaching side by side was defined as coaches [administrators] and teachers having opportunities to learn something new together; time to reflect openly on what is

occurring during instruction; cooperation and teamwork; teachers and coach [administrator] as equals." (Akahavan, 2015, p. 36). Akahavan (2015) concludes that, "Teachers want their coaches [administrators] to be equal with them and not above them. The responses [to the coaching] show that teachers are willing to learn and try new instructional practices with a person beside them who will not judge their teaching. (Akahavan, 2015, p. 36).

In an article on shared leadership, Terry Wilhelm discusses ways administrators can cultivate shared leadership with teachers by changing from traditional teacher leader functions to one in which leadership is shared with the administrators. Wilhelm states (2013), "In a shared leadership school, the principal maintains a delicate balance-giving teachers responsibility with abdicating all authority" (Wilhelm, 2013, p. 62). Wilhelm (2013) compares the traditional school and a shared leadership school by stating, "In a traditional school, the leadership team is typically composed of department chairs or grade-level representatives who meet periodically with administrators to discuss procedural and operational issues; they then take information back to their respective groups and perhaps gather input for the next meeting." (Wilhelm, 2013, p. 62). "In contrast," Wilhelm (2013) continues, "in a shared leadership school-often called a professional learning community-all adults continually learn together so that every student achieves at the highest levels. (Wilhelm, 2013, p. 62). Wilhelm (2013) states that the principal's role is considered the "trainer of trainers." (Wilhelm, 2013, p. 63). Wilhelm says, "To create a shared leadership school, the principal must become a staff developer." (Wilhelm, 2013, p. 63).

Wilhelm identifies skills required for shared leadership role. The first skill Wilhelm (2013) identifies is "leading colleagues in analyzing student work and achievement data." (Wilhelm, 2013, p. 63). In the role of administrator in a building involved with professional learning communities, the administrator needs to be an advocate and know how to analyze individual student work and achievement data at all levels. They need to be prepared and committed to giving teacher leaders advice and direction on improving student achievement, so that teacher leaders can better collaborate with their grade-level or departmental professional learning teams. The second and third skills Wilhelm (2013) discusses is "facilitating group discussions about improved instructional practices and locating research-based methods and strategies that may be outside the current collective team expertise." (Wilhelm, 2013, p. 63).

With regards to professional learning communities, administrators need to meet with teacher leaders and share current literature regarding best practices in teaching. They must then support teacher leaders with strategies to use in classrooms and help teacher leader engage the other members of their professional learning community in these same best practices. Administrators must also be knowledgeable, available, and proactive in finding ways for teacher leaders and their professional learning communities to develop professionally. The final fourth and fifth skills Wilhelm (2013) identifies are "putting structures in place for team member to hold one another accountable for trying and using strategies and comparing results for various strategies tried." (Wilhelm, 2013, p. 63). In order for a professional learning community to be successful, all members, administrators, teacher leaders, and team members, must be willing to be vulnerable to

identifying personal weaknesses and how to improve so that their students are given all opportunities to be successful.

All members of a professional learning team need to take active roles in identify overall and individual weaknesses and be willing to share with the group these areas of concern as to get the full benefit of a professional learning community. To help assure that all are accountable, an agreed upon goal must be established and benchmarks for analysis must be obtained and analyzed throughout the goal process. This will allow administrators to see where their help is needed and allow professional learning team members to give each other strategies for improving. These are two of the most difficult skills, because they ask all members of the team to really look at areas of weaknesses and look at how to use collaboration improve individually rather than as a way to compare who is the better teacher. It is in these two skills that the most work happens and, if done fully, the most success for teachers and their students is found.

Wilhelm (2013) concludes, “But developing the depth of shared leadership [is] necessary for transforming a school into a professional learning community does not happen overnight, and it is not completed in a few months.” (Wilhelm, 2013, p. 65). Wilhelm (2013) continues, “Shared leadership is a developmental process that becomes more effective after two years than after one and continues to grow-along with student outcomes-the longer it is thoughtfully and intentionally fostered.” (Wilhelm, 2013, p. 65). “To sustain this work requires distributing leadership among school staff. We collaborate with principals to foster shared leadership and help them clearly articulated teacher leader roles and expectations within their schools. The principal establishes the structures and helps set a school culture and encourages distributed leadership, teacher collaboration and

voice, and authentic staff engagement in school wide decisions" (Suescun et al., 2012, p. 25).

In the article "The Principal's Rose in Supporting Learning Communities," Hord and Hirsh (2009), "principals have found that the following approaches support strong learning communities: Emphasizing to teachers that you know they can succeed—together; Expect teachers to keep knowledge fresh; Guide communities toward self-governance; Make data accessible; Teach discussion and decision-making skills; Show teachers the research; Take time to build trust." This process begins, grows, and prospers with strong administrator leadership. Anfara (2012) states, "Teachers expressed the belief that for teachers to develop caring and trusting relationships in schools, principals must serve as models. Principals need to understand that they set the tone for professional and personal interactions that occur within their schools" (p. 62).

Danielson (2006) includes that to be effective, administrators must pull out the leadership and instructional expertise of the teachers, as they are the ones who know the most about what works in the classroom to increase student learning. "The success of PLCs requires principals and other school administrators to share power, authority, and decision-making with teachers" (Lampkin et al., 2014, p. 61). "Administrators are leaders of leaders, learning and leading with teachers who have an untapped reservoir of potential expertise waiting to unleased and anxious to be involved" Krisko, 2001, p. 3). Linder et al. state,

> Administrators should encourage and support PLCs as a form of professional development that allows teachers to direct the focus of their learning, and they should validate and celebrate the accomplishments of these groups. Teachers

> participating in PLCs appreciate administrators who support them with time and space for meetings, materials for studying chosen topics and implementing selected classroom techniques, people with expertise, or stipends for participation. As a result, administrators develop teachers who are collaborative, self-directed, inquiry-minded, and empowered by their work. (Linder et al., 2012, p. 21)

In a study by Ringler et al. (2013) on the levels of essential support teachers needed in collaborative models, the teachers indicated that strong support meant that principal provided feedback about teachers' practice, they found creative ways to give teachers time for collaboration, the principals themselves engage in the professional development. In the same study, it was found that "as the school year progressed, the teachers in the project became the teacher leaders" of the collaborative model (Ringler et al., 2014, p. 41).

In literature by Frey, Lohmeier, Lee and Tollefson (2006), they identify that collaboration is the heart of an enriching learning environment and impactful professional development. Delvin-Scherer and Sardone (2013, p. 35) state that regular collaboration and contact builds trust enables teachers to find interesting and beneficial ways to work together. They go to include specific lessons with regards to collaboration which include: respecting the company you are in, be confident in your abilities, assess what you do well, determine what you need to do better, recognized that perfect does not exist, do not be defensive when given suggestions, do other things together besides work, be short on gossip and long on discussion around current ideas, goals, and opportunities, recognized that everyone collaborates a little differently and bring in their own unique gifts, and keep a positive outlook on your work (Delvin-Scherer & Sardone, 2013, p. 35.).

Role of Teacher Leader in a Professional Learning Community

The role of a teacher is not just as a leader in the classroom, but also more importantly as a leader amongst a faculty. It is in the successful leadership of teachers, that real improvement, change, and growth occurs. "Teachers are uniquely positioned to assume leadership roles on a variety of tasks that could transform schools from more traditional workplaces into professional learning communities" (Owens, 2008, p. 57). Kingsley adds, "When teachers are trained to be instructional leaders with responsibility for Professional Learning Communities, the results can be powerful" (Kingsley, 2012, p. 24).

In an article by Kiranli (2013), it states,

> The main learning environment at a school is classroom where a teacher has to carry out a role of leaders as a person of authority and power. However, learning is not limited to the classroom environment. Teachers have to undertake the role of a leader both inside the school and in extra-curricular environments. Variables such as in-school environment, the school structure, school climate and school culture may either hinder or support teacher undertaking leadership roles. (Kiranli, 2013, p. 180).

In the article "Growing Teacher Leaders in a Culture of Excellence" by Searby and Shaddix (2008),

> Viewing teachers as leaders requires a paradigm shift about the concept of leadership in a school system. Growing teacher leaders needs to be an intentional act in our nation's school systems. Schools that have high leadership capacity are those that amplify leadership for all. School in which teachers are becoming

> significant leaders have structures in place that provide opportunities for broad participation in teams, study groups, vertical communities, and action research teams. (para. 1)

According to the Journal of Staff Development (2011), "Leadership is essential to serving the needs of students, schools, and teaching profession." The Center for Strengthening the Teaching Profession (TLSF; 2009, p. 1) defines teacher leadership as the "knowledge, skills, and dispositions demonstrated by teachers who positively impact student learning by influencing adults, formally, and informally, beyond the individual classroom" (TLSF, 2009, p. 1). They also state go on further to establish the breakdown of the knowledge and skills referred to in the definition.

The Center for Strengthening the Teaching Profession (2009) states that the skills include "working with adult learners, communication, collaboration, knowledge of content and pedagogy, and systems thinking" (TLSF, 2009, p. 1). In the article "Ten Roles for Teacher Leaders" by Harrison and Killion (2007),

> Teacher leaders assume a wide range of roles to support school and student success. Whether these roles are assigned formally or shared informally, the build the entire school's capacity to improve. Because teachers can lead in a variety of ways, many teachers can serve as leaders among their peers. (para. 1)

According to Harrison and Killion (2007), these roles include being a resource provider by sharing instructional resources with colleagues; being an instructional specialist by helping colleagues implement effective teaching strategies; being a curriculum specialist by helping colleagues understand content, how components link together, and how to use the curriculum in planning instruction and assessment that is essential to ensuring

implementation; being a classroom supporter by helping teachers implement new ideas; facilitating professional learning communities; serving as a mentor for a fellow colleague; being a school leader in areas outside of the classroom; using and helping others use data to drive classroom instruction; being a catalyst for change-a visionary; amongst the most important—being a life-long learner.

According to Suescun et al. (2012), "Most educators agree that teacher leaders are essential to fostering a climate of authentic and robust leadership and learning across a school. Teacher leadership is peer leading at its most authentic, demanding, and empowering." (Suescun et al., 2012, p. 32). In regards to the knowledge and skills pertaining to collaborative work, the teacher leader must possess the collaborative skills of teaching, developing, and keeping with the basic norms of collaboration; have strong conflict resolution and mediation skills; be able to use strategies and protocols effectively; model and show value to diverse opinions; be able to bring coherence to language and the situation at hand; share the responsibility and leadership; and hold him/herself accountable for the goals and outcomes of the group (TLSF, 2009).

Organizational skills of the teacher leader are also key to the success of a group. The teacher leader needs to be able to facilitate a meeting; provide documentation from the meeting; be able to move the group to task completion; know what resources are available and how to access them; and be able to delegate the responsibilities amongst the team (TLSF, 2009) The teacher leader must also be engaged in facilitating the professional learning of all teachers involved by using reflective strategies, have a structured dialogue and discussion forum, putting a stop to assumptions, helping foster engaged learning, being encouraging, understanding the personal and professional place

at which all teachers are at, and holding all teachers responsible for the learning of the group (TLSF, 2009). Dispositions of teacher leaders also play a role in their success. According to the CSTP (2009), teacher leaders must "believe that teacher learning is interwoven with student learning; value the work of learners; accept and act on constructive feedback; possess courage to take risk; and be reliable" (TLSF, 2009, p. 1). In regards to collaborative work, teacher leaders must also possess the skills necessary to know when compromise is warranted, be able to read the team, admit their own personal wrongs or when they can't provide the answer, provide honest communications, have a desire to work with fellow colleagues, and be passionate about goal or topic and want to motivate others to be passionate about the goal or topic (TLSF, 2009).

Suescun et al. (2012) states, "Simply placing an effective teacher in a role of leadership does not automatically make him or her a leader." (Suescun et al., p. 32). Suescun et al. stated that beyond being a strong leader in the classroom, and in his or her own teacher team, today's teacher leader must also see and communicate the larger instructional vision of the school and align decisions with that vision. "Teacher leaders cannot—in fact, should not—act alone" (Suescun et al., 2012). Harris summarizes in her research that "Using the idea of a professional learning community can be a way of creating leadership capacity among teachers. A professional learning community is a focused group of professionals that have a central focus or collective purpose" (Harris, 2010, p. 11). Coyle (1997) states that there is a great need to teachers to have more power within their own classrooms in order to begin to see themselves as leaders. She continues to say,

> Unless we flatten the present hierarchies that result in long distance management of teaching and create structures that empower teachers to collaborate with one another and to lead from within the heart of the school, the classroom, we will discourage the best and brightest from entering the field and remaining in it. (Coyle, 1997, p. 239)

Coyle goes on to identify that many teachers see themselves as leaders only within the walls of their own classrooms, and the thought of each teacher seeing themselves as leader beyond those walls is seen as too challenging, time consuming and all together threatening (Coyle, 1997). Fullan (2000) states that it is crucial for teacher to take responsibility for their pedagogy and professional development in order to keep the instruction relevant and current. "This means that teachers must become experts in pedagogical design. It also means that teachers must use the power of technology, both in the classroom and in sharing with other teachers what they are learning" (Fullan, 2000, p. 582). Harris states, "Individuals who have taken on roles as teacher leaders have been reported to be strong teachers and their opportunities for leadership have grown from their successes within the classroom setting. Through the success in the classroom, they have reportedly gained the trust and respect from their fellow teachers" (Harris, 2010, p. 15).

Kingsley (2012) suggests the importance of teacher leader training on PLCs as well by stating,

> Of course, the groups also need professional development on the core concepts of the PLCs, but experience suggests that in many cases this is not enough: learning what a PLC does is not the same as knowing how to make it happen in a school.

> And rather than expecting these teacher leaders to figure out aspects of leadership on their own, why not explicitly teach them leadership skills and strategies-especially those specific to leading PLCs. (Kingsley, 2012, p. 24).

Teacher leaders who collectively share with colleagues their specialized knowledge, expertise, and experience can help principals broaden and sustain school and classroom efforts. Developing the leadership capabilities of teachers to serve as mentors, instructional coaches, and facilitators in myriad ways should be a top priority and expand through continual professional development.

"To help each school fulfill its mission and energize and expand the professionalism and professional contributions of teachers, the expertise of all teachers, and especially teacher leaders, is needed" (Lumpkin et al., 2014, p. 59). Teacher leaders are invaluable about knowing their students because each teacher leader "emphasizes a focus on students, collaborative work with teachers and a commitment to ongoing learning" (Lieberman & Friedrich, 2010, p. 95). According to Muijs and Harris (2003), when empowered teacher leaders are the key facilitators in the implementation of PLCs, schools are changed and there is an impact on student learning, which is the output from participatory decision-making, a shared purpose, collaboration, and joint responsibility (Muijs & Harris, 2003). York-Barr and Duke (2004) identify a teacher leader as an educator who influences educators individually and collectively, as to improve teaching practices in order to increase student learning.

Conclusion

In conclusion, research shows that an effective Professional Learning Community must include an understanding what a PLC is and its components, a strong administrator

at the helm, and teacher leaders that are eager and willing to help peers work together collaborative and build a trusting and cohesive team with a focus on personal professional growth and student achievement.

> Professional learning communities are an instrument for facilitating enhanced learning, teaching, and leadership capacity at all levels of the education system. When educational leaders become determined and purposeful about improving student learning, they seek first to agree on the means to this end. The means, or pathway, as the literature under study suggests, is professional learning communities. (Ontario Principals' Council, 2008, page 7).

Ontario Principals' Council goes on further stating, "Transforming a school into a PLC can only happen when the principal is an advocate for collaborative action and actively supports the faculty's development of a PLC" (Ontario Principals' Council, 2008, p. 13). "A supportive culture for PLCs requires time, financial resources, constructive feedback, and recognition of improved professional practices" (Lumpkin et al., 2014, p. 61).

> With ever-diminishing resources, schools must look within to supply resources for supporting continuous professional learning. Educators must consider each other the most valuable resources in a system, to be developed and supported with leadership, structures, tools, and processes for promoting continual professional learning (Hoy, Bradley, & Horwitz, 2012. p. 1).

Chapter Three: Methodology

Introduction

This study took a deeper look into the practices and collaboration in professional learning communities in regards to the roles administrators and teacher leaders play in the success of the professional learning community model that takes place in eight distinct parochial schools. The study focused on the leadership skills needed by teacher leaders and if and how, with guidance from administrators, the professional learning communities were successful. Prior to the study, administrators had a small role in the preparation of the professional learning communities and the teacher leaders were given little support. This study sought to identify the leadership skills needed to make a professional learning community successful, as well as the importance administrative support has in teacher leader development and the professional learning team process.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the development of teacher leaders in the implementation of grade-level and/or departmentalized professional learning communities across eight parochial schools. When working with teacher leaders and a leading grade-level or departmentalized professional learning team, school administrators were involved in the development of teacher leaders. Teacher leaders were given the guidance and tools to lead their grade-level or departmentalized professional learning team effectively. Teacher leaders were identified through observations of having and using the knowledge and leadership skills based on the Teacher Leader Model Standards published by the Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium (2010) and were given support by building administrators in helping to engage their professional learning teams

in talking about teaching and learning within their own classrooms. They developed structured meetings that brought their teams together in collaboration of the best practices in education and the problems of practice within their own classrooms.

This study identified the role administrators have in cultivating growth and development of teacher leaders in professional learning communities, as well as the role the teacher leaders have in the effectiveness of the professional learning communities within eight distinct parochial schools. This study took place at different schools located amongst the eight parochial schools in the study. Each teacher leader meeting and professional learning team meeting was hosted by a different school each time.

Research Questions

This qualitative study focused on two research questions:

Research Question 1: How do teacher leaders grow and develop their leadership skills, based on Domains I and III, with the exception of F in Domain III, of the Teacher Leader Model Standards developed by the Teacher leadership Exploratory Consortium (2010), in collaborating with building principals and professional learning community teams among teachers in grade-level or departmentalized teams through participation in a teacher leader program?

Research Question 2: How do teacher leaders utilize their leadership skills to effectively collaborate with their professional learning communities, based on Domains I and III, with the exception of F in Domain III, of the Teacher Leader Model Standards developed by the Teacher leadership Exploratory Consortium (2010), in collaborating with building principals and professional learning community teams among teachers in grade-level or departmentalized teams by participating in a teacher leader program?

Hypothesis 1:

I believe that with support provided prior to each PLC meeting in the form of teacher leader program meetings, where they have access to resources and professional development, the teacher leaders in the PLC leadership role will grow as leaders and be able to effectively collaborate with the other teachers in their PLC, as they will have created a climate of collaboration, respect, understanding, and a place that focuses on student success.

Hypothesis 2:

I believe that with ongoing support provided by administration during the teacher leader meetings and throughout the teacher leader program, the teacher leaders in the PLC leadership role will grow as leaders and be able to effectively collaborate with the other teachers in their PLC, as they will have created a climate of collaboration, respect, understanding, and a place that focuses on student success.

Participants

This study consisted of 18 participants. The participants were nine administrators, one being an assistant principal, and nine selected teacher leaders from the eight parochial schools in the study. Five of the teacher leaders opted out of participating in the study. Their peers and administrators selected the teacher leaders. The process began with grade-level or departmentalized teacher leaders being nominated by their peers. The teacher leaders came from the population of teachers that made up the eight parochial schools. The process was also used to get input from the teachers who have worked with the nominated teacher leaders. Those nominations were then given to the administrators for discussion and final decisions.

The administrators selected teacher leaders based on personal experience with the nominated teacher leader and the recommendations. The teachers were then asked and given the opportunity to accept the role of teacher leader. All nine administrators were included in the study because of their roles as a school leader and their roles in the teacher leader program. The program required that all administrators participate, and therefore it was vital that all participated in the study. The focus was on the teacher leader and the administrators in the teacher leader development process. The population of administrators and teachers was small; the entire population of administrators and nine out of the 16 teacher leaders were used in the data collection process. Five of the teacher leaders opted out of participating in the study. Therefore, only a sample of the population could be used. According to Bickman and Rog (2009), sampling is required when not all members of the study population can be surveyed or included in the data collection (p. 78, para 1). While the excluded teacher leaders' data were not used in this study, it was collected to provide a personal resource for administration with regards to maintaining effective professional learning communities in the future.

The peer teachers, those who also helped in the teacher leader selection process, in the professional learning community were excluded in the study. While they were in the room during the observation, it was the teacher leaders and their interactions that were the focus of the administrators' observations.

Teacher Leader Model Standards: Domain I and Domain II

The Teacher Leader Model Standards provided a framework for this study. Domains I and III are related to andragogical principles and to the characteristics of the teacher leaders and professional learning communities. Domain I describes culture,

> The teacher leader understands the principles of adult learning and knows how to develop a collaborative culture of collective responsibility in the school. The teacher leader uses this knowledge to promote an environment of collegiality, trust, and respect that focuses on continuous improvement in instruction and learning. (Appendix B, p. 1)

Domain III describes professional learning.

"The teacher leader understands the evolving nature of teaching and learning, established and emerging technologies, and the school community. The teacher leader uses this knowledge to promote, design, and facilitate job embedded professional learning aligned with school improvement goals" (Appendix B, p. 2).

Data Gathering Instruments

The researcher initially collected secondary data that told what previous knowledge selected teacher leaders knew and/or did not know in regards to leading a grade-level or departmentalized professional learning community. A copy of the survey utilized survey can be found in Appendix B of this document. The researcher, along with other administrators, met with selected teacher leaders to set the structure and agenda of each professional learning community team meeting. At these meetings, the researcher kept an ongoing journal of the information shared, questions, and suggestions during the collaboration process with administrators and selected teacher leaders.

The researcher asked administrators for approval of surveys and agendas prior to administration of the meetings. The researcher, along with other administrators, provided feedback of the professional learning team meetings via observation records. The researcher created an observation form to be used while the researcher and fellow

administrators observed on-going professional learning community team meetings. The administrator observation sheet reflects Domains I and III from the teacher Leader Model Standards. See Appendix C for the observation form. See Appendix D for the Teacher Leader Model Standards Domains I and III, with the exception of standard F in Domain III.

The researcher and fellow administrators observed the teacher leader and the professional learning community team meetings to assess the structure, leadership, and response to leadership provided during the meeting, based on the Teacher Leader Model Standards for Domain I and Domain III, with the exception of standard F. The researcher discovered if and how the knowledge of the selected teacher leaders has changed, if they have experience personal growth, and feedback pertaining to the administration's leadership from the beginning of the study to the conclusion of the study, by way of an open-ended question survey (See Appendix D).

Data Analysis

The researcher analyzed the self-performed observation journals and provided personal reflections of the process. The administrator observation evaluations, teacher leader pre and post surveys allowed the researcher to see if there was a relationship in the development of teacher leaders and the role administrators have in the guidance process in coding, by looking at themes.

Conclusion

This study will show the importance of administrative leadership and role of teacher leader in the professional learning teams within eight distinct parochial schools in the same geographic region. As the research indicates, strong administrative leadership

along with effective teacher leaders will lead to efficient collaboration within professional learning communities and will have an impact on student learning. The significance of this study will enhance the current literature regarding administrative and teacher leadership in professional learning communities, with a focus on a small school or parochial school setting.

Chapter Four: Results

Purpose of the Dissertation

This study investigated the development of teacher leaders in the implementation of grade-level and/or departmentalized professional learning communities. There are many characteristics involved in the growth and development of teacher leaders. Guidance and the tools to lead their grade-level or departmentalized professional learning team effectively were important. Teacher leaders need to use the knowledge and skills they possess related to leadership and professional learning communities.

Help from building administrators to engage professional learning teams in talking about teaching and learning within their own classrooms is essential. The administrators need to provide structured meetings, present current research, and guide collaborative discussions. This study intended to identify the teacher leaders' leadership skills and effectiveness of their roles as teacher leaders in their professional learning communities.

Participants

This study consisted of 18 participants. The participants were made up of nine administrators, one who was an assistant principal and nine selected teacher leaders from the eight parochial schools included the study. Five of the teacher leaders opted out of participating in the study. The teacher leaders came from the population of teachers that made up the eight parochial schools.

Data Gathering Instruments

The researcher initially collected secondary data that told what previous knowledge selected teacher leaders knew and/or did not know in regards to leading a

grade-level or departmentalized professional learning community. The researcher, along with other administrators, met with selected teacher leaders to set the structure and agenda of each professional learning community team meeting. At these meetings, the researcher kept an ongoing journal of the information shared, questions, and suggestions during the collaboration process with administrators and selected teacher leaders.

Research Questions

This qualitative study focused on two research questions:

Research Question 1: How do teacher leaders grow and develop their leadership skills, based on Domains I and III, with the exception of F in Domain III, of the Teacher Leader Model Standards developed by the Teacher leadership Exploratory Consortium (2010), in collaborating with building principals and professional learning community teams among teachers in grade-level or departmentalized teams through participation in a teacher leader program?

Research Question 2: How do teacher leaders utilize their leadership skills to effectively collaborate with their professional learning communities, based on Domains I and III, with the exception of F in Domain III, of the Teacher Leader Model Standards developed by the Teacher leadership Exploratory Consortium (2010), in collaborating with building principals and professional learning community teams among teachers in grade-level or departmentalized teams by participating in a teacher leader program?

Hypothesis 1:

I believe that with support provided prior to each PLC meeting in the form of teacher leader program meetings, where they have access to resources and professional development, the teacher leaders in the PLC leadership role will grow as leaders and be

able to effectively collaborate with the other teachers in their PLC, as they will have created a climate of collaboration, respect, understanding, and a place that focuses on student success.

Hypothesis 2:

I believe that with ongoing support provided by administration during the teacher leader meetings and throughout the teacher leader program, the teacher leaders in the PLC leadership role will grow as leaders and be able to effectively collaborate with the other teachers in their PLC, as they will have created a climate of collaboration, respect, understanding, and a place that focuses on student success.

Data Analysis

The researcher analyzed the self-performed observation journals and provided personal reflections of the process. The administrator observation evaluations, teacher leader pre and post surveys checked for a relationship in the development of teacher leaders and the role administrators have in the guidance process in coding by providing themes.

General Qualitative Feedback

The researcher's role: During this process, I was also the principal leader for professional learning teams made up of the principals and teachers at the eight schools. It was important for me to be in this role in order to ensure that all components of the study were executed correctly. I also made myself available to the principals and teachers through steps of the data collection.

I personally led the teacher leader meetings held prior to each professional learning team meeting. I collaborated with peer administrators on the design of those

meetings. It is also important to understand that, because each school had their own curriculum framework and educational resources, teams were asked to set SMART goals and collaborate on aspects that were common to each of their schools. It is also important to understand that each school, with the exception of one, had only one of each grade level from kindergarten through eighth grade and multi-age preschool classrooms in each building.

The first teacher leader meeting focused on what a professional learning team agenda should look like with using the components of professional learning community as outlined by DuFour (2004. 2014). These agenda items included a review of current literature that focused on the current best practices in education, setting a SMART goal, identifying and discussing problems of practice, and because these were parochial schools, a faith sharing component. Following teacher leader meetings focused on support of their SMART goals through identifying professional learning opportunities and how administrators could help support the problems of practice identified at each team meeting. One component to the team meetings that was added was that principals would participate in team meetings to help provide support within the meeting. The principals would then collaborate afterwards and identify needed professional learning opportunities as well as ways support needed to be provided, based on each team's needs.

Developing the Teacher Leader Survey: Pre-Leader Program Results:

Once administrators and peer teachers, based on experience and leadership qualities, selected teacher leaders, the teacher leaders participating in the study initially completed a pre-leader program survey (Appendix B). The Developing the Teacher

Leader Survey: Pre-leader Program Survey asked the following questions to help identify the knowledge and needs within their individual professional learning teams:

*What are the major components of a professional learning community?

*What are the four essential questions PLCs must ask in regards to student learning?

*What role does the teacher leader play in a professional learning community?

*What are the expectations of administrators in the development of PLC agendas and in conducting the PLC meetings?

*What qualities should a teacher leader possess in order for a PLC to be successful?

*What topics would you like to see focused on in your PLC or literature review piece of your PLC?

*What is your current view of the use of the PLC model currently being used in the parochial school setting?

Teacher KK

Teacher KK's responses to the Developing the Teacher Leader Survey: Pre-Leader Program are as follows. Teacher KK identified the major components of the professional learning community are sharing lesson ideas, sharing failures and successes, sharing assessments ideas, developing units of study together and their outcomes, and providing support to one another. Teacher KK identified the four essential questions PLCs must ask in regards to learning as what can we do to increase student performance, how can we challenge out students, what can we change, and what can be added/changed/ incorporated with regards to curriculum and assessments.

Teacher KK identified the role that the teacher plays in a professional learning community as a guide for the group, a record keeper, and a voice for the group. Teacher KK's expectations of administration in the development of PLC agendas and in conducting the PLC meetings were that they support the teachers and help groups by being a shoulder/ear. Teacher KK identified the qualities a teacher leader possesses in order for a PLC to be successful are being organized, encouraging, having a strong voice, and being a good listener.

Teacher KK identified the topics her PLC would like to focus on in her PLC or in the literature review piece as assessment tools for early childhood, science curriculum for early childhood, and social studies for early childhood. Teacher KK's current view of the use of the PLC model currently being used in the parochial school setting is that it is a wonderful way to gain new ideas, get opinions, and have support.

Teacher WC

Teacher WC identified the major components of a professional learning community as sharing with each other, providing support with the ups and downs of teaching, sharing ideas, lessons, and ways to manage the classroom effectively. Teacher WC identifies the four essential questions PLCs must ask in regards to student learning as what are short-term goals, what are long-term goals, what outcomes are we expecting, and what does student achievement look like. Teacher WC identified the role the teacher leader plays in a professional learning community as the facilitator and mentor for the team.

Teacher WC identified the expectations of administration in the development of PLC agendas and in conducting PLC meetings were that she would like more support in

help finding resources for the art teachers. Teacher WC identified positivity as the only quality teacher leader possesses in order for a PLC to be successful. Teacher WC stated that art is very different that the rest of the PLTs.

When it comes to topic of literature, the teacher felt that their PLC would benefit from help with goal setting. She identified that they see each grade level only once a week, so needs vary across the grade levels. Teacher WC's current view of the use of the PLC model currently being used in the parochial school setting is that the first two years she participated in the PLCs, the teacher felt it was very successful. However, the third year was not successful. Teacher WC indicated that it needed to move to a more positive experience.

Teacher JW

Teacher JW identified the major components of a professional learning community as collaboration, research, and implementation. Teacher JW identified the four essential questions PLCs must ask in regards to student learning as what should students know, how would we know if they are learning, how do we respond to those not learning, and how do we respond when students learn more. Teacher JW identified the role of teacher leader in professional learning communities include being organized, keeping the meeting flowing, help keep on topic and focused, and collect data.

Teacher JW indicated that the expectations of administration included providing resources and holding teams accountable. Teacher JW identified the qualities a teacher leader should possess in order for a PLC to be successful is that they should be organized, idealistic, and stern, and they should be a visionary and supportive. Teacher JW identified the topics or literature their PLC would like to focus on is in grant writing for

technology. Teacher JW's current view of the use of the PLC model currently being used in the parochial school setting was that they have been very beneficial since most schools do not have team teachers or teachers in each building that teach the same grade.

Teacher EN

Teacher EN identified the major components of a professional learning community include teachers, administrators, and having goals to work towards. Teacher EN identified that two of four essential questions PLCs must ask in regards to student learning were what will help the student be successful and what changes can I make to the learning environment. Teacher EN stated that the role teacher leaders play in professional learning communities are that they organized the time together, making sure the group stays focused and on task and help the team meet the goals of the group.

Teacher EN did not identify expectations of administration in the development of PLC agendas and the conducting of meetings. Teacher EN identified that the qualities of a teacher leader include being organized, flexible, respectful, and assertive. Teacher EN identified the topics and literature their group should be discussed first as a team and then decided on. They would look at common goal ideas and then decide. Teacher EN's current view of the current PLC model is that there has been too much time put toward PLCs. Teacher EN felt that individual school time is needed and that meeting in PLCs two-three times a year is sufficient.

Teacher LE

Teacher LE identified that the major components of a professional learning community includes teachers, administrators, parents, and students who work together for the same purpose. Teacher LE stated that the four essential questions PLCs must ask in

regards to student learning are what students know, how will they reach all students, what if students are not learning, and how to challenge the higher learner. Teacher LE stated that the role the teacher leader plays in a professional learning community is to organize the meeting, keep forms and paperwork, and to keep communication going.

Teacher LE identified that the expectations of administration in the development of a PLC agenda and in conducting PLC meetings include helping to provide professional development and provide guidance for the leaders. Teacher LE stated that the qualities a teacher leaders should possess in order to be successful are to have good organizational and communication skills. Teacher LE identified technology use in the classroom and new best practices in education be key focus for topics and literature review. Teacher LE's view of the current PLC model being used is that it is confusing and changes too often. Teacher LE stated that you never really know what to expect from year to year.

Teacher KM

Teacher KM identified that the major components of a professional learning community are sharing ideas, collaboration, support of one another, and community building. Teacher KM identified that the four essential questions a PLC must ask in regards to student learning are what are student strengths/weaknesses, what "extra" can be used (technology, room equipment), what does differentiated instruction look like (variety of lessons), and where does the commonality lie in each teacher's classroom, so goals can be set and attainable for all. Teacher KM stated that the role of the teacher leader in a professional learning community is being a facilitator and active member of the group.

Teacher KM identified that the expectations of the administration in the development of PLC agendas and conducting meetings include setting up expectations for the teams, communicate effectively the agendas and goals, and provide ongoing support. Teacher KM identified that the qualities of a teacher leader include being approachable, a good communicator, a good listener, a planner, and organized. Teacher KM felt that their group would like to focus on group projects across all of the schools and work on lessons that were more cross-curricular. Teacher KM's current view of the use of the current PLC model is that when it follows the correct format and all members participate, it is very beneficial.

Teacher KC1

Teacher KC1 identified that the major components of a professional learning community are to identify a problem or goal for the group, research and find resources to solve the problem or meet the goal, and to implement strategies that will solve the problem or help achieve the goal. Teacher KC1 identified that the four essential questions PLCs must ask are what needs to be learned, how do my students learn, what resources are at my disposal, and how do we utilized resources and implement. Teacher KC1 stated that the role of the teacher leader in a professional learning community is to set the agenda based on the needs of the group, keep the group on task based on the agenda, and help set new agendas and goals.

Teacher KC1's expectations for administration in development of the PLC agendas and in conducting the PLC meetings is that they help create the agendas, provide feedback to the suggested agendas, share feedback on the minutes provided. Teacher KC identifies that the qualities teacher leaders should possess in order for a PLC to be

successful are being organized, help keep the meeting positive and on-task, be a good listener and validator, and lead by example. Teacher KC1 identified topic for focus or literature include designing cross curricular units, focus on student learning styles and differentiated instruction, and integration of technology in units/instructions. Teacher KC1's current view of the use of the PLC model currently being used in the parochial school setting is that the model needs to be more focused and positive. Teacher KC1 claimed that teachers do not see the value.

Teacher KC2

Teacher KC2 identifies that the major components of a professional learning community are to share, to encourage, to grow/improve as professionals, and improve student learning. KC2 identified two out of four essential questions being what are student strengths and weaknesses and what resources are available. Teacher KC2 identified the role the teacher leader plays in a professional learning community is to lead discussions, stay on task, and relay information and questions to the administration.

Teacher KC2's expectations of administration in the development of PLC agendas and conducting the PLC meetings are to help identify the goals of the PLC and to ensure that teams are staying on taking and reaching goals. Teacher KC2 identified the qualities a teacher should possess in order for the PLC to be successful is being able to keep the group on task and focused, be organized and positive, allow each member to participate, and be available for questions and support. Teacher KC2's PLC would like to focus on the topics or literature in the area of classroom management and technology use. Teacher KC2's current view of the use of the PLC model is that their group has been able to successfully share ideas and implement.

Teacher KZ

Teacher JZ identified that the major components of a professional learning community are that the team faces the challenges in their classrooms, solve problems and remain open regarding change while maintaining integrity. Teacher JZ identified that the four essential questions PLCs must ask in regards to student learning are do students feel safe and valued, are their (the students) needs being met, is their learning environment active, and are they (the students) being assessed effectively. Teacher JZ stated that the role the teacher plays in a PLC is to be an example for others, facilitates, and supports teacher development and student learning.

Teacher JZ's expectations for administration in the development of PLC agendas and in conducting the PLC meetings are that they help focus and support areas that need to be addressed and allow time. Teacher JZ identified qualities a teacher leaders should possess is that they need to be open to new methods and be self-evaluating. Teacher JZ identified the topic and literature their PLC would like to focus on is technology use in the classrooms and how to motivate students, so they can be set up for success. Teacher JZ did not comment on her current view of the use of the PLC model currently being used in the parochial school setting.

Summary and Reflection of the Developing the Teacher Leader Survey

Based on the responses given in the Developing the Teacher Leader Survey, it is evident that there was a weakness in the understanding of what a PLC should look like and the role the teacher leader and administrator plays. The teacher leaders left out key components in their responses that should have included the focus on what students learn and not what the teacher teaches, have a culture of collaboration and shared values,

identifying problems of practices and reflecting on current best practices, and using data and its results to drive PLC discussion, goals, and implementation.

Weaknesses in identifying the four essential questions a PLC, which include what do we want all students to know and be able to do, how will we know if they learned it, how will we respond to those that have not learned it, and how will we extend the learning for students who are already proficient. Another common area of weakness was identifying how PLCs should be data driven.

The teacher leaders had a good understanding that administrators should be a support system and that professional learning communities must have collaboration, but they struggled to identify key roles of the teachers outside of the regular meeting time. Based on the data collected, professional development and discussion for the teacher leaders addressed these areas of weakness, so they would have a complete understanding of what the PLC model looks like, the role and attributes of teacher leaders and administrators, and how to be effective teacher leaders in their own PLCs.

In addition to this work outside the PLT meeting, teacher leaders attended pre-PLC professional development with all administrators, one-to-two weeks prior to receive support on current initiatives and professional development needed that were a part of the PLC, problems of practice, and literature based on individual grade-level goals, creating agendas for meetings, and looking at current data pertaining to the goals set in each individual PLT.

Administrator Feedback-Teacher Leader Observation Form (Appendix C)

Another component of the study was that two observations by administrators take place during PLC meetings and that the administrator provided feedback on collaboration

between teacher leader and their school administrator. The teacher leader participated in five teacher leader meeting prior to the five PLC meetings during the school year. The observation feedback was shared with the teacher leader after each observation. The observation criteria were adapted and based on Domain I and Domain III of the Teacher Leader Model Standards developed by the Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium (2010).

Observation

Teacher KK's first observation by Administrator KM identified the following:

Teacher KK always utilized group process to help colleagues in their PLC work collaboratively to solve problems, make decisions, manage conflict, and promote meaningful change. Teacher KK always models effective skills in listening, presenting ideas, leading discussions, clarifying, mediating, and identifying the needs of self and others in order to advance shared goals and professional learning in their PLC. Teacher KK always employs facilitation skills to create trust among PLC members, develop collective wisdom, and build ownership and action that supports student learning. Teacher KK always strives to created and inclusive culture in their PLC where diverse perspectives are welcome in addressing challenges. Teacher KK always uses knowledge and understanding of different backgrounds of the PLC members to promote effective interaction among colleagues. Teacher KK always works with PLC members in establishing a goal and collecting, analyzing, communicating the data related to the quality of professional learning and its effect on teacher and student learning. Teacher KK always provides constructive feedback to PLC members to strengthen teaching practice and improve student learning. Administrator KK identified Not Applicable

when it came to if Teacher KK uses information about emerging education, economic and/or social trends in planning and facilitating their PLC. The administrator added the comment that no speaker was available for the PLT, which affected the group goal of professional development on age-appropriate milestones as they pertain to social, emotional, physical, and academic needs.

Teacher KK's second observation by Administrator AD identified the following:

Teacher KK always utilized group process to help colleagues in their PLC work collaboratively to solve problems, make decisions, manage conflict, and promote meaningful change. Teacher KK always models effective skills in listening, presenting ideas, leading discussions, clarifying, mediating, and identifying the needs of self and others in order to advance shared goals and professional learning in their PLC. Teacher KK always employs facilitation skills to create trust among PLC members, develop collective wisdom, and build ownership and action that supports student learning. Teacher KK always strives to created and inclusive culture in their PLC where diverse perspectives are welcome in addressing challenges. Teacher KK always uses knowledge and understanding of different backgrounds of the PLC members to promote effective interaction among colleagues. Teacher KK always works with PLC members in establishing a goal and collecting, analyzing, communicating the data related to the quality of professional learning and its effect on teacher and student learning. Teacher KK always provides constructive feedback to PLC members to strengthen teaching practice and improve student learning. Teacher KK always uses information about emerging education, economic, and/or social trends in planning and facilitating their PLC. The administrator did not add any additional comments.

Administrator AG, the administrator at the individual school where Teacher KK is employed, identified that Teacher KK always collaborates with PLC members and school administrators to plan professional leaning that is team-based, job-embedded, sustained over time, and are linked to classroom/content area goals.

Teacher WC's first observation by Administrator AG identified the following:

Teacher WC sometimes utilized group process to help colleagues in their PLC work collaboratively to solve problems, make decisions, manage conflict, and promote meaningful change. Teacher WC sometimes models effective skills in listening, presenting ideas, leading discussions, clarifying, mediating, and identifying the needs of self and others in order to advance shared goals and professional learning in their PLC. Teacher WC sometimes employs facilitation skills to create trust among PLC members, develop collective wisdom, and build ownership and action that supports student learning. Teacher WC most of the time strives to created and inclusive culture in their PLC where diverse perspectives are welcome in addressing challenges. Teacher WC always uses knowledge and understanding of different backgrounds of the PLC members to promote effective interaction among colleagues. Teacher WC sometimes works with PLC members in establishing a goal and collecting, analyzing, communicating the data related to the quality of professional learning and its effect on teacher and student learning. Teacher WC most of the time provides constructive feedback to PLC members to strengthen teaching practice and improve student learning. Teacher WC sometimes uses information about emerging education, economic, and/or social trends in planning and facilitating their PLC. The administrator added the comments that the teacher leader was observed as being a part of a discussion group vs. the leader of the discussion group.

Other teachers stepped in much more with thoughts and ideas, presenting a lack of leadership skills by Teacher WC. In addition, only two of the eight teachers brought in student work to differentiated lessons.

Teacher WC's second observation by Administrator DW identified the following:

Teacher WC always utilized group process to help colleagues in their PLC work collaboratively to solve problems, make decisions, manage conflict, and promote meaningful change. Teacher WC always models effective skills in listening, presenting ideas, leading discussions, clarifying, mediating, and identifying the needs of self and others in order to advance shared goals and professional learning in their PLC. Teacher WC always employs facilitation skills to create trust among PLC members, develop collective wisdom, and build ownership and action that supports student learning. Teacher WC always strives to created and inclusive culture in their PLC where diverse perspectives are welcome in addressing challenges. Teacher WC always uses knowledge and understanding of different backgrounds of the PLC members to promote effective interaction among colleagues. Teacher WC always works with PLC members in establishing a goal and collecting, analyzing, communicating the data related to the quality of professional learning and its effect on teacher and student learning. Teacher WC always provides constructive feedback to PLC members to strengthen teaching practice and improve student learning. Teacher WC always uses information about emerging education, economic, and/or social trends in planning and facilitating their PLC. The administrator did not add any additional comments.

Administrator SML, the administrator at the individual school where Teacher WC is employed, identified that Teacher WC always collaborates with PLC members and

school administrators to plan professional leaning that is team-based, job-embedded, sustained over time, and are linked to classroom/content area goals. Administrator SML also added the comment that Teacher WC spends time getting help and support with the leadership of her PLC at the beginning of the year and the amount of time decreases as the year progresses.

Teacher JW first observation by Administrator MR identified the following:

Teacher JW always utilized group process to help colleagues in their PLC work collaboratively to solve problems, make decisions, manage conflict, and promote meaningful change. Teacher JW always models effective skills in listening, presenting ideas, leading discussions, clarifying, mediating, and identifying the needs of self and others in order to advance shared goals and professional learning in their PLC. Teacher always employs facilitation skills to create trust among PLC members, develop collective wisdom, and build ownership and action that supports student learning. Teacher JW always strives to created and inclusive culture in their PLC where diverse perspectives are welcome in addressing challenges. Teacher JW always uses knowledge and understanding of different backgrounds of the PLC members to promote effective interaction among colleagues. Teacher JW always works with PLC members in establishing a goal and collecting, analyzing, communicating the data related to the quality of professional learning and its effect on teacher and student learning. Teacher JW always provides constructive feedback to PLC members to strengthen teaching practice and improve student learning. Teacher JW always uses information about emerging education, economic, and/or social trends in planning and facilitating their PLC. The administrator added no comments to the observation

Teacher JW's second observation by Administrator AD identified the following:

Teacher JW most of the time utilized group process to help colleagues in their PLC work collaboratively to solve problems, make decisions, manage conflict, and promote meaningful change. Teacher JW always models effective skills in listening, presenting ideas, leading discussions, clarifying, mediating, and identifying the needs of self and others in order to advance shared goals and professional learning in their PLC. Teacher JW always employs facilitation skills to create trust among PLC members, develop collective wisdom, and build ownership and action that supports student learning. Teacher JW (almost) always strives to created and inclusive culture in their PLC where diverse perspectives are welcome in addressing challenges. Teacher JW always uses knowledge and understanding of different backgrounds of the PLC members to promote effective interaction among colleagues. Teacher JW always works with PLC members in establishing a goal and collecting, analyzing, communicating the data related to the quality of professional learning and its effect on teacher and student learning. Teacher JW always provides constructive feedback to PLC members to strengthen teaching practice and improve student learning. Teacher JW most of the time uses information about emerging education, economic, and/or social trends in planning and facilitating their PLC. The administrator additionally commented that the group seemed to get along well, support each other, and give professional advice and best practice techniques.

Administrator SML, the administrator at the individual school where Teacher JW is employed, identified that Teacher WC always collaborates with PLC members and school administrators to plan professional leaning that is team-based, job-embedded,

sustained over time, and are linked to classroom/content area goals. Administrator SML also added the comment that Teacher JW collaborated with her more at the beginning but they do speak regularly on the learning goals for their PLC grade level.

Teacher EN's first observation by Administrator SML identified the following:

Teacher EN always utilized group process to help colleagues in their PLC work collaboratively to solve problems, make decisions, manage conflict, and promote meaningful change. Teacher EN always models effective skills in listening, presenting ideas, leading discussions, clarifying, mediating, and identifying the needs of self and others in order to advance shared goals and professional learning in their PLC. Teacher EN always employs facilitation skills to create trust among PLC members, develop collective wisdom, and build ownership and action that supports student learning. Teacher EN always strives to created and inclusive culture in their PLC where diverse perspectives are welcome in addressing challenges. Teacher EN always uses knowledge and understanding of different backgrounds of the PLC members to promote effective interaction among colleagues. Teacher EN always works with PLC members in establishing a goal and collecting, analyzing, communicating the data related to the quality of professional learning and its effect on teacher and student learning. Teacher EN always provides constructive feedback to PLC members to strengthen teaching practice and improve student learning. Teacher EN always uses information about emerging education, economic, and/or social trends in planning and facilitating their PLC. The administrator added the comments that the Teacher EN's grouped has gelled. There are very willing to talk and show what they know and do not know. They are

respectful of each other when sharing. They are not afraid to ask questions of each other, and there is a level of trust present.

Teacher EN's second observation by Administrator AD identified the following:

Teacher EN (almost) always utilized group process to help colleagues in their PLC work collaboratively to solve problems, make decisions, manage conflict, and promote meaningful change. Teacher EN always models effective skills in listening, presenting ideas, leading discussions, clarifying, mediating, and identifying the needs of self and others in order to advance shared goals and professional learning in their PLC. Teacher EN (almost) always employs facilitation skills to create trust among PLC members, develop collective wisdom, and build ownership and action that supports student learning. Teacher EN most of the time strives to created and inclusive culture in their PLC where diverse perspectives are welcome in addressing challenges. Teacher EN most of the time uses knowledge and understanding of different backgrounds of the PLC members to promote effective interaction among colleagues. Teacher EN always works with PLC members in establishing a goal and collecting, analyzing, communicating the data related to the quality of professional learning and its effect on teacher and student learning. Teacher EN always provides constructive feedback to PLC members to strengthen teaching practice and improve student learning. Teacher EN always uses information about emerging education, economic, and/or social trends in planning and facilitating their PLC. The administrator did not add any additional comments.

Administrator MAK, the administrator at the individual school where Teacher WC is employed, identified that Teacher WC always collaborates with PLC members and school administrators to plan professional leaning that is team-based, job-embedded,

sustained over time, and are linked to classroom/content area goals. Administrator MAK also added the comment that Teacher EN continually works with her on discovering meaningful articles to share with her PLC.

Teacher LE's first observation by Administrator PO identified the following:

Teacher LE always utilized group process to help colleagues in their PLC work collaboratively to solve problems, make decisions, manage conflict, and promote meaningful change. Teacher LE most of the time models effective skills in listening, presenting ideas, leading discussions, clarifying, mediating, and identifying the needs of self and others in order to advance shared goals and professional learning in their PLC. Teacher LE always employs facilitation skills to create trust among PLC members, develop collective wisdom, and build ownership and action that supports student learning. Teacher LE always strives to created and inclusive culture in their PLC where diverse perspectives are welcome in addressing challenges. Teacher LE always uses knowledge and understanding of different backgrounds of the PLC members to promote effective interaction among colleagues. Teacher LE always works with PLC members in establishing a goal and collecting, analyzing, communicating the data related to the quality of professional learning and its effect on teacher and student learning. Teacher LE always provides constructive feedback to PLC members to strengthen teaching practice and improve student learning. Teacher LE always uses information about emerging education, economic, and/or social trends in planning and facilitating their PLC. The administrator added the comments that the meeting was well planned and all members participated, supported one another, and seemed comfortable.

Teacher LE's second observation by Administrator AG identified the following:

Teacher LE always utilized group process to help colleagues in their PLC work collaboratively to solve problems, make decisions, manage conflict, and promote meaningful change. Teacher LE always models effective skills in listening, presenting ideas, leading discussions, clarifying, mediating, and identifying the needs of self and others in order to advance shared goals and professional learning in their PLC. Teacher LE always employs facilitation skills to create trust among PLC members, develop collective wisdom, and build ownership and action that supports student learning. Teacher LE always strives to created and inclusive culture in their PLC where diverse perspectives are welcome in addressing challenges. Teacher LE always uses knowledge and understanding of different backgrounds of the PLC members to promote effective interaction among colleagues. Teacher LE always works with PLC members in establishing a goal and collecting, analyzing, communicating the data related to the quality of professional learning and its effect on teacher and student learning. Teacher LE always provides constructive feedback to PLC members to strengthen teaching practice and improve student learning. Teacher LE always uses information about emerging education, economic, and/or social trends in planning and facilitating their PLC. The administrator additionally commented that the teachers were open to sharing problems of practice with regards to student struggles and were willing to share and get ideas.

Administrator DW, the administrator at the individual school where Teacher LE is employed, identified that Teacher LE always collaborates with PLC members and school administrators to plan professional leaning that is team-based, job-embedded, sustained

over time, and are linked to classroom/content area goals. Administrator DW did not make any additional comments.

Teacher KM's first observation by Administrator MAK identified the following:

Teacher KM most of the time utilized group process to help colleagues in their PLC work collaboratively to solve problems, make decisions, manage conflict, and promote meaningful change. Teacher KM sometimes models effective skills in listening, presenting ideas, leading discussions, clarifying, mediating, and identifying the needs of self and others in order to advance shared goals and professional learning in their PLC. Teacher KM most of the time employs facilitation skills to create trust among PLC members, develop collective wisdom, and build ownership and action that supports student learning. Teacher KM most of the time strives to created and inclusive culture in their PLC where diverse perspectives are welcome in addressing challenges. Teacher KM sometimes uses knowledge and understanding of different backgrounds of the PLC members to promote effective interaction among colleagues. Teacher KM sometimes works with PLC members in establishing a goal and collecting, analyzing, communicating the data related to the quality of professional learning and its effect on teacher and student learning. Teacher KM most of the time provides constructive feedback to PLC members to strengthen teaching practice and improve student learning. Teacher KM most of the time uses information about emerging education, economic, and/or social trends in planning and facilitating their PLC. The administrator added the comments that much of the discussion was between Teacher KM and one another teacher, and there was very little collaboration with the other teachers.

Teacher KM's second observation by Administrator AG identified the following:

Teacher KM always utilized group process to help colleagues in their PLC work collaboratively to solve problems, make decisions, manage conflict, and promote meaningful change. Teacher KM always models effective skills in listening, presenting ideas, leading discussions, clarifying, mediating, and identifying the needs of self and others in order to advance shared goals and professional learning in their PLC. Teacher KM always employs facilitation skills to create trust among PLC members, develop collective wisdom, and build ownership and action that supports student learning. Teacher KM always strives to created and inclusive culture in their PLC where diverse perspectives are welcome in addressing challenges. Teacher KM always uses knowledge and understanding of different backgrounds of the PLC members to promote effective interaction among colleagues. Teacher KM always works with PLC members in establishing a goal and collecting, analyzing, communicating the data related to the quality of professional learning and its effect on teacher and student learning. Teacher KM always provides constructive feedback to PLC members to strengthen teaching practice and improve student learning. Teacher KM always uses information about emerging education, economic, and/or social trends in planning and facilitating their PLC. The administrator commented additionally that Teacher KM was very knowledgeable on different topic in education related to reading best practices. The group was also very open to sharing and all teacher participated.

Administrator AD, the administrator at the individual school where Teacher KM is employed, identified that Teacher KM always collaborates with PLC members and school administrators to plan professional leaning that is team-based, job-embedded, sustained over time, and are linked to classroom/content area goals. Administrator AD

also added the comment that Teacher KM works well with her to plan and prepare for her PLT meetings. Teacher KM takes into account all the needs of the teachers and the differences in classrooms.

Teacher KC1's first observation by Administrator MAK identified the following:

Teacher KC1 always utilized group process to help colleagues in their PLC work collaboratively to solve problems, make decisions, manage conflict, and promote meaningful change. Teacher KC1 most of the time models effective skills in listening, presenting ideas, leading discussions, clarifying, mediating, and identifying the needs of self and others in order to advance shared goals and professional learning in their PLC. Teacher KC1 always employs facilitation skills to create trust among PLC members, develop collective wisdom, and build ownership and action that supports student learning. Teacher KC1 always strives to created and inclusive culture in their PLC where diverse perspectives are welcome in addressing challenges. Teacher KC1 always uses knowledge and understanding of different backgrounds of the PLC members to promote effective interaction among colleagues. Teacher KC1 always works with PLC members in establishing a goal and collecting, analyzing, communicating the data related to the quality of professional learning and its effect on teacher and student learning. Teacher KC1 always provides constructive feedback to PLC members to strengthen teaching practice and improve student learning. Teacher KC1 always uses information about emerging education, economic, and/or social trends in planning and facilitating their PLC. The administrator added the comments that the teacher leader was fantastic and brings all in the group in to the discussion and sharing. All participants were interested and interactive.

Teacher KC1's second observation by Administrator LV identified the following:

Teacher KC1 always utilized group process to help colleagues in their PLC work collaboratively to solve problems, make decisions, manage conflict, and promote meaningful change. Teacher KC1 always models effective skills in listening, presenting ideas, leading discussions, clarifying, mediating, and identifying the needs of self and others in order to advance shared goals and professional learning in their PLC. Teacher KC1 always employs facilitation skills to create trust among PLC members, develop collective wisdom, and build ownership and action that supports student learning. Teacher KC1 always strives to created and inclusive culture in their PLC where diverse perspectives are welcome in addressing challenges. Teacher KC1 always uses knowledge and understanding of different backgrounds of the PLC members to promote effective interaction among colleagues. Teacher KC1 always works with PLC members in establishing a goal and collecting, analyzing, communicating the data related to the quality of professional learning and its effect on teacher and student learning. Teacher KC1 always provides constructive feedback to PLC members to strengthen teaching practice and improve student learning. Teacher KC1 always uses information about emerging education, economic, and/or social trends in planning and facilitating their PLC. The administrator did not add any additional comments.

Administrator AG, the administrator at the individual school where Teacher KC1 is employed, identified that Teacher KC1 always collaborates with PLC members and school administrators to plan professional leaning that is team-based, job-embedded, sustained over time, and are linked to classroom/content area goals. Administrator AG made no additional comments.

Teacher KC2's first observation by Administrator KM identified the following:

Teacher KC2 always utilized group process to help colleagues in their PLC work collaboratively to solve problems, make decisions, manage conflict, and promote meaningful change. Teacher KC2 always models effective skills in listening, presenting ideas, leading discussions, clarifying, mediating, and identifying the needs of self and others in order to advance shared goals and professional learning in their PLC. Teacher KC2 always employs facilitation skills to create trust among PLC members, develop collective wisdom, and build ownership and action that supports student learning. Teacher KC2 always strives to created and inclusive culture in their PLC where diverse perspectives are welcome in addressing challenges. Teacher KC2 always uses knowledge and understanding of different backgrounds of the PLC members to promote effective interaction among colleagues. Teacher KC2 always with PLC members in establishing a goal and collecting, analyzing, communicating the data related to the quality of professional learning and its effect on teacher and student learning. Teacher KC2 always provides constructive feedback to PLC members to strengthen teaching practice and improve student learning. Teacher KC2 always uses information about emerging education, economic, and/or social trends in planning and facilitating their PLC. The administrator did not have any additional comments.

Teacher KC2's second observation by Administrator MR identified the following:

Teacher KC2 most of the time utilized group process to help colleagues in their PLC work collaboratively to solve problems, make decisions, manage conflict, and promote meaningful change. Teacher KC2 always models effective skills in listening, presenting ideas, leading discussions, clarifying, mediating, and identifying the needs of

self and others in order to advance shared goals and professional learning in their PLC. Teacher KC2 always employs facilitation skills to create trust among PLC members, develop collective wisdom, and build ownership and action that supports student learning. Teacher KC2 always strives to created and inclusive culture in their PLC where diverse perspectives are welcome in addressing challenges. Teacher KC2 most of the time uses knowledge and understanding of different backgrounds of the PLC members to promote effective interaction among colleagues. Teacher KC2 always works with PLC members in establishing a goal and collecting, analyzing, communicating the data related to the quality of professional learning and its effect on teacher and student learning. Teacher KC2 always provides constructive feedback to PLC members to strengthen teaching practice and improve student learning. Teacher WC always uses information about emerging education, economic, and/or social trends in planning and facilitating their PLC. The administrator did not add the additional comment that the group worked very well together.

Administrator AG, the administrator at the individual school where Teacher KC2 is employed, identified that Teacher KC2 always collaborates with PLC members and school administrators to plan professional leaning that is team-based, job-embedded, sustained over time, and are linked to classroom/content area goals. Administrator AG did not add any additional comments.

Teacher WC's first observation by Administrator AG identified the following:

Teacher WC sometimes utilized group process to help colleagues in their PLC work collaboratively to solve problems, make decisions, manage conflict, and promote meaningful change. Teacher WC sometimes models effective skills in listening,

presenting ideas, leading discussions, clarifying, mediating, and identifying the needs of self and others in order to advance shared goals and professional learning in their PLC. Teacher WC sometimes employs facilitation skills to create trust among PLC members, develop collective wisdom, and build ownership and action that supports student learning. Teacher WC most of the time strives to created and inclusive culture in their PLC where diverse perspectives are welcome in addressing challenges. Teacher WC always uses knowledge and understanding of different backgrounds of the PLC members to promote effective interaction among colleagues. Teacher WC sometimes works with PLC members in establishing a goal and collecting, analyzing, communicating the data related to the quality of professional learning and its effect on teacher and student learning. Teacher WC most of the time provides constructive feedback to PLC members to strengthen teaching practice and improve student learning. Teacher WC sometimes uses information about emerging education, economic, and/or social trends in planning and facilitating their PLC. The administrator added the comments that the teacher leader was observed as being a part of a discussion group vs. the leader of the discussion group. Other teachers stepped in much more with thoughts and ideas, presenting a lack of leadership skills by Teacher WC. In addition, only two of the eight teachers brought in student work to differentiated lessons.

Teacher WC's second observation by Administrator DW identified the following:

Teacher WC always utilized group process to help colleagues in their PLC work collaboratively to solve problems, make decisions, manage conflict, and promote meaningful change. Teacher WC always models effective skills in listening, presenting ideas, leading discussions, clarifying, mediating, and identifying the needs of self and

others in order to advance shared goals and professional learning in their PLC. Teacher WC always employs facilitation skills to create trust among PLC members, develop collective wisdom, and build ownership and action that supports student learning. Teacher WC always strives to created and inclusive culture in their PLC where diverse perspectives are welcome in addressing challenges. Teacher WC always uses knowledge and understanding of different backgrounds of the PLC members to promote effective interaction among colleagues. Teacher WC always works with PLC members in establishing a goal and collecting, analyzing, communicating the data related to the quality of professional learning and its effect on teacher and student learning. Teacher WC always provides constructive feedback to PLC members to strengthen teaching practice and improve student learning. Teacher WC always uses information about emerging education, economic, and/or social trends in planning and facilitating their PLC. The administrator did not add any additional comments.

Administrator SML, the administrator at the individual school where Teacher WC is employed, identified that Teacher WC always collaborates with PLC members and school administrators to plan professional leaning that is team-based, job-embedded, sustained over time, and are linked to classroom/content area goals. Administrator SML also added the comment that Teacher WC spends time getting help and support with the leadership of her PLC at the beginning of the year and the amount of time decreases as the year progresses.

Teacher JZ's first observation by Administrator KM identified the following:

Teacher JZ always utilized group process to help colleagues in their PLC work collaboratively to solve problems, make decisions, manage conflict, and promote

meaningful change. Teacher JZ always models effective skills in listening, presenting ideas, leading discussions, clarifying, mediating, and identifying the needs of self and others in order to advance shared goals and professional learning in their PLC. Teacher JZ always employs facilitation skills to create trust among PLC members, develop collective wisdom, and build ownership and action that supports student learning. Teacher JZ always strives to created and inclusive culture in their PLC where diverse perspectives are welcome in addressing challenges. Teacher JZ always uses knowledge and understanding of different backgrounds of the PLC members to promote effective interaction among colleagues. Teacher JZ always works with PLC members in establishing a goal and collecting, analyzing, communicating the data related to the quality of professional learning and its effect on teacher and student learning. Teacher JZ always provides constructive feedback to PLC members to strengthen teaching practice and improve student learning. Teacher JZ always uses information about emerging education, economic, and/or social trends in planning and facilitating their PLC. The administrator added the comments that the group worked very well together and seemed to have built a cooperative attitude with each other. The group seemed to enjoy each other both professionally and personally.

Teacher JZ's second observation by Administrator PO identified the following:

Teacher JZ always utilized group process to help colleagues in their PLC work collaboratively to solve problems, make decisions, manage conflict, and promote meaningful change. Teacher JZ always models effective skills in listening, presenting ideas, leading discussions, clarifying, mediating, and identifying the needs of self and others in order to advance shared goals and professional learning in their PLC. Teacher

JZ always employs facilitation skills to create trust among PLC members, develop collective wisdom, and build ownership and action that supports student learning. Teacher JZ always strives to created and inclusive culture in their PLC where diverse perspectives are welcome in addressing challenges. Teacher JZ always uses knowledge and understanding of different backgrounds of the PLC members to promote effective interaction among colleagues. Teacher JZ always works with PLC members in establishing a goal and collecting, analyzing, communicating the data related to the quality of professional learning and its effect on teacher and student learning. Teacher JZ always provides constructive feedback to PLC members to strengthen teaching practice and improve student learning. Teacher JZ always uses information about emerging education, economic, and/or social trends in planning and facilitating their PLC. The administrator did not add any additional comments.

Administrator SML, the administrator at the individual school where Teacher JZ is employed, identified that Teacher WC always collaborates with PLC members and school administrators to plan professional leaning that is team-based, job-embedded, sustained over time, and are linked to classroom/content area goals. Administrator SML also added the comment that Teacher JZ does a great job leading her group. Teacher JZ checks in with Administrator SML and informs on what the group is doing and the learning goal their PLC is focusing on.

Developing the Teacher Leader Survey: Post-Leader Program (Appendix C)

The third piece of data examined as part of this study, was the Developing the Teacher Leader Survey: Post-Leader Program. The teacher leaders participating in this

study completed a post survey that reflected the teacher leader program they participated in for the year. The questions on the survey were as followed:

*Explain your thoughts about the teacher leader meetings held prior to your PLC meetings.

*Were the expectations of the administration in the development of the PLC agendas and in conducting the PLC meetings met? Please explain your reasoning.

*What improvements could administrators make in ensuring success of the teacher leaders and PLCs?

*What did administrators do well with in ensuring success of the teacher leaders and the PLCs?

*What, if any, positive outcomes did you experience personally or in your PLC as a result of the teacher leader program?

*What, if any, negative outcomes did you experience personally or in your PLC as a result of the teacher leader program?

*What qualities did you feel you possessed throughout the program as the teacher leader for the PLC? Did you learn anything about yourself as a teacher leader? If so, what did you learn?

*After being a part of the teacher leader program, what is your current view of the use of the PLC model currently being used in the parochial school setting and do you think it should be a part of the parochial school setting?

*Do you feel prepared to work with other teachers who step into the role of PLC teacher leader? Explain.

*What part(s) of the teacher leader program would you keep?

*What part(s) of the teacher leader program would you change and how? Teacher KK's thoughts about the teacher leader meetings are that the meetings were helpful in explaining the role of the leader that she was not aware of previously. Teacher KK also thought it was a good opportunity to express concerns. Teacher KK's expectations of the administration were met. The preschool PLC followed the agenda outlined with the support of our administrator and did well having a guideline set in place. Teacher KK did not express and improvements that could be made by administrators in ensuring the success of teacher leaders and PLCs. Teacher KK stated that administrators were always there to help and listen to issues/problems.

Teacher KK identified the positives outcomes were having a group leader who knew the expectations and guidelines and help the group find purpose and focus. The teachers in the group expressed that they liked having a teacher leader who know what needed to be done and who would help accomplish the goal and having someone who could communicate with administration on behalf of the entire team. Teacher KK stated that the only negative outcome was find a new PLC teacher leader for their team for the next school year. (The regular teacher leader program would have teacher leaders in this position for two years, but this particular teacher would be leaving at the end of the school year.)

Teacher KK felt that she possessed organization, patience, and good listening skills throughout her leadership period. After being a part of the teacher leader program, Teacher KK's view of the PLC model being used is that she enjoys gaining new ideas from the group and meeting with a support team since there are a lack of multiple teachers in the same grade at the same school. Teacher KK expressed that she felt it is

difficult to have a PLC in a parochial school setting because a PLC is truly designed to meet at least once a week to discuss various issues, implementing similar lesson plans, assessments, etc. It is hard to work on a similar and meet only a couple of times during the year. This model would work well if each school had several of the same grade level in the same school. Teacher KK did feel that she could help guide a new teacher leader and outline expectations. After participating in the teacher leader program, she felt confident leading the group. The part(s) of the teacher leader program Teacher KK would like to continue are creating the agenda together and discussion various issues that were occurring in individual PLCs with the other teacher leaders and administrators. Teacher KK liked allowing the leaders to be the voices for their groups. Teacher KK identified a part that she felt could be changed is the length of time (1:15-3:00pm). Teacher KK stated that due to a long block of time, conversation often turned to complaints.

Teacher WC stated that the teacher leader meetings held prior to the PLC meetings were engaging and extremely helpful in the planning process. Teacher WC's expectations of the administration were met. Teacher WC did not identify any improvements administration could have made. Teacher WC stated that she appreciated that her administrator provided a lot of support with helping their group plan for additional professional development outside of the PLC meetings.

Teacher WC identified that the positive outcomes experienced were that the group was much more productive and collaborative than in years past. Teacher WC did not experience any negative outcomes. Teacher WC stated that she was much more supportive than in previous years and that she felt more comfortable with leading

meetings and guiding conversations. After participating in the teacher leader program, Teacher WC's current view of the PLC model used is that it is heading in the right direction. With more support and direction, the PLC was much more effective in collaboration and working towards a common goal.

Teacher WC felt that the teacher leader program helped to prepare her to help and support other teachers who step in the teacher leader role. Teacher WC stated that she would keep all the components of the teacher leader program and felt all components made her a better leader that in turn made her group function more effectively.

Teacher JW explained that the teacher leaders prior to the meetings were very helpful. They gave her a much better understanding of how her PLT needed to function in order to be successful. Teacher JW's expectations of the administrators were fully met. Teacher JW did not identify any improvements. Teacher JW mostly appreciated being able to have discussions with administrators, so they were aware of what was being discussed at each PLC and what support she needed as a teacher leader.

The positive outcomes Teacher JW experienced were that she felt much more comfortable as a PLC leader and the time with her PLC was very productive and focused. Teacher JW did not experience any negative outcomes. Teacher JW felt that she possessed the leadership qualities of being organized, knowledgeable, someone who other teacher trust.

Teacher EN stated that the beginning of the school year meeting was the most beneficial to planning the meetings throughout the school year. The resources given were used and referred to throughout the school year in planning and leading each PLC meeting. Teacher EN stated that the expectations of administration were fully met.

Teacher EN identified that one improvement be that an administrator is present at each meeting rather than just the teacher leader meetings and two of the PLC meetings. Teacher EN stated that the administrator did a great job with suggestions and checking in on her throughout the school year.

Teacher EN stated that the positive outcomes were that her group collaboration and lesson and curriculum sharing was constant throughout the year and not just at the PLC meetings. Teacher EN did not identify any negative outcomes as a result of the teacher leader program. Teacher EN became better organized in record keeping and agendas throughout the year. Teacher EN also stated that she learned that she could be in a leadership role even though she has had little teaching experience.

Teacher LE appreciated the added teacher leader meetings this year. They helped her better understand a PLC and how to better work with her team and keep the meeting student focused. Teacher LE's expectations of the administration were met and they were present and active throughout the year with regards to the PLCs. Teacher LE did not identify any improvements that administrators could make. Teacher LE stated that administrators participated well. Teacher LE's administrator met with her regularly to find literature and develop professional development options outside of the PLC for our whole team.

Teacher LE has identified the positive outcomes as her feeling more like a leader and that others really gained her trust. Teacher LE did not identify any negative outcomes. Teacher LE felt that throughout the program she possessed the qualities of being well organized and a voice for her PLC when it came to working with the administration. This was something Teacher LE stated was hard for her in prior years, as

she felt unsupported. Teacher LE's view of the PLC model after participating in the teacher leader program is that they are very important to continue. Because the teacher leaders were given support, the teachers in her PLC became better participants because there was ongoing guidance and support for them.

Teacher LE feels prepared to work with other teachers stepping into the role of PLC teacher leader because of the support she has been given. Teacher LE would not make any changes to the teacher leader program and hopes that it continues and more teacher make an effort to step into this leadership role.

Teacher KM's thoughts about the teacher leader meetings held prior to the PLCs were that they helped her understand what her role was with her group. They gave her information needed to support her group and lead them in meeting their goals. The teacher leader meetings also helped her gain the support from the principals that they did not have in the years prior, but now there was regular reporting and meetings with administration. Teacher KM' expectations of administration were met.

Teacher KM felt strong support with developing meetings and the help in understanding her role was key. KM identified that one improvement involving administration that she would like to see is the ability to get to work more closely with other principals more often. A good opportunity for this would be that a principal be at every PLC meeting and not just two of them. Teacher KM indicated that administrators ensured success by helping to set the requirements, giving tools to achieve success, and lent support if a group was struggling or needed guidance. Teacher KM identified positive outcomes that include that she gained resources and knowledge that she did not have before the program began. Teacher KM's negative outcomes included that some

teachers still did not want to be involved in the group. Teacher KM stated that she had a difficult time seeing the positives of coming together and collaborating as a group.

The qualities that Teacher KM felt she possessed was that she did not have any problem being direct and blunt, offering help to others, keeping them on task, being a good listener, and has been in the classroom for a long time, so she could offer an expertise. Teacher KM also stated that she is always willing to try new things if something is not working. She loves being able to collaborate with other teachers. After being a part of the teacher leader program, Teacher KM's view of the PLC model was that it is vital to our parochial school setting. Providing the ongoing support to teacher leaders will on enhance the success of the PLCs. Teacher KM now feels prepared to work with other teachers who step into the role of teacher leader, because she had a full understanding of how important collaboration is and how to be successful in a PLC. Teacher KM stated that she would keep the five PLC team meetings with the teacher leader meetings prior. This was very helpful and beneficial for her and her time. Teacher KM also liked the newly added faith formation component, which was not included prior. Teacher KM would not change any parts of the teacher leader program.

Teacher KC1 stated that the teacher leader meetings were very helpful in making sure she had a better understanding of her role and what resources were out available. Teacher KC1's expectations of the administration were fully met. Teacher KC1 did not make any suggestions to improvements. Teacher KC1 identified that administrators were present and actively involved. She stated that her administrator was easy to work with and very supportive in finding resources and professional development opportunities.

Teacher KC1 stated that the positive outcomes of her PLC included that they became more comfortable with each other and wanted to find more professional development outside of their PLC meetings. Teacher KC1 did not identify any negative outcomes she experienced.

Teacher KC1 felt that the qualities she possesses, as a teacher leader is that she is much more knowledgeable on what should take place in a PLC, so she is very comfortable with the organization and guiding the discussion. She also feels that she does a good job of making sure everyone is involved and actively participating in the meetings. Teacher KC1 stated that PLCs are beneficial and should continue to be a part of the parochial school setting. Now that they are feeling more comfortable with each other, they would like to do more professional development options together. Teacher KC1 feels very prepared, because of her organization and understanding, to work with other teachers who step into the role of PLC teacher leader. Teacher KCI found all components of the teacher leader program effective and important. Teacher KCI would not change any components of the teacher leader program, but would like to make sure there is proper communication if teachers leave a school or change to participate in another PLC.

Teacher KC2 did not see a benefit of all of the teacher leader meetings. Teacher KC2 felt the information could have been sent via email. Teacher KC2 did find the initial teacher leader meeting very beneficial but it felt that the rest of the meetings turned into times for teacher leader to talk about the problems in their group. Teacher KC2's expectations of the administration were fully met. Teacher KC2's administrator was always able and willing to provide her with information to share with her group. Teacher

KC2 identified one improvement for administrators is that they provide a goal for each meeting. Teacher KC2 always felt comfortable going to her administrator to ask for ideas and help with the PLCs SMART goal. Teacher KC2 also stated too that the other administrators at the teacher leader meetings were always positive and open to hear questions and ideas.

The positive outcomes Teacher KC2 experienced was that being a leader gave her the opportunity to collaborate more effectively than before, which in-turn built stronger relationships. Teacher KC2 did not identify any negative outcomes to the teacher leader program. Teacher KC2 believed that she brought organization, inspiration, and some humor to her PLC group. Teacher KC2 also stated that she felt that she allowed the teachers to share freely, their own thoughts and concerns. Teacher KC2's current view of PLCs in a parochial school setting after participating in the teacher leader program is that she enjoys the PLC meetings. Teacher KC2 states that teachers in a parochial school system sometimes feels that we are "on our own." Teacher KC2 shares that it is great that we have time to meet with other teachers, see what they are experiencing in their own buildings, and see how we can help each other. Teacher KC2 identified that she has been given the skills to help prepare another teacher who steps into the role as PLC teacher leader. Teacher KC2 stated that the kick off meeting and the participating and feedback from administration was key in the teacher leader program. However, Teacher KC2 stated that one component she would change is to just have the one teacher leader meeting at the beginning of the year and allow teacher leaders to work with their own building administrators for the remain time. Teacher KC2 suggested that in the absence of the additional teacher leader meetings information be shared electronically via email.

Teacher JZ's thoughts about the teacher leader meetings were that it was difficult for her building to allow her to leave during the school day. While the information and discussion were great, she felt guilty for leaving and have others cover, especially when they were short staffed at times. Teacher JZ's expectations of administration was met in that there was support provided to lead each meeting. Teacher JZ identified that one improvement by administration was in the communication of meetings and locations. There were a few times that her administrator communicated the wrong information and would like more communication with the teacher leaders. Teacher JZ stated one thing that her administrator did well was when a few teachers in her PLC were not supportive of her leadership or topics, she was given encouragement and support, and as a result, developed a much better rapport with her PLC.

Teacher JZ identified the positive outcomes due to the teacher leader program was that as the year progressed, the PLC had great topics to discuss and a lot of support from one another concerning many situations we had as facilitators in the classroom, parent communications, and issues with how to better accommodate our students. Teacher JZ identified communication issues as the only negative experience.

Teacher JZ felt her group was happy with the topics that were chosen to reflect on. Most of the time, Teacher JZ's PLC group was later to leave because they enjoyed one another and found discussion relevant to the classroom and the issues that were being experienced. Teacher JZ's view was PLCs in the parochial school setting was that they were important to continue. Teacher JZ stated that it is important to meet with other teachers of our level and that is gives the opportunity to talk about problems and solutions, along with offering support to one another concerning many issues being

experienced. Teacher JZ stated that she feels very prepared to work with other teachers who step into the PLC teacher leader role.

Teacher JZ felt all components of the teacher leader program were important. Teacher JZ suggested that rather than it be a designated PLC teacher leader that attends and runs a meeting that a different teacher representative attend each leader meeting.

Research Question One:

Teacher Leader Growth and Development of Leadership Skills

How do teacher leaders grow and develop their leadership skills, based on Domains I and III, with the exception of F in Domain III, of the Teacher Leader Model Standards developed by the Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium (2010), in collaborating with building principals and professional learning community teams among teachers in grade-level or departmentalized teams through participation in a teacher leader program?

Research Question Two:

Teacher Leaders Effectively Collaborating

How do teacher leaders utilize their leadership skills to effectively collaborate with their professional learning communities, based on Domains I and III, with the exception of F in Domain III, of the Teacher Leader Model Standards developed by the Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium (2010), in collaborating with building principals and professional learning community teams among teachers in grade-level or departmentalized teams through participation in a teacher leader program?

Hypothesis 1:

I believe that with support provided prior to each PLC meeting in the form of teacher leader program meetings, where they have access to resources and professional development, the teacher leaders in the PLC leadership role will grow as leaders and be able to effectively collaborate with the other teachers in their PLC, as they will have created a climate of collaboration, respect, understanding, and a place that focuses on student success.

Hypothesis 2:

I believe that with ongoing support provided by administration during the teacher leader meetings and throughout the teacher leader program, the teacher leaders in the PLC leadership role will grow as leaders and be able to effectively collaborate with the other teachers in their PLC, as they will have created a climate of collaboration, respect, understanding, and a place that focuses on student success.

Conclusion

In order to determine if my hypothesizes were accurate, I compared the Developing the Teacher Leader Survey-Pre Leader Program (Appendix A), the Administrator Observation Forms (Appendix B) from two observations and feedback regarding teacher leader collaboration with building administrators throughout the teacher leader program, and the Developing the Teacher Leader Survey-Post Leader Program (Appendix C). It was vital to this study to compare where teachers were prior to participating in the teacher leader program, the feedback from what administrators were experiencing, and where teacher were at the conclusion of the program in order to gauge the success of having a teacher leader program component as part of being the PLC teacher leader.

Chapter Five: Discussion and Reflection

Purpose of the Dissertation

The purpose of this study was to investigate the development of teacher leaders in the implementation of grade-level and/or departmentalized professional learning. With the help of building administrators, teacher leaders will need to use their knowledge and skills related to leadership and professional learning communities their learning teams in talking about teaching and learning within their own classrooms. Guided collaborative discussions could bring their teams to work collaboratively, while using best practices in education and problems of practice within their classrooms.

Research Questions

This qualitative study focused on two research questions:

Research Question 1: How do teacher leaders grow and develop their leadership skills, based on Domains I and III, with the exception of F in Domain III, of the Teacher Leader Model Standards developed by the Teacher leadership Exploratory Consortium (2010), in collaborating with building principals and professional learning community teams among teachers in grade-level or departmentalized teams through participation in a teacher leader program?

Research Question 2: How do teacher leaders utilize their leadership skills to effectively collaborate with their professional learning communities, based on Domains I and III, with the exception of F in Domain III, of the Teacher Leader Model Standards developed by the Teacher leadership Exploratory Consortium (2010), in collaborating with building principals and professional learning community teams among teachers in grade-level or departmentalized teams by participating in a teacher leader program?

Hypothesis 1:

I believe that with support provided prior to each PLC meeting in the form of teacher leader program meetings, where they have access to resources and professional development, the teacher leaders in the PLC leadership role will grow as leaders and be able to effectively collaborate with the other teachers in their PLC, as they will have created a climate of collaboration, respect, understanding, and a place that focuses on student success.

Hypothesis 2:

I believe that with ongoing support provided by administration during the teacher leader meetings and throughout the teacher leader program, the teacher leaders in the PLC leadership role will grow as leaders and be able to effectively collaborate with the other teachers in their PLC, as they will have created a climate of collaboration, respect, understanding, and a place that focuses on student success.

Data Gathering Instruments

The researcher initially collected secondary data that told what previous knowledge selected teacher leaders knew and/or did not know in regards to leading a grade-level or departmentalized professional learning community. A copy of this survey can be found in Appendix B of this document.

The researcher, along with other administrators, met with selected teacher leaders to set the structure and agenda of each professional learning community team meeting. At these meetings, the researcher kept an ongoing journal of the information shared, questions, and suggestions during the collaboration process with administrators and selected teacher leaders.

The researcher, along with other administrators, provided feedback of the professional learning team meetings via observation records. The researcher created an observation form to be used while researcher and fellow administrators observe on-going professional learning community team meetings. The researcher and fellow administrators observed the teacher leader and the professional learning community team meetings to assess the structure, leadership, and response to leadership provided during the meeting based on the Teacher Leader Model Standards for Domains III, with the exception of standard F in Domain III and I.

Data Analysis

The researcher analyzed the self-performed observation journals and provided personal reflections of the process. The administrator observation evaluations, teacher leader pre and post surveys looked to see if there was a relationship in the development of teacher leaders and the role administrators have in the guidance process in coding by looking at themes.

Triangulation of Results

In comparing the Developing the Teacher Leader Survey-Pre Leader Program (Appendix B), the Administrator Observation Forms (Appendix C) from two observations and feedback regarding teacher leader collaboration with building administrators throughout the teacher leader program, and the Developing the Teacher Leader Survey-Post Leader Program (Appendix D), it was determined that with support provided prior to each PLC meeting in the form of teacher leader program meetings, where teachers had access to resources and professional development, the teacher leaders in the PLC leadership role grew as leaders and were able to effectively collaborate with

the other teachers in their PLC. As teacher leadership grew, they identified that a climate of collaboration, respect, understanding, and a place that focuses on student success was present in their PLC.

All the teacher leaders identified the teacher leader meetings held prior to the PLC meetings and the resources were important in order to help mold successful PLCs. All the teachers identified that they felt they possessed the leadership qualities in order to maintain and grow effective PLCs.

All the teacher leaders identified that they also now feel equip with training future PLC teacher leaders after having the support of the teacher leader program. Lastly, in comparing the pre and the post leader survey, the responses indicated growth in understanding of what components are needed and important to and effective PLC. The responses indicted that with support and a better understanding of what an effective PLC looked like outlined for them as part of the teacher leader program, they were able to create an environment in their own PLCs that included collaboration, setting goals, discussing problems of practice, and building trusting relationships.

In comparing the administrator observations and the feedback provided by the teacher leaders' individual school administrators and the teacher leader survey post the teacher leader program, the teacher leaders in the PLC leadership role grew as leaders with the additional support of the administrators and were able to effectively collaborate with the other teachers in their PLC, as they created a climate of collaboration, respect, understanding, and a place that focuses on student success. In comparing administrator observations, all the teacher leaders that took part in the study were identified as improving in areas or remaining steady in each observed area. In addition, every

administrator working individually with a teacher leader in the building identified that they always collaborate with PLC members and school administrators to plan professional learning that is team-based, job-embedded, sustained over time, and are linked to classroom/content area goals. In the teacher leader post leader survey, all teacher leaders identified that their building administrator provided ongoing support and that it was vital to the PLC to have that support.

Personal Reflections

Prior to my study these schools had participated in a modified PLC in which a leader was designated based on interest, meetings were held once a month from September through May for one hour and forty-five minutes. There was no training, and honestly, very little support provided to the teacher who stepped into the teacher leader role. The teachers and teacher leaders really wanted to put an end to the PLC altogether.

Through seeing all of this as a new principal at one of the schools, I knew how important PLCs were to student success and knew that if teacher leaders received the support and resources, the PLCs would be a positive component to the professional development of all of our teachers. Throughout my time with this study, it was impactful to see the teacher leader meetings in action and be a part of the conversations. It was during this time, that I could see life come back into the PLC through the growth of the leaders. I appreciated seeing how much they grew to under the need for the PLC, but more importantly, how much they wanted to be a part in leading.

Recommendations for Teacher Leader Growth Using a Teacher Leader Program

Going forward, it is my recommendations that modifications and enhancements be made in accordance to the teacher leader suggestions, through observation, and as new

leaders step into the roles. These modifications being that teacher leaders who are handing the leadership over, be given a mentor role for that new teacher leader. I also recommend that the resources and support be updated to align with the current best practices in PLCs and the need of current students.

Recommendations for Future Research

My recommendations for future research include PLC teacher leaders and how they can effectively train teachers transitioning into the role of PLC teacher leader with a focus of small schools or parochial school settings. With most parochial schools, administration has to wear more hats in the absence of shared leadership roles such as co or assistance principals. In addition, it would be beneficial to focus on teacher leadership in small school or parochial school settings, as there is less literature that supports how to grow teacher leadership in this sort of setting.

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Appendix A

Developing the Teacher Leader Survey: Pre-Leader Program

(This is the survey that was given prior to the beginning of the study in which the post survey will be based on Secondary data from this survey will also be used.)

What are the major components of a professional learning community?

_____
_____
_____

What are the four essential questions PLCs must ask in regards to student learning?

_____
_____
_____

What role does the teacher leader play in a professional learning community?

_____
_____
_____

What are the expectations of administration in the development of PLC agendas and in conducting the PLC meetings?

_____
_____
_____

What qualities should a teacher leader possess in order for a PLC to be successful?

_____
_____
_____

What topics would you like to see focused on in your PLC or in the literature review piece of your PLC?

_____
_____
_____

What is your current view of the use of the PLC model currently being used in the parochial school setting?

_____

Subject Area: _____

Appendix B

Teacher Leader Observation Form

To be completed by administrator during a PLC meeting and reflects the administrator/teacher leader encounters prior to the meeting and the observation of PLT meeting the teacher leader is conducting.

Please rate each question 1-4: 1-Never, 2, Sometimes, 3- Most of the Time, 4-Always

The teacher leader utilizes group processes to help colleagues in their PLC work collaboratively to solve problems, make decisions, manage conflict, and promote meaningful change.

1 2 3 4

The teacher leader models effective skills in listening, presenting ideas, leading discussions, clarifying, mediating, and identifying the needs of self and others in order to advance shared goals and professional learning in their PLC.

1 2 3 4

The teacher leader employs facilitation skills to create trust among PLC members, develop collective wisdom, and build ownership and action that supports student learning.

1 2 3 4

The teacher leader strives to create an inclusive culture in their PLC where diverse perspectives are welcomed in addressing challenges.

1 2 3 4

The teacher leader uses knowledge and understanding of different backgrounds of the PLC members to promote effective interaction among colleagues.

1 2 3 4

The teacher leader collaborates with PLC members and school administrators to plan professional learning that is team-based, job-embedded, sustained over time, and are linked to classroom/content area goals.

1 2 3 4

The teacher leader works with PLC member in establishing a goal and collecting, analyzing, communicating the date related to the quality of professional learning and its effect on teaching and student learning.

1 2 3 4

The teacher leader provides constructive feedback to PLC members to strengthen teaching practice and improve student learning.

1 2 3 4

The teacher leader uses information about emerging education, economic, and/or social trends in planning and facilitating their PLC.

1 2 3 4

Comments

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Administrators: _____

Grade Level or Department_____

Observation criteria is adapted and based on Domain I and Domain III of the Teacher Leader Model Standards Developed by the Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium, 2010)

Appendix C

Developing the Teacher Leader Survey: Post-Leader Program

(This is the survey will be given at the conclusion of the study and reflects the questions in the post survey that was approved by administrators and administered prior to the study.)

Please address your understanding of the following as it reflects the teacher leader program you were involved in.

Explain your thoughts about the teacher leader meetings held prior to your PLC meetings.

Were the expectations of administration in the development of PLC agendas and in conducting the PLC meetings met? Please explain your reasoning.

What improvements could administrators make in ensuring success of teacher leaders and PLCs?

What did administrators do well with in ensuring success of teacher leaders and PLCs?

What, if any, positive outcomes did you experience personally or in your PLC as a result of the teacher leader program?

What, if any, negative outcomes did you experience personally or in your PLC as a result of the teacher leader program?

What qualities did you feel you possessed throughout the program as the teacher leader for a PLC? Did you learn anything about yourself as a teacher leader? If so, what did you learn?

After being a part of the teacher leader program, what is your current view of the use of the PLC model currently being used in the parochial school setting and do you think is should be a part of the parochial school setting?

Do you feel prepared to work other teachers who step in the role PLC teacher? Explain?

What part(s) of the teacher leader program would you keep?

What part(s) of the teacher leader program would you change and how so?

Subject Area: _____

Appendix D

Teacher Leader Model Standards I and III

Teacher Leader Model Standards

Developed by the Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium

Domain I

Fostering a Collaborative Culture to Support Educator Development and Student Learning

The teacher leader understands the principles of adult learning and knows how to develop a collaborative culture of collective responsibility in the school. The teacher leader uses this knowledge to promote an environment of collegiality, trust, and respect that focuses on continuous improvement in instruction and student learning.

Functions

The teacher leader:

a) Utilizes group processes to help colleagues[1] work collaboratively to solve problems, make decisions, manage conflict, and promote meaningful change;

b) Models effective skills in listening, presenting ideas, leading discussions, clarifying, mediating, and identifying the needs of self and others in order to advance shared goals and professional learning;

c) Employs facilitation skills to create trust among colleagues, develop collective wisdom, build ownership and action that supports student learning;

d) Strives to create an inclusive culture where diverse perspectives are welcomed in addressing challenges; and

e) Uses knowledge and understanding of different backgrounds, ethnicities, cultures, and languages to promote effective interactions among colleagues.

[1] *By colleagues, we mean members of the school community, including teachers, administrators, specialists, and others involved in the education of children at the school or district level.*

Teacher Leader Model Standards cont'd

Domain III

Promoting Professional Learning for Continuous Improvement

The teacher leader understands the evolving nature of teaching and learning, established and emerging technologies, and the school community. The teacher leader uses this knowledge to promote, design, and facilitate job-embedded professional learning aligned with school improvement goals.

Functions

The teacher leader:

a) Collaborates with colleagues and school administrators to plan professional learning that is team-based, job-embedded, sustained over time, aligned with content standards, and linked to school/district improvement goals;

b) Uses information about adult learning to respond to the diverse learning needs of colleagues by identifying, promoting, and facilitating varied and differentiated professional learning;

c) Facilitates professional learning among colleagues;

d) Identifies and uses appropriate technologies to promote collaborative and differentiated professional learning;

e) Works with colleagues to collect, analyze, and disseminate data related to the quality of professional learning and its effect on teaching and student learning;

f) Advocates for sufficient preparation, time, and support for colleagues to work in teams to engage in job-embedded professional learning;

g) Provides constructive feedback to colleagues to strengthen teaching practice and improve student learning; and

h) Uses information about emerging education, economic, and social trends in planning and facilitating professional learning.