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USING THE FULLAN LEADERSHIP MODEL TO
DETERMINE THE MEANING OF LEADERSHIP
FOR FOUR TEACHER LEADERS

A Thesis in

Instructional Systems

by

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to explore the ways that four individual teachers experienced the change in their role and daily teaching practice as they implement a teacher leadership program called Model Classrooms. Duke (1994) notes that teacher leaders have been in schools for a long time, but their roles have been more organizational or managerial in nature. In recent years, however, teacher leaders have begun to move to the forefront of school change (Duke, 1994). The Model Classrooms program focuses on teacher leadership and professional development as method to improve collaboration and collegiality among colleagues.

Originally, five self-selected teachers, under the guidance of the district assistant superintendent, designed this school reform effort in 2000 to improve teacher leadership skills and model best practices. These five teachers began their efforts in the place in which they had the most control, their own classrooms. The resulting framework contained four major components: planning and preparation, the environment, instruction, and assessment. In September 2002, an additional five teachers were added to the leadership team.

The goal of the program is to provide a network of teachers who are available to model best practices, provide an environment of greater teacher collaboration, and build local capacity to facilitate change. This study investigates what it means for four of these teachers to be teacher leaders in the professional development program. This 14-week investigation included personal interviews, classroom observations, and a review of their teaching materials. The data was analyzed using Fullan's Framework for Leadership

(Fullan, 2001a) to determine each teacher's level of moral purpose, understanding change, relationship building, knowledge creation and sharing, and coherence making. The results of this research suggest that the current implementation of the Model Classrooms framework is creating teacher leaders through individualized professional development.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Political agendas and national standards have dominated school reform issues since the early 1980's (Hertert, 1996). Politicians and education policy makers continue to demonstrate an increased willingness to make decisions about children based on their performance on a single standardized test (Merrow, 2001). Recent national legislation has created an accountability system for America's schools that will be hard to achieve without some major improvements in the way administrators lead and teachers teach (Coile, 2001). Richard Elmore, Harvard professor and researcher states, "We have tended to treat what goes on in the classroom as a relatively idiosyncratic process that is determined largely by the personal characteristics and attributes of teachers. What the accountability movement does is take the lid off that and say, Look, there have to be some ways to teach that are effective" (Farrace, 2002).

Early efforts to increase accountability were sparked by the publication of A Nation at Risk in 1983. Many of the programs that emerged focused on greater responsibility for teachers but did little to change the culture of schools (Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991). Culture can be defined as "the deeper level of basic assumptions and beliefs that are shared by members of an organization, that operate unconsciously, and that define in a basic 'taken-for-granted' fashion an organization's view of itself and its environment" (Schein in (Evans, 1996, p. 41). It is through changes in these beliefs that lasting reform can be achieved (Fullan, 2001b). Evans (1996) indicates that culture change is systemic and involves beliefs and attitudes that have been developed over a substantial period of time. Fullan (2001a) asserts that schools should strive to transform,

“the way we do things around here” (p. 44) by creating a culture, not just a structure, of change. This method of “reculturing” is “one that activates and deepens moral purpose through collaborative work cultures that respect differences and constantly build and test knowledge against measurable results – a culture within which one realizes that sometimes being off-balance is a learning moment” (p. 44).

Hargreaves and Evans (1997) suggest that there is increasing evidence that the quality of teaching and learning inside the classroom is affected by the quality of the professional relationships teachers have outside of the classroom. Students are given greater opportunities for learning when there is a professional culture of teaching in the school. When teachers are willing to share professional ideals and work together, sustainable change is more likely to occur (Hargreaves & Evans, 1997). Fullan (1997) suggests that the culture, central to the life of schools, is built on these professional relationships. It is through these cultures that teachers learn what it means to teach and what kind of teacher they want to be.

Cultures of collaboration among teachers seem to produce greater willingness to take risks, to learn from mistakes, and to share successful strategies with colleagues that lead to teachers having positive senses of their own efficacy, beliefs that their children can learn, and improved outcomes in that learning as a result (Fullan, 1997a, p. 68)

Through shared teacher leadership and building cooperative relationships (Reigeluth & Garfinkle, 1994), administrators and teachers in a small Pennsylvania school district are tinkering with small parts of the system in an effort to influence the greater community of teachers. It is through these changes in beliefs and understanding of a few teachers that a foundation is being laid for achieving lasting reform (Fullan, 2001b). While the standards-based reform in the district is being driven by state and national standards-

based legislation, the school administration determined a few years ago that their approach to improving test scores was going to start with improved professional development for teachers in an effort to provide a more liberal arts style of education for students.

If new and stable forms of organizational behavior emerge, transformations of meanings invariably accompany them. Teachers develop new conceptions of their work through communications in which their principal or colleagues point out new aspects of experience to them with fresh interpretations. It is only when teachers adopt these fresh perspectives that their behavior becomes subject to change. (Rosenholtz, 1989, p. 3)

Desimone et al. (2002) conducted a study of district professional development policies and noted that teacher professional development will play a crucial role in the long term success or failure of the standards reform movements. Moreover, even when teachers received well programmed professional development, many of the activities often do not have the features to increase teacher knowledge and permanently change teaching practice over the long term. Necessary features of professional development include: planned follow-up, participation of groups of teachers from the same school or department, a focus on content, active learning opportunities, and coherence (e.g. consistency with other goals and activities)” (Desimone, Porter, & Birman, 2002, p. 1266). This study will examine what one school district is doing to implement more effective teaching methods based on the Pennsylvania state standards through an innovative professional development program.

Background

In August of 2000, five self-selected teachers and the district assistant superintendent met and discussed the notion of Model Classrooms (MC) program for the

first time. The program was not prepackaged and there were no guidelines formally in place. Using a variety of resources such as Kendall and Marzano (2000), Content Knowledge: A Compendium of Standards (3rd ed) and Aligning Standards, Test, and Essential Skills to Improve Instruction (2001) published by the International Center for Leadership in Education, Inc., the district assistant superintendent led the process. He used a “widen-out” model which is based on the principle of participation and considers a top-down and a bottom-up approach to school change (Evans, 1996).

The five teachers (teacher leaders) began their efforts in the place in which they had the most control, their own classrooms. Since there was agreement between both the superintendent and the teacher leaders that if the program was to work they would need time, space, and a shift in responsibilities, the teacher leaders were given additional resources to accommodate their new roles (McLaughlin, 1997). A regularly-scheduled substitute teacher was provided for each in order to give them time to meet and collaborate. The substitute teacher was always the same person, so the teacher leader could build a working relationship with him or her. Every two weeks, the substitute would cover the classroom responsibilities of the teacher leader for a full day. This time allowed each of the teacher leaders to work independently on standards-based projects, to collaborate with other teachers, or to travel to other schools in the county to observe colleagues at work.

The long-term goal of the Model Classrooms program is to provide a network of 20 – 25 teacher leaders who are available to assist their peers and model best practices for standards-based instruction. The program is intended to provide an environment of greater teacher collaboration and build local capacity to facilitate change. For the

academic school years 2000-2001 and 2001-2002, the five original teacher leaders worked to build a Model Classrooms program to present to their peers. In September 2002, five new teacher leaders joined the established group to double the size of Model Classrooms leadership team.

As the main administrative supporter of the Model Classrooms program, the assistant superintendent is committed to making the experience meet the individualized needs of each of the teacher leaders. In addition, he wants to be assured that the program will continue to meet the goal of “Each one, Teach one”, a phrase he uses frequently to explain the way the Model Classroom teachers can further expand the implementation of the program. This study examines the Model Classrooms program from the perspective of those responsible for its implementation. Specifically, the research will explore the perceptions of the teacher leaders, with respect to their needs and expectations and their approaches to the implementation of the model.

Statement of the Problem

The research question investigated through this descriptive qualitative case study is, “What does it mean to four classroom teachers be a teacher leader in the Model Classrooms program?” This question is guided by four additional questions:

- What is the role of the teacher leader in the Model Classrooms program?
- What do the teachers perceive to be the implications of the Model Classrooms program on district-wide implementation of a standards-based curriculum?

The Model Classrooms program is about teacher leadership and building local capacity through teacher professional development, a method being used to address the challenges of school change.

The leadership model provided by Fullan (2001a) will provide the key components and major dimensions that will guide the case study analysis. This model consists of five components that are "...independent but mutual reinforcing forces for positive change" (Fullan, 2001a, p. 3). These five components are moral purpose, understanding change, relationship building, knowledge creation and sharing, and coherence making. The interrelationship of these components forms the framework for leadership that guides this case study.

Likewise, since one of the intended outcomes of the MC program is to lay the foundation for lasting reform through professional development, the program's capacity for promoting change is also considered. Capacity refers to the potential for growth and development within schools and districts. Massell (2000a) describes capacity as what is needed for an effective classroom (Massell, 2000a). To encourage a capacity for change, teachers need timely and relevant professional development, opportunities for collaboration, and an environment supportive of skill development and risk-taking. The classrooms need to be provided with high quality instructional materials and a variety of assessment tools (Massell, 2000b). The Model Classrooms program provides these components to teachers in a framework that includes four dimensions: planning and preparation, the environment, instruction, and assessment.

Significance of the Study

There are many dimensions to this case study including, teacher leadership, teacher professional development, standards-based curriculum and building local capacity. The combination of these dimensions help to provide a comprehensive description of what the Model Classrooms program means to each teacher and how it meets each of his or her individual needs. A review of the literature indicated several studies that investigated one aspect of the many components included in the Model Classrooms program. However, there were no studies that investigated the experiences of classroom teachers as the focus of a standards-based professional development program that was intended to promote teacher leaders and build local capacity for change. This study will use a descriptive case study method to analyze the innovative Model Classrooms program (Merriam, 2001). “The descriptive case study in education is one that presents a detailed account of the phenomenon under study” (Merriam, 2001, p. 38). An outside observer cannot construct the experience; it belongs to those who directly experience the phenomenon (Creswell, 1998). The phenomenon in this study is the experience of the teacher leaders as they implement the Model Classrooms program in their classrooms. The research was conducted in the natural setting of an elementary and middle school and the descriptions and perceptions of the participants are unique to their situation. Through detailed description this findings will present a vivid picture of the program through their stories. The study should be of interest to any persons who work in a K-12 educational setting and are interested in change. Findings from this study can serve as a framework for building learning communities of teachers who serve as catalysts for change.

Conclusion

Educational researchers continue to express concern with the prevailing piecemeal approach (Reigeluth & Garfinkle, 1994) to changing public education where the latest innovation is taken on without regard to adequate research or eventual sustainability (Bond, Glover, Godfrey, Butler, & Patton, 2001). The standards-based movement in Pennsylvania has resulted in a number of educational mandates at the state and local level. These initiatives mandate student instruction, educational materials, professional development, and often create a larger bureaucracy.

What school reformers may not realize is that the mandates are the easy part of educational change, “a step that sets in motion the dynamic of problem creation through problem solution” (Sarason, 1990). As with many mandated changes, reformers often confuse a change in policies as a change in practice. Those in authority believe that good things can come from applying new ideas. Sarason (1990) points out, however, “they seem unable to understand what is involved in unlearning what custom, tradition, and even research have told educational personnel is right, natural, and proper” (p. 101).

Through building teacher leadership, effective teacher professional development, and focusing on building local capacity, the Model Classrooms program is a unique approach to school reform. The group of teacher leaders is working to form a community of teachers that will work with each other rather than against one another, “...they connect teaching and learning to the realities and mysteries of life. These conditions are more natural and more conducive to learning and growth than are conditions that organize and separate people into different physical and psychological spaces” (Mitchell & Sackney, 2000, p. 4). The community of teacher leaders intends to provide a network

of educators to assist and support peers, allowing for more opportunities to take risks and try innovative teaching methods. Model Classrooms is only a framework for the teacher, individual teaching styles and instructional methods can be maintained. "...when any one 'correct' way is being advocated, the doors to true learning slam shut, and individual teachers are likely to retreat to their classrooms instead of being forced into educational practices that do not make sense for their students or for themselves" (Mitchell & Sackney, 2000, p. 4).

The Model Classrooms program is just one method used to build a leadership team that can teach and learn together in a safe and caring environment. The study is not intended to suggest Model Classrooms is the only method for building teacher leadership but lessons learned from this context may provide valuable insight for school administrators and classroom teachers involved in standards-based education.

Chapter 2

Review of the Literature

Overview

There is significant confusion in society today about the meaning of educational change and how it should be implemented in schools (Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991). Fullan (1991) suggests that the development of a shared meaning for individuals in K-12 environments is necessary in order to solve the many problems in education (Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991). Those individuals trying to implement substantial changes in public education must understand the culture of schools and the role the teacher plays in that culture. "The culture of schools and the capacity of the current teaching staff to implement reform initiatives are indispensable elements for restructuring and reforming our education system" (Futrell, 1994).

Hargreaves and Fullan (1998) state, "Too much educational reform and restructuring is destroying teachers' confidence, draining their energy, eating up their time, and taking away their hope" (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1998). Ultimately, "for large numbers of the teaching profession, the pressure of the job has taken the joy out of teaching" (Fullan, 1997b). In order to better understand how teachers respond to school innovations it is important to understand who the teachers are and under what types of conditions they are working. Change may be imposed upon teachers either by mandate or legislation or they may choose to voluntarily participate in the change process. Still in other circumstances, a teacher may initiate the change based on dissatisfaction with a given situation. No matter how the change is introduced to teachers, they are expected to participate in their assigned role.

Good teachers are good learners (Evans, 1996). In many cases, teachers recognize their own teaching practice sometimes falls short of their personal ideals. Teachers struggle with what they would like to do and what they can realistically accomplish given the resources available. In addition, teachers perceive the practice in their school as even more 'traditional' than their own, thus providing little motivation to change (Kuehn, 1993). Pioneering teachers often involve themselves in innovative school programs "to test and expand their professional repertoires" (Rosenholtz, 1989) and "they are interested in finding more powerful ways of facilitating learning for their students" (Wasley, 1992). Often before the innovations can become part of the school culture, "the early risk-takers who possess the self-motivation and energy to model or pilot new classroom practices can become frustrated and tired of urging colleagues to follow in their footsteps" (Adelman & Walking-Eagle, 1997, p. 102).

Edgar Schein, considered an authority on organizational culture, defines culture as:

A pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems. (Schein, 1992, p. 12)

The culture of a school, therefore, has been built, sustained, and taught to others long before a new teacher enters the building, and the depth and stability (Evans, 1996) of the culture demands that the teacher quickly assume the expected role of the classroom teacher.

In a study by Kuehn (1993) that looked at primary and secondary teachers in British Columbia, traditional teaching practice was described as focusing on content,

teacher-centered and direct instruction, and norm-referenced testing. A more innovative environment was described to have a focus on the process of learning and child-centered instruction; active and collaborative learning was complimented by performance-based assessment. What was discovered is the desire for change is often much stronger than the reality of change. Teachers were frustrated because in many cases the institutional practices of the school impeded change. If change is to be supported on a systemic basis, the institutional practices must be identified and strategies adopted that focus not just on changing the practice of individual teachers, but also on creating institutional supports, rather than impediments, for change (Kuehn, 1993).

How teachers relate to one another, the culture in which they work, and educational leadership can all affect a teacher's response to educational change. Mutual respect that includes both teacher to teacher and teacher to administrator can create the relationships that are key to systemic educational change. An environment is more conducive to change if it is inclusive, positive and accepting (Fullan, 2001b). That is not to say that everyone must get along and share similar views. In fact resistance to ideas can have some positive affects (Evans, 1996; Fullan, 2001a). An accepting environment is one where people treat others in the school community with dignity and professionalism. Fullan (2001b) indicates that long-term change can succeed if teachers are provided with many opportunities to learn new ways of working together along with policies based on standards of new practice. Yet, Fullan (2001b) states,

We must also realize that it is not collaboration per se that counts. Collaboration is powerful, which means that people can do powerfully wrong things together...Collaboration only makes a difference when it is focused on student performance for all, and the associated innovative practices that can make improvement happen for previously disengaged students. (Fullan, 2001b, p. 254)

This descriptive case study is about teacher leadership and the implementation of an administratively supported, standards-based, professional development program. It is about the experience of four classroom teachers as they try to positively impact student learning and act as role models for colleagues. The four teachers are not trying to systemically change the culture of the school district; they are simply trying to find ways to stay in their classroom and still influence colleagues and impact student learning.

What remains to be seen is whether the opportunities for teacher leadership and professional development are enhanced by the Model Classrooms program since the assistant superintendent has based the program on Fullan's Leadership Model and has provided the types of collaboration that are intended to promote positive change

The remainder of this chapter begins by focusing on a deeper explanation of the classroom teacher and the school environment and how school policies and school leadership influence these two components. Next, the school reform movement and standards-based reform will be presented in order to provide a contextual basis for understanding how past and present reforms can impact how teachers perceive and react to change. Since the intent of the MC program is to utilize professional development as a means of creating teacher leaders who will collaboratively work with colleagues to promote change, the next sections of the chapter will present a review of the literature on teacher professional development and building local capacity. Finally, the last section will provide the reader with an explanation of leadership, focusing specifically on Fullan's Leadership Model since it provides the theoretical model that was used to frame and analyze this study.

Who is today's teacher?

Many of the teachers in the classroom today came into the profession in the 1960's; Evans (1996) refers to them as 'The Sixties Cohort'. They are the largest group ever to make a full career out of teaching and include a higher-than-usual proportion of male teachers, including many men who entered the field to avoid the Vietnam military draft (Evans, 1996). Teaching should be a choice based on desire, ability, and the good teaching characteristics (Fullan, 1997a). The current population of classroom teachers may not have chosen teaching for any of those reasons. There is some evidence that education was not the first career choice for up to one-third of the current teaching force (Evans, 1996; Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991).

In the mid-1990's there were nearly 2.5 times more female teachers than male teachers in the United States. The average age of a schoolteacher was 40 – 49 years old (median age of 44 years). Today, the field continues to be dominated by mainly white teachers (90.7%). These factors are true in both public and private schools throughout the country. The majority of schoolteachers are married, close to 30% of the reported teachers have more than 20 years of fulltime experience in the classroom and more than 30% of all teachers indicate that given the option they would once again most likely choose teaching as a career choice (Snyder & Hoffman, 2001). As many novice teachers begin their careers in K-12 education to fill the gaps of the elders who retire, there will be few to mentor and guide them through the many trials and tribulations that inevitably occur. Many teachers base their daily classroom decisions on instinct and wisdom developed through many years and mistakes in the classroom, this experience cannot be replaced or taught; it simply must be lived.

Teachers teach alone. They are behind closed doors, isolated from their colleagues in the safety of their own classroom; they receive little feedback from peers and colleagues on their performance (Evans, 1996). "Individualism, isolation, and privatism make up one particular form of what has come to be known as the culture of teaching" (Hargreaves, 1994). Teachers face countless challenges on a daily basis. They are blamed for the ills of society, they are accused by state and federal legislatures, and parents and the community scorn them and yet still they come to work every day. Fullan (1991) supports this notion, by stating: "If the change works, the individual teacher gets little of the credit; if it doesn't, the teacher gets most of the blame" (p. 127).

Teachers are responsible for innumerable jobs throughout a day and the role of the teacher has been devalued by the community and the public (Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991). Fullan (2001b) quotes a high school teacher:

Teachers routinely have to teach over 140 students daily. On top of that, we have lunch duty, bus duty, hall duty, and homeroom duty. We go to parents' meetings, teachers' meetings, in-service meetings, curriculum meetings, department meetings, countywide teachers' meetings, schools board meetings, and state teachers' conferences. We staff ticket booths and concession stands at football and basketball games. We supervise the production of school plays, annuals, newspapers, dances, sports events, debates, chess tournaments, and graduation ceremonies. We go on senior trips, we go on field trips to capitol buildings, prisons, nature centers, zoos, courtroom trials... we search lockers during bomb threats, we supervise fire drills, write notes to the principal, the assistant principal, parents, and ourselves. We counsel. We wake up every morning to the realization that the majority of our students would far rather be someplace else (p. 116).

With so much to do in a school day, one must wonder when *change* is supposed to happen. There is little doubt that when teachers collaborate, their peers often demand more time, effort, and commitment than their students do (Evans, 1996). A study by

Purnell and Hill in 1992 found that the average high school teacher works a 60-hour week and claims that elementary school teachers have even longer and demanding days because of the requirements for greater individualization and greater responsibility for student supervision (Reigeluth & Garfinkle, 1994). "Teaching, as an occupation, is especially prone to increasing people's vulnerability to stress and reducing their readiness for change, to pressing veteran practitioners toward the lower end of the growth and performance continuum rather than lifting them toward higher professional engagement and functioning" (Evans, 1996, p. 120).

Over 5000 (86%) of a survey of 5900 teachers taken in 1975 indicated that they are there because of "the times I reached a student or group of students and they have learned" (Fullan, 2001b, p. 119). Researchers Scott, Stone, and Dinham discovered similar findings 25 years later in an international study of classroom teachers; they discovered that teachers pointed to the rewards such as "seeing children's progress" and "making a difference in young people's lives" as being a reason to be a teacher (Fullan, 2001b, p. 122). It seems for many teachers that the high ideals and passion for children that drew them to the field initially was still the magnet holding them there after many years in the classroom.

Repeatedly "the message is clear; teaching is not a respected, professional position. If you want to be considered a professional, leave teaching and move into administration" (Kelly, 1994). Yet many teachers have indicated that they are not interested in the administrative hierarchy of the public school system, they want to stay in the classroom and enhance the professional aspects of their career as a classroom teacher (Troen & Boles, 1994; Wasley, 1992). So teachers struggle with the realities of lack of

support, lack of professional recognition, dwindling resources, and increased pressure to increase student test scores. "Many of those who persevere in teaching learn that it is more important to satisfy their supervisors or to meet legislative mandates than to inquire into the best practices for working with particular students and in unique situations" (Sagor, 1997).

Although the environment of schools demands compliance to the norms of the culture, there are teachers that have a burning desire to change the status quo. They are unfettered by the challenges that have forced their colleagues into isolation and they are inspired by small successes. They have the skills to make effective changes for the benefit of their students and the school as a whole, "a large number of teachers know how to do a better job than they are currently doing. The key to school improvement would seem to have less to do with giving teachers new knowledge than with fostering conditions in which they are moved to use the knowledge they already possess" (Duke, 1994, p. 259).

This study attempts to determine the effect of the Model Classrooms program on individual teaching practice throughout the district. If there are perceived conditions of negativity present in their current environment, what affect do those conditions have on their role as a teacher leader, a standards-based educator and their ability to build local capacity for change? This study does not attempt to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the Model Classrooms program as a course for professional development but rather how the four teacher leaders perceive their role as a teacher leader in the program. Fullan (2001b) states, "professionally rewarding workplace conditions attract and retain good people" (p.115), and thus the question can be asked as whether the Model

Classrooms program is perceived by the teachers as a professional development and teacher leadership program that can help them overcome the imbedded negativity in the profession and replace it with a more rewarding environment and therefore improve their own individual teaching practice.

The School Environment

The public school systems are full of local, state, and federally issued mandates. These mandates are important, but not enough to make substantial positive changes in the way teachers practice and the way students learn. They can also narrow goals and objectives and limit teacher creativity (Fullan, 1993). “New ideas of any worth to be effective require an in-depth understanding, and the development of skill and commitment to make them work. You cannot mandate these things” (Fullan, 1993, p. 23). At the start of the reform effort, teachers need time to learn about and practice the new behaviors that will be expected of them, whether the reforms are mandated through a ‘top-down’ or ‘bottom-up’ innovation model. During innovation implementation the teachers need time to practice the new strategies fully and make them a part of the daily routine in their own classroom. These teachers then need time to reflect on the innovation and assess the benefits in order to continue practicing the new behaviors (Adelman & Walking-Eagle, 1997).

Change is already in the schools; the concern is how it is being dealt with by administrators, teachers, and children. Most teachers innovate, though not in an organized, thoughtful manner. Small groups of teachers create thousands of innovations in schools everyday, changes that are not acknowledge because they are not formalized changes (Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991). “The complexity of teaching is well recognized; a

teacher makes over 3,000 nontrivial decisions daily” (Danielson, 1996, p. 2). Yet, most teachers will resist change when it is not self-initiated. People prefer slow, incremental changes, not fast, formal, or overt changes, and teachers are no exception. Change in the workplace can be disruptive and uncomfortable (Evans, 1996). "It is probably closer to the truth to say that the main problem in public education is not resistance to change, but the presences of too many innovations mandated or adopted uncritically and superficially on an ad hoc fragmented basis” (Fullan, 1993, p. 23).

This study provides a description of the teacher leaders that is intended help the reader to understand how they felt about the impending changes. Some changes in the classroom were self-initiated, other changes were a result of their involvement in the Model Classrooms program, and still other changes may be a result of their role as an employee of the school district. The intent is to discover what it means to be a Model Classrooms teacher and whether the outcome of the program meets its intended purpose or instead causes these teacher leaders to be overwhelmed. That is, unable to handle the demands of day-to-day teaching, school and district wide expectations, and their role as a teacher leader.

Teachers' Experience with School Reform

It has been noted that many school innovations begin as top-down mandates often made by district administrators with superficial or no input from the faculty (Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991).

During the early days of the current reform era, reformers deliberately ignored the vast majority of educators. They did so out of concern that the education establishment might try to derail or stall efforts to change the current system. Others believed that educators had little to offer, else why had they not implemented reforms to stop the slide toward mediocrity?

Still others believed that educators did not understand or appreciate the magnitude of the challenges facing the nation or the critical role that education plays in helping address these challenges. Therefore, teachers were viewed as being part of the problem and were excluded from the policy-formulation phase of the reform movement. (Futrell, 1994, p. 122)

Practitioners have hands-on experience, judgment, and craft knowledge that can often be overlooked by policy makers (Evans, 1996). When the professional expertise of the faculty is not considered, teachers feel ignored and unappreciated. Many teachers struggle with the top-down mandates and at times even ignore the proposed innovations. Fullan (2001b) indicates three possible reasons for this lack of interest by teachers. First, teachers are often not given the proper training and resources to properly implement the new system. This low self-efficacy depletes any motivation to try something new. Second, many top-down mandates ignore the expertise and wisdom of veteran teachers causing resentment and bitterness. Third, veteran teachers have seen a number of innovations come and go in the past. Without proper monitoring, follow-up, and support they were all discontinued. Many teachers live with an attitude of “this too shall pass.”

Teachers who have been in the classroom more than a few years have experienced numerous attempts at educational change. Some innovations arrived with fanfare and books of supporting research, only to be replaced with a bigger and better plan a few years later (Fullan, 2001a). After teachers attend workshops and trainings, plan meetings and parent conferences, and commit to the culture of change, they do not want to be told that the information is irrelevant. Once a teacher had put in hours and days of extra work, he or she is not ready to give up the new ideas easily – it is called commitment (Evans, 1996). The challenge for school leadership is to keep the commitment steady and the change process continuous.

When teachers don't have the know-how or self-motivation to implement changes successfully they find ways to avoid the implementation. People are often afraid to try new skills and cling to what they know and what makes them most comfortable. The change process takes time and learning new skills to implement the changes takes more time both in and out of the classroom. There is also a risk of failure, which can cause high levels of fear and anxiety in the workplace (Evans, 1996). Teachers often fear that their inadequacies will be discovered by the principal or other teachers; they may engage self-defensive tactics to protect their sense of control and their social and personal worth to prevent the loss of power or respect (Rosenholtz, 1989; Sarason, 1990). There is evidence that "the single largest factor affecting the academic growth of students is the differences in the effectiveness of individual classroom teachers. ...As the level of teacher effectiveness increased, students of lower-achievement were the first to benefit" (Duttweiler, 2000). This evidence supports the idea that high performing teachers tend to be more content in their classroom and students are the primary benefactors. Thus administrators must find ways to attract good teachers and provide incentives that will keep them in the classroom. Teacher participation in decision making, administrative support and leadership, and opportunities for collaboration are just a few of the suggestions offered by long-term professionals in the field.

For innovations and reform to be put into practice in the daily lives of classroom teachers, the ideas must be clear and precise in terms teachers can universally understand (Peterson, McCarthey, & Elmore, 1996). If buzzwords such as 'teacher as a facilitator' or 'student-centered learning' are not discussed among teachers and reformers, then each teacher may use a different meaning. Consequently, even if teachers are willing to make

school-wide changes, the results may be very different than what was expected (Peterson et al., 1996).

In the study of a three elementary schools undergoing change, Peterson et al. (1996) discovered that even when teachers met in teams during the innovation process the actual classroom application of the new practices was different than reformers intended. Due to the isolation teachers experience in daily practice, team meetings served as a place for discussion about school routines and procedures rather than for discussion or sharing of ideas about curriculum and learning. Ultimately the real learning took place for teachers on an individual basis in their classroom as they put the innovations into practice, thus the application of the reform was on a continuum determined by the individual interpretation of each teacher (Peterson et al., 1996). Ultimately it has been determined that regardless of the teachers' initial response to new ideas and educational change, the working conditions in most schools do not provide an environment conducive to sustaining any implemented innovation (Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991).

An additional phenomenon that occurs during the implementation of new ideas is the concept of 'multiple innovations' (Fullan, 2001b). For example, if a teacher accustomed to little student-to-student interaction in the classroom adds just a few student discussions per week he or she would meet the mandated reform of more peer interaction in the classroom. Conversely, a teacher who frequently uses peer interaction in the classroom will most likely increase the use and complexity of the discussion groups, thus meeting the required mandate but to a much greater degree (Peterson et al., 1996). These two teachers will not even know the great differences in their teaching approaches unless they make an effort to observe their colleagues. When asked if they are implementing the

change, each teacher will honestly answer that they have worked to incorporate changes into their teaching practice.

Ultimately as teachers try to adopt new ideas of change, their current beliefs about teaching and learning impact the changes that they actually make in their classrooms. A veteran teacher does not want to be told that his or her own views on teaching and learning are inadequate to facilitate change; such a revelation can destroy any progress made to date (Borko & Putnam, 1995). Most teachers believe they must maintain traditional standards, lower expectations for students or adapt their practices and pedagogy (Wasley, 1992). And yet, teachers still remain uncertain about how to influence students, and even about whether they are having any influence at all (Fullan, 2001b). Many good teachers are just looking for opportunities to instruct children in a place that appreciates their efforts as educators, when they don't feel they can contribute or their work is no longer recognized then it is time to move on to another school or leave the teaching profession entirely.

Schools are hierarchical places. Decisions made elsewhere in the system are part and parcel of the working conditions. For the last 20 years, legislators in every state have made a number of decisions about how schools should be run and central offices have been generating and directing massive staff development programs for teachers. Attending in-service courses and implementing legislation took all the give out of already over-full teaching schedules. (Wasley, 1992)

The four components of the Model Classrooms program: planning and preparation, environment, instruction, and assessment, put the decision-making responsibilities in the classroom with the teacher leaders. Although this study does not investigate the school environment, the teachers' perceptions of the workplace could

influence their role as teacher leaders and the implications for district-wide implementation of a standards-based curriculum.

Standards-Based Reform

Currently 49 states have launched some form of standards-based reform. Surveys show that the public, elected officials, and education policymakers extend broad support to this educational reform movement. “Although strategies vary from state to state, they often include clarifying teaching and curriculum guidelines, tying promotion or graduation to specific skills, eliminating promotion based on age, and testing students periodically to ensure progress” (Public Agenda, 2000b). Local school districts have responded to the state mandated standards-based reform by implementing programs individually by school, district-wide, or in some cases in collaboration with other schools in an intermediate unit or neighboring community.

In the late 1980’s the standards-based reform effort emerged as a method for educators and policymakers to hold schools accountable for student performance (Fuhrman, 2001). “Standards-based reforms are reforms intended to anchor key aspects of policy – curriculum, assessment, teacher education, and professional development – around policy level statements of what students should know and be able to do” (p. 1). Standards are about rigorous and measurable benchmarks that demand higher expectations from the nation’s students (The National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). No Child Left Behind (NCLB), the national legislation that goes into effect in 2005-2006 will only exacerbate the problem of the availability of few high quality teachers and a greater demand for student performance. NCLB is based on the principles: stronger accountability for results, increased flexibility and local control,

expanded options for parents, and an emphasis on teaching methods that have been proven to work (U.S. Department of Education, Updated July, 2002).

In Pennsylvania the academic standards should, “express what it is students are expected to know and do when essential concepts and skills related to each academic discipline are acquired”(2001). Opponents of standards-based programs such as Alfie Kohn, an educator and lecturer, argue that expecting grade-by-grade standards such as, "we expect them to learn all the items on this list in 5th grade, all the items on that list in 6th grade," and so on, have a negative effect on learning. Additionally, the rigidity about both the timing of the instruction and its content creates failures unnecessarily by trying to force all children to learn at the same pace (Kohn, 2001).

Duttweiler (2000) furthers Kohn’s concerns stating that standards alone are not going to impact student achievement. Improving instruction must be accompanied by a more systemic change in the organizational structure, mandating standards and accountability is not going to have any greater chance of success that have any of our other reforms if the traditional educational structure and operating procedures are left intact. It is unrealistic to expect that more sophisticated reform strategies introduced into a system that is not organized to engage in change will result in anything other than more failure (p.12).

Yet, Fullan (2001b) supports standards-based curriculum stating, “We will conclude that standards-based reform, whether applied to student learning or teacher development, is an essential strategy for achieving meaning and coherence” (p. 37). Marzano further supports the idea of standards (2001), “Standards hold the greatest hope for significantly improving student achievement. Every other policy mandate we have

tried hasn't done so" (Scherer, 2001, p. 14). Standards clearly state what all students should strive to achieve without comparing individual performances. The move away from norm-referenced comparison to a more clearly stated goal, demands equal performance of all students making above-average students strive to greater achievement. Above-average students can no longer depend on the failure of others to put them in the top 5th percentile; the standards replace the ambiguity of norm-referenced assessments with a target that will be used to determine success or failure of each individual student (Reeves, 2001). As the debate continues between politicians, educators, and scholars, the indication is that there is significant public support for standards-based reform. "Only 2% of parents who know their school district is implementing higher academic standards want to stop and go back to the way things were before the standards were put in place" (Public Agenda, 2000a). Thus the discussions continue, yet the greater concern seems to be more about the implementation of standards-based reform, than the accountability movement itself.

During the 1999 National Education Summit, governors, educators, and business leaders identifies three key challenges facing U.S. schools: (1) improving educator quality, (2) helping all student achieve to high standards, and (3) strengthening accountability. There is no doubt that progress is being made in the third challenge...there appears to be considerably less progress being made, however, on the first two challenges. In fact, teacher quality and the lack of implementation of interventions to help all students achieve high standards are major concerns of those who question the wisdom of the way standards-based reform is being implemented. (Duttweiler, 2000. p. 2)

The literature is rich with the pros and cons of standards-based reforms. However, standards alone are not the main issue, it is the high stakes testing that inevitably accompanies such standards that are the main source of current debate. "Although most states have adopted statewide content standards and have begun to develop assessments

based on those standards, the systems of accountability that states have put into place have not always been closely aligned with their standards” (Biemesderfer, 2001). With new instructional programs, increased professional development, and improved daily curriculum, some schools are affecting student test scores. No one knows if these gains will hold up over time (Kohn, 2001; Lashway, 2001).

Fullan (2001b) refers to the study completed by the Education Trust in 1999. Findings revealed that top-performing high-poverty schools tend to “use state standards extensively to design curriculum and instruction, assess student work, and evaluate teachers” (p. 73). The standards were implemented with a strong support system, they were used in combination with increased instructional time, higher funding of professional development, additional resources for increased student support, improved community support, and a high-stakes accountability system. The school involved consistently exceeded expectations. Quite possibly it is not the standards that are the problem but the way the standards are being implemented in the public schools that create the raging debate among academic scholars. “We have yet to systematically enforce or implement standards” (Scherer, 2001, p. 14).

The state of Pennsylvania developed an education initiative under Governor Thomas Ridge. The initiative, called the School District Performance Measures (SDPM) program, rewards school districts for continuing or developing programs where teachers and administrators are rewarded for increasing student performance. The School Performance Incentive Program, of which SDPM is just a small part, rewards schools for improving their own past performance in achievement and effort. The basis for determining student performance is the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment

(PSSA), the standardized tests given to all public school students in 5th, 8th, and 11th grade. The standards-based student exams are used to determine state, incentive, and grant funding. “Governor Ridge has ensured that school districts locally control the curriculum and programs in their schools by putting those decisions in the hands of the local school board members and district administrators. However, the regulations that contain the academic standards require that school districts develop a strategic plan to map out a comprehensive, academic plan for their districts (*Pennsylvania's response to the 1999 Summit Action Statement*, 1999, p. 7).”

This type of mandate is one of the driving forces behind the Model Classrooms program (*Pennsylvania's response to the 1999 Summit Action Statement*, 1999). The school district administration has provided the resources to fund a number of initiatives driven by the Pennsylvania mandates, the Model Classrooms program is just one of the them. Several teacher leaders are involved in other standards-based initiatives within the school district including Understanding by Design and Curriculum Mapping; each of these programs provide key components to the school districts standards-based approach to classroom instruction. These other initiatives also provide future opportunities for research in the school district. In this research, the teacher leaders that are currently a part of the Model Classrooms initiative are not focusing on the state mandate or the standardized test scores of their students, although it would a reasonable assumption that compliance with state mandates and the availability of additional funding provide the rationale to support the program for the school administration and school board.

Teacher Professional Development

Teacher professional development typically consists of prescribed ideas intended to shape teachers' pedagogical practices. Far too often no attention is paid to the individual teachers or to how their knowledge is shaped by personal, interpersonal, contextual, and situational factors that shift over time (Olson & Craig, 2001). One day in-service programs with prearranged topics are too common to America's public school teachers (Zepeda, 1999). Professional development should offer teachers the opportunity for lifelong learning in their careers and build upon their classroom experience and personal interests (Finch, 1999).

“Professional development is a lifelong collaborative learning process that nourishes the growth of educators both as individuals and as team members to improve their skills and abilities”(Speck & Knipe, 2001, p. 4). It is often difficult for school districts to find the time and funding necessary to provide such interactive learning for teachers, yet the standards movement is demanding that teachers be more creative and innovative in their own classrooms in an effort to improve student performance. According to research from the National Center for Research in Vocational Education (NCRVE), teachers are more likely to innovate, collaborate, and encourage colleagues to be more creative if they are involved in the planning, implementation and assessment of a proposed educational reform. Teachers must also receive ongoing support through all stages of the reform effort along with additional assistance offered at regular intervals during implementation of any educational reform (Finch, 1999).

The literature consistently states that collaboration is a key component of a successful professional development program. Cohen (2002) cites the scramble for many

young professionals to compete for a few choice teaching positions at small, selective, private schools. She indicates that although teachers receive a lower salary and often must provide a greater service to their schools outside of the teaching responsibilities, it is the recognition and “the promise of a truly intellectual life”(p. 534) that draws the most qualified teachers to apply at these institutions. “Good liberal arts colleges, like good private schools, really are ‘teacher-centered’ institutions. Both seem to recognize that the way to foster excellence in students is to foster excellence in teachers” (Cohen, 2002, p. 534).

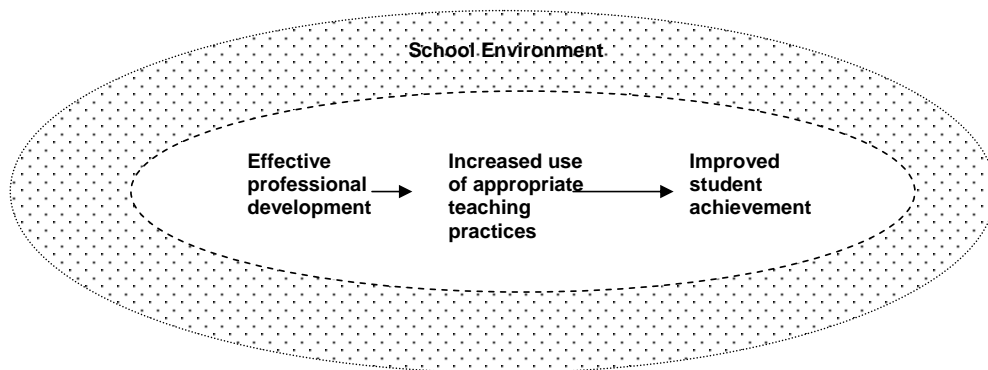
The Model Classrooms program is based on the idea that professional development programs that emerge from teachers’ expressed need to know or from their daily work with students will be more meaningful and will meet their immediate concerns (Speck & Knipe, 2001). In order to identify these needs and build effective job-embedded professional development programs, school leaders must be willing to provide the time and resources necessary for teachers to work together to discover what each will need to improve best practices and impact student learning. “Embedding professional development in the real work of teachers provides for clear connections to their work with students and to the improvement of student achievement” (Speck & Knipe, 2001, p. 13).

Professional development is also a method that can be used for teachers to give and receive critical feedback. A good teacher may spend many years in the classroom without hearing a single compliment about his or her work from colleagues or school leaders. “Teachers are just supposed to revel in the intrinsic rewards of their private successes. This lack of positive feedback from any adult peer can wear down even the

most robust of spirits” (Cohen, 2002, p. 537). By providing training, support, resources, collaborative support groups, and other forms of professional development programming, teachers can discover new and innovative ways to meet their needs and those of their students and ultimately have a positive effect on student achievement. This study investigates whether teachers perceive the Model Classrooms program to provide such resources and how it influences their daily teaching practice. Specifically the study examines how the Model Classrooms program which includes extensive opportunities for collaboration, training and support, and time for personal reflection and research, affects the way the teacher leaders implement a standards-based curriculum in their classrooms.

Supovitz (2001) indicates that “the implicit logic of focusing on professional development as a means for improving student achievement is that high quality professional development will produce superior teaching in classrooms, which will, in turn, translate into higher levels of student achievement” (p. 81).

Figure 1: Model depicting theoretical relationship between professional development and student achievement (Supovitz, 2001, p. 82)



Supovitz further indicates that a high quality professional development program contains components that demand problem solving skills, complex thinking, connects their work to student performance, allows for experimentation, is sustained over along period of time, and provides “authentic opportunities to learn from and with colleagues from and with colleagues *inside* the school” (Supovitz, 2001, p. 83, emphasis in the original). Since Model Classrooms is still a relatively new program, the current study does not investigate the impact of the program on student achievement but rather the perceived effect on teacher practice.

Building Local Capacity

Building local capacity is one approach that is being explored in some school districts, community colleges, and large universities. Capacity refers to the potential for growth and development within schools and districts. Harris (2001) states, “Capacity building is concerned with creating the conditions, opportunities, and experiences for collaboration and mutual learning... building school capacity implies that schools promote collaboration, empowerment, and inclusion (Harris, 2001, p. 261).”

The necessary skills and knowledge of how to use them, and the motivation to apply the essential skills to a particular situation are the stepping-stones for building local capacity. Local capacity has the ability to change the common concept of schools as learning organizations to thinking of them as learning communities, because they are living communities that learn, grow, and have a greater capacity for change (Mitchell & Sackney, 2000). The goal of the Model Classroom program is to build a community of teachers providing a network of peer support, effective feedback, and collegiality. By building capacity through the Model Classroom program, school administrators want to

provide teachers with the support and collaboration they need to make innovative decisions about the way they teach. Often a teacher's ability to teach can be greatly influenced by the willingness of the school to support professional learning and collaboration as well as the way the school district uses human and fiscal resources (Massell, 2000b).

Kaplan (2000) suggests that a conceptual framework and an organizational attitude are necessary to build capacity. A conceptual framework provides, "a coherent frame of reference, a set of concepts which allows the organization to make sense of the world around it, to locate itself within that world, and to make decisions in relation to it" (Kaplan, 2000, p. 51). Building an organizational attitude involves a number of factors. Specifically, an "organization needs to build its confidence to act in and on the world in a way that it believes can be effective and have an impact" (p. 518) and the organization must "accept responsibility for the social and physical conditions 'out there', shifting from demand and protest politics to a more inclusive acceptance of the responsibilities which go with the recognition of human rights" (p. 518).

Put in the context of a school setting, a shared vision can create a conceptual framework that teachers and school leaders can readily refer to when the struggles become overwhelming. "Shared meaning is a collective sense of what is important, and why" (Senge, Kleiner, Roberts, Ross, & Smith, 1994, p. 299). A shared vision may not necessarily solve many problems but it can create an environment in which people believe they are part of a community – thus increasing the capacity to adapt to change (Senge et al., 1994).

Organizations that suffer from a lack in capacity often complain about the lack of resources, lack of skills, inappropriate structures, unfavorable history, or impossible context (Kaplan, 2000). Organizations that have built capacity encourage a sense of ownership, an entrepreneurial attitude in all employees in which everyone in the organization acts as if they own the place. They are able to look into themselves to find the resources and skills necessary to deal with the struggles they face and they seek support and leadership from each other, not always from the hierarchical leader (Kaplan, 2000).

When we talk about capacity, we are basically talking about skill and knowledge. If you are going to make the changes in student learning that accountability requires, you have to dramatically increase the skill and knowledge of teachers and principals... it is not just a matter of releasing people to do what they already know how to do. It is making available the skill and knowledge for people to do things that they have not yet been able to do or not yet learned how to do – and that involves connecting people to sources of knowledge and skill outside of their own workplace; connecting people within the develop knowledge and skill; and substantially increasing professional development that is instructionally focused and designed to enhance student learning. “Capacity” also means putting teachers and principals in a stream of professional knowledge that lies outside of their immediate workplace and encouraging them to bring it into the workplace. (Farrace, 2002)

Leadership

Traditional leadership means that the person in the leadership position has all the answers, the vision to lead, the skills to manage, and the power to decide. As we moved into the industrial era organizations took on a hierarchical nature; information, decision-making, and control were clustered at the top and were the domain of a few. Individuals at the next level implemented the decisions of the leaders and the people at the bottom were paid to work and not think. Information primarily went from the top of the

organization and continued down through the organizational levels. The farther down in an organization you were, the less information you received. There was little opportunity for those at the bottom of the ladder to have input into decisions and organizational strategies (Fullan, 2001a).

The hierarchical nature of public schools is based on the 19th century industrial model that regards principals as managers and the teachers as the compliant production-line workers; much like factory workers in the 1800's, they all have equal status. This factory line model for classroom teachers does not allow great opportunities for teacher leadership in the school. Teaching does not value nor encourage leadership within the profession. Leadership opportunities are limited and often discouraged. By rising in the hierarchy, teachers are often removed from the classroom and lose credibility with peers (Livingston, 1992; Pellicer & Anderson, 1995; Yarger & Lee, 1994).

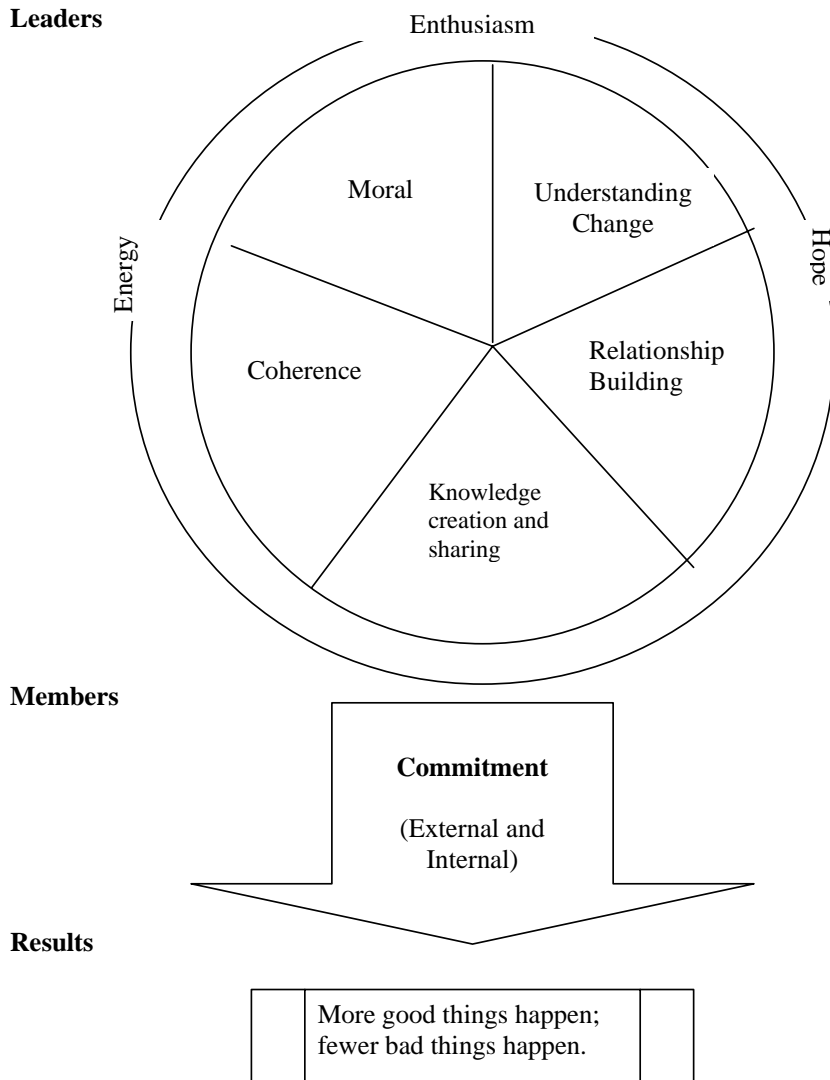
Smylie (1997) suggests that in order for schools to be effective, teachers must be able to respond to the changing needs of their students. They must be provided with a multitude of opportunities for professional development that provides new knowledge about teaching and learning. Teachers must be flexible, innovative, critically analytical, and reflective. He further states “change is best achieved not by regulation, but by developing the knowledge, skills, and commitments of teachers and by creating supportive conditions for their work” (Smylie, 1997). By providing additional opportunities for teacher leadership from within the classroom, schools can improve effectiveness while meeting the needs of classroom teachers and their students.

Fullan (2001a) defines leadership as “not mobilizing others to solve problems we already know how to solve, but to help them confront problems that have never yet been

successfully addressed” (p.3). Traditionally, leadership and power have flowed downward to the teachers from the district administrators and school principals. In the 1970’s, the Teacher Corps, a federally funded program developed the idea to give authority to practicing teachers as team leaders. Later the Teacher Centers Program, also federally funded, developed the idea of teacher leadership further in the early 1980’s with the notion that teachers should be empowered to make decisions about programs for their own professional development. As a result, the education reform of the 1980’s advocated viewing teaching as a profession and broader involvement of teachers in making decisions. These programs sought to identify teacher leaders and model best practices (Yarger & Lee, 1994).

Fullan provides a “framework for thinking about and leading complex change” (p. 3). The model includes five components of leadership that “represent independent but mutual reinforcing forces for positive change” (p.3). These components include; moral purpose; understanding the change process; relationship building; knowledge creation and sharing; and coherence making.

Figure 2: A framework for leadership



(Figure 1.1, Fullan, 2001a)

Moral Purpose

Many teachers enter the profession because they want to make a contribution; they have an intention of making a positive difference in the lives of those with whom they work including, children, other teachers, administrators, and the community (Fullan, 1993, 2001a). Creating a positive difference requires teachers to lead with a sense of direction and teach with a sense of purpose. The “moral dimension of teaching” demands that teachers don’t just go through the motions or brainwash students. A moral purpose in teaching requires that teachers do more than just assume students have learned, they must seek the evidence of student performance that demonstrates understanding (Pellicer & Anderson, 1995).

Similarly to lead in a culture of change teachers must make changes that matter, “teachers should be pursuing moral purpose with greater and greater skill, conceptualizing their roles on a higher plane than they currently do” (Fullan, 1993, p. 13). In order to be an effective leader, Fullan states, you must behave in a morally purposeful manner (Fullan, 2001a). However, choosing demanding purposes and sticking to them in difficult times takes great fortitude and tenacity, especially in a passionate vocation such as teaching (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1998). Fullan (2001a) goes on to suggest, “Moral purpose is profoundly built into the five components of leadership as they are carried into practice...if you follow the lessons in the book, you won’t have to plan to be more moral in your pursuit; it will come naturally” (p.15). Those that are involved with the MC program believe that it provides numerous opportunities for teacher professional development and teacher leadership driven by the moral purpose that they are doing what is right for children.

Understanding Change

Change cannot be controlled. Fullan (2001a) suggests that it can be understood or led and he provides six points to help us understand the change process.

- ♦ The goal is not to innovate the most – Too many innovations simply lead to lack of implementation, depth, and coherence.
- ♦ It is not enough to have the best ideas – Leaders who have good ideas without followers who believe in their cause will just be making mandates.
- ♦ Appreciate the implementation dip – The implementation dip is a dip in performance and confidence as one encounters an innovation that requires new skills and new understandings.
- ♦ Redefine resistance – We are more likely to learn something from people who disagree with us than we are from people who agree. But, we tend to hang around with and overlisten to people who agree with us, and we prefer to avoid and underlisten to those who don't.
- ♦ Reculturing is the name of the game – Structure does make a difference, but it is not the main point in achieving success. Transforming culture, changing the way we do things around here, is the main point.
- ♦ Never a checklist, always complexity – There is no recipe, cookbook, or step-by-step process for change. (Fullan, 2001a, pp. 31- 45)

Along with controlling change, Ellsworth (2000) suggests, “change can be understood and managed...it is sometimes referred to as planned change” (p. xvi) and he notes that selecting the proper framework for the intended change will be more likely to

produce the desired results. In this case study, the Model Classrooms program is the framework supported by the school district to implement the desired standards-based curriculum throughout the school district. The framework includes the involvement of classroom teachers to design and develop a viable system for district-wide adoption of the initiative (Ellsworth, 2000).

By considering the points noted by Fullan about the nature of change, the assistant superintendent is attempting to provide a proper framework to minimize the difficulties often faced by teachers who want to change the status quo. The Model Classrooms program is about building the capacity for change. The change process takes time and the Model Classrooms program is intended to give teachers the time and resources to implement the many facets of change in their own classroom.

Building Relationships

“If relationships improve, things get better. If they remain the same or get worse, ground is lost” (Fullan, 2001a, p. 5). Fullan’s third factor stresses that it is not necessarily the people involved in the reform effort as so much as it is the relationships formed between the people that will have the most impact on the role of the leader. “Relationship is everything when you see the world as a social system” (Senge, 1999, p. 140).

Strong leaders facilitate purposeful conversation, are willing to accept new ideas, and have effective problem solving skills. How teachers relate to one another, the culture in which they work, and educational leadership can all affect a teacher’s response to educational change. Mutual respect both teacher to teacher and faculty to administration create the relationships that are key to systemic educational change. An environment is more conducive to change if it is inclusive, positive and accepting (Fullan, 2001b). That

is not to say that everyone must get along and share similar views, in fact resistance to ideas can have some positive affects (Evans, 1996; Fullan, 2001a), it means that people treat others in the school community with dignity and professionalism.

Fullan (2001b) indicates that diversity of employees, ideas, and experiences can create an exciting culture of change. Naysayers can bring attention to issues that innovators overlook in their excitement to implement the ideas. As more members join the Model Classrooms program it is possible that a greater variety of ideas may spawn greater collaboration and a deeper understanding of the many issues facing teachers in this school district. However, along with the greater opportunity for collaboration, there is also greater opportunity for contention. New members may have different ideas about what should be changed and how the program should be implemented; the original teacher leaders must be willing to accept these new perspectives.

Innovators need to be open to the realities of others: sometimes because the ideas of others will lead to alterations for the better in the direction of change, and sometimes because the others' realities will expose the problems of implementation that must be addressed and at the very least will indicate where on should start. (Fullan, 2001b, p. 97)

Knowledge Creation and Sharing

People will not voluntarily share knowledge unless they feel some moral commitment to do so; they will not share unless the dynamics of change favor exchange, and good relationships are necessary for turning information into knowledge (Fullan, 2001a, p. 6). Effective leaders understand the importance of creating knowledge and the importance of sharing that knowledge in an effort to create independence among those with whom they are working. Teachers will be more willing to take risks and share information when the school leadership encourages teachers' growth and self-sufficiency

(Fullan, 2001a; Senge, 1999). Teachers are accustomed to working alone; often they need to be alone in order to cope with the immediate demands of the day-to-day routine. Brainstorming and bouncing ideas off one another is an effective way to spur teacher creativity, although daily preparation time is often not the best time for such collegiality (Hargreaves, 1994). Hargreaves goes on to suggest that much of the planning time spent during school hours is short term; the long term planning is mainly accomplished at home away from any environment that can encourage knowledge creation and sharing (p. 181).

This investigation into the Model Classrooms program is intended to determine the teachers' desire to create and share new knowledge. For often it is not about identifying the best practices but transferring and using the acquired knowledge that often leads to great frustration (Fullan, 2001a). By identifying the role of the teacher leader in the Model Classrooms program a clearer picture of the need to create and share new knowledge will emerge along with any barriers to such collaboration.

Coherence making

A system with "lateral accountability" (Fullan, 2001a, p. 118) is one that demands all good works get noticed and superficial compliance is not accepted. In hierarchal systems, such as the system set up in most schools (Kelly, 1994; Troen & Boles, 1994; Wasley, 1992), subtle sabotage and contrived collegiality are more likely to work against the coherence necessary to lead effectively during innovation implementation. In an interactive system where everyone is responsible for the successes and failures, "it is impossible to get away without being noticed" (Fullan, 2001a, p. 118).

The problem in public schools is not the lack of innovation but the abundance of it (Fullan, 1993, 2001a, 2001b). When innovators are not able to successfully implement

their vision, they often defend their innovation as steadfastly as those defending the status quo (Fullan, 2001b).

There may be much lip service paid to “participation,” but this usually means getting people to “go along,” to have a “sense of ownership.” The implementation goal is to have staff adopt the expert plan as is. This requires explanation, persuasion, training, and incentives; if these fail to produce the proper results, it requires mandates, requirements, and policies. (Evans, 1996)

Fullan (2001a) suggests that leaders must establish “innovative conditions and processes” (p. 115) and then guide teachers. Leaders must trust teachers to make effective decisions and share in the praises or consequences of such decisions. By building an environment using all of the factors, greater coherence can be achieved. It is through this coherence that a sense of shared commitment and motivation can move the innovation further than one administrator, principal, or teacher could do alone.

The energy-enthusiasm-hopefulness constellation

Fullan (2001a) has labeled the outer ring of the Leadership Model as the energy-enthusiasm-hopefulness constellation. “Effective leaders make people feel that even the most difficult problems can be tackled productively” (Fullan, 2001a, p. 7). They are always hopeful, their enthusiasm is infectious, and they seem to have energy that never stops. Good leaders believe so strongly in their ideas that they can persuade others quickly to be believers as well, but the key to maintaining leadership in an atmosphere of change is incorporating the hope, energy, and enthusiasm with the other five factors to create a greater capacity to adapt to the changing environment in which everyone must work. The Model Classrooms program is intended to provide the resources necessary to foster a creative and energetic environment necessary for teacher growth and professional

development; analysis of the data will reveal whether the teacher leaders perceive such resources to be available and accessible to them.

Conclusion

Change happens everyday. It surrounds us. “We are immersed regularly in its process” (Ellsworth, 2000). Educators deal with change on a daily basis. What works one day may be ineffective the following day, “Anything can happen. Schools are reactive partly because they must deal with unstable input - classes have different 'personalities' from year to year; a well-planned lesson may fall flat; what works with one child is ineffective for another; what works one day may not work the next” (Fullan, 2001b).

The purpose of this study was to explore the ways that four individual teachers experienced the change in their role and daily teaching practice as they implemented the teacher leadership program. Duke (1994) notes that teacher leaders have been in schools for a long time, but their roles have been more organizational or managerial in nature. In recent years, however, teacher leaders have begun to move to the forefront of school change (Duke, 1994). The Model Classrooms program focuses on teacher leadership and professional development as method to improve collaboration and collegiality among colleagues. “A teacher's ability and motivation to work with colleagues distinguishes effective teachers of teachers from effective teachers of children. The success of teacher leadership depends largely on their cooperation and interaction between teacher leaders and their colleagues” (Yarger & Lee, 1994, p. 229).

If you want to develop leadership, you should focus on reciprocity, the mutual obligation and value of sharing knowledge among organizational members. The key to developing leadership is to develop knowledge and share it; if it is not mutually shared, it won't be adequately developed in

the first place and will not be available to the organization in any case.
(Fullan, 2001a, p. 132)

The findings from this research, which relies on Fullan's Leadership Model as a framework for data analysis should be of interest to those change agents who continue to struggle to find the most effective way to deal with one of America's most precious resources, our classroom teacher.

Chapter 3

Research Methods

Introduction

This descriptive case study of four teacher leaders in a small Pennsylvania school district examines their Model Classrooms experience during a 14-week period, from September through December 2002. This chapter describes in detail the research methods used in this study and the rationale for using a descriptive case study method. Merriam states that, “choosing a study design requires understanding the philosophical underlying the type of research” (Merriam, 2001, p. 1), therefore a philosophical background for the study will be presented. Finally, additional information on the methods of data collection and analysis as well as the researcher identity will be presented to construct a clear representation of this qualitative research study about teacher leadership and professional development.

Qualitative Research Design

The intent of this study is to describe what it means for four classroom teachers to be teacher leaders in the MC program. The research employs the qualitative case study method as a means of describing the role of teacher leaders and uses Fullan’s Leadership Model as framework for data analysis. Qualitative research was chosen as the method to undertake this research since the purpose of the study is to build and describe that which is being researched (Creswell, 1998). For the purposes of this study, the qualitative research method will provide the tools necessary to achieve a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of the role of the teacher leaders as they implement the Model Classrooms program in their classrooms.

Phenomenological Framework

A phenomenological investigation is about discovering meanings and essences in knowledge (Moustakas, 1994), as well as examining the meaning of experiences for individuals (Creswell, 1998). Merriam (2001) indicates that a phenomenological case study focuses on the essence or structure of the experience. In this study the phenomenon under investigation is the role of the teacher leader in the MC program. The phenomenological understanding is based on,

...the premise that human experience makes sense to those who live it, prior to all interpretations and theorizing. Objective understanding is mediated by subjective experience, and human experience is an inherent structural property of the experience itself, not constructed by an outside observer (Creswell, 1998).

In accordance with the phenomenological framework the data used for analysis are the participants' first hand experience of the phenomenon thus, allowing them to define what it means to be a teacher leader in the MC program. Creswell (1998) suggests that the phenomenological data analysis uses the methodology of reduction, the analysis of specific statements and themes and a search for all possible meanings (Creswell, 1998). Further discussion of data analysis procedures used in this study is presented later in this chapter.

The Case Study

Creswell (1998) defines a case study as "an exploration of a bounded system". By examining a case over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information rich in context (Creswell, 1998, p. 61) a clear picture of the effects of the phenomenon on the case begin to emerge. The descriptive case study presents a

detailed account of the case study, not “...guided by established or hypothesized generalizations nor motivated by a desire to formulate general hypothesis” (Merriam, 2001, p. 38). This qualitative case study involved studying four teacher leaders in their own schools and classrooms and interpreted the meanings that the teacher leaders brought to the phenomena under study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000a). Further, Merriam (2001) describes descriptive case studies as an effective method for investigating innovative programs and practices in education such as the MC program (Merriam, 2001). Since this investigation examines the role of teacher leaders in an innovative school reform program, it follows that a descriptive case study method is appropriate to use. Moreover, the presentation of the findings will provide the reader with a rich, thick description of the experiences of the leadership team and each individual’s role as a teacher leader within the MC framework.

This in-depth study of four schoolteachers is designed to meet the standards of a rigorous qualitative research study. The methods used in this study maintained the standards of a case study by paying particular attention to such details that address its descriptive nature, such as those described by Merriam (2001). A case study can:

- Illustrate the complexities of a situation – the fact that not one but many factors contributed to it.
- Have the advantage of hindsight yet can be relevant in the present.
- Show the influence of personalities on the issue.
- Show the influence of the passage of time on the issue – deadlines, change of legislators, cessation of funding, and so on.
- Include vivid material – quotations, interviews, newspaper articles, and so on.
- Obtain information from a wide variety of sources.
- Spell out differences of opinion on the issue and suggest how these differences have influenced the result.

- Present information in a wide variety of ways...and from the viewpoints of different groups (Merriam, 2001, pp. 30-31).

By combining the characteristics of a descriptive case study with the complex discipline of qualitative research, this study shows a variety of teacher perceptions and personal perspectives on the role of the teacher leader in the MC program.

The Cases

Four in-service classroom teachers were chosen to participate in this descriptive case study. The assistant superintendent of the school district recommended the four teachers in this study and when they were approached, they all agreed to participate in the research¹. The assistant superintendent believed that these individuals would be willing to participate and would be easily accessible for interviews and observations. No additional sampling techniques were necessary because the assistant superintendent recommended all four teachers and they all agreed to participate in the case study.

Data Collection Strategies

Qualitative data consists of direct quotations from interviews, ordinary bits of information found in the environment, opinions and feelings of ordinary people, and detailed descriptions of people's behavior (Merriam, 2001). The data in this descriptive case study were collected over a 14-week period through personal interviews, classroom observations, and a review of lesson plans, curriculum, and other documents provided by the teacher leaders as a means of obtaining a clearer picture of the phenomenon

¹ Human subjects approval was gained prior to any data collection in this study. The study was explained to each participant and they were given copies of the informed consent form (Appendix B).

(Merriam, 2001, p. 69). The 14-week time frame of this study was just one semester and was accented by a break in the school calendar.

Interview Data

Fontana and Frey state, “interviewing is one of the most common and powerful ways in which we try to understand our fellow human beings” (Fontana & Frey, 2000). Merriam (2001) further clarifies, “the most common form of interview is the person-to-person encounter in which one person elicits information from another” (p. 71). Interviews are intended to determine that which we cannot directly observe such as thoughts, feelings, and intentions. In this particular case study, much of the program development had been done previously, and since it was not possible to observe behaviors that took place at a previous point, the interviews were used to reveal such information (Merriam, 2001). Seidman (1991) suggests the use of three interviews in order to allow participants the opportunity to fully delve into their experiences. Since an in-depth description of the experiences of the individuals was essential in this descriptive case study, an interview protocol was used to create a series of three formal interviews per participant (Appendix A).

It was important to build rapport with the teachers in order to reach an understanding of the perceptions of their personal and professional struggles. “The researcher must be able to take the role of the respondents and attempt to see the situation from their viewpoint, rather than superimpose his or her world of academia and preconceptions upon them” (Fontana & Frey, 2000, p. 655). Each interview was sixty to ninety minutes in length and took place in the school or classroom. The sessions were taped and transcribed for coding and later analysis. The interviews were open-ended and

semi-structured (Merriam, 2001, p. 74) and were guided by the interview protocol. As the interview progressed, probing questions were asked to clarify the teacher's response and to assist in interpreting his or her experience.

Deleted: (Merriam, 2001, p. 74)

Observations

“Observation makes it possible to record behavior as it is happening” (Merriam, 2001, p. 96). A minimum of two hours of classroom observation was scheduled per teacher; these hours were not consecutive but rather short periodic observations of their classroom teaching. The main purpose of the observations was two-fold; first, observing participants in their natural setting can lead to a better understanding of the context in which each teacher works and second, the teacher leaders may not have shared all the aspects under study during the interview (Merriam, 2001). Such observations could lend a “fresh perspective” (p. 96) to data collection.

Additional observations were also conducted during scheduled release times called “Model Classroom Days”. These full-day planning days were scheduled every other Wednesday beginning on September 11, 2002 and continued through the entire school year. There were seven such days that I attended and observed from September to December. The Model Classroom Days included large group meetings, small group teacher planning and preparation time, individual teacher project time, and brainstorming sessions.

Merriam (2001) presents a checklist of elements likely to be present in any observational setting:

- ♦ The physical setting – the physical environment, the context, the design, the objects, resources and technologies
- ♦ The participants - who is in the scene, the number of people, the reason for the gathering, characteristics of the participants

- ♦ Activities and interactions – What is going on? The sequence of activities, the way people interact, rules, structures, norms, start and end time, usual and unusual happenings
- ♦ Conversation – the content of the conversations, the interactions (or lack of interaction) between individuals, the speakers and the listeners, non-verbal behaviors.
- ♦ Subtle factors – informal and unplanned activities, symbolic and connotative meanings of words, nonverbal communication, unobtrusive measures, what not happening
- ♦ Your own behavior – How does the role of the researcher influence the scene? (Merriam, 2001, pp. 97-98)

The Merriam checklist provided an organized framework for the many individual classroom and large group observations. During the observations, I took written notes based on the Merriam checklist and audio-recorded each session in an effort to collect clear data that could provide additional information to the individual teacher interviews. The audio recordings were not transcribed but used during analysis, if necessary, to refresh my memory of the events and enhance the written notes.

Document Review

Merriam (2001) uses “the term *document* as an umbrella term to refer to a wide range of written, visual, and physical material relevant to the study at hand” (p. 112, emphasis in the original). Yin (1994) warns that documents should be carefully selected and not taken as literal recordings of event, “the most important use of documents is to corroborate and augment evidence from other sources” (p. 81). So in accordance with Yin’s caveat, the documents reviewed in this study were intended to supplement the semi-structured interviews and classroom observations.

“Because they [documents] have not been produced for the research purpose, they often contain much that is irrelevant to the study; by the same token, they can contain clues, even startling insights, into the phenomenon under study. Most researchers find

them well worth the effort to locate and examine” (Merriam, 2001, p. 119). Although a variety of teacher created documents were collected, not all of them were used in the final data analysis. The documents analyzed during this study related directly to the four components of the MC framework: planning and preparation, the environment, instruction, and assessment. Specific attention was paid to those documents that emphasized the teacher leadership components of the Fullan Leadership Model; such as the unit plan created and shared by two teachers and lesson plans and materials that showed a concern for individual student needs, indicating moral purpose. The final chosen documents included lesson plans; posters, wall hangings, decorations, etc.; instructional materials (teacher-made and teacher-selected commercial products); assessment materials (teacher made and teacher-selected commercial products); and student work.

Issues of Trustworthiness

In qualitative research, “the traditional positivist criteria of internal and external validity are replaced by such terms as *trustworthiness* and *authenticity*” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000b, p. 158, emphasis in the original). There are a number of methods for improving trustworthiness; Merriam (2001) suggests that the most effective way to deal with validity and reliability in qualitative research is to conduct the research in an ethical manner (p. 198). Trustworthiness was improved in this study by using member checks, rigorous attention to qualitative research methods and recognizing the limitations. These issues discussed in detail in this section.

Triangulation

Triangulation is typically regarded as a process of using multiple sources of data or perceptions to confirm the emerging findings or clarify meanings to construct “plausible explanations about the phenomena being studied” (Merriam, 2001, p. 204) or “verifying the repeatability of an observation or interpretation” (Stake, 2000, p. 443). Data collection in this study was collected in a variety of ways as previously discussed in this chapter. The expectation was that if the phenomenon could be seen in a number of interviews, observations, and documents, it would serve to clarify the interpretations and meanings discovered. Upon analysis of the data it was determined that the observations and documents could only provide background information and help to put the teachers’ comments into context. The observations led to emergent questions and helped to clarify some answers but triangulation did not occur and is discussed further in the study limitations.

Member Checks

There is no one ‘correct’ interpretation in qualitative research and there is more than one way to interpret an event or series of events (Janesick, 2000). A common strategy used to verify that the researcher’s interpretations of interviews and observations are accurate is member checks. Member checks are defined as “taking data and tentative interpretations back to the people from whom they were derived and asking them if the results are plausible” (Merriam, 2001, p.204). Such checks can help the researcher better understand the perspectives of those involved in the research and increase the ‘internal validity’ of the findings (p. 203).

The member checks were completed with each of the four teacher leaders. Each teacher was sent via email the entirety of chapter two and the section of chapter four that reflected his or her interpretation of the role of the teacher leader in the model classroom program. A phone conversation followed their receipt of the two chapters. Each teacher provided important feedback and in every case, confirmed my interpretation of the research findings. No significant changes occurred as a result of the member checks; on only one occasion a minor adjustment was made to a personal quote to clarify the intended meaning.

Data Analysis

“A theoretical framework is derived from the orientation or stance that you bring to the study. It is the structure, the scaffolding, the frame of your study” (Merriam, 2001, p.45). In this study, the strategy used was the theoretical proposition provided by Fullan’s Leadership Model. The five components of Fullan’s Leadership Model, moral purpose, understanding change, relationship building, knowledge creation and sharing, and coherence making, provided the necessary terms for data analysis. The model also, “guided the research process in terms of the identification of relevant concepts/constructs, defined key variables, noted specific questions to be investigated, aided in the selection of the research design, provided options for data collection strategies, guided the data analysis and interpretation of findings” (Merriam, 2001, p. 47).

Coding is a method of assigning words or phrases to text in order to better organize the ideas and easily retrieve specific parts of the data (Merriam, 2001), it is “the heart and soul of whole-text *analysis*” (Ryan & Bernard, 2000, p. 780). Coding and the search for patterns in this study began by reading through all of the interview data and

highlighting passages that were relevant to five components of Fullan's Leadership Model. Fullan (2001a) indicates that the components are "independent but mutually reinforcing", thus there were times when data were coded with more than one component. Next, the passages were copied from the original transcript and put into simple tables created to organize and retrieve data. The table was sorted by code and the data were reviewed to find patterns, "the search for meaning is a search for patterns, for consistency, for consistency within certain conditions, which we call "correspondence" (Stake, 1995, p. 78). Fullan's Leadership Model was not used to develop the interview protocol; therefore the patterns were not known in advance or based on the research questions (Stake, 1995). The patterns emerged during the data analysis by attributing interview data to each of the five components of the Fullan Leadership Model.

The literature base provided the secondary codes used in data analysis. The interview data were reviewed again and additional codes were assigned in order to interpret the intended meaning of the speaker. The challenge was to construct categories that met the criteria suggested by Merriam (2001). She suggests categories that capture the recurring themes throughout all the potential data, reflect the purpose of the research, be exhaustive, mutually exclusive, sensitizing, and conceptually congruent (Merriam, 2001, pp. 183 – 184).

The secondary codes were copied with the corresponding text into another simple table to complete pattern matching and correspondence as was done with the primary codes. The data revealed that many of the primary codes could be matched with a secondary code, thus, adding to the findings discussed in chapter five. The secondary codes that emerged were: accountability, building capacity, culture, professional

development, standards-based, and teacher leadership. The recurring themes (Stake, 1995) and the meanings were then analyzed across the cases in order to establish the findings that are discussed in chapter five.

Researcher Identity

A characteristic of qualitative research “is that the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis” (Merriam, 2001, p. 7). As a teacher of children and adjunct professor in teacher preparation programs, I have spent unlimited hours in schools and classrooms. I feel I can easily relate to the hard work and dedication it takes to be a school teacher in today’s public schools, unlike the average person as noted by Wasley (1994), “The general public still does not comprehend what dedicated teaching entails ” (p. xi). This insight allowed me to build a rapport with teachers by showing compassion for their struggles and understanding the culture in which they live and work.

As a change agent and student of school change, I strongly advocate the use of innovative instructional methods in the schools. I am aware that my biases were often difficult to hide; my enthusiasm was sometimes expressed by my body language or my tone of voice. Merriam (2001) advocates building rapport through communication and helping out once in a while, the teachers took advantage of my knowledge base by asking questions about technology or asking my opinion about an issue under consideration. During the creation of the new first-grade report card, I helped the process by creating the final product for them using Microsoft Excel. Although the teachers had the layout prepared, they struggled with the technology and I offered my expertise in an effort to move the process forward. I believe the incident enhanced our working relationship and

helped to build trust and rapport. At no time did I interfere with the creation of the report card. Instead, I acted only as if I was the designer and they were the subject matter experts.

In a preliminary discussion with several teachers one stated, “I am looking forward to your help and learning something new”, I was compassionate to her desire to learn and expand her teaching knowledge but I also indicated that my role in this project was that of a researcher and observer, not as a teacher. This answer was as difficult for me to say as it was for her to hear, as a life-long teacher I want to help and share information, I appreciate the use of collaboration and brainstorming and I see the value in teacher interactions. It remained difficult throughout the series of interviews to hold back opinions, ideas, and suggestions and allow the teacher to discover his or her own solutions to issues he or she was facing. However, I found on a number of occasions that we often explored deeper into the issues in a discussion and exchange of ideas that enhanced my understanding of their perceptions and also provided another view for the teacher leader, often leading in a direction not previously examined. This conversational style of interviewing led to a professional friendship sometimes blurring the line of researcher and participant.

Limitations

A major limitation of this study, one that is inherent in the use of case study research, is the inability to generalize the findings to other settings dealing with issues of teacher leadership and professional development. Stake (2000) notes, “What can be said about a single case is quite different from what should be said about all cases. Each case has important atypical features, happenings, relationships, and situations” (Stake, 2000, p.

439). Inherent in some case study research, as with this study, is the desire for the researcher to examine the intricacies of the specific case with no intention of further generalization. Stake (2000) identifies an intrinsic case study as one that is undertaken because “the researcher wants a better understanding of this particular case” (p. 437). The MC program is exclusive to this school district and therefore it would not be possible to duplicate the conditions under which the program is currently being implemented. Thus, lessons learned here may only help others adapt professional development and teacher leadership programs to their own specific circumstances after considering their own unique situations.

A second limitation of this study became apparent during member checks with the four teacher leaders. The teacher leaders were eager to share their ideas and enthusiasm about the MC program during our audiotaped individual interviews. However, while each participant’s identity was masked as much as possible, anonymity was difficult due to the small group of participants and the fact that they were hand-selected by the district assistant superintendent. Any reader familiar with the school district can easily determine which teachers participated and attribute specific quotes to that individual teacher. The teachers wanted to be sure that they were professionally represented to their colleagues and district administration and therefore, my initial interpretations and some of the sensitive information and/or contentious issues were removed or rephrased after the member checks took place. In one instance a quote was removed because the teacher felt it did not properly reflect her feelings when it was taken out of the context of the full interview. When an accommodation was used to protect the professional position of the

teacher, every effort was made to provide the reader with an understanding of the conflicts they faced as they fulfilled their role as a teacher leader in the MC program.

The third limitation was the inability to triangulate the data. The observations and documents provided a context for the study and a clear representation of the ongoing projects within the MC program. Unfortunately, these alternate data sources could not help to corroborate the codes assigned during data analysis. Although the member checks confirmed the codes assigned to each of the text passages were accurately interpreted during data analysis, the subjectivity of the inquiry could lead skeptics to discredit some of the findings (Stake, 1995).

A fourth limitation to this study is the potential bias caused by the professional friendships that developed between the four participants and myself. This limitation was not anticipated at the start of the research as I tried to make clear to each teacher leader that my role was that of an observer, interviewer, and researcher. However, as each of the three interviews progressed, and were further supplemented by observations during the seven Model Classroom days, the rapport with each teacher turned into a professional friendship that resulted in discussion, a sharing of ideas, and an excitement about sharing the MC program with other educators. While this blurring of the line between researcher and professional friend could be viewed as a limitation, the use of multiple sources of data, a rigorous case study design, and an analysis based on a theoretical framework served to control for this potential bias (Yin, 1994). Furthermore, I believe that as a result of this intellectual bond, I was able to probe deeper into sensitive issues and explore subjects that the participants may have otherwise been hesitant to discuss.

Conclusion

“Data are nothing more than ordinary bits and pieces of information found in the environment” (Merriam, 2001, p. 69). The goal of this research was to uncover the experiences of the teacher participants in an effort to analyze how the MC program is creating teacher leaders through professional development and collaboration. Using the methods for collecting and analyzing data in a descriptive case study as prescribed by Merriam (2001), Yin (1994), Stake (1995), and Denzin and Lincoln (2001), this research paints an accurate picture of the impact of the program on the participants. The chapters that follow will present not only the findings of this research, but also will discuss the implications that have been gleaned from those findings.

Chapter 4

Research Findings

Introduction

Early in the early summer of 2000 five teachers and the newly hired district assistant superintendent, Dr. King, sat in a very small and stuffy classroom in the elementary school to discuss a new standards-based program for professional development, it was called “Model Classrooms”. At that time no one really knew what the MC program was or what it could become; but Dr. King had a framework and a vision. It was his job to set these five teachers on a personal journey of discovery and give them the autonomy and the freedom to expand their minds and improve their instruction in an effort to positively impact student achievement. The MC program was not based solely on improving test scores, it was an attempt by a school administrator to give teachers the resources and the support that they needed to collaborate, develop professionally, and build a standards-based program that would meet the individual needs of all of the participants. The program would investigate best practices, standards-based research, and collaborative methods that could advance the finest skills in the teachers in an effort to develop teacher leaders and ultimately influence student performance.

In order to frame the setting for the reader, this chapter begins by describing the four components of the MC program. What follows is a detailed description of the beliefs and experiences of the four teacher leaders who agreed to be a part of this study. Using Fullan’s Leadership Model as a guide, the findings reveal how the four teacher leaders exhibited each component of the model: moral purpose, understanding change,

relationship building, knowledge creation and sharing, and coherence making. All four teachers approached the MC program in a very different way and each one demonstrated their understanding of their role as a teacher leader to varying degrees. The MC framework allowed each teacher to find the professional development program that met his or her needs in an original format.

The Four Components of the Model Classrooms Program

“The validity of a framework derives from the professional conversations that accompany its introduction into a school or district” (Danielson, 1996, p. 12). The Model Classroom program is a framework that identifies the responsibilities of the classroom teacher and it is designed to improve student learning. This framework is divided into four specific areas: planning and preparation, environment, instruction, and assessment. Although curriculum is a concurrent piece of the program, it is not the focus. The implementation of each component may be applied differently in an elementary, middle school, or high school environment; these decisions are made during the Model Classroom days in which teachers are given opportunity to collaborate and build collegiality.

The first component, planning and preparation, begins with the end in mind, planning backwards from the assessment. Teachers consider what standards will be used in the planning of the lesson and what knowledge and skills the students should take away from the lesson. The goal is to help children build a more systemic picture learning through enduring understanding; whereby the big ideas transcend the classroom and are remembered long after the lesson is done. The big ideas have a greater potential to engage students and help them to see the connections to other disciplines. Systemic

thinking is a way of helping students recognize that all systems are interconnected and interdependent and consider those factors when learning about new systems or making changes in an existing system (Reigeluth & Garfinkle, 1994).

Teachers who excel in this component design instruction that reflects an understanding of content and important concepts and principles within that content. Their design is coherent in its approach to topics, includes sound assessment methods, and is appropriate to the range of students in the class. (Danielson, 1996, p. 30)

The second component of the framework is the environment. All aspects of the classroom are considered including what is posted on the walls, how the desks are arranged for student interaction, and the noise level in the room. When you walk into a Model Classroom you can see the agenda for the day posted along with the standards being used in the day's lessons. Assessment tools, such as rubrics and checklists, are easily accessible so the students know exactly what is expected of them. Student work and literature-rich exhibits are displayed around the room. Traditionally, literature is only used in the subjects of English, language arts, and reading, but the teacher leaders are integrating books and other reading resources into additional disciplines such as, math, science, social studies and other content areas. By drawing on the natural relationships among subjects, students can see how the curriculum connects to the world around them, supporting systemic thinking. Literature-rich units can also assist students in addressing essential questions associated with required educational standards as well as life-long learning concerns (*Literature learning ladders; Bring reading alive for all learners*, 2002). The MC environment is designed for optimal student interaction and student learning.

When students remember their teachers years later, it is often for the teacher's skill in designing the classroom environment. Students recall the warmth and caring their favorite teachers demonstrated, the high expectations for achievement, and the teachers' commitment to their students. Students feel safe with these teachers and know that they can count on the teachers to be fair and, when necessary compassionate. (Danielson, 1996, p. 31)

The third component of the framework is instruction to enhance student learning. The MC program instruction is standards-driven and teacher-facilitated. Students are actively engaged in learning in student-centered small groups or independently. There is less lecturing and less whole group instruction. "There is probably more evidence validating the use of cooperative learning than there is for any other aspect of education" (Wong & Wong, 1998, p. 254). The lessons and units contain a variety of activities that encourage student learning and address a variety of learning styles. Students are made aware of the standards in advance of instruction and they are stated in terms easily understood. "By the end of the lesson...you need to be able to do..." Special attention is given to learners' needs and adaptations can be made to provide access to the core curriculum for everyone. Revision of student work is the norm. "Teachers who excel in this area create an environment of excitement about the importance of learning and the significance of the content" (Danielson, 1996, p. 32).

Finally, the assessment is appropriate to the instruction and the expectations are clearly communicated to the students prior to the lesson. "Researchers estimate that teachers may spend from one third to one half of their time in assessment-related activities" (Nitko, 2001, p. 3). Nitko (2001) also suggests that assessment is a process for gathering information for making a particular educational decision. In MC assessment is used to measure the students' ability to meet the stated standards. The assessment tools,

such as rubrics or checklists, are shared with students prior to instruction so students are more likely to achieve the expected outcomes.

“Assessment methodologies ideally should reflect authentic, real-world applications of knowledge and understanding. Although not always possible, such authenticity motivates students and provides teachers with excellent insight into student learning” (Danielson, 1996, p. 76). The Model Classrooms framework allows for students to have the opportunity to meet standards through alternative assessment. Alternative assessment usually indicates a change from the standardized tests and multiple-choice tests (Nitko, 2001). Assessment in the MC allows for students to demonstrate proficiency through alternative methods such as explanation, demonstration, production, and lines of evidence. Authentic assessments, “presenting students with tasks that are directly educationally meaningful instead of indirectly meaningful” (Nitko, 2001, p. 245), are also used as a way for students to show growth and success. Ranging from forced choice questions for testing facts and concepts to portfolios and teacher observation to assess student performance, students have many opportunities to succeed in meaningful ways.

Planning and Implementation of Model Classrooms

Under the guidance of the assistant superintendent, Dr. King, the teachers spent the first year building the MC program and reflecting on personal practice. Several of the five teachers met during Model Classroom days to collaborate and build the MC program, others chose to work alone. Because MC was not specifically defined but presented as a framework, it was exciting for the five group members to watch how each person tailored the professional development program for him/herself. Teacher A stated, “I think the first year we were a little bit more independent. There were the in-services

where you were sharing what your understanding was, you were still kind of refining and defining your own understanding ...I guess the first year was really the year of testing and seeing what worked and didn't work and I guess in that sense refining understanding."

Every two weeks a substitute was assigned to cover the full day of classes for each of the five Model Classroom teachers. The teachers used this time for visits to other schools in the area, to work on standards-based projects, and to collaborate with each other. Dr. King did not ask for any evidence of how the time was spent each week, he trusted that each teacher would act professionally and use the time as it had been allocated. During group gatherings, which he scheduled at various intervals, he would check-in with each group member to discuss their progress and share in their success. The program was unique to each person who implemented it and the framework allowed each Model Classroom teacher to meet their own individual needs while modeling best practices for students and colleagues.

Part of the appeal of the MC program was the ambiguity and the challenge that the teachers encountered when they were given freedom and autonomy with little supervision and direction. The 2002-2003 new members of the MC team, dubbed "the newbies" by Dr. King, expressed deep concern that they did not know what they were supposed to do with the time or they were afraid that they were not worthy to be a model teacher. The original group had the advantage of building the program and implementing small parts of it as they determined their personal needs and ways to effectively use the framework, the newbies did not have this time advantage. In November 2002, Dr. King met with the group and suggested that the newbies use the Model Classroom days for

professional reading, research, and personal growth without producing a tangible product, this idea put many minds at ease and once again validated the professionalism of each member. Dr. King stated:

It is really to give you this first year or the first part of the year to do visiting and to do reading and being more of the sponge...So I fully expect you to be collecting information, reading...This is the expectation, that you will take this time and be a sponge for a while and I have teamed you up with a veteran teacher but I know that you are not going to be together because the substitute can't cover both times but I thought well it would make sense [to team you up] and then at least you have somebody you can email and talk to.

The Four Teacher Leaders

Each teacher in the study comes to the project with a different perspective based on previous professional experiences and knowledge about the MC program. In an effort to maintain some anonymity, the teacher's names were replaced with A, B, C, and D. These letters have no correspondence to initials or names. In addition, the name "Dr. King" is also a pseudonym, self-selected by the assistant superintendent. He requested that the name of the school district and all of the participants' names not be published in an effort to maintain confidentiality.

Table 1: Teachers in the Case Study

	Years in the classroom	Grade Level/ Subject	Years in Model Classrooms	Mentored by:
Teacher A	12 Years	Middle School Math	Original Member	
Teacher B	17 Years	Kindergarten	Original Member	
Teacher C	30 Years	Middle School Math	New Member	Teacher A
Teacher D	11 Years	First Grade	New Member	Teacher B

To organize the extensive data collected, I used the components of teacher leadership provided in Fullan's Leadership Model (2001a); moral purpose, understanding change, relationship building, knowledge creation and sharing, and coherence making. Each description about the individual participants describes each component of the leadership model in the same order, intending to show the varying degrees of teacher leadership skills exhibited by the four teachers. What it means to be a teacher leader in the MC program is the focus of this study and the teachers provide many rich quotes to describe their role as a teacher leader within the program. The quotes presented in each section below were chosen because the statement represented the selected component during the context of the interview. The Fullan Leadership Model provides an organizational framework that can be used to help the reader determine how each teacher understands the affect that the MC program has on his or her performance as a teacher leader. Although the teachers' comments were used to describe a specific component, it should be noted that the quotes might not be exclusive to that component. Due to the fact that the Fullan's Leadership Model is an integrated model, it is possible that the quotes used to represent one component of the model may be also effective in defining a teachers beliefs and understanding of another component.

Teacher A

Teacher A was raised in the local area and attended the school in which she now teaches. She is a 12-year veteran of the classroom and currently teaches middle school math. She began teaching in the school district four years ago after many years in a "very progressive, very, very, progressive program, where what I was doing in my second year what they were just starting to do here". Teacher A admittedly takes risks, craves

collaboration with other professionals, and likes to be “in the know”. She has earned a Master’s degree in education and holds a Supervisory Certificate. She notes that the place for her is in the classroom.

I think that I will stay in the classroom for a while, I think I will look for opportunities to continue to enhance my professional development, I don’t know if I will pursue administration and supervision...I still like it here [the classroom] and this is a good place for me to be, this is where I have the greatest impact so I most likely will probably keep doing what I am doing.

Teacher A is an original member of the Model Classrooms program and attended the very first meeting in the summer of 2000, “we were really kind of squished in around this little table and there wasn’t a whole lot of space. Kind of all waiting for someone to tell me what to do, that didn’t happen.” But Teacher A notes that after a brainstorming session with the others, the program “took on a life of its own” and although a framework is in place, it can be defined by each person to meet his or her needs.

Teacher A spent the first year of MC researching, reflecting, and collaborating with colleagues. “The first year was a lot of just kind of making sense of it for myself and I think looking at what I understood to be a standards-based approach.”

She admits that she is “extremely conscientious” about her professional career and “it is very important for me to do a good job.” She has a need for validation and constantly reflects on her teaching by questioning her own decisions.

I do second guess and question and reflect probably significantly about what I have done. Perhaps I would like to think that that makes me a better teacher, perhaps it maybe makes me, in some ways, a little bit more human as a teacher leader, that I don’t walk in with this sense of confidence that I’ve got it all and I know it all... I probably beat myself up more than I need to but I think as a result of those characteristics, I probably deliver a high quality program to my students and I am a staff member with high expectations for not only myself but for other teachers in the building.

Teacher A struggled early in college and as a result changed her career path from engineering to education. She believes that this personal struggle and frustration with her academic performance “has helped me to be a better teacher.” Teacher A’s ability to reflect on personal accomplishments and her willingness to take risks has made her a respected leader in her school and a valued mentor to her students. She summed up how she felt after the first MC meeting. “...It was probably going to be a lot more work, how’s that going to look? It wasn’t really defined – then all the fear came back again, what if, what if, what if, what if... the perpetual worrier. So I did it, I’m just going to do it and see what happens.”

Teacher A portrays the five components of the Fullan Leadership Model to varying degrees through her actions as a veteran MC team member. Her desire to collaborate with other teachers and grow professionally guides her work. She likes having the respect of her peers and, because of her previous employment in a much larger school district, understands the value of good productive teacher collaboration.

Moral purpose

Teacher A is driven by the moral purpose of teaching, she continually seeks ways to make a positive difference in the lives of her students and other teachers in the district through her work on MC and other school and district committees. When Teacher A is given the opportunity to share her work at in-service trainings, Model Classroom meetings, committee meetings, and other forums, she feels that there is a purpose to her sharing and she contributes willingly. “I think I have stuff that I am willing to share with other people and I can help, to be a resource for them.” She understands that the MC program is a gift of time and professional development and she is willing to share her

work, research, and knowledge with a teacher or group of teachers who express an interest.

When I have opportunities to share, which I have been given that and I really appreciate, then ultimately I hope it plays out that I can exchange ideas with others and really collaborate. I am a good resource; [I tell them] this might be a nice idea that you might like to use too, it is a good way to collaborate and watch how things play out.

Throughout her career, Teacher A has worked in and out of the classroom and she likes to find ways to reach students who struggle in school, “I missed teaching, seeing the light bulbs, seeing some success – especially with the kids who don’t get a lot of success, when you see that success, you really feel validated and I am really doing good things here.” Her drive to do the right thing and find success in student work is a window into her philosophy of education. Teacher A is philosophical about where she belongs in the public school hierarchy and acknowledges that teacher leadership and roles of school leadership are not about the power but about having a positive impact on student learning and the educational environment.

I just don’t know if I want to be an assistant principal yet and I had been going through all of the trainings ...but I wasn’t really sure that that was where I wanted to go...I saw them [assistant principals] dealing with a lot of discipline and really not doing as much meaningful work as I thought I wanted to be doing. I didn’t really want to spend my whole day doing discipline, I wasn’t interested in that and at the same time I kind of wanted some of the power, I thought that is the wrong reason to do that. So I was acknowledging that I have issues of feeling that I would like to be in charge but I am not going to be successful if that is the only reason that I want it.

Teacher A believes that each student in her classroom is important and deserves recognition for their achievements. Many years ago she began calling students at home to express how pleased she was with the student’s performance or behavior in class. The

phone calls were often received with gratitude from parents and students, especially from those students who only received phone calls from school because of ongoing problems, not student successes. One parent told her that she kept the answering machine tape and often played the message for her daughter to remind her that she can achieve in school.

I always tried to call the ones that would never expect to get a positive phone call and then they are wrapped around your finger for the long time ... I remember one kid I wrote a note to, one of those, I just wanted to say thanks – and you open it up and you know you have really been working so hard and your participation is great, a boy, [with a] very, very, very, volatile personality...he came down the hall and I had given him the note at the end of class and he got to me at the end of the hall and he gave me a huge hug. So you melt! Those are the kinds of things that make you go, “That’s why I do this!” – they validate you, you need to do that, you have to do those kinds of things and so I try to do more of that here.

Teacher A knows that positive feedback is important for her students but she also realizes that it plays a role in her success and it is a necessary component to maintaining her sense of accomplishment.

I like to get positive feedback; I feel to some extent that I am probably validated when I see kids meeting with success in my room. I see kids who seem to enjoy math and then I hear from parents, “My child really likes you, my child is doing really well for you.” When I talk to my mom and maybe she talked to somebody else and she says, “Boy, so-and-so said that you were doing this, that, or the other thing, that was really great or that you’re an asset [to the school district].” That’s, I would say, where it comes from, I like it, I like to get it, it isn’t like I say, “Oh, I don’t need it” you know what I mean? I like to get it, so I certainly enjoy when I have opportunities to hear that.

Teacher A believes that working with others in the field can provide the kind of feedback and positive reinforcement that is inevitably seen in her own work. Unfortunately, her current position in a small school district does not lend itself well to large-scale collaboration. She understands that change takes time and she is working

toward building a more collaborative network of teachers to develop a program of growth and leadership within the district.

...the way I probably interpret this the most is ...having an impact on the other teachers in my building, maybe being able to collaborate, serving as a resource, but I think primarily it probably just plays out in my classroom, which is actually kind of unfortunate... a lot of what goes on in here [my classroom] doesn't necessarily get really discussed or shared or seen by other teachers, so in a lot of ways it just enhances my own professional development. But not to say that their aren't elements that I have seen where it plays out in the school, when I have opportunities to share which I have been given, then ultimately I hope it plays out, I am a good resource...

Understanding Change

Teacher A indicated that the change process is about taking a chance and it is the teacher leaders that are involved with MC that make the program successful. They must be willing to take the risk and see the value in their endeavor.

I guess it's the people that choose to be a part of the program [that make it successful]. As you look, those people are the type of people who are going to embrace it and not be afraid to take the risk and define it how they want and then run with that... but I think it is very appropriate to acknowledge, "I really don't know a whole lot but I am willing to take a chance." Because I don't think if you are receptive to taking that chance then ultimately no matter what somebody might do with you it may not really be sincere or be meaningful for you. It would just be better to acknowledge, "I'm just not prepared to take that step yet, that's not where I am at, this is my comfort zone, I am going to just stay right there, things are ok here."... I know there is a piece of me that believes very strongly that they need to be a part of this when they are ready.

Based on her comments, it was difficult to determine if Teacher A understood change as a process or simply made the most out of her ability to change and grow individually through professional collaboration with her colleagues. Her role in a previous district as a teacher mentor along with her training as a school supervisor has given her some unique insights into educational change and the complexities that

accompany the process. She explained how her role as a MC teacher is built around understanding personal change and personal growth. She notes that taking the chance to make changes is less risky when there is support from peers and administrators.

I think the first year we were a little bit more independent if I remember right. There were the in-services where we were sharing what our understanding was, we were still kind of refining and defining our own understanding that was really the year that I guess that, "It's ok for you to go out and try this and take a risk, let's see what happens, do you want to try this unit and it flops it's ok. If you are going to step out on the line and you are going to do something really using the standards in the classroom, maybe posting them, sharing them, etcetera, and see how that works then that's ok. So I guess the first year was really the year of testing and seeing what worked and didn't work and I guess in that sense refining understanding.

After Teacher A spent some time researching topics of her interest and developing an understanding of standards-based education, she was given the names of two teachers who had asked to get some more information. One of those was Teacher C. He is also a math teacher and a veteran teacher. She had to find a way to use her teacher leadership role to work with Teacher C, yet she understood the complexity of the relationship.

There was no way I was going into [Teacher C's] room, my former math teacher, a very experienced teacher, and going to observe his instruction and then give him feedback, no way! That, to me, was not a reasonable approach, what was a reasonable approach was, "if you want to collaborate and you want to plan some stuff together that is standards-based and see what that looks like and after we are done developing something, if you want to come to my room and see what it looks like in my room and I want to come to your room and see what it looks like in your room, that would be great"...he and I were both willing to modify and adapt and fit that whole planning piece into what we wanted it to be, I would listen and kind of hear what he was willing to do and what I was willing to do and that worked and it just evolved very nicely.

The completed unit on Mean, Median, and Mode was standards-based and met the objectives of both 7th and 8th grade math. It was created during the MC days and resulted

in Teacher C being formally invited to join the MC team during the following academic year. Such a collaboration is indicative of Teacher A's belief that she still has a lot to learn about her craft and, although in a leadership position, she understands her role in various relationships.

I would say that's how the mean, median, and mode unit really evolved, discussion and collaboration. Other things that I would say I do in my classroom have evolved because I received them from [my previous school district] or it was handed to me, somebody else created it. It was something that somebody else created that I used as a jumping off point of if I looked at a resource that I have had and found ways to develop it into something I could use in my class.

Relationship building

Teacher A learned the importance of building collegiality when she was in her former school district. As a teacher mentor, she was assigned to work with new teachers in the school district. Her role was to help them assimilate into the school district, not supervise them. She recognized immediately that relationships were going to be the key to her success.

So the first thing I need to do is build some rapport, it was just a matter of talking and listening and buying little treats and being supportive, that was my first experience with most of them and that's what I spent the first part of my time doing and just kind of going in and getting the vibe for what is going on in this room, well as it progressed it became wonderful, it was great!

While building the relationships, Teacher A had to be concerned with how she was perceived by others and find ways to promote collaboration.

That was a wonderful, just a wonderful, wonderful, position to work with new math teachers, that was super and to see all the instruction and what it looked like in different rooms to really have a chance to sit back and reflect on all the different kinds of instruction and to analyze and then to give feedback on it where you didn't sound like I am an expert and this is what you need to do, but instead to dialogue about it, that was an art, that

was something that I really know that I need to work on so-so much because you really have to choose your words carefully. You have to choose what connotations you want to have and how you want it to look, that was tough.

These previously learned lessons of collegiality and relationship building have played a role in her ability to be successful as a Model Classroom teacher. In order to assist others to build and implement a standards-based curriculum, Teacher A has to be accepted by her colleagues and she must be approachable. So Teacher A must find ways to gather information and share with some colleagues who may be reluctant to participate. Teacher A described how she worked with a colleague she respected but wasn't really interested in joining the MC team.

I was hoping it would happen there is, and it did to some extent, we opened up some dialogue, because I really see her as somebody who is really very competent teacher who pretty much does keep to herself and who I think could easily be a part of this program but does other things in other capacities and I don't think would necessarily get involved. I think something that gave her an opportunity to say, "Can you please share your expertise with me because you obviously are doing something really, really great in here and I want to be able to kind of mimic that." That can really get some people involved that normally wouldn't be interested.

But Teacher A also notes that building relationships is more effective if she is working with someone with whom she shares a common goal,

I think that is what makes it really unique and probably really effective because it is really individualized professional development...That is just a great thing, I think that is the way that everybody would like it to be, I want to work on this and I am going to collaborate with somebody who is receptive to it, wants to grow in the same way, or who is a good resource for me, that's just fantastic.

Knowledge Creation and Sharing

Although Teacher A is willing to take risks and try new things and indicates what she believes her colleagues think about her position as a MC teacher and teacher leader.

I think the general perception [of others] is that I do generally care about kids and that I do like my job and that I do what is in the best interest of kids and I am not burnt out, I am not tired of this, not that I don't like kids – those kinds of things I don't think are out there.

She continues to build trust and rapport with colleagues by sharing materials, listening to concerns, and offering suggestions. Through the beginning of this academic year, Teacher A was only working with Teacher C and did not have the time to work with other teachers. Currently the teacher leaders are working through the issue of having only five substitute teachers to service nine Model Classroom teachers.

The time piece is now becoming an issue, that's not very effective, with the way that we have to use our resources, it has become more challenging, therefore I think that is going to impact some of the success that we have had. It's hard, to share that one sub now between a number of people. So I think it's definitely going to have to be tweaked and turned a little bit. It may effect how some of the people we can work with, I don't know, we will have to wait to see.

But as the school year moves forward, Model Classroom teachers are required to reach out to colleagues and find others who may be interested in the program, as of early in the school year, no other teachers have expressed an interest in working with the MC program.

I guess it's the people that choose to be a part of the program; you can't really force them. As you look at those people [who volunteer] they are the type of people who are going to embrace it and not be afraid to take the risk and define it how they want and then run with that...Ideally the hope would be that "Each one, Teach one" would grow to a certain point then there aren't any left to teach!

Sharing information and working with colleagues is a risk that Teacher A is willing to accept in order to improve her own skills and she truly enjoys the collaborative efforts of her colleague, Teacher C. “I would listen and kind of hear what he [Teacher C] was willing to do and what I was willing to do and that worked and it just evolved very nicely.” However, she is quick to note that although she has more experience in the MC program and has researched the standards more thoroughly than Teacher C, they were equals during the collaboration process. Teacher C brings many years of classroom experience and other knowledge to the process.

It was wonderful, it was super to collaborate; it was great to share ideas on the development [of the unit] because together I thought we were a great team, working together on this project. I got to learn a lot more about what his expectations are for his students and he learned more about what mine are and what kind of things I am doing and what he was doing in his room and how can we align that, just in conversations... On top of that we ended up revising the unit a little bit afterwards. I had to go through the process of developing a rubric and all the conversations that go with that. We have this awesome unit that we are both really excited about. That to me was the most non-threatening, meaningful work that we could do, that I could make an impact to grow because the idea was let’s stretch – like “Each one, Teach one”, the idea that [the assistant superintendent] talked about and I never really looked at it again like as ok, I am the expert, but more as this an opportunity to collaborate, this was an opportunity to work with somebody.

Coherence Making

The MC program is an individual approach to professional teacher growth. Teacher A acknowledges that the program is about professional development for all of those that are involved, but it is more than just development:

I think it is about individual professional growth, for me it has been that, but I think that roles into teacher leadership, in some aspects it may and some aspects it may not, depending on how you interpret it. It is definitely about professional growth, the way that I have interpreted it is trying to go, ok, what areas am I interested in, what areas can I work in that will improve what I do?

The district assistant superintendent allowed each teacher the time to assess their own needs and Teacher A took advantage of that time to find things that she believed to be important to her own development as a person, teacher, and mentor. Her time was spent observing other teachers in other schools, working with Teacher C and exploring innovative teaching techniques in her own classroom.

Sure, it would have been nice to walk in on the first day and have someone say this is what you are going to do...blah, blah, blah. But in hindsight, it was great that that is not what happened. That was great because maybe what someone would have told me to do would have not worked for me and because I was able to define it for myself and make sense of it in a way that worked for me, I have enjoyed it more and I have felt like I have had enough freedom to continue to let it grow in a way that is meaningful for me and as I listened to the teachers talk today, I recognized that Teacher B's [a Kindergarten teacher] interpretation is very different [than mine] and then I think there, well, at the elementary level maybe it should look different there, there's no aspects of it that looks the same and we all talk about things that are very different, about what we are doing with it and where we are going with it. I think that is what makes it really unique and probably really effective because it is really individualized professional development.

She hopes that her efforts of collaboration, knowledge creation and sharing, and teacher leadership will result in greater coherence among the faculty. Teacher A truly believes that she is doing right by her middle school pupils.

It gave me more of a chance to see if what I am thinking is right, it gives me some opportunities to kind of maybe take some risks and see, try some new things and it gives me a chance to have access to some of the information which I kind of always liked kind of being in the 'know', so I felt like ok that will help me stay on top of things and I think more than anything I think I felt like, I think I know what I am doing so, Yes, sign me up because I think I have stuff that I would be willing to share with other people and then I can help, that resource kind of thing

She sees the standards-based curriculum as the best way to effectively teach her students and she wants to spread that news to other teachers, yet she needs to find ways to overcome the resistance she encounters along the way,

Sometimes when people see that I am going to do something, like last year I was going to do this in-service thing, there was the perception, “what makes her think or what makes them think that she knows any more than I do?” Or, “Augh, that standards stuff! Everything is not standards you know.” *But for me IT IS.* That defines for me, my curriculum, my program, my everything. It makes sense, perfect sense to me. But when there is the perception by some that there is a lot more than just standards then I have to work to get beyond that kind of attitude.

She works to prevail over the negativity by providing positive feedback to her peers and offering her services as a resource.

Yes, I see myself as a resource, not because I know the information but because I might know where to access the information. Definitely [I am] not a *model* classroom teacher. But there are a lot of people that are doing a lot of great things in this school district that I would like to get out and see and find some more opportunities with other teachers, or to collaborate with some more teachers, that’s appealing. I think if you look at it that way then I think we would have more people involved but I think the perception is that the initial group of people are people who really embrace this thing, like fanatical or something, that isn’t really the case. The fact is that there are many people on the staff who have not embraced them [the standards], therefore they don’t want any part of it so they probably don’t necessarily see it [the standards] as worthwhile, a worthwhile time, a worthwhile investment of their time. They see it as more work and they are not willing to do more work and that’s that. I don’t feel that the perception of me personally is negative because I am a part of it... but I could be wrong.

Summary

Teacher A discussed a number of episodes that clearly depicted her role as a teacher leader lived through the five components of the Fullan Leadership Model. Her strongest characteristics are her ability to build relationships and create and share knowledge. She came to the school district with many years of experience and books of resources and materials, it has been her driving force to share the information and build a

program that best suits the needs of all of the students in the district. She deeply believes in standards-based education and the MC program has allowed her to find more effective ways to implement the program and share it with others.

The internal struggle that Teacher A must face is the realization that she is the only math teacher in her grade and large-scale collaboration is difficult in a small school district. She works daily to model the behaviors of a teacher leader and grapples with the idea that she could do more if given the opportunities. “I think that the vision is being communicated to a select few and I think it is something that needs to be communicated to everybody.”

Teacher B

Teacher B is a 17-year veteran teacher who has spent much of her professional career teaching the youngest children in the elementary school. Teacher B holds a Masters degree in Education and has taught at the local college. Teacher B is currently the only teacher in her district to participate in the National Boards Certification Program to become a nationally certified teacher. “I have very high standards for myself and for my students but if you were to look at me as a teacher you would say this person wants children to love to learn and to feel a community of learning in the school and that is the overall goal.” She has found the board certification process to be highly reflective and beneficial to her personal growth as a teacher leader and classroom instructor. Many of the discussions we had about MC were enlightened by her reflection as a National Board Certified Teacher candidate. She is an advocate for early childhood education and understands the role that a child’s first teacher can play in his or her life.

Teacher B notes that the MC program has met and even exceeded her expectations as a professional development program. She indicated that the program is about standards, collective practice, and content knowledge. Teacher B believes that MC has allowed her to investigate the paradigm shift from assessment driving instruction to instruction driving the assessment, demanding greater content knowledge from instructors and a higher need for collaboration among teachers.

Moral Purpose

Teacher B is an original member of the Model Classrooms program and at the first meeting in the summer of 2000, she stated her moral purpose and personal beliefs about a teacher's impact on children in the classroom.

That summer we got together over in the IST classroom, I am not usually too bold but I remember sitting down at the first meeting and [Dr. King] asking what we thought and I just basically told him, you know we are behind [with professional development programs] well I didn't even know who he [Dr. King] was, he was new and I am thinking, well he is probably going to hate me but he is going to know that I say what I feel for our kids...and he listened to it and he had some interesting feedback and didn't shut me down...it has always been kind of a nurturing environment and you're listened to, you are given feedback, reflection and critical input, negative and positive ... if you don't feel that you can say what you really want to say then you can say what you [think they] want to hear and go back to my classroom and do what I want to do, right? ...[With Model Classrooms] you are given that autonomy and the freedom to say what you want to say...but they will give you that flexibility and freedom ...it was kind of like we don't really know what this program is...we are going to work together to find out what this is going to be and it evolved every year and the framework has always been the standards and how can we impact student learning.

According to Teacher B, moral purpose is a key component of early childhood education, she states, "it is too important of a job to not embrace it 100% and not give everything you can." She considers her role as the children's first teacher as critical to their long-term perception of school.

My goal is for me to do something for them and I don't care if they remember or they don't, I want them to remember the affective points of view about learning and teaching, because I am their first stop, I have a huge impact on that, all your teachers do but if you are an early childhood teacher, they are the ones that get you thinking about whether learning is enjoyable, whether you can be successful doing it, and those first few years, I think, have the most impact on the future and if you look at the research it would tell you the same thing. So I take my job extremely seriously.

A number of times during our interviews Teacher B told me small anecdotes about times she would have to defend her role as “just a kindergarten teacher” and bite her tongue when other teachers smiled and cocked their heads to the side as they commented how much fun it must be to “play with children all day.” Teacher B stated time and again how important her role was in the lives of the five and six year old students she has taught over the bulk of her career.

I have met many people in my profession and outside of my profession who think that [all I do is] play, and I do play with my kids and that is important and if you look at the research on play, my gosh! It is phenomenal. But they think I baby-sit all day...I don't think of it as a just a job, I think of my experiences when I was young with poor teachers and some of the good ones, I saw the importance of that position and its not a job, it's a vocation – it should be, maybe not to the point where maybe sometimes I take it to, but I don't think you should step into this position without it being a huge commitment and a vocation in your life.

Teacher B illustrates Fullan's view of moral purpose with her goal of helping students to love learning and love school. Her goals continually drive her to work to do a great job in the classroom thus teaching her students a passion for learning by providing the classroom environment that nurtures great learners.

When they walk through that door, they are happy, they want to be here and when they leave they are going to want to be at school more, they are going to want to learn more, they are going to have their own inner drive to learn because I have done something to instill that. If I don't do that, I have failed... they come in like wild people, desiring to learn and wanting

to learn so badly. Now if I taught them content but they left my classroom, [thinking] “boring, I don’t like school, teachers are not nice people”... then I am not doing my job, if they learn something and they love to learn then I have done my job.

Teacher B also demonstrates moral purpose in her role as a teacher leader, but just having moral purpose isn’t enough, it must be accompanied by strategies to implement ideas that energize colleagues. As she worked toward her goal of achieving National Board Teacher Certification she realized that change couldn’t be achieved in isolation, collaboration and interaction with other professionals is a necessary part of achieving any change in education.

It’s about wings and roots. It is about putting down roots together as a group and coming up with a clear vision of what is expected of you as a person and then giving wings to those ideas and freedom and flexibility and purpose and... it roots you down because it gives you people to hold together, we are all in this together, it gives you that team approach but also the wings to go off in your own direction and to grow as a learner yourself with always the idea that it’s the kids that count. I think sometimes as teachers you can get lost in what really matters. The most important thing in this building are the kids, that’s it and what they learn in this school and how they feel about learning and sometimes we can get so involved in the instructional tags of UBD, reflective practice, standards, etc. that we lose sight of what is really important.

Understanding Change

Teacher B understands that moral purpose must also be accompanied by an understanding of change; she talked about growth and change during our second interview,

Change; when you say the word change to somebody don’t you think they think negative? ‘Things are going to change!’ versus ‘We are going to grow together’. Get the difference? ... No teacher is going to let you in their room unless they feel that you are not threatening to them.

So Teacher B finds ways to build relationships and works towards systemic change, but she indicates that people and change often cannot be controlled. Teacher B told me that when she works with a colleague it is not about change but about individual professional growth. “Change is almost like a 4-letter word, people don’t like change and you can’t effect change, you can’t change anybody, they have to change themselves, you can’t change them.” In an effort to continue her personal growth and change things in her professional practice, Teacher B revealed that she works to update her skills and remain current with the research in the field. She is not afraid to try new methods to improve student performance.

I think I’m constantly looking for best practices and research and how does that look, you can read all the Piaget you want but you need to know how am I going to apply that in the classroom. And we are so fortunate now with the internet; If you have an interest in something than you can look at so many different models of that instructional method ad nauseam and then you find the one that best fits your learners in your classroom and you say I am going to try this and if it doesn’t work then you say ok, I’ll try it differently or this is what I did wrong or this is how I should direct more, every year I try to pick something that I am going to try to do better and this year it is the comprehension and the poetry journals and its my parent connection.

Teacher B has worked to improve the way the students in her class learn and share information by changing her role in the classroom. She discussed how she has altered her approach to allow more exploratory learning, frequent self-inquiry, and permits students to ask and answer questions on their own. “It’s a huge paradigm shift, it really is, it’s a huge step especially for me because I always want to nurture and do [it for them], but I am enjoying the classroom so much more and I am enjoying watching them facilitate their own learning. It has been a big change.”

Teacher B reveals an understanding of one aspect of the change process by her demonstrating her willingness to improve her skills and share her beliefs and ideas with colleagues. She indicated that “change is more autocratic and growth is more intrinsic” and money for professional development should be “invested in the people in your district rather than bringing in somebody who doesn’t really know what I do everyday.” Her commitment to teaching young people is enhanced by her individualized professional development and part of the journey includes sharing her expertise with parents, colleagues, and administrators. “You reflect on your practices and say ok, this is not working, I need to look to people, or research, or collaborate with somebody and figure out how to make this work for my students.” She sees the importance in building relationships and nurturing the parent-to-teacher and teacher-to-teacher connection. She uses a weekly parent newsletter and a self-designed website to communicate with parents and indicated that the MC program has allowed greater opportunities for collaboration with teachers outside of the elementary school.

I dialogue with the high school teachers a lot more than I used to which is good. It is always nice to get together with teachers that are not at your grade level and just bounce ideas of each other that are basically within the same framework but they look at them from a different point of view

Relationship Building

The stated goal of the Model Classrooms program is to build a team of teachers to assist others and develop a standards-based education program, “Each one, Teach one.” In order to meet the goal, the teacher leaders must work with their colleagues who may not be as enthusiastic about making changes to the four domain areas that guides the MC program; planning and preparation, the classroom environment, instruction, and

assessment. Teacher B knows that she must build relationships with her peers in order to help them understand the opportunities available to them and their students.

So you try to build personal relationships first and if [other teachers] have something [posted] in the hallway and you compliment what they are doing, everyone in this building does good work, I comment on what they are doing and hope, that's all you can do because if you go in like blazin' like "hey, I'm going to teach you something", forget it. You have to be welcomed in, that is the only way you can make a difference.

Realistically, however, Teacher B understands that not all teachers are going to welcome her in, "You try to always be kind and professional with everybody but not everyone is going to let you [into their classroom] and so you focus on the people that you think might [be interested in making some changes]." And, hopefully, by building relationships with the teachers that are willing to listen to new ideas, some others will start to see the benefits of teacher growth and professional development.

I don't go into any classroom and not steal something, some kind of idea or something. You can say to them, wow, I really like how you did this, would you share? That really makes them feel good about themselves too, that is really what it is about. You can't get everyone to move on the path unless they feel like they have something to offer and value because it is a very fearful thing, no matter how hard you try or where you are on that path, you are still taking risks and taking risks in front of your peers is really tough.

Relationships are not built on just giving information or providing expertise, but include the exchange of ideas and collaboration between teachers. "I think you gain a lot more in meeting in those groups and sharing, I know that from my experiences, it would be like me trying to do Model Teachers stuff all by myself, Well, yah, I'd get better but what good does that do?" But Teacher B believes that some projects must be developed by the users and implemented from scratch. One of the MC projects that Teacher B worked on during her MC days was rewriting some of the Pennsylvania kindergarten

state standards into kid language. She found that paraphrasing the standard from the way it was written in the state provided documents only caused confusion for her students. Once she started the process, she realized that this project should not be completed alone but required the creation and sharing of knowledge between the kindergarten teachers in the district.

I started to write [the state standards] into kid language and then I talked with [another kindergarten teacher in the district] about that as well and I said, this is a process that needs to be done collaboratively, if you are going to be sharing standards and I am going to be sharing standards we need to sit down together and define and interpret what these standards mean to a kindergarten student in our school district and so we sat down and we did that, we did that today we are working on Math standards, the Language Arts we did first... I am from the school of thought that you need to participate in it to know what it is about, you can't just give somebody the math standards that are written in kid language ... you really need to do it ... you need to collaborate with people that have [been involved] so that you understand what the program is. I think that you really, to have ownership in it, to understand it, to really use it, you have to be involved with somebody that has already done it, that why there is the idea "Each one, Teach one", you have to have some type of a direct connection to the program, to put it on a shelf, I think people will pull it out and use the program for what it is worth but I don't think they would really get it, you know?

Knowledge Creation and Sharing

Teacher B demonstrates her understanding that the information is not what is important but the implementation and the use of the information that will ultimately result in school change. In order to promote collaboration and sharing of information, the vision must be clear. As more and more teachers join the MC program, there is a possibility that the mission will be clouded as ambitious teachers work to promote their agenda. As a result of our interviews, Teacher B realized that there is no mission statement for the MC program. There is a framework and a motto, "Each one, Teach

one”, but there is some indication that those outside of the program are unaware of what MC stands for and what can be accomplished.

I think as it gets bigger it may be harder to keep focus and that is what you were saying, that they [other teachers] don't know that there is a singular focus, that concerns me because whenever it gets too big, you need to make sure that everyone has the same core values or core propositions, that everyone has the same focus and now that I sit here and think with you I think maybe, for model teachers it wouldn't be a bad idea to have core propositions of the MC program and maybe a mission statement... Just because I think you have to have those core ideals and when you start moving off of them you can say wait a minute, where are we really going because eventually years from now it could be something very different and not beneficial to students.

A vision and mission statement can help to build cohesion between the teacher leaders and other teachers in the school district.

Teaching should always be an evolution and growth and always moving towards the model. The model has the same framework but it is always changing in terms of how you reach that model, you are always trying to learn something more, collaborate with somebody and that changes your thought process, so I think it is frustrating and I hear from the teachers in the building, “oh that title!” Even when some of the teachers were recommended to be a Model Classroom teacher, we said, “we think you have the attributes of a person [that would make a good Model Classrooms teacher]”, they would say “oh I don't want that, I don't want that tag [of Model Classrooms teacher]!”

Coherence Making

Her desire to build coherence among her peers is tailored by her role in the change process. Teacher B is invested in the school district and in her students. Although she sees the value of systemic change in education, she sees herself as just a cog in a very large wheel. Her role is to collaborate with others and to grow as a teacher, along the way she hopes to influence others to join her on her journey and collaborate to do what is right for children.

It's always a collaborative kind of thing, but systemic change, I am not in that role, that's not the role for me, like they say, "Each one Teach One", so I work together with Teacher D, we both learn from each other this year. She might not work with that many people [now] but by next year she'll be working with other people and then she will affect change and it is like a domino [effect], in a small school district in a number of years it can be done where you really make that systemic change. I think that maybe at the high school what you are seeing there is that just that they have a bigger faculty and so it will take them longer to make that systemic change. In a small building like us you can make some really positive changes.

Teacher B sees her role in this process as leading by example and working with one person at a time to help them to see how they can improve their practice and influence student learning. Yet, she doesn't get discouraged if some teachers choose not to work towards excellence, it is not her job to oversee or criticize her colleagues.

There are those that want to move up to that level just because they feel that pressure, that desire, and you didn't put it on them, they put it on themselves and there is a certain percentage that you are never going to get to, don't bash your head, bang your head against the wall, or worry about what they think about you, it's wasted time.

Summary

As a veteran of the classroom and Model Classrooms, Teacher B was able to articulate the meaning of MC and express the vision of the program. Her interviews were filled with clear indicators that she understood her role as a teacher leader. She displayed the five components of Fullan's Leadership Model, often times they were intertwined with each component playing a role in the success of the others. Teacher B is driven by her sense of moral purpose and her belief that she must do what is best for children, no matter the cost to her time or health. She was recently working on reorganizing her priorities, noting "what are you doing, why are you doing it and what are you doing it for? No one really stops teachers and asks them that." She chose to focus on her

classroom, the MC program, and her National Boards Certification, allowing others to take over her positions on outside committees and resigning from teaching at the local college, essentially focusing on what is important to her professional growth and the development of her students. Leading by example, Teacher B hopes that others will join the journey and grow personally and professionally.

It doesn't matter, it is all a journey somewhere and I think 10 or 15 years from now you go, "Oh, ok that is where this went." I don't want to back away from it, I don't want to be sorry when I look back, I want to take the plunge and do my best. I have to be satisfied with whatever that best may be, because I am always going to be learning something and it won't matter whether I make it or I don't, it won't change what I do. It is a scary thing to step out [there], it really is. With anything, it is a personal journey but you can't stop, you just can't.

Teacher C

Teacher C has been with the school district for the tenure of his 30-year career and he expects to be in the classroom for several more years, "I don't want to leave the classroom, I want to stay in the classroom". He has a Masters equivalency degree, believing that he benefited more from taking a variety of classes, including an aerospace course (with an opportunity for real flight time), than from limiting himself to a single-discipline degree. Even after all of these years, he is still willing to take risks, learn new methods, and participate in committees and programs offered by the school and district in an effort to keep him abreast of the latest events in education. "So I am on my downward swing but to me that is no reason to not change or to learn new things because you are helping the students." He has seen many educational initiatives come and go through the years and he believes that the standards movement is one that will be sustained because of the national emphasis.

I think with this approach, its part of his [the assistant superintendent's] liberal arts approach, he is working it in slowly and letting us grow instead of saying, next week I want this done, I think he is letting us try it, feel it out, change it to fit the individual personality of all the people that make things succeed here within the district, for the ultimate goal which is your standards, that is the focus for everybody now-a-days, meeting the standards. Everyone is doing it; I think it is here for a while.

Teacher C is a middle school math teacher and he is new to the MC program. In the spring of 2002 he began working with Teacher A on the Mean, Median, and Mode unit and was invited to join the MC team as a member in the school year 2002 – 2003. Up until now his work has mainly been in tandem with Teacher A and he is still searching for what MC can do for him and his professional development.

I would say that I am at the very beginning because I just started this year. I'm still in the learning process and I think that meeting with the assistant superintendent helped me to understand what the learning is going to be about and I'm going to draw from Teacher A and talking with her about planning, I am going to try to think of some ideas and then she and I will sit and brainstorm a little bit, maybe what direction we want to go next.

Teacher C admits that he has not had the opportunity to work with MC long enough to see the connections to the other parts of the initiatives also being implemented in the school district. He suggests that he will use the MC days, “to investigate, to learn, and to try to implement some things different than I do at this time” and he appreciates being given the opportunity to “just have time to think about things and the way it might fit into my classroom.”

Most evident during my interviews with Teacher C was his ongoing commitment to his students.

In the end it boils down to my working with the students and enjoying them. Helping them to try to understand so that they can become productive people in society too. So that they can get the skills that when they get out they can make some choices; workforce, college, services, but so that they have the ability to make choices.

Teacher C teaches his students by being a role model in the classroom. Due to his inexperience with the MC program, Teacher C did not always answer the pointed interview questions about MC but he often had an anecdote about a current or previous student that would focus the conversation back on students. He is driven by a moral purpose to be a compassionate teacher and do what is best for his students and for the district.

I amaze people when they ask me, they know I am a teacher, they always hear the negative [about teaching] now and I say, "I love what I do", and [they respond], "you teach what level?" I say, "Middle School", [they respond], "and you love it?" I say, "Ya!" I said, "yes, some days are frustrating, yes, but I wouldn't have stayed in it for 30 years if I didn't love it." I am here for my students.

Moral Purpose

Teacher C works hard to find a balance between his commitment to his students and his school. "I have been on a lot of different committees; I don't always go searching for committees to be on because how I have always believed in looking at a lot of student work and giving them feedback," the perception of his colleagues is that Teacher C is on many school and district committees. Teacher C recalled an incident at the first faculty meeting of the school year, when Dr. King read the names of the many committees and their members, a colleague joked with Teacher C stating, "Why don't you just stay standing?" Just an indication of the number of committees and the moral commitment Teacher C feels to his profession and his students. "I said I've got to learn to say no, because I am kind of overwhelming myself at times."

This sense of Moral purpose is what makes Teacher C seek ways to improve his performance, even after more than three decades in the classroom. As a 'newbie', Teacher C does not have a deep understanding of the role of the teacher leader in the MC

program. When I asked him if the program is about teacher leadership he stated, “I think he [the assistant superintendent] is using it that way because as he said to all of us, you’ve got the respect of your colleagues and I think he is using us to help draw others in to accept different ideas.” Teacher C still trying to discover what teacher leadership really means for him; when further questioned to determine if he considered himself a teacher leader he was unable to clearly answer the questions. Yet further analysis of the data from our interviews showed that Teacher C does exhibit many of the characteristics in the Fullan Leadership Model.

I think a teacher leader is somebody that the kids [and teachers] can relate to also. I think we’re here first off, most importantly for our students, to help our students. ...You might not always have the respect of some people, they might disagree [with you], it could be just a lack of understanding, but I really think we are here for the kids first, I think the other stuff just goes along with it. I think that’s teacher leadership because you can be professional and not be a leader.

Throughout the interviews, Teacher C spent the majority of time talking about his students. He had many years of stories and lots of examples to share with me about his joys and successes of teaching in the same school district. Teacher C believes that MC is a professional development program because “It’s changing you as a teacher. It’s getting you to look inward and to be willing to try to take that risk where you might have failed and say well boy I sure blew it that day and let’s think of a different way to do it.” Although he has yet to define his role in the MC group, he is using the time to work with Teacher A and find things that interest him.

Understanding Change

Teacher C noted that the teachers that have been around as long as he has been must be willing to accept that change happens in schools, “Those that are still here and

aren't rushing out to retire I think are the ones who are willing to accept change and willing to try things." Through our interviews I could not determine if Teacher C had a deep understanding of change or was driven entirely by the moral purpose that what he was doing is for students. Teacher C never indicated that he has knowledge of the change process, yet he has dedicated his entire life to the vocation of teaching young people and indicates that he must change his methods of instruction in order to keep students motivated and interested. Nevertheless, he never referred to his needs or his individual growth just for the sake of personal professional development.

If you are doing something always one way and you aren't willing to ever change it, you are not going to grow, and I think that growth is taking something that you have always done and maybe you could do it this way instead and if it benefits the students and their knowledge then its growth but it is also change, that is my feeling about that. To me they are interchangeable – I think growth by itself is saying that there is change brought about.

Teacher C is still adjusting to his role as a MC teacher. "In my short time I have found it to be a positive experience, it is something that I can see that, ok, I need to find out a lot more about, I am still learning the ropes." As a veteran teacher, he has seen many changes occur in public education and he spoke of the many reoccurring programs in schools,

It is realizing that we can't do things like it was done forever. That some change is good and some change is not good, yet, when you close the door, you are in [the classroom], you are the one doing it and I think it's to get the person - once they close the door - to try things that can bring about more success or maybe not success as much as understanding from the students. You hope in the end that they understand and it will lead to success ...sometimes I wonder if some of the things, the concepts that they have introduced aren't just trying to bring things full circle...I think we need to make changes in how we introduce [some topics] to students and I think Model Classrooms is part of that, I think it will bring about change but I don't see it happening in my career.

Teacher C has seen many initiatives come in with much fanfare and research to see it fade after just a few months of implementation, his comments about the difference between those programs and the MC program does not show insight into the change process and its ramifications. He is unable to see the connection between what he does in his classroom and the long-term effects on students and colleagues.

This is where each person takes the pieces and fits it to their own individual personality, what works best for them and best for the class. I think this Model Classroom, as I work through it, won't be just a passing idea, I think of those other items, some of those, ok, here is an in-service about this and boom you're on. This thing is more personalized, it can fit the teacher, you know, it is better for each teacher to use it like they want to.

Relationship Building

Teacher C still relies heavily on Teacher A to guide him through the process. They typically schedule their Model Classroom days together by sharing a substitute with another MC team. Teacher A and Teacher C take advantage of their Model Classroom days once a month instead of every two weeks. This allows both of them to be out of the classroom at the same time and provides for maximum collaboration time. Teacher A and Teacher C have also commented that taking a full day out of the classroom every two weeks can be very difficult because they do not like to be away from their students that often.

The collaboration with Teacher A, although beneficial, does not allow Teacher C to discover what the MC experience means to him. He admits that he must spend more time reflecting and working alone in order to discover ways that he can benefit most from the experience. He indicated that he has a number of articles and journals that he has found or have been given to him by others that he has just not had the time to review. He was recently given the directive from Dr. King to use his MC days to read the articles and

meet with others to find an understanding of the program and develop a project that he is interested in pursuing.

I want to find some time, maybe instead of trying to go out [and visiting other schools], go someplace together, I think [Teacher A] and I, this is a good idea, she and I can just go out someplace and talk about our focus in Model Classrooms. We need to find the time to do that...I need to sit with her and pick her brain and think of new ways to do things because...she has been on [Model Classrooms] for a while now and then [we can] go from there.

Although Teacher C has been building relationships at the middle school for many years, he is still humbled when colleagues, and current and former students compliment him. He values his relationships with colleagues and Dr. King recently told him that one of the reasons he was chosen for the MC program is because of his well-respected reputation among the other teachers in the building and the district. The hope is that his long-standing relationships with other teachers will allow for greater collaboration and more innovation throughout the district.

I think it is a combination because I think a teacher leader is somebody that the kids can relate to also. Somebody that has the respect, they don't always agree but the students can still respect because they see what they are trying to do for them. I don't know if you could say that one is more important than the other, if you could, I would say, I think we're here first off, most importantly for our students, to help our students, I think how we get along as peers should work hand-in-hand with that [belief] and you might not always have the respect of some people, they might disagree, could be just a lack of understanding but I really think we are here for the kids first. There are people on the faculty, you know we still don't get along, I don't always agree with them but I've learned to still respect them as a teacher and I saw the things that they did [in their classroom] which I thought were fantastic, I told them, "I can't believe you are really doing that!" But I wouldn't badmouth them to other teachers or to students, especially the students. I know that there are teachers who could talk to certain teachers about other teachers, which to me is plain unprofessional but I have always maintained that relationship with my students.

Knowledge Creation and Sharing

Teacher C hopes that his relationships with others will allow him to more easily implement the idea of “Each one, Teach one” because the existing associations with others are already built on respect and trust. This mutual trust is necessary to allow knowledge creation and sharing and create an environment where people are willing to take risks and explore new instructional methods.

She [Teacher A] has been here in this building for a couple of years and she told me about the respect I had, respect a lot of the teachers have of me as a teacher, it took me off guard actually when she said that, because I get along with my colleagues, we don't always agree, but we can agree to disagree too. I felt good after she said it and maybe that is how she got me to volunteer I don't know! I volunteered because I saw the need for the kids, but maybe I looked at myself after hearing from [the building principal] and from [the assistant superintendent], they kind of chose people that they thought could work well together because of how they are as people and also would have the respect or the ability to maybe draw others in.

So Teacher C is still working to find his place on the MC team and determine what his role will be. Yet he has become more aware of his role as an ambassador, learning from those that have recently joined the faculty and demonstrating new instructional methods to the experienced teachers.

So what we are looking at is to come up with a common ground and what we are hoping is that we will work together and feel some sort of understanding. By working with peers instead of outside people, other teachers with accept it better instead of bringing in an outsider and saying, “Hey just because you have been in-serviced, the in-service is done and therefore you are all knowledgeable about this.” This is going to be a long drawn out process, it is not going to be just a one day, it is going to be multiple days of in-service, he [the assistant superintendent] really wants to break it down.

Teacher C talked openly during our interviews about his willingness to share his work with colleagues. He showed me examples of projects he worked on with other teachers

during his tenure on various committees. His new role on the MC team is the first time that he has been put into a position that requires him to create new projects, either alone or in collaboration with others. One project that he has created within the realm of MC is the unit with Teacher A,

We [Teacher C & Teacher A] kind of brainstormed, what can do between the 2 grades [7th & 8th grade] that my people [7th grade] can handle because they have had exposure to it and that her students [8th grade] can do a little something different with. Something that they have already had but some new way that gives it to them in a different way, to check their understanding of it. I just finished mean, median, mode with my kids and I suggested the topic to her, let's try to figure out something with mean, median, mode and we just did some brainstorming and all of a sudden we thought, "hey, let's do it and base it to the report card because they can all relate to report cards" and that's where we came up with doing the unit together. [The resulting unit was based on computing grades for a student report card based on mean, median, and mode of class and student grades].

Recently Dr. King recommended that Teacher C spend some time researching standards-based curriculum and teacher leadership, but his many years in the classroom have given him the knowledge base he needs to contribute to the knowledge creation and sharing component of the Fullan Leadership Model. As he continues to learn more about standards-based education and teacher leadership, Teacher C can contribute to the collaborative knowledge base, he understands the importance of working with others to build a reliable MC program and he believes that his membership on the team will be beneficial because of his veteran status.

You show what you can do by your actions, maybe positive ways for other people to try things, to seek those people out who have something to offer, or to just for people to ask about doing some of those things in their room. Hey, if they want it then I can give it to them but most of the stuff I have they can get from a lot of people here, but seeing as I have been around so long I guess they like to ask me. No one has really asked me about MC yet, but I would just send them to [Teacher A], I am not sure yet what I have to tell them, maybe after I do like [Dr. King] says and read about it for a while then I will be able to work on other projects.

His eagerness to participate, “I volunteered for this, I think it is a good idea” and his professional demeanor, “I know that there are some casual days that they have, I don’t know, to me there is a certain things that go with the profession, dress down days for me means coming in without a tie on. I just can’t get used to wearing my blue jeans to school” have made him an icon in the middle school. Teacher C believes that students, teachers, and administrators respect him; this support further encourages knowledge creation and sharing.

Coherence Making

Teacher C has seen many types of training and in-service through the years and he believes that the approach used in MC is a positive change in the right direction. He is impressed by the focus on building relationships and sharing ideas throughout the district in a collaborative method that depends on trust and respect.

I think [the assistant superintendent] is using us to help draw others in to accept different ideas and maybe to be more open instead of the typical in-service of bringing in the expert and listen to them for a few minutes or hours and then they are gone and we are sitting there thinking, “what did we just do?” Just going through the day... If it is non-threatening I think people are more willing to try it and accept it.

Teacher C simply states his purpose for teaching for 30 years, “my role is just to find ways that maybe I can help my students achieve better”, through this journey he has built a reputation “as to being a teacher who is demanding but who is fair” and he is pleased to be remembered as a fair man who has fun with his students and is willing to take a risk to improve student achievement. He sums it up, “as far as working with the kids, I have a ball.”

Leadership is complex and the definitions vary, Teacher C is not what one would consider a charismatic or overt leader, but one who uses the five components to show quiet leadership by example. He finds ways to utilize the resources and seize the opportunities afforded to him. By visiting other schools, collaborating with Teacher A, and serving on numerous committees, he is learning to lead by experiencing such learning at the hands of other learners.

Coherence making is about helping people see the benefits of change while listening to the concerns that the impending reforms can cause. Because Teacher C has consistently done what is right for students and not concerned himself with idle gossip and meaningless exchanges among the teachers, he has established himself as a teacher leader. With his new position in the MC program, it remains to be seen how his subtle leadership will help fulfill the coherence making component of Fullan's Leadership Model. "I still need to get my feet wet and get the experience, I am reading about it and still learning, what works here [in the research] doesn't always work in the real world." What he has seen of the MC program thus far has been encouraging; he describes the difference between gently encouraging others to participate compared to the aggressive change efforts of the past,

I think the approach he is taking by bringing teachers in and having the group slowly grow, I think that's a good idea, I have never seen that approach before. That's a welcome approach because it has always been, a person went to a seminar and the person came back and tried to drag people into these ideas, the person who went does all the work and he is the only one to change. You hear that threatening type of thing and you think, "Get lost!" Here with Dr. King it's, "Hey, let's try this together and see how it works."

Summary

It was revealed through data analysis that Teacher C is still trying to understand the change process. He is involved in other school committees and he is working to find his place in this program.

I think I have to learn and find my total focus about where we are going first, maybe somebody that has been on this [MC] since the start may have a better grasp of it, it is just something else put on my table, the table is so full I don't want to lose focus here because I am trying to do this at the same time [as the other committees], it is just, you can only do so much, folks only have so many means and changes, I think once I work with some of the others and determine what I want to do, how we can work differently, what changes as far as curriculum and see what else can be done at the same time, then I may be ready to jump in a little bit more, but right now I am just watching and learning from people like [Teacher A].

He is so passionate about doing right by students that it was difficult to determine if he understands change or just concedes that change is inevitable, therefore he is willing to listen to new ideas. Teacher C is a veteran of the classroom who displays characteristics of all the components in the Fullan Leadership Model, yet his sense of moral purpose was the strongest trait. He bases his reason for sharing information, building relationships, and coherence making on what is best for his students. He spoke of the ways he influences their entire lives, not just the year he is their teacher. He wants to prepare them for a career, not just teach them 7th grade math. This dedication embodies the many qualities discussed by Fullan in his model.

Getting the students to realize what they can do if they try, some of them just don't want to be wrong... You hope in the end that they understand and it will lead to success, but sometimes there are things like test-taking that stand in the way, if you show them when they try maybe they will succeed. I don't think some teachers do that, I do though, I just want them to try. I work to get them to want to try stuff.... I have seen students who have graduated who are doing fantastic, who, in the way we tested them, they didn't always show understanding, they were rated differently but once it got out there they were doing wonderful because they showed it in

a different way, they knew they should just try to do it, that is what I try to teach them, just try to do it.

Teacher D

Teacher D is an 11- year veteran of the first grade classroom. She holds a Masters degree in reading from a local university and has considered earning a terminal degree at some point in her future. Right now she believes that the best place for her professionally and personally is in the primary classroom “This is a place where they feel I can be the greatest asset to the children and to the district.” Teacher D has always been a risk-taker and innovative teacher. Eight years ago, while still a neophyte in the classroom, Teacher D worked with the special education teacher to implement an inclusion program in the district,

It [student inclusion] was not well received [by other teachers] but we didn’t really care, it didn’t stop us, we felt that it was the right thing to do for kids... since then I have been involved in many committees, technology, author committee, reading committee, school improvement teams, the normal kinds of things and last year I was approached about Model Classrooms.

Teacher D is a new member of the Model Classrooms team and very excited about the opportunities that the program provides to the teachers involved. Last school year, Teacher D teamed with Teacher B to complete a number of projects such as HEROES and grant writing opportunities, she was formally invited to become a MC teacher in 2002- 2003. Teacher D regularly schedules out-of-classroom time for other teachers, not currently involved in the MC program, to team up with her on projects. One of her first independent MC projects was working with other first grade teachers to rewrite the first grade Pennsylvania state academic standards into kid-friendly language. She took the project one step further and worked with another first grade teacher in the

district to create a record keeping system that aligned with the previously created progress report and the state standards, following a plan similar to the work done the year before by Teacher B. She continued the project by writing a lesson plan format that guided teachers in writing standards-based lesson plans. She gave all of these projects to the other first grade teachers in the district in hard copy and on floppy diskettes to allow them to use the lesson plans to fit into their current teaching strategies.

Teacher D shows a great commitment to the school district. “As time has gone by in my 11 years of teaching I have always taken on the responsibilities of helping my school district to be the best that it can be, I take that very personally because I have invested myself in the district.” As a member of numerous committees and collaborating with peers, Teacher D exhibits many of the characteristics in Fullan’s Leadership Model. She was very excited about being included in the Model Classrooms program, she indicated that prior to joining the team she was doing many of the activities on her own without being officially recognized or compensated with release time. She tries to stay up-to-date with the latest research and explore innovative and exciting ways to teach first graders. Many of her ideas are built in collaboration with other primary and special education teachers. She views herself as a teacher leader and is very appreciative of the luxury of time and resources that have recently been afforded to her through the MC program.

It is an opportunity, I look at it [MC] as a huge opportunity to develop best practices, not just for myself but for the school district [and] for the children, what can I do to improve anything I do? ...I think it is an opportunity to really take a leadership role, to be a teacher leader, I think it is an opportunity for teachers to collaborate with other teachers who are in the program but not just [those] in the program. I think it is really about being a teacher leader and it’s giving you resources and time to further develop those things. It really is about opportunities.

She spoke often about her passion for teaching and for working with small children. She works daily toward her mission to build a standards-based classroom and do what is right for all students.

Moral Purpose

Teacher D is driven by the moral purpose of teaching primary students. “It’s a powerful thing, teaching is, because what those children start with and they leave with and the impact that you make in helping them to move forward is intense, it’s a daily thing, not one thing, no, every day, every day is monumental.” She views teaching as a passion and a vocation. MC is a method for her to help herself and her colleagues develop a standards-based curriculum to improve student achievement. She is concerned with making a positive difference for the children and the teachers in the school and district. Teacher D believes that she has always worked to improve student learning through innovative instructional strategies.

Teacher D believes that a key component of Model Classrooms is the students; “It is about increasing student learning and potential, I think that that is the key, that’s the most important thing, that is why we are doing it is to help our students to be more successful.” So as she indicates, “I think that the goal of the Model Classroom teacher is to help you to be a better teacher to help your students to learn better,” she notes that although she is getting the time, resources, and collaboration, the purpose of her work is to improve student achievement and to enhance their experience in the first grade.

Teacher D charms others so they see the wonders of the MC program and the many rewards it has to offer any teacher who is willing to take the risk. Teacher D reveals her moral purpose in the way she tries to engage others in her own passion for teaching.

We are working on [how to involve other teachers]... how can we reach out and help people? I think the best way to do it is, first you give them the time and say, "Is there something that you would like to work on? I would love to help you." But what I am trying to do now is go backwards and say, "Ok, here is a project that we are working on would you like to come with us? Why don't you join us, and let's see where this takes us." I have one teacher who said, "Sure!" She is all excited, no problem. I have another teacher that is like, "hmmm" ... I thought, "Ok, here I go again." But I am going to keep trying so I have at least given them the opportunity. I have tried to be real laid back in my approach, because I'm hyper so I tried to not scare anybody, they don't have the same enthusiasm that I do, at least externally, that is the thing about teaching it is my chance, teaching is where I am an extrovert – extreme, I would love it if everyone would share their ideas with me, I would give you everything I have.

Understanding Change

Teacher D did not offer evidence that she understands the change process, yet she noted that change is occurring and she must be open to new beliefs. Teacher D demonstrates her willingness to change by developing new teaching approaches and collaborating with others. She frequently spoke about working with other primary teachers and involving them in many of the standards-based projects. Collaboration, sharing time and resources, and leading by example are just a few ways that Teacher D deals with the MC program.

Some of these [other teachers] are not open to [new ideas], it is more seen as "look what we have to do now" and "I have to do it" not "I want to do it". That is a hard wall to get up against. But again I think the invitation, the opportunity, me sharing, me willing to do that, should be good enough [to get the involved]. I had a teacher that is a little stand-offish on everything because she's the type of woman, she's an excellent teacher, but she [is possessive about her teaching materials] she asked me, which is rare, "would I mind her borrowing something that I had done for her to share at the in-service" and I said, my line is "Oh my Gosh! Oh Yea!

Come on in, I will give you everything if you want it!” She’s said, “Are you sure?” Of course I gave her the kitchen sink and I would again and again.

She admits that she has a lot to learn about MC and the change process, “I still have a lot to do, even just understanding the whole program or understanding better ways to achieve my goals, how can I make it better, how can I get others to see that what we do it a good thing?” but she is realistic and notes that change is time consuming and some people need to be coaxed a little, “there are some [other teachers] that just don’t understand what [MC] is all about, I mean it may take a long time but I think if we just ... get some others to come on board, not everyone, but there are some that are just really ready for this kind of thing.”

Relationship Building

There are times when Teacher D may still need to learn that having the best ideas is not enough. She alluded to some of the animosity some colleagues felt towards her and Teacher B. “[Teacher B] and I are very passionate about teaching and about learning from each other and about supporting each other and that is a turn-off to people. I think that they don’t [understand it], it is uncomfortable for them to watch other people be so excited about what they do, if they don’t feel that same way maybe, maybe...I teach with a passion, I don’t know if they teach with a passion.”

Teacher D is clear about her desire to work with her colleagues and promote her ideas about standards-based learning yet struggles to accept those that don’t have the same aggressive agenda for learning and teaching. Helping students achieve through a standards-based curriculum and maximizing her time from MC are priorities for her. She

tried to explain to me that some teachers might have other priorities; Teacher D notes that she must look for ways to redefine resistance and address the concerns of naysayers.

I think sometimes [other teachers] would like their priorities to be different but they can't change like that. I think sometimes people do things because they have to and not because they want to and you can't change [that attitude] and I don't always understand it. I know that people have different priorities so I try to be accepting of that, they can't all [do what I do], not that they have to be me or have to do what I do, or have to do what Teacher B does, but I tend to gravitate towards those people [that are passionate about their teaching] and the other teachers are going to gravitate towards people that are more dependent on going home at 3:30.

Knowledge Creation and Sharing

Knowledge creation and sharing dominated a great amount of our interview time. Teacher D spoke openly about her frustration when teachers don't want to share their ideas and she discussed a variety of ways she works to build the bridge to working relationships.

Ooo, that frustrates me, people that won't share with teaching, I just don't get it, it just annoys me that people get so possessive about teaching and their materials or their ideas and my thing is that if it helps students - all students learn to be successful and it makes you a better teacher, why would you not want to share? It doesn't make sense.

Her desire to improve student performance and make a positive difference in the lives of her students is manifested in her need to create and share her discoveries with anyone who asks. "I offer things and I also do things that they [other classroom teachers] would not have the time or desire to do but they will still benefit from" and she is quick to point out the advantages of being given the resources of the MC team. Teacher D admits that the most substantial part of the MC program is the out of classroom time that the teachers are provided to find and develop more innovative teaching ideas. "Well by

having the time with the substitutes, we can go visit other classrooms or we can work on things ourselves, and it is almost like a self-tutorial a lot of times or it is visiting other districts or collaborating to gather new ideas.”

Like many of her MC teammates, Teacher D was reading professional journals, implementing best practices, and creating a standards-based classroom prior to joining the MC program. However, the program has given her the other dimensions of professional development that were not available to an isolated teacher. Collaboration, visiting other schools and teachers, and administrative support filled the gaps in Teacher D’s personal professional development program.

Its about time for research to find things that you can improve on, its time for self reflection... its great for teachers that have already been doing these kinds of activities to have some time because we would have taken the time from our own schedules anyway and this just says number one, you are involved, you have ownership, you have opportunity, you have some time, we are going to back you, you have a support system now by being in the Model Classrooms program with other people who are doing it and you can develop what you are interested in.

As a new member of the MC team, Teacher D is still learning how the MC program can impact her position as a teacher leader. She is committed to the belief that collaboration is necessary for all teachers; MC is just one method for improving the collaborative network throughout the district.

Time is a factor that teachers [want], they want time, and they will take the time that you give them, but they are not always willing to give, and I am generalizing because there are exceptions, but at least the people that I am working with, you have very few that will give the time that it takes to keep progressing forward as a teacher. It is important for students, [teachers] need to have that collaboration time because it is the only time that you really get a chance to brainstorm and to have somebody looking at your work, not critically - but to help you, to analyze it, to [help you] prepare and produce a better product, they would be missing a huge piece if they did not have that collaboration.

Teacher D discussed the variety of invitations she extended to a number of teachers encouraging them to join the collaborative network of teachers. While trying to build these relationships, she is acutely aware that her fervor for the program can be a burden. “I am trying to turn people on the Model Classrooms program without overwhelming them with my enthusiasm by at least inviting them.” Fortunately, the eagerness does not wane when her colleagues are slow to reply, “I am going to give them the invitation and if you want to do it, here it is! I am still waiting on the reply. I still have not gotten a reply from the one teacher but I am still going to go ahead with [the project], I am going to take the time and I am going to talk to her about it today again.”

Teacher D spent some time talking about “pats on the back” and the “external feedback” that the MC program can provide to teachers, although she admittedly still seeks additional “pats on the back”. This component is very important to her and she indicated that it was one of the more compelling reasons for getting other teacher involved in the program.

I think the Model Classrooms program really helps the teachers that always want to do more and this is a chance for somebody to finally give them that time that they have been looking for and not even just time but that, “you are doing a good job”, the external [feedback]. It gives you external gratification. That, “Yes, you are doing a good job, look, this is good, oh you can try this, good for you!”... Again it is intrinsic, it is intrinsic, but I think if you give teachers time and support and you give them the pats on the back those teachers could persuade more teachers to be involved.

Coherence Making

Teacher D expressed a number of times that the Model Classrooms experience gave her the chance to join a group of teachers that were interested in improving their skills and honing their craft as a professional classroom teacher, “the bond that our group

of teachers has here at our school is great. It is both friendship but its also work related so we can really help each other.”

Many of the MC teachers were hand-chosen or volunteered to become a member of this select group of ten individuals. The group was provided with the MC framework and given the resources to expand their horizons and work towards a standards-based curriculum. Teacher D was excited at the first group meeting of the “newbies” stating, “I feel like I have found that club, you know that club from high school where everyone is interested in the same thing!”

So as Teacher D continues to work on her personal professional development, there is greater time for reflection, research, and a small keyhole into the grand plan of bringing all teachers on board through, “Each one, Teach one”, not simply providing the resources to the superstars. The Model Classrooms program has started with the teachers that yearned for professional development and craved new and innovative teaching methods and then these teachers are missionaries of the cause to spread the good news of best practices, along the way building relationships and coherence making, hoping to positively effect the achievement of children.

There are 3 levels [of teachers]. There are superstars, there are core teachers, and there are mediocre teachers. You can encourage the mediocre teachers, you can give them ideas, but you can't change them. You try to get them to be at the middle ground but what you do is you keep encouraging. I think that what happens is that as people see that the superstar, the go-getter teachers, I think those core teachers gradually see ways to improve, I think you are going to pull some of those out of the middle and push them up to the top... Model Classrooms gives us the resources to do that.

Teacher D is just beginning to see the complexity of the change process and is she has not had many opportunities to build coherence among her colleagues. She is anxious

to work with her peers but finds herself drawn to those that can help her move her projects forward. In the short time that she has been a member of MC, she has not truly had an opportunity to seek out the apprehensive teacher or listen to the concerns of the naysayers. She is just beginning to see the impact of teacher leadership and her role as a MC teacher.

Once you get me I am very much a team player and I am on the team, if I'm in the club I am going to support you and as long as I have similar beliefs I am going to be there for the group, I am going to back you. I understand now that you can't just tell people what is going on. I guess that is kind of good. Teacher B and I, over the past year have really been enlightened as far as what roles people play and what part of the game you play, where you come in. I am only one piece in the game but now I can see more of how it fits together, all of these puzzle pieces. Before I was just doing my thing, teaching doing what I loved, doing it, but now I can see how it all kind of gels, it has been enlightening... and a little frustrating too.

Summary

Although Teacher D exhibits many of the qualities of a teacher leader as described in Fullan's Leadership Model, it is apparent that some characteristics are stronger than others. Her drive and moral purpose are intense and she truly believes that what she is doing is for all the children. She is openly excited about her projects and her research. She is thrilled to share her ideas with everyone and collaboration is key to her success. Teacher D struggles to understand why some people shy away from contributing their ideas or materials to others and she knows that her excitement can be overwhelming to some teachers, yet she never loses sight of the children and the purpose of her job. In time Teacher D will have opportunities to work with people less enthusiastic about academic standards or innovative teaching practices, her ability to listen to their concerns and meet their needs will be a true indicator of her teacher leadership abilities.

Conclusion

A review of Fullan's Framework for Leadership and the findings in this chapter reveal that the four teachers discussed in this case study display many of the characteristics noted in the framework, but to varying degrees. A deep moral purpose leads each teacher to use the MC program to benefit his or her own personal professional development needs. They are guided by their love for children and their deep personal commitment to their profession. Each teacher indicated the importance of change and growth, noting that growth cannot happen without change but a change does not necessarily indicate growth. The teachers often acknowledged that they did not see a change in the way they approached their classroom and their daily responsibilities, but that the MC experience had enhanced their performance and made them better teachers and instructional leaders. Such an acknowledgement indicates that the teachers may not truly understand the meaning of educational change, as the implementation of educational change often involves a noticeable change in teaching practice (Fullan, 2001b).

"Each one, Teach one" is the cornerstone of the further growth of MC. Through building relationships with colleagues beyond the MC team and sharing the results of their hard work, the teachers have dealt with a mixed reaction from colleagues. Some school district faculty members are pleased to accept their work as a new tool in their arsenal to deal with day-to-day classroom teaching, while others resent being pandered to by "Model Teachers". But each MC teacher deals with the criticism in a professional manner, often relying on the support of their Model Classroom teammates and Dr. King to remind them of the hope they have for the school district and the children they are responsible for teaching.

What is compelling about the stories of the four Model Classroom teachers is the different ways each has approached the same framework. Teacher A had a history of working with other professionals during her previous employment. This experience helped her to realize the importance of professional dialogue and interaction between teachers. She brought a lot of insight into the planning stages of the program by providing materials and ideas. Teacher B is dedicated to the first year of learning for young people, she sees her role as a teacher and continues to be in awe of her Model Classroom teammates and the way they individually approach the program. She is passionate about her beliefs and willing to stand up for what is right for children. She believes that her love for children drives her need to improve every aspect of her professional persona. Teacher C is still learning, searching for ways to best use the Model Classroom time. He admittedly has much to discover about implementing MC and he is flattered that the administration is willing to put their confidence in a teacher that “is on the backend of his career.” Although in the classroom for more than 30 years, Teacher C is not willing to be complacent or accept that he knows it all, he continues to volunteer for numerous committees and consistently seeks ways to improve learning for his students. It remains to be seen how MC will affect his ability to continue to serve his school district on so many levels. Teacher D, although also new to MC, is in the front-end of her career and is grateful for the huge opportunity that MC has afforded her. She is still searching for the meaning of MC, but she knows that there is important work to be done and her passion drives her to find ways to make a standards-based curriculum the focal point of the district through modeling best practices in her own classroom. She gets so excited when someone asks her for help, she can barely contain her enthusiasm. When a teacher

expresses an interest in a project, Teacher D often seeks the assistance and collaboration of a colleague to make the project meaningful to a larger context of people.

MC is about supporting professional development and respect for highly motivated teachers. It is a way to give the teachers the time, resources, and support to investigate what interests them most and apply it directly to their own classroom. The teachers leaders in this study believe that MC acknowledges their collegiality and recognizes their ability to act as a professional without monitoring their time or work. Dr. King has stated that he has great trust in these individuals and he is proud to discuss the projects that have often exceeded his expectations.

Chapter 5

Discussion of Findings

Introduction

Teacher leadership that emerges from within the classroom is a concept in its early stages of development. The literature suggests that teacher leadership is still predominantly controlled by school administrators and professionals with non-teaching responsibilities (Silva, Gimbert, & Nolan, 2000, p. 779). As the research in the field widens, teacher leadership is becoming increasingly present and is contributing to improved school health and enhanced student performance (Richardson, 2003). The teachers involved in this research indicated that being a member of the Model Classrooms team and a teacher leader was secondary to their classroom responsibilities. They view themselves as resources for other teachers and model best practices to lead from the classroom, “how people make sense of leadership can tell us a great deal about how they regard themselves, their society, and the future” (Duke in Lashway, 1996, p. 17).

This chapter will present the cross-case analysis findings of each component in Fullan’s Leadership Model. Analysis of the interviews and classroom observations with each of the teachers revealed common themes. That is, although each teacher approached the MC program in his or her own way, there were common concerns and beliefs that often dominated a period of our discussions. Each teacher expressed his or her ideas, philosophies, and leadership values through words and actions. These themes were compared across cases to determine what it means for the four classroom teachers to be a teacher leader in the MC program. Analysis of the interviews revealed that while the

research participants were not directly questioned about the five components of Fullan’s model there was evidence of each component in their responses (Table 2). Although Table 2 indicates the number of times a teacher referred to a component in the Fullan Leadership Model, the numbers do not represent the strength of those comments.

Table 2:

The frequency of teacher references to the components of Fullan’s Leadership Model

	Teacher A	Teacher B	Teacher C	Teacher D
Moral purpose	28	18	23	32
Understanding change	25	26	13	26
Relationship building	29	26	13	25
Knowledge creation and sharing	19	17	10	33
Coherence making	32	33	10	29

Findings of Moral Purpose

The four MC teachers value their roles as leaders and mentors, yet were quick to point out that their purpose for being in school everyday is for the students. This is consistent with what Fullan states about the characteristics of moral purpose. Each of the four teachers have compelling stories about students that have touched their heart, the hours that they spent working late at night and on weekends, and the hundreds of dollars from their own pocket they spent just to improve a lesson or project or to meet the needs of just one student. Teacher B told a story of buying a former student a winter coat when she needed one and Teacher C remembered a time when he needed supplies and he just

went out and bought them. These are traits that cannot be taught or developed; there is a sense of morality and enthusiasm that drives these teachers to an unattainable perfection.

As presented in Chapter 2, teachers with moral purpose work to make a positive difference in the lives of children through leading with a sense of direction and purpose. The teachers in this study revealed their ongoing commitment to doing what is right for their students. Every teacher noted that they didn't have just one 'great teaching moment' but that their lives were filled everyday with the joys of teaching and that no one day was any more powerful than the last. Although the teachers did not state their philosophy of education during the interviews, it became apparent through data analysis that each one was living a personal philosophy every day and trying to spread their beliefs and ideas about what is best for children to anyone that would listen. Teacher D noted, "It [Model Classrooms] is about increasing student learning and potential, I think that that is the key, that's the most important thing, that is why we are doing it, to help our students to be more successful." Teacher B noted, "your philosophy is who you are as a teacher; it is the teacher you become." She told a story about how she worked with a student to build ownership in moral standard that was more appropriate for the classroom and build upon her idea of moral behavior.

It was a very gratifying experience to see that you can shape a person's behavior by recognizing what is very good about them and pointing that out...if I had tried to change him and say, "I expect you to do something [such as use courteous and kind words in this classroom], that is an expectation in this classroom." My expectations would not have changed him, but by nurturing the little bitty pieces of what I am seeing and working with him, then he changed, he really made amazing changes in his behavior.

"Your philosophy of education is based on your philosophy of life. What you believe about yourself, about others, and about life infuses and determines your

philosophy of education” (Morrison, 2001, p. 13). Educators typically share their beliefs through their behaviors, such as discussions with other teachers, curriculum considerations, and grading practices (Witcher, Sewall, & Arnold, 2001). MC teachers regularly participate in activities that represent their educational philosophy striving to improve how they live and work. Fullan (2001a) states that this is “a moral purpose of the highest order” (p.14). Reinoso (2002) suggests that it is important to have a morally guided mission to use as a tangible guide for students and teachers as they make educational decisions in and out of the classroom (Reinoso, 2002). Thus, the findings suggest that moral purpose is directly related to one’s educational philosophy and if a teacher is guided by a strong educational philosophy, he or she is also guided by a moral commitment to do what is right for student. This notion is further supported by Fullan (2002) when he states, “Moral purpose is social responsibility to others and the environment” (Fullan, 2002, p. 16).

Teacher A describes an event that exemplifies her philosophy about positively influencing students,

I have had numerous kids who nobody ever thought would do well, I remember very clearly the one kid, he was doing very well for me and I called his house and nobody else was home, and said, “I just called [the student’s name] to say that you’ve been doing a really great job” and he goes, “No teacher ever called my house before” I thought he was crying on the other side of the phone, it’s that kind of thing that just validates that I’m doing the right thing. Those are the moments that I love.

When Teacher D was asked about her greatest teaching moment, her response was passionate, “it’s a powerful thing, teaching is, because what those children start with and they leave with and the impact that you make in helping them to move forward is intense, it’s a daily thing, not one thing, no, every day, every day is monumental.”

During discussions with each of the four teachers in this study it was not difficult to interpret their progressive philosophies, “Traditionalists espouse that “what has been done in the past has been done well; therefore, we should hold on to it in the future”; progressives implore us to “look critically at past actions and practices to see what now can be done differently to make learning more satisfying and effective” (Morrison, 2001, p. 14). Progressive thinkers are not about seeking power but about teaching and critically analyzing their performance, their influence on their students, and the impact on their district. Teacher D provides a clear picture of her progressive philosophy,

We [MC teachers] are always the people that want to do more, its not because we want to be noticed, it is internal, this drive we have. We want to be the best that we can be and along the way, while we are trying to be the best that we can be, to help these kids to do and be even more successful than they already are.

“Howard Gardner says of great leaders that they embody the message they advocate; they teach, not just through words but through actions” (Lashway, 1996, p. 118). The findings from the present study are consistent with this notion and suggest that each teacher is living a passionate educational philosophy that is grounded in best practices and reflective thinking; one of the rewards of teaching is fulfilling personal goals that are governed by one’s most cherished beliefs about what it means to teach and learn (Witcher et al., 2001). Teacher exchanges become stronger and provide a deeper sense of meaning when they are driven by moral commitment (Fullan, 2001b). Fullan (2001a) states, “Moral purpose is about both ends and means. In education, an important end is to make a difference in the lives of students. But the means of getting to that end are also crucial” (Fullan, 2001a, p.13). The four teachers in this investigation exemplify this moral purpose in their words and actions, they are consistent in their collective belief that what they are doing is for the benefit of students not for personal gain or special

recognition. They are driven by the hope that by improving their own professional practice they are doing what is best for the overall achievement of the students whose lives they touch daily. They believe that “leaders are not born; they are nurtured” (Fullan, 2001b, p. 131) and see the MC program as the nurturing they need to be successful and live within the scope of their moral purpose.

Fullan (2001a) indicates, “Moral purpose is profoundly built into the five components of leadership as they are carried out in practice” (Fullan, 2001a, p.15). Throughout the interviews with each teacher the conversations consistently turned to the students as the reason why they volunteered to be a part of the MC program and the deep convictions they had for doing right by their pupils. These findings support Fullan’s assertion that “you don’t have to plan to be moral in your pursuit, it will come naturally” (p.15).

Findings of Understanding Change

As presented in Chapter 2, Fullan provides a six points to help us understand the change process including understanding innovation and a desire to acquire new skills. Consistent with these characteristics of understanding change, four of the teachers have a sense of recent research and update their classroom strategies and ideas based on a combination of the research in the field and their own experiences in the classroom. They realize that no one willingly follows someone they distrust, even if that person proposes good ideas or ones they agree with (Evans, 1996, p. 126). Yet even those that are willing to listen to new ideas may fear that their inadequacies will be discovered by the principal or other teachers, in some cases causing loss of power or respect (Sarason, 1990). Yet even with a desire to change their teaching approaches, the teachers often revealed a

cursory understanding of what Fullan indicates is change, and lack true depth of understanding of the change process.

Teacher A realized that teachers were more willing to listen and participate if the ideas came from a colleague. She noted that engaging in dialogue with teachers and working to change the culture of hesitation was more effective if she modeled the strategies and worked to help implement them in another teacher's classroom. Yet even with hard work and a sense of doing the right things for students, she noted that there are people that just won't change, "no matter who talked to them, they aren't really interested anyway." One may speculate that with a deeper understanding of the change process, Teacher A might be better equipped to understand why some people won't change and the strategies that she could implement to help foster a greater acceptance of quality reform programs such as MC.

Fullan (2002) also suggests that the goal of school change is improvement district-wide, not in one school or classroom. Teacher B talked about systemic change and humbly admitted that she had little impact on the system but had made a noticeable change in a few classrooms within the district. She recognizes that she has a part to play in "transforming the culture - changing the way things are done around here (Fullan, 2001a, p. 44), although she doesn't believe it is her role to implement systemic change.

Understanding change is about being innovative and creating a plan. It is important to strategize all aspects of the change process, including the name of the project. The name Model Classrooms comes with its own baggage. Administrators and other teachers often refer to team members as "Model Teachers". Teacher A notes, "I try very hard to never come across like I know more than you and besides I don't even like

the title “Model Classrooms” because I don’t think that that’s a very comfortable title that invites other people to engage in being a part of this.” Her statement is echoed by the other MC teachers, who told of times they heard colleagues say, “oh, that title!” followed by “Who do they think they are?”

Miller (1994) notes, “The word ‘change’ evokes predominately negative responses from most people and therefore is a difficult concept to ‘sell’” (Miller, 1994, p. 147). Several of the teachers indicated during the interviews that the name “Model Classrooms” can be interpreted by ‘outsiders’ as a group of teachers who believe they are *the model* and consider themselves to be better than the average teacher. When asked, the Model Classroom teachers would indicate that they believe an exemplary teacher is inquisitive, reflective, collaborative, innovative, creative, and a teacher leader. However, each believes that the Model Classroom teacher is willing to take risks, model best practices, and has a passion for learning that is passed onto his or her students. The Model Classroom teacher makes mistakes, has frustrating days, and knows that there is much to learn.

Several of the teacher leaders have spoken about the teachers who don’t understand the core values of the Model Classrooms program, these teachers often interpret the name to mean that the teachers involved believe they are ‘the model’, suggesting that they are better than teachers not chosen to be a part of the exclusive group. Teacher A stated, “Maybe because of the name, I think some people didn’t necessarily receive it as positive a way as they possibly could have...at times I think a different name would have been nice, we kind of batted that around a little bit before. Maybe something that didn’t convey this elitism.”

Some of the teachers in the district sarcastically commented about the time off these Model teachers are given with their MC days, Dr. King addressed the issue in the November meeting by telling the teachers that they don't need to justify the program to others when they get a day off, "How many days to you have to put with that to get ready for it? ... This is a legitimate program." By providing time to the teachers to review and implement best practices he was supporting Fullan's belief, "Leading in a culture of change means creating a culture of change. It does not mean adopting innovations, one after another; it does mean producing the capacity to seek, critically assess, and selectively incorporate new ideas and practices" (Fullan, 2001a, p. 44).

The findings of this study suggest that the name Model Classrooms has a negative connotation that could make teachers feel isolated and defensive. Furthermore, other teachers who may be interested in the program may shy away from the many possibilities that such opportunities can provide simply because they do not want to be labeled with the Model Classrooms name. The program, by its very nature, is built on trust and cohesiveness, yet when the ten Model Classroom teachers were singled out and praised by Dr. King in a faculty meeting at the start of the school year it reinforced the belief that Model Classrooms is an elite group of teachers.

The current statement of purpose was published in the Model Classrooms guide written by Dr. King, "To provide an environment in which teachers facilitate standards-based professional growth, both individually and among colleagues, thereby building local capacity" (Model Classrooms Handbook, 2002, Introduction). In an effort to clarify the role of MC, Teacher B and others are working on the core propositions hoping that it will provide more clarity and help others get involved by understanding the purpose of

the Model Classrooms mission. The core propositions can help others see the long-term vision of the program so as new members join the message is not lost in the excitement. Consistent with the innovation process, The Model Classrooms framework can provide a tool to help transform the current beliefs (Fullan, 2001b) and work towards implementing more innovative teaching strategies throughout the school district.

Findings of Relationship Building

Fullan tells us that it is the relationships formed between the people involved in the reform effort that will have the most impact on the role of the leader. The MC program was designed to allow teachers the time to work independently or in collaboration with others to discover the purpose of standards-based education and explore their personal needs for professional development. There is an expectation that one of the outcomes of the program will enable the work to be shared and the group to be expanded to include teachers who may have different needs than the original membership. Now in its third year, the findings reveal that a forced sense of collegiality and collaboration is occurring with the addition of five new members. The five new members were hand-selected for a variety of reasons and not self-selected as the first group of five teachers. Therefore, the new members may have different expectations of how they would like to use the MC time with which they have been provided. Teacher C and Teacher D are very comfortable working with the two original MC team members, but they express some concern about the expectation that they bring in new collaborators. Not only are they still exploring their roles as teacher leaders but they also recognize that finding the time to collaborate with others, who may not always be anxious participants,

is difficult and burdensome, thus forcing the collaboration into small pockets of stolen time.

Hargreaves (1994) suggests that, “in conditions of *contrived collegiality*, teachers’ collaborative working relationships are not spontaneous, voluntary, development-oriented, fixed in time and space, and predictable. The comparative, combined features of contrived collegiality are administratively regulated, compulsory, implementation-oriented, fixed in time and space, and predictable” (p. 195-96, emphasis in the original). This research indicates that the MC program is currently collaborative and collegial but could easily become forced and contrived over time if specific attention is not paid to the needs and expectations of all of the team members.

Model Classroom days were originally implemented to allow teachers time out of the classroom to work alone or in collaboration. The introduction of new Model Classroom teachers and no new substitutes has greatly limited the time available for peer interaction, forcing teachers to become more creative with their schedules thus making collaboration less desirable. Teacher B noted, “There are some pitfalls like the substitute thing, it can be a little bit crazy sometimes, there is never enough time.” Teacher B realizes that in her case, collaboration only happens when ideas are first introduced, she then works on the projects individually and brings back finished ideas and/or products when time allows. If collaboration is sharing information, decision making, working together, and interdependence (Barott & Raybould, 1998; Hargreaves, 1994), then in order to truly collaborate on a project MC teachers are forced to give up personal planning time and work after school just as they had before becoming members of the MC team.

The substitute teachers play a key role in the ability for the teacher leaders to gather and collaborate on projects. As new members join the team, the need remains for reliable out of classroom time. Currently the four teachers involved in this research are working together in pairs. The MC plan is for all the teacher leaders to eventually recruit a colleague with whom to collaborate on a new project. As new teachers enter the program to work on projects they must find ways to work together either by using common planning times, 'borrowing' a substitute from another team, or finding other traditional methods of meeting such as using time during lunch, before school, or after school. The teachers must make a choice between personal professional development to meet their own goals or forced collaboration with others during less desirable meeting times. If no common times can be found then collaboration and collegiality are no longer spontaneous, voluntary, or desirable. It will be a challenge for those involved to continue to keep the program fresh and unforced as new members enter into the leadership team each year.

Each teacher commented about the mixed blessings of having out of class time every two weeks. Most of the teachers agreed that a having full day away from their students twice monthly was too much time away from teaching, they were more comfortable with taking one MC day a month. Yet often they spent a portion of that day teaching in order to allow a teammate the opportunity to collaborate with another colleague, attend a meeting, or borrow their assigned substitute teacher in some manner. Ultimately this limits the time available for personal professional development and teacher collaboration. Nevertheless, as is consistent with the characteristics of relationship building, the MC teachers have effective problem-solving techniques and try

to facilitate purposeful dialogue with those who seek help or advice with a standards-based project. The planned out of classroom time is a major component that makes Model Classrooms special for the teacher leaders, if that time is compromised the teachers will continue to work on their projects on their own time just as they had previously. Thus, the program no longer grows and the culture of independence will remain the same.

Findings of Knowledge Creation and Sharing

Fullan (2001a) suggests that good relationships are a crucial for effective knowledge creation and sharing. As previously discussed, the teachers have strong relationships with other members of the MC team and they are working to include other teachers. They exude energy, enthusiasm, and hope when they are in the classroom, in a MC meeting, at a parents meeting, and during our interviews. The observations revealed a willingness to share information, collaborate with any teacher who showed an interest (and even a few who did not show an interest), and talk at length about the strengths of MC. All four teachers were recruited to present during a district-wide in-service day. Teacher A and Teacher C shared their Mean, Median, and Mode Unit, Teacher B and Teacher D shared their re-written academic standards and they presented HEROES² at a regional conference in the spring 2003. A shining moment for Teacher D was when she was invited to present her standards-based first grade report card to the School Board.

² Helping Everyone Reach Our Educational Standards (HEROES) was created to help parents understand the importance of academic standards and how the daily curriculum is built around the standards (see p. 111).

Her presentation was well received and once again validated the extraordinary work that is being accomplished as a result of the time and support of the MC program.

However, as MC teachers are willing to share the information they have gathered and the projects they have created, they are aware that colleagues may feel condemned if they aren't doing the things the MC teachers were doing, they may find it condescending, irritating, and not in the least inspirational (Wasley, 1994). Although each of the four teachers indicated that they knew that there are those unwilling to participate in programs like MC, none of them could really articulate why teachers may be hesitant to join. As an example of the tenacity shown by these teacher leaders, Teacher D keeps trying to involve her colleagues and keeps working regardless of what others think, even when doors are shut in her face. The teacher leaders understand that it takes commitment to share knowledge and that collaboration is a key component of creating and sharing information. These teachers are examples of Fullan's belief that planning and learning must be done in collaboration with others, not in isolation (Fullan, 2001a).

The MC teachers have demonstrated that they understand that influencing others to participate and share information requires skills such as identifying the needs of others, actively listening to colleagues, noting that others may be uncomfortable with change, willingly accepting alternative suggestions and understanding the value and role of knowledge creation (Fullan, 2001a; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 1996). Teacher A confirmed her ability to work with teachers with varying needs and expectations. She explains that working with Teacher C "was working on the unit and collaborating on everything that was involved in developing that" and working with a sixth grade teacher "was just giving her time to get out of her classroom and get her some references." Both of the

relationships provide her with a professional development experience “I get something out of either way.” The key was to listen to her colleagues and find ways to meet individual needs and model best practices.

As the new school year began there were no new teachers showing an interest in Model Classrooms, yet it remains important for the teacher leaders to seek opportunities for themselves and others. “Fellow teachers hold the power to unlock one another’s leadership potential and to foster its growth” (Barth, 2001, p. 449). The MC program provides a collaborative environment for teachers by granting the time and resources required to promote teacher interaction. Zepeda (1999) indicates that professional development is ongoing, collaborative, researched-based, and supported with adequate resources (Zepeda, 1999). By providing numerous opportunities for knowledge creation and sharing, the MC program meets the four characteristics of a strong professional development program. The Professional Preparation and Development Committee of Vermont (2001) published a personalized professional development program indicating, “A well-designed individualized professional development plan should do four basic things. It will assess your current interests, knowledge, and skills; identify specific areas for growth; develop strategies and identify resources to address areas for growth; and document professional growth” (2001).

“Since no two people are identical in their interests, skills, knowledge, or working situation, no single plan for professional development will work for everyone” (2001). This is true about the MC program. Although the teachers all believe that knowledge creation and sharing is a key component of a professional development plan, each has defined what the MC program can do for him or her, thus individualizing a

common framework. Zepeda (1999) suggests that the “schools that succeed are schools in which every participant is a learner” (p.14).

The motto “Each one, Teach one” is about including every teacher in an individualized program of knowledge creation and sharing using the teacher leaders of the Model Classrooms program as role models to lead the way to personalized professional growth. However, the motto that is intended to motivate the teacher leaders to share with others may be alienating colleagues. “Each one, Teach one” could imply that those already in the MC program are more qualified to teach others, thus creating a hierarchy of model teachers and others that represent less than the ‘model’.

Findings of Coherence Making

“It isn’t that people resist change as much as they don’t know how to cope with it” (Fullan, 2001b). Humans are creatures of habit; they seek patterns and look for causes and meanings in all events (Evans, 1996). Teacher leaders can act as role models to help others understand new patterns and assimilate them into their daily routines and work toward cultures of collegiality, openness, and professional communities of trust. When given the opportunity and support, teachers are coming out of their classrooms and are willing to work in teams to deal with issues of professional development, curriculum, and instruction (Lieberman & Miller, 1999). The MC Teachers have a shared sense of commitment and motivation that is consistent with the coherence making characteristic of Fullan’s Leadership Model.

Teacher leadership is about coherence making, Bolman and Deal (1994) state, “what distinguishes leadership from other kinds of relationships is that, when it works well, it enables people to collaborate in the service of shared visions, values, and

missions” (Bolman & Deal, 1994, p. 90). There are always teachers willing to pitch in, take risks, and challenge themselves and others to be better professionals. There are other groups of teachers who are more cautious about change and they are not convinced that what they are currently doing should be changed. Both views should be respected and acknowledged as relevant to change. Programs such as MC provide an environment for teachers to move slowly in the planning and learning process and invite others to join rather than run the risk of losing the value of the program (Fullan, 2001a). The participants in this study routinely make decisions about change in their own classrooms and schools and they are willing to accept the consequences of their decisions, Fullan suggests that this kind of leadership creates greater coherence among all teachers.

Successful organizations have leaders at all levels; MC is a program that provides leadership in a small Pennsylvania school district by working from within the classroom. Some of the teachers in this study are more high profile leaders than others, yet they all are willing to work around the criticism of others to meet their commitment to children. Teacher A is very subtle about her leadership abilities. She appreciates the individuality of the MC program and she is willing to allow teachers to define what they are personally interested in. She sees the value in the flexibility of the program that allows elementary and secondary teachers to use the program as a framework for professional development. She uses the MC time to facilitate collaboration among all teachers.

Teacher B is very passionate about her beliefs, yet at this time she is on a personal journey of self-reflection initiated by her participation in the National Board Teacher Certification (NBTC) program. Through the past two years Teacher B has completed many worthwhile projects in collaboration with other kindergarten teachers and Teacher

D. Teacher D has now taken the lead role in moving new projects forward while Teacher B takes her personal journey. Teacher B used MC to lead others and now she is using it to pursue personal professional development opportunities. Teacher B notes, “It’s all a journey.” She is hopeful that the NBTC program can provide her with greater insight into her own journey so that she can achieve a greater sense of coherence among her peers and reign in the chaos that often accompanies change (Fullan, 2001a).

Teacher C is still learning what teacher leadership means to him. He is still exploring best practices and has not had time to knock on the doors of colleagues and share his vast classroom experiences. He shared his understanding of what the MC program is about and revealed his subtle leadership capacity by noting, “we can’t do things like they have been done forever...I think leadership is about getting the person, once they close the door, to try things to bring about more success in the classroom.” His form of coherence making is accomplished by leading by example, respecting his peers, and listening to many opinions about proposed changes. This style is consistent with Fullan’s suggestion of working to establish innovative conditions and processes, yet it is his understated leadership that makes his methods appealing to others who are skeptical of aggressive changes in teaching style and practice.

Teacher D is aware of the criticism of colleagues, yet she continues to move forward with her own projects and those she has worked on with Teacher B in the past. The emphasis on the collaborative aspects of teacher leadership is both a benefit and a challenge. Teacher collaboration is a first step in teacher leadership, yet to engage in such collaboration and collegial interactions with their peers, teacher leaders give up their ability to close their classroom door to others (McCay, Flora, & Hamilton, 2001). After

11 years in the classroom, Teacher D is less concerned with what her peers think about her and more concerned with student achievement and professional development. Her leadership style is much more obvious than some of her MC counterparts and her passion for innovative teaching strategies is apparent in her words and actions. She is anxious to include others in what she believes to be exciting new opportunities for teachers and struggles with the realization that some teachers are not interested in school reform and innovation. She is vocal about her commitment to MC and the school district. As a new member of MC, Teacher D has not had the opportunity to collaborate with a teacher who is a little less excited about teaching innovations. Although she indicated that she understands the intricacies of change, it remains to be seen if she truly appreciates the complexity of coherence making and is willing to compromise her enthusiasm in an effort to promote unity.

Wasley (1991) views the role of teacher leaders as inspiring colleagues to change, to do things they would not ordinarily do without the influence of leaders (Wasley, 1991). Within the Model Classrooms program there is a noticeable absence of building principal input. According to Dr. King, the three building principals are aware of the MC program and which teachers in their respective buildings are involved. They are notified to the dates of MC days and the name of the substitutes hired to cover the classes. The middle school teachers praised the relationship they had with their building principal, although she did not directly or indirectly follow-up with the teachers about the impact of the program on their classroom or their students. The two elementary teachers are going through a change in building leadership and are experiencing growing pains. They see the new principal as a building manager who has limited contact with the teachers. However,

to their benefit, Dr. King's office is located in the elementary school in which they teach. This proximity has allowed Teacher B and Teacher D to form unique professional relationship with Dr. King that provides the leadership and support that they do not get from the building principal. But this relationship also tends to invite undeserved criticism from colleagues because of the perceived 'special status as Dr. King's favorites'.

Coherence making is about balancing chaos and order; such that what is good about chaos is used constructively (Fullan, 2001a). A successful teacher leader is able to use the complexities of the system for everyone's benefit by performing the tenuous balancing act everyday. In an effective teacher-centered leadership program, as with coherence making, it is necessary to respect the opinions of all team members, try to understand conflicting points of view, and maintained continued administrative support (Lieberman & Miller, 1999).

Summary of Findings

Moral purpose does not stand alone but weaves itself through every characteristic of Fullan's Leadership Model, the four MC teachers in this study consistently talked about their drive to do what is right for children and what is best for the school district. Without energy, enthusiasm, and hopefulness, programs such as MC cannot happen, they simply become burdensome and end as another casualty in the school reform efforts. "Energetic-enthusiastic-hopeful leaders "cause" greater moral purpose in themselves, bury themselves in change, naturally build relationships and knowledge, and seek coherence to consolidate moral purpose"(Fullan, 2001a, p. 7).

Consistent with Fullan's Leadership Model, the Model Classrooms program is producing teacher leaders. All four teachers in this case study exhibited the five

characteristics of the Leadership Model, although some to varying degrees, and they were encircled in a vibrant example of the “energy-enthusiasm-hopefulness constellation” (Fullan, 2001a). The veteran MC teachers (Teacher A and Teacher B) were at a different stage of the change process while the “newbies” (Teacher C and Teacher D) were still exploring the vast opportunities that MC could provide to them and their colleagues.

“Leadership...is not about mobilizing others to solve problems we already know how to solve, but to help them confront problems that have never yet been successfully addressed” (Fullan, 2001a, p. 3). Each MC teacher involved in this case study was searching for solutions to problems that some of their isolated colleagues didn’t even know existed. This, according to Fullan, is what leadership is about.

Need for Further Research

The Model Classrooms program is an initiative rich with research possibilities. However, further inquiry is needed in areas that were beyond the scope of this study. Specifically, the impact of the program on the other members of the team, especially those members that were skeptical of the program in the beginning, should be investigated. It could also be noteworthy to investigate how each of the new members grow and change as they educate themselves and determine their personal definition of a standards-based classroom. The next stage for these new members will be to invite other teachers to join the collaboration process, thus extending their leadership role and becoming more vulnerable to criticism and praise. A set of follow-up interviews at the end of the school year could provide data to determine if the teachers have further developed strengths in any of the five leadership characteristics. Further study should

explore the growth of the “newbies” as they gain a better understanding of the program and begin to reach their own conclusions about its potential.

The findings from this investigation suggest that the name of the program carries a great deal of negative baggage. The literature indicates that some programs and institutions have changed their names to better define their services or deal with negative publicity, but there is little research on the impact of the name of the initiative and the eventual success or failure of the initiative. Hoyt (2000) refers to several vocational programs that underwent name changes to better describe their purpose for the new technical generation. They changed their names to better reflect the fact that today's work environment, labor market, and employment opportunities are very different from those that existed in the early 1900s when vocational education first became popular (Hoyt, 2000). In 2000, Beaver College in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania voted to change its name to Arcadia University in an effort to shed an image and a name that "too often elicits ridicule in the form of derogatory remarks pertaining to the rodent, the TV show 'Leave It to Beaver' and the vulgar reference to the female anatomy" (The Associated Press, 2000). At this time, no follow-up studies have been conducted to determine the effects of the name changes in either instance. The data in this research shows that the name Model Classrooms is not perceived by the participants to be the best choice for an inclusive group of change agents. Further research should be conducted to determine if a name change would help the group's image and specifically what the new name should be.

Through the MC program, it is expected that implementing a standards-based curriculum in the classroom and providing teachers with the resources necessary to learn, plan, and implement the programs, will result in a greater impact on student achievement.

Further research must be done to see if such initiatives influence student achievement. The MC teachers believe that there is a noticeable improvement in their students' performance but it is hard to attribute the enhancement in achievement to any one factor. Moreover, the MC program has not been implemented long enough to make a genuine quantitative appraisal of its effects on test scores and student achievement.

Model Classrooms provides the time for reflection and practice to teachers, further investigation into the characteristics of the program are necessary in order to evaluate the ultimate success of MC. It is not known if components such as providing out-of-class time for preparation, individualizing the program, offering collaborative opportunities, and the absence of principal participation are the most effective methods for building a successful program to build teacher leadership and professional development. Additional research that focuses on the components of the program is necessary to gain a better understanding of the interplay of each and how they contribute to the overall effectiveness of MC.

Autonomy is a norm that defines the teaching profession (Johnson Jr., 1998) and the MC program, while encouraging collaboration, supports autonomy. Further research can inquire as to whether teachers find the time it takes to set up a collaborative meeting is better spent working independently and then later sharing the results. Also, if real learning traditionally takes place for teachers on an individual basis as they implement innovations in the classroom (Peterson et al., 1996), will this realization by the MC teachers continue to impede further need or desire for collaboration if the process is difficult? If collaboration is a key component of MC, then the issue must be addressed before additional teachers are added to the team.

The schools in this small district are all in proximity to each other. Currently, the teacher leaders are working with other teachers in their own schools. This has happened as a result of convenience and familiarity. With teachers meeting during planning periods and lunch times, it was not difficult to meet in the same school, but it may have proven to be an imposition to drive a few miles to another school when schedules did not easily align. Further research could investigate the level of innovation that occurs when two middle school teachers work together versus a middle school teacher working with an elementary or high school teacher. Such partnerships may help to dispel myths about the responsibilities of each teacher as well as foster greater creativity and excitement for innovative teaching strategies.

Finally, a case study about Dr. King as a school leader and teacher mentor could provide great insight into the establishment of the Model Classrooms program and his vision for its continuing success. The research could investigate the issues that a school administrator encounters when dealing with colleagues, classroom teachers, the school board, and the community. He is obviously proud of the program yet little is known about what struggles he faces to continue the energy, enthusiasm, and hopefulness as well as the necessary support and funding from the school district.

The Model Classrooms program can provide many rich research opportunities by investigating any of the MC teachers, the other teachers in the district, the school administration, and the effects of the program on the students, a particular school, or the entire district. As the literature on classroom teacher leadership continues to deepen many questions will be answered and many more will be raised. It is hoped that studies

such as this one will open a greater dialogue between researchers to help improve the conditions for schoolteachers and positively impact student achievement.

Conclusion

The purpose of this research was to investigate what it means for four classroom teachers to be a teacher leader in the MC program using Fullan's Leadership model as the theoretical framework. It was discovered that the respect for individual professionalism and the support in the form of resources and administrative praise made the experience one that would be difficult to package and put on a shelf. The program requires administrative support, hands-off management, trust and respect, and most importantly it must be teacher driven. As one project was wrapping up, each of the teachers could recite a long list of projects they hoped to find the time and/or funding to complete.

Maintaining their ongoing moral purpose by keeping one eye on the students in their classroom while keeping the other eye on their own goals for professional growth, they didn't have to search for new ideas; concepts continue to emerge from current projects. With a growing wish list and time becoming a more precious commodity, it takes discipline for the teachers to assess their current needs in relationship to the resources available and the likelihood that the project can be completed. Dr. King expects that each teacher leader will work with a colleague, thus requiring greater patience in putting personal interests behind those of their new collaborator. Yet, that is what makes the program distinctive, teachers are willing to put their own interests aside and ultimately they find serendipity as they work with others.

It is the conclusion of this research that the current implementation of the Model Classrooms framework is providing a very different experience for each of the teachers.

While these experiences differ, each teacher in this study consistently discussed and exhibited all of the characteristics in Fullan's Leadership Model, although to varying degrees. Therefore, Model Classrooms is creating teacher leaders through individualized professional development. Each teacher had to discover what the program could do for him or her, experiment with a number of strategies, and deeply reflect on his or her own strengths, weaknesses and needs. It is a rare in public education that teachers are given such autonomy within an administrative directive; so often teacher leaders are burdened with additional responsibilities and a greater form of accountability that often includes paperwork, reports, and micro-management (Cohen, 2002; Fullan, 2001b). The MC program supports Sergiovanni's (1996) view of teacher leadership,

We could just as well assume that teachers themselves must be the instructional leaders in schools, and we could just as well assume that they have a responsibility to become self-managing. This would mean accepting more responsibility...for looking after their own continual professional growth and for meeting their commitments to school purposes (Sergiovanni, 1996, p. 7).

In this case study, Dr. King gave the teachers the MC framework and allowed them to define each component, it required teachers to change their thinking and teaching strategies and not simply plug the framework into what they were already doing. This type of personal reflection and experimentation is a key factor in the current success of the ongoing professional development program in this district. Future research can determine if the MC program is achieving the intended goals.

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Appendix A

Interview Protocol

Interview #1: Background Questions

- Tell me about yourself.
 - Background experience and education
 - What grade/subject you teach
 - Tell me about your family (or those closest to you) – have they noticed any changes in you since you started Model Classrooms?
 - Tell me about your ‘past lives’ before you became a teacher
 - Feelings and beliefs about teaching, the way children learn and the role of the public school
- What has been the one most memorable teaching ‘moment’ for you?
- What is your greatest success story?
- Why did you get involved in Model Classrooms? Invited or volunteered?
- Was it a good decision? Why/why not?
- Did you set personal/professional goals, what were they, have you reached them?

Interview #2: The Model Classrooms Program

- How long did you plan for Model Classrooms? Take me through that process.
- When was it really ‘implemented’
 - How do you believe that happened – when did the ‘planning’ phase stop and the ‘implementation’ phase start?
- Tell me about some of the projects you have worked on under Model Classrooms
 - What process did you go through to arrive at that choice? Were there other suggestions? What finally helped you decided?
 - What references have you used for the process?
- If you could change anything about the planning and implementation process, what would it be?
- Do you believe you were provided with the support and resources you needed to do the best job possible? Would you ask for anything else? Have you asked for anything and not received it – was an explanation given?
- What factors have most influenced the implementation process?
- Have the Model Classrooms goals changed – have your personal goals changed?
- Did you have to change your teaching strategies when you implemented Model Classrooms? Which ones/why?
- Did you use teaching materials in a different manner? Which teaching materials and how were their uses changed?
- What role have parents played in the implementation process?
- What factors will influence the quality and practicality of the Model Classrooms program?
 - As you further implement the program, what are your greatest concerns?
 - Have any of these concerns presented themselves?
 - How have you dealt with them as they arise?

- Would you rate the program a success so far?
 - How do you measure success?
 - What needs to happen in the future and what is needed to insure it continues to develop?
- What has been the most dramatic change in your own performance since the inception of Model Classrooms?
 - What hasn't changed – do you think it ever will?
- Has your motivation to teach and innovate and your creativity in the classroom changed as a result of this program? In what ways?
- Describe the relationship you have with the other individuals involved in this project – other than your mentor or mentee
- How do you see the dynamics changing with the introduction of new participants?
- In what ways does the Model Classroom program influence your capacity to facilitate change?
 - In your opinion, are all the people on the team capable of building local capacity?
- What circumstances do you believe propel individuals to assume leadership?
- What kinds of roles do you think teacher-leaders assume?
- What characteristics will you look for in others as you recruit new teacher leaders?
- How does leadership affect your view of yourself as a teacher? How does it affect the way you view other teachers?
- How does leadership affect relations with your peers (both in and out of the teacher leadership program)?
 - Have their perceptions or comments influenced your planning and implementation of the program? Why?
- What is its impact of your role as a teacher leader, in the classroom? For you? For your students?
- There has been an emphasis away from 'change' and a focus on 'growth' when talking about Model Classrooms. Are these two different? Why/why not.
- How do you feel about adding five new people to the Model Classrooms program?
 - Are there some things that you would never share – are there some things that some people “just have to learn for themselves”?
 - What is your role in the teacher leadership team?
 - How will that role change with the addition of new people?
 - What kind of influence do you think you can have on the coherence of the group?
 - Do you have some 'preconceived ideas' about the five new members?
 - How will those ideas influence the cohesion of the group?
- If a group of teachers comes in to talk to you about Model Classrooms, what advice would you give them?
- Would you recommend that other school districts go through this process? Why?
- What are you hoping this program will provide for other teachers? Students? Administrators? Other school districts?

- What message are you hoping to send to other educators? To children? To the school community?
- Is this program about
 - Teacher leadership
 - Building capacity
 - Program implementation
 - Standards-based curriculum
 - Anything else?

Interview #3 – The search for meaning

- Interview #3 was different for each of the four teachers. Many of the questions followed up from the past two interviews. Followed by others such as:
- What is the meaning of Model Classrooms?
- What does it mean to be a teacher leader? How has your professional role changed as a result?
- What does local capacity mean?
- Do you think Model Classrooms gives you the ability for greater capacity for change?
- What is the purpose of a standards-based classroom?
 - How have you defined it for you?
- Can I package this program up in cellophane and put it on a shelf and sell it for \$52.95? Why/Why not?
- What does the “Each one, Teach one” ideal really mean?
- If you must rotate out of the Model Classrooms program to make room for new members – what do you see yourself doing instead?
- What has been your experience in Model Classrooms?

Appendix B

Informed Consent Form

PAGE 1 OF 2

Informed Consent Form For Behavioral Research Study

The Pennsylvania State University

Title of project: *Teacher leadership and the implementation of Model Classrooms*
Person in charge: *Christine M. Remley, Principal investigator*
Ph.D. Candidate, Currently ABD, Instructional Systems



The purpose of this study is to investigate the process of implementing Model Classrooms and the challenges you experience as a teacher leader. If you agree to take part in this research, you will be asked to participate in interviews and classroom observations. The interviews will be audiotaped. All audiotapes will be stored in a locked cabinet at 159 Ridgeway Drive, Lewisburg, PA and accessed only by the principal investigator. The audiotapes will be destroyed by the year 2005.

You may also be asked for representations of your work such as lesson plans, unit plans, and other artifacts of your planning. Your participation in this research will last from September through December 2002, interview and observation times will vary. You will not be compensated for your participation in this study.

You may ask any questions about the research procedures and these questions will be answered. Your participation in this research is confidential, however due to the small number of current participants in the Model Classrooms program, anonymity cannot be guaranteed. Only the principal investigator will have access to information that can be associated directly with you and your responses. In the event of publication or presentation of this research, no personally identifying information will be disclosed. Your participation is voluntary. You are free to stop participating in the research at any time, or to decline to answer any specific questions without penalty.

For additional information concerning your rights as a research participant you may contact the Office for Research Protections, 212 Kern Graduate Building, University Park, PA 16802, (814) 865-1775

Participant:

I agree to participate in an investigation of the implementation of Model Classrooms and my role as a teacher leader, part of the education and research program of the Pennsylvania State University.

I understand the information given to me, and I have received answers to any questions I may have had about the research procedure. I understand and agree to the conditions of this study as described.

I understand that my participation in this research is voluntary, and that I may withdraw from this study at any time by notifying the principal investigator.

I am 18 years of age or older.

Informed Consent Form For Behavioral Research Study

I understand that I will receive a signed copy of this consent form.

Signature

Date

I agree to allow the use of personal word-for-word quotes.

I agree to allow representations of my work to be collected and utilized for educational purposes such as presentations at educational conferences or publication in educational journals.

Signature

Date

Researcher:

I certify that the informed consent procedure has been followed, and that I have answered any questions from the participant above as fully as possible.

Signature

Date

Christine M. Remley

Education:

December 2003	Pennsylvania State University	Ph.D., Instructional Systems
August 1996	Villanova University	Master of Arts, Education
May 1987	East Stroudsburg University	Bachelor of Science, Elementary Education State Teachers Certificate II

Faculty Teaching Positions

September 2003 – May 2004

Mansfield University of Pennsylvania, Department of Elementary Education and Special Education
(Mansfield, PA) – Full Time, Fixed Term, Assistant Professor of Education

January 2003 – May 2003

Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania, Department of Early Childhood and Elementary Education
(Bloomsburg, PA) – Full Time, Temporary, Instructor

September 2000 – May 2002

Schreyer Institute for Innovation in Learning, The Pennsylvania State University (University Park, PA) -
Graduate Assistant, Instructional Designer

September 2001 – May 2002

Bucknell University, Department of Education (Lewisburg, PA) - Adjunct Instructor

\September 2000 – December 2000

Bucknell University, Department of Education (Lewisburg, PA) – Student Teacher Supervisor

August 1999 – May 2000

Mansfield University of Pennsylvania, Department of Education & Special Education (Mansfield, PA) –
Full Time, Temporary, Instructor

May 1994 - February 1998

Kindercare Learning Centers, Inc., Private Academic School (Aston, PA) - Center Director, Director of
Education, Preschool/Kindergarten Teacher

September 1987 - June 1989

Waldron-Mercy Academy (Merion, PA) - Second Grade Teacher

Presentations and Research

Fall 2002 – AECT Conference Presentation

“The influence of an instructional technology course on future teaching practice”

November 2001 – AECT Conference Presentation

“Designing and developing rubrics to assess ISTE'S National Educational Technology Standards (NETS)”

November 2001 – PAECT Conference Presentations

“Designing and developing rubrics to assess ISTE'S National Educational Technology Standards (NETS)”

“Active Learning Exchange (ALEx) Database, A Resource for Faculty”