1

A VERY BRIEF HISTORY OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

> History cannot give us a program for the future, but it can give us a fuller understanding of ourselves, and of our common humanity, so that we can better face the future.
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> —*Robert Penn Warren*

Volumes have been written about the history of North American schooling, and it is certainly beyond the scope of this book to revisit our history in any depth. I provide a brief sketch here of how school management has evolved over the past 150 years, intending to offer a fuller understanding of teachers who lead. I consider historical and cultural influences on educational roles in schools, rather than defining what teacher leadership is and who teachers are as educational leaders. The organization we call *school* was created in response to culture-specific ideas about how formal education should be structured. Most, if not all, of these concepts have been challenged and revised over time, yet the very foundation of nineteenth-century European Judeo-Christian values lies firmly beneath our feet. Those structures and organizing features have been rendered invisible over time and, like dusty worn rugs, need a good airing, if not disposal. Like many other observers, I believe modern schools were never designed for learning and their potential to serve modern society grows more limited by the day. Meanwhile, teachers lead the work of educating young people and each other in schools. I hope the

briefest sketch will illuminate some unexamined premises of teaching as leading and allow us to better face the future.

Leading Learning Past and Present

The physical organization of contemporary schools in North America may seem timeless to those who are second-generation or higher North Americans, yet the model is only one hundred and some years old. "Modern" schools' emergence parallels the twentieth century's evolution from more rural to more urban—from family-centered businesses and cottage industries to industrialization. Skilled work done by both genders was learned through apprenticeship with a craftsperson. Literacy development for European-Americans in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries typically occurred through religious education for both genders, and formal academic study was reserved for the middle class. Whether individuals were immigrants or members of established communities, reading and ciphering were learned in homes and churches. Schooling in the early United States reflected attempts to establish common schools in the Thirteen Colonies, but individual communities held tightly to cultural and religious values and their right to inculcate their children with those values. New York City fathers established "free schools" in the early 1800s, seeking to provide basic education and moral values to children from homes where parents were uneducated (and presumed to be immoral). In the largest urban areas, tenement-dwelling children attended factory-like warehouse schools. In rural communities both North and South, one-room schoolhouses represented another path to formal schooling. In both cases, only rudimentary study was the norm. Until the mid-twentieth century, only middle- and upper-class children received a formal education that could prepare them for university admission. Working-class youth trained in the trades—which required formal but often nonliterate apprenticeships—or in unskilled jobs that required little or no formal training. "College prep" coursework was then, as it is now, reserved for the privileged class.

"Educational leadership" in homes, religious settings, and one-room schoolhouses was provided by parents, clergy, teachers of both genders, and other community members. Teaching throughout the nineteenth century was a transient occupation in which young men might hold a position as teacher for a few years before moving on to other lines of work. After the mid-1800s, young women followed the same pattern. They taught younger children in short stints, usually until they became established with their own homes and families. In Southern black communities during Reconstruction, small, formerly clandestine schools continued to serve freedmen, both adults and children. Teachers were not professionals and did not organize themselves in large settings. Notions of the "principal teacher" followed the need to organize or manage many teachers under one roof and were established mainly in large, urban schools.

Organizational structures of the largest Northern schools reflected industrial practices established in the nineteenth century, thus creating the school structures we know today. In this structure one principal (with or without assistants) manages many teachers, and that principal is charged to carry out the dictates of governments that finance the school. Suburban and the few remaining rural schools followed the lead of the largest schools, emulating graded classrooms, subject-centered scheduling, emphasis on start- and end-times, bells, and the need to stay at one's desk for the duration of instruction. Such standardization was seen as a natural by-product of modernization. Large, factory-like schools were designed to prepare the masses with vocational training to work in similar settings when they came of age, not to prepare members of a democratic society. Therefore, schools needed managers, not instructional leaders.

Different Leaders for Different Schools

Throughout the twentieth century, some educational leaders challenged the industrial model of schooling, but their ranks were small. The schools they established were often idiosyncratic

and elite, barely touching the masses in production-line schools. Examples of progressive education that repudiated industrial model schools include John Dewey's lab school at the University of Chicago, the Waldorf School, Froebel's kindergartens, and schools based on Adler's Paideia philosophy or Maria Montessori's methods. In the latter half of the twentieth century, the Coalition of Essential Schools, a network of progressive educators and parents, continued the traditions of developing critical thinking, collaborative, project-based learning, and community partnerships. These few schools were only available to families of privilege, however, and their individualized, constructivist, and student-centered approaches to teaching and learning have had little influence on the greater schooling enterprise.[1] The purpose of Progressive schooling was to create an educated citizenry that could fully participate in the democratic process. This foundational understanding runs counter to the capitalism-based belief that schooling is preparation for factory work. Progressive schools were often established and led by charismatic leaders who had strong beliefs about school as a place to develop the human mind and spirit. To quote Montessori, "The greatest sign of success for a teacher . . . is to be able to say, 'The children are now working as if I did not exist.'" Societal beliefs that youngsters should be self-directed learners remain controversial, even as most citizens agree that industrial-era schooling is not adequate to modern societal demands.

Schools Reflect Society

After World War II, more children were attending the growing numbers of schools, but they were still in racially segregated classrooms. As the era of race-based civil rights took root in the mid-1950s, schools became more than a reflection of the multifaceted society in which they sat. Race- and gender-based discrimination was challenged in the courts, and schools became the locus of systematic attempts to integrate communities. Because of civil

rights case law, schooling for all was established as a legal right, not a privilege. The stated goal in federal policy was equal education for all, and schools became the primary container in which societal inequities might be measured and rectified.

One outcome of court-ordered school racial integration was an acknowledgement that even though laws permitting schools to be "separate but equal" had been overturned, American schooling continued to reflect and perpetuate social and economic disparities. Most school systems were theoretically desegregated through edict and policy, but in reality remained separate and unequal. Large urban schools continued to serve low-income and immigrant newcomers, while white working-class families with some mobility moved to the suburbs. Affluent families continued to enroll their children in private schools. Public school leaders' management tasks now included formal requirements to educate all students, whether majority or minority, regardless of race, gender, or disability. Educators in public schools are therefore now required to lead broader societal reforms, whatever their roles and responsibilities, however large or small the institution. Educational leaders face the same dilemmas prevalent in the larger society: role, experience, race, gender, class, sexuality—our own as well as those of our constituents—dictate opportunity and shape the educational process.

A small but persistent progressive movement continued throughout the second half of the twentieth century and into the new century. In the 1970s, progressive educators established "schools within schools," such as academies, magnets, and other approaches to individualizing education. These more personalized approaches are evident in contemporary reform efforts—for example, the creation of smaller schools within large high schools and theme-based schools led by community partnerships. While John Dewey's efforts to disrupt the worst practices of systematic, routinized factory schooling failed on a large scale, these progressive glimpses into more humane and culturally responsive learning environments offer hope to many underserved

communities. These schools are also incubators for innovative leadership structures.

The Evolution of Leading and Managing in Schools

Leadership of formal schooling evolved throughout the twentieth century, reflecting societal changes and evolving perspectives on the purposes of schooling.[2] Activities associated with leadership moved from the province of individual teachers working with small groups of students to formal management of small, medium, and large organizations. The "leader" of the school was the principal-manager, and teachers, however formally educated or experienced, reported to that principal. When schools grew large and required management, the issues were primarily facilities, budget, staffing, and students. A retired principal told me his job in a rural elementary school required him to "Keep the boiler lighted and chase the dogs off the playground!" In Alaska, where he lived, keeping the boiler lighted was a serious matter. In rural schools, the superintendent might also drive the bus, coach the football team, and teach social studies. In large urban schools, formal leadership is usually distributed across a management team, in which the principal works with one or more assistants to manage the facilities, budget, staffing, discipline, and student mental and physical health.

Who Becomes a Principal?

For most of the twentieth century, school leaders were male and white, with a few exceptions. Women headed some small rural schools and some urban schools in the early part of the century. Southern African American communities were segregated from white communities, and the leaders of African American schools were black, as were the ministers of African American congregations and others in the professional classes. After laws were

passed in the 1960s that rendered formal desegregation illegal, black principals were often displaced by white men, although the school staff and students remained largely segregated. Women's removal from and re-entrance into the principalship paralleled their engagement in the workforce in other fields before and after World War II. Ironically, in a "women's profession" such as teaching, the number of women principals does not yet reflect the gender ratio of the teaching workforce. The evolution of schools into larger consolidated centers actually reduced the number of women principals from a higher number in the 1920s to lower numbers later in the century.

School leadership patterns reflect race, gender, and class status in the larger society. Consider the following: in 2007–2008, the majority of public school teachers were women (about 84 percent at elementary schools, 59 percent at secondary schools), but only 59 percent of elementary principals and 29 percent of secondary principals were women. Demographic data from NCES for 2008–2009 indicate that 84 percent of principals were white, 10 percent were African American, 4.5 percent were Hispanic, 0.4 percent were Asian, and 0.6 percent were American Indian.[3] All things being equal, the ranks of principals should reflect teacher demographics, if not student demographics.

Certainly, greater societal influences on professional access and selection of majority and minority individuals for any role prevail in schools as well. Our "semiprofession" has long debated whether teachers are born or made, and there is a parallel debate about whether leaders are born or made. Most of us agree that while teachers and principals are required to have a credential, preparation is a minimum requirement. All professionals strive to move beyond basic preparation to good practice, so if teachers can develop their craft, the same should be true for administrators. Yet so-called "trait theory" pervades our thinking about leadership. Traits associated with effective leaders have included personal characteristics and temperament as well as managerial skills. Numerous studies do not support leaders

having specific traits, but beliefs about the traits of a good leader persist. Those with the greatest social status in the larger society also have status in schools. The notion of the "hero-principal"[4] is alive and well at all levels of the educational enterprise. This image departs from the earlier "principal-teacher," as they were called at one time, who could do every job in the building, secure resources, and maintain a complex schedule for her teachers and herself. Current examples of the school leader as hero are evident in mission statements of nonprofit enterprises such as New Leaders for New Schools, Leadership Academies, and other like enterprises. Millions of dollars are invested into recruitment and training of the "best and brightest" corporate-style leaders as our profession struggles to pull the largest districts into the twenty-first century. New leaders are trained in corporate-style management, and teachers are seen as one of the resources to be managed.

Who Becomes a Teacher?

Teaching is considered a "semiprofession," and teachers are unionized workers for the most part.[5] While the management-staff metaphor is problematic for those who consider themselves full professionals, the concept of principal as boss is alive and well in contract language and in our collective understanding of how schools are organized and staffed. Whether one accepts my proposition that working directly with children is an act of leadership,[6] most people generally see the principal as "in charge" of the school and teachers as subordinates. This belief runs deep and is not easily disrupted by the many examples of teacher autonomy[7] and teacher leadership we observe in schools every day. The tangled roots of management and staff relationships have made "teacher leadership" a separate enterprise from school leadership. Teachers' perceptions of their autonomy and authority are shaped and reshaped by the organizational apparatus of school and the history of the profession.

Teachers strive to act in professional ways amid very conflicting work cultures. Some research suggests that conventional leadership is "antithetical" to teachers behaving professionally.[8] Conventional leadership requires conventional followership, and the trappings of leading and following limit professional action. Teachers work in settings that demand sophisticated responses to complex problems, yet are expected to do what they're told or be labeled resistant to reform efforts. Conflicting expectations lead some to challenge the authoritative relationship between themselves and principals,[9] while others acquiesce or play along in what Hargreaves[10] calls "contrived collegiality." Even those models that sound more democratic come under fire by those who study reform. One example is the rhetoric of "distributed leadership," a catchall term that implies more people have authority to make decisions.

Little research supports the efficacy of this approach[11] and, like many recommendations that emerge from studies of school leadership, the principal is charged to do the distributing. Teachers are *allowed* to have authority over their work, *chosen* for tasks, or *given* responsibility. In each case, teachers are subjected to, not agents of, leadership. No wonder some succumb to the condescension and withdraw or leave the profession altogether. It's understandable that when teachers are treated like line workers, some respond in kind and walk out the door at three o'clock. Many teachers work long hours after students leave, and some are admonished for breaking contract agreements. Union policy sometimes "protects" teachers' rights by forbidding them to convene in professional conversation beyond contract hours.

Most teachers transcend the constraints of conventional management-staff limitations, refusing to be deskilled by mandated, scripted curricula, retaining their dignity in the face of labor actions, and keeping a professional countenance with all comers: students, parents, clipboard-wielding staffers, compliance officers, and errant journalists. Teachers lead in myriad

ways from the moment they accept the job, whether they choose or are chosen to become formal leaders at a later time. Teacher race, gender, and class status influence how they experience authority,[12] but all teachers must enact leadership from their position in the social hierarchy.

Challenging the Dichotomy Between Site Leaders and Teachers

Studies of what traits make a good principal reflect what teachers, parents, and the general public think makes a person a "leader." Effective teachers display the same traits, but are they essential to powerful leadership for teaching and learning? These traits are seldom interrogated, but accepted as innate to effective leaders and include qualities like decisiveness, good management, and organization. The expectation that principals should also be knowledgeable about learning was less common in earlier decades, but the climate of accountability has heightened the need for principals to be "instructional leaders." Few principals, however, spend much of their time working directly with teachers and students. Most pertinent to this discussion, leadership "traits" often reflect historical patterns of race, ethnicity, gender, language, and other areas of perceived difference. The cultural and systematic exclusion of minorities from full membership as teachers and formal leaders reflects societal assumptions about who leaders are, rather than what they do.[13]

Through the last years of the twentieth century and a decade into the twenty-first century, little has changed in the organization and management of schools. Schools are not the great equalizer, but rather effectively reflect and reproduce inequities present in the larger society. Educators strive to close the widening opportunity gap between those who can squeeze into an outdated schooling model and the majority of the school-aged population that mainstream education excludes. Efforts to

reach the poorest-performing students are stymied by social circumstance, outdated pedagogy, and the dearth of resources. Visionary educators in the least resourced communities struggle to establish and sustain charter schools or other forms of smaller, more intimate schooling environments and continue to fail the urban communities that they seek to serve. A generation of school reform efforts has not solved the century-old problems of schooling the least among us.[14]

Schools are touted as foundational to creating and sustaining a democratic society, yet schools continue to reproduce the most egregious of discriminatory patterns evident in the larger society. School leaders in a variety of roles are unwittingly complicit in replicating societal structures that sort, track, and limit access to an adequate and equitable education. The organizational and physical structures of schooling reflect deeply held nationalistic values of capitalism, competition, and prosperity. Unexamined, these embedded assumptions continue to shape schooling in very insidious ways, and conventional school leadership practices follow these assumptions.

In 1983, the National Commission on Excellence in Education published "A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform."[15] This report focused on the dire academic performance of public schooling in the United States compared with international counterparts. The findings and recommendations emphasized "content" learning and teacher quality, indicating that unless major reforms occurred and higher standards were set, American students would continue to fall behind. This call to arms echoed the post-Sputnik crises of the late 1950s, when the Russians beat the Americans into space and schools were charged to "catch up" with the Russians. The need for qualified teachers to address worsening student performance figures prominently in this report and subsequent reports. Every president since that time has implemented a version of national reform and recommendations, currently reflected in President Obama's Race to the Top. Each policy development demands more accountability by school leadership,

unfortunately accompanied by less autonomy and efficacy to resolve the concerns every teacher already has.

Over the past thirty years, the pressures on educators to use content standards and raise test scores have created new twists and turns along the path of school leadership. On one hand, teachers have lost some of the professional gains made during the 1970s and 1980s, when progressive methods and teacher professionalism were gaining momentum. On the other hand, teachers are now more formally educated, and more of them obtain advanced degrees than thirty years ago. Contemporary teachers study leadership and reform, develop expertise in specific areas, and provide much of the formal leadership in schools. Positional leaders may be forced to decentralize authority because so much of the responsibility of raising test scores falls on teachers. Whether authority is distributed by the principal, wrested away from the central office, or emerges from a desire to make learning accessible to students, teachers have authority and are authorities in their own classrooms and beyond.

Teaching as Leading

Given the history of schooling and its less-than-adequate work conditions and job status, choosing to become a teacher at all is an act of leadership. Many new teachers undergo a professional hazing when they change sides of the desk, including starting their careers in economically challenged communities, starting weeks or months into the academic year as a long-term substitute or unplanned hire, managing multiple preparations, being assigned high numbers of lower-performing students, and being pressured to accept coaching or other co-curricular responsibilities. The organizational hierarchy of schools dictates that those with the least experience receive the most difficult schedule, the most poorly behaved students, and the worst space. This predictable pattern of Darwinian behavior on the part of senior teachers is problematic for the profession and damaging to students, yet I recognize

that working conditions are difficult and professional survival is not a given. Years of working in compromised systems with few resources and demoralizing labor processes do drive some teachers to self-protection and isolation. Many researchers believe that unsupported induction and rigorous conditions through the first months and years are largely responsible for causing half of new teachers to leave within five years.

The literature is replete with studies that investigate teacher "attrition," blaming inadequate preparation, lack of authority, and less than ideal working conditions.[16] The few beginning teachers who start their careers in suburban schools with adequate space and textbooks, a desk for every student, an experienced staff, and grassy fields are not always successful in the transition to full-time teaching either. Teaching is not for the faint-hearted and demands a focused, unswerving belief that almost all children can learn and that conventional schooling can support that learning. Teaching means providing an adequate education for the students without adequate resources. Teaching other people's children in a society that denigrates schooling, the poor, and teachers is not only powerful leadership, it is a form of activism.

Inhabiting the Role of Teacher

Into this challenging work culture steps each new class of reform-minded teachers, some of them young adults and others mid-career changers, all of them determined to make a difference. One of my colleagues describes why she chose a challenging school for her first job: "An equitable teacher is one who finds what each student needs and provides it for them, so each has an opportunity for success. A one-size-fits-all prescription is not the answer. My experience student teaching left me wanting to work in a place where student needs were least met, a place where assumptions and stereotypes held students from opportunities of success."

The majority of educators who become teachers and subsequently positional leaders were themselves successful in school. Many of those individuals may or may not have examined conflicting beliefs about the purposes of schooling in North America, particularly its role in the assimilation of foreigners. Few educators are students of Marx or study the history of formal education in this country. First-year teachers "re-enter" the school as emerging professionals, coming into a very familiar setting but sitting on the opposite side of the desk. Once they have reentered this familiar yet somewhat cloistered workplace, there is little time or incentive to fully interrogate the historical patterns that led to school as it is now construed. Ironically, teachers do stand on the front lines of the "war on poverty," as it was known in earlier times, and most believe formal education is the best medicine for the ills of societal inequality. Even as teachers are expected to solve the problems of an inherently inequitable society, however, they become handmaidens in an oppressive system that often reproduces inequity.

There are commonly held stereotypes about the worldliness of teachers compared to other professions, and they follow a continuum from socially committed individuals who wish to help others to the more derisive status of, "those who can't do, teach." Many who become schoolteachers, however intellectually competent, do represent a lower- and middle-economic class of individuals. "Schoolteaching," like ministry, social work, and nursing, has historically been one of the few professions open to working-class individuals, women, and first-generation Americans who may not speak English from birth. Unlike students pursuing higher-status professions of medicine and law, those who attended less prestigious public schools or now attend state colleges earn a teaching credential. There is a smaller percentage of teachers who come from middle-class backgrounds, and some report choosing teaching in spite of pressures from family and friends to choose a more lucrative line of work.

Choosing to Stay in Teaching

While I acknowledge the statistics about teacher attrition within the first five years of beginning the job, I question the use of the term *attrition* and the interpretation of that data. Many of these studies are based on sociological theories that treat teaching as a job like any other. The primary reasons teachers cite for "leaving" teaching are lack of professional support and poor working conditions. Most new teachers start in the least desirable work settings, meaning schools that serve low-income communities and are underresourced. Even with professional induction support programs and reasonable work settings, however, many teachers don't stay in the classroom. Within the four walls of a classroom, teachers are charged to mitigate the worst inequities of society, to disrupt historic discriminatory practices, and to create powerful learning environments based on their own vision of what schooling *could* be. Given the complexity of the work of teaching, it may take a few years for young teachers or mid-career changers to recognize the dilemmas created by great expectations and little autonomy and authority. Even with basic skills and growing competence, teaching is psychically and physically challenging. This work is not for everyone. Those who can will stay in teaching. Those who are not suited to the task move into other educational settings or different careers. The primary definition of *attrition* is a reduction or decrease in numbers, size, or strength. This connotation may be applicable here, but consider the second definition: a wearing down or weakening of resistance, especially as a result of continuous pressure or harassment. The pressures are relentless and demand integrity and leadership from those who stay.

Professional Identity Development

Fully inhabiting the role of teacher is a professional and personal odyssey requiring emotional and professional development that may be invisible to the teacher herself. These early years

constitute a professional "identity-development" period, when young adults and some mid-career changers try out this complex and difficult role. Teachers come to the work from different standpoints. Some start out with a very clear idea of what the work is and who they are in the work, while others grow into the role and take longer to fully embrace the work. Some find the work overwhelming and unsatisfying, whatever they imagined the work of teaching to be. Members of this latter group should be supported in their decision to teach and lead in other settings or focus their interests in another direction. While all comers are challenged, only half prevail. I contend that surviving induction and finding success as a teacher is in itself a powerful act of leadership.

Educational leadership begins early in life and becomes more visible with the decision to enter the profession. The roots of teaching as a vocation are planted in childhood and adolescence, as teachers carry with them their own experiences as students. Teachers also report work experiences including coaching, tutoring, or just sharing one's interests and skills with others. Leadership activities continue throughout one's years in education, whatever the title, wherever the site, however the external world names and frames the work teachers do.

Teachers are sometimes assumed to have the same characteristics as their students. Those who teach the youngest children must therefore be the least worldly and sophisticated, as, for example, some observers see preschool teachers. Conversely, those who teach AP physics must be the smartest because they teach a "hard" subject. This characterization may seem beside the point, but consider how we judge leaders' competency. Is a person who works with five-year-olds a leader? While most teachers spend their days with human beings younger than themselves, their personalities cover the same breadth of brilliance and intellectual challenge as any other profession. Some music teachers are indeed temperamental artists, while others are quite concrete and stalwart. Some math teachers are very skilled at doing math,

but not so skilled at making sure most of the kids learn it. Some high school teachers are very capable at instilling a love of literature in their students, yet find the role of department chair beyond their capacity. Grossman and Stodolsky[17] looked at secondary teachers' identities in relation to their subject areas and identified organizational differences within departments and status differences between departments. Disciplines do have status, and we judge others as representatives of their disciplines.

Images of Leading in Schools

Teachers also have identities in relation to their engagement with others in the workplace. Some are viewed, and view others, as team players who work effectively with positional leaders, while others avoid affiliation with administration.[18] I recall a conversation with another teacher during my first few years of teaching. This teacher had taught fine arts in junior high school for a very long time and laughed derisively when I told her I had been "elected" to the School Site Council. "Only a young, overly idealistic teacher would agree to such a request," said she. In her world, formal leadership and school governance were window dressing. "It doesn't matter who's up front," she said, impugning our current principal and the whole tribe of positional leaders. As that "overly idealistic" teacher, I was left wondering what school leadership was. I learned over time that leadership took many forms. Some teachers offered their leadership by serving students effectively, while others were more visible in governance and decision making. Some teachers shared their craft freely, bringing new colleagues into the guild much as craftsmen from the trades do. Others were brilliant thinkers and doers for a few years, then moved into other settings or roles. I learned that much of school leadership was provided by teachers. And I learned that taking leadership actions within the classroom was a requirement of the job.

Over the last thirty years, educational leaders have rediscovered collective, shared, distributed, or collaborative models of leading. Key influences on educational leadership reform include pressures on positional leaders to be instructional leaders, not just managers; pressures from teachers to retain or garner some measure of professional autonomy; and greater recognition that the quality of classroom instruction is central to improving student achievement. Approaching leadership by identifying what effective leaders actually do is also enlightening and offers potential for rethinking school leadership. For instance, "transformational leadership" represents movement from "transactional leadership."[19] Transactional leaders adapt to the culture of the organization, whereas transformational leaders strive to change the culture by engaging members in vision development. Leaders' values and the actions that portray those values are what matter most. If instructional expertise and cultural competence, or the ability to teach across difference, are essential to improving student achievement, then teachers are educational leaders with the greatest scope of influence. Educators who base practice on deep moral purpose are engaging in leadership, whatever the context.

Perceptions of the characteristics that make a leader are widely studied. One of my mentors, Linda Lambert, articulates the convergence between individual development, learning, and collaboration. Teachers lead in relationship with others, not as lone rangers. In this excerpt, she portrays leadership as learning well with others:

> When leadership means a person in a specific role enveloped in formal authority, teachers do not see themselves reflected in that image. When leadership becomes a broadly inclusive culture concept, it provokes a different response: I can see myself as participating in this learning work with my colleagues. Leadership realizes purpose, the sense of purpose that teachers brought with them into this profession.[20]

Lambert has studied adult learning for decades and believes that "leadership defined as a form of learning situates that work within the context of teaching and learning. So defined, it forms a sacred alliance among teaching, learning, and leading." She also addresses role and organizational context by adding, "The new language of leadership, accompanied by assumptions about who can learn and who can lead, frame the foundation for an evocative context for teacher leadership. The most vital aspect of this new definition lies in its relationship to learning."[21] Lambert connects leadership to organizational change, transformation of followers, and a community of leaders. She states the following:

> These movements have paved the way for some evocative assumptions about leadership. It is suggested that those assumptions could be summarized as:
>
> 1. Leadership may be understood as reciprocal, purposeful learning in community.
> 2. Everyone has the right, responsibility and capability to be a leader.
> 3. The adult learning environment in the school and district is the most critical factor in evoking leadership identities and actions.
> 4. Within that environment, opportunities for skillful participation top the list of priorities.
> 5. How we define leadership frames how people will participate.
> 6. Educators are purposeful—leading realizes purpose.[22]

Lambert's integration of constructivist learning and leading, attention to collegial interactions, and attention to organizational culture offer a framework to understand the complex interactions among these dimensions. Leadership is "situated" rather than inherent. Taking action from a foundation of moral purpose is reflected in her depiction and the following work as well.

Mendez-Morse's review of leadership literature identifies the following six characteristics of leaders of educational change:

- Having vision
- Believing that the schools are for learning
- Valuing human resources
- Being a skilled communicator and listener
- Acting proactively
- Taking risks[23]

Any individual, whether principal, teacher, or parent leader, can reflect such characteristics. Notions of who can be a leader, therefore, must continually be revisited with careful attention to characteristics of leading, rather than personality traits. Educational leadership happens at all levels, in every dimension of the teaching and learning enterprise, every day. Embracing teaching as leadership allows us to rethink schooling, leadership, and school reform.

Leadership Roles in and Beyond the Classroom

Educational leadership begins in the classroom and moves outward. In subsequent chapters, I describe school leadership from the teacher's perspective. Teachers learn about leadership throughout life and from many sources—but begin careers as school leaders in the classroom. Starting with the values and purposes teachers bring into the profession, I consider the ways teachers lead and the evolution of leadership development from the classroom outward. Placing instructional leadership at the center of school leadership, I follow my colleagues through their journeys as teachers leading. Descriptions of why they chose the work of teaching are followed by examples of classroom-based instruction as leadership. Teachers describe their relationship to others and how to work effectively with role-alike and task-alike groups of colleagues. They describe the challenges and benefits of working

across difference to build relationships, gain trust, and effect change in their classrooms, schools, and beyond.

Advocacy for students and improved instruction leads predictably to schoolwide leadership. At the school level, individual teachers share expertise and seek professional support from others. Specialized knowledge is strengthened by affiliation with professional groups and advanced training, deepening knowledge about particular content, pedagogy, and practices. Teachers carry hard-won expertise back to professional organizations, bartering trade secrets and improving practice. Teachers lead by reaching out to the communities they serve, whether friends and neighbors who support schooling, parents of their students, or professionals from other work settings who can support them in the quest to bring learning to students.

The historic and cultural roots of school leadership are deep. Examine through new eyes the places and spaces where you lead and your students learn, within and beyond the school. Consider leadership *actions*, rather than title or role. Think about the work of teaching in all its dimensions, and about what kinds of leadership actions are embedded in that work. Understand clearly what and who we are as a profession and how we came to be this way. Education is ever-changing, even though some of our practices aren't evolving as quickly as our students are. Teachers are building the future of education by bringing the wisdom of practice to educational leadership.

Historical and Cultural Influences on Leadership

Precedent for School Leadership Form and Function

- Remember site leaders are required to manage, and most instructional leadership takes place in classrooms.
- Recognize where and how site leaders influence and support adult and student learning, and build on that influence and support.

- Appreciate the power of instructional leadership in the classroom, at the grade level and department, and beyond. Strengthen connections between people and across roles.

Places and Spaces Where Teachers Lead

- Be conscious of where your ideas of formal leadership come from.
- Listen to your descriptions of what "leaders" do and what you do. Use purposeful language to characterize who and what you are as a leader.
- Take a good look at your facility and the ways in which the spaces shape practice.
- Recognize the power of your experience and bring what you know into the mainstream of the reform conversation.

INQUIRY ONE
Leadership Activities

A Week (or a Month) in the Life of a Teacher

Purpose: To capture data that shows you when, where, and how you lead.

Recasting the work of teaching as leading requires a systematic description of the work of teaching in all its forms. The physical structure of the "egg carton" school, where teachers go into the classroom with the students in the morning and come out of that same space for periodic breaks and at the end of the day is a powerful organizing feature of the work. Even though teachers devote a certain amount of time to adult interactions, the primary image of teaching is standing in front of students. To help you flesh out this image with the many forms of leadership you engage in every day, take some data about how, when, and with whom you interact on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis.

Keep a log of activities for one week or one month (see the sample logs in Exhibits 1.1 and 1.2). Start on Sunday and

Exhibit 1.1. Weekly Log

	Sun	*Mon*	*Tues*	*Wed*	*Thurs*	*Fri*	*Sat*
Before school							
8:00							
9:00							
10:00							
11:00							
12:00							
1:00							
2:00							
3:00							
After school							
Evening							

Exhibit 1.2. Monthly Log of Meetings, Contacts, and Other Outreach or Professional Activity

	Week 1	*Week 2*	*Week 3*	*Week 4*
Before school				
Mornings				
Noon or midday				
After school				
Evenings				

include any planning, grading, or other prep activity. For each hour, activity, or period, note the activity, educational purpose, and any individuals with whom you interact.

Analysis of a Week or a Month in the Life of a Teacher

When do you interact with colleagues?

What is the purpose of those interactions? Are they planned, formal, or informal?

Do you come early each day to prepare, or do you do more preparation during breaks or after school?

How many of your interactions involve staff, teachers, specialists, parents, or others?

Are there patterns to your week or month that can be strengthened or changed to support your work?

Where do leadership actions appear within those events, exchanges, and conversations?

The Physical Characteristics of Schools Shape Teaching, Learning, and Leadership

Put on your anthropologist hat and look at your school as if for the first time. Imagine you are coming onto the grounds as a traveler from another country.

Describe the Building and Its Occupants

Draw a schematic of the school, including all classroom wings, offices, the gym, cafeteria, and portables. For multiple stories, show each level.

Label by grade, department, or function.

With a partner from a different site, discuss the implications of the layout.

How does the facility support or inhibit physical interactions between adults? For example, a large school with multiple wings might cluster by grade level or department or might mix the grade levels (with all bilingual or "gifted" classes in one wing, K–5).

Critical Reflection Questions

Where are the different classes and functions in relation to the office? For instance, the office might be at one end of the grounds on one side of the parking lot, while the classroom wings are on the other side of the parking lot.

What is the quality of classroom space for different groups? For instance, the special education students are in a deteriorating portable in the parking lot, while other students are near the office.

What messages does the organization of the facility send to students, staff, families, and visitors?

Is the facility equitably shared by all members of the community? Which groups have the most desirable space?

What is the history of this particular organizational scheme? Is it still relevant? Can or should it be changed?

The School in the Community

Is this school a community center?

Who uses it, and when, and how?

What policies are in place to create a welcoming atmosphere to "regular" occupants and visitors, affiliated groups, and other groups?

What is the enrollment policy (neighborhood, open enrollment, magnet, or selective admissions)?

Resources

Frost, D., Durrant, J., Head, M., and Holden, G., *Teacher-Led School Improvement* (New York: RoutledgeFalmer, 2000).

Frost and his coauthors describe the ways teachers in Great Britain needed to "rebuild teacher professionalism" in the face of nationalizing the curriculum. The authors and participants recognize the many roles of leadership teachers play and the importance of teacher expertise in the midst of reform. The section on teacher-led inquiry is especially useful.

Hall, P., and Simeral, A., *Building Teachers' Capacity for Success* (Alexandria, Va.: ASCD, 2008).

This book was coauthored by a school principal and a literacy coach and focuses on the stages of developing collaboration. The stage development approach offers some useful ideas to readers, particularly those new to facilitation of professional development. There are links to downloadable forms.

Institute for Educational Leadership, *Leadership for Student Learning: Redefining Teacher Leadership—a Report on the Task Force of Teacher Leadership* (Washington, D.C.: Institute for Educational Leadership, 2001).

This report makes a case for teacher leadership, examining the difficulties teachers face as leaders in schools. Drawing from school change and school leadership literature, the report makes recommendations about what needs to change in schools as organizations for teachers to function as professionals and lead needed change. It's not

a how-to text by any means, but it is a well-crafted overview of schooling practices that continue to hamper student success.

Katzenmeyer, M., and Moller, G., *Awakening the Sleeping Giant: Helping Teachers Develop as Leaders*, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Corwin Press, 2009).

Now in its third edition, this text continues to serve a broad range of teacher leadership audiences. The authors give well-researched definitions of teacher leadership, offer a range of self-study and facilitator-friendly activities, and stay grounded in the real world of school reform. As one reviewer noted, the authors have stayed abreast of the evolving world of teacher leadership.

Lambert, L., *Leadership Capacity for Lasting School Improvement* (Alexandria, Va.: ASCD, 2003).

Lambert's text is a wonderful synthesis of her career-long interest in school leadership. She focuses on skillful leadership by all members of the school community, rather than focusing on what one skillful leader does. The tools and surveys for analysis are useful as conversation starters, data collectors, and program evaluation frameworks.

McGhan, B., "A Fundamental Education Reform: Teacher-Led Schools," *Phi Delta Kappan* 83(7) (2002): 538–540.

There are few accessible articles about teacher-led schools, and this is one. The author outlines key conflicts in school leadership roles, for instance, revisiting the challenge for principals to be true instructional leaders when what's actually needed is principals who are good managers. He describes wholesale change efforts versus incremental change and points out that teacher leadership is the key factor in either case.

Murphy, J., *Connecting School Leadership and School Improvement* (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Corwin Press, 2005).

This text gathers, synthesizes, and describes research on teacher leadership. It's not an easy read or a how-to,

but it is a good reference and provides detailed context for readers who want to delve into theories of leadership, teacher leadership, and school improvement.

The Project on the Next Generation of Teachers, Harvard Graduate School of Education.
www.gse.harvard.edu/~ngt/papers.htm

Susan Moore Johnson and her team address "critical questions about the future of the nation's teaching force" through a series of studies about the teaching profession. Their research on "second-stage teachers" is especially instructive in understanding teacher professionalism and teacher leadership.

York-Barr, J., and Duke, K., "What Do We Know About Teacher Leadership? Findings from Two Decades of Scholarship," *Review of Educational Research* 74(3) (2004): 255–316.

This is a review of the literature about teacher leadership research over two decades. The researchers describe the kinds of studies and various findings about what teacher leadership is, the forms it takes, conditions that influence it, and characteristics of teacher leaders. The researchers acknowledge that "the construct of teacher leadership is not well defined." This would be useful for those in professional development and teachers conducting self-study of the work of teaching.

Notes

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4. W. N. Grubb and J. Flessa, "'A Job Too Big for One': Multiple Principals and Other Nontraditional Approaches to School Leadership," *Educational Administration Quarterly* 42 (2006): 518–550.
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