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# How Female Social Studies Department Chairs Navigate Their Roles As Leaders

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HOW FEMALE SOCIAL STUDIES DEPARTMENT CHAIRS NAVIGATE THEIR  
ROLES AS LEADERS

by

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## ABSTRACT

During the past four decades, state and federal education policy in the United States has focused on standardization and increased accountability. In contrast, education researchers advocate elevating the status of teachers through the professionalization of education. Teacher leadership is a concept that is used to reform schools and increase student achievement. The high school department chair is a formal teacher leadership role in the school hierarchy. Because research indicates that a majority of social studies teachers are male, female social studies department chairs are in a position to lead predominantly men.

A gap exists in the research on social studies teacher leaders. My study investigated the intersection of teacher leadership, social studies, department chairs, and gender leadership styles. Using grounded theory, I conducted a comparative case study to understand the experience of female social studies teacher leaders serving a department chairs in public high schools. Particularly, I wanted to understand how female teacher leaders serving as social studies department chairs define the concept of leadership and demonstrate the characteristics of teacher leadership. Also, I wanted to understand how female teacher leaders serving as social studies department chairs negotiate leading teachers in a potentially masculine department within schools.

This study revealed how female social studies teacher leaders defined leadership through the lens of their context. In addition, female social studies teacher leaders demonstrated teacher leadership characteristics influenced by the organizational

structures of their schools and districts. Furthermore, this study indicated that female department chairs purposefully transitioned between masculine leadership styles and feminine leadership styles using their own position in the organizational hierarchy as the pivot point. Female social studies department chairs interacted with educators at or below their position in the hierarchy utilizing feminine leadership qualities; yet interacted with educators above their position in the hierarchy utilizing masculine leadership qualities.

**Key Words:** Social Studies, Teacher Leadership, Teacher Leaders, Department Chairs, Gender, Leadership

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iii
ABSTRACT .....	v
LIST OF TABLES .....	viii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	ix
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION .....	1
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW .....	17
CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY.....	73
CHAPTER 4 FINDINGS.....	97
CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION.....	291
REFERENCES .....	349
APPENDIX A – INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL .....	376
APPENDIX B – INTERVIEW 1 PROTOCOL .....	377
APPENDIX C – STUDY OVERVIEW AND CONSENT LETTER .....	378
APPENDIX D – DEPARTMENT AND ADMINISTRATION PROFILE CHART .....	380



## LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1 List of Names.....	286
Table 4.2 Fairview One Pass Rate Data.....	289
Table 4.3 Fairview One End-of-Course Data 2009-2015.....	289
Table 4.4 Jackson County Schools Pass Rate Data .....	290

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACT.....	American College Testing Exam
AP .....	Advanced Placement
API.....	Assistant Principal for Instruction
EOC.....	End-of-Course Exam
FCA.....	Fellowship of Christian Athletes
GPA.....	Grade Point Average
IGP .....	Individual Graduation Plan
NCLB.....	No Child Left Behind
PACE .....	Program of Alternative Certification for Educators
PASS.....	Palmetto Assessment of State Standards
PLC .....	Professional Learning Community
SAT.....	Scholastic Assessment Test
SSSC.....	State Social Studies Council

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Since at least the 1970s, two competing paradigms have characterized American educational reform in the United States. The first strategy was the accountability movement, which bureaucratized the educational system through state standards and national, state, and district-level tests (Darling-Hammond, 1997). The accountability movement culminated with the passage of No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) (2002), a federal law requiring states to create a systematic assessment program to gauge student mastery of standards. Since NCLB, school leadership adopted a business-like approach to running school systems (Gergen & Vanourek, 2008; Hess, 2008). In contrast to the accountability movement, the second strategy emerged from education researchers who advocated for the professionalization of the teaching force (Goodlad, 1990; Goodlad, 1994; Holmes Group, 1986). Professionalizing education frequently meant opposing the bureaucratic, business-like standardization of education (Giroux, 2012; Ravitch, 2014).

Connected to professionalizing the teachers, teacher leadership developed a concept for harnessing the leadership potential of teachers to improve student achievement and reconfiguring the organizational structure of schools to allow for bottom-up change to

occur (Darling-Hammond, Bullmaster, & Cobb, 1995; Smylie & Denny, 1990; Steel & Craig, 2006; York-Barr & Duke, 2004). Within the literature on teacher leaders, the role of department chair is recognized as a significant formal leadership position for classroom teachers (Katzanmeyer & Moller, 2009; Silva, Gimbert & Nolan, 2000). However, research on teacher leadership is generally limited to English, mathematics, and science (Lotter, Yow, & Peters, 2014; Muncey-Silva & Munoz, 2012; Robbins & Zirinsky, 1996; Siskin, 1991; Tushie, 2008; Yow, 2007; Yow, 2010). The lack of research on social studies teacher leaders is attributed to the general lack of standardized testing associated with social studies (Campbell, Melville, & Bartley, 2012; Melville & Wallace, 2007). Therefore, a gap in the literature on teacher leadership exists in the area of social studies teacher leaders. In addition, because social studies teachers are predominately male (Fitchett (2010), female teacher leaders are in a position to lead men. Consequently, research pertaining to female social studies teacher leaders is unexplored.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the intersection of teacher leadership, social studies departments, the accountability movement, and gender leadership characteristics. In general, I was interested in understanding the lived experience of female social studies teacher leaders serving a department chairs in public high schools. In particular, I was interested in how female social studies department chairs define the concept of leadership and how they demonstrate the characteristics of teacher leadership. Most important, I was interested in understanding how female social studies department chairs negotiate leading teachers in a potentially masculine department within schools. To investigate this phenomenon, I used grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006; Glasser & Strauss,

1967) to conduct a comparative case study (Glesne, 2011; Maxwell, 2013; Merriam, 2009) of two female social studies department chairs.

### **The Accountability Movement**

For the past four decades, state and federal education policy in the United States has focused on standardization and increased accountability. In the early 1980s, Ronald Reagan's National Commission on Excellence in Education (1983) concluded that United States' school system was in failing, resulting in the United States losing the intellectual and economic battle with other countries. The resulting report, *A Nation at Risk*, boldly stated that "[i]f an unfriendly foreign power had attempted to impose on America the mediocre educational performance that exists today, we might well have viewed it as an act of war" (p. 5). Having assessed the nation's schools, the commission made recommendations for improvement in the areas of content, standards and expectations, time, teaching, leadership and financial support. While these recommendations included ideas such as sound instruction in the core areas of science, math, English, and social studies (p. 24-24), decreasing student absenteeism (p. 30), and improved criteria for entering teacher education program (p. 30), the accountability movement hinged on the report's call for "rigorous and measurable standards... for academic performance and student conduct" (p. 27). Most notable was the inclusion of a plan for "[s]tandardized tests of achievement... [to] be administered at major transition points from one level of schooling to another and particularly from high school to college or work" (p. 28). Consequently, the politically-motivated accountability movement resulting from *A Nation at Risk* advocated measuring and monitoring student achievement through standardized assessments.

By the mid-1990s, the accountability movement resulted in a more bureaucratized educational system consisting of state standards and national, state, and district-level tests (Darling-Hammond, 1997). At the classroom level, standardization of education “meant a focus on standardized education procedures, prescribed curricula... and test-based strategies tied to tracking” (Drake, 2012, p. 28). Finally, with the passage of NCLB (2002), the accountability movement resulted in a federal mandate for public schools to systematically assess children’s mastery of standards. However, Hess (2008) observed that the accountability movement split into two groups following the passage of NCLB. The first “camp” focused on “improving schools and systems” using “professional development, mentoring, [and] rigorous curricula” combined with “formal accountability systems, standards, and incentives... [for] driving systematic change and the adoption of best practices” (p. 3). The second “camp” advocated market-based solutions such as school choice, vouchers, and charter schools to stimulate competition and initiate “sufficient pressure to force meaningful reform of existing districts” (p. 3). However, critics have argued that neither group’s strategy has the potential for success until a supply-side strategy of deregulation in education occurs (Finn, 2008).

As the accountability movement adapted a business-model approach to educational reform, comparisons of the educational system to companies such as Microsoft, U.S. Airways, McDonalds, Disney, and Federal Express were drawn (Gergen & Vanourek, 2008; Hess, 2008). Finn (2008) argued that to fully integrate “Adam Smith’s market mechanisms” (p. 165) into the school system, reform must move beyond standardized testing to include an audit and inspection system for schools, parent feedback on the school, and data aggregation to produce a school rankings with the

complete set information made public(p. 174-175). Narrowing the focus to teachers in a school system designed around a business model, Hess (2008) noted that quality control of teachers is centered on “collecting test-score data for students... and using those to compute value-added measures of teachers” (p. 17). Likewise, Gergen and Vanourek (2008) argued that talented teachers would thrive when the “layers of regulations and procedures” are removed and policy creates “environments dramatically more conducive to innovation and excellence, including meaningful standards, an embrace of choice and competition, full funding for charter schools and other innovative models, astute deregulation, and results-based accountability” (p. 42). Thus, having accomplished the establishment of standards and standardized tests as called for in *A Nation at Risk*, the accountability movement has shifted focus to the creation of school system based on market-based strategies.

### **An Alternate Strategy for Reform: Teacher Professionalization**

Examining the culture within schools, Lortie (1975) observed that the cultural norms of isolation and conservatism, combined with the bureaucratic hierarchy which has characterized the school system for a century, prevent reform and innovation in public schools. Specifically, Lortie concluded that teaching could not be considered a profession because of sociological characteristics such as professional isolation, proportionally low societal status, and lack of power within the organization. Thus, Lortie noted that to “professionalize” teachers need to reject institutional “conservatism” to become “dynamic” and “changing” in nature, “produce intricate arrangements of collegial judgement” as collaborators, and embrace “professionally oriented values” to achieve “professional status in a centralized system” (p. 228). Lortie’s conclusion that teaching

did not have the characteristics of a profession, prompted theorizing how to professionalize education.

In the 1980s, reports emerged that contained proposals for professionalization of public school teachers. *A Nation at Risk* (1983) contained recommendations to re-conceptualize and professionalize. For example, the commission suggested creating “career ladders for teachers that distinguish among the beginning instructor, the experienced teacher, and the master teacher” and that “[m]aster teachers should be involved in designing teacher preparation programs and in supervising teachers during their probationary years” (p. 31). However, such recommendations were overshadowed by standards and testing. Three years after *A Nation at Risk*, The Holmes Group (1986) observed that teachers “carry out a late twentieth century assignment while locked into a mid-nineteenth century job description” in a system in which teachers “have no time left to learn themselves, to be productive scholars, or even to do justice to their students' homework” (pp. 6-7). As a result, The Holmes Group advocated elevating the profession by elevating the criteria and rigor for teacher education programs under the belief that colleges and universities should serve as a professional gatekeeper into the teaching profession. In addition, the group proposed a three-tiered certification with the ascending levels of instructor, professional teacher, and career professional. Professional levels would be obtained through criteria such as instructional achievement and professional development in content and pedagogy.

Professionalizing teachers was further advanced by Goodlad (1990; 1994). Although writing about school-university partnerships and the importance of improving pre-service teacher education, Goodlad advanced ideas that served to articulate a



professional educator as the accountability movement gathered public support. Goodlad (1990) noted that “[t]eachers have grown accustomed to hearing alternating blame and praise. The words of condemnation have been particularly harsh this time” (p.11). Contradicting the accountability movement, Goodlad (1994) stated that “good teachers are driven in their daily work by neither the goal of improving the nation’s economic competitiveness nor that of improving the school’s test scores” (p. 203). Instead, Goodlad (1990) claimed that all teachers are “responsible stewards of the schools in which they teach... to make sure that programs and structures do not atrophy” (p. 44). Taking this concept further, Goodlad (1994) being a steward of a school “means that these teachers must join with colleagues in creating and renewing schools that fulfill their educative mission in the face of conflicting expectations” (p. 196-197). In other words, teachers – working in a professional capacity – must be seen as the center of educational reform. As Goodlad concluded that, as long as teachers are viewed as maintainers of “established classroom norms” and “simply cloned by teachers already in place” educational reform and improvement will not occur. Instead, the “[e]nactment of a new vision depends on the production of teachers who understand and are committed to it and who possess the knowledge and skills to implement it” (p. 205).

By the late 1990s, the accountability movement increased the bureaucratized educational system consisting of state standards and national, state, and district-level tests (Darling-Hammond, 1997). Darling-Hammond (1997) noted that teaching was “evolving from an occupation that the public has historically considered routine... to a profession” (p. 294). However, Darling-Hammond noted that the professionalization was occurring “piecemeal” as evidenced by new curricula and goals of teacher education programs, new

teacher certification designs, the creation of the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards, and “grassroots networks... to rethink schools” (p. 294). However, Darling-Hammond observed, while “professions assume responsibility for defining, transmitting, and enforcing standards of practice, teachers currently have little control over standards setting” (p. 300-301). This aligns with Lortie’s (1975) observation 22 years earlier that a teachers’ position of being isolated at the bottom of the hierarchy prevented such empowerment. Thus, Darling-Hammond (1997) determined that teachers must be at the forefront of developing and sharing “shared knowledge... through professional education, licensing, and ongoing peer review” (p. 298). To that end, she articulated three steps to the professionalization of teachers. First, teachers must create a robust, collective base of professional knowledge. Second, teachers must exhibit a dedication to the well-being of children. Third, the empowerment of teachers must occur through professional knowledge development not institutional control and mandates.

In the five years following Darling-Hammond’s proposal for professionalization, NCLB was passed and the accountability movement began to incorporate market-based theories into education reform. Ravitch (2014) critiqued the market-based theories of the accountability movement as “corporate reform” spearheaded by “major foundations, Wall Street hedge fund managers, entrepreneurs, and the U.S. Department of Education” (p. 19). To this end, Ravitch advanced the idea that “[r]eform is a misnomer, because the advocates for this cause seek not to reform public education but to transform it into an entrepreneurial sector of the economy” (p. 14). Additionally, Giroux (2012) described “America is being shaped by anti-educational reform movement that uses the politics of humiliation to for creating stereotypes about public schooling, teachers, and marginalized

youth” (p.26). Giroux defined “politics of humiliation” as the “institutionalization and widespread adoption of a set of values, politics, and symbolic practices... [that] lead to inexorably to hardship, suffering, and despair” (p. 14). Yet both Ravitch (2014) and Giroux (2012) called for continued elevation of teaching to professional status. In this, Giroux (2012) he observed that, as a result of current policies built on accountability and market-based solutions, “teachers are being deskilled, unceremoniously removed from the process of school governance, largely reduced to technicians, or subordinated to the authority of security guards” (p. 1-2). This suggests a de-professionalization of teachers in the current policies.

Therefore, Giroux described teachers as “public intellectuals” who are “the most important component in the learning process for students” and serve “as a moral compass to gauge how seriously a society invests in its youth and in the future” (p.1-2). Ravitch (2014) outlined a process for professionalization centered on improving credentialing procedures for teachers, shaping the teaching force into skilled and collaborative organization, and creating school cultures in which teachers have the power to individualize instruction and question policies “without fear of reprisal” (p. 276). Thus, nearly forty years after Lortie (1975) concluded teaching was not a profession, educational researchers, reformers, and theorists continue to advocate for policies and organizational changes to elevate teachers to a professional status.

### **School Leadership in the Accountability Era**

Leadership in schools is changing due to the accountability movement and market-based reform efforts. Discussing the potential role of school leadership in the market-based reform model, Gergen and Vanourek (2008) noted that the school system

needs a business-style operational system in which principals, superintendents, and other “senior leaders” have “a clearer understanding of the ‘division of labor’ across their respective roles, both in terms of where their purviews differ and where they converge” (p. 41). In this, Gergen and Vanourek advocated for principals to have “wide-ranging administrative autonomy for how things are done (process) and accountability for ensuring that things do in fact get done (outcomes)” (p. 41). Explaining the lessons learned from the charter school movement, Candler (2008) noted that successful school leadership is limited to principals. Candler argues that strong, knowledgeable school board members critical because they “have legal accountability for school performance” (p. 157). Gergen and Vanourek (2008) and Candler’s (2008) proposals represent suggested structural and organizational changes aligned with the market-based reform agenda.

However, due to the focus on test scores following NCLB, school-level administrators moved beyond theoretical discussions of becoming instructional leaders and are assuming an active role as instructional leaders in their schools (Reitzug, West, & Angel, 2008). As principals crafted themselves as instructional leaders in their schools, Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) developed a list of twenty-one characteristics of leadership principals need to reform schools. Specifically the authors noted that focusing on instructional innovation is regarded as second-order change. Cuban (1988) explained that second-order change is deep change that results in fundamental organizational change and requires members of an organization to re-conceptualize problems to discover solutions and make profound shifts in action to enact change. Because teachers’ philosophies regarding instruction and assessment are deeply personal (Sykes, 1999;

Wormeli, 2006), to change a teacher's philosophy and practice constitutes second order-change. Thus, according to Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005), second-order change is generated by school leaders who possess the following characteristics: (a) Knowledge of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment; (b) Optimizer; (c) Intellectual Stimulation; (d) Change Agent; (e) Monitoring/Evaluating; (f) Flexibility; (g) Ideals/Beliefs.

However, the focus has primarily been on what board members, superintendents, principals, and assistant principals can do as leaders in the era of testing, standards, and market-based reform.

### **Teacher Leadership**

Although the accountability movement gained momentum among politicians and business leaders in 1980s and 1990s, education researchers remained on Lortie's (1975) conclusions that school organization hindered innovation and that teaching was not a profession. For example, The Holmes Group (1986) proposed the creation of the Career Professional Teacher, classroom teachers who would "advance the field of education" by focusing on "educational policy and improvement" and "improving the educational effectiveness" of other teachers (p. 40). Other researchers followed, resulting in a body of work claiming that that to reform education teachers and administrators must re-conceptualize the role of teachers (Darling-Hammond, Bullmaster, & Cobb, 1995; Smylie & Denny, 1990) and the school system must reorganize (Smylie & Denny, 1990; Steel & Craig, 2006; York-Barr & Duke, 2004). Steel and Craig (2006) criticized the "industrial model of education" and pointed to organizational reforms that will lead to focused on the "the empowerment and professional development of teachers" (p. 677). Within the areas of organizational reform and teacher empowerment and development,

the term “teacher leadership” is often used. When conducting a literature review on teacher leadership, York-Barr and Duke (2004), found that, because researchers use many criteria when studying teacher leaders, defining “teacher leadership” is difficult. One criterion for conceptualizing teacher leadership is the identification of formal and informal roles (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001).

In the two decades coinciding with the growth of the accountability movement, a concept of teacher leadership emerged from education researchers and theorists. First, teacher leaders are actively engaged in their own growth and development (Dempsey, 1992; Harrison & Killion, 2009; Lieberman & Miller, 2004; Rogus, 1988), especially as it relates to being a scholar and specialist in both content and pedagogy (Dempsey, 1992; Harrison & Killion, 2009; Lieberman & Miller, 2004; Wasley, 1992). In addition, teacher leaders are teachers who work lead with vision (Harrison & Killion, 2009; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009; Lieberman & Miller, 2004; Rogus, 1988). Often, this vision of education involves the professionalization of teachers through encouraging others to assume leadership roles (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009; Rogus, 1988; Lieberman & Miller, 2004; Wasley, 1992). In this, teacher leaders seek to create communities of professional educators (Dempsey, 1992; Harrison & Killion, 2009; Lieberman & Miller, 2004; Wasley, 1992). Another trend is that teacher leaders are reflective in their work, often conducting action research on their practice (Dempsey, 1992; Harrison & Killion, 2009; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009; Lieberman & Miller, 2004). In the era of accountability, teachers leaders are seen a data specialists (Harrison & Killion, 2009). Yet they are also regarded as agents of change in their schools and district (Harrison & Killion, 2009; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009; Lieberman & Miller, 2004).

A formal role of teacher leadership is that of department chair (Katzanmeyer & Moller, 2009; Silva, Gimbert & Nolan, 2000). However, the duality of being both a classroom teacher and holding a quasi-administrative position makes the role of a department chair ambiguous (DeRoche, Kujawa & Hunsaker, 1988; Kelley & Salisbury, 2013; Zepeda & Kruskamp, 2007). When considering the personnel of a strong instructional leadership team within school, Neumerski, (2012) included teachers, specifically department chairs and instructional coaches, as integral to a strong instructional leadership team. However, because the accountability movement has not altered the organizational hierarchy of the school system, Printy (2008) noted that department chairs are critical in shaping the instructional growth of teachers because principals can be removed from the instructional leadership process in the current school structure. Therefore, teacher leaders are important to carrying out the mandates of accountability by serving as instructional leaders. Consequently, the topics of accountability, professionalization, instructional leadership, and teacher leadership converge at the position of department chair.

### **The Social Studies Department in the Era of Accountability**

**The masculine social studies department.** Unique to social studies department is disproportionate number of men and athletic coaches compared to other departments. In analyzing data National Center for Educational Statistics, Fitchett (2010) found that sixty-seven percent of social studies teachers are male; whereas mathematics, science and English are, at most, fifty-three percent male. Additionally, data from the *Survey of the Status of Social Studies* (Fitchett & Van Fossen, 2012), a nationwide survey of social studies teachers, indicates that eighty percent of social studies teachers nationwide coach

a sport at some point during the school year. Recently, Stacy (2014) studied the historical roots of social studies teachers as athletic coaches and found that social studies curriculum and department culture are often embedded with the masculinity of athletics. The connection between social studies and athletic coaching is so strong that pre-service social studies teachers view being able to coach athletics as vital to securing a job (Chiodo, Martin, & Rowan, 2002; Weller, 2002). Because social studies teachers are likely to coach, sharing the coaching culture enters the social studies department. Rog (1984) noted the power structure of the coaching culture places priority on coaching over teaching and those teachers who veer toward teaching typically become more professionally active.

**The effects of standardization in social studies.** High school social studies courses in the United States are not immune to the standardization of the accountability movement. In discussing the politics of official knowledge, Apple (1993) used social studies curriculum to demonstrate how standards represent the political “conflict over what some regard as simply neutral descriptions of the world and others regard as elite conceptions that empower some groups while disempowering others” (p. 222). More specifically, standardization of social studies curriculum contradicts the concept of social studies as dynamic, fluid, interpretive discipline for social awareness and social justice (Chandler, 2009). In addition to the standardization of curriculum, standardized testing has entered the social studies classrooms. Although NCLB (2002) did not mandate standardized tests in social studies, twelve states included social studies as part of either an end-of-course exam program or exit exam program in public high schools (McIntosh, 2012). However, social studies is tested less frequently compared to subject areas such a



mathematics and language arts (Chudowsky, Kobler, Stephanier, & Hamilton, 2002; McIntosh, 2012). However, due to the pressures and constrictions of standardized testing, social studies teachers in the period since NCLB incorporated teacher-centered instructional strategies centered on test preparation and less student-centered instructional strategies focused on deeper thinking and citizenship development (Misco, Patterson & Doppin, 2011; Vogler, 2005; Vogler & Virtue, 2007).

### **Purpose of the Present Study**

Studies have been conducted on teacher leaders who teach English (Muncey-Silva & Munoz, 2012; Robbins & Zirinsky, 1996), mathematics (Yow, 2007; Yow, 2010), and science (Lotter, Yow, & Peters, 2014; Siskin, 1991; Tushie, 2008). In addition, researchers have investigated teacher leaders in mathematics and science because they are tested areas and, as a result, the impact of leadership is measured in student performance outcomes (Campbell, Melville, & Bartley, 2012; Melville & Wallace, 2007). The studies on social studies teacher leadership focus on department collaboration (Eagle, 2013; Rouse, 2007) and pre-service teachers (Gandy, Pierce, and Smith, 2009). When social studies is included in teacher leadership studies, it is combined with the other core areas (Conley, 2011; Klar, 2010; Sanocki, 2013; Wettersten, 1992; Wettersten, 1993; Zepeda & Kruskamp, 2007). As such, there are gaps in literature on social studies teachers as teacher leaders.

Department chairs serve as teacher leaders in a formal role (York-Barr & Duke, 2004) and play a vital role in instructional supervision in the ear of accountability (Neumerski, 2012). Considering departments as subcultures within schools, department chairs have influence the establish norms within the department (Siskin, 1991). Yet,

social studies departments are a masculinized context (Yoder, 2001) and influenced by the masculinity of athletics (Stacy, 2014). Considering that sixty-seven percent of social studies teachers are male (Fitchett, 2010) and eighty percent of social studies teachers coach a sport (Fitchett & Van Fossen, 2012), how do female social studies department chairs lead within a masculine subculture in the school? Therefore, the purpose of my study is to understand how female social studies teacher leaders experience leadership opportunities in public high schools. In particular, I want to understand how female social studies department chairs navigate leading teachers in a potentially masculine discipline in public high schools. To investigate this, I will use grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006; Coyne and Cowley, 2006; Glasser & Strauss, 1967; Stern, 1980) to conduct as comparative case study (Glesne, 2011; Maxwell, 2013; Merriam, 2009) of two female social studies department chairs.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Because the research questions for my study focus on female social studies department chairs as leaders, this literature review focuses on several domains pertinent to the study. The main areas are: leadership theories, teacher leadership, department chairs, social studies department culture, and gender and leadership. Because I am using grounded theory, I created a literature review that represents active data analysis under grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006; Glasser & Strauss, 1967) and under the research designed I created based on Coyne and Cowley (2006) and Stern (1980). Bogdan and Bilken (1992) noted that creating a lengthy literature review prior to the initiation of a qualitative study may serve to further bias the researcher. Although Charmaz (2006) pointed out that this is not to be construed as an “excuse” for “careless” a review of existing research on the phenomenon entering the study (p. 166).

#### **Review Method**

Because the purpose of the review was to construct a conceptual frame for the study and to gain a deeper understanding of conceptualization of leadership in the domains of education, business leadership, gender, and organizational structures, I began by reading several general books on business leadership, starting with Maxwell (2011). I

also selected books on business leadership because incorporating business models to public schools was a significant trend at the time of my study (Gergen & Vanourek, 2008; Hess, 2008). I then turned my focus to teacher leadership by reading influential works on teacher leadership by York-Barr and Duke (2004) and Katzanmeyer and Moller (2009). From there, I used references within those publications to point toward influential publications in the field. For example, from York-Barr and Duke's (2004) literature review on teacher leadership, I located early conceptual pieces by Rogus (1988) and Dempsey (1992). I then included non-refereed publications that were also used as references in peer-reviewed publications using the assumption that such works are held in high regard by education researchers. Examples of this include worked by Lortie (1975) and Fullan (1993). Finally, I delved into the research on social studies teachers found in journals and dissertations. As a result, my review contained a mix a recent scholarship, seminal works, and practitioner friendly pieces.

### **Review of the Literature**

#### **Concepts of Leadership – Making a School-Business Connection**

When thinking about educational leadership broadly, one must consider the characteristics and skills of successful leaders identified by researchers. Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) conducted a meta-analysis on the literature related to school leadership. The authors identified twenty-one characteristics leaders need to improve schools. The characteristics are: (a) affirmation, (b) change agent, (c) contingent rewards, (d) communication, (e) culture, (f) discipline, (g) flexibility, (h) focus, (i) ideals/beliefs, (j) input, (k) intellectual stimulation, (l) involvement in curriculum, instruction, and assessment, (m) knowledge of curriculum, instruction, and assessment, (n)

monitoring/evaluating, (o) optimizer, (p) order, (q) outreach, (r) relationships, (s) resources, (t) situational awareness, and (u) visibility. However, the authors also noted that change in schools can be incremental or substantial. For leaders seeking substantial change, they must possess the following seven characteristics: (a) knowledge of curriculum, instruction, and assessment, (b) optimizer, (c) intellectual stimulation, (d) change agent, (e) monitoring and evaluating, (f) flexibility, (g) ideals/beliefs. The question that arises from this is how these traits, identified specifically for school leaders, align with broader concepts of leadership, specifically those in business.

A motivational speaker and writer who focused on developing business leaders, Maxwell (2011) argued that leaders move through five levels of leadership. The first, and lowest, level identified was *position*. In this level, people follow a person because of the position he has in an organization. The second level identified was *permission*. In this level, people follow a person because the leader builds valuable relationships with them. The third level identified was *production*. In this level leaders are able to use the relationship from level two to generate production among the staff. The fourth level identified was *people development*. In the level, leaders help others grow as leaders and create loyalty. The fifth, and highest, level identified was *pinnacle*. On this level, a leader possesses a reputation as a strong leader, their organization has a positive reputation, and the leader, thus, transcends their position, organization, and industry. Maxwell wrote for business leaders and institutions, never suggesting that the structure be re-conceptualized.

Wheres Maxwell (2011) wrote from a business perspective, Bolman and Deal (2001) wrote that leaders must be guided by a strong moral and ethical –almost spiritual – center. The authors noted that leaders can provide four gifts: (a) *love*, (b) *authorship*, (c)

*power*, and (d) *significance*. The gift of *love* is showing people that they are important as individuals through establishing relationships. The gift of *authorship* refers to cases whereby leaders provide room for creativity and trust people generate solutions to problems. The gift of *power* refers to leaders providing freedom to make decisions and influence the organization. To this end, leaders should not monopolize power as organizations in which employees have no power are gripped with rebellion. The gift of *significance* refers to the creations of ceremonies and rituals that allow members to feel part of a shared history and future. Bolman and Deal wrote for businesses and educational institutions, yet they moved the discussion of leadership into the area of reorganization by suggesting that hierarchical structures should be altered.

While Maxwell (2011) and Bolman and Deal (2001) were motivational speakers who wrote for an audience of business, educational, and athletic leaders, Barnes (2011) specialized business management and organizational structure who wrote for an academics audience. Barnes identified several important characteristics that successful businesses and leaders must possess. First, organizations and leaders must combine planning with improvising by setting goals, but allowing for flexibility when needed. Second, organizations are successful when socially responsible values and vision are imbedded in the corporate culture. Third, organizations are successful when they maintain creative control by insourcing all possible functions through internal leadership and specialization. Fourth, leaders and organizations must embrace innovation, to advance skills and move to the top percentile of similar organizations. Fifth, transformational leaders motivate others to excel and generate dynamic organizations. Sixth, flattening organizational structures via shared leadership leads to stronger decision

making. Although Barnes applied these concepts to Fortune 500 businesses, he used the business organization of Grateful Dead as the case study through which he developed these of concepts of business management. Like Bolman and Deal (2001), Barnes discussed the restructuring of organizations away from hierarchical models.

Like Maxwell (2011), Boleman and Deal (2001), and Barnes (2011), Stephen R. Covey often focused his leadership work on business practices. However, in *The Leader in Me*, Covey (2008) focused on establishing leadership programs in schools. To this end, Covey offered “The 4 Imperatives of Leadership.” The first imperative Covey offered was inspiring trust through three steps: “modeling” or serving as a good example, “relating” or building relationships with others, and “teaching” or influencing (p.167-168). The second imperative Covey noted was to clarify purpose by articulating vision, expectations, and strategies. The third imperative Covey identified was to align systems through engaging stakeholders, positioning leaders with the system to enact change, developing talent, and rewarding success. The forth imperative Covey recognized was to “unleash talent” by allowing “empowered” teachers to implement the vision of reform (p. 179-180). In this, Covey acknowledged that principals may feel a loss of control as teachers gain more power, indicating that “The 4 Imperatives of Leadership” calls for a restructuring of organizations.

In considering the four books on leadership written for wider audiences in business management and leadership, it is important to return to education. Several key characteristics identified by Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) are found within the previously discussed books. First, Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) identified a school leader’s ability to build relationships, meaning “an awareness of the personal lives

of teachers and staff,” as important to successful schools (p. 58). In the larger literature on leadership, relationship-building is important for showing employees they are valued (Bolman & Deal, 2001), improves productivity (Maxwell, 2011), and inspires trust in leadership (Covey, 2008). Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) also noted that flexibility is critical as it demonstrates a leader’s ability to “adapt” to “the current situation” and to be “comfortable with dissent” (p.49). Likewise, Barnes (2011) noted that the ability to veer away from a plan and improvise in the face of unforeseen problems is an important skill for leaders to develop. Next, Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) noted that school leaders must build a positive culture for teachers and students, which can mean, as Bolman and Deal (2001) described, finding “hope,” significance,” “meaning,” and “confidence” in their work (p.120). Along these lines, Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) identified affirmation and rewards, recognizing accomplishments, as an important for school leaders. This aligns with concepts of recognizing progress (Covey, 2008) and recognizing strong work through the concept of authorship (Bolman & Deal, 2001).

In their meta-analysis of the research on educational leadership, Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) also found that strong leaders created a vision of the school centered on shared ideals and beliefs. This aligns with Covey (2008), who noted that a vision for an organization must be focused on “realistic goals” (p. 171). Meanwhile, Barnes (2011) found that “[p]eople for whom values are important expect their work environment to respect those values” (p. 43) and those values and beliefs must drive the organization. In addition, Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) determined that the characteristics of Change Agent and Innovators are important in that principals must be willing to



challenge the status quo. Covey (2008) hinted at this concept by stating that “unleashing” teachers is important but then assures that principals will not “lose control” (p. 181). In contrast, Bolman and Deal (2001) supported the “rejection of institutional norms” by turning “the organizational pyramid on its side” (p. 111). Likewise, Barnes (2011) advocated shared leadership structures because “[w]hen employees have power. . . .they grow more loyal to the organization, work harder, and contribute better, more creative ideas” (pp. 180-181). However, the one issue that Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) did not identify in the literature on educational leadership is the development of leaders within the ranks of teachers. However, Maxwell (2011), Bolman and Deal (2001), Barnes (2011), and Covey (2008) all noted that fostering leadership in others is an important leadership characteristic. This begs the question: Why is the development of leadership among teachers not found in the meta-analysis educational leadership research conducted by Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) but the development of leadership among employees is critical in the works of Maxwell (2011), Bolman and Deal (2001), Barnes (2011), and Covey (2008)?

### **Influence of the Participants: Writings from the Business World**

Prior to my study, I selected works related to business leadership (Barnes, 2011; Boleman & Deal, 2001; Covey, 2008; Maxwell, 2011) because the accountability movement morphed into a movement to apply business practices to public education (Gergen & Vanourek, 2008; Hess, 2008). During my study, the work of Goleman (2000) and Lencioni (2002) emerged from the participants. For this reason, I briefly included a review of the work. First, Daniel Goleman (2000) identified six leadership styles based on his earlier work with emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1995). Writing in the *Harvard*

*Business Review*, Goleman (2000) determined that the six leadership styles are (a) *coercive*, (b) *authoritative*, (c) *affiliative*, (d) *democratic*, (e) *pacesetting*, and (f) *coaching*. The two styles Goleman deemed negative were *coercive* and *pacesetting*. *Coercive* leaders lead by giving directions and orders and *pacesetting* leaders lead by establishing performance goals. However, these leaders do not demonstrate empathy for their workers. In contrast, Goleman noted that authoritative, affiliative, democratic, and coaching leadership styles are positive as these leaders demonstrate a strong reliance on emotional intelligence indicators such as empathy, emotional awareness, and relationship building (p. 80). Ultimately, Goleman identified positive leadership as consisting of strong relationships with employees because the “business environment is continually changing, and a leader must respond in kind” (p. 90).

Where Goleman (2000) focused on emotion and connectivity in leaders, Lencioni (2002) focused on how leaders can change the habits of workers. In his book *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team: A Leadership Fable*, Patrick Lencioni (2002) identified five dysfunctions that leaders must overcome to create successful organizations. First, leaders must address *Absence of Trust*. According to Lencioni, trust is “the heart of a functioning, cohesive team” (p. 195) and leaders must demonstrate vulnerability to create a culture of trust. Second, leaders must address *Fear of Conflict*. Lencioni argued that “productive conflict” (p. 202) is critical to organizational growth and leaders must “demonstrate restraint when their people engage in conflict, and allow resolution to occur naturally” (p. 206). Third, leaders must address *Lack of Commitment*. Because commitment is grounded in “clarity and buy-in” (p.207), leaders must establish deadlines, align members with a common vision, and create plans for “worst-case scenarios” (p. 211). Fourth, leaders

must address *Avoidance of Accountability*. Lencioni defined accountability as the “willingness of team members to call their peers on performance or behaviors that might hurt the team” (p. 212). To remove the dysfunction of *Avoidance of Accountability*, successful leaders “encourage and allow the team to serve as the first and primary accountability mechanism” (p. 215). Fifth, leaders must address *Inattention to Results*. Successful organizations concentrate “on specific objectives and clearly defined outcomes” (p. 216). Leaders must create a results-focused environment by being “selfless and objective” and “reserve rewards and recognition for those who make real contributions” (p. 220) to the success of the organization. Lencioni concluded that by addressing these five dysfunctions, leaders can move organizations to success.

### **A Background to Teacher Leadership**

Claiming the United States’ school system was dire straits and losing the intellectual and economic competition with other countries, *A Nation at Risk* called for “rigorous and measurable standards... for academic performance and student conduct” (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983, p.27). The accountability movement resulting from *A Nation at Risk* advocated for standardized tests to measure student achievement. By the mid-1990s, the accountability movement produced a bureaucratized educational system consisting of state standards, common curriculum, and national, state, and district-level tests (Darling-Hammond, 1997). The accountability movement ultimately resulted in the passage of the NCLB (2002), which, under federal mandate, public schools are to systematically assess children’s mastery of standards.

Although the accountability movement gained momentum among politicians and business leaders in 1980s and 1990s, education researchers remained on Lortie’s (1975)

conclusions that school organization hindered innovation. For example, The Holmes Group (1986) proposed the creation of the Career Professional Teacher, classroom teachers who would “advance the field of education” by focusing on “educational policy and improvement” and “improving the educational effectiveness” of other teachers (p. 40). Other researchers followed, resulting in a body of work claiming that that to reform education teachers and administrators must re-conceptualize the role of teachers (Darling-Hammond, Bullmaster, & Cobb, 1995; Smylie & Denny, 1990) and the school system must reorganize (Smylie & Denny, 1990; Steel & Craig, 2006; York-Barr & Duke, 2004). Steel and Craig (2006) criticized the “industrial model of education” and pointed to organizational reforms that will lead to focused on the “the empowerment and professional development of teachers” (p. 677). Within the areas of organizational reform and teacher empowerment and development, the term “teacher leadership” is often used. When conducting a literature review on teacher leadership, York-Barr and Duke (2004), found that, since researchers use many criteria when studying teacher leaders, defining “teacher leadership” is difficult. In conceptualizing teacher leadership, formal and informal roles are identified (Katzanmeyer & Moller, 2001).

### **Conceptualizing Teacher Leadership**

#### **Four Significant Articles on Teacher Leadership**

In reviewing the literature following The Holmes Group’s (1986) proposal of the Career Professional Teacher concept to move teachers into a deep realm of professionalization, articles by Rogus (1988), Dempsey (1992), Fessler and Ungaretti (1994), and Harrison and Killion (2009) stood out for both their similarities and for their progression of the concept. Rogus’s (1988) theoretic piece conceptualized teacher leaders

as those who *pursue professional development* by reflecting on their present abilities and working to improve and *empower their peers* “in a way that leader and follower raise one another to higher levels” (p. 49). Teacher leaders also *create a vision for education* by weighing positive and negative outcomes in comparison to present condition and *communicate the vision to their peers* by through combination of passion and dedication. Finally, teacher leaders *generate trust among their peers* through consistent action.

Four years after Rogus (1988), Dempsey (1992) conceptualized teacher leadership images using four images: *Teacher as fully functioning person*, *teacher as reflective practitioner*, *teacher as scholar*, and *teacher as partner in learning*. Teacher leaders fulfill the *teacher as fully functioning person* image when they focus on professional development and growth. Likewise, teacher leaders embody the *teacher as reflective practitioner* image when they reflect for the purpose of professional growth. In addition, teacher leaders exemplify the *teacher as scholar* image when they engage in the learning of new knowledge and instructional methods. Finally, teacher leaders demonstrate the *teacher as partner in learning* image when they encourage collaboration among individual teachers. The progression from Rogus (1988) to Dempsey (1992) is marked by Dempsey’s inclusion of content and pedagogy expert and collaborator.

Following Dempsey (1992), Fessler and Ungaretti’s (1994) identified eight teacher leadership options. Fessler and Ungaretti designed the options to be simultaneously concrete and flexible because they observed “policy makers and administrators who view teachers as pawns in the system who must be moved to predetermined positions and roles to achieve externally defined goals” (p. 211). Likewise, the authors observed that “top-down view of leadership and change” only results in

“short-term effects” (p. 211). As a result, the teacher leadership options are: (a) *Teacher as Preservice Teacher Educator*, (b) *Teacher as Mentor to New Teachers*, (c) *Teacher as Researcher*, (d) *Teacher as Organizational Leader*, (e) *Teacher as Staff Developer*, *Teacher as Peer Coach*, (f) *Teacher as Curriculum Developer*, and (g) *Other Leadership Activities*. These options captured Fessler and Ungaretti’s belief that “sustained change cannot be accomplished without tapping the rich reservoir of leadership residing at the grassroots of every schools – classroom teachers” (p. 211). As a result, the teacher leadership options are critical to “[e]mpowering teachers” with leadership opportunities that brings their “expertise to the problems of school improvement” (p. 221).

Fifteen years after Fessler and Ungaretti (1994), Harrison and Killion (2009) identified ten roles teacher perform as teacher leaders to improve and reform the school system. The ten roles are: (a) Resource Provider; (b) Instructional Specialist; (c) Curriculum Specialist; (d) Classroom Supporter; (e) Learning Facilitator; (f) Mentor; (g) School Leader; (h) Data Coach; (i) Catalyst for Change; and (j) Learner. The common idea in the roles was that teacher leaders “help their colleagues” grow professionally (p74). An additional idea was the adjustment of teacher leadership to the accountability movement as evidenced by the roles of helping teachers follow “the adopted curriculum” (p. 74) and use testing “data to drive classroom instruction” (p. 76). In this, one sees a progression from the theoretical definitions of Rogus (1988), Dempsey (1992) to the more concrete definitions of both Fessler and Ungaretti (1994) and Harrison and Killion (2009).

### **Three Significant Books Conceptualizing Teacher Leadership**

In addition to articles by Rogus (1988), Dempsey (1992), and Harrison and Killion (2009), influential works in conceptualizing teacher leadership include books by Wasley (1991), Lieberman and Miller (2004), and Katzanmeyer and Moller (2009). Written between the Rogus (1988) and Dempsey (1992) articles, Wasley's book (1991) was an early work in teacher leadership. In a study of three teacher leaders Wasley both conceptualized and studied teacher leadership. Wasley determined that constraints to teacher leadership are lack of time, lack of a firm definition, institutional isolation, lack of training, and balancing teaching and leading. In addition, major obstacles in developing teacher leadership include focusing on administrative of instructional work, creating and evaluating leadership positions, understanding context, and developing collaboration. Yet, teacher leadership is a concept of paradoxes as teacher leadership requires shared leadership in a hierarchy, both overt and covert behaviors, and learning from colleagues. However, Wesley concluded that teacher leadership is critical to reform but requires a role change.

Twelve years after Wasley (1992) and two years after NCLB (2002), Lieberman and Miller's (2004) book positioned teacher leadership as an alternative to standardized testing for school reform. Both a study and conceptual work, Lieberman and Miller, through observing four teacher leaders, argued that teacher leaders (a) research their own practice, (b) lead as examples of life-long learning, (c) model experimentation, (d) inspire others through improved practice, (e) work to expand relationships, (f) focus on content, (g) organize novice and veteran teachers, (h) lead with humility, (i) create learning communities, (j) understand context and culture, (k) present their work to others, and (l)

are change agents. Yet, like the concrete definitions found in the Harrison and Killion (2009), Lieberman and Miller (2004) clearly defined the roles of a teacher leader, perhaps an indication of the accountability movement's effect on education.

Finally, Katzenmeyer and Moller's (2009) book, *Awakening the Sleeping Giant: Helping Teachers Develop as Leaders*, was a landmark book in teacher leadership. First published in 1996, the authors defined teacher leaders as those who lead within and beyond the classroom, contribute to a community of leaders and learners, influence other toward improved practice, and accept responsibility for achieving outcomes.

Additionally, Katzenmeyer and Moller noted that strong teacher leaders benefit a school by (a) improving professional efficacy, (b) retaining excellent teachers, (c) overcoming resistance to change, (d) enhancing careers, (e) improving classroom performance, (f) influencing other teachers, (g) improving accountability, and (h) creating sustainable programs. Finally, the authors discussed both formal and informal roles as equally essential to successful schools. Here, one sees a blend of the theoretical definitions and the concrete, accountability movement-driven, definitions.

Five years after Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009) updated their classic text on teacher leadership, the Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium (2011) created seven domains to serve as standards for teacher leadership. The domains were (a) Fostering a Collaborative Culture to Support Educator Development and Student Learning, (b) Accessing and Using Research to Improve Practice and Student Learning, (c) Promoting Professional Learning for Continuous Improvement, (d) Facilitating Improvements in Instruction and Student Learning, (e) Promoting the Use of Assessments and Data for School and District Improvement, (f) Improving Outreach and Collaboration with



Families and Community, and (g) Advocating for Student Learning and the Profession. The domains were created by “a broad array of education organizations, state education agencies, teacher leaders, principals, superintendents, and institutions of higher education” (p. 3). Due to the extensive nature of the domains, the Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium noted, “It is not expected that an individual teacher leader should or could embody the many dimensions of teacher leadership” (p. 9). That stated, the consortium observed that teacher leadership often represents “a pathway to administration” (p. 5) and teacher leaders should work closely with administrators to share “responsibility for the results” their work (p. 23). In this, the Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium appeared to provide teacher leadership domains that support administrative functions in education.

### **Studies on Teacher Leadership**

#### **Focus on the Status Quo**

For the last century, schools have been characterized by a hierarchical bureaucracy with cultural norms of isolationism, autonomy, and conservatism hinders schools from implementing change, reform, and innovation Lortie (1975). Making the issue of school norms more complex is Britzman’s (1986) observation that pre-service teachers replicate traditional norms within a school and institutionalized social control by not resisting hierarchical authority. Advocating for teacher leadership, Steel and Craig (2006) theorized that school leadership be reframed through showing confidence in teachers’ professional judgment, acknowledging the relational nature of schools, recognizing contributions from all levels, giving feedback other than criticism, supporting

teachers as learners, working to reduce teacher isolation, encouraging leadership beyond the classroom.

Early research on teacher leadership was conducted by Mark Smylie. First, Smylie and Denny (1990) conducted an exploratory study examining the responses to teacher leadership through the enactment of a Lead Teacher program. The authors found that teacher leaders defined their role in terms of supporting other teachers, while non-teacher leaders noted that they felt the Lead Teacher program was an elitist and competitive initiative. To that end, Smylie and Denny found that Lead Teachers did not like breaking norms. In another study, Smylie and Brownlee-Conyers (1992) explored the working interactions between teacher leaders and administrators. They observed that teacher leaders were optimistic about their role, but feared hurting relations with students and peers. Smylie and Brownlee-Conyers also found that the least supportive principals were those who saw the teacher leader as a threat to their power and a departure from the status quo. The conclusion from these two studies was that schools must reorganize power structures, develop new positions for teacher leaders, and better develop the concept of teacher leadership (Smylie & Brownlee-Conyers, 1992; Smylie & Denny, 1990)

The re-organization of school structures is a critical piece to understanding teacher leadership as an affront to the status quo. The idea of change agents was found in conceptual work discussed above (Harrison & Killion, 2009; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009; Lieberman & Miller, 2004) and in studies by Miles, Saxl, and Lieberman (1988) and Scribner and Bradley-Levine (2010). First, Miles, Saxl, and Lieberman (1988) studied 17 change agents in New York City schools. From the study, the authors created

a list of 18 skills needed for educational change agents. These comprised six general skills: interpersonal ease, group functioning, training/doing workshops, master teacher, educational content, and administrative/organizational ability. More recently, Scribner and Bradley-Levine (2010) studied the teacher leadership types within the status quo as a means of determining areas of change. The authors found that teacher leaders fell into three categories: Organizationally Legitimized Roles, Institutionally Legitimized Content Area Expertise, and Gendered Leadership Roles. Scribner and Bradley-Levine concluded that school administrators must “actively recognize leadership practices that fall outside of traditional, bureaucratic, Euro-centric and male conceptions” (p. 518). Both studies are important as they note that administrators must select and train teacher leaders to be change agents (Miles, Saxl, & Lieberman, 1988) to dismantle the hierarchical system (Scribner and Bradley-Levine, 2010).

Recently, Douglas Roby conducted several quantitative studies of teachers in a teacher leadership graduate program (Roby 2009, a; Roby 2009b; Roby, 2011a; Roby, 2011b). Roby focused on cultural norms in two studies. First, Roby (2011a) studied how teacher leaders evaluated their human relations skills. He found that teacher leaders viewed themselves as average in human relations skills while their peers viewed them as above average and aligned areas of improvement with school norms of isolation. In addition, Roby (2011b) studied how teacher leaders evaluated the culture of their schools and their potential for influencing its culture. He found that, when ranked based on areas needing improvement, norms such as isolation, lack of informal leadership, and lack of trust and support emerged. Teacher leaders in the study indicated a need to address

isolation and open dialogue with administrators to develop trust and support. The schools norms identified by Roby (2011a; 2011b) are grounded in the findings of Lortie (1975).

Finally, researchers examined the relationship between teachers and administrators in terms of school norms and status quo. In a study of elementary school teacher leaders, Kelley (2011) focused on the use of formal leadership roles in the era of accountability. The author found that teachers viewed formal teacher leaders as standing out from their peers and desired collaboration with formal leaders. However, teachers in formal leadership roles spoke more about working with administration and supporting administrative policies. Kelley determined that the issue of power in the teacher-teacher leader relationship was evident. Since power and hierarchy is an issue in developing teacher leaders, Helterbran (2010) argued that administrators must conduct hiring interviews with teacher leadership included in the line of questioning, create a culture whereby all teachers are viewed as leaders, and develop an environment of learning and collegiality. Doing so will decrease teacher turnover and improve morale. In a recent study, Weiner (2011) determined that norms of isolation and seniority are diminishing as teacher leaders and principals focus on innovation through collaboration and best practices based on current research. However, the author noted that current school organization and hierarchy continue to serve as a roadblock for reform and teacher leadership.

### **Distributed Leadership**

In looking at teacher leadership, another theme that emerges in the literature is distributed leadership. Two researchers – James Spillane and Alma Harris – developed the theories of distributed leadership in schools. Spillane, Halverson, and Diamond

(2004) made the case for distributed leadership in schools. The authors noted that school leadership is based on the ideas that leadership is understood through tasks. Spillane, Halverson, and Diamond suggested the distributed leadership may be more existent than we think and conclude that to study leadership, we must study leaders at work. Spillane (2005) described how distributed leadership means spreading leadership and power over a complex web of people, situations, and routines. He explained how distributed leadership is a new concept of school organization, not a renaming of something already in existence. Alma Harris (2003) connected teacher leadership to distributed leadership. She notes that the hierarchy of schools defines leadership positions, which makes teacher leadership difficult to generate. Though many definitions of teacher leadership exist, all align with theories of distributed leadership as authority is decentralized and leadership exists among groups. Harris contended that teacher leadership and distributed leadership may be heresy as it counters the top-down notions of leadership, may be fantasy as it requires formal leaders to surrender power, and may be a possibility as teachers need time to grow as leaders, professional development in leadership, and confidence as leaders. Additionally, Harris (2013) acknowledged that formal leaders must focus on developing leadership capacity within the school. This involves building trust among the individuals and groups who lead within the school. In the works of Spillane and Harris, it is evident that distributed leadership and teacher leadership serve to undercut the cultural norms and structures that limit innovation (Lortie, 1975).

Researchers have studied distributed leadership and teacher leadership in both urban and rural schools. In urban schools, research by Fraser (2008), Margolis and Huggins (2012), and Portin, Russell, Samuelson, and Knapp (2013) stood out for their

varied success and focus on teacher relationships. First, Fraser (2008) studied two Philadelphia high schools to investigate how teacher leaders serve as instructional leaders and how informal teacher leaders are perceived by their peers. The main finding of the study was that formal and informal teacher leaders' capacities to lead are informed by social capital configurations and the distribution of leadership throughout a school's faculty. Second, Margolis and Huggins (2012) examined the hybrid teacher leader position as a form of distributed leadership in a qualitative study conducted over a two-year period and consisted of six participants. The authors found that, given the increased organizational complexity, teacher leaders had difficulty defining their roles. This resulted in reduced success, relationship deterioration, lack of classroom-focused professional development, and diminished capacity for leadership. Third, Portin, Russell, Samuelson, and Knapp (2013) studied non-supervisory teacher leaders who assist supervisory teacher leaders in instructional coaching. The authors used qualitative methods to study four high schools in different urban school districts across the United States. The findings of the study indicated that teacher leaders in a non-supervisory role who are engaged in instructional supervision require four areas of expertise: content expertise, knowledge of powerful pedagogy, ability to build relational trust, and capacity to forge systemic linkages.

In contrast to the urban settings, distributed leadership in rural schools seems more successful. First, Masumoto and Brown-Welty (2009) conducted a qualitative case study of contemporary leadership theories and school-community interrelationships in three high-poverty, high-performing schools in rural California. The authors found that that school leaders used instructional, distributed, and transformational practices to

improve student performance. In addition, the schools effectively created collaborations with parents and other stakeholders. Second, Anderson (2008) studied a rural Canadian school that uses distributed leadership as a theoretical lens and proposes rural teacher leaders as a third transformational leadership prototype. The article was a qualitative study qualitative case study of small schools with few formal teacher leadership roles such as department heads or curriculum leaders.

### **Department Chairs**

A formal role of teacher leadership is that of department chair (Katzanmeyer & Moller, 2009; Silva, Gimbert & Nolan, 2000). Additionally, department chairs are regarded as instructional leaders (Feeney, 2009; Wettersten, 1992). Department chairs have long existed as a teacher leader as they are regarded as content area specialists (Skolnik, 1950). However, because department chairs are both a teacher and administrator, the role of a department chair is difficult to define (DeRoche, Kujawa & Hunsaker, 1988; Kelley & Salisbury, 2013; Zepeda & Kruskamp, 2007). Weller (2001) asserted that department chairs are regarded as one of the most under-utilized positions in the school system. In a quantitative study of 200 department chairs to investigate job performance, Weller found that the department chair position is poorly defined and multifaceted. He also found that most department chairs lack adequate preparation. For example, seventy percent of chairs had no training for the position and eighty-five percent wanted to be more involved in supervising instruction. Evidence that department chairs are under-utilized and under-trained was also evident in work by Zepeda and Kruskamp (2007). In their qualitative case study examining the perspectives of three high school department chairs (math, science, and social studies) and in their work at

providing instructional supervision within their department, the authors found that chairs experienced role conflict and ambiguity relative to providing instructional supervision, the meaning of instructional supervision for the department chairs was intuitive and reflected in differentiated approaches, and chairs were constrained by lack of time and emphasis. In addition, Kelley and Salisbury's (2013) qualitative case study focusing on three urban high schools found that chairs are often underutilized in the effort to improve education. The department chairs in the study felt the role was empowering, but more training was needed to improve as leaders. Though a fixture of the school hierarchy, the department chairs are often under-used and under-trained.

In addition to being under-utilized, the selection of department chairs is ambiguous. DeRoche, Kujawa, and Hunsaker (1988) conducted a quantitative study of department chairs in California. Chairs and principals were surveyed as part of the study. The authors found that few criteria exist for selecting a chair, few rewards were provided, and that responsibilities revolved around budget issues. In addition, while both chairs and principals viewed department chairs as leaders within the school, they differed on the chair's role in supervising teachers. An attempt to scientifically select a department chair was suggested by Konet (1989). Konet contended that using Fielder's "Least Preferred Co-Worker" survey will help identify the person within the department best suited for leading the department. The purpose of the method was to identify the chair that will generate the greatest job satisfaction among the department members.

In the literature on departments and department chairs, the role of the department chair in shaping the culture of the department is evident. Printy (2008) studied the influence of high school principals and department chairs in the creation of productive



communities of practice and the extent to which leaders affect teachers' professional beliefs and their instructional skills. The author found that administrators and chairs were critical in shaping the teachers into communities of practice; with department chairs being most critical to the process as principals can be detached from the process. In a similar qualitative study, Melville and Wallace (2007) examined how departments operate as both a learning community and an organization. The authors concluded that "[d]epartments must be understood as both communities and organizations if their full potential for teacher professional learning is to be realized" (p. 1204). While Melville and Wallace (2007) focused on departments as a community, Siskin (1991) focused on departments as subcultures of a school. Using a case study of a high school in California to examine the development of culture within a department, Siskin (1991) found that chairs – as a hybrid role – had influence over the teachers in the department from textbook selection to hiring to scheduling to evaluation, yet also established norms within the department. In another case study of a department, Robbins and Zirinsky (1996) studied informal leadership roles in the department. The authors found that the department viewed themselves as friends and collaborators who valued the knowledge and expertise of all. With these, it is evident that departments serve as unique subunits of the school and the department chair is critical in leading their development.

Another theme within the literature on teacher leadership and department chairs was distributed leadership. Bredeson (2013) studied *distributed instructional leadership* in six urban high schools by focusing on the both the content of professional development and the role of administrators and department chairs in implementing professional development. The author found that teachers challenged their traditional roles as

department chairs, created strong relationships with peers, and generated a collaborative environment. In contrast, Feeney (2009) conducted a study of distributed leadership among department chairs. In a case study of high school department chairs' leadership capacity, the goal of the study was to understand of how chairs perceived their role as teacher leaders. Feeney found that department chairs do not possess the teacher leadership skills necessary to stimulate the broad-based leadership capacity for improved student achievement because chairs view developing leadership skills as additional work and see their role as managerial. However, Muijs, Chapman, and Armstrong (2013) argued that schools with stability and clear policies will better foster teacher leadership. In a qualitative study of the attitudes toward teacher leadership among early career teachers in an alternative certification program, the authors found that teacher education must include a teacher leadership component. With this body of research, it continues to be evident that distributed leadership is essential to successful teacher leadership development.

Finally, in the literature on department chairs, two researchers emerge as prominent –Jill Wettersten and Hans Klar. Wettersten presented several papers that the American Education Research Association annual conferences twenty years ago. Wettersten (1992) studied the practices of department chairs and how chairs are perceived as instructional leaders. She found that department chairs: develop content curriculum, supervise instruction, hire and fire teachers, influence school policies, and create a bridge between administration and departments. Additionally, Wettersten's (1993) studied four exemplary department chairs' instructional leadership roles. She found that the four chairs engaged in similar practices. Specifically, they maintained

communication with administration and teachers, practiced collegiality, delivered rewards, and treated teachers with respect. Finally, Wettersten's (1994) used social exchange theory to study how chairs serve as the bridge between teachers and administrators. She found that the relationships were not transformational. The department chairs were described as providing opportunities for teacher leadership, encouraging teacher-developed changes, developing collegial relationships. This, in turn, created loyalty, trust, and a sense of community, which made them effective chairs in the sense of improving instruction.

Almost twenty years after Wettersten's work, Klar also studied department chairs as instructional leaders. First, Klar (2010) used a qualitative case study of multiple urban schools to examine how principals developed instructional leadership capacities among department chairs to enhance instruction within the department. He found that instruction was enhanced when principals provide a shared understanding of distributed instructional leadership, provide opportunities to develop instructional leadership capacities, provide opportunities to be instructional leaders, monitor chairs' needs, and providing support as required, and demonstrate a long-term commitment to distributed instructional leadership. Second, Klar (2012a) studied how principals foster the skills of their department chairs to improve school-wide instructional capacity and increase student achievement. He found that principals cultivated a shared understanding of the need for change, engaged department chairs in authentic instructional leadership initiatives, and provided the ongoing support, resources and commitment necessary for the chairs to enhance their instructional leadership capacities. Finally, Klar (2012b) examined how principals fostered their department chairs' instructional leadership capabilities through

professional communities. He found that principals utilized methods of modeling supervision skills, collaboration with peers, and skill-building activities enculturated department chairs into authentic communities of instructional leaders. In this work Klar included themes of distributed leadership and leadership development of department chairs.

### **Studies of Social Studies Teacher Leadership Studies**

Social studies teachers are included in the literature on teacher leadership; however, few studies that focus exist solely on social studies teachers. Three articles by Rouse (2007), Gandy, Pierce, and Smith (2009), and Eargle (2013) stood out as studies of social studies teacher leadership. Rouse (2007) conducted a qualitative study of a group of eighth grade social studies teachers to examine how collaborative planning affects teacher collaboration, teacher efficacy, and sense of community. The author found that increased teacher knowledge promoted teacher leadership within the group, reduced teacher workload, and helped teachers meet the external requirements of developing curriculum units, fostered teacher reflection. In addition, Rouse found that increased teacher knowledge improved teachers' opinion of collaboration, increased participation in the sessions, and improved focus during the sessions, reduced time-off-task, and increased teacher buy-in to the concept of collaboration.

In a study of pre-service social studies teachers, Gandy, Pierce, and Smith (2009) examined pre-service teachers working with organizations such as museums, Girl Scouts, and Big Brothers/Big Sisters. While the program was designed to help pre-service teachers develop leadership skills, findings indicate that pre-service teachers learn to develop projects, collaborate effectively, and manage time. Finally, Eargle (2013)

conducted a program review that examined how social studies teachers at a high school are developing as teacher leaders through a school-university partnership. The author found that collaboration between the school and college encouraged experimentation with new methodologies, encouraged reflective practices and teacher growth, and created a more cohesive social studies department. However, although teacher leadership developed through the partnership, traditional school norms and structural hierarchy prevented teachers from fully assuming their roles as teacher leaders.

### **Social Studies Teachers as Athletic Coaches**

Social studies at the secondary level is a male-dominated discipline (Fitchett, 2010). In analyzing data National Center for Educational Statistics, Fitchett (2010) found that sixty-seven percent of social studies teachers are male; whereas mathematics, science and English are, at most, fifty-three percent male. Recently, Stacy (2014) studied the historical roots of social studies teachers as athletic coaches. She found that social studies departments and curriculum are often embedded with the masculinity and violence of athletics. To this, Eichhorn (2013) observed that college freshmen might enter college unprepared due to social studies teachers who are focused on coaching athletics. So intertwined are social studies and coaching that studies indicate that pre-service social studies teachers view coaching as critical to obtaining a job. Weller (2002) conducted a study of pre-service social studies teachers and found that male social studies teachers ranked coaching as important in the job search and many are coaching at high schools while in pre-service education programs. Similarly, Chiodo, Martin, and Rowan (2002) studied pre-service social studies, science, and English teachers. The authors found that pre-service social studies teachers felt that coaching was important to securing a job and

that coaching as the most important non-teaching job function. In comparison, English and science pre-service teachers were not concerned with coaching and felt that academic extra-curricular activities were the most important non-teaching job function.

Coaching and social studies are interlocked. Fouts (1989) conducted a quantitative study to examine the different classroom environments between coaching and non-coaching social studies teachers. The author found statistical differences between coaching and non-coaching teachers. Coaching teachers have more structured classrooms with higher levels of control. Non-coaching teachers had classrooms with more innovation. In balancing teaching and coaching, Rog (1984) noted there are four types of teachers who coach athletics – the *Coach*, the *Coach Teacher*, the *Teacher/Coach*, and the *Teacher*. *Coaches* and *Coach Teachers* are more interested in coaching than teaching. *Teacher/Coach* and *Teachers* are more interested in teaching. Rog concluded that being a *Teacher/Coach* or *Teacher* defies the power structure of the coaching culture with a school and suggested that becoming professionally active as an educator to become known as a *Teacher*.

### **Post Data Collection Literature Review**

Bogdan and Bilken (1992) advocated that grounded research involved the simultaneous acts collection and analysis of data and alignment of data to ongoing research of the existing literature. I created a research design based on Coyne and Cowley (2006) and Stern (1980) that called for continuous review of the literature based on themes emerging from the data (see Figure 3.1). Additionally, Bogdan and Bilken (1992) noted that creating a lengthy literature review prior to the initiation of a qualitative study may serve to further bias the researcher. However, Charmaz (2006) noted that delaying a

thorough review encourages the research to hone themes and interpretations and avoid “importing preconceived ideas” (p. 165). However, “[d]elaying a literature review differs from writing a scanty one. Nor does delaying excuse careless coverage” (p. 166). The literature review thus to this point was generated over a year-long period of time leading to the present study. The literature view in this section represents the literature related to themes that emerged during data collection and analysis.

### **Pertinent Works to Understand Hierarchical and Bureaucratic Control**

It is important to consider the hierarchical nature of the school system by focusing on relevant works related to the characteristics of bureaucracies. School systems hinder teacher leadership because of the business-like organizational model (Steel & Craig, 2006). Gouldner (1978) defined a hierarchical bureaucracy as a system “of domination imposing subservience upon subordinate sectors and extracting compliance from them” (p. 43). Upper classes use bureaucracy as a means of “reaching down into and dominating a group from some point outside its own ranks.” (p. 43). Gouldner concluded, “Bureaucratization is the routinization of domination” (p. 43). Turning to the American school system, Lortie (1975) observed that, beginning in the early twentieth century, the school system became larger and “more bureaucratized” (p. 3). As districts grew, administrative functions expanded. Consequently, teachers in the bureaucratized hierarchy became employees to be managed by ever-present administrators acting with increased authority. By the 1970s, Lortie noted that teachers demonstrate loyalty and obedience to the principal as a means of gaining favorable conditions such as class size and course load. Lortie concluded that, as a result of the hierarchical development of the school system, “a teacher was no longer *the* teacher” (p. 4). Thus, the hierarchical

structure of the bureaucratic school system diminished the social standing of the teacher. The nature of hierarchical and bureaucratic organizations can be explored by turning to the works of Michels (1911), Weinstein (1979), and Ferguson (1984).

Writing in the early twentieth century, Robert Michels (1911) examined the sociological reasons why democratic systems become controlled by oligarchies. Michels concluded that that all organizations develop an aristocratic class as the organization “becomes divided into a minority of directors and a majority of directed” (p. 26) through hierarchical and bureaucratic development. The cause of this development rests in both the “nature of the human individual” and the “nature of organization” as “sociological law” finds that human nature drives people to “constitute cliques and sub-classes” (p. 6). Michels concluded that the hierarchical bureaucracy is formed to ensure the functioning of the organization and the preservation of the oligarchical class within it. Concluding his examination of how democratic organizations and systems became oligarchical, Michels articulated the Iron Law of Oligarchies. The theory stated that, while people lower in the hierarchy seek to move up the organizational structure, the goal of the oligarchical class is to create “the tactical and technical necessities” (p. 241) to maintain the current structure. Ultimately, Michals concluded, “Man as individual is by nature predestined to be guided... To an enormously greater degree is guidance necessary for the social group.” (p. 243). As a result, democratic institutions evolve into bureaucratic hierarchical systems controlled by an oligarchy because human nature dictates division and tendencies to follow leaders.

Where Michels (1911) studied why democracies give way to oligarchies forming bureaucracies as a means of social control, Weinstein (1979) studied how opposition



forms to challenge a bureaucratic control. Weinstein defined *bureaucratic oppositions* as “attempts to change a bureaucracy by those who work within the organization but who do not have any authority” (p. 2). According to Weinstein, “Many *bureaucratic oppositions* are grounded in resistance to violations of purely bureaucratic norms” (p. 13). Given the, Wienstien noted that bureaucracies can have “institutionalized procedures for dissent” and, as a result, possess the capacity to change (p. 7). Otherwise, bureaucracies that “have not recognized the legitimacy of dissent” can be compared to “authoritarian states” (p. 7). Because the function of the organization is to eradicate potential unrest, bureaucratic elites use both *rational actions* and *irrational actions* to maintain order. Focusing on efficiency, *rational action* is the “bureaucratic ideal in which orders flow down the hierarchy of authority and obedience follows” (p. 4). In contrast, *irrational action* is “residual” and is characterized by “behavior inimical to the efficient attainment of organizational goals” but serve to preserve the status quo (p. 4). Thus, bureaucratic control occurs through the organizational structure of the hierarchy and through power abuses of the elite.

According to Weinstein (1979), *bureaucratic oppositions* occurred when people lower in the hierarchy perceive malfeasance in the system. First, it should be noted that Weinstein concluded that, if “corruption is widespread within an organization,” then “it is often interpreted as normal behavior and scarcely perceived to be a norm violation” (p. 16). Thus, corruption is rarely opposed. Opposition arises when workers perceive the rules as being unfairly applied by managers. This typically results in defining “the grounds for opposition” over “policy differences” (p.14). In addition, *bureaucratic oppositions* are often “directed against incompetence” and “incompetent officials” (p.

17). Another cause of opposition centers on the “[i]nflexible adherence to rules... due neither to personality nor to bureaucratic training, but may result from a feeling of "having" to prove to others that one is competent” (p. 22). Weinstein noted that such “overcompensation is especially prevalent among those whose ascriptive characteristics differ from the qualities of the ‘normal’ role incumbent” (p. 22). In this case, Weinstein argued that women, minorities, and younger managers tend to be the target of opposition for not aligning with the older, white male construct of a manager.

Finally, Weinstein noted that bureaucratic oppositions occur when workers observe “abuses grounded in policies which harm those outside the organization” and result from workers’ “commitment to absolute moral principles rather than from issues of effectiveness or efficiency” (p. 31). This typically occurs when “a change in society's moral standards that has not been accompanied by alteration in policy” (p. 32). Thus, bureaucratic oppositions occur when workers assess the policies and actions of those above and actively seek to change the policies and actions.

Weinstein (1979) concluded the study by highlighting the political nature of the bureaucratic environment. Weinstein argued that control and opposition within a bureaucracy is political action. Weinstein labeled “fear of hierarchical power and habits of obedience” as “barriers to opposition” that must be removed to create change in the organization (p. 108). To sustain power, administrative positions in organizations organize retaliations against those involved in *bureaucratic oppositions* in the form of defamation. Weinstein noted that, when “authorities attempt to damage the reputations of dissenters,” they “diminish their political effectiveness” in the organization. (p. 111). Weinstein observed three factors in addition to *bureaucratic oppositions* that function to

keep bureaucracies ethical. First, organizations may be in competition with other organizations. Second, organizations may be regulated by the government. Third, organizations may be monitored by special interest groups. Thus, outside factors may limit the power of bureaucratic hierarchies.

While Weinstein (1979) focused on *bureaucratic oppositions*, Ferguson (1984) studied the means by which bureaucracies serve to control women who work within the system. Extending on Michels (1911) and Weinstein (1979), Ferguson (1984) claimed that bureaucracies represent an “effort to eliminate uncertainty and assure control” and, as a result create “a distorted political situation in which individuals are isolated, social relations are depersonalized, communications are mystified, and dominance is disguised” (p. 10). Furthermore, bureaucracies serve as “a guise to conceal the control function that hierarchy performs” over people within the system. (p. 11). Contradicting Weinstein (1979) to an extent, Ferguson (1984) claimed that “the ability to mount a successful opposition is... undermined in bureaucracies because there is no clear focus for it” due to the web of bureaucratic policies and procedures (p. 16). Therefore, bureaucratic, hierarchical systems demand obedience. Ferguson wrote, “The evolution of organizational theory reveals a history not of progress toward a... more humane forms of organization but of continuing extension and integration of techniques and control” (p. 62-63). The result is that “workers in an organization are seen as objects to be manipulated and directed according to the needs of the organization” (p. 68). In addition, Ferguson detailed upward mobility in the hierarchical bureaucracy. Reproduction of leaders in their own image serves to “minimize uncertainty within the organization, but it also undermines independent speech, thought, or action, discourages innovation, and

closes off access to the decision-making levels for those who do not or cannot present to appropriate image” (p. 109). Consequently, Ferguson noted that “conformity and abandonment of critical consciousness are the prices of successful performance in the bureaucratic world” (p. 29).

Turning the focus toward women in the bureaucracy, Ferguson (1984) critiqued bureaucracies as systems of domination over women. Ferguson stated, “Bureaucratic discourse both creates and reflects the masculine notion of the subject, then posits that version of subjectivity as universal” (p. 204). In this, Ferguson meant that bureaucratic hierarchies are masculine in nature. For women in a bureaucracy to advance up the hierarchy, they must develop the “organizational values and skills” of “conformity, deception, deference, instrumentalism, and greed” (p. 186). In addition, women must “overcome the obstacles to success posed by their traditional feminine socialization, so that they can present the appropriate image to male colleagues and superiors” (p. 186). In other words, women working in bureaucracies must adopt male characteristics to advance in the system. Ferguson argued that the women who adopted masculine traits of the bureaucracy posed “absolutely no threat to the dominance of bureaucracies” (p. 192). Furthermore, actions of conformity to bureaucratic norms:

show that bureaucracies can be made to accept as recruits individuals who have the right middle-class communication skills, the money to look and act the organizational role, and the willingness to ‘play the game’ – even if these individuals happen to be female (p. 192).

In this, Ferguson observed that integration of women into upper levels of the hierarchy was conducted through conformity to masculine ideals. However, Ferguson concluded

that focusing “on integrating women into public institutions produces a situation that perpetuates bureaucratic discourse rather than challenging it” (p. 29). Having women adapt to a masculine environment is not change because “important questions are not asked, critical arguments are not formulated, alternatives are not envisioned” (p. 29). Ferguson’s work represented a critique of the bureaucratic structure of organizations as a means of continued oppression of women in society.

### **Additional Considerations of Rural Contexts**

Rural schools as a context represent a critical piece of my study. Research on rural education demonstrated that ruralness is difficult to categorize and characterize because of the rural areas in the United States are different in nature (Herzog & Pittman, 2003; Lewis, 2003; Sherwood, 2000). However, Budge (2006) observed six common characteristics of rural schools in the literature. First, rural schools consist of students, faculty, and community members are drawn together by affection for their community (Bauch, 2001; Howley, et al., 1996; Kemmis, 1990). Second, as a result, schools are perceived as an arm of the community in rural areas (Collins et al., 2001; Herzog & Pittman, 2003; Kannapel & DeYoung, 1999; Lane & Dorfman, 1997; Seal & Harmon, 1995; Stern, 1994). Third, as state and federal policies affect education and the economic challenges globalization affect education, disagreement over the role of schooling exists in rural contexts (Harmon & Branham, 1999; Howley, Harmon, & Leopald, 1996; Kannapel & DeYoung, 1999; Sherwood, 2000; Smith, 2003). Fourth, rural schools face the challenge of geographic isolation and lower population densities compared to suburban and urban schools (Beeson & Strange, 2003; Stern, 1994). Fifth, the demographic trends indicate that young educated rural residents are out-migrating to

suburban and urban areas (Armstrong, 1993; Hammer, 2001; Hodgkinson, 1994; Howley et. al, 1996; Nadel & Sagawa, 2002; Smith, 2003). Given this, researches have studied administrative leadership in rural schools, teacher retention, and teacher leadership.

**Rural school-level leadership.** Rural school administrators face challenges that are unique to rural contexts. Preston, Jakubiec, and Kooymans (2013) noted the rural principals are challenged the need to develop strong, and often time consuming, community relationships as a means of maintain their own job security. In addition, the authors found that rural principals dealt with multiple job functions compared to suburban counterparts. Additionally, rural principals contended with the absence of quality professional development opportunities for faculty to due comparatively fewer resources. Finally, principals in rural schools face the challenge of generating purposeful change to fulfill state and federal accountability requirements. Considering the challenges faced by rural principals within their schools, Ashton and Duncan (2012) theorized a “toolkit” for rural administrators when working with teachers in the school. Ashton and Duncan advised that principals develop honest, deep, professional relationships with each teacher on faculty to create an environment of collegiality. Second, the authors noted that rural principals must ask for, listen to, reflect on, and incorporate into school-level policies feedback from teachers on what is working well in the school and what can be improved. Third, when a change in leadership occurs, Ashton and Duncan suggested that rural principals hear, understand, and acknowledge any anxieties teachers may express or demonstrate. Considering the research of Preston, Jakubiec, and Kooymans (2013) and Ashton and Duncan (2012), it is evident that rural principals must build strong

connections and authentic relationships with both the community of teachers in the school and the community at large.

In research conducted to assist pre-service education programs prepare teachers for rural contexts, Kaden, Patterson, and Healy (2014) conducted a quantitative study of characteristics of rural leadership and teaching in rural Alaska and identified four themes of characterization. The first theme centered on travel to isolated locations. The authors found that rural district-level supervision often required a high cost and longer distances. Second, Kaden, Patterson, and Healy identified a theme of learning to teaching in a small, rural context as important. The authors found that rural teachers tend to have stronger and more positive relationships with students and are in an environment that allows for individualized support for students. However, rural teachers often experience longer hours due to extra-curricular activities, a variety of teaching assignments in terms of courses and levels, and limited opportunity for professional growth. Third, Kaden, Patterson, and Healy identified the theme of living in a small community as critical to rural education. The authors discovered that, although rural context are often picturesque, school administrators and teachers are limited in quality housing, have limited access to health care and child care, and seldom have reliable or available internet access. Fourth, Kaden, Patterson, and Healy identified the community relations as a central theme. The research uncovered positive aspects connected to this theme such as living in a unique and interesting culture, developing an understanding of rural and/or indigenous culture, and having strong parental support. However, the authors noted that adjusting to rural life and becoming integrated into the community can be a challenge for new teachers and administrators.

While the research conducted by Preston, Jakubiec, and Kooymans (2013), Ashton and Duncan (2012), and Kaden, Patterson, and Healy (2014) balanced positive and negative characteristics and challenges of rural leadership, teaching, and schooling, Freie and Eppley (2014) conducted a critical study of power and hierarchy in rural schools. The authors examined the role of the principal in maintaining power in the rural school. While acknowledging the power is also exercised “the rules, rituals, and even architecture of a school,” the rural principal is unique as a “representative or vehicle of governmentality, a primary disciplinary actor in the school, and a subject of his own ethical and disciplinary power” (p. 667). Additionally, Freie and Eppley found that the rural principal and the hierarchal organization of the rural school often curtail resistance to authority among both faculty and students. Examples of this may include “a student resisting a teacher’s teaching, a student opposing authority, a parent evading school rules, or a young teacher challenging pedagogy” (p. 666). As a result, the authors found that the rural principal exercises “disciplinary power” that, if not critiqued, “may be normalized and viewed as a natural part of the way the system operates” (p. 666). Freie and Eppley concluded that the policies and practices of the rural principal are often a result of “the unquestioned daily business of school that obscures the functioning of the networks” (p. 662). In this, the authors determined that “those responsible for policy enforcement are themselves subjects, though positioned differently in the same network” (p. 662). Thus, Freie and Eppley concluded the unchecked and unchallenged power in the rural school results in an authoritarian system in which all participants are controlled.

**Teacher retention in rural schools.** Retention is centered on successfully identifying and addressing the unique challenges that first-year teachers experience in



rural schools. Hellsten, McIntyre, and Prytula (2011) conducted a qualitative study and six challenges for first year teachers that must be addressed to retain them at the school and in teaching. First, Hellsten, McIntyre, and Prytula noted that the challenge of being accepted by the community can be addressed by helping teachers develop connection within the community. Second, the authors found that utilizing a strong mentor program for first-year teachers in rural school can assist them in the challenge of understanding the community. Third, Hellsten, McIntyre, and Prytula concluded that first-year teachers face the challenge of isolation and schools must work to integrate them into the community and develop strong professional connections. Fourth, the authors discovered that first-year teacher often conflate personal and professional time and need guidance on scheduling personal time with friends. Fifth, Hellsten, McIntyre, and Prytula noted that first-year teacher face the challenge of scarcity of resources in a rural schools. They suggested pre-service programs take the lead on this challenge and integrate specific preparation for teachers likely to teach in rural contexts. Finally, the researchers noted that first-year teachers in rural schools assume a greater workload in rural contexts and schools should assist them in obtaining the certifications that will assist them in developing into a multifaceted role.

Given the challenges articulated for first year teachers (Hellsten, McIntyre, & Prytula, 2011), recruitment is also an issue. In 2000, the governor of Montana created a task force to study the state's rural teacher shortage (Burke, 2000). The task force found that rural districts face challenges in recruitment of quality educators. These challenges consist competing with larger, wealthier, suburban districts. Specifically, rural districts have a lower salary scale, few resources, weaker or less consistent induction and

mentoring programs for first-year teachers compared to larger, wealthier, suburban districts. Additionally, larger districts tend to have more robust recruitment programs compared to rural districts. Finally, the task force noted that retention in rural districts hinges on the pressure of the workload teachers face in a smaller, rural context. Similar to the Montana task force (Burke, 2000), Monk (2007) conducted a largely quantitative study on how rural schools recruit and retain high-quality teachers. Monk found that student characteristics such as a higher percentage of special education and English language learners and a lower percentage of students intending on attending post-secondary education poses a challenge recruit and retain high-quality teachers in the rural context. As a result, Monk found that the hiring practices of rural schools “are less likely to require passing scores on state tests as well as standardized tests such as the Praxis examinations required... for certification” (p.159). As a result, rural schools may be pressed to lower standards to recruit teachers into an environment with students who need high-quality teachers.

Another approach to recruiting teachers into rural schools is to hire from within the community or adopt a Grow-Your-Own program. First, research indicates that teachers seek teaching contexts similar to their hometown experience, if not returning to their hometown altogether (Boyd, Lankford, Susanna, & Wyckoff, 2005; Yeager, Marshall, & Madsen, 2003). In a sociological study, Erikson, Call, and Brown (2012) studied why elderly rural residents do not leave rural communities in the face of shifting demographics, out-migration, economic downturns, and distance from quality healthcare services. The researchers found that rural residents held the satisfaction with the spirit of the rural community in high regard and, thus, perceived local services as being high

quality. This can be seen in the research on rural teachers as well. Davis (2002) conducted a quantitative study of rural teachers and found that rural teachers remain in rural schools because they are drawn to the rural lifestyle. In addition, Davis found that rural teachers value strong relationships with students. Also, Davis found that rural teachers would leave only because of their commitment to their spouses and potential job opportunities away from the rural community spouses may have. To retain teachers, Davis suggested rural districts focus on strengthening the level of instructional leader in the school and cooperating with each other to form communities of instructional collaboration. Most significant, Davis suggested rural districts consider offering student loans to community residents to become teachers and return to teach in district. Combining Davis (2002) and Erikson, Call, and Brown (2012), it is evident the teachers who are rural residents are likely to remain in the rural school because they perceive the rural community with high regard and with a level of comfort.

Davis's (2002) suggestion that student loans be awarded for community members to return as teachers after college aligns with a body of research and policy suggestions that advocate for Grow-Your-Own programs (Beesley, Atwill, Blair, & Barley, 2008; Gagnon, & Mattingly, 2015; Mahan, 2010; Versland, 2013). In a qualitative dissertation on rural Virginia educators, Mahan (2010) concluded that a Grow-Your-Own approach eliminates the challenge of convincing teacher to relocate to rural areas. Grow-Your-Own also taps into a preexisting connection to the rural community. In a report on recruitment and retention in rural schools for Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning, Beesley, Atwill, Blair, and Barley (2008) concluded that Grow-Your-Own programs allow rural schools and districts to purposefully target and prepare people as educators

who will “most likely to return to the area and fill a need” (p. 8). However, Versland (2013) concluded in a qualitative study of rural educators that Grow-Your-Own methods for hiring principals can be negative. As teachers become administrators in their schools, they become socially isolated as a result of relationships being altered by the new administrative role. Overall, Versland found that teachers regarded Grow-Your-Own in a negatively as it is perceived as lacking competitive hiring process which results in the selection of weak candidates.

**Rural teacher leadership.** In addition to the aforementioned studies of rural teacher leaders representing distributed leadership (Anderson, 2008; Masumoto and Brown-Welty, 2009), research suggests methods and strategies for developing teacher leaders in rural schools. Ringler, O’Neal, Rawls, and Cumiskey (2013) conducted a quantitative study of rural teachers and concluded that principals need to develop teacher leadership through engaging in pedagogical conversation with teachers, establish a system of peer observations, and initiate studies of the research on teacher leadership. The researchers also suggested that rural schools partner with colleges or universities to assist in teacher leadership development. In addition, Franklin (2012) wrote a reflective and theoretical article establishing five actions principals can do to develop teacher leaders. The five activities suggested were to provide funding for professional development centered on research, send teacher leaders to conferences to understand state-level trends, trust the decision-making capacity of teacher leaders, seek authentic consultation with teacher leaders, and value the advice and respect the recommendation of teacher leaders regarding school policies. Given this, Vaughn and Saul (2013) conducted a qualitative study on rural teacher leaders as change agents and discovered

obstacles to their vision for education. Specifically, the researchers noted that teacher leaders were limited by the challenge of engaging rural students with new methodologies, the lack of resources available to enact their vision for change, building policies that prevent change from occurring, the conservative nature of rural school leadership. Vaughn and Saul noted that these challenges became compounded by the general challenges of working in a rural context.

### **A Consideration of Gender Roles and Leadership**

A consideration on the connection between gender roles is important when considering the work of school leaders. According to Bitterman, Goldring, Gray, and Broughman (2013), seventy percent of high school administrators in the United States are male. When considering gender roles, Eagly, Wood, and Diekman (2000) noted that men are ascribed agentic attributes, meaning they are viewed as insistent, governing, daring, confident, aggressive, determined, independent, and competitive. In contrast, women are ascribed communal attributes, meaning they are viewed as sensitive, warm, cooperative, kind, compassionate, interpersonally sensitive, and nurturing. According to Eagly, Wood, and Diekman, in a work environment, agentic behaviors would be offering solutions to problems, speaking with authority, and initiating actions to gain attention while communal behaviors be being meek and speaking softly, following orders, being supportive of colleagues, and finding solutions to relational problems in the workplace. However, Coder and Spiller (2013) concluded that “cultural differences and societal changes” have prompted a distorting these gender roles (p. 23). In the education system, the authors noted that agentic attributes are becoming embodied by women and communal attributes by males. However, “research in the area of leadership education

and gender roles has not kept up with those changes” (p. 23) and education leadership students are being miseducated as to the characteristics needed to be a school leader in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. To better understand the relationship between gender and leadership, a targeted review of the literature is necessary.

In the 1970s, three paradigms emerged to study the relationship between gender and leadership. Schein (1973) developed what became known as the *think manager-think male* paradigm. Conducting a quantitative study of 300 middle-level managers, Schein found that managers associated characteristics attributed to men as necessary for managerial success. Schein concluded that managers perceive successful managers as possessing masculine attributes. Following this study, Shinar (1975) developed what became known as the *agency-communion* paradigm. In a rating of 129 occupations, Shinar found that male and female college students categorized the occupations along gender stereotypes. Specifically, masculine occupations were viewed as agentic and feminine occupations as communal. Later in the decade, Powell and Butterfield (1979) developed what became known as the *masculinity-femininity* paradigm. Powell and Butterfield conducted a quantitative study of 684 business students. Although the researchers hypothesized that leadership characteristics would be perceived as genderless or neutral, findings showed that business students perceived leadership in terms of masculinity. In addition, female business students ascribed to themselves masculine traits. In a meta-analysis of leadership literature using the three paradigms (Powell & Butterfield, 1979; Schein, 1973; Shinar, 1975), Koehnig, Mitchell, Eagly, and Ristikari (2011) found a “strong and robust tendency for leadership to be viewed as culturally masculine” (p. 637). The analysis pointed to an inherent bias against female leaders

within leadership structures that expect leaders to be confident and dominant. Consequently, men face fewer obstacles in achieving positions of leadership.

**Hegemonic masculinity.** Because the concept of masculinity is embedded in the bureaucracies (Ferguson, 1984), social studies curricula (Engebretson, 2014), and social studies departments (Stacy, 2013), a brief overview of attempts to rethink the concept of masculinity is important. First, West and Zimmerman (1987) noted that people *do gender* on a daily basis through engagements in society. West and Zimmerman noted, “Doing gender means creating differences between girls and boys and men and women, differences that are not natural, essential, or biological” (p. 137). West and Zimmerman noted that people both ascribe and assume gender characteristics during daily interaction. They noted that “[g]ender is a powerful ideological device, which produces, reproduces, and legitimizes the choices and limits that are predicated on sex category” (p147). Gender, therefore, is a social and cultural concept, not a physical characteristic.

In the 1980s, Carrigan, Connell, and Lee (1985) theorized that masculinity in the United States was at a turning point. Noting that the 1970s prompted a reevaluation of traditional masculinity through “communal households and collective childcare,” the authors set envisioned “coalitions among feminists, gay men, and progressive heterosexual men that have real chances of making gains on specific issues” as they reshape masculinity as cultural concept (p. 600). However, Carrigan, Connell, and Lee observed that “the hard-liners in the American ruling class has involved the systematic reassertion of old-fashioned models of masculinity” (p. 599). They concluded that the “bureaucratized corporations” of the 1980s, “the integration of business and government,” and “the Reagan foreign policy” resulted in “repairing men's authority in

the face of the damage done by feminism” and represented “the modernization of hegemonic masculinity” (p. 599). Thus, in general, gains made to conceptualize gender in the 1970s were overpowered by the economic and political powers.

Twenty years after Carrigan, Connell, and Lee (1985) noted the entrenchment of hegemonic masculinity, Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) suggested the use of the term *socially dominant masculinities* as a replacement for *hegemonic masculinity*. Connell and Messerschmidt argued that the “concept of hegemonic masculinity does not equate to a model of social reproduction” and researchers must “recognize social struggles in which subordinated masculinities influence dominant forms” (p. 829). To make this point, the researchers noted that “hegemony works in part through the production of exemplars of masculinity” that few males achieve (p. 846). However, *socially dominant masculinities* refers to “the idea that the hierarchy of masculinities” (p. 846). To better understand socially dominant masculinities, Connell and Messerschmidt suggested developing a gender hierarchy model, understand the role of privilege and power, tease out contradictions in hegemonic masculinity, and distinguish the effect of geography on concepts of masculinity (p. 829).

Defending this position, Messerschmidt (2008) did not deny *hegemonic masculinity*. Messerschmidt agreed that hegemonic masculinity “involving the subordination of femininity and non-hegemonic masculinities... has by now been documented in many international settings” and is a result of “consent, discursive centrality, institutionalization, and subordination and marginalization of alternatives are widely documented aspects of hegemonic masculinities” (p. 104). However, Messerschmidt pointed out that “our emphasis is indeed on distinguishing masculinities



that legitimate a hierarchical relationship between masculinity and femininity, and among masculinities (hegemonic), from those that do not (dominant)” (p. 106). Thus, Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) and Messerschmidt (2008) advocated for a more complex analysis of masculinity and gender beyond a dominate image.

As notions of masculinity and masculinity’ role in maintaining social order is questioned in light of modern developments, the concept of masculinity in the rural contexts is also challenged. Two recent studies (Bell, Hullinger & Brislen, 2015; Filteau, 2015) documented the changing concept of masculinity in rural areas as a result of the globalized economy. In a study of economic statistics and occupation trends, Filteau (2015) concluded, “As market transformations, technological innovations, and shifting environmental politics change the rural economic climate, they also alter the structural conditions under which men accomplish “being a man”” (p. 436). Filteau observed that in economic downturns, men accept employment in sectors traditional consider feminine such as service and retail sectors. However, in resource-rich rural contexts, such as areas producing oil, gas, and coal, hegemonic masculinity and socially dominant masculinity remain firmly embedded in the local culture.

In contrast, Bell, Hullinger, and Brislen (2015) studied farm-related advertising for seed, machinery, and remote communication companies and determined that “the agribusiness industry works to manipulate conventional farming masculinities in the United States to facilitate agricultural deskilling” (p. 285). Using advertisements that “present a farming masculinity that embraces partnership and consultation,” businesses as shifting the depiction of masculinity “in contrast to the traditional conventional farming representation of a ‘lone wolf’ farmer who is independent and self-sufficient” (p. 307).

Bell, Hullinger, and Brislen (2015) further observed that modern advertising has created a new “farming masculinity [that] depicts farmers as ‘businessmen’” and not the “rugged, tough, working class, independent male farmer who is physically powerful in his domination of nature. . . . who depend on their own physical strength and grit” (p. 307). Consequently masculinity in rural contexts is changing as large companies and globalization affect local communities.

**Discrimination and the glass elevator.** Although evidence suggests that masculinity is changing in rural contexts (Bell, Hullinger & Brislen, 2015; Filteau, 2015), traditional masculinity remains a dominate and oppressive concept (Carrigan, Connell & Lee, 1985; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Messerschmidt, 2005). Discrimination against women in the workplace represents masculine dominance. In a quantitative study of a simulated workplace job interview, Davison and Burke (2000) operated on a hypothesis grounded in stereotypes of female sex-type jobs such as cooks, domestic servants, nurses, librarians, secretaries, daycare directors, and teachers. In addition, male sex-type jobs consisted of positions such as engineers and carpenters. Confirming discrimination trends, Davison and Burke found that both male and female applicants received lower ratings when applying for an opposite-sex-type position.

Similarly, Klatt, Eimler, and Krämer (2016) documented the discrimination in a quantitative study of 354 participants on the appearance of females in relation to leadership. Drawing on Schein’s (1973) *think manager-think male* paradigm, Klatt, Eimler, and Krämer (2016) found that women wearing pants, makeup, and jewelry were received as most competent. Women with braided hair and no makeup were regarded as too masculine and women with loose hair and no makeup were viewed as both most

feminine and warmest. Women wearing a skirt with their hair in a braid were perceived as arrogant. Women with loose hair were most likely to be hired. Klatt, Eimler and Krämer (2016) concluded that, “loose hair, as well as makeup, jewelry, and pants, each seem to be advantageous for a woman in a leadership position” (p. 495). In the study, discrimination based on female appearance was evident as the feminine and warm image did not align with the image of competence.

In studying prejudice toward female leaders, Carli and Eagly (2001) determined that gender prejudice would “interfere with women’s ability to gain authority and exercise influence and would produce discrimination when it is translated into personnel decisions within organizations and political structures” (p. 631). To this end, Heilman (2001) found that gender stereotypes are embedded in performance evaluations. The result is that concepts of what men and women should and should not do based on gender roles leads to the belief that women are not capable of leadership. As a result, Ciolac (2012) noted female leaders successfully gained higher levels of work from employees. Ciolac theorized that women put in more effort to be respected than men because women are “forced to work more than men managers to obtain recognition of their leaders” (p. 268). Thus, stereotypes about women adversely affect their ability to attain leadership roles, but also prompt them to work harder as they cannot rely on the masculine system to promote them.

Exploring the effect of female stereotypes and success as leaders, Heilman and Okimoto (2007) conducted a quantitative study to test the hypothesis that women as penalized for lacking sensitivity when successful in traditionally male leadership roles or fields. Research centered on areas of perception of congeniality with workers, aggression

toward workers, and appeal as leader. Heilman and Okimoto (2007) found that “women who are successful in male gendertyped domains are penalized for their success” because they are perceived as “less desirable as bosses” as a result of being “more disliked and interpersonally derogated than identically described men” (p. 91). However, when perceived as communal, the positive perception of female leaders increased. Therefore, Heilman and Okimoto (2007) concluded that female success in male domains represents a “violation of genderstereotypic prescriptions that produces negative reactions . . . and they are penalized as a result.” (p. 91) Therefore, women who adopt agentic leadership styles are perceived as an undesirable boss because they lead in a masculine style when workers expect a female approach from them.

With regard to discrimination based on gender, a body of research focuses on men who work in traditionally feminine domains. Williams (1992) coined the phrase *glass elevator* to describe the phenomena of men in traditionally feminine domains who advance to leadership roles as a result of comparatively less discrimination to women in traditionally male domains. In a qualitative study, Williams examined the role of discrimination in the hiring and promotion of males in traditionally female occupations such as teaching, social work and nursing. Williams found that men seldom experience discrimination in traditionally female occupations and benefit from hierarchical advantages to advance their careers. Twenty years later, Price-Glynn and Rakovski (2012) applied Williams’ (1992) *glass elevator* theory to nursing assistances. Price-Glynn and Rakovski (2012) concluded that, while men remained advantaged, factors such as an individual’s race, ethnicity, and country of origin weighed heavily in the promotion process. In addition, the size of the organization factored significantly as well. Thus,

Price-Glynn and Rakovski (2012) argued that multiple identity characteristics and context intersect to create discriminatory practices. To this end, Williams (2013) acknowledged that the *glass escalator* concept “explains the advantages that straight white men receive in professional jobs” found in a traditionally female domain but “it analyzes male privilege without critiquing capitalist exploitation” (p. 626). Williams noted that the *glass elevator* concept was limited in its lack of intersectionality and reliance of standardized norms of the workplace. Therefore, while men experience advantages in the workplace, the explanation is currently being reexamined.

**Gender stereotypes and management.** In addition to Williams’ (1992) *glass elevator* theory, a body of research exists that explores gender stereotypes and management. Shortly after Carrigan, Connell, and Lee (1985) observed “the modernization of hegemonic masculinity” (p. 599) during the Reagan era, Brenner, Tomkiewicz, and Schein (1989) conducted a quantitative study to study the connection between the leadership characteristics and gender stereotypes and compared the results to Schein’s (1973; 1975) research on the same topic in the 1970s. Brenner, Tomkiewicz, and Schein (1989) concluded that women conceptualize leadership using some masculine stereotypes, but practice leadership with mostly masculine characteristics. However, men continue to utilize exclusively masculine stereotypes when describing leadership. Brenner, Tomkiewicz, and Schein noted that, while this is a positive step for perception, the “scarceness of women in senior positions” continues to be problematic (p. 668). Twenty years later, in a quantitative study of male sex-typed or gender neutral occupations, Cabrera, Sauer, and Thomas-Hunt (2009) examined how leaders and management teams were evaluated by external reviewers. The researchers determined

that external reviewers rated the performance expectations for a management teams higher when the leader's gender was aligned with the sex-typed occupation. This research indicates that masculine stereotypes continue to dominate managerial and leadership positions in the workplace.

Recent research on gender stereotypes and leadership advance the area of study forward by noting the acceptance of communal leadership styles. Hickman (2015) conducted a qualitative study of the attitudes of young men toward female leaders. Hickman interviewed twenty male millennials who primarily experience a childhood with a father who was the primary income earner for the family and who desired to enter traditionally male occupations. Hickman found that the young men accepted and expected women to serve in leadership roles. Likewise, young men expect a workplace that is communal, or feminized, in nature. However, Hickman acknowledged that female leaders must "be seen in positions of authority and their credentials must be recognized and celebrated" to add credibility to their standing (p. 29). Similarly, Gartzia and van Knippenberg (2015) conducted a quantitative study of male leaders and communal practices. The authors found that communal leadership styles generated greater cooperation among team members, but this was greater when the men were leading predominately men even though the communal trait is associated with femininity. The work of Hickman (2015) and Gartzia and van Knippenberg (2015) demonstrated a potential change in masculinity in the workplace and recalled the observation of Carrigan, Connell, and Lee (1985) thirty years early suggesting a potential shift in masculine concepts in the 1970s.

**Effectiveness of female leaders.** A consideration of the literature on female leadership and effectiveness is critical to understanding female leadership. In the early 1990s, Eagly, Karau, and Makhijani (1995) synthesized research on the effectiveness of female leaders and found the effectiveness of male and female leadership depended on the terms – masculine or feminine – used to couch the study. More recently, Paustian-Underdahl, Walker, and Woehr (2014) conducted a meta-analysis of ninety-five studies to examine the effectiveness of female leaders. The analysis discovered a potential advantage for female leaders. Across the ninety-five studies, men and women were viewed equally in perceived leadership effectiveness and women are rated more effective than men with other-rating are used. In addition, Ko, Kotrba, and Roebuck (2015) conducted a quantitative study of 952 leaders from traditionally female occupations that drew upon Williams (1992). Ko, Kotrb, and Roebuck (2015) found that “the perception of leadership effectiveness does not solely depend on the leader gender but also the context that makes the leader gender more salient” (p. 294). Finally, De Hoogh and Den Hartog (2015) conducted a quantitative study of narcissistic female leaders. Narcissistic leaders are generally perceived as strong and effective, although lacking the feminine trait of warmth. However, De Hoogh and Den Hartog that narcissistic female leaders were rated as ineffective by male workers, a finding that countered their hypothesis.

**Effectiveness of female principals.** Finally, a brief discussion of the literature of female principals is critical to understanding female leadership in schools. Egley (2003) conducted a quantitative study of the effectiveness of invitational education leadership among principals. Invitational educational leadership is a theory that centers on school leaders shaping the school into a welcoming environment and culture (Purkey & Novak,

1996). Egley (2003) focused on how the personal and professional relationships developed by principals with teachers affected teacher job satisfaction, perception of principal effectiveness, and perception of the principal as a change agent. Egley a statistically significant relationship between “the professionally and personally inviting behaviors of the principals” (p. 66) and teacher job satisfaction, principal effectiveness, and change agency of the principal. In a mixed methods study of male and female principals, Burns and Marton (2010) studied the use of invitational leadership. The researchers found no statistical difference between perceptions of male and female effectiveness as principals. Both teachers and principals noted the characteristic of trust as essential to the success of invitational educational leadership. Burns and Marton concluded that “effective leadership behaviors will always prove effective, regardless of the gender of the leader” (p. 46). However, it should be observed that creating a welcoming environment under invitational education leadership theory (Purkey & Novak, 1996) aligns with the communal attributes of warmth, cooperation, and kindness ascribed to women (Eagly, Wood, & Diekmann, 2000).

Finally, Spiller (2013) observed limits to female educators obtaining promotions to principalships. First, Spiller observed that predominately male school boards may serve as impediments to qualified female candidates. Second, Spiller stated that women may choose to limit their career goals in favor of family commitments and concerns over the amount of time a principalship will require. Third, Spiller claimed that women, due to committing to families, avoid moving to rural areas where principalships for first-time candidates are often located. Spiller offered suggestions on how to prepare female educators for principalships. For example, pre-service education programs “should accept



some responsibility for identifying talented and high achieving female students to be mentored and encouraged by women currently in leadership roles” (p. 5). In addition, young female teachers should be encouraged to access networking opportunities and engage early in long-term career planning. These should be done “to allow young women to understand the potential obstacles in front of them and commence planning for and around them” (p. 5). While not a study of female leadership, Spiller’s article served as practical advice to navigate the education system hierarchy to become a school-level leader.

### **The Gap in the Literature and Ideas for Additions to the Literature Review**

The literature on teacher leadership is growing. Studies have been conducted on teacher leaders who teach English (Muncey-Silva & Munoz, 2012; Robbins & Zirinsky, 1996), mathematics (Yow, 2007; Yow, 2010), and science (Lotter, Yow, & Peters, 2014; Siskin, 1991; Tushie, 2008). Research has been conducted on teacher leaders in mathematics and science because they are tested areas and, as a result, the impact of leadership is measured in student performance outcomes (Campbell, Melville, & Bartley, 2012; Melville & Wallace, 2007). The studies on social studies teacher leadership focused on department collaboration (Eargle, 2013; Rouse, 2007), social studies department chairs as instructional leaders (Eargle, 2014), and pre-service teachers (Gandy, Pierce, and Smith, 2009). When social studies is included in teacher leadership studies, it is combined with the other core areas (Conley, 2011; Klar, 2010; Sanocki, 2013; Szczesiul & Huizenga, 2015; Wettersten, 1992; Wettersten, 1993; Zepeda & Kruskamp, 2007). As such, there are gaps in literature on social studies teachers as teacher leaders.

In particular, studying female teacher leaders in social studies is an unexplored area. High school social studies teachers are predominantly male (Fitchett, 2010). Leadership is often seen as masculine in nature (Koegnig, Mitchell, Eagly & Ristikari, 2011) and men tend to lead in a top-down governing style (Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000). Yet, teacher leadership tends to require distributed leadership, which would counter concepts of top-down authority (Harris, 2004; Spillane, 2005; Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2004). Therefore, studying the intersection of gender, leadership, teacher leadership, and social studies offers an opportunity to learn how female social studies department chairs in high schools perform as leaders. A study of this offers the potential to generate theory about teacher leadership, gender, and social studies.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009) defined teacher leaders as those who lead within and beyond the classroom, influence others toward improved practice, contribute to a community of leaders and learners, and accept responsibility for achieving outcomes. Education researchers maintain that teacher leadership is needed to reform instructional practices and administrators must re-conceptualize the role of teachers as leaders and change agents in education (Darling-Hammond, Bullmaster, & Cobb, 1995; Smylie & Denny, 1990). A gap exists in the literature related to teacher leadership. A few studies exist on teacher leadership specific to social studies teachers (Eargle, 2013; Gandy, Pierce, & Smith, 2009; Rouse, 2007). Moreover, social studies departments in secondary schools are unique for having male-dominated personnel (Fitchett, 2010) and for being rooted in the masculinity of athletics (Stacy, 2014). Additionally, the role of gender is under-examined in relation to teacher leadership. Thus, the intersection of teacher leadership in social studies, social studies department culture, and social studies and gender represents an unexplored area of research.

#### **Research Questions**

To explore and develop a deeper understanding of the intersection of teacher leadership, social studies, and gender, I developed an overarching question and three particularized research questions to focus my investigation. My study was guided by the following research questions:

What is the experience of female social studies teacher leaders serving a department chairs in public high schools?

- a. How do female teacher leaders serving a department chairs define the concept of leadership?
- b. How do the female teacher leaders serving a department chairs demonstrate the characteristics of teacher leadership?
- c. How do female teacher leaders serving as department chairs negotiate leading teachers in a potentially masculine department within schools?

With these questions, I wanted understand how the participants align with the literature on teacher leadership, how they lead beyond the classroom, what positions of leadership they hold, and how they serve informally as leaders. Additionally, I wanted to understand how the participants perceive leadership. In particular, I wanted to know how they conceptualize and define leadership and seek to translate those leadership qualities and characteristics into practice.

Finally, at the center of my study, I wanted to understand the relationships the participants have with other educators. Specifically, I wanted to understand their relationship with others in the discipline, other teacher leaders, school administration, females, males, academic positions, and athletic coaches. Also, I wanted to understand work with others to lead in their department, school, or district. With this question, I was able to answer the overarching question of female social studies teacher leader's experience as perceived by the participants and took steps toward generating understanding using a ground theory approach (Glasser & Strauss, 1967).

## Participants

### Purposeful Selection of Participants

Qualitative research is based on purposefully identifying information-rich cases for (Patton, 2002). Purposeful sampling allows the researcher to “learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of inquiry” which “yields insights and in-depth understanding rather than empirical generalizations” (Patton, 2002, p. 230). On the surface, the selection of Jessica and Amanda appeared to be what Patton defined as convenience sampling. Because I knew Jessica through a professional organization and I knew Amanda for three years as colleagues, the participants were “easy to access and... study” (Patton, 2002, p. 242). However, my selection of Jessica and Amanda was purposeful. When identifying participants for the present study, I used what Patton defined as intensity sampling as Jessica and Amanda represent “information-rich cases” but are “not highly unusual cases” (p. 234). They characterized teacher leadership in ways that are individually unique but not out of the ordinary for teacher leaders.

Additionally, I used what Patton labeled as criterion sampling and theory-based sampling. Criterion sampling requires the selection of participants “that meet some predetermined criterion of importance” (p. 238). My criteria for selection as a participant in the present study included: being a female high school social studies teacher, a department chair, and a teacher leader beyond the formal role of department chair. Jessica and Amanda both meet the predetermined criteria. Taking the criterion sampling a step further, Patton noted that theory-based sampling is the selection of participants on the condition of their “representation of important theoretical constructs” (p. 238). For theory-based sampling, I identified Jessica and Amanda using Dempsey’s (1992) images

of teacher leadership. Dempsey conceptualized teacher leaders as: *Teacher as fully functioning person, teacher as reflective practitioner, teacher as scholar, and teacher as partner in learning*. Jessica and Amanda both met this theory-based sampling condition. Thus, the participants in the present study met the benchmarks of purposeful sampling (Patton, 2002) in the areas of intensity sampling, criterion sampling, and theory-based sampling.

### **Protection of Participants**

Qualitative research involves the negotiation of risk and benefit, resulting in researcher obligation to protect participants. Hemmings (2006) defined beneficence as “an obligation on the part researchers to do no harm, maximize possible benefits, and minimize possible harms” (p. 13). In qualitative research this is challenging because of the direct work with individuals. As Bosk and De Vries (2004) noted, “[t]o some degree, we cannot specify risks because we do not know what we will find, what interpretive frameworks we will develop for reporting what we do observe, and how the world around us will change to make those findings seem more or less significant” (p. 253). While agreeing with Bock and De Vries, Hemming (2006) noted that “researchers must articulate potential social stigmatization, psychological trauma, and other harms that may occur as a direct result of their data collection” during the Institutional Review Board process (p. 17). While it is difficult to determine risk in a qualitative project, I considered and identified possible risks as part of the research process. I presented these risks to the Institutional Review Board for the University of South Carolina and received approval to proceed with my study (See Appendix A).

I suspected at some point in the data collection process statements the participants might critique their current colleagues in their social studies departments. A second possibility was that my findings may uncover a negative attitude toward their current school administration. Based on these two suspected outcomes, a potential risk to the participants could be that my study impedes the relationship they have with others, making future work in their schools difficult. A third risk I considered was that others see the theory produced as a result of the study as easily generalized, do not take into account cultural aspects and the personalities of the participants, and denounce it as irrelevant because it was not easily seen in their own context. As a result, this could have a negative impact on the professional reputation of the participants.

These risks are plausible, but not definite. On the other hand, the benefit of the study is definite. The gap in the research on teacher leadership among female high school social studies teachers is clear. The teachers involved in the study participated because they saw it as valuable to their growth as educators and to the development of social studies as an important discipline in our schools. A goal of my study was to empower the participants as leaders and role models and validate the work they have accomplished thus far in their careers by being the subject of an academic study. Likewise, the interviews and the journal served a dual purpose. First, they were a means of data collection for this study. Second, they were a means of reflection for the participants and, thus, should prompted them to think deeper about their classroom practice and their role as teacher leaders.

An ethical issue in qualitative research is maintaining the anonymity of participants. Glesne (2011) described participant privacy as a “foremost concern” (p.

172). My study focuses on a two female social studies teachers who engage in leadership activities around the state. As such, I did not want to put them in jeopardy as these teachers may be easily identifiable. Glesne suggested using pseudonyms to preserve the anonymity of participants in the write-up stage of the study. As a result, I assigned each participant and their co-workers pseudonyms using the most common names from the Social Security name index and surnames in the United States according to the 2010 census. In addition, although I described their schools in general terms, I assigned the schools pseudonyms as well. I quoted sources to describe the schools and community to provide a rich background of the teaching context. These location identifying documents included a local newspaper, state department of education documents, and county Chamber of Commerce descriptions. However, I did not cite those sources to protect the anonymity of participants as revealing the actual school, district, county or community name would point people to the identity of the participants. However, it would be possible to identify the school with some investigation. As an additional layer of security, recordings, transcripts, documents, and location identifying documents will be saved on a password protected digital device, such as a laptop.

## **Methodology for Qualitative Research**

### **Comparative Case Study**

For my study, I used a comparative case study approach. The “descriptive and holistic” nature of a case study was well-suited for this particular study (Glesne, 2011, p. 22). Because I am focused on understanding the lived experiences of the two female social studies teacher leaders, a comparative case study is appropriate as it provides “variation across the cases,” an opportunity for a “more compelling... interpretation”,



and improving the validity of the findings (Merriam, 2009, p. 49-50). However, I designed the comparative case study to allow for both within-case analysis and cross-case analysis, as a means of identifying themes across cases (Merriam, 2009). In addition, because my goal was not to generalize or compare my findings to other teacher or situations, I chose to approach the uniqueness these particular teachers with a data collection design that is “less structured” and “individually tailored” to the participants and situation (Maxwell, 2013, p. 88). This approach allowed me to gather rich data through a variety of methods that enabled me to produce a vivid portrait of the teachers as leaders in social studies and their experience as women in a predominantly masculine discipline.

According to Glesne (2011), a case study is the study of the “complexity” and “uniqueness” of a case using “data gathered through participant observation, in-depth interviewing, and document collection and analysis” (p. 22). A case study approach was appropriate to my study because the phenomenon under investigation, teacher leadership in among female secondary social studies teachers, requires the depth of a case study. The rich detail of a case study allowed me to better theorize about the phenomena for future research studies. Additionally, Maxwell (2013) concluded that, because “the selection of a particular case in terms of the goals of the study” is a critical component of a case study, the methodology of a case study must include “purposeful selection” of both a site and participants (p. 78). Maxwell defined *purposeful selection* as deliberately selecting “particular settings, persons, or activities... to provide information that is particularly relevant to your questions and goals, and that can’t be gotten as well from other choices” (p. 97). In identifying participants for the study, I used Patton’s (2002)

intensity sampling, criterion sampling, and theory-based sampling methods to achieve purposeful selection. Because I concentrated on the female social studies teachers working as high school department chairs who aligned with Dempsey's (1992) images of teacher leadership, a comparative case study with purposeful selection is best method to use to frame and present my study.

### **Grounded Theory Methodology Development**

Stern (1980) described grounded theory as a means of conducting “investigations of relatively uncharted waters... or to gain a fresh perspective in a familiar situation” (p. 20). Because I was interested in understanding the lived experiences of female social studies teacher leaders, grounded theory suited my case study design. Grounded theory is a research approach focused on generating theory based on systematic analysis of data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). In doing this, Stern (1980) outlined five steps for conducting grounded research, which were subsequently modified four stages by Coyne and Cowley (2006). For my study, I adjusted Coyne and Cowley's matrix to include reflective journals and theory development. Also, I modified Coyne and Cowley's matrix to denote ongoing development of the analytic framework on follow-up interviews (see Figure 3.1, Research Matrix).

### **Grounded Theory Methodology in the Present Study**

A timeline best describes the process I used of collecting data in my study. First, I identified participants using Dempsey's (1992) images of teacher leadership. Second, participants submitted two documents: a resume and graph that describes the members of their administrative staff and social studies departments. I then conducted initial interviews to establish the participants as teacher leaders and captured their

understanding of leadership. I conducted the interviews in February 2016. I transcribed and analyzed the interviews. Between late-February and early-May 2016, the participants recorded their experiences related leading in department and school in a biweekly journal. The participants submitted the entries to me electronically. As I received the entries, I analyzed the entries, cross checking between the interview data and the journaling. As this process progressed, I maintained memos to monitor my interpretations of the data and I compared the emerging findings with existing literature. At the completion of the three-month journal writing period, I developed final interview questions based on within-case analysis and cross-case analysis. I conducted interviews using a phenomenological interview methodology (Roulston, 2010). I transcribed the final interviews. I analyzed all data in accordance to the research process matrix, producing a theory of teacher leadership among female social studies teacher leaders via grounded methodology.

### **Data Collection**

I collected data for the study primarily through participant interviews and participant journaling. I also used other documents for data collection such as resumes and report cards.

**Pilot study.** Developing a pilot study allows qualitative researchers an opportunity to concentrate on concepts prior to initiating the larger study (Maxwell, 2013). For my study, this meant an initial exploration of the understanding how female social studies teacher leaders lead in high school social studies departments. In 2014, I conducted a pilot case study of a female social studies teacher leader who was in the process of transitioning from one high school to another. I sought to understand how she

perceived and understood leading a largely male staff. Glesne (2011) and Maxwell (2013) noted that conducting a pilot study allows the qualitative researcher to calibrate research methodology. As a result of the pilot study, I was able to hone interviewing techniques for the present study utilizing a phenomenological interviewing approach to capture “detailed and in-depth descriptions of human experiences” (Roulston, 2010, p. 16). Additionally, I found that having data that included both participant interviews and participant-produced artifacts would allow for a richer, more descriptive narrative of the participant’s experience (Glesne, 2011). Consequently for the present study, I decided to include a reflective journal as a means of establishing a participant-generated document (Glesne, 2011; Merriam, 2009). Finally, the pilot study allowed me to sharpen the research questions guiding the present study. Specifically, I included questions connected to female teacher leader who lead social studies teachers who serve as athletic coaches.

**Contextual and biographical.** My study is designed to explore information-rich cases (Patton, 2002). To demonstrate this, I presented both a description of the participants’ current work environments and biographical sketches of the participants. I believe that the description of the work environment provided an understanding of the participants’ daily instructional lives and leadership activities. Likewise, it indicated a connection between perceived teacher leadership actions and context. Additionally, I included a biographical sketch of the participants to understand how their past informed their understanding and perceptions of leadership. The biographical sketches allowed me to situate the participants along professional continuums (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Huberman, 1989). These components served as benchmarks for my own reflexivity procedures in the qualitative process as I understood how I relate to and differ from the

participants. These also served to identify my insider/outsider status (Merriam et al., 2001) with two people I have known prior to the study.

**Interview protocols.** First, I developed interview questions (see Appendix B) as open questions and open probes to garner more details about the participants' lived experience and explore the perceptions of their experiences (Roulston, 2010; Seidman, 2006). In doing so, I avoided leading questions to may illicit a desired response or influence the language the participants use (Roulston, 2010; Seidman, 2006). Leading can also take the form of reinforcing actions and mannerisms, which I avoided as well (Seidman, 2006). Seidman (2006) noted that being attentive to the participant's word selection allows the interview to probe for meaning. In my study, this was useful in determining the participants' understanding of words such as "leadership" and "teacher leadership" and "extra-curricular." This was particularly useful when my definitions and the participants' definitions did not align. Because I constructed a biographical component to the research and reconstructed the perceived narrative of participants' daily leadership activities, I asked follow-up questions to ensure the chronologies of the actions are accurate (Seidman, 2006). Finally, I used an interview guide consisting of five to six base questions "designed to ask participants to reconstruct their experience and to explore their meaning" (Seidman, 2006, p. 92) to assist me in adhering to the above protocols (see Appendix C).

**Participant interviews.** First, participants received a consent form (see Appendix C). Jessica was interviewed once. Amanda was interviewed three times. I conducted interviews at times convenient for the participants. I conducted the interviews in a phenomenological interview approach as the goal of the interviews were to document the

“lived experiences” of the participant by focusing on their “feeling, perceptions, and understandings” as female teacher leaders in social studies (Roulston, 2010, p. 16). The first interview session focused on the participants’ growth as a teacher, a teacher leader and their leadership philosophy. The follow-up interview sessions focused on relationships the participants have with administrators and other social studies teachers as a teacher leader and on leadership actions documented in the journals. I recorded the interviews and saved digital copies on a password-protected lap top.

**Journals.** I decided to use participant journals as a means of documenting instances of leadership over the course of three months. Glesne (2011) noted that participant diaries are important sources of data for generating interview questions and “supporting or challenging interview data” (p. 90). This supported a grounded theory approach in that it allowed a comparative analysis between interviews and journals in both within-case analysis and cross-case analysis. Additionally, the journal represented a personal document, which allows for the analysis of the participants’ “personal perspective” in order to understand their “attitudes, beliefs, and views of the world” (Merriam, 2009, p. 142-143). Because I wanted to understand how the participants comprehend their role as female leaders in a largely masculine discipline, the journals serve as data to understand how the participants gave meaning to specific relationships and events. I saved the journals on a password-protected lap top.

**Additional data.** I collected various documents to provide context to the participants’ work environment. On occasion, I used email to ask follow-up questions to clarify statements made by a participant. The participants provided a resume, from which I gathered data related to identifying them as teacher leaders. Additionally, the

participants provided a chart that described administrators and social studies teachers in their school (see Appendix D). From the chart, I identified who participants mention in their interviews and journals since the participants referenced numerous people during the study (see Table 4.1). The chart will also allowed me to create a master list of people in the study to then produce a master list of pseudonyms for participant protection.

Finally, data about the schools were collected from school websites, state School Report Cards, local organizations, and the National Center for Education Statistics. I used this data to contextualize the schools in terms size, geographic location, student achievement levels, and athletic programs. For Jessica, I also used a biography she wrote for the State Social Studies Council (SSSC). For Amanda, I used three additional writings she produced. First, she provided me with her District Teacher of the Year application. Second, she provided me with two papers she wrote for graduate schools – an action research paper on African American inclusion and a reflection on conducting a book study. I used to provide richer data. I saved all additional data on a password-protected lap top.

### **Data Analysis**

The interviews and participants journals were transcribed and inserted into a chart for coding. The chart had three columns. The left-hand column documented time. The middle column contained the transcribed interview. The right-hand column contained coding. In analyzing the participant interviews, I used in vivo coding, descriptive coding, and narrative coding (Saldaña, 2013). In vivo coding is a coding process that uses the exact language of the data to focus on the “unique vocabulary or argot” of documents and participants (Saldaña, 2013, p. 91) while descriptive coding is based on the researcher’s

understanding of the data to generate “a categorized inventory, tabular account, summary, or index of the data’s contents” (Saldaña, 2013, p. 89). I did this to focus on the words of the participant. Then, to analyze the interviews for the purpose of a case study, I used narrative coding, which “applies the conventions of... literary elements” to qualitative data to transform data into “the form of stories” (Saldaña, 2013, p. 131). Finally, I shared emerging findings and interpretations of the data with the participant as a form of member checking (Roulston, 2010).

### **The Researcher: The Data Collection Tool**

#### **Reflexivity**

Seidman (2006) concluded that, because research is personal to the researcher, “[a]n autobiographical section explaining researchers’ connections to their proposed research seems to me to be crucial for those interested in in-depth interviewing” (p.32). Thus, it is important to reflect on my background and assumptions. Roulston (2010) noted that reflexivity in qualitative research “refers to the researcher’s ability to be able to self-consciously refer to him or herself in relation to the production of knowledge” (p. 116). Pillow (2003) categorized reflexivity methods into four themes: *recognition of self*, *recognition of the other*, *truth*, and *transcendence*. However, Pillow called for a new theme of reflexivity focused on “rendering the knowing of their selves or their subjects as uncomfortable and uncontainable” (p. 188). This form of reflexivity is called interrupting reflexivity and is designed to purposefully challenge our held assumptions. This section outlines my assumptions, outsider status, and subjectivity as part of the reflexivity process.



## **Situated Knowledge and Related Assumptions**

My career path is influenced by concepts of service and innovation. After stints as a Peace Corps Volunteer for two years and with the State Department of Social Services for three years, I have worked at two public high schools. I was drawn to teaching at the first high school because of its rural setting and, thus, the opportunity to serve a largely overlooked student population. Likewise, joining the faculty to the second high school, an all magnet school, was appealing as it allowed me to be at the forefront of advancements in school reform. Therefore, my research was driven by a personal and intellectual desire to investigate issues related to service and innovation.

Additionally, my career has been marked by teacher leadership. I often present at workshops and conferences on district, state, and national levels and serve on district and state-level committees. As the current state coordinator of social studies education, I conduct professional development throughout the state, work with pre-service teachers, and serve as a liaison between state and district leadership. As the current vice-president of the state council for the social studies, I organize statewide professional development workshops and conferences and serve as a voice for social studies instruction in the state. Additionally, I have mentored pre-service teachers and co-taught a Holocaust Education to in-service teachers. Finally, from my experience representing public education as a 2011-2012 state Honor Roll Teacher, I learned that teacher leaders must be advocates for education. In my career, I have developed a strong sense of teacher leadership

From my perspective, I believe all educators can be leaders and I enter the present study with the assumption that social studies teacher leaders are working to advance instruction. I believe that Rogus (1988) was correct in his early conceptual piece on

teacher leadership that teacher leaders as those who pursue professional development, empower their peers, create a vision for education, communicate the vision to their peers, and generate trust among their peers. Additionally, I believe that Lieberman and Miller (2004) were correct when that identified teacher leaders as those who inspire others through improved practice, work to expand relationships, focus on content, create learning communities, present their work to others, and serve as change agents. For me, as a teacher and researcher, teacher leadership is a powerful force for of service and innovation in our schools.

### **Positionality Statement**

Merriam et al. (2001) concluded that “the reconstruing of insider/outsider status in terms of positionality, power, and knowledge construction allow us to explore the dynamics of researching within or across one’s culture (p. 405). Two areas of positionality stood out at the onset of the study that affected my insider/outsider status. First, I have been around strong women during my life and I have never been an athletic coach.

I am drawn to this research topic because I am the father of two girls and I want them to be regarded as equals in their lives and careers. In addition, I am the son of a single mother whose highest level of education was an associated degree. However, I observed her strength as she divorced my father and worked to provide the things I needed as a child. Finally, I was raised in part by my maternal grandmother. My grandmother strongly influenced my education as she introduced me to the local library at a young age and helped me with my homework in elementary school. Yet, she did not have a high school diploma, having left school during the Great Depression. So, I am

engaged by issues related women's rights. I think that my sympathy toward the issue can be transparent as people get to know me. However, I am a male and, thus, outsider.

In addition, I am a male social studies teacher who is not an athletic coach. At the onset of my career, finding a job was difficult as some schools would not interview me because I am not qualified to coach. Likewise, I have observed department meetings where football defensive schemes for an upcoming game were discussed with more importance than student progress and instructional practices. At my first school, I was one of two male teachers in the school who did not coach a sport, making me an anomaly in that context at that time. My most recent school did not have an athletic department, so all of the social studies teachers were academic-only teachers. I have never been a part of the athletic department subculture of a school. In contrast to the sympathy I have for women's issues, I bristle at the thought of social studies teachers having to coach. As a result, my work on this study will align with Pillow's (2003) interrupting reflexivity as I will be prompted to potentially sympathize and better understand something that makes me uncomfortable.

### **Researcher Subjectivity as a Limitation**

As the researcher, I was a potential limitation in this study (Merriam, 2009). In qualitative research, the researcher is the primary data collection instrument. Alan Peshkin (1988) argued that, by understanding one's subjectivity before the research process begins, researchers ensure that subjectivity does not occur "accidentally," but rather as part of the research "process, mindful of its enabling and disabling potential while data is still coming in" (p. 18). Using Peshkin's theory of subjective I's, I identified

three potential I's that anticipate will be engaged by my research on the phenomena of female teacher leaders in social studies.

First, like Peshkin, I have a Pedagogical-Meliorist I. I have a firm grasp of my social studies teaching philosophy, one grounded in constructivism, the progressive (if not social reconstruction) curricular discourse, and historical thinking. It upsets me to hear social studies teachers using teacher-centered strategies. I view myself as an instructional leader, working to influence teachers around me. Also, I have a strong Teacher Leader I as I see myself as professional educator who helps teachers and students beyond my classroom, school, and district. Shifting to a researcher role with my Pedagogical-Meliorist and Teacher Leader I's in mind, it was important to keep my subjectivities in check and curb my desire to mentor the participants during interviews related to the study.

Additionally, I identified an Academic-Athletic I for the present study. As a social studies teacher, I am an academic-only teacher as I am not qualified to be an athletic coach. Combined with my Pedagogical-Meliorist I, my Academic-Athletic I becomes aroused when I observe social studies teachers prioritize coaching a sport over instructional planning. Of the I's I discussed thus far, I monitored this one most carefully. I did not want to allow my Academic-Athletic I to distort my data and findings to demonstrate a phenomena that does not exist. To do this, I recorded and analyzed data with a critical eye and keep the Academic-Athletic I in check

Finally, I identified an additional I during the study. I identified a GSA I for this study. Because I am a teacher, I used the abbreviation for the national student-led organization, Gay-Straight Alliance, to name this I. Politically, I consider myself liberal

and supportive of LGBTQ issues. Personally, my cousin Karen and I have been close throughout our lives. Karen and her wife, Cindy, have been a couple for twenty years, married for nearly two, and are the proud mothers of a seven-year-old son. However, Karen's coming out to our family a decade ago was hard on Karen and on our largely conservative family. Because of my liberal disposition and closeness to Karen, I immediately expressed my support when others in the family did not. As a result of my GSA I, homophobia and out casting people because of their sexuality upsets me. In this study, I unexpectedly encountered my GSA I as Amanda spoke of a gay colleague's experiences. Like my Academic-Athletic I, I carefully and critically recorded and analyzed data to keep the GSA I in check.

### **Trustworthiness and Reliability.**

Glesne (2011) noted that, because qualitative research centers on "social constructed" concepts and understandings, trustworthiness is a process "to demonstrate ways in which the researchers can claim their work is plausible or credible" (p. 49). To create trustworthy research, researchers employ methods of reliability. Maxwell (2013) noted that the purpose of reliability methods is not to support interpretations and findings, but to test interpretations and findings. Creswell and Miller (2000) identified nine methods for establishing reliability and trustworthiness in qualitative research: triangulation, disconfirming evidence, researcher reflexivity, member checking, prolonged engagement in the field, collaboration, audit trail, rich descriptions, and peer debriefing. In addition, Creswell and Miller noted that methods of creating validity in qualitative research align with one of three lenses: researcher, reader, and participant. Methods aligned to the researcher lens demonstrate how the researcher creates validity

through processes in the research and analysis stages. Methods categorized as the reader lens build validity through reader interaction with the final presentation of research. Methods adhering to the participant lens utilize either the participants in the study or “individuals external to the study” (p. 125) to determine the accuracy of interpretations. In my study, I used primarily Creswell and Miller’s methods of triangulation, rich description, member checking, audit trail, and research reflexivity to build trustworthiness. These methods incorporated all three lens. Additionally, I used Maxwell’s (2013) method of comparison to build validity in my study.

**Triangulation.** Creswell and Miller (2000) defined triangulation as a “validity procedure where researchers search for convergence among multiple and different sources of information to form themes or categories in a study” (p. 126). In practice, triangulation is the collection of “corroborating evidence collected through multiple methods, such as observations, interviews, and documents to locate major and minor themes” (p. 127). Likewise, Creswell and Miller note that triangulation is research lens because the responsibility to collect multiple sources is on the researcher. Roulston (2010) noted that triangulation serves to create validity by allowing researchers to track themes over time rather than focus on single isolated moments in time. In addition, Maxwell (2013) stated that triangulation builds trustworthiness by reducing the “risk of chance associations” and by allowing “better assessment of the generalities” developed by the researcher (p. 128).

**Audit trail.** Creswell and Miller (2010) described the audit trail approach to building validity as a method by which “researchers provide clear documentation of all research decisions and activities... throughout the account or in the appendices” (p. 128).

Advancing this definition, Roulston (2010) described the audit trail as a “transparent” method that provided readers “a detailed [description of research methods] that may be replicated by others” (p. 87). To the point of the transparency, Tracey (2010) noted succinctly that at the core of the audit trail method is “honesty about the research process” (p. 842). Creswell and Miller (2010) noted that the audit trail aligns with the participant lens as it requires, for example, the doctoral committee to validate the methodology of the research.

**Rich description.** Creswell and Miller 2000 stated that rich description in qualitative research “creates verisimilitude” through “statements that produce for the readers the feeling that they have experienced, or could experience, the events being described in a study” (p. 128-129). Tracey (2010) determined richness of data to be one of eight criteria for sound qualitative research. Stacey further noted that rich, complex data provides validity when the data is analyzed with rigor and an audit trail. Ultimately, as Creswell and Miller (2000) observed “vivid detail... help[s] readers understand that the account is credible” (p. 129). Consequently, the description method aligns with the reader lens as the validity of the research is determined by the reader.

**Member checking.** Creswell and Miller (2000) defined member checking as “taking data and interpretations back to the participants in the study so that they can confirm the credibility of the information and narrative account” (p. 127). Roulston (2010) expanded on the description of the process. According to Roulston, member checking involves interviewees assessing and adding to the finding of the researcher with the purpose of validating a proper “understanding of the phenomenon investigated”

(p.87). Member checking is critical to the building of validity. As Maxwell (2013) concluded:

This is the single most important way of ruling out the possibility of misinterpreting the meaning of what participants say and do and the perspective they have on what is going on, as well as being an important way of identifying [researcher] biases and misunderstandings of what [the researcher] observed (p. 126-127).

Creswell and Miller (2000) determined that member checking adhered to the participant lens as it a method using participants in the research to build validity.

**Research reflexivity.** Creswell and Miller (2000) described the researcher reflexivity method as one by which researchers “self-disclose” and “report” their personal assumptions, beliefs, values, and biases “that may shape their inquiry” and “reflect on the social, cultural, and historical forces that shape their interpretation” (p. 127). Tracey (2010) determined reflexivity to be one of eight critical criteria for qualitative research. Tracey described reflexivity as process focused on “honesty and authenticity with one’s self, one’s research, and one’s audience” that is couched in “early stages of research design through negotiating access and trust, data collection, analysis, and presentation” (p. 842). Creswell and Miller determined the reflexivity method of validity as a researcher lens as the responsibility to be transparent regarding bias and assumptions rests with the researcher.

**Comparison.** Transitioning away from Creswell and Miller’s (2000) methods of validity, I now focus on a method used by Maxwell (2013). Maxwell determined that comparison between cases generates validity because the method serves to corroborate



interpretations and conclusion in the research. As Maxwell noted, studies focused on a single case “incorporate less formal comparisons that contribute to the interpretability of the results” (p. 129). However, the comparison method potentially merges with Creswell and Miller’s (2000) methods of identifying disconfirming evidence. According to Creswell and Miller, the disconfirming evidence methods involves the researcher searching “through the data for evidence that is consistent with or disconfirms... themes” in the analysis (p. 127). Moreover, the method, aligned with the researcher lens, generates validity to qualitative research because the “search for disconfirming evidence provides... support of the account’s credibility because reality... is multiple and complex.” (p. 127). Given this, I believe that the method of comparison of cases (Maxwell, 2013) naturally involves seeking both confirming and disconfirming evidence (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Because I used a comparative case study to identify themes between two separate cases (Merriam, 2009), the validity methods of comparison (Maxwell, 2013) and, thus, disconfirming evidence (Creswell & Miler, 2000) were built into the research design.

**Logistical limitations.** I did not identify any logistical limitations preparing for my study. I had access to the participants. Participants were either geographically close for me to meet with them face-to-face or had reliable Internet access so interviews could be conducted via Skype or Google Hangout. Likewise, the journaling was conducted through an online platform, specifically, Google Survey. Also, several follow-up questions were conducted via email.

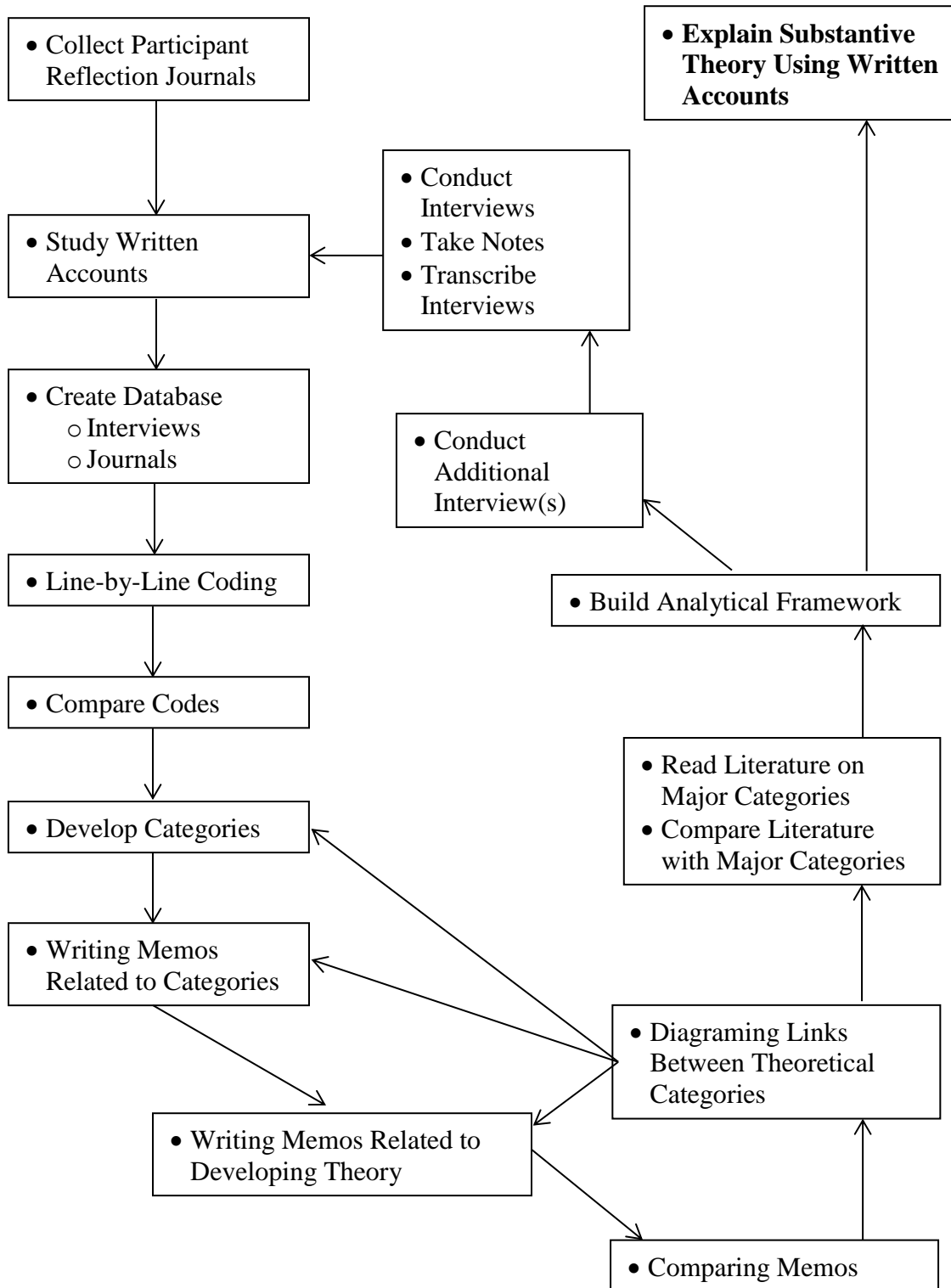


Figure 3.1: Research Matrix based on Coyne and Cowley (2006) and Stern (1980)

## CHAPTER 4

### FINDINGS

#### **Introduction Establishing the Participants as Teacher Leaders**

I selected Jessica Smith and Amanda Williams for my study using Patton's (2002) criterion sampling and theory-based sampling strategies. Criterion sampling called for the selection of participants based on criteria applicable to the research questions. For my study, the criteria for selection as a participant included being a female high school social studies teacher, a department chair, and a teacher leader beyond the formal role of department chair. Jessica Smith and Amanda Williams both met the predetermined criteria (see Table 4.1, List of Names). The participants were also selected based on Patton's theory-based sampling. This selection strategy required the participants to align with an established. For my study I used Dempsey's (1992) images of teacher leadership, which consisted of *teacher as fully functioning person*, *teacher as reflective practitioner*, *teacher as scholar*, and *teacher as partner in learning*. Jessica and Amanda both met this theory-based sampling condition. As a result, both teachers in my study met the standards of purposeful sampling in the criterion sampling and theory-based sampling (Patton, 2002).

### **Jessica: Meeting Criterion Sampling**

During the process of selecting Jessica to participate, we discussed the study by phone. During the conversation we discussed the participant responsibilities and she confirmed that she met the benchmarks for criterion sampling (Patton, 2002). In her 2015 biography for SSSC elections, Jessica wrote, “I am currently teaching Advanced Placement US History at Fairview High School in Fairview District One.” She noted that she taught the “spectrum of social studies courses and ability levels” in her career. In this it is evident that Jessica met the criteria of being a female social studies social studies teacher. Although she affirmed that she was a department chair at Fairview High School, Jessica did not mention being a department chair in the biography or the interview. However, she held a formal teacher leadership role. She wrote, “In 2012 I became the lead teacher for social studies for high schools for Fairview District One.” Although a leadership position in social studies, Jessica did not fully meet the criteria of being a department chair. However, Jessica did meet the criterion of being a teacher leader beyond the formal role of department chair, or lead teacher in her case. She noted in her SSSC biography that she served “as a cooperating teacher for teaching interns” and as a “mentor to new teachers.” With this, it is evident that Jessica met the criteria of leading beyond the formal role. In general, Jessica met the criteria for the study (Patton, 2002).

### **Jessica: Meeting Theory-Based Sampling**

To determine that Jessica was a teacher leader, I used theory-based sampling (Patton, 2002). I aligned Jessica’s SSSC biography to Dempsey’s (1992) four-characteristics of a teacher leader. To be a *fully functioning person*, Dempsey noted that teacher leaders must be “capable of responding creatively and competently to tomorrow’s

challenges” (p. 114). Jessica wrote in her SSSC biography that leading the “implementation of programs and initiatives” in Fairview One “deepened my understanding of 21st century systems of learning” which “allowed me to develop a vision of the role of social studies in producing the 21st century graduate.” In this it is evident that Jessica aligned with Dempsey’s (1992) theory of the teacher leader as a *fully functioning person* because she placed 21st century learning at the forefront of her pedagogical wheelhouse. To be a *reflective practitioner*, Dempsey (1992) reviewed the literature on teacher leadership to note that teacher leaders reflect deeply on their classroom practice. According to her SSSC biography, Jessica described her classroom as “an opportunity to explore pedagogical practice and through careful trial and error identify best practices that increase student achievement.” This statement revealed that Jessica implements and reflects on new instructional methods to elevate student success. With this, it is evident that Jessica aligned with Dempsey’s (1992) *reflective practitioner* image of a teacher leader. Additionally, Jessica exhibited the traits of both *fully functioning person* and *reflective practitioner* through her memberships and participation in such as “National Council for the Social Studies, the [State] Council for the Social Studies, the [State] Social Studies Supervisor’s Association, and ASCD [Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development].” As a result, Jessica met the theory-based requirements (Patton, 2002) of both the *teacher as fully functioning person* and *teacher as reflective practitioner* to define her as a teacher leader (Dempsey, 1992).

Jessica also aligned with Dempsey’s characteristics of teacher leaders as *teacher as scholar* and *teacher as partner in learning*. To be a *scholar*, Dempsey explained that teacher leaders must demonstrate the ability to “master an ever more complex body of

knowledge” (p. 116) in terms of both content and pedagogy. Jessica stated in her SSSC biography, “Developing and leading professional development furthered my knowledge of best instructional practices and the needs of adult learners.” From this, it is evident that Jessica developed a knowledge base centered on best practices to advance both students and teachers. As a result, Jessica aligned with Dempsey’s (1992) image of a teacher leader as a *scholar*. Finally, to be a *partner in learning*, Dempsey (1992) concluded that teacher leaders “forge... dynamic new partnerships” (p. 118) among students, teachers, school and district leaders, and the community. Jessica acknowledged that her own growth as a teacher was the result of other teacher leaders. In the SSSC biography, Jessica wrote, “Through collaboration with trusted mentors... my teaching and communication skills have consistently improved and my beliefs regarding the invaluable role of a team... [is] consistently reaffirmed.” In this it is evident that Jessica understood the impact teacher leaders, serving as a partner in her growth, positively affected her as a teacher and teacher leader. Additionally, Jessica noted in her SSSC biography that “the robust exchange of strategies and practices, along with successes and failures, improves the instructional practice of all who take part and consequently the achievement of the students they teach.” In this it is evident that, as a teacher leader, Jessica envisioned a dynamic school system centered on constantly improving practice through the efforts of collaboration among all stakeholders. Because of this, Jessica aligned with Dempsey’s (1992) *partner in learning* image of a teacher leader. By also aligning with the *teacher as scholar* and *teacher as partner in learning* requirements, Jessica fulfilled the theory-based sampling (Patton, 2002).

### **Amanda: Meeting Criterion Sampling**

During the process of selecting Amanda to participate, we discussed the study in person at the state social studies conference in 2015. During the discussion we discussed the participant responsibilities and she confirmed that that she met the benchmarks for criterion sampling (Patton, 2002). Because Amanda completed the study, I collected more data of her as a teacher and teacher leader. To demonstrate alignment to sampling methods, I used her Jackson District Teacher of the Year (DTOY) application. Amanda taught social studies at the middle level prior to joining the faculty at Dayton High School. Amanda noted in her DTOY application, “While at Dayton, I have taught History of the Modern World, all levels of United States History (CP, Honors, and AP,) and AP Human Geography.” In this, Amanda met the criterion sampling (Patton, 2002) requirement of being a female social studies teacher.

In addition, Amanda noted in her DTOY application that she served as “the Social Studies Department Chair since 2014.” Consequently Amanda aligned with the criterion sampling requirement (Patton, 2002) of being a social studies department chair. Finally, Amanda demonstrated teacher leadership in other capacities. Amanda wrote in her DTOY application that she frequently “facilitated and participated in... professional development opportunities.” In this, she noted specifically leading district’ and state-level presentations and workshops, presenting at the “National Association of Single Sex Public Education National Conference in Chicago,” and writing “a Common Core US History Unit on the Civil Rights Movement for the... State Department [of Education].” It is evident that Amanda met the criterion sampling benchmark (Patton, 2002) of being a

teacher leader beyond the formal role of department chair. As a result, Amanda clearly met the three criterion sampling benchmarks I identified for my study.

### **Amanda: Meeting Theory-Based Sampling**

To determine that Amanda was a teacher leader, I aligned her DTOY application to Dempsey's (1992) four-characteristics of a teacher leader. Dempsey noted that teacher leaders who meet the *fully functions person* image must be "capable of responding creatively and competently to tomorrow's challenges" (p. 114). In her DTOY application, Amanda wrote, "I am here to teach these students how to think for themselves and learn on their own." In this, it is evident that Amanda envisioned her classroom as a place for students to prepare for the challenges for high education and the workforce by teaching them to be independent in thought and learning. In addition, Amanda demonstrated an understanding of the challenges facing teachers resulting from policymakers. Noting changes occurring to the state's teacher evaluation system in 2019, Amanda wrote, "While I do believe that it is important to evaluate teachers, I am concerned about the [time-consuming] process and [data-based] evaluation criteria that teachers face." In addition, she noted inadequate "access to technology for all students" created "disparities of resources across school districts" in the state. Given her ability to address policies affecting teaching and learning in the state, Amanda aligned with Dempsey's (1992) image of a teacher leader as a *fully functions person*.

Dempsey (1992) reviewed the literature on teacher leadership and determined that teacher leaders reflect deeply on their classroom practice demonstrate the image of *reflective practitioner*. Amanda wrote in her DTOY application, "In November 2011, I was named a National Board Certified Teacher in the area of Early Adolescence Social



Studies-History.” According to Hakel, Anderson, Koenig, and Elliott (2008), reflection is central to the National Board Certification process and indicates “a significant departure from the established culture of teaching in the United States” (p. 56.). As a result, Amanda’s engagement in the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards process represents deep reflection. In addition, she held active membership in the State Social Studies Council, National Council for History Education, the State Geographic Alliance, and the State Social Studies Supervisors Association. According to Amanda, working with these groups allowed Amanda “to improve myself as an educator as well as improve my colleagues.” It is evident that Amanda sought means of personal growth for herself and others through learning and reflecting. As a result, Amanda aligned with Dempsey’s (1992) image of *reflective practitioner*.

In addition, Amanda aligned with Dempsey’s *teacher as scholar* image for teacher leaders. Dempsey explained that teacher leaders who are *scholars* establish their ability to “master an ever more complex body of knowledge” (p. 116) in terms of both content and pedagogy. Amanda wrote in her DTOY application, “I am currently working on obtaining a Masters of Education in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Cincinnati.” In this, it is evident that Amanda actively pursued an additional advanced degree to learn more about curriculum development and instructional practices. In addition, Amanda conducted “research on the causes of low minority enrollment in higher level courses and have discovered that this is a nationwide trend and is not an anomaly in my school” after observing the low number of African American students in Advanced Placement (AP) courses at Dayton High School. It is evident from this that research characterized Amanda’s practice as a teacher and as a teacher leader as she

observed a problem and researched the problem to develop a stronger understanding of the underpinning issues. As a result, Amanda aligns with Dempsey's (1992) image teacher leaders as *scholar*.

Finally, Amanda demonstrated alignment to Dempsey's *teacher a partner in learning* concept. Dempsey proposed that, to align with the *partner in learning* image, teacher leaders "forge... dynamic new partnerships" (p. 118) among students, teachers, administration, and stakeholders. In her DTOY application, Amanda noted, "This year, I have worked to create a professional learning community on formative assessment" consisting on thirteen teacher in the school. In this, it is evident that Amanda instituted a new practice for teachers to associate with each other and work collaboratively to improve practice. In addition, Amanda worked with her principal and vice principals to promote change. In her DTOY application, she wrote, "I have also worked with the administration to increase the number of African Americans enrolled in AP Social Studies classes." In this, Amanda demonstrated a desire to improve her school by working with school-level leaders. Finally, Amanda explained that "I have taken... student teachers and practicum students from local colleges" and universities because "I really enjoy working with... preservice teachers to share my best practices and my passion for education." In this, Amanda represented the establishment of relationships between educational institutions and her formation of relationships with preservice teachers. Through these characteristics, it is evident that Amanda aligned with Dempsey's (1992) image of teacher as a *partner in learning*. Therefore, by aligning with the *teacher a learner, reflective practitioner, teacher as scholar* and *teacher as partner in learning* requirements, Amanda fulfilled the theory-based sampling (Patton, 2002).

## **Participant 1: Jessica Smith**

### **“Collard Fields Turned into Football Fields”**

Fairview County is nestled in the heart of the state and is divided into five school districts. Jessica teaches in Fairview County School District One, which is referred to as Fairview One. At the time of my study, Fairview County and Fairview One were in a state of change. As Jessica observed, “the past decade we have seen neighborhoods spring up, strip malls, grocery stores” and the success of Fairview One schools is “one of the biggest draws.” The result is, according to Jessica, greater diversity. As she noted, the student body represents a “greater variety of regions” as the students “weren’t born in Fairview [county] or born in [the state].” Demographically, Jessica explained that Fairview High School has “more diversity” now than a decade ago. As she noted, “We have much more of an Asian population. I’m not going to say we have tremendous, but of our minority groups, Asian is probably the largest.” In addition, because the district remains a “rural location” to some extent, Jessica noted that “second behind [the Asian population] is probably Hispanic.”

While Jessica noted that Fairview One is becoming more diverse, demographic data is contradictory. According to the United States Census Bureau, racial and ethnic demographic changes did occur between 2000 and 2010 in Fairview County. The white population declined in Fairview County from 84.18% to 79.28%. The African-American population grew from 12.63% to 14.3%. The Hispanic population grew from 1.92% to 5.54%. However, the Asian population saw a change of 1.05% to 1.42%. So, while the white population declined and the African-American population grew slightly, the

Hispanic population grew 250.43% by adding 10,383 residents and Asian population, while growing 65.07%, added only 1,470 residents.

Moreover, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) reports that the current demographics of Fairview One is 90.3% white, 6.06% African-American, 2.29% Hispanic, and 0.84% Asian. More to the point, the NCES shows that current student body of Fairview High School is 89.3% white, 6.9% African-American, 1.9% Asian, and 1.6% Hispanic. This data indicates that, within a predominately white county, Fairview One and Fairview High School has a white population greater than the county average as a whole. It also indicates that Fairview High School has an Asian population greater than the district average and a Hispanic population lower than the district average. However, the white and Africa-American populations are consistent with district demographics. The data also contradicts Jessica’s claim that Asian students were the largest minority group, followed by Hispanic students as county and school data showed that African-American students are the largest minority group. This could be a result of Jessica teaching only AP United States History. As she explained, at Fairview High School, Hispanic and African-American are in the grade-level “Seminar” classes and Asian students are “in the Advanced Placement levels, which fits the stereotype unfortunately.” Therefore, she may be positioned to see primarily the growth of the Asian population due to the potential tracking policies of the school or district

Jessica believed that the demographic transformation and subsequent growth is “[a] lot of change, but I think change for the better.” However, she was clear to point out that it “[d]epends on who you talk to” as to whether or not the change is positive or negative. She noted that the district “has changed in eighteen years” as it has moved from

an “agrarian” and “rural” district to a more “suburban area.” When she began teaching at Fairview High School, the school “literally was in the middle of a collard field.” The students at the time consisted of families with deep ties to Fairview County. Jessica noted that when she “first started teaching there, people were born, lived, and died in Fairview. They went to Fairview [High School]. Their kids went to Fairview [High School].” As a life-long resident of the county and district, she explained, “I went to Fairview [High School] and “[m]y own parents are graduates of Fairview High School.”

The County Chamber of Commerce describes Fairview as “among the fastest growing communities” in the state and “features distinct neighborhoods to suit different tastes, from starter homes to midrange subdivisions to higher-end luxury estates.” According to the United States Census Bureau, the population of the county grew from 167,611 in 1990 to 216,014 in 2000 to 262,391 in 2010. Supporting Jessica’s observation, census records in 2000 indicate that 32 percent of county residents were born in a different state. However, although Fairview One is classified by the NCES as a suburban locale, two of the five high schools – Arlington High School and Madison high school – are identified as rural locales. Indeed, Fairview County has remained agrarian in nature, with pockets suburbanization. According to the United States Department of Agriculture, Fairview County received \$16.2 million in farm subsidies for cotton, corn, wheat, and soybean production. Likewise, the County Chamber of Commerce describes the area as one that “survived the burning of... surrounding areas during the Civil War” and possessing a southern “heritage [that] lives on today through the area’s numerous museums, antebellum homes and traditions of hospitality.” Additionally, the United States Census Bureau reports that military veterans make up 8.8 percent of the county’s

population. Also, according to state voter registration statistics, registered voters in the county are 50.47% Republican, 34.81% Democrat, and 14.72% Independent. Along with this, state election data shows that the county voted majority Republican in the 2008, 2010, 2012, and 2014 election cycles. So, while the county is changing demographically, it is holding a level of conservative, southern, agrarian culture.

In addition, Jessica explained that the Fairview One has increased its facilities. Jessica recalled, that as a child, “I remember when we were three elementary schools and a middle school that fed into [Fairview High School].” However, the district has “added three middle schools” to feed in to Fairview High School since Jessica began her teaching career in 1998. Jessica noted that “Fairview One has built a new school every year for, like, a decade” and the district is now at “over thirty some odd schools.” As to Fairview High School, Jessica has seen an expansion of the “sheer physical size of our campus.” As she put it, “[c]ollard fields turned into football fields” as the district built additional classrooms, a new stadium, a new gym, and a performing arts center. The school district rezoned in 2013 to divide Fairview High School and create a new school, Winchester High School. Jessica observed that, “Our student body decreased when we split with Winchester. We needed to. We were at 3,300 [students] and now we are down to 1,800 [students]. However, with the increasing population, the student body population is “projected to be right back up there.”

Fairview One has, according to the district website, “30 schools (17 elementary schools, seven middle schools, five high schools, one technology center).” The high schools are Fairview, Winchester, Georgetown, Madison, and Arlington. According to the NCES, 24,210 students attended schools in Fairview One in 2014. Likewise, the

district website also noted that it is “one of the fastest growing school districts in the state” and “grew by an average of 527 new students per year” between 2004 and 2014. As a result, it “built 14 new schools since 2000” to “keep up with this tremendous growth.” This statement aligns with Jessica’s statement regarding the frequency of school construction.

Specific to Fairview High School, the growth was documented in the *Annual School Report Card* issued by the state department of education in 2008, 2011 and 2014. In 2008, the *Annual School Report Card* narrative for Fairview High School noted:

The greatest challenge... continues to be an increasing student population.

Extensive renovations have been completed, and FHS enjoyed the opening of a new auditorium and a new gymnasium. A new football stadium will open for the 2008-2009 school year.

With this narrative, the population growth is identified as a significant challenge, while the expansion of facilities is documented. In addition, the 2011 *Annual School Report Card* narrative that “FHS continues to be challenged by rapid student growth and the greater demands on faculty caused by growth.” With this, it is evident that two years later the population growth continued to loom large and affected teacher morale. However, the 2014 *Annual School Report Card* narrative documented the rezoning and split of the school with a positive tone. The narrative stated that Fairview High School “began the 2013-2014 school year. . . . [w]ith 1,300 fewer students than the year before because of the opening of” Winchester High School.” As a result, “the halls and classrooms were less crowded, and there were places to park.” With this, it is evident that Fairview One

and Fairview High School are experiencing the rapid growth that Jessica described in her interview.

When describing the faculty at Fairview High School, Jessica struggled to find the word that best described them. Jessica stated that, “They are hard-working. I would not necessarily use the word innovative. . . . We are a strong faculty, a knowledgeable faculty. But they are stubborn, I guess is the word.” In this process, Jessica hedged between presenting the teachers in a positive or negative light. She noted that the teachers at Fairview High School, to include the Social Studies Department, were largely veteran teachers. “It is not uncommon,” Jessica stated, “for a teacher to have eighteen, fifteen years” of classroom experience. As a result, Jessica referred to the teachers as “old school.” As she observed, “They are old school in terms of, ‘By God I set the bar here and that is where you better hit. I’m not going to take the late work. I’m not going to do this or that.’” In this, Jessica is describing a teaching faculty that is adhering to tried and true methods with little concern for new pedagogical theories. However, Jessica is quick to point out that the teachers at Fairview High School are passionate out students. She observed that, “Our teachers care about kids. They love on kids. . . . [T]heir heart is in the right place.” While the teachers may be “old school” in their approach, they are well-meaning and care about children.

To compound the “old school” teachers issue, however, is the academic success of the Fairview High School. Jessica recounted a conversation with a district-level administrator who “described FHS as a finely oiled machine that was able to crank out grads and [test] scores.” Consequently, Jessica concluded that the teachers at the school possess “a little bit of the mindset that ‘We are successful and if it ain’t broke, don’t fix



it.” As a result, Jessica noted that teachers in the Social Studies Department tend to oppose change and innovation in regards to instructional practices. When asked what “innovation” means to her, Jessica stated that:

To me, to be innovative, you have to at least be open to a new idea or to have the perception that there might be a better way of doing something. That doesn’t mean that what you are doing is bad. It just means there might be a better way or different way.

With this, Jessica described a Social Studies Department leaning on student achievement as indicated on standardized tests as justification for not embracing new instructional methods. Yet even in the face of change within the district, the teachers Fairview High School hold fast to “old school” methods. With the rezoning of Fairview One and subsequent opening of Winchester High School in 2013, Jessica acknowledged concern over how “Fairview High School is perceived with in our district. We get compared with the new high school.” However, even with the comparison, Jessica concluded, “We are good at what we do. FHS is good at what does.” As a result, there is “resistance” to instructional change. Although Fairview High School now faces intradistrict competition from Winchester High School, because the standardized test scores remain high Fairview High school, the teachers remain beholden to the methods that produce such scores.

Data from varied sources confirm Jessica’s description of Fairview High School as an academically successful school with a strong, professional staff. According to the NCES, Fairview One operated on a \$264,338,000 budget during the previous school year. Fairview One’s website noted that “the district spends 86 percent of its general fund operating budget on instruction and instructional support (salaries and related costs).”

The NCES recorded that Fairview One has 1,597 full-time teachers. According to National Board of Professional Teaching Standards directory, Fairview One employed 368 National Board Certified Teachers as of July 2016. Therefore, twenty-three percent of the teachers in Fairview One have achieved National Board Certification. Likewise, the Fairview County Council highlighted the success of Fairview One. The council's webpage noted that "Fairview One strives to provide a strong foundation for learning that produces positive results for students." As a result, the money that Fairview One spent teaching and instruction attracted a quality teaching force. This, in turn, created the reputation of a high-performing district. However, this reputation is supported by standardized test data. Fairview High School out-performed national, state, and district averages on both national and state exams related to high school (see Table 4.2, Fairview One standardized test data). Jessica's assessment of teachers resisting instructional change is understandable when 92.6% of the students passed the United State History End-of-Course (EOC) Exam, 88% of students passed AP Exams, and students earned composite scores of 23.8 on the ACT and 1592 on the SAT. Thus, Fairview High School appeared to be a "well-oiled machine" producing high performing students in regards to standardized tests.

### **"A Badge and a Beer all at the Same Time"**

Jessica's path to becoming a teacher was affected by childhood dreams, an initial career, and motherhood. As a child Jessica dreamed of a career in law. First, her father was an attorney. Second, she saw being an attorney as dazzling. "From a young age," Jessica reflected, "I thought I was going to be an attorney. For some reason in the 1970s, we thought it would be glamorous to be an attorney." For Jessica, the seeds of being a

teacher were planted when she was a student at Fairview High School in the late 1980s. Jessica noted that she “never thought about being a teacher” before high school. However, taking AP United States History “kind of sparked an interested” as she was drawn to the “through process that goes into AP US History.” More importantly, Jessica “loved” Mrs. Joan Alexander, the Advanced Placement United States History teacher. As a result, Jessica stated that she “took teacher cadet as a senior” because Mrs. Alexander “taught the teacher cadet class.” The influence that Mrs. Alexander had on Jessica was significant. As Jessica noted, the experience of being taught Advanced Placement United States History and teacher cadet by Mrs. Alexander “opened my eyes that [teaching] could be a possibility.” Consequently, Jessica explained that she “entered college with this pleasant experience from teacher cadet and the desire to be a history major.” Prior to being in Mrs. Alexander’s class, Jessica only foresaw a career in law. Yet, upon graduating from Fairview High School she saw a life with more options.

Jessica attended the state’s flagship university, graduating with a bachelor’s degree in history in 1992. She explained that she chose history as a major because “history is a good humanities and pre-law background.” This explanation indicates that, while Mrs. Alexander was influential, Jessica was still drawn to a career in law as an undergraduate student. As Jessica progressed through the history degree program, she began to rethink her desire to be an attorney like her father. As explained, “I didn’t really like the idea that lawyers make money because lawyers log billable hours. I knew that I wanted family and that sort of stuff.” The desire to craft a family life became a focus for Jessica. During this time, she met Tim, her future husband who was four years older. However, Jessica was clear to note that she did not “immediately” decide “to turn by

history degree into teaching” when she “didn’t go the law school route.” By the time she graduated from college, she was married to Tim, “needed a job right out of college[,]” and all she had was “a history degree, just a straight degree.” Consequently, Jessica took a job as a probation agent with the state’s Probation, Parole, and Pardon Services.

When asked how she found herself with from the Probation, Parole, and Pardon Services, Jessica’s response was succinct. Jessica explained, “I needed a job. My husband worked for them. They had openings.” With this, Jessica is matter-of-fact regarding her experience as a newly married couple needing financial stability. However, when asked about her experience as a probation agent, Jessica first attempted joke, and then became reflective. “I was 21 [years old],” Jessica joked, “The state... handed me a badge and a beer all at the same time.” While Jessica was being jovial with this statement, she expressed the pressure of the situation when considering the confluence of her age and the responsibility of her job. However, her upbringing played a role in her understanding of the position as well. For Jessica, being a probation agent “was eye-opening for a little sheltered female from Fairview.” When asked what she meant by “sheltered,” Jessica explained, “I had lived a very homogenous life, to say. Very traditional path. Very white, middle class background. Not exposed to the world.” For Jessica, “sheltered” meant not being aware of experiences and realities of non-white, lower income citizens. To this, Jessica noted the influence that her parents played in sheltering her understanding people outside of her own demographic. As Jessica said, “My parents had protected my innocence very much. So then to be suddenly supervising someone released from, you know, the Central Correction Institute for murder...” At this point, Jessica trailed off with her thought and shook her head. Here Jessica demonstrated how, as a forty-four year old

adult looking back, the jolt of the situation is still difficult to put into words. Yet, she remained a probation agent for three years.

During the three years that Jessica worked as a probation agent, motherhood and the emotional impact of working as a probation agent prompted her to reconsider teaching as a career. First, she and Tim welcomed their first child into their family. At this time, Jessica started thinking about becoming a teacher for “convenience and family life.” In addition, her work as a probation agent regularly exposed her to the effect of poverty on the lives of children. Jessica explained that “what started to impact me the most was starting to see the role that poverty plays in people’s lives” and, as a result, “I guess that is where the story [of my becoming a teacher] really kind of starts.” As a probation agent, Jessica, the “sheltered” young lady who led a “homogenous life” in a “white, middle class” context, was seeing the intertwining of poverty, crime, and education. In tracking and arresting parolees, she saw the “lack of opportunity” when going “on home visits.” With this, Jessica is acknowledging that she understood socioeconomics at a deeper level than her upbringing provided. Looking back she is clear to balance the reality that incarceration was “a result of their own choices, but some was a result of the situation they had been born in to.” Given her background, it is evident that serving as a probation agent cause Jessica to change her understanding of why people engage in criminal activities. The experience she lived appears to have shown her how participating in a life of crime may also be a result of poverty and need, not by choice alone.

Furthermore, the emotional grind of working as a probation agent came to a head on a particular morning that Jessica described as a “horrible scenario.” As Jessica

explained, “I went on a particular arrest scenario. Two kids sitting on a couch waiting to go to school. We... show up to arrest their mother.” With this statement, Jessica is recalling the scene as though it as an official report with a clipped cadence in her voice and direct statements about scene with no adjectives. She continued the description in the same method of delivery:

Mom was back passed out on the bed from a night of partying with a boyfriend who wasn't the kids' father. Grandfather was watching the kids, getting them ready for school. But you could smell the alcohol coming off of him.

In this, Jessica recounted a scene that demonstrates multi-generation substance abuse, absence of a biological father, and children exposed to the effects of crime and poverty. At this point, Jessica's tone shifted and she became more reflective in telling the story. She recalled the children on the sofa: “They start crying. They hate us. We are taking their mother.” Jessica then summarized the importance of the “horrible scenario” by stating, “And here sit these two innocent babies, like seven or eight years old, on the school bus, already coming from behind before they have even left the house.” Two aspects of the story stand out as significant. First, Jessica did not reveal the race or ethnicity of the children. This is significant because she explained the scenario with a focus on the children. Second, the story demonstrates Jessica's commitment to helping children through education.

At this point in her life, Jessica was twenty-four years old, married, and a mother of toddler. The effect of seeing two children crying as their mother was arrested in a home with apparent substance abuse caused Jessica to become a teacher. As she recalled, “I came home and talked to my husband. I... resigned the next day.” Thus, the “horrible

scenario” of the arrest was the trigger for leaving her job as a probation agent to become a teacher. Jessica explained, “It [teaching] had been twirling in the back of my mind for a while.” With this, she is indicating that her personal family needs and the emotional toll of being a probation agent made the career shift long-gestating idea, but the arrest of the mother of two was the tipping point. In the end, Jessica noted, “I decided that I would rather, as hokey as it sound, try to be impactful on the front end, try change lives.” As a result, Jessica attended the sub-campus of the state’s flagship university in 1996 to earn her teaching certificate.

Jessica chose the Aiken campus over the main campus because “I was married and had a child. So I need to be employable as soon as possible.” She weighed her options of earning an undergraduate secondary social studies education degree for certification in eighteen months at Aiken versus graduate degree in secondary social studies education at the main campus in two years. As a result, Jessica explained that “I have a BA in history and a BA in secondary education. . . . I actually added on elementary certification just to make myself as marketable as possible.” As she concluded her secondary social studies degree at the Aiken campus, she “strategically requested where to student teach” so that she remained in the Fairview area. She student taught in Fairview Three and Fairview One. Jessica recalled that she graduated in December 1997 and worked as a substitute at Fairview High School. Although she “interviewed all over” it turned out she “was on-the-job auditioning” as a substitute at Fairview High School. Jessica stated that principal “just called me and said, ‘We have this opening do you want to come onboard?’ Eighteen years later, I am still there.” Although admitting that the timing “just worked out” for her to get job at Fairview,

Jessica’s story of seeking her first job demonstrates that she was methodical in making herself an appealing candidate by earning the elementary add-on certificate, networking in the county by requesting field placements in Fairview One and Fairview Three, and working as a substitute while seeking a full-time position.

### **“Fast-Paced Overwhelmedness with Good Outcomes”**

Because the participants in my study were teachers of AP courses, I chose to have them periodize their career into three periods. The College Board defined the historical thinking skill of periodization as “the ability to describe, analyze, and evaluate different ways that historians divide history into discrete and definable periods.” Thus, the “models of periodization” created by historians are focused on central characteristics or themes unique to the given period. The periodization process often includes constructing a period based on “the choice of specific turning points or starting and ending dates” (College Board, 2015, p. 10). The three periods that Jessica used to explain and define her career are centered on unique themes and characteristics. Jessica characterized the first period of her career by difficult work in a challenging setting. In this period, she was teaching grade-level classes and, notably, a course on parenting. Jessica defined the second period of her career as characterized “complacency” and “frustration.” During the period, she attempted to balance work and family obligations. Jessica determined that the third, and current, period of her career has been marked by a desire to create change. In this period, she emerged as a teacher leader.

**“I was batting cleanup for the social studies department.”** Jessica framed Period One of her career around the concept of tough work in a demanding setting. As she explained, “I would say, if anything, that was some of the hardest work I have ever



done.” Although the period was one of difficult work, the situation enabled her to grow as a teacher. Jessica’s first years were spent teaching in a portable unit prior to the expansion of Fairview High School. In her first year as a teacher she “had three different preps.” She taught World History Seminar and World Geography Seminar courses. At Fairview High School, seminar courses are the grade-level courses. In addition, she taught a parenting class. Jessica’s assessment of her first year schedule was that she “was battling cleanup for the social studies department.” In other words, Jessica was teaching the classes that no one else in the department wanted to teach. She recalled that, during Period One, she was “trying to survive.” As Jessica stated, “I was trying to do teaching, to do what I thought was teaching, to do it well, and not have classroom management issues.” With this statement, Jessica acknowledged that her focus was on transferring theory to practice and learning classroom management techniques. She worked hard to “put into practice everything I thought I knew about teaching.” However, she concluded that “it was some of the best on-the-job training.” Therefore, while Jessica struggled to develop instructional and classroom management skills, within that process she felt she grew as a teachers.

During Jessica’s first year in the classroom, she was paired with a mentor through the state’s induction year program. Jessica recalled that “I had a mentor teacher assigned who was not a good mentor.” She continued by stating that the mentor-mentee relationship was “not even a reality.” This this statement, Jessica’s case demonstrates that she experienced a lack of strong mentorship within the official mentoring system. Going deeper into discussing her mentor, Jessica noted, “I cannot remember any major interactions with that were about teaching. It was more of a buddy type of thing.” To this

end, her mentor asked her things like, “Do you need to know where to find the paper?” Therefore, Jessica’s experience as a mentee in the induction year process was that her mentor was not an instructional leader for her. Instead, the mentor assigned to her has not been effective as a mentor and leader for Jessica. It should also be noted as well, that Jessica did not indicate whether or not the assigned mentor was male or female. This is significant because Jessica found a mentor in Mrs. Turner. For Jessica, Mrs. Turner “became the person I would go to and say, ‘I am having a hard time with this knucklehead on the back row. What do I do?’” Mrs. Turner was also a social studies teacher and, at the time, the department chair. She took Jessica under wing. As Jessica recalled, Mrs. Turner was “a great mentor just as a classroom teacher.” In this, Jessica is explaining that Mrs. Turner nurtured her as a first-year teacher. Yet Jessica also noted that Mrs. Turner was “someone that I became really good friends with.” Therefore, while Jessica characterized Period One as difficult, she was also keen to point out that she developed a strong mentor-mentee relationship with the former department chair and the relationship subsequently evolved into a strong friendship.

In addition to working with official and unofficial mentors, Jessica also characterized Period One as one which she encountered diversity in regards to perspectives. In discussing this period in her career, teaching the “cleanup” classes with grade-level students, that Jessica used negative language in reference to students. Jessica noted, “Interestingly enough, there have really only been two kids in my career that I just didn’t like. They would have come from that period.” From this statement it appears that the “hard work” that characterized Period One is connected to the type of students she taught in the grade-level courses. Jessica elaborated on one of the students that she “just

didn't like." She recalled that she started to develop migraines. Jessica, stated, "I could not figure out why... Then I realized it was this one kid who I knew was coming because I got it at the same time every day." On the first day of school, the young man entered her class "announced" that he had just been released from a State Department of Juvenile Justice facility, where he had been incarcerated for assault. Jessica reflected on the situation: "Being a probation agent he thought he scared me, but he didn't. . . . At that point, it was not about teaching him Geography, it was about keeping him so he wasn't a problem." In this case, it is evident that this young man was similar to the type of people she encountered as a probation agent. However, instead of working to teach him, she worked to minimize him as a distraction.

The negative language and attitudes toward students when discussing Period One manifest elsewhere in the interview. As mentioned above, Jessica referred to the "knucklehead on the back row" when asking her mentor for advice during her first year teaching. In addition, Jessica recalled, that Period One "was a learning curve because I had been so sheltered. I came from that homogenous upbringing. Suddenly I am teaching kids different from me." Despite being a probation agent for three years prior to becoming a teacher, this statement indicates that Jessica's "homogenous upbringing" remained a strong influence on her initial years in the classroom as she worked with students from different backgrounds. In addition, she recounted a statement recently made by her one of her administrators. Jessica noted, "My assistant principal put it this way, 'It is kind of hard to teach kids you wouldn't go to dinner with, isn't it?' This is a great way to put it." With this statement, Jessica is capturing a negative statement about children made by a building-level leader, and supporting the position. Jessica justified

agreeing with the statement by stating, “It wasn’t just that their behavior was a little rough, it was different value systems.” Therefore, the root of the negativity, as indicated by the available data, is that the students were from a different background than she.

**“You are going to use these words: ‘Help me understand.’”** The negative experience and language Jessica used to describe this period in her career was juxtaposed with a positive experience emerging from teaching the grade-level classes and students with different home values than hers. As Jessica recalled, “In the Parenting class, I dealt with a lot of pregnant moms.” When asked to describe the Parenting class, Jessica stated:

It was a parenting skills class. . . . It was everything from how to feed the baby and wash the baby... What you would expect them to get at Fairview Medical Center on how to raise an infant.

Jessica noted how her personal life intersected with her teaching of the Parenting class. Because her son was two years old when she taught the course, Jessica felt that she was “learning right along” with the students. Reflecting on teaching the Parenting class in Period One of her career, Jessica stated, “I guess that class defines that timeframe.” The Parenting class was critical to Jessica as the class piqued her sense of social justice.

While discussing the effect the Parenting class had on her as a teacher, Jessica recalled a pivotal relationship she had with a young pregnant student. The student “kept giving me attitude the first few weeks.” Jessica decided to ask Mrs. Turner, her adopted mentor, for advice. Jessica recalled the conversation she had with Mrs. Turner:

So I went to Mrs. Turner and said, “What do I do.” She said, “You are going to pull her aside and have a one-on-one conversation with her.” I said, “Really. What

am I going to say?” She said, “You are going to ask her what’s going on. You are going to use these words: ‘Help me understand.’”

Looking back at that single conversation, Jessica stated that she learned that the phrase “Help me understand” was critical to making strong connections with students. As Jessica noted, “That one little phrase defuses so much.” Yet, Jessica learned this approach from her adopted mentor, a trusted female in the department who became a close friend.

Jessica applied that phrase to the situation with the pregnant student in the Parenting class. Jessica recollected, “I pulled this girl over and said, ‘Help me understand no matter what I try to do you push back on me.’” With this, Jessica was clearly integrating the phrase learned from the mentor into the specific situation. The student initially responded that she felt that Jessica did not like her. Jessica stated that “over the course of the conversation it came out that she was pregnant and felt I was judging her. I wasn’t judging her.” While Jessica believed that she was not being judgmental, she did acknowledge that “body language” may have suggested otherwise. However, the statements suggest that Jessica learned from both the conversation with Mrs. Turner and the female student. Jessica finished the conversation by telling the young girl:

Look. Everybody makes mistakes. It is what you choose to do. Not that the child is a mistake... It is what you choose to do with this situation. I am not judging you. If you drop out and make these choices, you are choosing to let this beat you.

Ultimately the girl remained in school and formed a positive relationship with Jessica. Jessica stated that, although it “sounds like a Hallmark commercial,” the girl “came back to me before she graduated to say ‘Thank you.’” Within Jessica’s experience in Period One of her career, this class, relationship, and specific scenario was a turning point. She

made a connection with and an impact on a student that was positive and meaningful. Jessica noted that, as history teacher, she “thought the rewards would come from the Seminar World History class” but realized the pregnant student in the Parenting class “reminded me of why I wanted to work so hard.” After all, Jessica resigned as a probation agent “to be impactful on the front end” as a teacher.

**“I was in a groove, a complacent groove.”** Jessica framed Period Two of her career around the concepts of contentment and aggravation. This feeling emerged as Jessica expanded her family and settled in to the rhythms of teaching. Contextualizing Period Two of her career with family, Jessica stated, “I was at a point that I didn’t think I could give any more. Call it lazy. Call it whatever. I was in my early thirties and had two kids.” By this point, Jessica was veteran teacher of nearly a decade and she and Tim welcomed a second child into their family. When asked to define Period Two of her career, Jessica stated, “Complacency. Frustration.” The frustration was a result of “trying to figure out that balance of how to do all those things” as her family life “was crowding in on teaching.” The frustration was not, however, a lack of enthusiasm for the work as she noted that the “passion for teaching was there.” However, Jessica did not want to be consumed by job. She wanted to focus on her family. As Jessica recounted, “The one thing I said at the time was, ‘This is how I finance my life. This isn’t my life.’ I refused to allow it to take over every part of my life.” With this, it is evident that Jessica had an interest in teaching, but was not willing to make teaching a lifestyle.

To further accentuate the frustration building during Period Two, extracurricular club sponsorship played a significant role in attempting to balance time. Jessica marked by her sponsorship of the school’s Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) chapter as

critical to Period Two. Jessica noted that sponsoring FCA “helped get me thought the complacent period.” She noted that sponsoring FCA was the longest stint she held as a club sponsor, although she did not specify how long she was the sponsor. However, Jessica noted that the club had a large membership. As she stated, “We had as many as ninety to one hundred kids showing up. . . . We took ninety to one hundred kids to the conference every year.” Although planning for and organizing a large group was demanding, Jessica stated, “I just loved the kids and being around the kids.” Therefore, working with the FCA kept Jessica energized as an educator, while still attempting to balance work and family. Yet, Jessica still felt overall frustration. Even working with FCA, it was difficult “to balance all the demand” and she felt “resentment” toward work “because there was always something to do at home.” It is evident that Jessica struggled to balance the responsibilities of both family and school.

Although the balance of family and work was critical to characterizing Period Two of Jessica’s career, also important was the Jessica feeling that lack of professional advancement. Jessica admitted, “I was in a groove, a complacent groove.” She was not growing as a teacher. Yet, she also stated, “I guess I felt a little disgruntled because I didn’t feel like opportunities were coming my way.” Approximately a decade into her career, Jessica experienced immobility in relation to professional growth and advancement. As she noted, “I knew I wanted to be more than what I was but I didn’t know... necessarily how to get there.” Jessica felt a lack of guidance on how to advance, how to become a leader in education. However, she acknowledged the influence of Mrs. Turner during the complacency of Period Two. As Jessica recalled, Mrs. Turner was “in my ear” with blunt and necessary advice. “We were good friends,” Jessica began, “but

she would come and go, ‘What are you doing? You are better than this. Get you head out of your butt and be the teacher you know you can be.’” The tough love approach was effective for Jessica. She began to pivot her career, again under the direction of Mrs. Turner, by seeking National Board Certification in 2005. For Jessica, achieving National Board Certification “was one of the hardest things I have ever done.” The process required her to “think about why am I am a teacher, what am I doing and what do I want to be as a teacher.” Given her state of complacency and frustration, the National Board Process was evidently a transformative process. In a more practical sense, Jessica noted “I didn’t want to become one of those old bitter folks sitting down in the teachers’ lounge.” Based on this, Jessica must have seen herself going in a direction that took from her complacent and frustrated to stagnate and bitter. Becoming a National Board Certified Teacher, Jessica realized that she was prepared to “start affecting that change that I entered the profession for.” As a result, becoming a National Board Certified Teacher marked a turning point in Jessica’s career. Earning the certification propelled her into a new period of her career, one marked by teacher leadership.

**“I really am pretty Pollyanna about education.”** Jessica framed Period Three of her career around the concepts of balancing family, professional growth, and teacher leadership. Jessica stated that Period Three of her career – “the past five years” – would be described as “fast-paced overwhelmedness with good outcomes.” Jessica transitioned into Period Three of her career through the continued mentorship of Mrs. Turner. During latter half of Period Two, Mrs. Turner “encouraged me to join professional organizations and do things that would expose me to ideas and mindsets that would get me out of that rut and ignite the fire again.” As a result, Jessica became a member of the National



Council for the Social Studies and the State Council for the Social Studies. In addition, Jessica's teaching schedule changed as she began teaching AP United States History. She noted that in Period Two, "I was approached... about teaching an AP class." As a result, she was "exposed to trainings that were a new way of teaching that excited me." As a result, Jessica began to grow her instructional repertoire and hone her pedagogical philosophy.

At this point, Mrs. Turner continued as a mentor for Jessica. As an AP United States History teacher, Mrs. Turner was suited for the role of mentor. Jessica said, "She [Mrs. Turner] started to grow me as a classroom teacher and taught me how to lead that classroom. It was a shift in mindset from instructor to facilitator." Although this took place during Period Two, Jessica was specific to address it as a critical change for defining Period Three of her career. Growing as an AP teacher transformed Jessica's instructional practices and overall educational philosophy. Several times in the interview, Jessica mentioned the need to "love on kids." By this, she meant that she wants show students that she genuinely cares about them as people and wants the best for them. "I really am pretty Pollyanna about education," Jessica said. "I hope that doesn't sound hokey."

The philosophic transition that occurred in Period Two and that characterized Period Three was coupled with events and changes in her family life. She noted that her children are "spread out" in age. At the time of my study, Jessica noted that her four children are aged twenty-one, eighteen, and eight. As a result, it is like she and Tim have "three separate families." This affected Jessica's career "because every time I reached a point that people would start shifting, I had a baby." In this, it is evident that Jessica's

feelings of compliancy and falling behind professionally are connected to justifiable family obligations. Yet she was specific to note that her professional “renewal came after the twins were born.” When the twins were born eight years ago, Jessica felt that her family life settled and she was better able to balance family and teaching. As Jessica noted, “My children got older so it got easier. . . . My career has been in segments of pregnancies with big gaps in between.” Therefore, as her children became older and her family settled in growth, Jessica felt the flexibility to take a larger role as a teacher. In addition, she noted that one of her parents passed away during Period Two. However, losing a parent, having older children, completing her own family, and growing older herself, changed Jessica’s “whole outlook on everything.” With this, Jessica meant that she felt confident in stating her professional opinions on instruction and curriculum. For this reason, Jessica noted that both the family changes and then instructional changes that began during Period Two are essential to understanding Period Three.

In addition to becoming more embolden in sharing her educational philosophy, Jessica also experienced success as a classroom teacher as measured on state standardized tests and, consequently, as an emerging leader in Fairview One. The first administration of the End-of-Course (EOC) exam for United States History that affected student grades and factored on the *Annual School Report Card* for schools was during the 2008-2009 school year. Prior to that year, the state department of education piloted the exam during the 2005-2006, 2006-2007, and 2007-2008 school years. Of that time, Jessica recalled, “Our district piloted the US History EOC, we had some success with that, and I had some of the highest scores on those pilot tests.” Because of her students’ success on the EOC, Jessica developed a reputation as a strong teacher. Although she stated that scores and

pass rates were not the focus of her teaching, Jessica noted, that her pass rate felt “like validation that something that you are doing is good and something that you are doing is working.” The feeling of validation is understandable given the context. Although Jessica did not share her pass rate, the initial years of the EOC implementation show overall low performance. In 2008-2009, the state pass rate on the EOC of 42.4% and Jessica was in a school with 74.5% pass rate (see Table 4.3, Fairview One EOC pass rates). It stands to reason that she felt successful in this environment with a state focus on accountability through standardized tests. Jessica pointed out that this feeling of validation “made me want to keep trying to be successful” on standardized tests such as the EOC for United States History and the AP United States History Exam. This being the case, it is evident that Jessica was growing instructionally as she and her students were experiencing above the norm results on the EOC.

As Jessica’s standardized test performance increased, she began to develop a reputation as a teacher and teacher leader. Jessica observed, “You start to get a little street cred with folks in higher up positions.” By this, Jessica meant that building-level and district-level administrators and leaders took notice of her success. Consequently, district administrators selected her for district-level committees. As Jessica stated, “I started being asked to serve on textbook adoption committees or benchmark writing committees for the district for the US History test.” Therefore, Jessica was selected for committees that determined the textbooks using in the district and, more significant to her, the committee that wrote the district benchmark tests used to prepare students for the EOC for United States History. Joining district-level committees served as a critical component

for Jessica's development as a teacher leader and as a characteristic of Period Three in her career.

However, Jessica was keen to point out that just serving on the committee was not what developed her as a teacher leader. The attitude she brought to serving developed her as a teacher leader. As Jessica explained, "I never did it for the accolades. I never went in to the benchmark committee thinking, "Oh, if I do well here, I will get more attention." In this observation, Jessica demonstrated humbleness about her involvement on the committees as she displays a desire to avoid attention and recognition. At the same time, she was careful to point out that she did not want to appear unprofessional. Jessica recalled, "I went in with the attitude, "I want to do well because this is something that is meaningful and we need these benchmark tests. . . . I don't want to look like an idiot." Jessica further explained that "I am not going to show up for [the] committee and not know anything." With this, Jessica demonstrated that she viewed the work of the benchmark test committee as critical to student success and that she needed to be knowledgeable in the importance of benchmarks from an instructional and assessment perspective.

When asked why she believed she processes this outlook, Jessica cited two people. First, she learned from Mrs. Turner to "show up prepared" at school and district meetings. With this, Mrs. Turner played an important role in Jessica's development as teacher leader. More significantly, Jessica cited her father, an attorney, as an influence. Jessica recalled, "My dad had these five Ps: Prior Planning Prevents Poor Performance. . . . We grew up with that mantra. He would say, 'There are five Ps. There are five Ps.'" In this, Jessica revealed that her professional attitude toward preparedness was instilled in

her as a child. Yet she stated that her father believed that “[y]ou show up prepared and you perform well and that gets you more attention.” This indicated that her father instilled in her a sense of preparedness as a means of achieving career advancement. Although Jessica stated that she served on the committees for the value of the work, instilled in her at a young age was a belief in equating committee membership with career advancement.

Having served on district committees and demonstrating her ability to come prepared to work hard, Jessica advanced within the district by becoming the Lead Teacher for Secondary Social Studies in Fairview One. According to her CCS biography, Jessica stated that the Lead Teacher “position has provided me opportunities to lead professional development, write and implement curriculum, and develop assessments and benchmark tests to be used across the district.” In serving as Lead Teacher, Jessica stated in her interview that “I teach two blocks per day and half the day I am doing district stuff or whatever.” Therefore, she has a hybrid teacher-administrator position. According to Berry, Byrd, and Wiedner (2013), teacher leaders in a hybrid role represent the future of teacher leaders as solving problems and leading reform. As a result, Jessica held a unique position in as both a classroom teacher and district-level administrator.

Becoming the Lead Teacher was a combination of timing and confidence. While serving on the benchmark committee, Jessica was worked closely “with the Lead Teacher at that time, Paul Murphy.” In 2012, Paul became the districts Coordinator of Blended Learning and Technology. The Lead Teacher position opened, Jessica applied, and she earned the job. As Jessica stated, “It just fell in my lap.” However, when asked why she decided to apply, Jessica noted four factors that prompted her to feel confident in taking

the leadership role. First, Jessica noted, “I had served on the benchmark committee, on the curriculum writing committee.” In this, Jessica is indicating that her familiarity with the process benchmark and curriculum writing as a committee member made her feel secure in her ability to take a formal leadership role. Therefore, her role as an informal teacher leader prepared her to be a formal teacher leader. Second, Jessica stated, “I had the opportunity to teach geography, world history, just about all the core classes, which was an opportunity to learn the curriculums.” In this Jessica was demonstrating that her wide range of content pedagogical knowledge gave her the confidence to apply for the position.

Third, Jessica noted that Mrs. Turner, her mentor, supported Jessica’s decision to apply for the Lead Teacher position. As Jessica recalled, Mrs. Turner “helped prep me for the interview.” Again, Jessica noted the consistent impact that Mrs. Turner had on her career. Mrs. Turner’s endorsement and support was a third factor that prompted confidence in Jessica to emerge into the formal teacher leadership role of Lead Teacher. Fourth, Jessica stated with a shrug, “I guess I am just a team player. What do you need me to do and I will do it?” Therefore, Jessica felt confident in applying because she believed that being the Lead Teacher for Secondary Social Studies in Fairview One was her opportunity to contribute to the success of the district, the success of the “team.” In this, Jessica is demonstrating that her interest in the Lead Teacher position was selfless. However, given that her father’s five P’s philosophy was important to her and that she felt a lack of professional advancement in Period Two of her career, Jessica may have been seeking a position of status within the district in Period Three.

### **“I Think We Are at Kind of a Pivotal Time Where Education Has to Shift”**

As the Lead Teacher for Secondary Social Studies, Jessica grew into the role of a teacher leader. In this process, she developed her leadership philosophy. When asked to define teacher leadership, Jessica stated, with a paced deliberateness, “Modeling behaviors with gentle pressure steadily applied that will produce change.” In this statement, Jessica encapsulated the concepts of leading by example, avoiding heavy-handedness as a leadership style, and being a change agent. This philosophy is embedded in how she leads and interacts with the teachers in her district. In addition, she noted that her greatest challenge as a leader in Fairview One is changing minds. For Jessica this meant recognizing that the landscape of education is changing and the “old school” teachers must adapt to new philosophies and practices.

**“I am the manager of the team.”** For Jessica, becoming the Lead Teacher transformed her as a teacher leader. Jessica noted that, once in the Lead Teacher position, “that is when that learning curve began.” Jessica described the transition from informal teacher leader to formal teacher leader, as abrupt. As she recalled, “Instead of serving on a committee for a good leader, I was suddenly leading the committee.” The result of this transition was that Jessica felt “scared to death” as she now needed “to put into practice, on a grander scale, with adults, what I had done with kids in my classroom.” This comment indicates that Jessica views classroom teachers as leader in their room and that the skills developed by good teachers are transferable to leading fellow teachers. However, understanding this did not assuage the sense of trepidation. In response to this feeling, Jessica noted, “I just started reading. I just started learning what I could.” When asked what she read to develop as a leader, she stated, “I read Patrick Lencioni’s book

*Functions of a Dysfunctional Team*, or something. It is on leadership.” The book to which Jessica referred was *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team: A Leadership Fable* by Patrick Lencioni (2002). Jessica’s inclusion of Lencioni’s work business leadership is notable given the trend of applying business operations to public education (Gergen & Vanourek, 2008; Hess, 2008).

More important than reading leadership books to develop as a teacher leader, Jessica used the leaders around her as model of good leadership methods and behaviors. Speaking generally, she observed that, “I guess all my experience up until that point had been observing good leadership.” Particularly, this meant modeling herself after school-level and district-level leaders who “I admired their leadership style.” However, most important was Mrs. Turner, Jessica long-standing mentor. At the time, Mrs. Turner was still the department chair at Fairview High School. Jessica noted, “I started remembering the things [Mrs. Turner] had taught me. . . . and that made me want to work harder [as a leader].” With this, it appears that Jessica was relying more on the influence of her mentor than school-level and district-level leaders.

Jessica recalled a specific conversation with Mrs. Turner during the application and interview process to become Lead Teacher. Jessica asked Mrs. Turner why she did not apply for the Lead Teacher position. According to Jessica, Mrs. Turner “knew she was going to retire” and stated, “My time is passed. . . . It is your opportunity. But remember one thing: Leadership is more than a title.” Jessica noted that that Mrs. Turner’s statement “has always stuck with me.” Consequently Jessica sought to lead as her mentor led, to lead by nurturing leadership in others. Jessica acknowledged that she first focused on “just trying to copy” Mrs. Turner’s leadership style, but then “started to



develop my own philosophy as I put it into practice.” As a result she acknowledges that her leadership philosophy “evolved” over time. However, at the onset of her leadership experience, Jessica relied on observing leaders she admired. The method of observing leadership from role models is consistent with research on the informal processes by which social studies department chairs learn leadership skills (Eargle, 2014).

As she transitioned and developed the formal teacher leadership role of Lead Teacher, Jessica honed her leadership philosophy. Jessica described her leadership style as one that “empowers others to be out front.” When asked to describe this with greater specificity, she noted, I guess I am the manager of the team. I don’t mind doing all the stuff to make [other teachers] shine.” With this Jessica leads from behind, encouraging others to be leaders. However, she does not dismiss her role as a leader. As Jessica explained:

I likened it to being a kid when you got to be at the front of the line. . . . But you did not realize that everyone was following you because the teacher was back there keeping everybody going. . . . I try to be that kindergarten teacher making sure the class gets to the music room but let that kid up front think he is leading everybody.

With this, Jessica encouraged leadership and a sense of empowerment in others, Jessica was also clear that she was the primary motivator and that the social studies teachers in the district were moving in the direction that she envisioned.

In addition to leading from behind, advocacy for teachers was critical component to Jessica’s leadership philosophy. Jessica stated that she is “also a representative for” teachers and, as a result, “I advocate for them at the district office.” As Lead Teacher,

Jessica was often in meetings with district-level leaders. Jessica used these meetings to be a voice for teachers, to provide a teacher's perspective on the topic discussed. Jessica noted that when district-level leaders asked her what teachers may think of a proposed policy, "I don't mind saying that hard, "Well, they are going to hate it' or 'You can't put anything else on their plates right now.'" In this, it was evident that Jessica is confident is speaking honestly with district-level leaders and telling them things they may not want to hear. Consequently, Jessica noted, "I think that has built a little bit of trust between me and the teachers I represent." However, Jessica also recognized that the existing familiarity and relationships she had with the approximately "sixty-five teachers that fall under social studies secondary umbrella" also meant a pre-existing level of trust was present. Jessica noted, "Part of what was helpful was that I had worked with all of these teachers before. . . . I knew most of them." That said, Jessica was in a teacher leadership position where teacher respect and trust her because of her previous relationship with them and district-level leaders respect and trust her because of her work in the classroom and service on committees.

**"I don't pretend to be the sage on the stage know-it-all in the room."** Jessica also applied her leadership philosophy through conducting professional development in the district and coaching teachers. At first, Jessica was concerned about how to lead professional development for her peers. As she recalled, "I knew most of them. So, I thought, "What am I going to give these people?" From this point, Jessica decided to "lead by example." As to conducting professional development for the high school teachers in Fairview One, Jessica claimed, "I do believe that they are not going to buy in to me if I can't say 'I am right along with you' or if I am not modeling what I am asking

them to do.” With this, it was evident that Jessica’s goal as a teacher leader is to be the type of teacher she wants other teachers to be. Jessica recognized that her hybrid role as classroom teacher a district-level leader allows her to implement this philosophy. Jessica noted that she often states in professional development sessions with teachers that “I tried this” strategy or explains her “plan of how to implement this in my own room.” Jessica was certain that this lends credibility to her role as Lead Teacher as she is regarded as still in the trenches of education. In addition, because of the hybrid leadership role of Lead Teacher, Jessica understands the importance of teachers’ time. She noted that “I always tried to be respectful of their time, to make what I did with them meaningful, and to make them feel like their time with me had not been a waste.” From this, it is clear that Jessica wanted professional development to be relatable, applicable, and substantial and she felt that her dual role of classroom teacher and Lead Teacher better served this approach.

The mentality of being shoulder-to-shoulder with teachers that Jessica brought to the Lead Teacher position is important because Jessica viewed herself as a change agent. Positioning herself as a classroom teacher allows her to achieve her goal of changing teacher instruction. Jessica noted that “the biggest thing I try to do is educate.” To accomplish this, Jessica stated, “I don’t pretend to be the sage on the stage know-it-all in the room.” Instead, Jessica presented herself as “a teacher who is striving for the best for my students, who is also striving for the best for them, who is willing to work hard for them.” This philosophy gave her the ability to support her instructional agenda. Jessica noted that she is going to “stand in front of those teachers and say ‘This is why you need to shift your instruction,’ then I am going to data to back it up.” For Jessica this meant her own classroom and, as important, the work and research of others. Jennifer

stated, “I am going to have testimonial of where it works. . . . I try to provide them with every single possible resource I can.” With this, it was evident that Jessica uses her own classroom experience as testimonial hook, but ultimately grounds her agenda in data, resources, and outside endorsements related to the instructional methodology.

In addition to conducting professional development, Jessica often coached teachers one-on-one as the Lead Teacher in Fairview One. These situations are often related to teachers who are struggling with instruction. However, she took the same approach tethering data and resources to experience as a classroom teacher. Jessica noted that her philosophy is “to engage in a meaningful conversation without it being a confrontational conversation.” To do this, Jessica stated:

“I always try to [share]... my own personal struggles in my classroom to make a teaching shift. . . Sometimes I even say, ‘You know, it feels like a weight and sometimes you don’t see the reason.’”

In this, it was apparent that Jessica brings a teacher into the conversation by recognizing and relating to the teacher’s struggles to change their instructional methods. Again, Jessica noted the influence of Mrs. Turner’s early advice of using the phrase “Help me understand.” Jessica observed, “It is so applicable. I have used that phrase the rest of my career with teachers I have had to have hard conversations with.” In this, Jessica was showing teachers that she has an interest in their position and beliefs and that she is attempting to connect with this as a leader.

**“I don’t feel we are in a position of changing for the sake of change.”** Being able to conduct relevant and meaningful professional development and engage teachers in constructive conversation, is critical because Jessica believed that the current educational

environment is requiring a shift in instructional practice and overall educational philosophy. As a result, Jessica viewed herself as a change agent. Jessica noted that the teachers at Fairview High School were “old school.” Because the district as a whole is successful on state standardized tests, the mindset is prevalent in the district. As Jessica attempts to lead teachers to new grading philosophies and instructional strategies, teachers often resist by stating, “Great, I am going to listen to you but I am going to go over here and do what I know works. Just leave me alone as long as my scores are where they need to be.” To this attitude, Jessica claimed, “I don’t believe. I think we are at kind of a pivotal time where education has to shift. I don’t feel we are in a position of changing for the sake of change.” In this, Jessica referred to the political interest in magnet schools, charter schools, vouchers for private schools, and teacher evaluation practices. As the business model encroaches on education, Jessica observed, “Customer service, like it or not, believe it or not, is part of education.” For this reason, Jessica believed that teachers must change their practice to reflect to both meet student needs and respond to the expectations the public – parents and politicians – have of public schools. Therefore, it was evident that Jessica made decisions as a leader based on pedagogical interests, student needs, and stakeholder perceptions.

When asked to explain this topic further, Jessica recalled a conversation with a veteran teacher over grading practices. Although Jessica began the conversation with the teacher in the same construction manner that she typically does, she realized that the teacher was entrenched in her grading philosophy of using a Bell Curve. Jessica described the teacher as “old” and aligned her with a sizeable teacher demographic in the district that “are either retired or at will.” Jessica proceeded with the conversation by

stating directly to the teacher: “You are teaching on a Bell curve. That is what you believe.” The teacher responded in the affirmative. Jessica explained to the teacher the fault of the Bell Curve by stating, “You are going to walk into your room the first day and say, ‘You, you, and you are going to fail. I am just going to ignore you.’” The teacher replied, “I would never do that to kids.” To which Jessica respond, “But in your practice that is what you are doing.” In this anecdote, it is evident that Jessica, at times, does not use “gentle pressure steadily applied that will produce change” as she stated. Instead, Jessica used direct confrontation of the issue to expose a fault in practice that led to teacher changing her assessment methodology. This suggests that Jessica lead using the governing, aggressive, and confident approach of a masculine leader (Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000).

### **“I Am at a Point in My Career That it is Just Who I Am”**

As Jessica considered where her career may go from this point forward, she noted several topics that she felt were important. First, she discussed the issue of trust as empowering. Second, she continued to ponder the balance of work and family. In this she concluded that work has taken precedence. Third, she viewed her future as full of opportunity.

**“When people trust you, it is encouraging.”** Jessica believed that trust was critical to advancement of any kind. Particularly, Jessica notes the trust and relationship she has with her principal, Dr. Cindy Evans. Jessica described Dr. Evans, a female, as “about ten years older than me.” Because the Lead Teacher position required Jessica leave the Fairview High School to go to the other schools in the district, Jessica recalled, “I was

just, ‘Hey, Cindy, I have got to go. This is where I will be this morning.’” After several weeks, Jessica said Dr. Evans told her:

‘As long as your AP scores are where they need to be, the lesson plans are turned in, and nobody at the district office is wondering where you are, just go. I appreciate you letting me know. . . . I know you are doing your job.’

For this Jessica, this was a validation that Period Three in her career was on the track she wanted it to be as she earned the respect and status she desired in Period Two. As Jessica noted, “When people trust you, it is encouraging.” It was evident that Jessica saw continued trust from her school-level and district-level leadership as critical for any advancement that she may undertake from this point forward in her career.

**“Well, my hours are the school hours.”** For much of Period One and Period Two in her career, Jessica struggled with finding time for both family and career. Often, she asked herself, “Where is the balance and where do I cut it off?” At the time of my study, she acknowledged that her relationship with Dr. Evans allowed her to take time for family if she needs to. Jessica observed, “Cindy is about ten years older than me. She had kids. She has grandkids now. There is really not a whole lot of questioning.” In this it was evident that Jessica was comfortable asking for time off to attend an event at her children’s schools and that having female principal meant having an understanding leader. However, Jessica clearly noted, “Well, my hours are the school hours.” As a result, she does not attend many events in which her children take part at their schools. Noting that “there are mothers who are there every time the doors open,” Jessica admitted “I am not there every time the doors open.” In this, it was evident that Jessica gradually shifted her focus to her career when taking the Lead Teacher position. This does mean

that she was less focused on family. It meant she found balance. To this end, Jessica noted that her husband “has accepted” the balance and that he “does a lot more on that side of things in terms of going to eat lunch with them or that sort of stuff.” While Jessica found a comfortable balance between her family and career, it prompted a new balancing of Tim’s family and career as he assumed a greater role with their children. Jessica summed the balance up by stating “I am at a point in my career that it is just who I am. It is what I do.”

**“I would like to have a voice at the table.”** Considering the future, Jessica viewed her career as having many avenues to explore. At the time of my study, she was working on a master’s degree in Educational Leadership to become certified in administration. She noted, “I could see myself writing curriculum.” She also noted that she working at the state department of education or “running for office” is a possibility. However, the realistic option was “administration just because what I have learned in a leadership role.” In this, Jessica wanted to affect more change in education. As she stated, “I would like to have a voice at the table when decisions are starting to be made in education.” Being a teacher leader stimulated this notion. Jessica observed, “In so many ways what I do at a teacher leader has as much, or more, of an impact on students as does teaching.” It is evident that Jessica understood that her role as a teacher leader served to transform areas of education, thus having a positive impact of students. She further stated, “The experiences [as Lead Teacher] have taught me that I am pretty good at what I do and I do have something to offer people.” With this statement, it is clear that being a teacher leader allowed Jessica to gain greater confidence in her ability to generate change among her peers. With this, she seeks to move into administration in the coming years to



continue to create positive change that has a great on student development and achievement.

### **Participant 2: Amanda Williams**

#### **“Not Very Many City Folk”**

Jackson County is tucked in the middle of the state with a major lake on the southern tip of the county and a national forest covering the northern half of the county. Jackson County has one school district, the School District of Jackson County, which is referred to as the Jackson School District. The district has three high schools: Jackson High School, Milford Community School, and Dayton High School. Jackson High School is located in the county seat, which is centrally located in the county. Milford Community School, a K-12 school, is located in the northern end of the county. Dayton High School is located in the southeastern section of the county and, thus, the district. Amanda described Dayton High School matter-of-factly. “I teach in a small, rural high school,” she explained. She described the Dayton community as “three small towns under the size of... I don’t even know... really small.” Although the communities existed, Amanda noted, “Most people live out in the country. Not very many city folk.” Amanda admitted to being “from the area” and a graduate of Jackson High School.

In her initial interview, Amanda reflected on the historical reputation of Dayton High School. She recalled that, in the late 1990s, “Dayton was the redneck school that nobody wanted to go to when I was in high school.” She went on to describe the district as a whole as a “very conservative area of a southern state.” As to demographics, she noted that Dayton High School has “780 students enrolled in grades nine through twelve and the student body is made up of 30% minority groups.” Likewise, Amanda explained

that “[w]e have very poor students here. But we have students who live on the lake that are fairly well off.” With this, Amanda was noting that Dayton High School had a small pocket of affluent students, yet remains a largely low-income, white, and rural community.

Amanda maintained that Dayton High School served a largely rural community and additional data supports the claim. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), both the Jackson School District and Dayton High School are listed as “rural-distant” categorization. This means that the area is a “rural territory that is more than 5 miles but less than or equal to 25 miles from an urbanized area” and “is more than 2.5 miles but less than or equal to 10 miles from an urban cluster.” Within the Jackson School District, NCES categorized the Milford Community School as a “rural-remote” area as that school “is more than 25 miles from an urbanized area and is also more than 10 miles from an urban cluster.” In fact, the 2015 *Annual School Report Card* for Milford Community School describes the school as “embedded in... [a] National Forest of northern Jackson County.” Likewise, a consortium for regional county governments that included both Jackson and Fairview Counties described Jackson in a Green Infrastructure Committee report as “rural in character, with forestry and farming predominating.” This characterization is supported by the Jackson County Chamber of Commerce which noted that “today’s farmers rotate crops such as corn, millet, wheat, and soybeans. In addition Jackson had dairy, poultry, and cattle farms, as well as many acres of controlled reforestation.” To that end, the United States Department of Agriculture, Jackson County received \$20.2 million in farm subsidies for dairy, wheat, corn, and livestock production.

Through this, it is evident that the Jackson County School District and Dayton High School are situated in a rural community.

The description of Jackson County and Dayton High school that Amanda provided as largely white and low-income is substantiated in various sources as well. According to NCES, the Jackson County School District serves 6,071 students across fourteen schools and Dayton High School serves 776 of these students. Additionally, according to NCES, Dayton High School's student body is 69% white, 21.5% African-American, and 8% Hispanic, and 1.5% biracial. Also, the United States Census Bureau, reported in 2010 that the population of Jackson County was 62% white, 31% African-American, and 7% Hispanic. This demographic breakdown is consistent with the numbers Amanda stated in both her interviews and her action research on African-American students having access to AP courses at Dayton High School. In terms of socioeconomics, NCES documented the operating budget for Jackson County School District as \$63,753,000, or approximately a quarter of the budget of neighboring Fairview One. According to the United States Census Bureau, Jackson county residents earned an average annual salary \$41,971 with 19.4% of residents living below the poverty line in 2010. According to Dayton High School's 2015 *Annual School Report Card*, 56.6% of the students either receive assistance through Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and/or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) programs or they are categorized as "homeless, foster, or migrant students." Furthermore, according to the Jackson School District's 2015 *Annual District Report Card*, 73.9% of county's children either receive assistance through Medicaid, SNAP, and/or TANF programs or they are categorized as "homeless, foster, or migrant students."

Consequently, data supported Amanda’s characterization of Dayton as a largely white, low-income population, with a pocket of affluent students.

Additionally, Amanda described the county as a “very conservative area of a southern state” and data tends to support this characterization. United States Census Bureau reported that military veterans make up 7% of the county’s population in 2010. Also, according to state voter registration statistics in 2016, registered voters in the county were 44.33% Republican, 38.9% Democrat, and 16.77% Independent. Along with this, state election data showed that the county voted majority Republican in the 2008, 2010, 2012, and 2014 election cycles. Furthermore, the Jackson County Chamber of Commerce described a “community filled to its borders with history: ancient Indian sites, battlefields of the American Revolution, historic plantations, and beautiful homes.” With this, it is evident that the county highlights the county’s connection to the founding of the nation and the Civil War. This was furthered by noting the historical connection the county has with cotton production prior to the Civil War. The Jackson County Chamber of Commerce website also noted that “over 240 congregations” demonstrate “the diverse heritage” of the county.

The Jackson County Chamber of Commerce also noted that the eastern section of the county was “settled by Germans in the eighteenth century and is still dominated by the Lutheran Church” while “[o]ur Scotch-Irish ancestors insured the addition of Presbyterian, Methodist and Baptist congregations.” Although dominations such as African Methodist Episcopal, Roman Catholic, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and Jehovah's Witness are mentioned, the chamber of commerce focused primarily on describing the influence of German and Scots-Irish immigrants on the

religious make-up of the county. To that end, in the Jackson County is home to Jackson College, a private, Lutheran liberal arts school. The college's handbook noted that the objective of the college is to instruct students in the "heritage of the Christian faith and its contribution to humane problem solving in the evolving global community." Therefore, it is evident that Jackson County was a conservative, Republican, Christian county that highlighted its historical connections to the American Revolution and Civil War.

Aligning with this was evidence that the community was largely white, agrarian, and low income.

When describing the faculty of Dayton High School, Amanda started out by noting that "[t]here are around 40-something" teachers on staff. However, the numerical description gave way to a more critical description. Amanda explained that "a handful of teachers here... work really hard, that challenge students. But I feel that the majority of the teachers here are lackadaisical as far as getting the students... to do their best." In this, Amanda described a faculty that consists of several teachers attempting to provide a strong education for students, but the greater part of the faculty is not motivating students to achieve higher. Amanda observed that several of the teachers on staff "grew up here. . . . I don't feel that there is a big culture of learning." For Amanda, a "culture of learning" is: "Where students come in and they know what is expected of them. They... do their work. They are eager to learn. The teachers are eager to watch them learn and eager to teach." Therefore, Amanda did not feel like she is in a school environment where many students excited to learn and a majority of teachers enthusiastic about teaching.

Reflecting on the rural nature and income level of the community, Amanda concluded that "education is just not valued with the families around here." As a result, few students

“go on to four-year colleges. A lot of kids go to a tech school. And that’s ok. That’s fine. There’s nothing wrong with tech school. But ‘higher ed’ is not pushed.” For Amanda, encouraging students to set goals for entrance into a four-year college was something not done by both families and faculty.

The description of Dayton High School that Amanda provided is supported by additional sources. In Dayton High School’s AdvancEd Executive Summary for reaccreditation in 2013, it was document that the “faculty consists of three administrators, 28 classroom teachers, five special education teachers, five fine arts/foreign language teachers, four related arts and four PE/health/driver's education teachers.” This is a total of 46 teachers and 3 administrators. According to the United States Census Bureau, the 2010 census found that 77.7% of county residents twenty-five years old or older had a high school diploma, but only 17.8% of county residents twenty-five years old or older had a Bachelor’s degree or higher. Thus, within the community, many residents had a high school diploma, but few had a college degree. In addition Dayton High School’s AdvancEd Executive Summary also noted that 68 of the 162 – or 42% – graduates in 2013 “received completer certificates from the Jackson County Career Center.” According to the Jackson County Career Center’s website, the center offered courses in cosmetology, machine tool technology, welding, carpentry, health science, automotive technology, and agriculture. Therefore, 42% of the students in Dayton High School’s Class of 2013 took courses in vocational areas.

In contrast, according to Dayton High School’s 2015 *Annual School Report Card*, 9.1 percent of the student body was enrolled in AP courses. The focus on vocational areas over academic areas was evident in standardized test scores (see Table 4.4, Jackson

County Schools standardized test data). While Dayton, with a pocket of affluent families, tended to out-perform the district averages and pass rates on standardized tests, the school also under-performed against state and national averages and pass rates. Thus, evidence beyond Amanda’s interviews indicated that Dayton High School was a school with a small faculty, a working-class career focus, and a general absence of high achievement on standardized tests and participation in AP courses. That said, Dayton High School’s AdvancEd Executive Summary noted that the faculty “will continue to strive toward engaging our students and reaching for the stars.” To accomplish this, school leaders are committed to developing “strategies that will improve student achievement” and creating “rigorous assessments tied to state standards.”

### **“Because I love history”**

The path Amanda took to become a teacher was influenced by her mother and her own experiences as a student. When asked why she became a teacher, Amanda noted quickly that her “mom was a teacher.” As Amanda explained “I was always around it. And I knew from an early age that I wanted to work with kids.” Therefore, seeing her mother as a teacher inspired Amanda to envision herself as a teacher. Amanda’s mother was an elementary school teacher in Jackson County. According to the Amanda, “She [taught] first grade for sixteen years, then fourth grade for a couple of years, and then she did the GT [gifted and talented] program the last ten years.” Although her mother is now retired, Amanda’s mother was a well-respected educator in the district as she was, at one time, a runner-up for District Teacher of the Year. This, too, had a positive effect on Amanda as she strong role model as an educator at an early age.

After graduating from Jackson High School in 2001, Amanda attended the state's flagship university. As Amanda noted in her application for Jackson County District Teacher of the Year, "I received my Bachelors of Arts in History from the state's flagship university in 2005 and my Masters of Teaching in Secondary Social Studies from the state's flagship university in 2006." When I asked her why she decided become a social studies teacher, Amanda replied, "Why social studies? Because I love history." In this, it was evident that Amanda saw her subject or content area as a personal passion. Amanda continued by stating, "I love traveling. I love learning stuff." For Amanda, learning history and social studies was a continuous process and a pastime. When it came to deciding on a major, Amanda recalled, "Honestly when I went through the course catalog at Carolina, like, 'What classes will I like the most? What am I going to major in?' And it was history." Although Amanda seemed flippant in this statement, it demonstrated her desire to devote her academic time and academic energy toward a deeply personal interest.

When Amanda completed the Bachelors of Arts in History she immediately entered the Masters of Teaching in Secondary Social Studies program. Amanda recalled that when she attended the state's flagship university, "if you were doing education... you majored in what you wanted to teach and minored in education. Then you did a summer and a year and got your master's." This process culminated with "student teaching" during the final semester. For Amanda, this approach allowed her to develop strong content knowledge with the bachelor's degree in history and the secondary social studies pedagogy with master's in teaching. However, because her mother was an elementary school teacher, Amanda initially dreamed of teaching elementary school



students. As a result, she started the graduate program in elementary education. Amanda stated, “I wanted to do third grade. . . . And I got in a third grade classroom and I hated it. And so I figured I had no idea what I was going to do.” She decided to switch to the secondary social studies program, which at the time was for middle and high school social studies. Amanda noted, “I went back into a practicum [course] and got... in a middle school class. I loved it! I loved working with kids.” Consequently, Amanda finished the Masters in Teaching Secondary Social Studies program enthusiastic about her career choice. Amanda explained that she enjoys “being able to have intelligent conversations with the kids and watching them grow intellectually and otherwise.” It is evident from this that Amanda saw in the student teaching experiences an opportunity to connect with students through history, a content area about which she is passionate.

**“We barely got through the Civil War.”** Amanda has since transferred her passion learning for history, connecting with students, and helping students grow academically from middle school to high school over the course of her career. Amanda noted, “Now in high school I love working with kids.” This was significant statement as her path to becoming a teacher included a negative experience as a high school student. Amanda admitted that as a student she “loved” her history classes in middle school. However, she stated, “I hated history in high school. . . . I had terrible teachers in high school.” At this point in the interview, Amanda paused and clarified that she “loved” the teachers as people. In this, Amanda it was evident that she hesitated to portray the teachers in a poor light but wanted to be honest in telling her story. I reassured her that “they will be given pseudonyms.” Amanda then continued explaining why her high school history classes were a negative experience for her as a student.

Amanda described a high school experience in social studies as rote, bland, and ineffective. Amanda first noted that her “freshman year was [with] Coach Collins” for World History. Again, Amanda noted that she “loved” Coach Collins, yet admitted that being in his class was boring. As Amanda described the class, Coach Collins’ teaching methodology was: “Here’s some notes. Here’s a study guide. Memorize it. Come in and take the test.” For Amanda, the classroom environment and expectations were not challenging. Amanda recalled making a 98 on a World History test. According to Amanda, Coach Collins angrily asked her, ““What is wrong with you?”” To which Amanda said, ““I didn’t study. Sorry.”” The following year, as a sophomore, Amanda took AP United States History with Coach Cannon. The methodology utilized by Coach Cannon was teacher centered. According to Amanda, he “sat at the front of the room and read off of note cards.” In addition, Amanda recalled, “We barely got through the Civil War. Never did a DBQ [document-based question]. Never did anything written.” Because AP United States History is a survey course that covers colonization to the present and requires written analytic responses, Amanda did not pass the AP Exam for United States History.

Because this experience was negative, she did not take a social studies class her junior year. As a senior, she “took Gov and Econ, but I don’t remember anything about that.” Given that she would have taken Government and Economics during the 2000 election, recount, and President George W. Bush taking office, it is significant that she does not “remember anything about that” in terms of the classroom experience. This demonstrated that the classroom experience Amanda had as a student lacked impact. Therefore, given that her experience as a high school was negative and left a poor

impression, her becoming a high school teacher is all the more meaningful. This is because she developed a teaching philosophy opposite of what she experienced.

### **“It Was Up to Me to Get the Ball Rolling”**

I decided to use a periodization structure to the interview process and data presentation because participants in my study were teachers of AP courses. According to the College Board, the historical thinking skill of periodization is “the ability to describe, analyze, and evaluate different ways that historians divide history into discrete and definable periods.” This means that historians determine essential themes and characterizations when generating “models of periodization” for a given timeframe. In addition, historians use “specific turning points or starting and ending dates” when constructing timeframes for periods (College Board, 2015, p. 10). When I asked her to separate her career into beginning, middle, and current periods, Amanda periodized her career using unique themes and characteristics. Amanda characterized the first period of her career as atypical for a new teacher as she was in a single-gender middle school context. In this period, she found the work to be simultaneously “hard” but “awesome.” Amanda characterized the second period of her career as having greater collaboration with other teachers but also like a “typical ‘first year’” experience learning about classroom management. During the period, she discovered her ability to connect with diverse students. Amanda determined that the third, and current, period of her career has been marked by becoming a high school teacher. In this period, she returned to Jackson County and grew as a teacher leader.

**“It was hard, but it was awesome at the same time.”** Amanda framed Period One of her career around concepts of innovation and independence. Period One was also

defined by teaching in a single-gender program, making the period brief since “I was there for two years.” Upon graduating from the state’s flagship university with a Master’s of Teaching degree in Secondary Social Studies in 2006, Amanda began teaching sixth grade at Oxford Middle School in Dover County School District Two. The school was located in the capital city of the state. Amanda noted that Oxford Middle School was unique because it housed a “single-gender magnet program.” Amanda taught in the single-gender program. As she recalled, “I taught sixth grade and it was the dream. . . . [I]t really was not a first year at all.” When asked why it was not like a “first year” experience, Amanda first stated, “I had no problems.” She then detailed why she did not have the “problems” that other teacher first year teachers face. First, she noted that she generally had “twenty kids in a class.” The small class size made classroom management easier. In fact, Amanda noted that, in Period One, “classroom management was never a problem.” For Amanda, this environment meant that Period One lacked the challenges that first year teachers often have (Huberman, 1989).

However, factors other than class size contributed to the ease of classroom management. First, academic performance was critical to the single-gender program and academic performance was a criterion for retention. Amanda stated that if students “had two Ds in consecutive nine weeks they got kicked out of the program.” Additionally, Amanda noted, “If there were behavior problems, we kicked them out.” Therefore, if students were not achieving academically or behaving as expected, they were removed from the single-gender program and returned to their zoned schools. Furthermore, Amanda recalled that she had “no discipline problems” because “[p]arents are always around.” The presence of students’ parents meant that students were being observed by

both teachers and parents. Regarding the parents, Amanda said, “They were helpful. They always had my side.” With this, it was evident that Amanda felt supported by the parents of her students and that they constituted a partnership for student learning and achievement. During the interview, Amanda remembered a conversation with her mother during Period One. Amanda said, “My mom, who was a teacher, was, like, ‘How in the world did you end up with a dream job your first year?’” In this, Amanda and her mother both recognized that Amanda was experiencing an atypical teaching environment. Yet this was critical for Amanda in defining Period One of her career.

Teaching social studies at Oxford Middle School was a greater challenge than classroom management. Amanda recalled that, in general, she “had the struggles of content and learning content and how to manage time.” While she did not have trouble with classroom management, she experienced trouble with pacing and learning content. Amanda admitted that this facet of Period One “was hard, but it was awesome at the same time.” When asked what she meant by that statement, Amanda explained, “Because it was a magnet program, I was the only sixth grade social studies teacher. So I could do whatever I wanted.” In this statement, it is clear that Amanda found Period One and working at Oxford Middle School’s single-gender program to be a platform for her to experiment with instructional strategies and curricular decision-making. The counterpoint to this was that Amanda was isolated. Amanda recalled, “It was difficult through because I was the only one.” While she could be creative as the only sixth grade teacher, she lacked the opportunity to collaborate with others. To substitute for a collaborative partner, Amanda leaned on the director of the program, Jonathan Lewis. According to Amanda, Mr. Lewis was a former sixth grade social studies teacher. Amanda noted, “He

gave me a lot of help. I met with him a lot.” Mr. Lewis mentored Amanda in helping her understand, “What to do, how to teach this, where I should be going, [and] how long it should take.” For Amanda, Mr. Lewis was a strong mentor in her first two years of teaching as he helped her understand curriculum development.

However, although Amanda did not have the challenge of classroom management and could focus on creating curriculum on her own, the signature characteristic of Period One was the innovative context of a single-gender program. Amanda stated, “The whole experience of teaching single-gender was awesome.” When asked why, Amanda said, “It was really good to have middle schoolers separated. . . . Everybody could just be themselves.” Amanda explained that teaching single-gender classes meant that she differentiated instruction based on gender-based learning styles, which she observed might be “cliché stuff.” For example, Amanda noted, “I’m a morning person. So, I up!” Her male students were scheduled with her in the morning periods, which “worked out great for me.” Amanda differentiated instruction for the male students by having “them moving around.” She noted that, since boys are more kinesthetic, “We played games. They were running, doing stuff.” After lunch, Amanda taught girls. She noted that the girls wanted to engage in class discussion early on. As a result, Amanda said that her lessons for the girls “were more about communication rather than up a moving around.” Within this context, Amanda learned about the difference in male and female learning styles. However, she also observed

After a while I noticed the girls wanted to play those competitive games [like the boys]. . . . But they didn’t have boys making fun of them if they ran slow or threw the ball wrong.

In this statement, it is evident that the girls Amanda taught wanted competition and physical activity integrated into their lessons and Amanda was willing to change her curriculum to accommodate the wants and needs of her students. Yet, she also acknowledged that the absence of boys in the completion made girls feel better about themselves when taking part in physical activities integrated into the lessons. For Amanda, teaching in a single-gender program, experimenting with curriculum, and lacking classroom disruptions characterized Period One.

**“We were on the same track all the time.”** Amanda conceptualized Period Two of her career around a “typical” experience and making connections with underrepresented students. During Period One, Amanda met Brian, a science teacher also at Oxford Middle School. When they married, Amanda transferred within the district to Manchester Middle School because district policy prevented married couples from working in the same school. Amanda defined Period Two as “the rest of my middle school days.” As a result, Amanda noted, “My typical ‘first year’ was my third year.” By this, Amanda meant that she had to focus more on classroom management as she adjusted to a new context. At Manchester Middle School, Amanda taught seventh grade, meaning she had prepare for teaching new content. Aside from the new content, Amanda viewed the experience at Manchester as less innovative. According to Amanda, it was “just a regular co-ed classroom.” In addition, classroom management was at the forefront of her classroom decision-making process. As she recalled, “I had a little bit more problem with discipline there.”

While she concentrated on curriculum and pedagogy at Oxford Middle School in Period One, Amanda concentrated on classroom management at Manchester Middle

School in Period Two. However, Amanda viewed learning classroom management as positive in that it good “to get into the, quote-unquote, ‘real world of teaching.’” In this, Amanda saw the benefit of developing classroom management skills.

While developing classroom management skills was a signature characteristic of Period Two, working collaboratively with other social studies teachers was also a key theme of this period in her Amanda’ career. At Manchester Middle School, Amanda was one of four seventh grade social studies teachers. Amanda described the working relationship between the four as that of a team. The group of four teachers consisted of two men and two women. Amanda noted, “We all worked really well together.” In addition to Amanda, the other female was Rebecca Wright. Amanda described Mrs. Wright as a “legendary middle school teacher in Dover Two.” However, it was Mrs. Wright’s first year teaching seventh grade after decades of teaching sixth grade. The two men were Adam King and Lewis Scott. Both men had “been teaching seventh grade forever.” This being the case, Amanda found herself the youngest and least experienced of the team. The group worked to align their lessons and assessments. As Amanda recalled, “We did everything together. We were on the same track all the time.” Although they were aligned, she deferred to the expertise of the three veteran teachers. Amanda admitted that, although the teachers were “a good support system for help,” she did not have an opportunity to “teach how I thought it should have been taught.” In this it is evident that Mr. King, Mr. Scott, and Mrs. Wright used seniority to prescribe the curriculum that the four of them would use. Without experience and stature, Amanda went along with the majority of the group. In her third year teaching at Manchester Middle Schools, Amanda transferred within district to Burlington Middle School.



Amanda stated, “Manchester was being split with a new school and I moved to Burlington for a year.” Because she believed that Period Two was defined primarily by her time at Manchester Middle School, Amanda declined to discuss anything about Burlington Middle School other than that she taught eighth grade. Thus, Period Two consisted of four years of teaching experience – three years at Manchester Middle School and one year at Burlington Middle School.

*“He opened up with me.”* As a teacher at Manchester Middle School, Amanda worked with veteran social studies teachers, honed her classroom management skills, and worked with diverse student groups. However, she also learned the impact of making strong personal connections with students and teaching diverse and unrepresented populations. In general, Amanda observed, “I think the biggest turning point would be having [boys and girls] in the classroom together. Co-ed classes! I was, like, ‘Crap! What do I do?’” Noting that gender-specific strategies that she employed effectively at Oxford Middle school to either assist or protect students would not necessarily work at Manchester Middle school, Amanda said the transition was “difficult” but the “support system” of Mrs. Wright, Mr. King, and Mr. Scott helped in the transition as she learned strategies to address co-ed classrooms and management skills.

Most significant during this time was learning to work with students from low-income families, students in lower-level courses, and minority students. Amanda believes that she is able to develop strong personal connections to underrepresented and lower-level student groups. As Amanda explained, “I feel like I let those kids, whether they’re the low socioeconomic kids or the low ability kids, I let them know that I am real and I get to know them.” When asked why she feels this is the case, Amanda said, “Because

they know that I care about them. . . . I can talk to them on their level. So they don't feel threatened. They feel comfortable with me." In this statement, it is evident that Amanda is a teacher who seeks to connect with students in a manner that builds mutual trust and respect. As a result, Amanda noted, "I don't have a lot of discipline problems." Amanda learned at Manchester to grow positive relationships with students and demonstrate that she cared about students personally and academically. For Amanda, this was a theme unique to Period Two and Manchester Middle School. Because of the parental involvement and the academic and behavior criteria for remaining in the single-gender program at Oxford Middle School, it is evident from Amanda's observation about "being real" that she did not have to work as hard to develop relationships with student at Oxford Middle and she did at Manchester Middle School.

In learning the importance of growing relationships with students, Amanda reflected one student in particular in her interview. Amanda recalled that she "had one student that tried me." Jacob was an African-American male who was "big for his age" in the seventh grade. Amanda recalled that Jacob "came from a very poor home with little to no supervision." According to Amanda, Jacob "was really the first student that I had that everyone said, 'Aww. You got Jacob.'" Amanda admitted that she "braced for Jacob coming in" her classroom because of stories teachers told of their trouble managing Jacob. Amanda focused on making a connection with Jacob. This occurred when Jacob "was diagnosed in 7th grade with a learning disability." Amanda opened her classroom to him for extra help. She recalled that "when [Jacob] couldn't work with his resource teacher, he would come to my room to work." Jacob was able to do this because his resource class was during Amanda's planning period. Amanda took time to work with

Jacob on social studies, math, and reading. During the extra help sessions, Amanda noted, “He opened up with me. He worked for me.” The result was that Jacob “gained confidence in the classroom.” Amanda observed, “He just needed someone to show him love and that they cared. I feel like I was one of those people.” As the year progressed, Amanda noted that “we ended up having a great relationship. He never caused me any problem.” It is evident from this that Amanda learned that growing and nurturing positive relationships with students curtails classroom disruptions and leads to student achievement. Yet this example also demonstrated that Amanda cares about students as people, as individuals. This is underscored by the events at the end of that school year. Amanda recalled:

At the end of that year, I was leaving [to Burlington Middle School]. He was being zoned for a new school [in the rezoning]. I cried when he left that last day of school because I wasn’t going to see Jacob again.

The relationship that Amanda developed with Jacob was a key event for Period Two in her career because it demonstrated her commitment to students regardless of their background. For this reason, Amanda was purposeful in identifying working with diverse students and learning classroom management skills as two themes that characterized Period Two of her career thus far.

**“I had to know it. I was the leader.”** Amanda defined Period Three of her career as centered on transitioning to a high school and growing as a teacher leader. After a year at Burlington Middle School, and a total of six years in Dover Two, Amanda joined the faculty at Dayton High School in Jackson County. The move occurred because of family. Amanda’ husband, Brian, inherited his grandmother’s home in the town of

Arlington, which is in rural Fairview County and in the Fairview One. At the same time, Brian became an assistant principal at a middle school in Fairview One. Amanda noted that the commute from Arlington to Burlington Middle School was not practical. As she stated, “I was not driving an hour” each way. Amanda did not sign a contract and “I looked for any kind of job I could find.” Looking at neighboring Jackson County, Amanda saw that “Dayton had an opening. I applied and got a job.” When asked why, other than for the reason of needing a job, she chose to apply to the high school, Amanda was reflective when noting the challenge of moving from middle to high school. She stated, “I felt like I was ready to move to high school. I had done sixth grade, seventh grade, and eighth grade. Every time I moved up a grade I liked it better.” Therefore, the decision to move to high school, particularly Dayton High School, was a combination of professional challenge, family economics, and convenience.

Although the transition from middle to high school was a challenge at first, Amanda noted that Period Three was characterized by emerging as a leader. The first year Amanda was at Dayton High School, she taught World History to sophomores and United States History to juniors. Looking back, Amanda observed, “I expected a whole lot more out of them than the middle schoolers. So when they were on the same maturity level as the eighth graders that got frustrating. It was hard.” To compound this, Amanda was entering a phase in her career yet she did not feel successful as a teacher. Teaching United States History, Amanda was accountable for students passing the state’s End-of-Course Exam. Amanda recalled, “Coming from middle school, where I had the [state-administered] PASS test, I had a state test over my head since I started.” From this it is evident that she was accustomed to standardized tests. In fact, Amanda noted, “My scores

were really good at the middle school.” Therefore, Amanda was not only accustomed to standardize tests, but she was accustomed to her students being successful on standardized tests. Amanda admitted to being self-assured about her ability to prepare students for state exams and did not see the United States History End-of-Course Exam (EOC) for high school as different. As she recounted, “I thought, ‘Whatever. State test. I’ve got this. No problem.’ And I thought, ‘EOC. We’re good. You say it’s hard. Whatever.’” It is clear from this statement that Amanda was over-confident and smug about her teaching skills. At the end of her first year teaching at the high school, she was humbled and hurt by her pass rate on the United States History EOC. As Amanda recalled, “I got my scores back and I was so angry. I only had thirty-something percent pass. That was just the worst thing ever for me.” Thus, Amanda was forced into time of reflection.

This time of reflection was aided by personnel changes within the Social Studies Department. In teaching United States History, Amanda worked closely with Benjamin Edwards. Benjamin, whom Amanda referred to as a “mentor,” was also the department chair. At the end of Amanda’s first year teaching at Dayton High School, Benjamin left for a teaching position in another district. The following year, Amanda teamed with Tiffany Harris, who was teaching United States for the first time. Amanda recalled, “[M]y mentor in US History left me. . . . I had only taught US History one year. And I was like, ‘Oh, crap. I’m in charge.’” Amanda felt, as evident from this statement, that she was now the leader for the United States History curriculum at Dayton High School. However, she was also hurt by her previous year’s performance on the EOC. Amanda states, I knew that I needed to do something different for me to get those scores up

because I was not happy at all.” In this statement, it is clear that Amanda was motivated by student performance on the EOC. Working with Tiffany, Amanda found the opportunity “to totally revamp the class... really cool.” In this, Amanda believed that the loss of her mentor, the gaining of a new teaching partner, and the sting of low scores was an opportunity to lead.

For Amanda, the opportunity to lead came with the opportunity to create change with the United States History curriculum. She also noted that, in her career to that point, “I did what people told me to do.” Amanda recalled, “I felt like that was the first time I got to do what I wanted to do.” Although she was the only sixth grade teacher in the single-gender program at Oxford Middle School, Mr. Lewis told her how to teach the single-gender classes in Period One. Mrs. Wright, Mr. Scott, and Mr. King told her how to teach seventh grade in Period Two. Benjamin gave her the lesson plans and materials for teaching United States History her first year at Dayton High School. Amanda observed that instead of Benjamin “coming over and saying, ‘Here’s what we need to do today,’” Amanda had to delve into the United States History standards. Amanda noted, “It pretty much fell on me. . . . I had to know it. I was the leader.”

Although Amanda viewed the new role created for her due to personnel changes as happenstance, Amanda also saw it as an opportunity to be a leader because Tiffany had not previously taught United States History. Amanda recalled, “I at least had a year of US History. She had never taught it. Somebody had to come in and say, ‘This is what we are going to do.’” In this statement, it is evident that Amanda emerged as a teacher leader by taking responsibility to fill the void of a curricular leader created by Benjamin’s departure. Amanda summed the experience up by noting, “It was a lot of work, but it was

good work. . . . I needed that.” The assumption of a leadership role with United States History curriculum design at Dayton High School marked a turning point for Amanda as a teacher leader in Period Three of her career.

Amanda’s work with United States History became the instructional cornerstone of her teaching at Dayton. It has also been marked by inconsistency in collaboration. Amanda observed, “This is my fourth year teaching US History. This is my fourth person teaching it with.” During Amanda’ first year teaching United States History at Dayton High School she taught with Benjamin Edwards, whom she described as a “mentor.” In her second year she taught with Tiffany Harris. Although Tiffany had not taught United States history, she had nine years of teaching experience. However, encouraging Tiffany to embrace curricular change fell on Amanda. As she stated, “It was up to me to get the ball rolling.” The two worked well together and “the scores shot up.” However, Tiffany left to teach in another district at the end of the year. In Amanda’ third year, she taught with Andrew Thompson, a second year teacher. Amanda said of Andrew, “I really did have to . . . hold his hand through it.” Andrew left after that year, his only year at Dayton High School.

During her fourth year, Amanda collaborated with Joshua Miller on United States History. Joshua was in his fifth year of teaching that particular year. Amanda said of working with Joshua that she needed to “show him how we are going to do it” but that “[w]e really worked together to” create the curriculum. More data regarding the relationship between Amanda and Joshua is forthcoming in the chapter. The point of this segment is to demonstrate that Amanda did not have a steady experience with a collaborative team for teaching United State History; however the charge of leading the

curriculum development has fallen on her. Amanda described this revolving door of partners as beneficial to her development as a teacher and teacher leader. She noted that, “I think that really helped me grow as a classroom teacher and as a leader. Being able to work with someone else and totally change the way we did it.” With this statement, it is evident that Amanda recognizes the value of partner or collaborator to help change the curriculum, yet also recognizes that she has become the leader in the partnerships. At the end of my study, Amanda learned that she would be teaching United States History with Henry McCloud the following year; her fifth collaborator in has many years. Thus, Period Three for Amanda was marked by transitioning to teaching high school, becoming a curricular leader, and reflecting deeply on her growth as a teacher and teacher leader.

#### **“Just by Showing That I Could do Something Like That, They Gave Me More”**

At the time of my study, Amanda was a student in the Masters of Education in Curriculum and Instruction, an online graduate program, at the University of Cincinnati. Amanda explained that she plans to “finish the second half of the masters in curriculum and instruction next year.” Amanda acknowledged that she began the program partly “for the money” as she will receive a step increase in pay with thirty graduate hours over the master’s degree. Although Amanda viewed achieving the additional master’s degree as a smart financial decision, she also viewed obtaining the degree as a means of professional growth. Amanda stated, “I have been out of school for ten years and want to stay kind of in the loop of good curriculum and instruction.” The program of study for the Masters of Education in Curriculum and Instruction has a teacher leadership strand option. This is evidences by the *Program of Studies* for the degree, which requires twelve credit hours in teacher leadership coursework (University of Cincinnati, 2016). When asked about the



teacher leadership strand, Amanda noted, “I have just completed the Teacher Leader certificate for this program.” In discussing the program, Amanda pointed out, “In Ohio, teacher leader is an add-on certification.” In earning the teacher leadership certification as part of the degree program, Amanda believed the degree helped her grow as a teacher leader. Amanda observed, “I’ve read more books [on leadership] in the past couple of months than I ever would have if I didn’t do it.” For Amanda, the regiment of working toward a degree prompted her to read widely and deeply on leadership and curriculum than she would have ordinarily.

As a result of the Masters of Education in Curriculum and Instruction program, Amanda honed her concept of teacher leadership. When asked to define the term, Amanda stated that a teacher leader is a “teacher who is not leaving the classroom” and a teacher “[w]ho wants to better the education of all students in the school, not just in their own classroom.” From this statement, it is evident that Amanda interprets teacher leadership to mean classroom-based leaders who affect school-wide student achievement. Amanda provided examples of how teacher leadership can be observed in a school. First, Amanda stated that teacher leaders provide their peers with “recommendations for activities, strategies, to use in the classroom.” She viewed this as informal and formal. Amanda identified an informal example as “talking in the hallway with a teacher and saying, ‘Hey, I tried this today. How about you try it?’” Amanda then identified a formal example as “presenting at school-level, district-level, and state-level conferences.” She viewed both as means of sharing lesson and curricular ideas. In addition, Amanda believed that teacher leaders “get teachers to work together.” As a result, Amanda understood teacher leaders as “leading a book study or leading PLC [professional

learning community]” to encourage collaboration among teachers through the school. In these examples, it is evident that Amanda centered her concept of teacher leadership as founded on the idea of improving instruction in a school through casual conversation, conference presentations, and collaborative school-based groups.

In addition to viewing teacher leaders as sharing instructional methods and nurturing collaboration in the schools through books studies and PLCs, Amanda acknowledged that teacher leaders can assume a formal role in the school. Amanda noted, “You have the department heads, which are teacher leaders.” Amanda noted, however, that the role of a department chair as a formal position in the school should be no different than the informal leadership in terms of influencing pedagogy. She stated, “I think they [department chairs] should be doing the same things, spreading and giving ideas for strategies for the classroom.” However, Amanda acknowledged that department chairs should have greater authority to lead at Dayton High School. Amanda noted, “I would love to be able to actually observe my teachers in the department and give them feedback, working with them and helping them develop their skills better.” In this, Amanda conceptualized the role of a department chair as a teacher leader who is an instructional leader. She took the idea further by stating, “But for me, it is more than just working with your department; it is making everything cross-curricular.” In this, Amanda held to her definition of teacher leadership as affecting the entire school as she viewed the role of a social studies department chair as playing a role in generating cross-curricular planning and connections among departments.

When discussing her own growth as a teacher leader, Amanda noted that moving from a large district like Dover Two to a small district like Jackson County allowed her

greater opportunities to lead. Amanda noted, “In Dover Two, by the time I got to Manchester Middle School, I wanted to do more with leadership, go to conferences, and do different things to extend my learning.” Thus, by her third year of teaching, and entering Period Two of her career, Amanda had a desire to lead. In her statement, it is evident that she equated leadership with her own professional learning and growth as she made a connection between leadership and attending conferences. However, the traditional school hierarchy served as an impediment. Amanda observed that the opportunity to lead and attend conferences “was always given to the exact same people all the time. The same five teachers got to go to everything and do everything. I really resented that.” While she worked with veteran teachers like Ms. Yarborough, Mr. King, and Mr. Scott, she was not equal to them as leader or as someone able to attend state workshops and conferences.

However, arriving at Dayton High School in 2012 changed that. Amanda stated, “Coming to Jackson County has helped me grow [as a teacher leader] tremendously because it’s small enough that they could give an opportunity.” In this statement, it is evident that Amanda views the small nature of the school district as conducive to developing teacher leadership. Between 2013 and 2016, Amanda presented at the annual SSSC conference twice and has presented at the Jackson County School District’s annual professional development workshop twice. Yet, Amanda also hedged toward using the status quo to explain her growth as a teacher leader in Jackson County. According to Amanda, “Maybe it is that I have taught long enough, too... By the time I got here it was my fifth of sixth year. I wasn’t they youngest teacher anymore.” In this observation,

Amanda suggested that she may have become a teacher leader because she had a level of seniority.

Amanda noted that she has assumed several significant duties at Dayton High School in the three four years she worked there. First, she noted, “I was named department head last year.” Becoming the social studies department chair happened “very quickly, thanks to key people leaving.” This was a reference to Benjamin Edwards, the department chair her first year, and Tiffany Harris, the department chair her second year, leaving. In addition, Amanda stated, “I have been trained as a mentor” for first year teachers and preservice teachers. She was also an “evaluator this year” for second year teachers in the state’s teacher evaluation system for licensure and certification.

When asked why, other than years of experience, she felt that she had elevated to a place of leadership in such a short period of time, Amanda noted that she has demonstrated a level of knowledge that is valued by building-level and district-level administrators. Amanda recalled:

I had some experience with USA Test Prep in Dover Two. . . . When Michael [her principal] talked about getting that for US History, I was able to say, ‘Yeah, that is a great program.’ So I became the expert on it because I had seen it before.

In this anecdote, although Amanda spoke of it in a joking and self-deprecating manner, it is evident that her experience culminated to a point that she could speak to issues and topics with insight. Yet, she benefitted in small, rural Jackson County by having taught in the larger, suburban Dover Two. Although she did not feel equal in Dover Two, the knowledge she accrued in that district allowed her move into a leadership role quickly in Jackson County. As Amanda summed up her growth as a leader, “I think just by showing

that I could do something like that, they gave me more and more.” As she demonstrated knowledge and as she proved an effective classroom teacher, school-level and district-level leaders trusted her with leadership responsibilities.

### **“I Don’t Have Time”**

As Amanda gained leadership responsibilities at Dayton High School, she experienced a decrease in extra-curricular responsibilities. Amanda noted that when she was at Manchester Middle School she sponsored a Model United Nations team. She felt that the program she ran at Manchester Middle School was successful because the students “went to compete at Georgia Southern [University] every year and I had kids win awards every year.” When she arrived at Dayton High School she took over a pre-existing Mock Trial team her first year. She then tried to start a Model United Nations team in her second year. Although she spent time with the programs, she “did not have enough kids come consistently” to make them successful. During the time of my study, Amanda was one of three prom committee sponsors. Although the other committee members did most of the work, Amanda noted that she is expected to chaperone the prom. She jokingly said, “My husband is so excited that we have to come to prom.” For Amanda, serving on the prom committee consumed less time than the coaching Mock Trial or Model United Nations teams. However, when asked what she would like to sponsor one day if time allows, Amanda said she would like to coach a sport. Amanda confessed, “One day I want to coach tennis. I have not done it before, but I want to.” Then asked why tennis, Amanda responded, “That’s what I played [in high school] and I love it. Just to be out there and play.”

In addition to Mock Trial, Model United Nations, and prom committee, Amanda also started a history club at Dayton High School. It was during her discussion of sponsoring the history club that the lack of time to sponsor clubs because of her leadership and instructional development came into focus. Amanda recalled, “The kids asked if we had one and I was, like, ‘No.’ So, I started it last year and we met once per month.” With this statement, it is evident that Amanda was willing to devote time to extra-curricular activities that are generated out of student interest. She collaborated with Andrew Thomason, the other United States History teacher that year. As the year progressed, the club turned into “current events class or time.” Amanda noted, students “wanted to know what was going on. We watched *CNN Student News* and we’d talk about it.” Under this format of watching a new program and discussing it, there was little upfront work on Amanda’s part. However, students would also “give a topic and we would present it at the next meeting.” Preparing presentations was more time consuming. During the following year, which was the year of my study, Amanda admitted, “I have not had a meeting yet. I don’t have time.” When I asked her why she did not have time to sponsor the history club, Amanda stated, “I’m planning four classes and doing department head stuff that I don’t get paid anything for.” With this statement, it is evident that both the increased workload of teaching AP Human Geography, AP United States History, Honors United States History, and College Prep United States History, drew time and focus away from extra-curricular activities. In addition, her responsibilities as a department chair drew time and focus away from sponsoring extra-curricular activities.

### **“Neither One of Us Feel Like We are Fully Appreciated”**

I built into the interview process an opportunity for Amanda to discuss her relationship with department members and administrators both at the onset of my study and at the end. The purpose of this section is to introduce the primary contacts Amanda had as a department chair and to briefly outline Amanda’s relationships with male and female social studies teachers and administrators. In most cases, these relationships are studied in greater depth later in the chapter as the relationships factor into Amanda’s role as a leader. At times, the lack of a relationship or interaction between Amanda and the teachers introduced below is explored in greater depth as well. Data used to create the brief descriptions were derived from interviews, journals, and the “Department and Administration Profile Chart” (see Appendix D).

**“She came to me for a lot.”** First, I briefly describe the female teachers and administrators with which Amanda had regular contact with as a department chair at Dayton High School during the time of my study. The women in this section include an assistant principal, Ashley Jones, and two teachers, Stephanie Taylor and Sarah Davis (see Table 4.1).

**Ashley Jones.** Ashley Jones is an African American female in her late forties. At the time of my study, she was in her first year as an administrator. Prior to being the Assistant Principal of Instruction for Dayton High School, Ashley was a special education teacher at the school. As a teacher and administrator, Ashley was the faculty advisor for the Beta Club for the school. Amanda noted that she and Ashley “were really close as teachers.” Amanda noted, “We had a good relationship last year before she was an administrator.” In this, it is evident that Amanda perceived her relationship with

Ashley as strong and mutual. Amanda noted early in the study that Ashley seemed “overwhelmed.” This was a result of “testing season” and Ashley managing the scheduling of standardized tests. In this, Amanda assumed a leadership role that will be discussed later in the chapter.

Amanda also noted that her relationship with Ashley continued to be strong. Amanda explained, “Now she keeps candy in her office for me so I go down and talk to her.” In these discussions, the Amanda and Ashley were candid with each other without damaging the relationship. Amanda noted, “[Ashley] is also not going to sugarcoat anything. If I am not doing what I am supposed to do, she is going to let me know. Which I think is good.” Likewise, Ashley used Amanda as a sounding board for her own growth as an administrator. Amanda recalled that Ashley would often come to her for advice. Amanda noted, “She came to me for a lot.” Often, the discussions in which Ashley sought counsel involved her asking, ““Amanda, what should I be doing with this? You tell me if I am not doing something right. Tell me if I need to change something.”” Based on Amanda’s perception of her relationship with Ashley, the two shared reciprocated respect. It is also evident that the strength of their relationship is based on their ability to talk openly and honestly without fear of hurting each other.

**Stephanie Taylor.** Stephanie Taylor was a white female in her late forties. In addition to being a social studies teacher at Dayton High School, Stephanie also coached the softball team. Stephanie’s roots in the community were deep as she was also a graduate of Dayton High School. At the beginning of my study, Amanda perceived her relationship with Stephanie as “good.” However, Amanda was unsure “how long Stephanie has taught.” In this, it is evident that the two were not close. In fact, Amanda



noted, “I never really see her.” During the school year of my study, Stephanie taught World Geography and AP European History. At the same time, Stephanie was “out right now with cancer.” Amanda admitted, “That has been difficult dealing with that.” Stephanie’s absence required others in the department to take responsibility for lesson planning for the substitute teacher or teaching classes entirely. At the end of the study, Amanda explained that Stephanie “passed away on Easter Sunday at the beginning of Spring Break.” The effect that this had on Amanda and the department will be discussed in greater detail later in the chapter.

***Sarah Davis.*** Sarah Davis is a female in her mid-twenties. She was a first year social studies teacher at the time of my study. Sarah taught Government, Economics, and World Geography. Sarah did not have any extra-curricular responsibilities. Amanda noted that Sarah was “doing pretty good” adjusting to being a teacher. At the onset of my study, Amanda noted, “We have developed a pretty good relationship.” In this, it is evident that Amanda perceived her relationship with Sarah to be developing toward a place of comfort. Amanda identified two factors contributing to the development of their relationship. First, Amanda noted that Sarah was “next door” and, as a result, “[w]e talk in the hall between every class.” From this, it is evident that Amanda believed the physical proximity of their classrooms prompted their relationship to grow. Second, Amanda noted that Sarah “is usually here in the afternoons so we talk.” With this statement, it is evident that Amanda and Sarah both have the time in the afternoon to work and collaborate in their classrooms. It is also evident that, like Ashley, Amanda defined a strong relationship with the ability to carry discussions. By the end of the study,

Amanda described their relationship as “close.” The growth and development of Amanda and Sarah’s relationship will be explored in greater detail in this chapter.

“**He is grasping at straws to get me to stay.**” Next, I briefly describe the male teachers and administrators with which Amanda had regular contact with as a department chair at Dayton High School during the time of my study. The men in this section include the principal, Michael Brown, and an assistant principal, Eric Robinson. In addition, three social studies teachers are included. Those teachers are Joshua Miller, David Wilson, and James Anderson (see Table 4.1).

**Michael Brown.** Michael Brown is a white male in his mid-thirties. He is the principal of Dayton High School and, at the time of my study, he was completing his fourth year in that role. Before becoming the principal at Dayton High School, Michael was a social studies teacher at the school and an assistant principal at Dayton Middle School. In addition, he was a graduate of Jackson College, a small private liberal arts college in Jackson County. As a teacher at Dayton High School, Michael was also the defensive coordinator for the football team. At the onset of my study, Amanda stated that she and Michael “get along really well” and that “we have a very good relationship right now.” At the time, Amanda felt that she had degree of power in their relationship. First Amanda noted that, “Pretty much anything I want, he is going to get me.” In this statement, Amanda revealed that she perceives herself as having influence over Michael. She continued by stating how this affects her leadership style. She noted, “I try not to use that to my advantage much. I don’t want to be that person that I didn’t like at Manchester that gets everything.” As such, it is evident that Amanda uses her perceived influence judiciously.

Second, during the time of my study, Amanda was considering leaving Dayton High School and notified Michael in an effort to be transparent. Amanda noted that, “He is grasping at straws to get me to stay. He will come to me and ask me questions. I feel like we have a little bit stronger professional relationship.” With this, Amanda perceived that she power and equity in the teacher-principal relationship with Michael. However, the power came with the threat of her leaving and Michael losing one of his top teachers and teacher leaders. Amanda acknowledged that Michael might have “valued me more” because of “the very big reality that I want to leave.” However, throughout the study, Amanda had conflicting perceptions of the relationship she had with Michael. She often felt “unappreciated” and lacking a voice in decision-making related to the social studies department. The relationship between Amanda and Michael was at the center of most of the examples of Amanda’s experience as a teacher leader during my study and will be investigated with greater depth in this chapter.

***Eric Robinson.*** Eric Robinson is a white male in his late thirties. He is an Assistant Principal and primarily “in charge of discipline.” Before moving into administration, Eric was a physical education teacher at Dayton Middle School and the head basketball coach at Dayton High School. Like Michael, Eric is a graduate of Jackson College. Amanda did not indicate a strong relationship with Eric. In attempting to characterize the relationship, Amanda stated at the end of my study, “There are good days and bad... Not bad days. There are days I like Eric and there are days that he rubs me the wrong way.” In this, it evident that Amanda was either ambivalent about their relationship or did not want to qualify their relationship. However, she noted that Eric “has done a great job at discipline.” Yet she followed that statement by noting that Eric is

often “focused on nitpicky things that don’t matter.” This aspect of her relationship with Eric manifests in the hiring process for new social studies teachers and will be discussed later in the chapter. However, an underlying aspect of Amanda perception of their relationship may be that she does not respect Eric as an educator. Amanda explained that Eric “comes in occasionally to do our walk through observations.” In describing Eric’s observations of her instruction, Amanda said, “He was a P.E. teacher. . . . His observations are, like, ‘That’s a cool clock.’ And I am, like, ‘Thanks. How did I do? How’s my lesson?’” In this statement, it is evident that Amanda did not view Eric as an instructional leader as she linked his being a physical education teacher to not being knowledgeable of instructional practices. Amanda’s views align with Rog’s (1984) concepts of Coaches and Coach Teachers who are focused more on coaching athletics than teaching. With this, Amanda demonstrated the divide between academic and athletic subcultures of a school.

**David Wilson.** David Wilson is an African American male in his late fifties. David retired from the United States Marine Corps in his forties. He began his teaching career at Dayton Middle School. He then transferred to the high school in 2014. At the time of my study, David taught only History of the Modern World and coached cross country. Amanda does not have close relationship with David. She noted simply, “We are fine.” Amanda also observed, “He is downstairs, so I don’t see him that much.” Based on this, it is evident that she and David lack a strong relationship because they are not geographically close in the building. However, Amanda appreciated David’s willingness to contribute to the department and his dedication to students. Amanda noted, “When I ask him to do something, he is right there to do it.” Thus, the relationship that Amanda

has with David is based on her giving him orders as opposed to the discussion-based relationship she has with Ashley and Sarah. When asked what David does when asked, Amanda said, “He helps out with the cram party.” The cram party was an afterschool review session for United States History students taking the EOC. Amanda also acknowledged that David “gave me most of the names for the A.P. thing.” With this statement, Amanda referred to an action research project she conducted to increase African American participation in AP courses in the social studies department. This project is a cornerstone of Amanda’s work as a teacher leader during the time of my study. As a result, Amanda and David’s relationship will be examined in greater detail further in this chapter.

**James Anderson.** James Anderson is a white male in his mid-thirties. At the time of my study, James was in his third year teaching. He taught Law Education, Psychology, Current Issues, and History of Modern World. In addition, when Stephanie took a leave of absence to undergo cancer treatment, James began teaching her AP European History course. In addition, James coaches the school’s Academic Team. In general, Amanda noted that James “is not a favorite teacher of students or teachers” because he comes across as arrogant. To that end, Amanda admitted that she does not have a good relationship with James. She recalled, “His first year, he was next door to me and we butted heads a little bit. He came in thinking he knew everything.” Consequently, Amanda “put him in his place.” When asked what she meant by this, Amanda said, “I let him know that this was not the environment that he did his student teaching in... and you do not know everything about teaching.” In this, Amanda set a confrontational tone to their relationship. At the same time, Amanda explained that she does not perceive James

as seeing her as “an authority figure.” In this, it is evident that Amanda wants a degree of control and power over the department members. However, she noted at the end of my study that James “means well” and “he is holding his own now.” Notable in James’s case is that he is gay man in what Amanda describes as a “very conservative area of a southern state.” Amanda described scenarios where this has been an issue with parents and administration. Because these scenarios involve Amanda as a department chair, the scenarios will be examined later in this chapter.

**Joshua Miller.** Joshua Miller is a white male in early thirties. At the time of my study, Joshua was in his fifth year teaching, all at Dayton High School. He taught Honors United States History, CP United States History, Government, and Economics. In addition, Joshua was an assistant football coach and the head baseball coach. Unique to Joshua is that he commuted approximately one-hundred and twenty miles round trip to work at Dayton High School. Amanda noted with sympathy that Joshua “drives an hour just to get here every day.” Amanda described her relationship with Joshua as the strongest among the social studies teachers and administrators. Amanda stated, “We are really close. We have always been friends.” Amanda initially described Joshua in terms of academics. She noted, “Joshua is the other strong teacher in our department... Joshua is the only other teacher certified to teach AP Human Geography and AP U.S. History.” In this statement, Amanda honed in on the academic qualities Joshua possess and appeared to perceive him as an equal in terms of being “the other strong teacher.” In fact, early in my study, Amanda seemed to relish the opportunity to collaborate with Joshua on the United States History curriculum. Amanda noted, “Teaching US History together, I get to work with him with teaching.” In this, it is evident that Amanda wanted to build on her

friendship with Joshua as partners in curriculum design. However, Amanda observed, “He has some good ideas but he is stressed out a lot with coaching.”

In addition, Amanda noted that Joshua felt torn between coaching and teaching. Amanda explained, “He is extremely frustrated with the coaching situation. We talk about it a lot.” In this, it is evident that Amanda and Joshua have a relationship centered on conversation and openness about feelings. The personal nature of the discussions between Joshua and Amanda allowed them to connect over feeling undervalued and having a desire to move close to home. Early in my study Amanda observed, “Neither one of us feel like we are fully appreciated and could do so much more at other schools.” She noted that this was particularly hard on Joshua. Between coaching, teaching high-stakes courses, the number of preps, and the commute, Amanda believed that Joshua “is tired of being ‘walked on’ by Mr. Brown.” More to the point, Amanda noted, “Neither one of us feel like we are fully appreciated.” In this statement, two issues are evident. First, it is evident that Amanda and Joshua have a strong relationship as they are able to discuss feel unappreciated. Second, her relationship with Joshua reveals more about her relationship with Michael. While discussing her relationship with Michael, she noted feeling “valued” by Michael. But in discussing her relationship with Joshua, she noted how the two feel undervalued by Michael. Overall, the relationship with Joshua was another centerpiece of Amanda’s experience as a teacher leader during the time of my study. As a result, I will explore the relationship in greater depth within this chapter as well.

### **“I am A Pretty Dad-Gum Big Fish”**

To understand the experiences that Amanda discussed, it is important to consider how Amanda understands her context in relation to leadership at Dayton High School.

Three topics stood out in the data that demonstrate either her understanding of the administrative leadership in the school or her attitude toward teaching in the school. First, Amanda spoke with specificity on Michael’s leadership style as a principal. Second, Amanda explained her role in the school organization as a department chair. Third, Amanda applied and interviewed for a teaching position closer to home during my study. Within these topics, it is evident that Amanda struggled to comprehend her position with Dayton High School’s organization structure and, thus, her future with Dayton High School.

**“Even if it is a good idea, he is not going to change.”** Central to Amanda’s experiences as a teacher leader at Dayton High School was how she perceived the leadership style of her principal. To begin with, Amanda stated that Michael was “not a very confrontational person.” In this, Amanda meant that Michael tries to avoid difficult discussions or speaking directly to faculty about issues for improvement. To this end, Amanda noted, “Michael is still struggling with the line between I’m-your-boss and I’m-your-friend.” As an example of this, Amanda explained “Sometimes he will come up and just shoot the breeze and hang out. But it is awkward.” With this, Amanda meant that Michael would come speak with her, Joshua, and Sarah. Although Amanda could not pinpoint a specific example of an “awkward” conversation, she did mention that Sarah was often uncomfortable. On occasion, Sarah would wonder aloud with Amanda what her principal was “doing standing there taking to me like this.” Amanda seemed to dismiss Sarah’s uncomfortable feelings by noting that she was a “first year teacher.” In this it is evident that Amanda was not bothered by the content of the conversations and saw Sarah’s response as a result of inexperience.



In addition to perceiving Michael as an uncomfortable with confrontation and collegial banter, Amanda explained her perception of Michael's leadership style. To begin with, Amanda noted that "he tries to be democratic in getting opinions of the faculty." This typically occurs in faculty meetings. Amanda explained that Michael's demeanor followed a pattern of "What do y'all want to do? Well, this is what we are going to do." Amanda clarified the meaning of this statement. According to Amanda, "By that I mean he seems to already have an idea in his head and it doesn't matter what other's think." This trend was evident at Amanda spoke of Michael's leadership style in "leadership meetings" which consist of "department heads and assistant principals." Amanda described the leadership meetings as follows:

You go down to leadership meetings, and he says, 'Let me hear your ideas.' And you give him ideas. And he says, 'Well, this is what we are going to do.' That's fine if there is something that the school has to do or he wants to do. But at least take our ideas and sit on them for a day and then come back and say, 'I thought about what y'all said, but this is what we are going to do.'

In this, it was evident that Amanda feels that Michael does not value the opinions of his faculty. This statement also suggested that the Amanda perceives leadership as listening to others and considering those ideas during a deliberative decision-making process.

As Amanda expressed her perception of Michael's leadership style, she referenced some of her reading from the teacher leadership strand of the master's degree program. Amanda pointed to the work of Goleman's (2000) six leadership styles – *coercive, authoritative, affiliative, democratic, pacesetter, and coaching*. When Amanda first read the article, she recalled that *coercive* was the "first one that jumped out at me"

regarding Michael's leadership style. According to Goleman (2000), a coercive leader uses "extreme top-down decision making" that "kills new ideas on the vine" (p. 82) Supporting this, Amanda noted that "Michael is going to do what Michael wants to do, which is frustrating." Amanda further explained:

I feel that once Michael has made up his mind, you are not going to change it. He also is not going to listen to what you want to say. Even if it is a good idea, he is not going to change.

With this, it is evident that Amanda perceives Michael as a leader who will not listen to his faculty or take their advice into consideration. However, while Goleman (2000) described employee "morale and feelings" to be widely negative (p. 82), Amanda also noted that Michael is "charismatic" about ignoring suggestions and, as a result, faculty morale is widely positive. From this, it is evident that Amanda interprets Michael's *coercive* leadership style as softened by his youth and personality.

Aside from aligning Michael with the *coercive* leadership style, Amanda continued using Goleman (2000) by aligning Michael with the *pacesetter* leadership style. According to Goleman (2000), pacesetters "set extremely high performance standards" and "is obsessive about doing things better and faster" (p.86). When asked to explain why she categorized Michael as a pacesetter, Amanda noted, "Because he is so data driven. It's a 'we-have-to-do-this-to-get-our-scores-up' type of thing." It is evident from this that Amanda perceived Michael's leadership style as *pacesetter* as a result of the accountability system represented with the United States History EOC. On the other hand, Amanda noted that Michael also demonstrated an *affiliative* leadership style. According to Goleman (2000), an *affiliative* leader "values individuals and their

emotions more than tasks and goals” (p. 84). Noting a “positive” turn for Michael, Amanda said, “We are having a ‘family fun’ day... in August. No work. Bring your kids and play games outside. . . Then [we will] have a cookout for lunch. I like that!” Amanda explained that the family fun day, occurring during the faculty work week prior to the start of school, demonstrated that Michael “realizes that he hasn't really been putting the faculty first.” For Amanda, this represented a change in Michael to be more of an affiliative leader. Although this may be the case, overall, Amanda perceived Michael’s leadership style as primarily *coercive* and *pacesetting*, as established by Goleman (2000).

**“I am just the teacher that is the go-between.”** Another contextual aspect needed to understand Amanda’s lived experience as a social studies department chair is her perception of her own leadership style and her power as a department chair. When asked to describe her leadership style, Amanda again used Goleman (2000) as a guide. Amanda stated, “I would say *authoritative* and *coaching*.” According to Goleman (2000), an *authoritative* leader “charts a new course” for the organization by presenting a “long-term vision” while also allowing “people the freedom to be innovative, experiment, and take calculated risks” (p. 84). A leader using the *coaching* style inspires “employees to establish long-term development goals” and helps “them conceptualize a plan for attaining them” as a means of focusing on the “long-term learning” of employees (p. 87). After making the statement that she was an *authoritative* and *coaching* leader, Amanda admitted discomfort in assessing her leadership style. Amanda felt like she was “tooting my own horn when I look at that.”

Given that Amanda perceived her leadership style as a blend of Goleman’s (2000) *authoritative* and *coaching* styles, I asked her to explain what that meant to her. To

Amanda, this meant being relaxed in nature and open to ideas and suggestions. Amanda summed her style up in one word, “laidback.” She explained, “I am going to tell you what you need to do. But I am also going to let you do it.” In this statement, it is evident that Amanda saw herself as a leader who presents expectations for the department but allows teachers in the department to conduct their work with a level of autonomy. In addition, for Amanda, “laidback” meant leading without being heavy-handed or intrusive. Amanda noted, “I am not going to micromanage. . . . There is no need for me to go hound you or bother you so long as you are doing your job.” In this, it is apparent that Amanda wanted to demonstrate to the teachers in the department that she trusts their professionalism. In addition, Amanda described herself as approachable. Amanda observed:

I feel like everyone is comfortable enough with me to come to me with problems. . . . I feel like they respect me enough as a leader to listen to them. Maybe make a change maybe not, but at least listen.

In this statement it is evident that Amanda equated approachability to establishing a relationship that allows teachers to disagree without being insubordinate. This was important to Amanda because of past experience. “I have had department heads that I would not go to and say that to.” Therefore, because she experienced a leadership micromanaging department chair in the past, Amanda purposefully sought to lead in opposite style.

Although Amanda attempted to lead with an *authoritative* and *coach* style that is represented by a relaxed and approachable persona, Amanda operated in a traditional organizational structure that minimalized the role and function of a department chair.

Amanda admitted, “I have no real authority.” When asked to explain what this meant to her, Amanda said, “I am just the teacher that is the go-between. . . . I disseminate information as department head.” In this statement, it is evident that the department chair position at Dayton High School lacked power and the purpose of the position was serving as a channel through which information from above in the organizational hierarchy flowed. However, Amanda noted that she played a role in administrative tasks necessary to school operations. She noted, “I do feel that over the last couple of years [Michael] has given me more say so in scheduling and stuff like that. That has been an improvement.” Along with scheduling Amanda is involved in interviewing candidate for open social studies positions. However, in this system and under Michael’s leadership style, Amanda does not feel confident voicing her opinion at times. Amanda noted:

Michael has told me a couple of times that he values my opinion. . . . [But] I don’t feel I can go in and say, ‘Bad idea.’ Michael gets an idea in his head and that is what is going to happen. I feel like I would be wasting my breath to fight it.

Although given opportunities to create the master schedule and interview prospective teachers, it is clear from this statement that Amanda felt voiceless and unappreciated.

To further this perception, Amanda acknowledged that her structural position as department chair does not make her part of the administrative team. Amanda, who at the end of my study joined a state-level committee to provide feedback on a new teacher evaluation model, noted that becoming part of the administrative team “might be something that department heads across the state are going to have to go to... [because] the new evaluation that is coming out in 2018.” Based on her work with the committee, Amanda noted, “With everything that has to go into the evaluation of one teacher, you

are going to need more than three administrators at a school doing that. I am going to have to do it.” However, Amanda circled back to an issue with her current position by explaining that “there are no incentives” for her to be a department chair under current system. Amanda explained, “I don’t get anything. . . . [But] I will do it because I want to do it.” While Amanda received the incentive of “no lunch duty” one year for serving as department chair, she meant that she did not receive an extra planning or stipend for her work. This led her to question, “What is the incentive for me doing this?” At the time of my study Amanda’s duties as department chair centered on helping interview candidates for open positions, give advice related to the master schedule, disseminate information, and attend leadership meetings. However, regarding the proposed evaluation model, Amanda pondered, “What kind of incentive are you going to give me to... do a pre-conference [with teachers], observe lessons, do a post-conference, and write all this stuff up for more than one teacher?” It is evident that Amanda is concerned about incurring added responsibilities while not receiving incentives and not being regarded as part of the administrative team. However, at the time of the study, Amanda’s observation demonstrated that her current context as a department chair included having little power over teachers or influence with administrators, lacking incentives as an extrinsic motivation to serve as department chair, and being part of a traditional organizational structure.

**“I feel like I would get pushed farther and become better.”** The third topic that serves to contextualize Amanda’s experiences during the time of my study is her interest in leaving Dayton High School. When Amanda and her husband Brian moved to Arlington in 2012, she accepted a position at Dayton High School because it was closer

to home than a school in Dover Two. At the time of my study, Amanda was considering finding a social studies position in Fairview One, preferable at Arlington High School. Amanda noted, “The last move that I have in my head right now is to Arlington High School whenever they have an opening. . . . because that is where we live.” In this, it was clear that Amanda is interested in changing schools because it is close to home. She acknowledged, however, that she wanted to continue being a teacher leader at Arlington High School. Amanda noted, “I want to stay in some type of leadership role at that school. . . . [like] being a leader with curriculum.” She doubted that she would be “department head anytime soon” if she made the move. While Amanda considered moving to be closer to home, continuing to be a leader was important.

During the course of my study, Amanda applied for a position at Arlington High School and interviewed at a district career fair. Toward the end of my study, she discovered that Arlington was interested in hiring her when the principal, Dr. Kimberly Walker, called Dayton High School to check references. As Amanda recalled:

So the Friday before Spring Break, Ashley called me. It was 4:00 that afternoon. I was still [at work]. She said, ‘I hate you, Amanda Williams.’ I was like, ‘Uh, why?’ She said, ‘You are leaving us.’ I said, ‘Not for sure. I have not heard anything.’ She said, ‘Well, she just called.’ I was like, ‘Really?’ And she said, ‘Yeah. You haven’t gotten a call yet?’ I said, ‘No.’

After the conversation with Ashley, “Michael told me that she had called.” Because she did not receive a phone call by 5:30 that afternoon, Amanda figured she would have to wait a week as both districts were on Spring Break. Still, Amanda was thrilled over the prospect of a job offer and working closer to home. Amanda recalled, “I’m, like, giddy. I

am so excited. I kept my phone on me the whole week just in case.” After Spring Break, Amanda felt pressure from Michael regarding the potential move. Each day, beginning with Monday, Michael asked Amanda for an update. Amanda recalled this took place “every day for a week and a half.” At one point, Michael demanded Amanda call Dr. Walker for a decision. Amanda stated, “I told him, ‘I’m not going to call her, because, technically, I shouldn’t know that she has called you. . . . As soon as I know something, I’m going to let you know.’” When asked if Michael’s badgering made her feel valued, Amanda replied, “I was annoyed with it.” From this scenario, it is evident that Amanda was focused on leaving Dayton High School for Arlington High School and did not want the additional pressure of being pressed for an update.

Despite not wanting to be hassled for an answer for Michael, Amanda felt an obligation to Dayton High School. Amanda noted, “I don’t want to leave Dayton in shambles.” When asked to explain what she meant by leaving the school “in shambles,” Amanda said she wanted Michael to have time to “hire somebody good.” Referring to the social studies department’s improved success on standardized tests and moving toward a common vision of instruction, Amanda explained, “People have done a lot of work to build this up and I’m not going to let it go to crap.” In this, it is clear that Amanda had a level of loyalty to Dayton High School and an interest in leaving on professional terms with a smooth transition.

As the week wore on, Michael confronted Amanda about staying at Dayton. According to Amanda, contracts were due on Monday. That day, Michael asked if she had heard anything. Amanda replied she had not. Amanda then recalled, “Michael said, ‘Well, Amanda, I just going to say it: Dang it, you need to stay here.’ I just kind of



laughed.” At that point, Amanda did not take Michael’s last-minute attempt to persuade her seriously. The she recalled Michael launching into a heartfelt speech:

Michael said, ‘You need to be somewhere where you are appreciated and they are just jerking you around over there. You need to be somewhere where you are appreciated and respected. I don’t know what you want to do with your life, but you would make a great curriculum coordinator. You can move up in this district a whole lot faster than you can move up over there. You just need to stay here.’

In this, it was evident that Michael valued Amanda as a teacher and did not want to lose her. It is also clear that he recognized her potential as a leader in education. When asked how Michael’s pitch made her feel, Amanda noted that initially it was “still annoying.” However, as she reflected on it, she admitted that “his little speech... really resonated with me.” In this, it was evident that Amanda felt momentarily valued by Michael as a teacher and as a teacher leader.

On the Monday of Michael’s speech, Amanda reached out via email to Dr. Walker at Arlington High School because contracts were due. She emailed prior to Michael’s speech. Amanda explained, “It got down to contract time and I still hadn’t heard anything. I did email her... asking where things stand.” Amanda did not receive a response until that evening. Amanda recalled, “She emailed me back that night at 9:30. And she said, ‘I thought I had an opening but it fell through.’ That was pretty much it.” In a two-week span, Amanda went from believing the opportunity to move on was a reality to reflecting on Michael’s speech to learning the opportunity was not occurring.

As a result, at the end of my study, Amanda felt confused and continued to weigh the pros and cons of remaining at Dayton High School. Amanda called the situation “a

double-edged sword.” On one hand, Amanda recognized the benefit of being in a small district. Amanda reflected, “I feel like I have more opportunities to move up and do what I want to do if I stay in Jackson.” Yet she also acknowledged the strength of a larger district. To that end, she said, “I feel like I would get pushed farther and become better if I went to Fairview One.” In this, Amanda understood that she would not hold the same level of leadership if she moved to Arlington High School. Amanda noted, “It was going to be really hard going to be ‘a nothing.’ So, that’s an ego thing, I guess. I might get knocked down a couple of rungs going to Arlington.” Ultimately, she recognized the significance of her position at Dayton High School in Jackson County. Amanda confessed, “Right now, I am a pretty dad-gum big fish.” Although she feels undervalued, is interested in moving to a school closer to home, lacks formal authority as a department chair, and disagrees with Michael’s leadership style, it was evident from this statement that Amanda is keenly aware of her position, influences, and reputation at Dayton High School and in Jackson County.

**“She was able to see me as an equal.”** During the course of my study, schools across the state prepared for and implemented state-administered exams. Among them were the End-of-Course (EOC) Exams for English I, Algebra I, Biology, and United States History. Midway through the journaling process, Amanda noted that Ashley, the assistant principal for instruction (API), “is starting to plan EOC dates and is feeling overwhelmed. . . . and asked for my help in trying to schedule everyone.” Amanda explained in the journal that Ashley wanted “to be sure she understands what is going on” since it was her first year. In the end of her entry, Amanda stated, “I am going to help her with this tomorrow.” In this statement, it is evident that Amanda and Ashley have a close

relationship as Ashley is comfortable share feelings of frustration and asking for assistance. Overall, Amanda seemed measured with her phrasing in her journal. However, Amanda seemed more impulsive in her interview as she shared her perspective of helping Ashley schedule EOC testing. Amanda stated bluntly, “Testing was terrible this year. It was so unorganized. Ashley did not have a clue what she was doing.” Partly, Amanda’s observation of the testing scenario was a result of comparing Ashley to the former API, Nicole Martin. Amanda said, “We are used to Nicole coming in and saying, ‘These kids are going to go here and these kids are going to go here. Here are your tickets.’ Everything was very organized.” Although Amanda and Ashley had a good relationship, Amanda still compared Ashley’s performance in the role of API to that of Nicole.

When asked what she did to assist Ashley in organizing the EOC testing, Amanda explained that she organized the United States History Exam schedule. The testing schedule was established to administer an exam each day with all students taking a particular course to test simultaneously in the various computer labs in the school. Amanda stated that when she arrived in Ashley’s office to help, Ashley asked her to “create the schedule for the US History EOC.” After agreeing, Amanda began to develop the testing schedule for United States History. Amanda calculated the total number of students taking the exam between her classes and Joshua’s classes, determined the total number of computers between the library and the three computer labs in the school, and devised the schedule. Amanda noted, “I wanted it on a B-Day. That is when all my US History classes are. Then, I had only one class to switch over.” In this statement, it is evident that Amanda understood the big picture of the school by not wanting to disrupt

the overall school schedule as little as possible. At the same time, she demonstrated an understanding of individual student needs. Amanda noted that she worked with the special education teachers and “I got accommodations from Joshua and my accommodations.” In organizing the schedule for the United States History EOC, Amanda was functioning as a teacher leader. However, Wasley (1991) noted that Amanda’s actions served as an administrative function to maintain the “efficiency and effectiveness of the... system (p. 4).

Amanda summed up the experience of scheduling the United States History with a more deliberate and reflective tone as her interview progressed. Amanda noted, “I don’t think [Ashley] realized how much went into it and how much time it took to get all of it organized.” Amanda, as a teacher leader and United States History teacher, understood the process of scheduling exam largely through a combination of experiencing it from the teacher’s side of the schedule and observing Nicole’s organization the previous three years. According to Amanda, Ashley appreciated Amanda’s work. Amanda noted, “Ashley said, ‘This was the only smooth day we have had of testing. You will be doing this for me next year.’” While Ashley appreciated Amanda’s organization, Amanda observed a larger issue. Amanda concluded that Ashley did not understand “how important that organization was for the teachers.” In this, Amanda seemed to note the disconnect between the needs of teachers and the needs of administration in terms of scheduling exams for efficiency and protection of instructional time. When asked why she felt Ashley could depend on her to help, Amanda first acknowledged that scheduling the exams was the “biggest thing she came to me about” during the year. However, the previous connection the two had as teachers factored into the trust Ashley placed in

Amanda. Amanda perceived Ashley's trust as a product of "a working relationship before she became an administrator." As Amanda explained, "we taught together for three years." Because of the pre-existing relationship the two established as classroom teachers, Amanda concluded that Ashley did not view her along the hierarchical lines of the organizational structure of the school. Of Ashley, Amanda stated, "She was able to see me as an equal."

**"Because we all would have had a bigger, stronger relationship with her."**

During the course of my study, Amanda was required to demonstrate leadership during a time of personal tragedy for the school community. During the course of the school year, Stephanie Taylor underwent treatment for cancer and passed away in March. Amanda recalled the story of Stephanie's struggle with a combination of sorrow, reflection, and stoicism. Amanda began by recalling that Stephanie had survived breast cancer earlier in her life and the cancer was in remission. However, in "August or September" her doctors "found cancer again. . . . in her neck, in her lymph nodes." Amanda observed that Stephanie was positive about the course of treatment. Amanda recounted Stephanie telling her, "It is going to be OK. I've done this before. They are going to do a series of pills. It did not bother me last time. I will still be able to work." Unfortunately, as the semester wore on, Stephanie's condition worsened. Amanda noted with a matter-of-fact tone, "It was not working the way it did last time. She was missing a lot [of work]." At this point, Amanda served as a leader in the department. Amanda "had to help with sub plans" for Stephanie's geography classes and mentored James on teaching Advanced Placement as he took over Stephanie's AP European History class during his planning.

As the first semester came to an end, Stephanie took a turn for the worse. Amanda continued the story. She noted that “[b]y December, you could tell [Stephanie] did not feel good and she left. She was going to go home, rest, do some chemo.” Although Stephanie was physically ill, she was upbeat about her prognosis. Amanda recalled Stephanie telling her, “I’ll be back in February. Here’s my return date.” Stephanie left during the week of midterm exams. In a positive turn of events, Stephanie was “accepted to Cancer Treatment Centers of America in February.” Amanda noted that, although Stephanie, her family, and the school community believed things were looking up, it changed her return date to work. Amanda noted that Stephanie “planned to come back in March, after Spring Break.” In the meantime, Amanda led the department in through Stephanie’s absence. As to Stephanie’s AP European History class, James “agreed to take that over with extra pay” because the class was scheduled during his planning period. However, Amanda took over the AP European History class at times to teach the students how to answer the document-based question on the exam. Amanda stated, “I met with the students... [because] they were having a hard time with it and [James] was having a hard time explaining what to do with it.” She then “continued to work with James” on helping him understand the requirements and expectations of AP courses. In this, Amanda assumed a leadership role as an instructional leader by helping James. Yet, she also led by working to ensure that students did not suffer academically because of extenuating circumstances beyond the control of the students, teachers, or school.

Since Stephanie was out for such an extended period of time, the school searched for a long-term substitute. This had a negative effect on Stephanie’s students. Amanda noted that the substitute, Monica Stewart, was on the preferred substitute list because she

was a deeply rooted community member. However, at the end of my study, Amanda noted, “She was in there until last week, when Michael fired her.” According to Amanda, Stephanie’s students “got on to the computer and changed grades” while Monica was not paying attention. When she discovered what happened, she began scolding the students, who responded with equal emotion. As the noise of the commotion filled the halls, “Michael went down there” and found Monica and the student who changed grades “yelling and fussing” at each other while the other students played “on their phones, doing nothing.” According to Amanda, he fired Monica on the spot. At this point in the interview, Amanda sadly stated, “That is what has happened with her classroom.” In this statement, it is evident that Amanda had respect for Stephanie’s ability to manage a classroom by making positive connections with students and, therefore, it hurt Amanda to think of a once positive classroom becoming an environment of cheating, hostility, disengagement, and apathy.

At forty-seven years old, Stephanie Taylor passed away on March 27, 2016. According the obituary in the local newspaper, Stephanie was the mother of a son and a daughter and was married to her high school sweetheart. Her obituary noted, “Mrs. Taylor was a teacher at Dayton High School where she was the BETA Club sponsor, JV softball coach and served on the Prom Committee.” In this, it is evident that Dayton High School, of which was an alumna, was an important part of her life. This is further evidenced by her family’s request that “[m]emorials may be made to the softball programs of Dayton High School” and her college alma matar. Amanda recalled Stephanie’s passing with one sentence: “And she passed away on Easter Sunday at the beginning of Spring Break.” I asked Amanda to discuss how she felt. Amanda said, “Try

not to bring it..." She trailed off mid-sentence. However, she composed herself and continued. Amanda observed that Stephanie's death "is always there. . . . in the back of your mind." For example, the first day back from Spring Break, Amanda explained that "[i]t was very eerie walking by her room." Amanda also noted that "it is weird sitting at meetings, like faculty meetings, because I would always sit with her." However, in these statements, it is evident that Amanda was emotionally affected by Stephanie's passing, but there was not a close relationship between the two.

When asked what the mood of the department was since Stephanie's passing, Amanda's response was surprising. She said, "I hate to say I can hardly tell a difference." When asked to explain this further, Amanda confided, "This is really bad. We have not had a department meeting since" Stephanie died. At the time of this statement, two months had passed. Amanda explained:

This sounds really bad, but it was good that it was at the beginning of Spring Break. It was not like it was Sunday and we came back to school the next day.

The funeral was over Spring Break, so we were all able to deal with it before we came back to school.

In this statement, is evident that Amanda is emotionally torn over Stephanie's death. She was not indifferent to Stephanie's passing. Yet, she was not close with Stephanie either. Likewise, it is evident that Amanda understood that Stephanie's death exposed the lack of comradery in the department she leads.

In this, Amanda acknowledged that geography and time factored in to the department not being close as she reflected on how Stephanie's passing exposed this about the department. Amanda noted, "[Stephanie's] group were the teachers downstairs



that she ate with.” Thus, when Amanda earlier noted that she “can hardly tell a difference” was, in part, because of their physical location in the school. As she explained, “The upstairs teachers, we didn’t see her a lot anyway.” Based on this observation, it is evident that Amanda understood the lack of physical proximity in the school as contributing to the lack of a strong relationship with among the department. To further make this point, Amanda noted that Stephanie’s passing may have “been felt a whole lot more by us as a department if we met all the time. . . . because we would have had a bigger, stronger relationship with her.” Although emotional about Stephanie’s passing, Amanda was also analytical of the situation as she considered the social dynamics of the department from the perspective of a leader. She noted that the lack of time together created a lack of closeness. Thus, in the heartbreak of losing Stephanie, Amanda reflected on the relationships that existed – and did not exist – in the department. This issue will be discussed again later in the chapter as Amanda articulated bringing the department closer together as a goal for herself as a leader.

### **“We Need a Good Teacher”**

A significant area of leadership that Amanda demonstrated during the course of my study was taking part in the interview process for new social studies teachers as department chair. During the study, she discussed the hiring of the three most recent additions to the department: Sarah, Justin, and Robert. Sarah was hired in May 2015 and Justin and Robert were hired during the timeframe of the study. During this, Amanda experienced conflicting perceptions on whether or not her opinions regarding the candidates were truly valued by administrators. In addition, she often expressed concern over the need to hire an athletic coach over a teacher. Additionally, her experience

revealed the hiring practice of favoring the “hometown” candidates. Finally, Amanda’s experience demonstrates that she often uses masculine leadership qualities when interacting with administrators. In this, Amanda used male-oriented agentic attributes such as confidence and aggressiveness (Eagly, Wood & Diekmann, 2000) when working alongside administration during the hiring process.

**“The other three men were coaches. And then we had Sarah.”** At the end of our first interview in February 2016, Amanda recalled the hiring of Sarah in May 2015. Andrew Thompson was a second year teacher who was at Dayton for one year before leaving. In addition to teaching United States History with Amanda, Andrew “was the assistant baseball coach and assistant football coach.” Amanda recalled, “[W]e had an opening for this school year [2015-2016] last spring. . . . So we had to find a coach.” According to Amanda, “Even though there were other openings [at the school], the coaching position is obviously tied to social studies.” When asked why she thought this was the case, Amanda shrugged and said, “Somehow.” In this series of statements, it was evident that Dayton High School followed a hiring pattern supporting the perception that athletic coaching is a necessity for a social studies teaching position (Chiodo, Martin & Rowan, 2002; Weller, 2002). It is also evident from Amanda’s statements that she was accustomed to social studies positions being connected to coaching positions. Amanda explained the hiring process that followed Andrew’s departure. She noted, “I saw the list of people to interview and it was all male.” However, Amanda added, “There was one female that was given to us by former teacher who said, ‘Hey, she’s going to be good. Why don’t you interview her?’” Amanda requested that they interview the female candidate and “we did.” It is evident that Amanda did not agree with the interview list

excluding female candidates. In advocating for the female to be included, Amanda was advocating for change, given the system.

In recalling the hiring process to fill Andrew's position, Amanda described the interviews in and the subsequent discussion over the topic of hiring a coach. First, Amanda noted, "One male was not a coach. . . . The other three men were coaches. And then we had Sarah." In this statement, it is evident that the majority of the candidates being considered were either male or athletic coaches. The hiring committee consisted of Michael, Eric, Nicole, and Amanda. In addition, Amanda stated that the athletic director "sat in on our interviews." It is clear from this that the hiring process was designed to provide the athletic department with a voice in the hiring process for the social studies position. Amanda recalled, "When we interviewed Sarah, she was by far the best candidate as a teacher." However, Amanda was quick to note that "we needed a coach." The male who was not an athletic coach was "not a good candidate for the job." Amanda noted, "The coaches were OK, but they were not outstanding teachers. They were definitely being hired to coach." Amanda concluded that these three candidates were primarily interested in coaching over teaching social studies because "[a]ll of them saw the opening on the State High School League website." Amanda noted, "They did not see it on the school's website." In these statements, it is evident that Amanda was frustrated with the social studies department being used to fill an athletic coaching position. It is evident as well that Amanda was frustrated that the candidates learned of the position through an athletics-centered website.

When the interviews were completed, Amanda advocated hiring Sarah. After the athletic director left the room, Amanda recalled, "I said, 'Look. We need a good teacher.

Yeah we need a coach, but I think it is more important that we get a good teacher.’’

Amanda told Michael, Eric, and Nicole that they needed to hire ‘‘someone that can do something in the classroom.’’ In this recollection, it is clear Amanda was taking a bold stand against a traditional hiring practice. Amanda noted her argument for hiring Sarah was immediately met with resistance from Eric, who oversees the athletic functions of Dayton High School. Amanda recalled, ‘‘Eric said ‘Well, athletics are very important, too.’’’ According to Amanda, she responded by explaining that ‘‘when it comes down to it, we are a school and a school is here to teach.’’ Supporting Amanda, Nicole also argued that Dayton High School ‘‘needed a good teacher.’’ In this situation, Amanda and Nicole, the two females on the hiring committee, advocated for the female teacher and Eric, the male with a background in athletic coaching, advocated for a male athletic coach. Although Michael listened, he compiled the initial list of candidates consisting of all men and predominantly athletic coaches.

Ultimately, Sarah was hired over the three male athletic coaches. Although Amanda advocated for Sarah to be interviewed and to be hired, she stated, ‘‘I don’t know how much I said had to do with it. But it ended up working out.’’ Amanda explained the back channel maneuvering to facilitate Sarah’s hiring. Dayton High School needed ‘‘to find a wrestling coach’’ by the time hiring was taking place. The school’s athletic department filled Andrew’s football and baseball coaching positions. Amanda noted, ‘‘Michael realized that we need a good teacher, not just a coach.’’ Michael discovered that a preservice teacher ‘‘who was coaching wrestling was graduating from Jackson College and was getting a job at Milford [Community School] and he was going to have to coach at Milford.’’ Consequently, Michael ‘‘called the superintendent’’ and arranged to have the

preservice teacher hired at Dayton Middle School, which is located across the street from Dayton High School, because “we needed our wrestling coach over here.” As a result, Sarah was hired. Reflecting on Michael’s actions, Amanda said, “I think, you know, he listened. I think he knew that was important.” In this, Amanda felt that she was valued by Michael. It is evident that she and Nicole were able to make a case for strong instruction. Yet, at the time, Amanda felt that Michael grew as a leader. She noted, “I was very proud of Michael” for stepping hiring for instructional purposes only.

**“I figured that was who they were going to hire anyway.”** During the time of my study during the 2015-2016 school year, Amanda was involved in the hiring of two social studies teachers. The hiring committee consisted of Amanda, Michael, Eric, and Ashley. The first position that needed to be filled was Stephanie’s position. The committee hired a first year teacher named Justin Jackson. At the time of the interview, Justin was graduating from a state-supported military college. Amanda recalled, “In one day, we interviewed six people, five of which are looking for their first teaching job.” In a journal entry regarding the interviews, Amanda noted, “We unanimously decided to hire a young man graduating from [the military college] in May who is a native of Jackson County.” Specifically, Justin graduated from Milford Community School in Jackson County. Amanda explained in her journal that she was “a little skeptical” of Justin because the discussions regarding Justin indicated that “we had to hire him based on who he was and who he knew.” However, Amanda noted in the journal Justin had “a fantastic interview and I am looking forward to him joining us next year.” By using the word “unanimously” in the journal, Amanda was implying a sense of unity among the committee members. However, upon further investigation in subsequent interviews, I

discovered that the Justin being from Jackson County was more significant and that Justin's hiring was not as unanimous upon further reflection.

When we explored the hiring of Justin further in the interviews, Amanda noted that, at the time of the interview, hiring Justin was "unanimous" and that the four on the committee "all liked him." However, Amanda explained that Eric was advocating for Justin prior to the interview. Amanda recalled, "Before [Justin] came in, Eric said, 'Now, he is the hometown favorite.'" To this comment, Amanda recalled thinking, "Well, what's the point? Let's just go ahead and sign the papers." In this, it is evident that Amanda felt that a decision was already made to hire Justin and she would have little substantive input in the process. This affected Amanda's mindset when Justin entered the room for the interview. Amanda acknowledged, "I had a bad taste in my mouth when he came in and I was thinking, 'You better impress me.'" With this, it is evident that Amanda was viewing Justin's interview with a level of hostility and heightened bias because of Eric's comment that Justin was the "hometown favorite." Amanda acknowledged that Justin "did a good job" in the interview and she was "impressed" with him. She noted that she "was glad that he did" impress her. To this, she explained, "I figured that was who they were going to hire anyway." With this statement, although Amanda agreed with hiring Justin, it is evident that also she capitulated to Eric's desire to hire the "hometown favorite."

Subsequent to Justin's hiring, Amanda observed that her attitude toward Justin changed. Amanda explained, "After we hired him, I called my dad, because he is from Milford, and asked, 'Do you know this guy?' And he said, 'Oh, yeah.' And I said, 'Well, we just hired him.'" After some prying from Amanda, her father said of Justin, "He does

not take direction very well.” As Amanda continued to learn more about Justin, she noted, “Everything I have heard about him since is that he is a jerk. . . . I am kind of nervous about him now.” I asked if she felt that Justin attending the military college might have changed him. Amanda said, “That’s what I am hoping.” She noted that Justin “did a lot of leadership things” at the military college. The alternative to the military college changing him is that the first year of teaching will. Amanda noted, “Maybe his first year will humble him, too, if he is not already.” Either way, it is evident that Amanda had reflected on Justin’s hiring and was no longer comfortable with it largely because of Justin’s reputation in the community. It is important to note from this exchange that Amanda viewed the first year of teaching as a potentially more humbling experience than attending a military college. This suggests that the pressure and work of a teacher is a higher level of stress, which aligns with literature on the topic of first-year teachers experiencing stress (Ingersoll & Kralick, 2004; Huberman, 1989; Womack-Wynne, Dee, Leech, LaPlant, Brockmeier & Gibson, 2011).

To investigate Justin’s post-hiring, Amanda was using her network of family and friends in Jackson County to learn more about him. In doing so, she tapped into a small town network. However, she was critical of the small town mentality that she perceived as guiding Justin’s hiring. I asked Amanda how she felt when Eric advocated for Justin based on his being the “the hometown favorite.” Her first reaction was to second guess her own hiring. Amanda explained, “My first thought was, ‘Am I the hometown favorite?’ I am from around here, too.” In this she questioned, momentarily, her own value when she was hired in 2012. However, she then noted, “I felt, like, what is the point of me wasting thirty minutes interviewing this guy if we are just going to hire him

anyway. What does it matter what I think?” In this statement, it is clear that Amanda perceived her contribution to the hiring committee as irrelevant to the hiring process. This marks a distinct change from the hiring of Sarah a year earlier when she successfully advocated for a female teacher who was not an athletic coach to be hired.

**“What if I say ‘No’? I am out voted.”** The third interview process that Amanda took part in was the second interview process during the time of my study. Specifically, interviews took place at the time of our final two interviews. Because of this, our interviews captured the process and Amanda’s perceptions and opinions as the interviews unfolded. This round of hiring resulted from Joshua taking a job closer to home. This meant that Dayton High School was losing a United State History teacher and, the head baseball coach, and an assistant football coach. To complicate this, Dayton High School’s only female physical education teacher resigned to accept a job closer to home. This meant that Dayton needed a female physical education teacher and a junior varsity volleyball coach. At the beginning of the process, Eric was focused on the “kind of baseball coach we need.” However, Amanda acknowledged that, unlike the year before, the athletic director was not involved with the interviews. Amanda explained that the athletic director “had his eyes on somebody that played at Jackson College that already teaches in the district” at Jackson High School. She further explained that Michael called the person, who is a physical education teacher, and “gave him the head coaching position” although he “is not even coming over” from Jackson High School to join the Dayton High School teaching faculty. With this, the social studies position was not bound to the head baseball coach position. At the same time, the driver’s education teacher resigned. Amanda noted that “if we had to have a coach, we could put him in drivers



ed.” Amanda explained, too, that “Michael was excited that we did not have to connect” the social studies position to a coaching position. Therefore, having a “driver’s ed position open” gave Michael, Eric, Ashley, and Amanda greater flexibility in hiring for the social studies position.

One candidate that they interviewed Lauren, a female in her early twenties graduating from the a small liberal arts university in the northern part of the state. Lauren grew up in a small rural town in a neighboring county. The interview committee remained Michael, Ashley, Eric, and Amanda. When describing the committee’s point of discussion when weighing the pros and cons of hiring Lauren, Amanda noted that Michael, Eric, and Ashley believed that Lauren would “fit right in” and that they would “probably hire” her. When asked to explain what was meant by Lauren fitting in, Amanda said, “She is a small town girl. Talked real country.” From this, it is evident that Lauren was considered a strong candidate because she possessed what are perceived to be characteristics similar to those of the Dayton High School student body. Additionally, Amanda noted that Michael and Eric viewed Lauren as “the top choice” because “she played volleyball” and “we are losing our JV volleyball coach.” An offer was extended to Lauren. However, she declined Dayton High School’s offer as she found a position in a “bigger district.” Additionally, “they did hire a female PE teacher to replace” the exiting teacher and that teacher can also coach volleyball. This provided additional flexibility in hiring a social studies teacher as the committee began to look at their next choice in the interview pool.

In addition to Lauren, they interviewed Christopher, a male first-year teacher in his mid-twenties who recently graduated from the state’s flagship university’s Masters in

Teaching program. Amanda noted, “[Christopher] was really good. Very poised. Very intelligent.” Furthermore, Christopher was from Boston, a characteristic that Amanda found critical and necessary for the students at Dayton High School. Amanda explained, “When he said he was from Boston yesterday, I was, like, ‘Aw! These kids would love having a different perspective!’” For Amanda it was important that the students “learn something else” than, for example, the typical southern-centric of focus United States History.

Amanda advocated for hiring Christopher because of the value his perspective would add to the social studies department. However, Eric disagreed with hiring Christopher based on a line of argument similar to the “hometown favorite” argument he used to persuade the committee to hire Justin. Amanda recalled, “Eric was, like, ‘I don’t know, man. Why doesn’t he want to go home? What’s his deal? I need to look him up. Something’s going on.’” Amanda noted that Eric could not find “anything negative about” Christopher other than “he was from Boston.” Amanda countered Eric, who moved from out of state to attend Jackson College. Amanda recounted saying to Eric, “I was like, ‘Why didn’t you want to go home? You’re from Georgia. You didn’t go home.’” In this exchange, Amanda did not craft a rational, thoughtful argument for hiring Christopher to rebut Eric as would be expected from a female leader (Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000). Instead, it is evident that Amanda employed a personalized rebuttal against what she viewed as Eric’s insubstantial position to highlight the hypocrisy in Eric’s argument. Because the exchange between Amanda and Eric included bluster and little substance, Amanda referred to it as a “ridiculous argument.” At this point, Amanda and I were concluding an interview and resuming the following week.

In the week between the interviews, Michael extended an offer of employment to Christopher. Amanda explained that Christopher told Michael he had an offer from school in the capital city of the state, but wanted time to weigh his options because he was intrigued “personal feel” of Dayton High School. At this point in our interview, Amanda received a phone call from Michael. Observing her side of the conversation, I noted that her face expressed looks of disbelief and frustration and her voice expressed tones of disappointment and resignation. When the phone call ended, we resumed the interview immediately. Amanda explained, “Apparently, Michael gave Christopher until today to call him back and he has not heard from him. So we have a new option.” Amanda noted that this “next option” was a young man named Robert White, a 2008 graduate of Dayton High School. She began describing Robert as “a guy who would be going through the PACE Program,” which is an alternative certification program in the state. However, Robert “just took the Praxis” exam and “has not been accepted yet” into the PACE Program. Robert was a student small state-supported liberal arts school in the state. However, Robert “had to quit school for a little while” because “he got a girl pregnant.” Now that the child is five years old, Robert “wants to go into teaching.” Michael assured Amanda that Robert “has done all of his coursework” to earn a degree in history but has not had a “student teaching” experience. According to Amanda, Michael spoke with the human resources director for the district and she approved a plan to hire Robert. Amanda explained:

If Robert does not get into the June 24<sup>th</sup> start for PACE, he can long-term sub for the first semester until he gets into PACE in January. Then [he can] be hired as full-time teacher [second semester].

Amanda's frustration with this turn of events was evident. This portion of interview captured her initial reaction to going from a qualified candidate with a unique perspective in Christopher to candidate who is not certified to teach and is another "hometown" hire. Accentuating the point that Robert was a hometown hire, Amanda noted, "I mean, his mom teaches at the school [Dayton High School]." Finally, Amanda explained, "We are going to interview him next week. . . . Michael told me, 'I just think he would be good.'"

I gave Amanda a few minutes to process Robert being hired as a new social studies teacher. When we resumed, I asked how she felt about the decision. Amanda began by stating, "[Michael] said Eric and Ashley are on board. What if I say 'No'? I am out voted." In this statement, it is evident that Amanda understood that she had no influence in this hiring decision. Although she successfully advocated for hiring Christopher a week earlier, she found herself feeling unimportant to hiring the process. Amanda then reflected on the status of the department chair position in organizational structure of Dayton High School. Amanda questioned, "[I]f I were a true administrator, would [Michael] take me more serious?" In this, it is clear that Amanda understood that the department chair position held no authority. While Amanda appreciated that Michael "called for my opinion before we set up an interview" with Robert, she noted, "I feel I could say a little bit more if I had more of a leadership role." In this case, it is evident that the structure of and perception of the department chair position at Dayton High School did not allow teacher leaders to lead in a substantive manner when tough decisions needed to be made.

In addition to critiquing the department chair position within the structure of the school, Amanda further examined the rural culture of Dayton High School. While

reflecting on Robert being hired, Amanda described Michael's attitude as, "Let's help out one of our own." When asked to explain what she meant by this, Amanda stated, "It's a small town. Let's hire one of our own before we talk to anybody else." In this, Amanda described a provincial attitude toward hiring teachers from outside of the county. She noted Eric best characterized this attitude. She explained that Eric "is from a small town" in Georgia and possesses "this small town mentality that is scared of everything that is not like me." This can be seen manifest in his questioning of Christopher being Boston. Amanda also noted the importance that Jackson College factors into Michael and Eric's protect our own mentality. She noted that Michael and Eric are both graduates of Jackson College and "it something with Jackson College being so small and close-knit." Amanda observed a trend across content areas that in "past two I have seen, if Jackson College is on [your resume], we are going to hire you. If... you are from Jackson County, we are going to hire you." In this, it is evident that Amanda disagreed with the wholesale policy of hiring from within the county instead of attempting to attract the best candidates.

Amanda further explained this mentality with an additional anecdote. She discussed a young man named Ralph Fontan from Jackson College who "did his practicum with me three years ago." Amanda recalled that he only "came twice" to observe her teach. In addition, she described Ralph as "unprofessional" because he wore "jeans and button up shirt" and "the top three buttons were unbuttoned" on the day "he came to teach his lesson." Amanda then refused "to sign off on his hours that he did not do." During the hiring process that brought Sarah aboard in 2015, Michael, Eric, Nicole, and Amanda interviewed Ralph because he was a Jackson College graduate, despite

Amanda's objections. Amanda noted that "Michael listened to me on this guy last year" and "they understood why I said don't interview him" when the interview was over.

However, as Michael looked to fill Joshua's position during the time of my study in 2016, Ralph was on the interview list again. According to Amanda, Michael "was going through the list from" the state's online application clearinghouse and selected "anybody that was local." Because Ralph "went to Jackson College, [Michael] picked him" to interview. Amanda noted, "Michael forgot that I told him last year not to hire this guy." When Amanda read Ralph's name on the list, "I came in and said 'No.' Then [Michael] was, like, 'Oh. He was the one.'" Amanda confessed that the hiring committee did not write "anything down during the [second] interview" with Ralph and the interview was a "courtesy" because it was already scheduled before Amanda registered her objections. In this case, Michael listened to Amanda, but it was a time when the committee had multiple candidates from which to choose. However, the example of Ralph demonstrates that hiring practices at Dayton High School often revolved around the hometown native or the Jackson College graduate. Amanda summed this topic up by noting, "Sometimes that works out. Sometimes it doesn't."

Amanda then circled back to Robert and admitted that she wanted to "see him in an interview and see how he is." However, "the three [other candidates] we have interviewed are terrible. So, Robert cannot be any worse." She then confessed, "I figure he will be around for a while." In this exchange, Amanda conceded that hiring Robert may bring a level continuity to the department that a hometown hire can bring with respect to retention.

### **“I Wanted Him to Know That I Supported Him No Matter What He Decided”**

Of the relationships Amanda had in social studies department, her friendship with Joshua stood out as significant. Amanda described Joshua, who coached football and baseball, as “intellectual” but would also refer to him as “the coach.” The two formed a bond over similar teaching philosophies and worked together as the two United States History teachers at Dayton High School during the time of my study. Amanda’s relationship with Joshua also revealed a deep sense of loyalty as Amanda attempted to change Joshua’s schedule to make it less stressful. In the end, Amanda served as a friend and leader by supporting Joshua’s decision to leave Dayton High School.

**“He is like my brother.”** Amanda discussed Joshua frequently in her journals, interviews, and emails. When I first asked Amanda to describe her relationship with Joshua, she responded, “We have a pretty good relationship. I would say we are more friends than coworkers.” By the end of my study, it was evident that the relationship was stronger than “pretty good” friends. Amanda described a strong relationship with Joshua during the course of study, especially after she knew he was leaving Dayton High School for a job closer to home. When asked to describe her relationship with Joshua at the end of my study, Amanda mimicked crying and said, “Let’s not talk about Joshua.” Amanda explained, “He is like my brother.” With this statement, it is clear Amanda understood her relationship with Joshua was stronger than she initially indicated. Amanda further explained that the two spoke on a variety of topics, both frivolous and personal. Amanda noted, “We talk about school stuff. We talk about books we have read. We talk about shows we watch.” At the same time, Amanda recalled, “He showed me ring he bought

the girlfriend.” In this statement, it is evident that Joshua and Amanda had a strong relationship marked by respect.

When asked why she thought she was drawn to Joshua, Amanda provided a multifaceted answer. First, she observed, “I have worked with him for four years.” This statement indicated that the closeness she felt with Joshua was a result of time, proximity, and continuity. However, the four year relationship was striking to Amanda for a second reason. She noted, “That is the longest I have worked with anybody.” To contextualize this statement, Amanda worked for four schools during her ten-year career with Dayton High School being her longest tenure. Therefore, Joshua was the first teacher with which Amanda could develop a close, long-term friendship. In addition, Amanda noted that she and Joshua “had very similar personalities, similar backgrounds.” To explain this, Amanda observed that they “had a lot of the same interests” and that they were “both athlete and the smart kid in high school.” In this statement, it is evident that Amanda was able to connect with Joshua on personal topics and through shared background as student-athletes. Summing up her relationship with Joshua, Amanda stated, “I am going to miss him.”

**“He was really pulled in two different directions.”** While discussing her relationship and work with Joshua, Amanda regularly and directly addressed his status as a male social studies teacher who served as an athletic coach. Often, Amanda used the phrased “forced to coach” to describe Joshua’s involvement as an athletic coach. When asked to explain what she meant by this phrasing, Amanda replied, “He has told me that when he was hired, he was hired to teach. Then they found out he could coach.” Amanda continued by explaining, “At a small school, if you have any history of playing a sport,



they want you to coach.” In this, it is evident that Joshua, while hired with the understanding that he would only teach, assumed an athletic coaching position because his back ground in athletics aligned with the needs of the athletic department. To balance this, Joshua “wanted to coach baseball” and “was an assistant coach his two years.” During his third year, he became the head baseball coach. This opportunity is something Joshua wanted. However, because he played football in high school, “he had to coach football, too.” It is in this context that Amanda perceived that Joshua felt “forced” to coach. As will be discussed later, this served as a factor in Joshua leaving Dayton High School.

In this context, Amanda and Joshua worked together as the two United States History teachers at Dayton High School. Amanda observed that Joshua struggled to both teach and coach. Amanda noted, “[Joshua] loves to read. He loves the content. . . . But he did not have time.” She extended this explanation by adding, “Teaching US History with him was not difficult but . . . [h]e was so busy that . . . we did not have time to collaborate.” Amanda also noted that, although they had “common planning” during the last block of the day, Joshua “had to go to coaching stuff.” In this, it is evident that Joshua’s responsibilities related to coaching affected his collaboration with Amanda. Although they both had a planning period to collaborate, Joshua’s instructional planning time was consumed with athletic coaching duties. When asked how Amanda, in turn, served as an instructional leader in this scenario, she took the role of disseminator of curriculum. Amanda noted that Joshua adopted a “kind of go with the flow” attitude toward teaching the United States History course, which carries a state mandated End-of-Course Exam. Amanda recalled, “He would come to me, ‘What do I do today?’ And I

would tell him, ‘Here’s where we should be today. Here’s the quiz we are giving today.’ So, he just took it.” With this statement, it is evident that Joshua was teaching the class without a clear understanding of unit or curricular outcomes.

Likewise, the responsibility fell on Amanda to develop the curriculum. This, however, was not Joshua’s intent. Amanda noted that Joshua had “couple of good ideas” to contribute to the curriculum, but “we just didn’t have time to do anything with it.” Therefore, while Joshua wanted to contribute to the curriculum and the two had a common planning, athletic coaching responsibilities pulled Joshua’s attention and time away from developing and implementing his instructional strategies. According to Amanda, this wore on Joshua. Amanda recalled, “He talked about it a lot. He said, ‘I hate teaching this class right now because I don’t have time to devote to making it better and doing new things with it.’” This statement is further evidence that Joshua and Amanda had a strong and open relationship, as Joshua admitted to having faults and frustration. It is also evidence of the stress Joshua felt balancing teaching and athletic coaching. In the end, he followed Amanda’s lead with the curriculum. Summing up their collaboration, Amanda said of Joshua, “I told him to do it and he would do it.” From this statement, it is evident that Amanda led Joshua through giving orders and directions. In this, she led with masculine leadership attributes (Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000).

In addition, Amanda noted that the balancing athletic coaching responsibilities and teaching responsibilities had an adverse effect on Joshua’s students. Amanda first noticed this during the 2014-2015 school year. Joshua taught AP Human Geography. Amanda stated that Joshua “did not have time to do anything with it.” When asked to explain what she meant by this, Amanda began by stating that Joshua had a thirty-six

percent pass rate in 2015. She described the students as “high freshmen,” meaning they were academically gifted ninth grade students. Amanda stated, “Everywhere else, freshmen do fine on that test.” According to the College Board, sixty-two percent of students taking AP Human Geography in 2016 were freshmen (College Board, 2016a) and the national pass rate on the exam was fifty-one percent (College Board, 2016b). She recalled that his students that year “complained a lot about not learning anything.” In addition, she noted, “Nothing they learned or did in class was on the test.” Joshua, however was not oblivious to this fault. Amanda recalled that Joshua “wanted to do things different” in the classroom by making “it better and more interesting for the kids.” However, she observed that “he did not have time to come up with anything. And he knew that.” In this, it is evident that Amanda perceived Joshua as wanting to improve instruction, but was too firmly tethered to athletic coaching to find time to be innovative in his classroom.

It is in this, that Amanda’s relationship with Joshua showed strength and closeness. Amanda observed that the culture of the athletic department affected Joshua. Amanda observed that Joshua “was really pulled in two different directions.” Amanda stated, “A lot of the coaches at the school are coaches. They are there to coach.” Again, Amanda held views of athletic coaches supported by Rog (1994). However, Joshua wanted to be an effective classroom teacher. Yet, when he was with “the coaches it was strictly coaching, goofing off, hanging out with his friends.” In this it is evident that Amanda perceived the athletic department at Dayton High School as jocular in nature. In contrast, Amanda provided Joshua with an outlet. Amanda described Joshua as “very intellectual.” When Joshua sat and talked with Sarah and Amanda, “he was the teacher

with us.” In this it is evident that Joshua moved between cultures within the school and Amanda, thought their friendship, provided him a safe place to do so. In addition, Amanda stated, “[Joshua] could tell that he was not as good of a teacher as he wanted to be.” He admitted, ‘I’m a coach. I want to be a teacher first, but I can’t be.’” In this, statement, it is evident that Joshua felt comfortable with Amanda to admit fault, insecurity, failing. Amanda, concluded, “He hated that about Dayton.” Thus, Joshua developed a negative perception of a school that provided him with significant opportunities in teaching and athletic coaching because he felt the priority of athletic coaching over classroom instruction.

**“That was a lot for the head baseball coach.”** Seeing that Joshua was frustrated at the end of the 2014-2015 school year, Amanda sought to create a schedule for Joshua that would relieve the stress. Amanda noted that his teaching load and coaching responsibilities were “pulling him twenty different directions” and that “he would have been a lot better” with few preps. During the 2014-2015 school year, Joshua had four preps – AP Human Geography, Economics, Government, and a course on the Holocaust. Amanda noted, “That was a lot for the head baseball coach.” Amanda exerted herself as a leader and advocated for reducing Joshua’s number of preps. I asked Amanda to describe the decision-making process behind the schedule changes. Amanda recalled, “When we knew that Andrew was leaving, Michael really wanted to give Joshua the US History because he was the next strongest teacher.” In this, it is evident that Michael regarded Joshua as a capable educator. However, “Joshua didn’t really want” to teach a grade-level United States History because of the high stakes on top of his athletic coaching responsibilities. However, “he knew that it was a fact that he was going to take

it.” In this, it is evident that Joshua teaching United States History with Amanda was a foregone conclusion.

To make the scheduling process difficult to navigate, Amanda noted that she and Michael need to work within the qualifications of the teacher on staff. Amanda then noted that Joshua was “the only teacher certified for AP Human and the Holocaust class.” On top of that, “we added an Honors Econ” for 2015-2016. Amanda told Michael that Joshua would have five preps in 2015-2016 – Advanced Placement Human Geography, United States History, grade-level Economics, honors Economics, and the Holocaust course – if something was not changed. Amanda acknowledged that Michael agreed that Joshua would have five “major preps” and that needed to change. Amanda, who carried a load of three preps in 2014-2015 with AP United States History, honors United States History, and grade-level United States History, offered to increase her load to decrease Joshua’s. She and Michael agreed to drop the Holocaust course from the offerings. Then, Amanda told Michael, ““You know what, I will take the AP Human. I’ve taught AP US, I’ve got that.”” In this, Amanda was leading by taking the burden off of Joshua and placing it on herself.

Amanda recalled that the plan “worked” and “Joshua was going to have [only] US History and Econ” during the 2015-2016 school year. Therefore, in setting the Master Schedule in April 2015, Amanda and Michael gave Joshua grade-level and honors economics and grade-level United State History. With this, it is evident that Amanda felt she accomplished a significant act to alleviate the stress of a department member and positively affect student achievement. However, Amanda noted, “We came back the week before school starts. We check his schedule. He has five preps.” Joshua taught

grade-level United States History, grade-level and honors Economics, and grade-level and honors Government. Amanda was frustrated with the decision. She noted, “I tried to get those off of [Joshua]. I ended up giving myself four preps and he gained a fifth prep.” In this, it is evident, that Amanda felt dejected.

“**He was beat around a lot.**” During the time of my study, Joshua made the decision to leave Dayton High School and take a teaching position closer to home. Amanda acknowledged, “I knew that was coming. We’ve been talking about it from probably two years.” During the five years he taught at Dayton High School Joshua lived nearly sixty miles from the school, which meant he spent two hours commuting each day. Amanda noted, “He is ready to be closer to home.” In addition, the commute combined with the hours spent coaching football and baseball meant he had little time at home. Amanda described his daily routine as “not getting home until 11:00 at night then turning around a coming back” the next morning for a 7:30 report time. This schedule added additional personal pressure on Joshua. Amanda noted, “He is ready to propose. He is ready to settle down.” Furthermore, Amanda observed, “All summer he would coach Legion baseball [in Jackson County] and do football summer workouts [for Dayton High School]. He was never home.” From this it is evident that Joshua’s commitments to athletic coaching carried a burden of loss of time. Amanda bluntly stated, “He doesn’t get paid anything to coach.” In this, it is evident that the stipend Joshua received was not enough compensation to offset the loss of time.

Joshua’s position as an athletic coach factored in to the decision-making-process as well. Joshua confided in Amanda that the cohesive nature of the athletic department was strong. Amanda recalled, “He even said, ‘If I stay here, I don’t want to do football,

but I can't do that because my friends are coaches. That would strain that relationship.”

In this it is evident that Joshua struggled at Dayton High School with his shared position in both the social studies department and the athletic department. This statement also reveals that Joshua felt no other option but to leave Dayton High School. As a result, Joshua made a decision to leave based on personal decisions centered on being closer to home, finding time to start a family, and positioning himself to focus on teaching and instruction.

Once the decision was made to leave, Joshua actively sought opportunities closer to home. Amanda recalled, “He found out in March that Keen [High School] was going to have an US History position open. It took a little while for it to get in the works.” Joshua pursued the position as it was fifteen miles from his home. Amanda noted that the opening at Keen High School came down to the last minute. She recalled, “They called him the Monday before contracts were due and said they wanted to interview. Michael let him hold off on turning in the contract.” Joshua accepted the position in early May. According to Amanda, Joshua will be “will be teaching US History and possibly AP Human Geography and that's it.” Unlike his final two years at Dayton High School, Joshua will have only two preps at Keen High School. It is also evident that the administration at Keen High School sees strength in Joshua as a teacher as he is entering with a schedule focused on high-stakes exams. However, Amanda noted, “He is excited.” When asked about his athletic coaching responsibilities at Keen High School, Amanda noted, “He is an assistant baseball coach.” During the summer of 2015, Joshua coached the Jackson County Legion baseball team to win the American Legion World Series. Amanda described Joshua as humble about the experience. She noted, “He does not have

a big head about it.” She also observed that winning the championship allowed him the freedom to give up coaching. Amanda explained:

He said that he feels that being the World Series Champion coach, he has proven himself as a head coach. . . . He is perfectly fine being an assistant. . . . He is not going [to Keen High School] thinking he has to be a head coach. . . . He has done what he wants to do and he is stepping back.

In this statement, it is evident that Joshua was finished as a head baseball coach. It is also evident that he turned his attention to classroom instruction. In the end, it is clear that Joshua took a position at Keen High School that had attributes that Dayton High School either did not have or did not provide him.

Because of the close relationship Amanda had with Joshua and because she was his department chair, I asked about her influence and advice in his decision to leave Dayton High School. In a general sense, Amanda noted, “My biggest thing for him was being close to home and having a life.” It is evident that Amanda did not attempt to convince Joshua to stay at Dayton High School, despite her position as the department chair. Amanda accepted that Joshua “needed to go somewhere where he could do what he wanted to do.” For Joshua, this meant finding a job closer to home with fewer teaching preps and fewer athletic coaching assignments. Amanda recalled telling Joshua, ““You know you want to be a better teacher. . . . You need to go somewhere where you can do that. [I]f you stay here, they are going to force you to keep coaching.”” While Amanda did not encourage Joshua to stay, she did encourage him to follow a direction that focused on academics, on improving his classroom instruction. In addition, this statement also acknowledged the hold that the athletic department at Dayton High School had on



Joshua. In this, Amanda acted as a teacher leader because she advised Joshua to raise “higher levels” of instructional practice (Rogus, 1988, p. 49) by going where he would have the time and, thus, opportunity to grow as an educator.

When asked why she gave this type of advice, Amanda noted that she felt he was being used and underappreciated at Dayton High School. Amanda, who was contemplating a move as well, noted, “I sympathized with him.” She noted that Joshua “was not appreciated at all” by the administration. When asked what she meant by this, Amanda said, “He was beat around a lot. . . . He is so nice. He said ‘Yes’ to everything.” In this it is evident that Amanda perceived appreciation with an acknowledgement of having a burdensome schedule and an attempt to ameliorate the situation. To this, Amanda also advised Joshua to go “[s]omewhere where he won’t get walked on and all over” and “learn to just say ‘No.’” With this advice, Amanda was encouraging Joshua to stand up for himself, to be a self-advocate. In summing up the advice she gave to Joshua, Amanda noted that Joshua “was beating himself up” over his teaching schedule, athletic coaching responsibilities, the commute, and personal desires for a family. She noted throughout her advice to Joshua, “I wanted him to know that I supported him no matter what he decided.” In this, Amanda was supportive and selfless as leader.

In our final interview during the timeframe of my study, Amanda discussed telling Joshua goodbye. Their final conversation as co-workers took place the the graduation ceremony, the evening before our final interview. Amanda stated plainly, “Last night it was so bad.” During the ceremony, Amanda realized “I should have written Joshua a letter.” In this, it is evident that Amanda wanted to express to Joshua what their friendship meant to her during the four years they worked together. She told

Joshua that she wanted to write such a letter. Amanda recalled, “He was, like, ‘I am glad you didn’t because I was have cried. You would have completely changed you opinion of me.’” In this, it is evident that Joshua’s feelings toward Amanda as both a friend and colleague were equally strong. Although that exchange contained a bit of levity, Amanda described a somber situation. She noted, “We were standing in the parking lot. I just looked at him. We were just standing there, not talking. Neither one of us wanted to leave.” Finally, Amanda noted, “I just looked at him and said, ‘Bye.’ Then, I got in my car.” In this, it is evident that the two had a strong relationship. It is noteworthy that this is the most significant relationship that Amanda described during my study because her relationship is with a male. It is also noteworthy because Joshua’s final interaction with a faculty member at Dayton High School was not an athletic coach or another male teacher. The two teachers – female and male – found a common bond among social studies, academics, teaching, sports, pop culture, and life experiences.

#### **“I don't know if James really respects me as a department head”**

During the time of my study, Amanda reflected on and described her mentoring of two teachers in the social studies department, Sarah and James. It is evident that Amanda mentored the two teachers differently. First, Amanda formed a relationship with Sarah and later referred to her as a “little sister.” Sarah regularly approached Amanda for advice and Amanda admitted to helping Sarah when she became frustrated. In contrast, Amanda described James as “arrogant.” Although James’s classroom was located near Amanda, Sarah, and Joshua’s respective rooms, Amanda made little effort to develop a relationship with James. Additionally, Amanda perceived their relationship as mired in a struggle for James respect her as a leader.

**“She knows what she wants to do to move forward.** At the time of my study, Sarah was a first year teacher. Her classroom was next door to Amanda’s classroom and Amanda was assigned as Sarah’s first year mentor. Early in the study Amanda wrote in her journal that Sarah experienced two incidences with a particular class. One involved a student writing, anonymously, an inappropriate comment during a warm-up activity. The other involved a student posting a photo of her on Snapchat, an image-based social media application for smartphones. Amanda reflected in her journal, “[Sarah] has had some difficulty with classroom management, and these were the two events that pushed her over the edge.” To the first incident, Amanda wrote, “Sarah had a student write some inappropriate things on a notecard for a warm up. . . . She came to me wanting to know what to do.” In this, it is evident that Sarah viewed Amanda as a valuable resource for classroom management advice. In her journal, Amanda explained the advice that she offer Sarah. She wrote, “I told her to address with the inappropriate warm up with the whole class and let them know that that behavior will not be tolerated.” The advice Amanda provided was practical and direct. Given the direct nature of the advice, Amanda led with a masculine approach. (Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000). In addition, Amanda suggested giving “students assigned seats.” Amanda noted, that “seems to have gained more control over her classes” as a result. In this Amanda represented leadership by being a responsive mentor for Sarah (Ingersoll & Kralick, 2004; Womack-Wynne, Dee, Leech, LaPlant, Brockmeier & Gibson, 2011).

The second incident regarding Sarah that Amanda documented in her journal involved Snapchat. Amanda wrote that Sarah “found out that a student posted a picture of her on Snapchat.” She noted, “The student who posted the picture is a good student and,

while she was angry, [Sarah] did not want to write him up.” The advice Amanda provided, according to the journal entry, was strategic in nature. Amanda wrote, “I told her that she was going to make more of an impression on these students by writing up the ‘good’ kid than any of the regular discipline problems.” In this, it is evident that Amanda advised Sarah to make an example of the student to show the class she would use the disciplinary actions. It is also evident that Amanda advised Sarah to be consistent with school rules. Sarah took Amanda’s advice and wrote a discipline referral for the student.

Because the second incident involved social media, I decided to explore this in my final interviews with Amanda. Reflecting on the incident three months later, Amanda recalled, “[Sarah] came to me hot. She was so mad.” In asking Sarah what occurred, Amanda learned that a student told Sarah that another student posted a photo taken in class on Snapchat. At that point, Sarah “just snapped.” Amanda recalled, “The kid was, like, ‘Calm down, Ms. Shealy. It is not a big deal.’ She said, ‘It is a big deal. That student violated my privacy.’” In this, it is evident that Sarah viewed a photo taken her in a public forum, the classroom, as a loss of privacy because it was posted without permission. It is evident, too, the students did not view photo taken in a public forum as private. I asked Amanda what she advised Sarah to do in this situation. Amanda noted, “For me, I would have been, like, ‘Dude, don’t do that.’ I did not feel it was that big of a deal as she made it.” In this, it is evident that Amanda understood the complexity of social media in the classroom and that she is comfortable with being viewed and observed in the classroom.

However, Amanda advised Sarah to reflect on the incident before acting. Amanda recalled, “I did tell her, ‘Yeah, that it could be a violation. If you don’t feel

comfortable..., then you need to write him up. You need to do what you feel is right to protect yourself.” In this statement, it is evident that Amanda, acting a mentor, sought to understand Sarah’s point of view. While she disagreed with Sarah that the Snapchat post a violation, it is clear that she was not going to discredit Sarah’s perspective. Yet the statement also indicates that Amanda decided to help a first year teacher feel secure in her classroom. In the end, the student received “a day of suspension” for the Snapchat incident. After this, Sarah “never had any problems. [A technology issue] never came up after that.” Through these two incidents, it is evident that Amanda guided Sarah to establishing classroom norms and procedures directed toward establishing and maintaining control.

In addition to the incidents regarding the warm-up activity and Snapchat, Amanda also mentored Sarah through the negativity of the teachers’ lounge. Amanda observed, “We have some teachers that are very negative.” To clarify, Amanda noted that the negativity was directed “[t]owards teaching” and “[t]owards the profession they chose.” In this, it is evident that Amanda did not appreciate teachers who openly express a negative opinion of teaching and schooling. Amanda described a conversation in the teachers’ lounge that occurred at the end of my study in May 2016 in which the negative teachers asked Sarah how her first year fared. According the Amanda, Sarah nonchalantly said, “Well, it was a first year.” Amanda then noted she interjected and enthusiastically said the group, “But she is ready for next year. She is ready to go.” According to Amanda, a teacher in the lounge said in response, “Yeah, but summer is so great. Then you come back in August. It is so hard to come back. Oh, I hate coming back in August. I hate August.” Amanda summed up the end of the conversation by stating, “It was just

negative, negative, negative about coming back.” In this, Amanda described an environment damaging toward the mindset of a first year teacher.

Given this context, I asked Amanda how she mentored Sarah in this situation. Amanda noted that she “went to talk with [Sarah] about it afterwards.” Amanda explained, “I said, ‘Sarah, August is my favorite time of the year. I am so excited to come back.’” In this statement, Amanda was leading by demonstrating a positive message and by reflecting with Sarah on her own perspective regarding the start of the school year. According to the Amanda, Sarah agreed with Amanda and understood that the teachers were negative. Sarah responded, ““Oh, I know. I just brush off whatever they say. I know they are like that. . . . I’m excited about next year.”” To this, Amanda replied, ““I wanted to make sure they were not negatively influencing you in any way.”” In this exchange, it is evident that Sarah perceived the negative attitude of the teachers in the teachers’ lounge as something to avoid affecting her. Likewise, it is evident that Amanda wanted to be proactive in steering Sarah away from negativity. Thinking about the future, Amanda told Sarah, ““Well, we will start our own little lunch club. So we do not have to listen to them.”” In this, Amanda demonstrated leadership as well in that her plan was to bring together likeminded positive teachers to commune over lunch.

Overall, Amanda perceived Sarah as having experienced usual first year as a teacher. Amanda observed, “[Sarah] he had a very much typically first year. She had a lot of good days. She had a lot of bad days.” Thinking specifically about a freshmen World Geography class at the end of the day, Amanda noted:

A couple of times she came to me during [my last block] planning. . . . She came to me a couple of times, ‘Can you just go stand in there?’ She just had to get away. . . . At least once, she was crying by the time she came to me.

With this statement, it is evident that Sarah experienced the emotion and stress of a first year teacher. This aligns with Huberman’s (1989) initial phase of teaching, which is marked by “reality-shock” as the new teacher balances “professional ideals and the daily grind of classroom life” (p. 33). It is also evident that Sarah viewed Amanda as approachable and reliable as a mentor. In addition, Amanda was attentive to Sarah and prompted her to reflect on her experience as a first year teacher.

To accomplish this, Amanda gave Sarah “a journal this year” for both of them to use for reflection. When asked why she did this, Amanda explained, “My mentor did that and I thought it was really cool.” In this, it is evident that Amanda is leading through mirroring leaders that affected her, which is consistent with research on social studies department chairs learning leadership skills by observing former department chairs (Eargle, 2014). Amanda explained that the journal is designed for Sarah “to keep so she can go look at it and laugh later.” Thus, the journal’s purpose is to capture the first year experience and serve as a benchmark for growth later in Sarah’s career. This process of reflection allowed Sarah to chart of course for improvement during the summer. Amanda noted, “She knows where she messed up. . . . She knows what she wants to do to move forward.” To improve, Sarah has identified “podcasts to listen to over the summer” and “books to help her teach Econ.” In this, it is evident that Amanda nurtured Sarah into a reflective teacher by serving as a consistent source of feedback and advice.

As a result of working with Sarah, Amanda acknowledged that she and Sarah became friends of the course of the year. Given the departure of Joshua, Amanda admitted, “The other day I said [to Sarah], ‘I am really glad I made a new friend.’” When asked what assisted in developing the relationship between the two, Amanda first stated, “Sarah and I were next door to each other... so we talked a lot.” In this it is evident that geography within the school factored into relationship-building between Amanda and Sarah in the same sense that it hindered the relationship building between Amanda and Stephanie. In addition, the statement demonstrates that the two developed a relationship through conversation. In addition, Amanda noted, “I know the family she married into pretty well, so we had that connection.” Given that Amanda, Sarah, and Sarah’s husband are from Jackson County, the personal connection within a small community played a role in their relationship-building. However, Amanda acknowledged, “I think part of it is my being the only other female in the department, except for Stephanie.” Therefore, Amanda admitted that the connection that she shared with Sarah as a female drew them together. At the time of my study, the social studies department consisted of three male and three females. With Stephanie’s passing and the new hires being male, Amanda and Sarah will be the only females in the department, making this connection more pronounced. To extend on this, Amanda observed, “This is weird, but there might be like a big sister, little sister relationship. I think she looks up to me for things, and I’m looking out for her.” In this, it is evident that the two draw on each other based on gender lines. It is also noteworthy that Amanda framed her relationship with Sarah around that of a sibling, the same framework she used to describe her relationship with Joshua.



**“He is very much overwhelmed and he doesn't want to admit it.”** As a department head, Amanda also informally mentored James. At the time of my study, James was a third year teacher. When discussing James, Amanda stated, “He was a little too cocky the first two years.” In contrast, Amanda said Sarah “takes criticism, internalizes it, and works with it and fixes it. She listens to me.” This contrast framed the uneasy relationship between Amanda and James. Additionally, although they were located on the same hall, the two did not regularly communicate. Amanda noted, “He doesn't come down. I don't talk to him a ton.” In this, it is evident that James did not approach Amanda for advice. However, it is also evident that Amanda did not actively mentor James either. She observed from afar, noting that sometimes James is “very high strung” and sometimes James is “alright.” From this, it is evident that Amanda and James did not have a strong relationship. However, Amanda noted in her journal that “James came to me today to discuss his ‘3rd year slump’ as he called it.” Therefore, while the two did not have a strong relationship, James felt that it was appropriate to reach out to Amanda for advice.

During a follow-up interview, I asked Amanda to describe the third year slump that James experienced. Amanda recalled, “He is tired of teaching. . . . He is very much overwhelmed and he doesn't want to admit it.” While reflecting on James's experience, Amanda stated, “He was starting to find things to complain about.” In this statement, it is evident that Amanda did not lend credence to James's frustrations as she seemed to take a dismissive approach. Amanda then articulated James's frustrations. During the time of my study, James taught Psychology, Law Education, Current Issues, and Sociology. Amanda noted that James believed Psychology and Sociology “boring” to teach. In

addition, he “did not have any textbooks” for Law Education. Furthermore, James was frustrated that the other teacher with Current Issues, who also taught Driver’s Education, “would not collaborate with him.” To compound the issues, James “added in the AP European History class while Stephanie is getting cancer treatment and now has five preps and only one planning period.” In light of all of this, Amanda took the position that James “started getting negative this year about things.” This dismissive approach is rooted in Amanda’s perception of James as “cocky” during his first two years. She concluded, “I don’t know if reality set in or he just had a rough year.” In this, it is evident that Amanda perceived James as being humbled by his experience during the time of my study. It is also evident that Amanda lacked a clear understanding of why James felt “overwhelmed” during what was a stressful third year.

Given that James reached out to Amanda for advice, I asked Amanda what advice she offered James to help him through the “slump” he experienced. Amanda noted, “He feels that he is not putting everything he can into his job and is not being an effective teacher.” Considering this, Amanda said, “I assured him that we all go through this, that he is not a bad teacher and that he needs to take some time for himself.” In this, it is evident that Amanda provided nurturing feedback that demonstrated sympathy. In addition, Amanda provided James with practical and supportive advice. She explained that “[t]here are ways to make the subjects fun even if you don’t like them.” She specifically praised his adapting to teaching Law Education without a textbook. She noted, “[James’s students] analyzed court cases and then they reenacted them. I think the kids really enjoyed it.” According to Amanda, “I had a lot of kids that had US History and Law Ed say, ‘Aw, man, we talked about that court case in [the Law Education]

class” when studying it in United State History. Because students were able to transfer knowledge from James’s Law Education course to her United States History course, Amanda conceded, “I think he did a good job with it.” However, it should be noted that Amanda’s advice to James was grounded in an observation that James was aiding in the development students toward to United States History EOC, for which Amanda is accountable.

However, the high-stakes courses were not only Amanda’s domain. Although Stephanie was the teacher of record for AP United States History, James stepped in to teach the class when Stephanie took an extended medical leave in December. Given the stakes and complexity of teaching an AP course, James felt additional stress. Amanda recalled, “He came to me all the time [saying], ‘What do I need to do? I don’t think I am doing this right. They are going to all fail.’” In this statement, it is evident that James cared about the success of the students in the class and was assuming responsibility half way through the year for their success on the exam. To this, Amanda offered James feedback from a variety of angles to help him feel confident. First, Amanda told him, ““There are multiple sides to your story. You took over a class from someone for completely terrible circumstances.”” In this, Amanda contextualized his situation as being explicitly attached to Stephanie’s illness and absence, which were beyond the control of either of them.

Second, Amanda provided James with the observation that the students “came from an AP class where they didn’t have to do a lot of work and weren’t pushed to do a lot of work.” In this, she was referencing the students’ experiences the year before in AP Human Geography with Joshua. To further this idea, Amanda explained to James, ““So

you are the first one that is pushing them. If they don't know how to push themselves, they are not going to do well.” It is evident in this statement that Amanda shifted blame toward Joshua, and his being torn between teaching and coaching, for not properly preparing the students for AP work and expectations. To sum up her mentoring James through teaching AP European History, Amanda said, “I had to calm him down a lot with that.” It is evident that Amanda was willing to mentor closely and prescriptively with James when the frustration derived from an accountability of an AP course. This marks a contrast to the seemingly dismissive approach regarding Psychology, Sociology, Current Events, and Law Education.

Although Amanda mentored James with AP European History and provided him with positive feedback regarding the Law Education course, an antagonistic element in their relationship remained. According to Amanda, during a discussion over expectations for students can do cognitively, “I got him to say that I was right.” Amanda felt a disconnect between what students were capable of doing and what James expected them to do without proper scaffolding. Amanda noted, “He finally told me, ‘Yeah, you are right.’” To this, Amanda responded, “Thank you. It took you three years to admit it or figure it out.” In this, it appears that Amanda savored seeing James humbled by the experiences of his third year. It is also significant that Amanda spoke to James in both nurturing and stinging tones. Overall, Amanda took an approach toward mentoring James that suggested tough love. For example, in regards to James having multiple preps, Amanda noted, “It is just time for him to settle into it.” This is significant because is a clear contrast to her advocating for a decrease in number of preps in Joshua's schedule. Additionally, Amanda noted that she often “told him to just calm down.” In this it is

evident that she perceived the problem as originating from James and not something external, such as the five preps, lack of collaboration, and lack of a textbook. Within this, it is clear that Amanda had a strained relationship with James. In addition, it is evident that she did not actively seek to improve their relationship at the time of my study.

Amanda's relationship with James may stem from her perception of James as conducting power plays against her by speaking with Michael about issues prior to speaking with her. Amanda viewed this as a break in the chain of command. Amanda recalled, "When James started, he came to me a lot about things and I tried to tell him how it was." Noting that she does not "sugar coat" the challenges of teaching, Amanda concluded that James "resents me" for her honesty. As a result, Amanda observed, "[H]e doesn't talk to me until after he's talked to Michael." In this is it evident that Amanda wanted to mentor James during his first year of teaching. Where she perceived her feedback and advice as an honest assessment of teaching in a rural school, it is seems that James ceased to look to her for advice and assistance and turned to Michael. When asked why she thinks James goes to Michael, Amanda noted, "He knows Michael has more power in any issues that he has." To that end, Amanda, explained, "I don't know if James really respects me as a department head." Therefore, it is evident that Amanda perceived James as gravitating toward people he understands as possessing power. At Dayton High School, the organizational structure Amanda described does not allow the department chair to hold "authority." As a result, this and James breaking the chain of command, Amanda views James a not holding respect for her role as department chair.

Given this situation, I asked Amanda to explain how serves a leader for James. Amanda offered a brief example before exploring a lengthier example. Frist, she noted

that “James will ask Michael for anything, and Michael gives it to him, most of the time.” Amanda recalled that “Joshua wanted to get certified in AP Econ” but “Michael wouldn't pay for it because we didn't offer” and AP Economics course. However, Amanda stated, “James wanted to get certified in AP World, and Michael paid for it, even though we don't offer that class.” This is a reference to the state’s policy that teachers must take a three credit hour graduate course to earn endorsement to teach an AP course. In this example, it is evident that Amanda was highlighting what she perceived as favoritism toward James on the part of Michael. In addition, these statements demonstrated that Amanda favored Joshua over James.

Furthermore, Amanda provided an example of James going over Amanda to speak with Michael regarding his schedule for the 2016-2017 school year. Amanda stated, “[James] has been driving us crazy the last couple of weeks.” According to Amanda, James regularly asked, ““What am I going to teach next year?”” To this, Amanda replied, ““We don’t know. We have not hired anybody.”” In this example, Amanda referred to the time of my study in which two social studies teachers were being hired. Amanda explained that James “would like to take over Stephanie’s load” of AP European History and World Geography. However, Amanda explained to me in an interview that “if we hire somebody that would be really good with freshmen, then James is not going to get the World Geography. She also explained to me, “I would rather have a first year with [all] World Geography than five different preps. At least James has taught all of his preps before.” First, it is evident that Amanda wanted to lead the department as a whole by placing people with their strengths or lessening the stress of a first year teacher. This strategy aligns research conducted by Ingersoll and Kralick (2004)

and Womack-Wynne, Dee, Leech, LaPlant, Brockmeier, and Gibson (2011) on decreasing stress levels for first-year teachers as a means of retention. However, it is also evident that she did not fully take James's desires into consideration.

When I asked Amanda how she served as a leader for James in the case of the schedule for 2016-2017, Amanda circled back to the perceived lack of respect James has for her as a department chair. She noted, "He came to me and the first thing asked was if he told Michael this. He said, 'Yeah, but I thought it was fair to tell you, too.'" In this, it is evident that Amanda did not appreciate that James continues to go to Michael first for problems. It is also evident that she presumes he always does so. However, it is evident that James had a degree of respect for Amanda because he informed her of his discussions with Michael. To James's statement, Amanda said, "Without talking with Michael, the only thing I can tell you is that if you take over World Geography, you are going to have [to move downstairs to the freshman academy hall]." With this statement, it is evident that Amanda was attempting to mentor James through the process by weighing pros and cons of assuming a new schedule. In this case, a con would be move elsewhere in the building. Given the previously discussed issues related to geography in the building and relationships, this move could be a negative for James. In addition, Amanda told James, "I don't want you to be unhappy. We will look at it." In this, it is evident that Amanda reconsidered James's feeling on the matter. It is also evident that she committed to expressing James's desires to Michael when making the master schedule, but felt no real change would come from it. In this, Amanda expressed what Feeney (2009) concluded was the department chair's role in the school as being simply a series of tasks, not authentic leadership.

When I asked how James responded to her leadership, Amanda relayed a story that demonstrated James's trust and her betrayal of that trust. Amanda recalled that, after discussing the schedule, James "kind of looked at me, like, 'Thanks.'" With this, it is evident that Amanda perceived a sense of dejection from James. In return, Amanda told him, "I can talk to Michael about it. . . . But it is not my decision." In this statement, Amanda admitted a lack of power in the decision-making process for the master schedule. However, Amanda believed that James "felt good to get that off of his chest" and that she understood that her acknowledgment "that we will look at it might have made him feel better." As we concluded that portion of the interview, Amanda admitted, "I don't think we are going to change our mind." In this, she confessed that she did not intend to advocate for James's schedule change and that Michael did not intend to change James's schedule. When we reconvened for the final interview, James's schedule included courses he did not want. Amanda stated, "He came to me yesterday very upset because we put him back with Sociology and Psychology. . . . He hates it." From this statement, it can be concluded that James felt betrayed after Amanda indicated that she would advocate for him.

When I asked why James "hates" teaching Sociology and Psychology, Amanda revealed a more complex side of the story. Amanda explained that James "feels like he is walking on eggshells when he teaches" Sociology and Psychology. Amanda noted that James "talks about a lot of controversial issues" in those courses and "he's concerned that he will say something that will offend someone and then get himself in trouble and risk losing his job." Amanda observed that James "goes home every day analyzing everything he said in class to see how the students, and then the parents, will take it." This



observation aligns with Evans, Avery, and Pederson's (1999) observation that, because social studies content is ripe with taboo topics, teachers refrain from or develop concern over teaching controversial topics. When asked how she could mentor James in teaching controversial topics, Amanda then explained

James married a man the weekend after gay marriage became legal in [our state]. . . . There are students whose parents will not allow them to take his class or participate in [the] Academic Challenge [Club] because he is gay.

With this statement, it is evident that James is in a position where he is not supported by some people in the school community. This statement serves to better understand why James desired to teach World Geography over Psychology and Sociology. Amanda admitted that James's marriage surprised the Dayton High School faculty. First, James is the father to "a son who will be a senior" at Dayton High School in 2016-2017. Second, "[n]o one knew he was dating anyone, much less gay." Third, as Amanda stated, "He still doesn't really talk about it." In addition, Amanda further contextualized the situation by noting that "James is fairly liberal" and Dayton is "in a very conservative area of a southern state." In explaining this, Amanda made two similar statements: "I think this and other things have made him feel uncomfortable" and "I think all of that makes him uncomfortable." With this, it is evident that Amanda knew very little about James and that James was not comfortable opening up to her. It is also evident that Amanda did not take time to truly understand James's position in regards to his schedule and James's feelings and stress in their teaching context.

When I asked what she observed of Michael as a leader in this situation, Amanda described an awkward situation. She noted, "James respects him [Michael], but Michael

doesn't really feel the same way.” In this, it is evident that Amanda perceived Michael as having little or no respect for James. Amanda explained Michael’s logic behind James keeping Sociology and Psychology as such:

‘That’s your lifestyle. . . . I am fine with that. But when your lifestyle is impacting five other teachers and what they teach, I have a problem with that. I cannot say that you cannot teach this class because it makes you uncomfortable because of your lifestyle.’

In this, it is evident that Michael viewed James’s sexuality as a choice. It is also evident that Michael made a decision on the schedule based on what he perceived as best for the department as the expense of the potential emotional harm of the individual. When asked what she thought of Michael’s argument, Amanda said, “I agree.” She paused and then said, “I see both sides.” In this, Amanda reflected on James’s situation. Amanda admitted, “I am not [in favor of] putting a first year teaching three different preps, two of which they teach by themselves.” Yet, she also acknowledged, “I don’t want him [James] to be miserable teaching that class. . . . That is not fair.” This statement indicates that Amanda was torn over James’s scheduling request for the upcoming school year. With this, it is important to circle back to the statement Amanda told James: “I can talk to Michael about it. . . . But it is not my decision.” Also, given that Amanda perceives Michael as a leader who does not listen, it appears that Amanda knew that Michael did not intend to change James’s schedule because of a “lifestyle” decision. It is further evident that Amanda did not feel the empowered as teacher leader to truly advocate for a teacher in her department.

### **“I Think that is a Testament that They Value Me as a Teacher and as a Leader”**

A significant teacher leadership action that Amanda undertook during the time of my study was to develop and organize a professional learning community (PLC) centered on a book study. Amanda wrote in her Jackson County 2016-2017 District Teacher of the Year application, “This year, I have worked to create a professional learning community on formative assessment.” In the application, she described the PLC as “a group of 13 other teachers from my school in a book study... creating and discussing effective formative assessments to use in the classroom.” It is evident that Amanda viewed the book study as a central part of her 2015-2016 school year. In addition, it is evident that the focus of the book study was to generate discussion among the teacher as a means stimulating improved instruction. In our first interview, Amanda stated that attracting thirteen teachers, approximately a quarter of the faculty, “shocked me” because it promoted her to think that Dayton High School has “more teachers that care then I thought.” In this, it is evident that Amanda did not perceive the teachers at Dayton High School as engaged in professional growth. It also demonstrates that, by leading a book study at the school, Amanda’s conceptions of the faculty were challenged.

Amanda did not discuss the book study in the journals for my study. In one of our final interviews, she discussed the book study to some extent. When I asked if organizing the book study affected her as a teacher leader, Amanda responded, “I think so.” Then she framed the book study around how teachers and administrators perceive her as a teacher leader. Amanda observed, “I think that is a testament that they value me as a teacher and as a leader.” In this, it is evident that Amanda viewed the book study as important to defining herself as a teacher leader at Dayton High School. Amanda

explained that one of her graduate courses required her to initiate the book study as a PLC and to receive administrative support (University of Cincinnati, 2016). Amanda recalled, “I was really nervous about that. I went to Michael and said, ‘I need to do a PLC, what do you want me to do it on?’” Amanda and Michael then discussed the instructional needs of the school and, as Amanda noted, “We chose formative assessment.” This statement indicates that Michael allowed Amanda to have a voice in the direction and focus of the book study. Amanda told Michael, “‘I don’t know if I am going to get anybody to do this with me.’” Michael’s advice was to “make your social studies department do it.” Michael’s response aligns with a *coercive* leadership style identified by Goleman (2000) as it exemplifies “top-down decision making” focused on “compliance” (p. 82). Amanda countered Michael by telling him, “‘I don’t want to make anybody do it. Then it is not authentic. It is not good if you make people do it.’” In this, Amanda’s retort aligned with the *democratic* leadership style identified by Goleman (2000) as it exemplified a focus on teacher “buy-in” through building “trust, respect, and commitment” by allowing teachers to decide what “affects their goals and how they do their work” (p. 85).

To pitch the book study to teachers, Amanda “sent an email stating” the book study goals and “[t]alked about it at a faculty meeting.” Through this process, she garnered the participation of thirteen teachers. At the end of my study, Amanda was pleased with the success of the book study. She noted that her “professors where, like ‘Wow! That is amazing. Most of them have two or three.’” It is evident from this statement that Amanda perceived the book study as successful because of the positive, and comparative, feedback from her professors.

**“My principal and I have seen the need for more formative assessments.”**

During casual conversation, Amanda mentioned writing a paper on the book study PLC for her graduate coursework as the project was associated with the teacher leadership strand of her degree program at the University of Cincinnati. I asked Amanda if she would allow me to analyze the paper for the purposes of my study. She consented and provided me with a nine-page paper dated April 18, 2016. The paper, titled “Assignment 2: PLC Implementation, Product, and Reflection,” was written for a course titled “Practicum II for Teacher Leaders.” The paper consisted of seven sections. The first focused on the goals and scope of the PLC. The second was a compilation of data related to the PLC. The third and fourth were the final product and resources of the PLC, respectively. The fifth was a reflection protocol based on Bullock and Hawk (2001), while the sixth was a more personalized reflection. The seventh, and final, section was an assessment of the advantages and disadvantages of PLCs.

According to Amanda’s paper, the book study took place between October 26, 2015 and April 13, 2016, approximately half of the book study timeframe overlapped with the timeframe of my study. In the paper, Amanda explained that an adjustment to the state teacher evaluation program required teachers “to complete Student Learning Objectives” (SLO) based on pre- and post-testing. Amanda wrote, “My principal and I have seen the need for more formative assessments to be sure that students are learning the material presented to them in class.” With this, it is evident that Amanda and Michael viewed the book study as a means for supporting teachers, and thus students, by focusing on formative assessment and contribute to the SLO competent of the teacher evaluation. As a result, Amanda decided to craft the book study PLC as an opportunity for teachers

to “examine what makes a good formative assessment.” In this, it is evident that Amanda perceived the book study as a platform for stimulating deep discussion among teachers regarding formative assessment.

However, Amanda also envisioned the book study PLC as an opportunity to “create some generalized formative assessments for each content area that teachers can pull from to assess student learning.” This statement is evidence that Amanda viewed the book study PLC as a platform for generating teacher leadership as the teachers in the group would lead in the creation of formative assessments made accessible to all teachers. In addition, creating a book study PLC that extends beyond social studies and impacts all content areas aligns with Amanda’s understanding of a teacher leader. As previously noted, Amanda defined teacher leaders as those “[w]ho wants to better the education of all students in the school, not just in their own classroom.” It is evident that Amanda utilized her knowledge and understanding of teacher leadership to design the book study PLC.

In designing the book study PLC, Amanda established three goals for the teachers. The first goal was teachers to “understand how to use formative assessment effectively to measure student achievement.” To achieve this, the book study group read *The Formative Assessment Action Plan* (Fisher & Frey, 2011) and both met “face to face meetings and [conducted] discussions using One Note's collaboration space.” With this goal, Amanda attempted to lead through discussion centered on the formative assessment book by Fisher and Frey (2011). The second goal required the book study group to “create a bank of formative assessments that can be utilized by specific content teachers to enhance their use of formative assessments in the classroom” based on Fisher and Frey

(2011). To accomplish this, the book study participants worked first with their content areas then with “different content teachers to create formative assessments that can be used by any teacher in the school.” With this goal, Amanda attempted to lead through her definition of teacher leadership as she designed the book study to have reached beyond the participants. The third goal of the book study required teachers to “implement their formative assessments into their classrooms and analyze their effectiveness using their student data from their SLO.” With this goal, Amanda attempted to lead through prompting teachers in the group to purposefully integrate new strategies and analyze and reflect on the relative effect on student achievement.

In her paper, Amanda described the roles and demographics of the book study group. The teachers, under Amanda’s plan for the book study, read *The Formative Assessment Action Plan* (Fisher & Frey, 2011) “in two chapter increments” and discussed “what we already do well and how we can build off of this.” The group then utilized formative assessment from the book or created their own based on book in their classrooms and then evaluated “each other's formative assessments on their effectiveness” during reflective meeting sessions. Ideally, the group would also “observe these practices in the classroom” for further data and reflection. Amanda also envisioned the group creating “a flip book (hard copy and electronic copy) to be passed out to each teacher in our school.” In this, Amanda established a logical, reflection-based process for teacher and student growth both within the group and across the school.

A cursory analysis of the group indicates that Amanda attracted a group of teachers that with reasonably even distribution across subject areas. She noted:

There are two teachers from the Social Studies department (Sarah and myself), four teachers from the English department (Crystal, Barbara, Nicholas, and Kristina), two teachers from the Science department (Felicia and Jason), 3 teachers from the Math department (Melissa, Sally, and Anne), 2 teachers from our Fine Arts/Language Departments (Cody and Kathy), and 1 teacher from our Special Education department (Lila).

Closer analysis indicates that of the fourteen total participants, to include Amanda, eleven were female and three were male. Of the five other social studies department members, Amanda attracted only Sarah. Stephanie, during the time of the book study, was on extended leave. However, Joshua, James, and David did not participate. This suggests that Amanda had appeal and influence as a leader with teachers across the school, but may not have the same level of appeal and influence within her department.

**“This will allow our students to experience more growth in every course and be better learners.”** In her reflection paper on the book study, Amanda also identified basic levels of participation, assessed the book used as the basis of the study, and described the resulting formative assessments. Of the teachers who joined the book study, Amanda observed in her paper that “most... were present” and “participated well in the discussions and had good insight and ideas to use in the classroom.” In this it is apparent that Amanda provided an honest assessment of the participation level. Amanda reflected in the level of success of the book study by noting that “we did not create many formative assessments.” However, “we did discuss and implement many other formative assessments into our classrooms.” It is evident that, although Amanda did not achieve the level of creativity that she envisioned, she did achieve as a teacher leader changed



practice among her peers. Amanda also described two aspects of the book study that “did not work out as planned.” First, the teachers did not “communicate through the school's One Note account” as she envisioned. It is evident that, although the teachers wanted the interaction of the book study to be based in the face to face discussions, not an online platform. Second, the group did not produce the “complete formative assessment portfolio” Amanda envisioned. However, she noted that “we did get a small list of formative assessments to share with the entire faculty.” In this, it is possible that Amanda needed to lower expectations for her first book study until a culture is produced at Dayton High School to generate a portfolio of formative assessment activities.

The formative assessment strategies that the book study PLC produced was a valuable tool despite not meeting the initial expectations. Amanda based the book study on *The Formative Assessment Action Plan* by Fisher and Frey (2001). Amanda acknowledged in her paper that the book boosted group discussion on “how to implement formative assessments and helped distinguish between the different types of formative assessments.” It is apparent that the book by Fisher and Frey (2001) served as a valuable resource for the book study. Amanda explained that most of “the assessments implemented in the teachers' classrooms came from this book.” Therefore, it is evident the book Amanda selected for the study served to change teacher practice. The strategies that the book study PLC identified for use, integrated into their instruction, and discussed the effectiveness of were:

Guided reading with content articles, KAHOOT review questions, Effort Rubrics, Round Robin review, Tweet Exit Slips, Mentimeter.com, Establish Purpose (use

discussion, math quadrilaterals worksheet), Top-Hat Organizers, Daily quizzes, [and] individual student conferences.

These ten formative assessment strategies were “put into a portfolio and emailed to all teachers in the school.” Although not as expansive as Amanda envisioned, it is evident that the list represents teachers exploring strategies outside of their comfort zone and, more importantly, sharing the strategies with others at Dayton High School. Amanda, in the end, determined that the small portfolio “will allow our students to experience more growth in every course and be better learners, making them more confident in every aspect of their lives.” In this, it is clear that Amanda understood that her experience leading a book study PLC was a success.

**“I have learned that it is hard to manage other teachers.”** Amanda wrote a paper for the teacher leadership practicum included two sections for reflection. The first was section based on Bullock and Hawk’s (2001) *Developing a Teacher Portfolio: A Guide for Preservice and Practicing Teachers*. The second was an open reflection. Bullock and Hawk defined three stages of teach reflection. Those stages were description, analysis, and planning. In the description phase, Amanda described the book study as a group of teachers “able to hold strong professional conversations to better understand the effective use of formative assessments and to carry them out to improve student learning.” Amanda noted that “sustaining a professional learning community with my colleagues has allowed me to build up my professional skills.” In this, it is clear that Amanda perceived the organization of the book study as affecting her growth as a teacher leader. In addition, Amanda noted that “I have increased my knowledge to better help my

colleagues and my students.” This statement indicates that Amanda understands her own content and pedagogical growth as central to continued growth as a teacher leader.

In Bullock and Hawk’s (2001) second phase of reflection, Amanda analyzed the book study process. Amanda noted, again, tied the book study around the state’s new “Student Learning Objectives to evaluate teacher performance.” Her general analysis in the paper focused on “[t]eachers across all disciplines joined the professional learning community in order to better help their students learn the material set forth by the state standards.” This, again, aligned with Amanda’s teacher leadership philosophy that teacher leaders affect learning beyond their classroom and beyond their content area. For Bullock and Hawk’s (2001) third reflection phase, Amanda determined plans on how to move the book study forward during the next school year. Amanda acknowledged that she hoped to “continue this PLC and work towards adding more formative assessments to the teachers' repertoire in order to improve student learning and understanding.” This statement indicates that Amanda understood the importance of a book study PLC for generating dialogue among teachers and prompting instructional growth. In addition, Amanda observed, “I have learned that interdisciplinary professional development is great in order to get ideas from teachers you would not normally work with.” It is evident that Amanda grew from working with teachers outside of her content area. It is also evident that she grew as a leader through observing the generation of ideas from teachers across content areas. Finally, Amanda concluded, “I would want to take the ideas gathered this year and concentrate on creating more formative assessments for my personal classroom and my content area.” In this, Amanda is acknowledging that the social studies department needs strong formative assessment. This statement is significant

considering the majority of social studies department members did not participate in the book study PLC.

The second reflection section of the paper for the teacher leadership practicum was an open-ended personal reflection. In this section, Amanda noted general ups and downs to the book study PLC that she did not discuss as extensively elsewhere in the paper. Amanda admitted in this section of the paper that she was “excited, yet nervous, about creating a Professional Learning Community at my school.” Amanda noted that she was concerned about teachers being willing to join “an extra group with extra meetings.” In this it is evident that Amanda was conscientious of her peer’s time and, potentially, stress level. However, she noted, that the “teachers all seemed excited about the start of a new year and the start of a new group of professional learners.” It is clear that the teachers joined the group with a noticeable level of enthusiasm for the book study.

As the year progressed, sustaining the book study’s momentum became challenging. Amanda noted that “there were very few days that we were able to set aside for this PLC because of administrative restrictions (other required meetings, tutoring times, etc.).” In this, it is clear that school and district policies affected the ability of the group to meet regularly. Amanda also wrote in her paper that “it became harder and harder to get all thirteen teachers to attend the meetings” because “there were a few coaches in the PLC who missed the after school meetings because of practice.” In this it is evident that Amanda perceived athletic coaching as drawing attention away from the academic pursuits of the book study. Amanda countered these issues by sending email “reminders to read and when the meetings were” and she “brought snacks as incentive to come.” Her efforts were successful. Amanda noted that the “thirteen teachers, plus

myself, met the goal of proficient student growth, which is 60% meeting their target score set after the pretest.” Therefore, while other factors in student growth are certainly plausible, Amanda led a group of teachers from across content areas to initiate new strategies in a reflective environment and draw a connection to student growth.

The personal reflection section also contained evidence of Amanda’s growth as a teacher leader. Of her own growth, Amanda observed, “I have learned that it is hard to manage other teachers and get them to do something extra.” She explained that “[t]he number of teachers who volunteered to take part in my group initially show me that they respect me as a leader.” In this it is evident that Amanda perceived teachers’ volunteering for her book study as an indication of respect. However, Amanda learned that respect encouraged people to join, but she needed to work to create continued momentum and sustainability. Amanda wrote that “everyone became busier and busier, myself included, [and] it became harder to devote a ton of time to the PLC.” From this, Amanda “learned that I need to keep myself on pace in reminding teachers of meetings and keeping them motivated and excited about the focus of the PLC.” Therefore, it is evident that Amanda learned that leading takes time, planning, and continuous effort keep group members moving forward. In addition, Amanda envisioned the book study as “all of the teachers working together as one.” To accomplish this, Amanda “tried to get other teachers to lead a meeting, but no one wanted to take on that role.” Consequently, Amanda stated, “I felt that it was more me leading the PLC.” From this, Amanda learned that “it very difficult to share the leadership.” It is evident that Amanda wanted to encourage teacher leadership within the group and foster distributed leadership (Harris, 2003; Spillane, 2005; Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2004). It is also evident that the group wanted a

single leader. However, Amanda's observation demonstrated teachers' allegiance to the status quo of the hierarchy (Lortie, 1975).

The final section of Amanda's paper on the book study for the teacher leadership practicum required her to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of PLCs. However, evidence exists within this section of Amanda's development as a teacher leader and her vision of teacher leadership. Amanda wrote that book study PLCs create a scenario in which teachers "work with other teachers who care about their profession and their role in helping students." In this it is evident that Amanda understood book study PLCs to be an outlet for teacher leaders to affect teacher and student growth. In addition, Amanda concluded that "teachers [in a PLC] need to be passionate about student achievement... [and] have a shared vision of what they want their classrooms to look like." In this, it is evident that Amanda understands teacher leadership as both articulating a vision for education and harnessing and synthesizing the shared vision for education of those they lead. Creating a shared vision is a leadership characteristic of both the business world (Barnes, 2011; Covey, 2008), school administrators (Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005) and teacher leaders (Rogus, 1988). Likewise, because book study PLCs, such as the one Amanda conducted, inherently allow for teachers to "discuss the pros and cons of it with other teachers who have also implemented the strategy[.]" the book study PLC creates a "support system throughout the entire year." For Amanda, it is evident that leading a book study PLC was equivalent to developing a supportive culture within the school that is a safe space of instructional experimentation. This aligns with Jones, Stall, and Yarbrough (2013) and Thessin and Starr (2011) who concluded that PLCs are

powerful opportunities for teams of teacher to collaborate on improving classroom instruction through innovation.

In addition, Amanda reflected on the conflict between mandatory and voluntary participation and the role of administration in book study PLCs. She struggled to determine which style is best for teachers. If the book study PLC is mandatory, “teachers are not going to be as passionate about the learning material as they should be to be effective.” However, if participation is voluntary, “it can be difficult to get teachers to commit to extra work and extra meeting times.” In this, Amanda is circling back to the first conversation she had with Michael over the book study. While she advocated for voluntary participation, she experiences a decrease in participation because teachers “do not have much extra time on their hands.” At the writing of her paper, Amanda appeared to be uncertain as to which was preferable – mandatory or voluntary. However, she did conclude that “administration has to be supportive of the group and what they are trying to do.” As a result of her experience with the book study PLC, it is evident Amanda viewed the success of a project initiated by teacher leaders as clearly backed by school-level administrators.

### **“If You are Not Willing to Help All the Kids, Everyone, Go Home”**

Central to Amanda’s experience as a teacher leader during the time of my study was an action research project she conducted to increase African American enrollment in Advanced Placement (AP) courses at Dayton High School. Drawing on her experience teaching a Dover District Two prior to joining the Dayton High School faculty, Amanda explained that she values and enjoys having African American student in her class.

Amanda stated, “They are fun. They bring another perspective. I want all of my students

to reach their potential.” However, Amanda observed that the percentage of African American student enrolled in honors and AP courses did not mirror the percent of African Americans in the overall student body. Taking a stand against this trend, Amanda concluded, “With the percentage of Black that we have in the school... it needs to be closer represented in AP and honors classes than it is.” Consequently, Amanda focused on increasing participation in AP courses among the African American population at Dayton while taking a course titled *Quality Instructional Practices for Teacher Leaders* in her graduate program at Cincinnati University.

Conducting the interview-based action research for the course, Amanda found that African American students in her school remained in grade-level courses “because that’s where their friends are” or “they don’t want to seem white.” Interviewing students also revealed that “they don’t want to be the only one” in the AP classes. Taking a proactive stance, Amanda concluded, “We have got to reach them.” Amanda also acknowledged that Dayton High School was not “doing them any services” by “perpetuating this self-perception” that African American students are not capable of upper-level work. Yet, she also found that AP teachers in other content areas “are not as open to it as I am” and do not want to risk scored and pass rates.

**“I said, ‘Why can’t that be you?’ He goes, ‘Well, I guess it could.’”** When discussing why she decided to pursue inclusion as an action research project, Amanda related a student-centered story. She noted that a student, William, graduated in 2015. Amanda pointed to a statement that a student, Anthony, made in her grade-level United States History class early in the 2015-2016 school year as meaningful. Amanda recalled, “[Anthony] made a comment around September or October. He said, ‘Man, a brother is



not going to get Student of the Month anymore that William is gone.’ That comment really bothered me.” In this it is evident that Anthony viewed William as the only African America student capable of being named Student of the Month. It is also evident that Amanda listened to Anthony and reflected on his statement.

Although Amanda described Anthony as “polite,” “intelligent,” and “holds himself well” in class discussions, she admitted, “It took me a while to get to know him better.” As their teacher-student relationship grew, Amanda felt she could reach out to Anthony and in “December or January... said something to him about it.” Amanda stated that, when she broached the subject, Anthony “knew exactly what I was talking about.” Amanda recalled their conversation:

I said, ‘Why can’t that be you?’ He goes, ‘Well, I guess it could.’ I said, ‘Yes. It could. Were you in honors classes?’ He said, “‘Yes.’ I said, ‘Why aren’t you now?’ He said, ‘I don’t know.’ I said, ‘I think you need to be.’

In this statement, Amanda urged Anthony to reflect on his ability to be a Student of the Month. It is also evident that she recognized Anthony’s potential and laid out a challenge to him to reach it. It is similarly clear that Amanda demonstrated that she supported Anthony in entering upper-level courses. Amanda recalled telling Anthony, “I am going to talk to your mom. You need to be in an AP class. Here are your options. Here is what you do in each class. You pick.” With this statement, Amanda took an individual approach to working with Anthony by explaining the process and expectations to both he and his mother. Following this, “Anthony chose AP Human [Geography]” for the 2016-2017 school year.

Following her conversation and work with Anthony, Amanda reflected on the culture and trends at Dayton High School. Amanda observed, “In the three years I have taught AP and honors classes, I have only had eleven minority students. That was absurd to me.” In this, it is evident that Amanda was prompted by her conversation with Anthony to see with greater clarity the proportional imbalance of African Americans in upper-level courses. As she reflected, she developed questions. Amanda stated, “I wanted to know, number one, why weren’t they taking it, when did they stop taking honors classes, had they been in honors classes before.” With this, it is clear that Amanda engaged in a reflective process to understand the perspective of her students and the culture of her school. Amanda stated, “I happened to be in a class doing action research.” Although she describes with nonchalance, her experience with Anthony influenced her graduate school coursework as inclusion “became my action research project.” In addition, Amanda viewed the 2016-2017 school year as an opportune time to make shifts “[w]e are dropping the honors” and will only offer grade-level and AP courses. With this in mind, she decided on a general pitch to students that they would “be better prepared because of” taking AP courses. In addition, she admitted, that “I am not worried about that test at the end of the year.” In this, Amanda chose inclusion and opportunity over pass rates.

**“In those eight classes combined, I have had a total of eight African Americans out of 154 students.”** While discussing the action research project, Amanda mentioned an accompanying paper for her coursework. I asked if I could use the paper as an additional data source. Amanda agreed and provided me with a digital copy. The paper she gave me was written for a course titled *Quality Instructional Practices for Teacher*

*Leaders.* The paper was thirteen pages long, including resources, and was dated May, 27, 2016, the day after the second interview. Amanda titled the paper “African Americans in Advanced Placement Courses: Increasing Enrollment in a Rural Southern High School.” She began with a description of the student body, noting “that 23% of our school is African American.” Amanda expressed concern in her paper over a trend she has seen in teaching AP and honors course the past three years. Amanda explained:

I have taught four Advanced Placement (AP) classes and four Honors US History classes. In those eight classes combined, I have had a total of eight African Americans out of 154 students (5%). To break it down further, there have been three out of 68 (4%) African Americans in the AP classes and five out of 86 (6%) in the Honors classes.

With this, it is evident that Amanda analyzed historical data to generate a body of evidence on which to argue for change at Dayton High School. Amanda then took a stand in her paper by writing, “In a school with 23% of the students being African American, they are grossly underrepresented in the upper level Social Studies classes at only 5%.” In this statement it is clear that Amanda took a strong stance on inclusion as she points to the disturbingly skewed demographics of the upper-level course.

Amanda also wrote from the perspective of a department chair. She admitted, “My biggest concern is that, as a social studies department, we are not giving our African Americans students an equal chance at participating in the upper level classes.” Given that the social studies department at Dayton High School offer AP Human Geography, AP European History, and AP United States History, it is clear that Amanda perceived the problem of African American enrollment as both a school-wide and department-wide

problem. Having discussed the demographics in her paper, Amanda asserted, “I want to work to get more African Americans, both male and female, enrolled in the AP classes next year.” In this it is Amanda embodied being a change agent, a central characteristic of a teacher leader (Fraser, 2008; Harrison & Killion, 2009; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009; Lieberman & Miller, 2004; Miles, Saxl, & Lieberman, 1988; Scribner & Bradley-Levine, 2010).

**“I have met with my administration and we have designated two people to serve as official mentors for the African American students.”** Amanda established her action research project on African American inclusion in AP Courses on some of the existing literature on the topic. Specifically, Amanda wrote, “I plan on utilizing some of the recommendations from Klopfenstien (2004), Ndura, et al. (2005), and Maloney and Saunders (2003).” In this, Amanda took a research-based approach to leading change in her school. Within the description Amanda provided in her paper, elements of leadership emerged. To begin with, Amanda wrote, “I plan to get suggestions from all teachers from the social studies department for students who they feel are academically capable of succeeding in an upper level course.” In this statement it is evident that Amanda intended to lead her department in reflecting on student proficiencies and potential and generating change based on that potential by making recommendations for students to move to AP courses. Furthermore, Amanda’s plan included leading beyond the school to work with stakeholders. Amanda proposed having “an AP parent night to inform the parents and students about the AP courses.” In this, Amanda is leading with the purpose of affecting school culture by including parents in the decision-making process by having them informed about AP coursework, expectations, and benefits.

In addition, Amanda's plan called for an increased role for herself as a teacher leader. Amanda wrote that "[i]t is imperative that the students understand the benefits of taking at least one AP course" whether they seek to attend college or enter the work force. Because of this, Amanda decided that "[t]he administration and I will... meet with... students [identified by the social studies department] and give them a survey to... understand why they are not... enrolled in the AP courses." In this statement it is evident that Amanda planned to work closely with school-level administration. The significance of the statement is that her plan called for her and her administrators to have equal status as learners in the project. This is further evidenced by her plan to create teacher mentors for African American students. Amanda wrote, "I have met with my administration and we have designated two people to serve as official mentors for the African American students we hope to register for AP social studies classes next year." Again, it is evident that Amanda's plan positioned her to obtain an equal status through the collaborative process of identifying mentors. However, there is no evidence that the plan called for the increased in stature for Amanda to be maintained. Overall, in the plan Amanda described, she demonstrated a clear role for herself as a teacher leader.

In describing her action research plan, Amanda also discussed her protocol for interviewing students. At time she wrote the paper, teachers identified and recommended sixteen students for AP coursework. Although Amanda discussed the questions she would use in the interviews, she also discussed working with the Guidance Department. Amanda explained in her paper:

After students have completed their Individual Graduation Plan (IGP) meeting with their guidance counselor, I... [will] meet with one counselor to... see how

many of these 16 students enrolled in an AP course for the 2016-2017 school year.

This is an important strategy for Amanda's inclusion project. Whiting and Ford (2009) referred to school counselors as gatekeepers "because they frequently underrefer Black students for screening and identification" (p. 24). Therefore, Amanda is leading change at the point in the system where under-referral occurs by monitoring the progression of the students into the AP courses. However, Amanda wrote that on March 14, 2016 the guidance department ran a report on "students who had requested the three AP Social Studies courses." This report showed that "only five of the 16 students that were recommended to take AP courses actually signed up for one." However, in her District Teacher of the Year application written in June 2016, Amanda noted, "After talking with these students, I was able to get nine of them to register for either AP United States History or AP Human Geography." It can be concluded that Amanda intervened post-IGP meeting with guidance, met with students who were recommended for AP but did not enroll, and appealed to them personally to take an AP course.

In her final interview, Amanda provided examples of the personal appeal to students to take AP courses. Amanda recalled one of the students stating earlier that he did not want to do the work required in an AP course although he acknowledge being capable. The student was Anthony and Amanda encouraged him to take AP Human Geography. Amanda stated, "Then he came to me like a week before school was out and said, "Ms. Williams, I want to have you again next year. I want to take that AP class." Amanda gave the student a summer assignment. She admitted, "I honestly thought that giving him that summer assignment might push him out. But it didn't. He took it." In this

it is evident that Amanda connected with Anthony in a manner that encouraged him to take the course with her. Amanda did acknowledge concern that “Anthony was going to be the only senior in a room full of freshmen.” In addition, Amanda recalled another student, Matthew, who was also in her US History class and she “saw him grow over the year.” Amanda stated, “I said, ‘Matthew, you need to take AP Human [Geography] with Anthony.’” Anthony was in the room when Amanda pitched taking AP Human Geography to Matthew. Amanda then noted, “Anthony was, like, ‘Yeah! Yeah! Come take it with me.’” After giving Matthew the summer assignment, Amanda observed that “[h]e did it in class” following the End-of-Course exam. Thinking of Anthony and Matthew as the only seniors in a freshman course, Amanda said, “I am excited to see both of them together, to have each other to support each other in that class. With these examples, it is evident that Amanda developed strong relationships with Anthony and Matthew. It is also evident that trust her to lead them as students through Advanced Placement coursework.

**“I don’t know where it came from but it is just there.”** Through the action research process, Amanda grew as an educator. Amanda learned more about the underrepresentation of African American students nationwide and at Dayton High School, particularly when interviewing her students. In her paper, Amanda documented her findings. Amanda first asked, “What reservations do you have about taking AP classes?” She found that students “feared” they “would not accomplish the goals” they set for themselves. Second, Amanda asked, “What help would you like to have in an AP class?” Students stated that they would like to “have extra help after school with the teacher” and “learn good study skills to help them through the class.” Students also stated

they wanted “help challenging myself more” and “individualized attention.” Third, Amanda asked, “What factors have kept you from taking high level courses in the past?” Students expressed concern “that their GPA [Grade Point Average] would drop or that they were scared they might fail.” Also, several students “indicated that they had never been recommended to take one and believed that their guidance counselor did not think they were capable.” Fourth, Amanda asked, “What factors would push you into taking an AP class?” Students explained they would enroll because “it would look good on a college application and therefore help them get into college.” Some also mentioned that they wanted “higher expectations placed on them, try something harder, and to push themselves.” From this research, Amanda learned about the perspectives of African American students at Dayton High School. This research also allowed her to set and agenda for helping the students enroll in and become successful in AP social studies courses.

Based on her action research, Amanda addressed two of the concerns of her students during the timeframe of my study. In general, Amanda observed, “After interviewing these students, many of them seemed excited and willing to try an AP class the next school year.” From this, it can be concluded that the interview process itself was both a reflective process for the students and a conversation centered on encouragement through Amanda’s interest and support. However, Amanda was specific in her response to their concerns. First, Amanda mentored the students by explaining the calculation of an AP course on their GPA. To do this, Amanda used the state’s Uniform Grading Policy. Amanda demonstrated how their GPA is calculated when the AP course is weighted. Amanda explained:



[A]n 85 in an AP class is weighted the same as a 93 in a college preparatory class and a 77 in an AP class is the same as an 85 in the college preparatory class.

With this, it is evident that Amanda understands the system and process of weighting the GPA. Amanda perceived the students as understanding “that they could still maintain a high GPA, even if they did not make an A in the AP class.” With this, it is clear that Amanda directly addressed one of the significant concerns the students expressed. By demonstrating to the students with clarity and mathematical support how the AP course would not negatively affect their GPA, Amanda was able to persuade the students to take the course.

In addition to demonstrating the GPA weighting of an AP course, Amanda developed an additional aspect of the action research project for the 2016-2017 school year. Because students expressed a desire for additional help, Amanda initiated an AP support group for the students. In her paper, she described the group as a “club” that would meet “during their lunch activity period... to have extra study time, work on study skills, and encourage each other.” In this, it is evident that Amanda intends to offer specific support to the students. Amanda provided additional detail on the club concept in her application for District Teacher of the Year. In the application, she stated, “Another thing that this club can do is help these students, especially the juniors, start to look at colleges, including the admissions process, scholarships, and registering for the SAT and ACT.” In this, it is clear that Amanda perceives the club as an opportunity to counsel the students on college and career choices. In her final interview, Amanda mentioned that she framed the club idea on an article from *Rethinking Schools* titled “Blood on the Tracks: Why There Are So Few Black Students in Our Science Classes?” (Lindahl, 2015).

Specifically, Lindahl advocated for actively recruiting African American students and creating a network of support among students. Lindahl also noted that “achieving equity demands extensive experimentation with pedagogical strategies and curriculum” and department members must work together to shift instruction (p. 4).

After listening to Amanda discuss her efforts to recruit African American students into AP social studies courses, the descriptions she provided of her relationships with the students, and how she perceives the nine students taking the class as a success for the action research project, I asked felt that the students were drawn to her as much as they are drawn to the AP courses. Amanda said, “I think they are.” However, she also hesitated with the answer. She quickly noted, “Three of them I have taught. The others I have not. They don’t know me.” With this statement is evident that Amanda was attempting to understand how students she has not taught might be drawn to her as a teacher. Amanda then recalled a statement made by a student in the action research interview. Amanda said, “Madison Nelson told me that was something like, ‘We know you are real. You demand respect without being rude.’ Something like that.” With this statement, it is evident that the African American students perceive Amanda as fair and trustworthy. Amanda concluded, “I give off a little bit of democracy, I guess it is, in the classroom.” Because they can select their own seats until poor choices result in assigned seats, Amanda feels that her students have “ownership.” Amanda believes that students “know that... I will listen to them” and that “I respect their opinions.” With this, it is evident that Amanda develops strong, honest, respectful relationships with her students, regardless of race or ethnicity. When asked how she was able to develop this quality, Amanda observed, “That is just something that I have. I don’t know where it came from

but it is just there.” In this it is evident that Amanda perceived relationship building as an innate personal characteristic. However, this characteristic was critical in Amanda successfully implementing an action research project on minority inclusion as a teacher leader at Dayton High School.

**“As a Caucasian female who did take many AP courses in high school, it was difficult to understand.”** In addition to gaining deeper insight into her students, Amanda also grew as a leader because of the new perspective she developed as a result of the action research. First, the action research project that Amanda conducted on African American inclusion challenged her concept of the support network teachers create for students. Amanda noted that the interviewed “students do not want to be the only African American in the class” or they wanted “to remain in the college preparatory classes because they do not want to hurt their GPA.” Amanda struggled to understand this. Although she spoke with students about this issue, it was a fellow that provided clarity. Amanda used the book study PLC to open “a discussion on the number of African American students enrolled in upper level courses in all content areas.” One of the teachers, Nicholas, in the book study PLC “was an African American male who teaches in the English department.” According to Amanda, Nicholas explained to the largely white group that “when he was in high school... he was pushed to attend technical school instead of a four year college.” Nicholas further explained that “his guidance department did not push for him to take these upper level courses or enroll in a four year college.” This comment both aligns with Amanda’s action research findings and with Whiting and Ford’s (2009) assertion that school counselors play a central role in the process of placing students in upper-level courses. This prompted Amanda to reflect deeply on her own

perceptions of African American students and the school system. Amanda stated, “As a Caucasian female who did take many AP courses in high school, it was difficult to understand why someone would not want to take advantage of these classes.” However, after conducting the research, Amanda concluded that “preconceived stereotypes” of African American students drove teachers and school faculty to perpetuate the status quo of underrepresentation of African American students.

Possessing a deeper understanding as a result of her action research, Amanda served as a stronger teacher leader. Amanda admitted that the action research project “opened my eyes” to the problems with in her school. First, Amanda served as a leader in her department. At the onset of the action research project, Amanda “talked to the Social Studies department during a department meeting about getting more African Americans enrolled in the upper level courses.” It is evident that she has purposeful and forthright in goals for the project. The immediate result, as discussed above, was that the department provided names of students to recommend for AP social studies courses. The long-term result was a deeper dialogue of instructional expectations. Amanda pointed out that discussions focused in instruction “increases our students’ ability to learn.” With this, Amanda served as an instructional leader for her department, setting a vision for student learning. She expanded upon this statement by saying, “I think overall it will increase the rigor in the whole department. . . . It will push [teacher and students] to be better.” It is evident that Amanda understood that the students she interviewed wanted to be challenged and wanted to learn. Her goal, form these statements, is to motivate the teachers in her department to grow instructionally, reconceive their perceptions of students, and provide an academic and supportive learning environment for all students.

In addition, Amanda has challenged Michael over scheduling and expending the project. Due to the “receptive” nature of the social studies department members, while nine African American students have enrolled in AP social studies courses, the overall number of students in AP social studies courses increased. In her final interview during the period of my study, Amanda said, “I have 28 signed up for both AP Human Geography and AP US History.” This made her “happy” because so many were enrolled and “concerned” because the class sizes were large. As a result, Amanda advocated for two sections of both AP Human Geography and AP United States History. According to Amanda, Michael believed the “number[s] will drop because some of those students will have scheduling conflicts.” In this, it is evident that Michael perceives students, regardless of race, as selecting the less challenging course if a conflict arises. Amanda responded by pushing “little harder to try to get two sections for each of those courses.” However, Michael did not change his position.

In addition to scheduling, Amanda wanted to develop a stronger relationship with middle school faculty. Amanda proposed having a presentation to deliver at the middle school because recommendations for ninth grade are made by the middle school teachers and guidance counselors. It is important to note that Dayton High School is positioned across the street from its feeder school, Dayton Middle School, making for such a presentation to be logistically possible. However, Amanda stated, “Michael pretty much told me, when I first started thinking about it, he said, ‘There is nothing we can do. That is at the middle school level.’” Amanda responded to Michael by stating that he was “passing the buck” and he was complicit in putting students “into this line that they think they have to stay in.” With this, Amanda responded with a bold, yet accurate, critique of

Michael and the system for which he is responsible. As a result, a compromise was reached. Amanda noted that there will be a booth with “me and some [current] students... at freshman orientation when they are signing up for classes to let them know [taking AP courses] is an option.” It is evident in this scenario that Amanda successfully led as a change agent. While the outcome of increased enrollment over time is to be seen, the addition of an AP booth at freshmen orientation is a step toward change in the approach to guiding students to a proper placement based on ability and desire.

Although she envisioned the action research project to center on the social studies department, she decided to expand the scope once the interviews with students were complete. Amanda said that she delivered “a presentation on the data that was collected for the Social Studies department... [to] the individual departments... [to help them] identify African American students who would do well with their content AP courses.” In the presentation, she explained the “recruitment process that was done for the Social Studies AP courses.” In this, Amanda aligned with Ashmead and Blanchette’s (2013) call for teachers to purposefully recruit underrepresented students in to AP courses and design AP curriculum around their needs. In addition, Amanda’s vision for Dayton High School is similar the supportive, nurturing, and rigorous culture Bavis, Arey, and Leibforth (2015) found in studying a successful inclusion program.

However, the plan was met with resistance in other departments, particularly in the Science department. Amanda recalled, “I mentioned it the [AP] Biology and [AP] Chemistry teachers. They just seemed kind of like, ‘Meh.’” When asked why she felt the teachers responded with a dismissive tone, Amanda observed, “I think part of it might be that they are really hung up on scores.” After a pause, Amanda then stated:

I don't think they are as willing to work with kids who are going to need an extra step, an extra push, and that extra help where you might be there until 4:30 every day with them or you might not eat lunch with your friends because you are working with these kids.

With this statement, it is evident that Amanda perceived lack of commitment to helping underserved student as a problem. Also, it is evident that Amanda understood a solution to the problem of underrepresentation is transforming the mindset of teachers to directly address student needs. Amanda noted, "If you are not willing to help all the kids, everyone, go home." In this, it clear that Amanda possessed a deep commitment to increasing African American participation in AP courses at Dayton High School. It is also evident from the statement that she felt frustrated with the attitude of her colleagues teaching AP courses. This, however, served to embolden her to prove the science teachers incorrect about the students. Amanda, concluded, "I think I am going to have to have success in the Social Studies Department before they will latch onto it." With this statement, it is evident that Amanda understood that she may have reached too far too soon. It is also evident she understood that changing the recommendation system at Dayton High School may occur in increments. It is also evident that she understood that leading through success increases the probability for spreading the change she desires.

### **"At Some Point In My Life, I Want to Move Up"**

In concluding the process of my study, a theme related to the validation and the future emerged. First, Amanda was named as the Dayton High School Teacher of the Year in April 2016. As a result, she vied for the Jackson District Teacher of the Year. In a text message to me in August 2016, Amanda revealed she was named District Teacher of

the Year. This process proved validating for Amanda. In addition, Amanda discussed her vision for the social studies department at Dayton High School. The vision that Amanda described conformed to theories of teacher leadership and transformative leadership. In addition, she envisioned herself serving as more of an instructional leader for the members of the department. Finally, Amanda acknowledged that, while she currently remains loyal to Dayton High School and Jackson County, she continues to see herself working in Fairview One at Arlington High School.

**“I am proud of it. I don’t think it defines me.”** Toward the end of the period of my study in the spring of 2016, Amanda was named Dayton High School’s 2016-2017 Teacher of the Year. In her final journal entry dated April 24, 2016, Amanda wrote, “I was named Teacher of the Year back on April 14!” In the journal she expressed being torn over receiving the recognition. Amanda wrote, “I thought at the time that I would be going to another school, and was happy, yet sad that I won.” With this, it is evident that the initial joyous emotion over being named Teacher of the Year was muted by the letdown of not obtaining a position at Arlington High School. This changed after discovering that Arlington high School did not open up a teaching position. Amanda noted that she wanted to represent Dayton High School and “go for district teacher of the year.” In this, she understood that “I couldn’t do that if I left.” Thus, in her journal she demonstrated loyalty and appreciation to Dayton High School despite seeking employment at Arlington High School earlier in the spring.

During our final interview for the period of the study, Amanda and I discussed her being named Dayton High School’s Teacher for the Year. When I first asked her about the recognition, she determined it was important to contextualize the award. Amanda



explained, “Let me say that I never wanted to be Teacher of the Year because I never wanted to do the extra work. But I would love to have had Teacher of the Month.” In this, it is evident that Amanda did not actively seek the Teacher of the Year, but did appreciate acknowledgement of doing a good by being a Teacher of the Month. Amanda further explained that “Teachers of the Month are automatically on the ballot for Teacher of the Year” at Dayton High School. Therefore, the process that the school uses to select its Teacher of the Year is to create a ballot consisting of the various Teachers of the Month for the school year, who are also selected by the faculty each month.

Amanda then provided a narrative of how she came to be recognized as Teacher of the Month in November 2015. She began by stating, “Let’s go back to the beginning of the year on this one.” During the first two days of the school year, “Joshua was out doing his American Legion stuff” for the World Series. Amanda stated, “So yours truly made all of his copies, got everything together for him, taught his classes during my planning the first two days.” In this, it is evident that Amanda viewed herself as stepping to help out both her friend and department member. However, Joshua, who coached the local American Legion baseball team to a World Series championship, was recognized as the August Teacher of the Month. Amanda said, “I was, like, ‘You’ve got to be kidding me.’” It is evident that Amanda was dismayed by Joshua receiving the recognition when she stepped in to cover his responsibilities while he was coaching. In fact, Amanda noted, “So, I lose to the coach.” This statement is significant because it was the first and only instance that Amanda categorized Joshua as a coach and not a teacher struggling with coaching responsibilities. In September, Mr. Parker, a veteran Spanish teacher at the school, was named the Teacher of the Month. Amanda, however, recognized Ms. Parker

a “pretty legit.” Amanda noted, “I lost to Parker. That is fine.” In this, it is evident that Amanda viewed Mr. Parker as worthy of the recognition and viewed Mr. Parker with respect.

The October Teacher of the Month proved to be, according to Amanda, surprising for the entire faculty. Amanda stated, “The next month was Michael Brown.” In the interview, I asked, “How did the principal win Teacher of the Month?” To this, Amanda replied in a flabbergasted tone, “I don’t know!” Amanda explained, “I saw [Michael] on the list of those nominated and was, like, ‘You’ve got to be kidding me. He is not a teacher.’” Amanda “voted for somebody else” but Michael became the October Teacher of the Month. Amanda recalled, “We were all floored. I have no idea how that happened.” It is evident from this statement that Amanda and the teachers she associated with could not understand how the principal could be recognized as the Teacher of the Month. It is also evident that Amanda perceived the Teacher of the Month award as an opportunity for classroom teachers to be recognized for their contributions to students and the school.

Amanda then explained that the rumor mill described the election of Michael as Teacher of the Month as “a blowout.” Whether the rumor was true or not, Amanda felt frustrated. She noted that she felt the proper protocol for a principal in the position is to “decline it and give it to the next person.” In addition, Amanda noted that Michael’s “picture [holding the certificate] is... one of the pictures scrolling on the website.” Perceiving Michael as basking in the recognition of being Teacher of the Month and not turning attention to teacher, Amanda’s frustration mounted. In addition, Amanda received herself as a hard-working, dedicated, innovative teacher who was not receiving any

recognition. Amanda stated, “So, I was, like, ‘Seriously?’ I lose the principal. This is crap.” In this situation, it is evident that Amanda felt that the Teacher of the Month awards were going to people – Joshua and Michael – who did not align to her vision of who should receive the awards.

In November 2015, Amanda was named by her peers as the Teacher of the Month. Amanda recalled, “I got it for November. That was cool. That is all I expected.” In this, it is evident that the frustration subsided. She noted, that “It is nice to get the recognition that what you do it noticed.” In this, it is evident that Amanda did not feel appreciated beforehand. It is also evident that the a system of recognizing teachers beyond the Teacher of the Month award exists at Dayton High School. When the ballot for Teacher of the Year went out, Amanda “voted for somebody else” and “kind of forgot about it.” In this, it is clear that Amanda did not want to be Teacher of the Year; she only wanted to have a small toke of acknowledgement for her contributions to the school and students. Several days later, Ashley Jones asked Amanda to come see her during lunch. Because she had planning before lunch, Amanda went to Ashley’s office early. Ashley “looked surprised” and told Amanda, ““It needs to wait until lunch.”” Amanda saw “she had two dozen roses” behind her desk and “started to put two and two together.” Amanda returned to her classroom, called her husband, and said, ““I think I am about to get Teacher of the Year.”” She returned to the office at lunch, but described the disorganization of announcing her as the Teacher of the Year as a “debacle.” Amanda recalled, “At that point, I totally knew what was happening. I had to play it cool.”

Amanda described the announcement:

Michael was, like, ‘I am proud to announce your new Teacher of the Year.’ He gave me the roses and I just smiled. I went back [to my classroom] and said to the students [who were waiting for tutoring], ‘OK, let’s go study.’

In this, it appears that Amanda did not perceive the moment as special or significant. Juxtaposed to her excitement and fulfillment regarding the Teacher of the Month, her description of receiving the Teacher of the Year award was subdued.

As we discussed the award, Amanda admitted to having mixed feelings about receiving the award. Amanda recalled, “I was happy but I was conflicted with it.” Amanda explained, “I had heard at that point that Ms. Walker from Arlington contacted Michael about hiring me. . . . [and] I thought I was going to go to Arlington.” Because she believed that she would soon be hired at Arlington High School, Amanda admitted, “I didn’t really want it. I wanted somebody to have it.” In this, it is evident that Amanda understands the Teacher of the Year award as recognition for those who are loyal to the school and have no plans to soon leave the school. It is also evident that Amanda perceived herself as potentially unworthy of receiving the award because of her intent to leave.

However Amanda’s mother, a former teacher in the district was excited and proud. Amanda recalled, “I called Mom and she was crying. So then I started crying.” In speaking with her mother she reflected on being a representative of Dayton High School as the Teacher of the Year. Amanda said, “[T]he more I thought about it, I was like, ‘This kind of sucks.’” However, Amanda explained that “a day or two later I found out I was not going to go to Arlington.” In this, it is evident that Amanda viewed the Teacher of the Year award as an honor, but also understood the level of responsibility it brings by

representing her peers. In addition, Amanda perceived the recognition as a testament of her role as a teacher leader. She explained that “people realize that I work hard” in and out of the classroom. However, Amanda remained humble and appreciative of the recognition. Amanda noted, “I don’t go around proclaiming it. It is something that I got. I am proud of it. I don’t think it defines me.” In this, Amanda recognized the Teacher of the Year award is an outcome of consistent student-centered work, but was not her goal. To that end, the consistent student-centered work defines her as a teacher and teacher leader.

**“I want us to be more close-knit.”** During the course of my study, Amanda wrote about and discussed the current state of the social studies department at Dayton High School and her vision for its future. First, Amanda described the social studies department as “disconnected.” When asked to explain why she perceived the department with a word that denotes incoherence, detachment, and division, Amanda said, “We are a changing group that knows we need to work together but doesn't take the time to do it.” In this it is evident that Amanda viewed the social studies department in May 2016 as evolving due to new members being hired and historically separated as individual teachers loosely group under the department banner. To make this point, Amanda observed she, Sarah, and Joshua “just never see” James, David, and Stephanie. Amanda noted, “Before Stephanie passed away, it was Stephanie and David downstairs. But she was better friends with the science teachers, the other females downstairs.” In this, it is evident that Stephanie and David were separated by gender and interests from each other downstairs while they were also separated from the rest of the department upstairs. As to James, Amanda described him as “not a social person” who “sticks to himself” and “eats

lunch in his room.” In addition, James is “on the farthest end from us” and “does not fit in with anybody really.” While James is on the same floor as Amanda, Sarah, and Joshua, Amanda perceived as distant, in terms of both geography and personality. At the same time, she perceives James has having little in common with her, Sarah, and Joshua.

Amanda openly noted that she, Sarah, and Joshua were close, while the other members of the 2015-2016 social studies department were not. She acknowledged the three were bound by age, common philosophies, and geography. With Amanda and Joshua in their early thirties and Sarah in her mid-twenties, the three were similar in age. Also, Amanda noted that their classrooms were lined up “1-2-3... together” in a row. Most important, the three possessed a common “philosophy as far as teaching.” Amanda stated that their basic philosophy was “[m]ake it interesting, try to stay positive, [be] very interested in what we are teaching.” In this, it is evident that that they were drawn together by common ideas of teaching, their proximity to one another, and their ages. In addition, Amanda mentioned that “Joshua and I taught US History. Joshua and Sarah taught Government and Econ. So, Joshua was [also] kind of the other mentor for Sarah.” In this, it is evident that the overlapping courses that the three taught created an opportunity to discuss curriculum and help each other. Furthermore, she, Joshua, and Sarah were “together a lot” and often “went to lunch” on professional development days. In this, it is evident that the three develop personal connections that allowed for a stronger sense of collegiality. While Amanda perceived the department as being “disconnected,” it is evident that a pocket within the department – consisting of Amanda, Sarah, and Joshua – was united.

Although this division existed at the end of my study, Amanda recognized that it could not continue. In her journal, Amanda noted that Michael constructed the master schedule to allow for departments to have common planning periods. As Amanda explained, “[A]ll department[s]... have at least one common planning time to hold department meetings.” Therefore, Michael is working to ensure that departments have time to meet and collaborate. Amanda also wrote, “I really like that, since the Social Studies department has so many coaches, we will be able to meet as a full department.” In this, it is evident that Amanda perceived athletic coaching responsibilities as affected after schools department meeting attendance. Having a common department planning period “is something I might be able to work with” to create a more collegial environment.

Likewise, Amanda envisioned “getting together as a department and doing things outside of school and getting to really know each other so we can work better together.” Amanda views this as critical to the department’s future. As she observed, “It is one of those things in the department that if I don’t like you, I won’t work with you and just my own thing.” This statement is significant because it demonstrates that Amanda recognized a damaging mentality for department cohesion. It is also significant because it demonstrates that Amanda recognized her own attitude toward some teachers in the department, such as James. In addition, Amanda noted that, aside from she and David as veteran teachers, “I’m going to have a fourth year, a second year, and two first years.” Therefore, Amanda perceived building trust, collaboration, and congeniality in the social studies department as important due to the overall inexperience of the teachers. It is clear,

then, that Amanda perceived building relationships in department as key to correct long-standing divides and supporting the newer teachers.

In addition to discussing the state of the social studies department, Amanda also reflected on her role as department chair. She was named department chair in May 2014. Amanda admitted that she was “nervous” about taking the role “because there were people here longer.” It is evident from this statement that Amanda perceived the department chair position attached to longevity in the school. It is also clear that, by selecting Amanda, Michael countered Lortie’s (1975) conclusion that moving up in the school hierarchy was based on seniority. When asked how the department initially responded, Amanda said, “[T]hey were, ‘OK, what do we need to do?’” In this, it is evident that the department members accepted Amanda being department chair. It is also evident that the department members accepted Michael’s decision to make Amanda department chair.

However, when asked why she thinks the department responded positively to her being named department chair, Amanda offered a different angle. Amanda stated, “I think they saw that I knew what I was doing and knew how to step up and take a role.” In this, it is clear that she perceived the department’s positive response to her being named department chair as a result of the leadership qualities she demonstrated during her two years at Dayton High School. She extended this explanation by observing that “of the six of us, three coach” sports. Looking at the makeup of the department during the last three years, Joshua, Stephanie, Andrew, and David coached in 2014-2015 and Joshua, Stephanie, and David coached in 2015-2016. Amanda continued by stating, “I was here all the time with the kids. They knew I was invested and cared.” In this, it is evident that



Amanda connected coaching athletics to not having time to invest helping students academically. Turning this analysis around, it meant that Amanda perceived spending time after school tutoring students as a demonstration of caring and investment in student success and athletic coaches having difficulty doing considering the after school schedule related to athletic practices and games. It is clear that Amanda viewed her status as an academic-only teacher department as a qualification for being department chair and for earning the respect of the social studies teachers in the department.

As the social studies department chair at Dayton High School, Amanda approached the position with a sense of egalitarianism. At the same time she learned that time is needed to develop in a leadership position, especially given the turnover in personnel in recent years. Amanda said that she does not want to use being department chair “to my advantage much.” She stated, “I don’t want to be that person that I didn’t like at Manchester that gets everything. I want to share the wealth.” In this, it is evident that Amanda viewed her position as developing the teacher in the social studies department. She explained that Michael often asked her to attend conferences or workshops. Amanda typically declined and suggested others in the department to attend. Amanda justified this decision by stating, “I don’t want to miss that much class time.” In this, it is evident that Amanda perceived instructional time with students as critical in their success. However, she also noted, “If you are going to develop leadership, you need to let other people do it. There should not be just one teacher leader in each department.” It is clear in this statement that Amanda perceived her role as department chair as developing leadership throughout the department through developing the instructional competence of the teachers.

Amanda also viewed her department chair role as solidifying as the department evolves due to turnover in personnel. Amanda noted, “David is very much, ‘What are we doing? Where do I need to be?’ He does look to me for what is going to happen.” It is evident that David, who retired United States Marine Corps, viewed Amanda as the leader of the department. Amanda observed, “When [David] came in, I was department head.” Consequently, it is apparent that Amanda viewed the ease of leading David and David being led by her as based on the pre-existing notion that she was the leader. Reflecting on the 2016-2017 social studies department consisting of David, Sarah, Robert, and Justin. Amanda observed that “all I have ever been is department head” to these teachers. As a result, four of the five other teachers in the department entered with the understanding that Amanda was the department chair. For Amanda, this means she will “have a little bit more validation as department head.” Therefore, in addition to her investment in students and capability to lead, Amanda also observed credibility deriving from existing perception of her as the formal leader of the department.

However, James remained the outlier in concept of the department. Amanda noted, “James will be the only one that was a teacher with me before I became department head.” Amanda explained that James continued to discuss issues with Michael first, an action that Amanda perceived as going over her head. Amanda described a typical conversation as James “will come to me with things” that he thinks she is unaware of. This typically prompted Amanda to tell him, “I know that already. I am department head.” In this, it is evident that Amanda perceived the need to exert power over James or to demonstrate that she has a form of authority. Amanda confessed, “[S]ometimes I feel that he is talking down to me.” As a result, Amanda perceived James

as not respecting her role as department chair. However, Amanda did not believe that James “does that on purpose.” She noted, “I think that is who he is.” In this, it is evident that Amanda continued to view James “cocky” and lacking people skills. It is also evident that, although Amanda conceptualized the department as having shared leadership, she also conceptualized the department as viewing her as the central authority within the department.

In addition, Amanda asserted an understanding that the role of the department chair is to be an instructional leader. To this, Amanda acknowledged that working on a Masters in Curriculum with a teacher leadership strand, “has definitely changed me” in that she reflected on “my own teaching” more. She learned through the program that “administrators don’t necessarily know how to be [instructional] coaches.” Amanda noted, “I took a... class on [instructional] coaching and mentoring, how to do that effectively.” While serving as Sarah induction year mentor this year, Amanda applied what she learned from the course to “building” Sarah up as a teacher. Amanda explained that she is “unconsciously competent at... teaching” and that the degree program “has made me think... [and] work more on being consciously competent.” Amanda viewed this as important because being consciously competent enables her to effectively explain pedagogy “for the teachers that I am working with.” In this, Amanda referenced the Conscious Competence model (Robinson, 1974). Recognizing that she is unconsciously competent, Amanda meant that she operated based on routine. Desiring to be consciously competent, Amanda indicated a desire to explain with depth their own skills, knowledge, understanding.

As an instructional leader in the social studies department, Amanda conceptualizes the department as highly collaborative. Noting that the department will have a common planning period in 2016-2017, Amanda stated, “I want to try to meet twice a month as a department. Not for the whole planning, but for 30 minutes, 45 minutes.” She expressed a desire to “get some more continuity going on in the department.” Amanda identified the lack of collaboration on curriculum development as undesirable. She also identified the lack of time as contributing to the lack of collaboration. She noted that “James and David both taught World History” but did not share lessons or materials. In addition, she explained that Sarah and Joshua “weren’t doing the same thing” in the Government and Economics courses. However, Amanda explained that “Joshua just didn’t have time to work with Sarah because of all of his coaching stuff” and that Joshua used a common planning the two shared “to go get things ready for baseball.” Likewise, although Stephanie and Sarah taught World Geography, Sarah, who has Bachelor of Arts in Geography, “hated the PowerPoints that Stephanie used.” These examples further illustrate “disconnected” perception that Amanda had of the department. It is evident that Amanda perceives department unity and instructional alignment as important to curriculum development and improved practice among the teachers in the department.

To help facilitate department unity and curricular alignment, Amanda decided to include a book study as part of the social studies department protocols and goals in 2016-2017. Amanda stated, “We were going to do a book study next year as a department on data drive differentiation.” Amanda selected the book because it has “good ideas on differentiation” for “newer teachers” who need “strategies.” Amanda purposefully

selected the book given that inexperience of the department. She wrote in a follow-up email, “Of the 6 of us, there will be 1 PACE teacher, 1 first year, 1 second year, 1 fourth year, and then me and David with a little bit more.” In this, it is evident that Amanda viewed the book study as an avenue for discussing instructional methods and approaches. It is also evident that she perceived her role as department chair as helping members of the department grow their instructional repertoire and hone their teaching philosophy. In this, Amanda is serving as an instructional leader by seeking to be a change agent in the area of curriculum, instruction, and assessment (Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005).

**“The last move that I have in my head right now is to Arlington High School.”** Although Amanda articulated a vision for the social studies department at Dayton High School and admitted loyalty resulting from the Teacher of the Year award, she continued to set her sights on finding a job closer to home. Amanda noted, “I was upset that I didn’t go to Arlington. . . . But, that’s the way it worked out.” She stated that Michael’s speech about determining her future goals and leadership in Jackson County resonated with her. However, she said, “I thought about what [Michael] had said. . . . [But] I don’t know what I want to do.” At the end of my study, Amanda seemed content and challenged at Dayton High School. She acknowledged that she has “an opportunity now for this” and that she is “perfectly happy with that.” In this, it is evident that the leadership opportunity as department chair and the validation that has come through teachers participating in the book study PLC, the results of the action research, and being named Teacher of the Year allowed Amanda to appreciate working at Dayton High School.

However, Amanda expressed a desire to work in Fairview One. Amanda stated that “there is talk [in the community] of a new high school opening up on [Highway] 378” near Lake Bristol. She noted that Fairview One is “already building a middle school out that way.” Most important, she explained, “We would be zoned for that high school.” With this, it is clear that Amanda’s decision to continue looking for positions in Fairview One is based on family needs and responsibilities. The statement indicates that she wants to teach in her community. However, she acknowledges that the school opening is “probably five or ten years down the road.” Yet, Amanda also perceived working in a larger district as an upward career move. Amanda voiced a desire to have “some type of leadership role at that school” when she makes a career move. While acknowledging the unlikelihood being hired in as “department head anytime soon,” Amanda envisioned herself as “a leader with curriculum” at the next school. It is clear that Amanda perceived herself as a teacher leader at the end of my study.

However, Amanda voiced a desire to move beyond the classroom as a district curriculum coordinator. Her desire to be a good mother outweighed those desires. Amanda noted that she “got into education” because she enjoyed having “my mom home with me in the summer” and she “wanted that for my family.” Because a coordinator position would require her to “work through the summer,” Amanda stated, “I wouldn’t take a curriculum job right now because that defeats the purpose” of being home with her sons. While waiting move out of the classroom, Amanda concluded, “At some point in my life, I want to move up.” In this, it is evident that Amanda desires to move up the organizational hierarchy. Although she defined a teacher leader as a “teacher who is not leaving the classroom,” it is evident that Amanda believed that leading from the

classroom is limited as she desires to formal leadership role in the realm of administration.

Table 4.1: Reference Guide for People Referenced in the Data

Name	Gender	Position	Location	Classes Taught*	Extra-Curricular*
Jessica Smith**	Female	Teacher / District Lead Teacher	Fairview High School	AP United States History	
Wanda Turner	Female	Department Chair (Former)	Fairview High School	AP United States History	
Cindy Evans		Principal	Fairview High School		
Paul Murphy	Male	Blended Learning & Technology Coordinator	Fairview One		
Kimberly Walker	Female	Principal	Arlington High School		
Tim Smith	Male	Jessica's Husband			
Joan Alexander	Female	Jessica's Former Teacher	Fairview High School	AP US History	
Amanda Williams**	Female	Teacher / Department Chair	Dayton High School	United States History (AP and CP), AP Human Geography	History Club
Michael Brown	Male	Principal	Dayton High School	Social Studies (US History, Civics)	Football Coach
Eric Robinson	Male	Assistant Principal for Discipline	Dayton High School	Physical Education	Basketball Coach
Ashley Jones	Female	Assistant Principal for Instruction	Dayton High School	Special Education	Beta Club
Nicole Martin	Female	Assistant	Dayton High School		



Name	Gender	Position	Location	Classes Taught*	Extra-Curricular*
		Principal for Instruction (Former)			
Joshua Miller	Male	Teacher	Dayton High School	US History, Economics, Government	Head Baseball Coach, Asst. Football Coach,
Sarah Davis	Female	Teacher	Dayton High School	World Geography, Government, Economics	
James Anderson	Male	Teacher	Dayton High School	Law Education, Psychology, Current Issues, World History	Academic Challenge Team
Stephanie Taylor	Female	Teacher	Dayton High School	World Geography, AP European History	Assistant softball coach
Davis Wilson	Male	Teacher	Dayton High School	World History	Head Cross Country Coach
Robert White	Male	Teacher / New Hire / Former Student	Dayton High School		
Justin Jackson	Male	Teacher / New Hire	Dayton High School		
Andrew Thompson	Male	Teacher (Former)	Dayton High School	United States History	
Tiffany Harris	Female	Teacher (Former) / Department Chair (Former)	Dayton High School	United States History	
Benjamin Edwards	Male	Teacher (Former) /	Dayton High School	United States History	

Name	Gender	Position	Location	Classes Taught*	Extra-Curricular*
		Department Chair (Former)			
Monica Stewart	Female	Long-Term Substitute	Dayton High School		
Nicholas Clark	Male	Teacher	Dayton High School	English	
Lauren	Female	Job Applicant	Dayton High School	Social Studies	
Christopher	Male	Job Applicant	Dayton High School	Social Studies	
Mr. Parker	Male	Teacher	Dayton High School	Spanish	
Jonathan Lewis	Male	Director Single Gender	Oxford Middle School	Grade 6 Social Studies	
Kevin Scott	Male	Teacher	Burlington Middle School	Grade 7 Social Studies	
Adam King	Male	Teacher	Burlington Middle School	Grade 7 Social Studies	
Rebecca Wright	Female	Teacher	Burlington Middle School	Grade 7 Social Studies	
Brian Williams	Male	Amanda's Husband			
Coach Cannon	Male	Amanda's Former Teacher	Jackson High School	High School Social Studies	
Jacob	Male	Student	Manchester Middle School		
William	Male	Student	Dayton High School		
Anthony	Male	Student	Dayton High School		
Mathew	Male	Student	Dayton High School		
Madison Nelson	Female	Student	Dayton High School		

\* Denotes former teaching and extra-curricular activities if an administrator.

\*\* Denotes participants

Table 4.2: Data from 2015 test administrations for Fairview One schools. Data culled from the state department of education website.

Institution / Entity	State End-of-Course Exam for US History Pass Rate	ACT Mean Composite Score	SAT Mean Composite Score	Total Advanced Placement Exams Pass Rate
Fairview HS	92.6%	23.8	1592	88%
Nation	N/A	20.0	1490	58%
State	69.1%	20.2	1442	57%
Fairview One	83.6%	22.2	1520	73%
Winchester HS	86.3%	23.3	1582	70%
Georgetown HS	78.8%	20.6	1415	64%
Arlington HS	78.2%	20.9	1434	52%
Madison HS	75.5%	19.5	1430	74%

Table 4.3: Pass Rates Comparison from 2009 to 2015 between Fairview High School, Fairview One, and the state on the United States History End-of-Course Examination. Data culled from state department of education website.

	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
Fairview HS	74.5%	72.4%	76.1%	77.6%	85.2%	88.0%	92.6%
Fairview One	60.1%	64.5%	66.1%	67.2%	75.9%	78.2%	83.6%
State	42.4%	46.3%	49.3%	52.3%	60.6%	65.4%	69.1%

Table 4.4: Data from 2015 test administrations for Jackson County schools. Data culled from the state department of education website.

Institution / Entity	State End-of-Course Exam for US History Pass Rate	ACT Mean Composite Score	SAT Mean Composite Score	Total Advanced Placement Exams Pass Rate
Dayton HS	67.3	19.3	1425	46%
Nation	N/A	20.0	1490	58%
State	69.1%	20.2	1442	57%
Jackson County	55.8%	20.1	1349	37%
Jackson HS	41.3%	20.7	1281	00%
Milford HS	62.9%	19	1268	N/A

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION

The purpose of grounded theory is to generate theory based on the systematic analysis of data (Glasser & Strauss, 1967). This was important because of the gap in the literature on social studies teacher leadership. Research exists on teacher leaders in English (Muncey-Silva & Munoz, 2012; Robbins & Zirinsky, 1996), mathematics (Yow, 2007; Yow, 2010), and science (Lotter, Yow, & Peters, 2014; Siskin, 1991; Tushie, 2008) because those are tested subjected areas with measurable student performance outcomes (Campbell, Melville, & Bartley, 2012; Melville & Wallace, 2007). The research on teacher leaders in social studies center on pre-service teachers (Gandy, Pierce, and Smith, 2009), department collaboration (Eargle, 2013; Rouse, 2007), and department chairs as instructional leaders (Eargle, 2014).

The significance of my study is that it represents an initial study on intersection of social studies teacher leadership, gender roles and leadership styles, and the role high school department chairs. This study also is significant as it further demonstrates how leadership with schools is changing, yet the system is not changing at a pace to properly accommodate the work of department chairs. It also demonstrates the power of conformity in masculine hierarchies (Ferguson, 1984). The findings of my study illustrate how female teacher leaders in social studies develop an understanding of leadership based on their context. Additionally, the study demonstrates the importance of context in shaping the leadership experience of teacher leaders in social studies. Finally, my study

indicates, that female social studies department chairs switch between communal and agentic leadership characteristics (Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000) depending on the level of the school's hierarchy with which they work.

### **Defining (Teacher) Leadership**

The first sub-question that I asked focused on how female teacher leaders serving a department chairs define the concept of leadership. In defining teacher leadership and recounting their leadership styles, Jessica and Amanda differed in their conceptualization of leadership. Jessica's concept of and approach to leadership appeared to be largely business-oriented and masculine in nature. In contrast, Amanda's concept of and approach to leadership appeared to be an amalgamation of feminine and masculine leadership types. In both cases, the participants ground their understanding of leadership in an understanding of their local context.

#### **Jessica Smith: Alignment to Masculine Leadership**

While discussing the concepts of leadership and teacher leadership with Jessica, she concentrated on working her way up the hierarchy, her use of business leadership concepts, and how she manages teachers. First, Jessica cited her father, an attorney, as a significant influence in how she approached intentionally moving through the ranks of the hierarchy. Jessica joined district-level benchmark and curricular committees, but claimed that she did not join the committees seeking attention. However, she grew up with her father's "mantra" of the "five P's: Prior Planning Prevents Poor Performance" that serves people in advancing their careers. As Jessica noted, her father advised her to "show up prepared and... perform well and that gets you more attention." Considering the hierarchy as a masculine structure (Ferguson, 1984), this is significant. Ferguson

noted that women must adopt the masculine skills valued by the bureaucratic system to advance up the hierarchy. Therefore, Jessica's father instilled in her a mindset to advance in a masculine system.

Developing the characteristic of preparedness is practical for many occupations; developing a reputation of preparedness in the masculine bureaucratic hierarchy is necessary for advancement. Jessica stated, "I am not going to show up for that committee and not know anything." While she was being practical, she was also playing the masculine game of moving up the masculine bureaucratic hierarchy (Ferguson, 1984). Preparedness as a prerequisite for decision-making aligns with literature on masculine leadership styles. For example, Eagly and Wood (1982) noted that people in leadership roles are expected to exert influence over others. Also, Eagly, Wood, and Diekman (2000) observed that decisiveness is an agentic, transactional leadership style ascribed to masculine leaders who are tasked with determining solutions to problems and possessing the ability to speak with authority. Thus, the preparedness that Jessica exhibited in curricular and benchmark meetings that garnered attention from district-level leaders aligned with perceptions for influencing others (Eagly & Wood, 1982) and using deep knowledge to speak with authority to make high-profile decisions (Eagly, Wood, Diekman, 2000).

In addition to her father's influence regarding preparedness as a means of moving up the organizational hierarchy, Jessica demonstrated a business-oriented approach to leadership and teacher leadership. Jessica based her understanding of leadership on reading *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team: A Leadership Fable* by Patrick Lencioni (2002), a business management consultant and president of The Table Group. Lencioni

defined five dysfunctions organizations experience and how leaders can overcome those dysfunctions. The five dysfunctions were: *Absence of Trust*, *Fear of Conflict*, *Lack of Commitment*, *Avoidance of Accountability*, and *Inattention to Results*. In our interview, Jessica demonstrated the influence of Lencioni's work in her actions. First, Jessica aligned with Lencioni's advice for business leaders to build trust among followers. To this objective, Jessica relied on a pre-existing relationships with Fairview One's sixty-five social studies teachers as a means of establishing initial trust. However, she purposefully spoke on the behalf of teachers as a representative for teachers during district meetings. Confronting district leaders in an organizational position higher than the Lead Teacher position she held, Jessica stated, "I don't mind saying that hard, "Well, they are going to hate it' or 'You can't put anything else on their plates right now.'" Jessica perceived this action as establishing "a little bit of trust between me and the teachers I represent" and, consequently, adhering to Lencioni's (2002) call for leaders to eliminate the dysfunction of *Absence of Trust*. However, the confrontational aspect of directly telling superiors the "hard" truths about proposed policies aligns with the transactional, agentic leadership style of the masculine leader (Eagly, Wood, & Diekmann, 2000).

In addition to addressing Lencioni's (2002) *Absence of Trust*, Jessica also exhibited an alignment to *Avoidance of Accountability* and *Inattention to Results*. For purposes of my study, these two dysfunctions merge together. Jessica worked in a district focused on standardized test results. This is evident in Dr. Evans' statement that Jessica could come and go from campus "[a]s long as your AP scores are where they need to be" and in Jessica's observation that Fairview High School is a "finely oiled machine



that was able to crank out grads and [test] scores.” It is also evident in school and district standardized test results (see Table 4.2 and Table 4.3) and the ensuing competition among district schools for top scores. Jessica first emerged as a leader in her district because her students’ performance on standardized tests. She acknowledged that this gave her “a little street cred with folks in higher up positions.” Opportunities to serve on benchmark exam and curricular committees followed. As the Lead Teacher, Jessica, noted, “Instead of serving on a committee for a good leader, I was suddenly leading the committee.”

As Lead Teacher, Jessica’s role included leading benchmark exam development and raising test scores. This meant she adopted, and agreed with, a *pacesetting* leadership style (Goleman, 2000), which are focused on “performance standards” (p. 86). Given the focus on standardization, testing, and meeting goals for results, the system in which Jessica worked was grounded in overcoming the dysfunctions of *Avoidance of Accountability* and *Inattention to Results* (Lencioni, 2002). Yet the standardization of testing and student outcomes in the district represented the long-standing focus of efficiency within the bureaucratic hierarchy (Michels, 1911; Weinstein, 1979). Jessica demonstrated fidelity to district’s focus on standardized testing, noting that creating benchmark exams was “something that is meaningful.” By demonstrating adherence to district-wide benchmarking and standardization, Jessica demonstrated adherence to the masculine nature of the bureaucracy (Ferguson, 1984). Thus, Jessica’s understanding of leadership in schools included a focus on standardized test results. Yet this was also a product of her district’s emphasis on standardized tests.

In addition to addressing Lencioni's (2002) *Avoidance of Accountability* and *Inattention to Results*, Jessica also exhibited an alignment to *Lack of Commitment* by establishing a business-oriented leadership style of "clarity and buy-in" (p.207). Jessica believed that the hybrid position of Lead Teacher, in which she worked part time in the classroom and part time at the district office, allowed her to "I am right along with you" to teachers in the district as a means of getting teachers "to buy in to me." To accomplish buy in for instructional change, Jessica first utilized a methodology in her own class and discussed with teachers the relative effectiveness in her classroom. However, she followed up by presenting research on the methodology. By presenting herself as one of the teachers to create buy-in, Jessica aligned with the communal attributes of female leaders by being sensitive teacher needs and concerns over change (Eagly, Wood, Diekman, 2002). However, Jessica's couched her leadership beliefs in masculine concepts by relying on Lencioni (2002). It is important to recognize in this that Ferguson (1984) noted that how-to books for business leaders instruct readers how to "play the game" of the masculine bureaucracy (p. 192).

Finally, Jessica described herself as a manager within the system. During the time of my study, Jessica was a graduate student in the Educational Leadership program at the state's flagship university. When defining teacher leadership, Jessica carefully used the phrase, "Modeling behaviors with gentle pressure steadily applied that will produce change." The application of pressure implies that she possesses power over other teachers. The phrasing aligns with Goleman's (2000) concept of the *coercive* leader who uses top-down power to lead. Additionally, Goleman (1998b) noted that effective leaders get results through motivation of workers, not dispensing orders of workers. Because

Jessica modeled herself after school-level and district-level leaders who she “admired” for “their leadership style” it is evident that Fairview One functions as hierarchical system and her leadership style and definition aligns with the masculine concept. This is evidenced in the exchange Jessica had with the teacher using the Bell Curve. By bluntly pointing out the disconnect between the teacher’s philosophy and practice, Jessica utilized direct confrontation to address the problem. This embodied the governance, aggression, and confidence characteristics that aligned to masculine leadership (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003; Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000). Thus, in the single interview that was conducted with Jessica, she relayed a definition of leadership and teacher leadership through her stated philosophy and stated actions that were predominantly masculine in nature.

### **Amanda Williams: Balancing Masculine and Feminine Leadership Styles**

While discussing the concepts of leadership and teacher leadership with Amanda, she concentrated on leadership styles, relationships with other teachers, and interactions with men in the school. At the time of my study Amanda was in the process of earning a master’s degree in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Cincinnati’s online program. Amanda noted she “completed the Teacher Leader certificate for this program” and that Ohio has “an add-on certification” to distinguish teacher leaders. According to the program of study for the Curriculum and Instruction degree, the Teacher Leader option requires twelve credit hours of graduate work, which includes two teacher leader practicum experiences (University of Cincinnati, 2016). Also, According to Ohio’s educator licensing requirements (Ohio Department of Education, 2016), teachers can obtain a Lead Professional Educator License with a master’s degree and nine years of

experience. Also, teachers must achieve National Board Certification or complete an Ohio Master Teacher Portfolio through their district and earn the Teacher Leader Endorsement through an accredited institution to receive the Lead Professional Educator License. Therefore, the education that Amanda received in completing the teacher leadership strand of her Curriculum and Instruction degree at the University of Cincinnati was grounded in a state-wide effort to develop and license teacher leaders. This program affected Amanda's conceptualizing of both leadership and teacher leadership.

In defining leadership and teacher leadership, Amanda drew upon her coursework for the teacher leadership program. In particular, Amanda noted the work of psychologist Daniel Goleman. Goleman (1995) popularized the theory that emotional intelligence, the ability to recognize and understand feelings, was critical to one's success in school, work, and personal relationships. Goleman (1998a) extended his theory to note that "[l]eadership is not domination, but the art of persuading people to work toward a common goal" (p. 38). Noting that "emotional aptitudes" should be at the forefront of business skills," (p. 38), Goleman recommended that, when leaders critique worker performance, leaders must be solution-oriented, be specific in the critique, make the critique in person, and be sensitive to the emotions of the worker. This aligns with feminine leadership styles (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003; Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000).

Amanda specifically noted Goleman's (2000) six business leadership styles: *coercive*, *authoritative*, *affiliative*, *democratic*, *pacesetting*, and *coaching*. Comparing the Goleman's styles (2000) to masculine and feminine leadership styles (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003; Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000), *coercive* and *pacesetting*

(Goleman, 2000) contain agentic masculine attributes (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003; Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000). In contrast, *authoritative*, *affiliative*, *democratic*, and *coaching* styles (Goleman, 2000), align with communal feminine leadership styles (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003; Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000). Therefore, when Amanda defined her own leadership style and critiqued Michael's leadership style, she knowingly did so from Goleman's (2000) theories and unknowingly did so from gender-leadership congruence theories (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003; Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000).

Given this, Amanda used Goleman's (2000) business leadership styles to define herself as a teacher leader and her concept of leadership. Amanda referred to herself as representing *authoritative* and *coaching* styles of leadership. Therefore, she understood leadership to include creating a vision, allowing people the flexibility to be innovative, and assisting people in obtaining their professional development goals. Goleman (2000) noted that both of these leadership styles required leaders to be empathic toward workers. Therefore, Amanda perceived herself as aligning with the sensitive, caring, and nurturing characteristics of female leaders (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003; Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000). In addition, Amanda noted that Michael, as the principal, represented *coercive* and *pacesetting* styles of leadership. In this, she understood leadership to also include demanding obedience from workers, setting and focusing on performance standards, and being professionally driven (Goleman, 2000). Therefore, Amanda perceived Michael as aligning with the governing, aggressive, determined, and competitive characteristics of male leaders (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003; Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000). Consequently, defining leadership and teacher

leadership, Amanda demonstrated an understanding of varying styles of leadership and was capable of applying the styles.

Evidence in the data suggests that Amanda was accurate in aligning her leadership style with Goleman's (2000) *authoritative* and *coaching* styles. She represented an *authoritative* leadership style when seeking enacting a program for African-American inclusion in AP courses and establishing a book study as a professional learning community. Goleman described an *authoritative* leader as one who "charts a new course" for organization by articulating a "long-term vision" based on having the "the freedom to be innovate, experiment, and take calculated risks" (p. 84). With the book study, Amanda encouraged instructional innovation in the school by focusing the book study PLC on development and use of formative assessment. In addition, Amanda directed the social studies department toward an inclusion program that required teachers conceptualizing their understanding of upper level students and the system of teacher and guidance recommendation. With this, it is evident that Amanda conceived of a definition of leadership and teacher leadership and acted on that definition.

Likewise, Amanda claimed to be a *coaching* leader based on Goleman (2000). Evidence in the data supported her claim. According to Goleman, *coaching* leaders "establish long-term development goals" for employees and influence the "long-term learning" of employees. As department chair, Amanda worked closely with Joshua and Sarah as a *coaching* leader. With Joshua, Amanda advised him to seek a position in a school where he could become the teacher he envisioned himself being. With Sarah, she mentored her through journaling and reflective conversation to help her grow as a first-year teacher. As Amanda noted, "I feel like everyone is comfortable enough with me to

come to me with problems. . . . I feel like they respect me enough as a leader to listen to them.” In this, it is evident that Amanda sees herself as an empathic leader (Goleman, 2000). However, Amanda’s perception of being a leader that listens to teachers in the department aligns with communal ascriptions of female leaders (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003; Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000).

Unique in Amanda’s case is that she differentiated leadership definitions when she compared herself to Michael. Amanda perceived Michael as a different type of leader. In contrast, Jessica appeared to maintain a common leadership definition across positions – teacher, department chair, Lead Teacher, and administrators – using Lencioni’s (2002) works to provide consistency. By using Goleman’s (2002) six leadership styles, Amanda operated on a definition of leadership that was flexible. This meant that Amanda perceived Michael as a *coercive* and *pacesetting* leader. As a *coercive* leader, Michael used “extreme top-down decision making” to lead at Dayton High School (Goleman, 2002, p. 82). Evidence of this is found within data concerning, for example, the method by which Michael ran leadership meetings. As Amanda stated, “You go down to leadership meetings, and he says, ‘Let me hear your ideas.’ And you give him ideas. And he says, ‘Well, this is what we are going to do.’” It is also evident in that Amanda frequently perceived Michael as not listening to her during the hiring process of new social studies teachers. Yet, this top-down style also aligned with characteristics of male leaders (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003; Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000).

Viewing Michael as a *pacesetting* leader, Amanda pointed to the focus on standardized test results. Goleman (2000) described a pacesetting leader as one who

establishes “extremely high performance standards” and “is obsessive about doing things better and faster” (p.86). Amanda viewed Michael as a pacesetter because “he is so data driven. It’s a ‘we-have-to-do-this-to-get-our-scores-up’ type of thing.” However, Amanda may have misinterpreted this characteristic about Michael because of her role in teaching only courses with high-stakes tests, both the College Board’s AP Exams and the state’s EOC exam. Additionally, Michael supported the inclusion program for African American students even though teachers in other departments viewed the program as a potential risk to pass rates. As a result, it is possible that Michael adhered to the *authoritative* leadership style as he helped muster support from guidance to assist Amanda and the social studies department in the project. That said, if Amanda’s assessment of Michael as a *pacesetter* leader is accurate, then his focus on objectivity, drive, and competitiveness aligns with masculine agentic leadership characteristics (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003; Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000).

While most of the Amanda’s observations fell along masculine and feminine leadership characteristics (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003; Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000), evidence indicated a misalignment at times. For example, Amanda noted that Michael was an *affiliative* leader, or a leader who “values individuals and their emotions more than tasks and goals” (Goleman, 2000, p. 84). She specifically mentioned this in regard to the family day in the week prior to the start of school as an opportunity to build congeniality. This would indicate that Michael represented a feminine communal leadership style (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003; Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000) and was expressed concern for the emotional well-being of the Dayton High School faculty (Goleman, 1998a). However, even as Amanda



pointed this out about Michael, she continued to believe that Michael led with a *coercive* style by noting, “He... is not going to listen to what you want to say. Even if it is a good idea, he is not going to change.” This would indicate that Amanda defined leadership categorically. While acknowledging that Michael demonstrated *affiliative* characteristics for a day, she perceived Michael as *authoritative* and *pacesetting* the rest of the time.

Yet, Amanda also demonstrated in action and philosophy an alignment to agentic masculine leadership characteristics as well (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003; Eagly, Wood, & Diekmann, 2000). Amanda aligned with Goleman’s (2000) *coercive* style as well. For example, Amanda expressed a desire to have James perceive and respect her as the leader of the department. In other words, she sought compliance (Goleman, 2000). In addition, she recognized that she does not possess “real authority” as a department chair at Dayton High School. It is evident that Amanda understands leadership to be associated with a formal position in the hierarchy. Her perception aligns with the structural power of bureaucratic hierarchies (Ferguson, 1984; Michals, 1911; Weinstein, 1979). However, it also aligns with Lortie’s observation that the school system is a bureaucratic hierarchy (1975) even though the department chair position often lacks power (Weller, 2001). Unlike Jessica, who had power as the Lead Teacher in the district, Amanda understood that she lacked power and wanted her department chair position to hold power. In other words, Amanda defined leadership as *coercive* and desired to be a more *coercive* leader. In this, Amanda adhered to the *think manager-think male* paradigm by perceiving successful leaders as having masculine traits (Schein, 1973). During the member check session (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Maxwell, 2013; Roulston, 2010), Amanda acknowledged the accuracy of this interpretation. Thus,

Amanda ultimately defined leadership using Goleman (2000) has the basis of her understanding. While she perceived herself as leading with feminine styles and criticized Michael for using masculine styles of leadership (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003; Eagly, Wood, & Diekmann, 2000), she admitted to seeking greater authority, or masculinity, for her position as department chair.

### **Demonstration of Teacher Leadership**

I centered my second sub-question how female teacher leaders serving a department chairs demonstrate the characteristics of teacher leadership. To select my participants, I used Dempsey's (1992) images of teacher leaders as a benchmark for purposeful and theory-based sampling (Patton, 2002). Jessica and Amanda met Dempsey's (1992) four images of the *teacher as fully functioning person*, *teacher as reflective practitioner*, *teacher as scholar*, and *teacher as partner in learning*. As I analyzed data, I found that Jessica's actions aligned with the *Teacher Leader Model Standards* developed by the Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium (2011) and Amanda aligned with Fessler and Ungaretti's (1994) teacher leadership options. The two models demonstrate how the participants aligned with teacher leadership concepts in both their actions and ideas and their contexts.

#### **Jessica Smith: A Data-Based Teacher Leader**

Given Jessica's role as a Lead Teacher in Fairview One, she was closely connected to administrative tasks at both the school and the district level. The Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium (2011) concluded that teacher leadership is "a pathway to administration" (p. 5) and administrators and teacher leaders must share the "responsibility for the results" their work when collaborating (p. 23). In addition,

standardized testing and use of relevant and resulting data are critical to the function of the teacher leader (Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium, 2011). The consortium's rationale for the domain was the focus on "accountability for student learning" (p. 28). In fact, four of the seven domains explicitly discussed the collection, analysis, and use of data. The consortium "defined data-driven decision making" as:

A process of making educational decisions based on the analysis of classroom data and standardized test data. Data-driven decision making uses data on function, quantity and quality of inputs, and how students learn, to suggest educational solutions (p. 35).

As a teacher leader, Jessica served on writing common curriculum and creating benchmark exams as a district-level committee member after her students scored well on standardized assessments. Her subsequent role as the district Lead Teacher required her to spearhead the development of common curricula and district benchmarks.

Consequently, Jessica's role as a teacher leader aligned with the Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium's (2011) teacher leadership domains as both her work and the domains are grounded in goals-oriented outcomes and accountability models.

The Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium (2011) established seven domains of teacher leadership. Domain I is *Fostering a Collaborative Culture to Support Educator Development and Student Learning*. A teacher leader aligned with this domain "[m]odels effective skills" when leading professional development through strong "facilitation skill" (p. 14). Jessica aligned with Domain I because she led professional development through modeling what she expects teachers to replicate in their classrooms. Jessica said that her role as a Lead Teacher is to "educate" teachers and that she

purposefully avoided a “sage on the stage know-it-all” approach. Additionally, Domain VII is *Advocating for Student Learning and the Profession*. A teacher leader aligned to Domain VII “[r]epresents and advocates for the profession in contexts outside of the classroom” (Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium, 2011, p. 20). Jessica aligned with Domain VII by serving as “a representative for” teachers and being an “advocate for them at the district office” when district-level leaders discussed policies. Therefore, Jessica demonstrated the qualities of teacher leadership by aligning to Domain I and VII of the Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium (2011).

Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium (2011) created Domains II, III, IV, and V to be centered on teacher leaders’ use of school and student data. Domain II, *Accessing and Using Research to Improve Practice and Student Learning*, defined a teacher leader as one who “[f]acilitates the analysis of student learning data” (p. 15). Under Domain V, *Promoting the Use of Assessments and Data for School and District Improvement*, a teacher leader uses “assessment and other data to make informed decisions that improve learning for all students and to inform school and district improvement strategies” (p. 18). Jessica aligned with Domains II and V first through her work with creating district benchmark exams as a committee member then as the Lead Teacher. However, Jessica also aligned to Domains II and V by acknowledging that education is transforming as a result of the accountability movement. Citing the “old school” mentality of teachers who resisted her instructional advice because “my scores are where they need to be,” Jessica often articulated to teachers that “we are at kind of a pivotal time where education has to shift” and “[c]ustomer service... is part of education.” As a result, Jessica used a combination of assessment data and knowledge of

the educational trends and policies to offer “improvement strategies” (Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium, 2011, p. 18) and, thus, align with Domains II and V.

A teacher leader aligned to Domain III, *Promoting Professional Learning for Continuous Improvement*, engages in “reflective dialog... based on observation of instruction, student work, and assessment data and helps make connections to research-based effective practices” (Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium, 2011, p. 16). Teacher leader aligned to Domain IV, *Facilitating Improvements in Instruction and Student Learning*, oversees “the collection, analysis, and use of classroom- and school-based data to identify opportunities to improve curriculum, instruction, assessment, school organization, and school culture” (p. 17). Jessica’s alignment to Domains III and IV is evident in her desire to break teacher out of the “[w]e are successful and if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it” mindset that is prevalent in Fairview High School. She frequently presented teachers with “innovative” practices that “a better way or different way” of teaching. To counter the “resistance” among teachers to instructional change, Jessica noted that she presents teachers with “data to back... up” the instructional “shift” she advised. In this, Jessica aligned with the Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium’s (2011) Domains III and IV for teacher leadership.

If there was an area where Jessica did not completely align with the Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium’s (2011) domains, it was Domain VI. Domain VI for teacher leaders is *Improving Outreach and Collaboration with Families and Community* which focused on understanding the “families, cultures, and communities” that make up the school community (p. 19). Jessica aligned with this by speaking to the changing demographics of Fairview County and the areas served by Fairview High School. Jessica

discussed the development of “neighborhoods..., strip malls, [and] grocery stores” as well as the increase in the number of people who “weren’t born in Fairview [county] or born in [the state].” Both the County Chamber of Commerce and the United States Census Bureau supported Jessica’s observation regarding the economic development and demographic changes in the last decade. However, Jessica explained that Fairview High School’s racial and ethnic population changed in the last decade as well. While Jessica noted that the “Asian [population] is probably the largest” and “second behind [the Asian population] is probably Hispanic,” the United States Census Bureau and the National Center for Education Statistics contained data indicating that African Americans students are the largest minority group, followed by Hispanic students, then Asian students. Because Jessica lacked the knowledge of her school’s and district’s racial and ethnic demographics, she did not fully align with Domain VI in the Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium’s (2011) teacher leadership framework.

#### **Amanda Williams: A Grassroots Teacher Leader.**

Where Jessica aligned with the Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium’s (2011) teacher leadership domains, Amanda’s ideas and actions aligned with Fessler and Ungaretti’s (1994) teacher leadership options. Specifically, Amanda represented Fessler and Ungaretti’s belief that “sustained change cannot be accomplished without tapping the rich reservoir of leadership residing at the grassroots of every schools – classroom teachers” (p. 211). Considering my question of how female teacher leaders serving a department chairs demonstrate the characteristics of teacher leadership, Amanda demonstrated teacher leadership by aligning with grassroots approach based on Fessler and Ungaretti’s seven teacher leadership options.

First, Amanda demonstrated teacher leadership by serving as a mentor for preservice and induction year teachers. In becoming a teacher leader, Amanda passed certification as a “trained as a mentor” for preservice and first-year teachers. Fessler and Ungaretti (1994) conceptualized a teacher leadership option as *Teacher as Preservice Teacher Educator*. This option meant that teacher leaders “serve as mentors for preservice teacher interns, to share experience in seminars and education courses, and to play pivotal roles in blending theory and practice” (p. 214). Amanda demonstrated this option by working with “student teachers and practicum students from local colleges” during her career. In this, she noted, “I really enjoy working with... preservice teachers to share my best practices and my passion for education.” Additionally, Amanda demonstrated teacher leadership by aligning with Fessler and Ungaretti’s (1994) *Teacher as Mentor to New Teachers* option. This option meant that teacher leaders “provide novices with guidance and structure in the context of a trusting relationship” (p. 214)” Amanda’s work with Sarah exemplified this teacher leadership option. Amanda described their relationship as “weird” because it “might be like a big sister, little sister relationship. I think she looks up to me for things, and I’m looking out for her.” However, the level of mutual trust and respect between Amanda and Sarah was evident in the data as Sarah often turned to Amanda for advice and Amanda turned to Sarah to be a leader for the Geography curriculum in the 2016-2017 school year. From these, it is clear that Amanda demonstrated teacher leadership as aligned to Fessler and Ungaretti’s (1994) mentor-based options.

In addition, Amanda demonstrated teacher leadership by working closely with and leading her peers at Dayton High School. Fessler and Ungaretti (1994) described the

*Teacher as Peer Coach* option as a providing “assistance to other teachers in the context of supportive, helping relationship” (p. 216). Amanda aligned with this option by her consistently helping Sarah and Joshua. It was also manifest in her role department chair as she organized the material and courses for Stephanie’s long-term substitute and helping James with AP European History. Fessler and Ungaretti (1994) described the *Teacher as Curriculum Developer* option as utilizing a teacher leader for “curriculum writing workshops... [to] tap their expertise and experience during the process of developing new curriculum materials” and relying “on the teacher expertise available within their individual schools.” (217). Amanda led curricular development when she and Tiffany worked to “totally revamp” the United States History curriculum. After Tiffany left, Amanda helped Andrew and Joshua learn the curriculum. Fessler and Ungaretti (1994) described the *Teacher as Staff Developer* option as “working with peers to identify school and individual teacher growth needs, identifying available resources to assist in meeting those needs, and when appropriate, delivering the inservice or professional growth activity” (p. 216). Amanda demonstrated this option by leading the book study professional learning community. Amanda noted that the book study engaged teachers throughout Dayton High School in “strong professional conversations to better understand the effective use of formative assessments and to carry them out to improve student learning.” Consequently, Amanda demonstrated teacher leadership by working with her peers both formally and informally to improve practice.

Furthermore, Amanda demonstrated teacher leadership through research-based practices and actions. Fessler and Ungaretti (1994) described the *Teacher as Researcher* option as a teacher leader who possesses a “research orientation to teaching and



learning.” This meant the teacher uses data for “continuous teacher renewal and school improvement” and for “suggesting and evaluating courses of action” (p. 215). Amanda demonstrated this option as a department chair by identifying the proportionally low number of African American students in advanced courses at Dayton High School. Amanda conducted action research on the issue and developed a plan for inclusion that included teachers in the department, guidance counselors, administration, and parents. She admitted that the process “opened my eyes” to the problems with in her school, yet she was “happy” with the initial results. Additionally, unlike Jessica, Amanda worked to gain a deeper understanding of the racial, ethnic, and social backgrounds of her students by conducting the action research.

Amanda later confirmed during the member check session (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Maxwell, 2013; Roulston, 2010) that many of the recruited students stayed enrolled in the AP courses at the start of the following school year. Amanda’s action research also aligned with Mills (2013) concept of action research as “effecting positive changes in the school environment... and improving student outcomes and the lives of those involved” (p. 8). Her work also aligned with Ladson-Billings’s (2006) charge that research must focus on matters “in the lives of real people around real issues” (p.10). Finally, Amanda’s work with the inclusion program represented her as a change agent, a characteristic critical to teacher leadership Harrison & Killion, 2009; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009; Lieberman & Miller, 2004; Miles, Saxl, & Lieberman, 1988; Scribner and Bradley-Levine (2010). Yet it began with her alignment to Fessler and Ungaretti’s (1994) teacher leadership option of *Teacher as Researcher*.

Although Amanda demonstrated teacher leadership characteristics aligned with most of Fessler and Ungaretti's (1994) teacher leadership options, data did not indicate that she aligned with the *Teacher as Organizational Leader*. This option is described as "leadership in professional associations" (p. 216)." Amanda represented Jackson County at the State Social Studies Supervisors Association, but was not a leader in the organization. During the member check session (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Maxwell, 2013; Roulston, 2010), Amanda noted that she represented a state teacher advocacy group at a meeting to provide feedback on a new state-wide teacher evaluation rubric. However, she was not in a leadership position. Instead, these actions aligned with Fessler and Ungaretti's (1994) *Other Leadership Activities* option, which broadly envision teacher leaders consulting with school system personnel, community leaders, and university faculty regarding classroom learning and student achievement. (p. 217). To this end, during the member check session (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Maxwell, 2013; Roulston, 2010), Amanda noted that Jackson College hired her as adjunct instructor to teach a Middle Level Social Studies Methods course during the Fall 2016 semester. It should be noted that the teacher leadership options are "not meant to be an all-inclusive list, not are the options mutually exclusive" (Fessler & Ungaretti, 1994, p. 213). While Amanda did not align with the *Teacher as Organizational Leader* option per se, she did align with the broadly defined *Other Leadership Activities* option by serving on state-level committees and working as an adjunct. Overall, Amanda demonstrated substantial alignment with Fessler and Ungaretti's teacher leadership options.

## **National Board Certified and Leaving the Classroom**

Both Jessica and Amanda earned National Board Certification. According to Cavalluzzo, Barrow, Henderson, Mokher, Geraghty, and Sartain (2014) National Board Certified Teachers have a positive effect on student learning as indicated by standardized tests and, consequently, National Board Certification is an indicator of teacher quality. Jessica stated that earning National Board Certification was an opportunity to “think about why I am a teacher, what I am doing, and what do I want to be as a teacher” and identified the process as a turning point in her career. Amanda stated directly that she earned National Board Certification in 2011. Both Jessica and Amanda discussed the relative success of their students on standardized tests. In fact, both gained attention as leaders through their work with standardized tests. Jessica demonstrated leadership on benchmark exam committees; Amanda demonstrated leadership with her knowledge of USA Test Prep.

In addition, National Board Certified Teachers tend to experience expanded opportunity in leadership at the school, district, and state levels (National Research Council, 2008). Both Jessica and Amanda experienced leadership at multiple levels. Jessica became a Lead Teacher in her district. Amanda became department chair, presented at the district and state levels, and initiated programs such as the book study on formative assessment. However, Cannata, McCrory, Sykes, Anagnostopoulos, and Frank (2010) found that National Board Certified Teachers typically experience leadership at levels closest to the classroom. Amanda aligned to this finding as the core of her leadership work in my study was exemplified by her African American inclusion

program and a book study. Overall, after earning National Board Certification, both teachers expanded their leadership roles.

A long-standing and important characteristic of teacher leadership is that teacher leaders are leaders in education but remain in the classroom (Holmes Group, 1986; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009; Steel & Craig, 2006; Struyve, Meredith, & Gielen, 2014; Tushie, 2008). In fact, Amanda defined a teacher leader as a “teacher who is not leaving the classroom.” However, both Jessica and Amanda see themselves leaving the classroom for formal leadership positions. At the time of my study, Jessica held a hybrid position by working as both a classroom teacher and district-level Team leader. Although the hybrid position is a legitimate teacher leadership role (Berry, Byrd, & Wiedner, 2013) and “flexible work patterns” are suggested to encourage teacher leadership (Fessler & Ugaretti, 1994, p. 220), the hybrid role represented step away from the classroom for Jessica.

Counter to this, National Board Certification Teachers tend to leave the classroom for leadership opportunities elsewhere in education because they seek new challenges and desire a greater effect on student learning beyond their own classrooms (Crain, 2013). Likewise, Cavalluzzo, Barrow, Henderson, Mokher, Geraghty, and Sartain (2014) suggested that “school systems... use National Board certification as a gatekeeper for advancement” (p. 6). Jessica, who was enrolled in an Educational Leadership degree program at the time of my study, envisioned herself entering “administration just because what I have learned in a leadership role” because she desires a “voice at the table when decisions are starting to be made in education.” Likewise, Amanda stated, “At some point in my life, I want to move up.” For Amanda, this meant obtaining a district “curriculum

job.” Given Amanda’s alignment to Fessler and Ungaretti’s (1994) teacher leadership options, this finding is significant because Fessler and Ungaretti believed that “teachers should be given the opportunity to experience leadership roles without being forced to leave the classroom permanently” (p. 213). Thus a common characteristic that Jessica and Amanda have as National Board Certified teacher leaders is that they desire to leave the classroom as their careers advance. This common factor counters the concept of teacher leaders as remaining in the classroom (Holmes Group, 1986; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009; Steel & Craig, 2006; Struyve, Meredith, & Gielen, 2014; Tushie, 2008), by aligning with findings that National Board Certified Teachers tend to leave the classroom for other leadership opportunities (Cavalluzzo, Barrow, Henderson, Mokher, Geraghty, and Sartain, 2014; Crain, 2013).

### **Jessica: Leading in Masculine Contexts**

The third sub-question that I asked focused on how female teacher leaders serving as department chairs negotiate leading teachers in a potentially masculine department within schools. At the onset of the discussion of the third question, it is significant to note the lack of evidence pertaining to Jessica. My study was designed as a comparative case study using grounded theory. I selected this research method because a comparative case study allows for richer themes to emerge and holds the potential for a stronger interpretation (Merriam, 2009). This was important because the goal of grounded theory is to generate theory based on the systematic analysis of data (Glasser & Strauss, 1967). Additionally, I selected a comparative case study method because the corroborating of data, themes, and interpretations in a comparison generates validly in qualitative research

(Creswell & Miller, 2000; Maxwell, 2013). Concerns over validity are addressed within this section and within the section on implications and future research.

After the first interview, Jessica dropped out of my study with no explanation. She did not respond to emails, text messages, or phone calls. Likewise, she did not complete any of the journals I continued to share with her through Google Drive. Therefore, the data for her case is significantly less than the data for Amanda. As a result, my discussion of how female department chairs lead in a potentially masculine department is answered largely through Amanda's case. Because of this, the discussion and subsequent observation is based on the lived experience of Amanda, effectively single case study (Glesne, 2011; Maxwell, 2013; Merriam, 2009).

### **Jessica as an Agentic Leader**

In the data collected for Jessica's case, a theme of masculine leadership emerged. This theme was evident in her support of the bureaucracy, business leadership philosophy, and masculine leadership actions. Ferguson (1984) concluded that hierarchical bureaucracies are masculine by nature and serve to perpetuate a masculine hegemony. Jessica's context was a large school district characterized by hierarchical, bureaucratic control. On a \$264,338,000 budget, Fairview One consisted of 30 schools, 24,210 students, and 1,597 full-time teachers. Much of the growth in Fairview One occurred since 2000. This process aligned with Lortie's (1975) observation of the large "bureaucratized" (p. 3) school system characterized by increased administrative authority, teacher obedience to administration, and the reduced social standing of the classroom teacher. Additionally, the Fairview One system is similar to the business-model approach to education (Gergen & Vanourek, 2008; Hess, 2008). The

bureaucratization process manifested in Fairview One through benchmark exams for courses with state-administered standardized tests, common curriculum, and the establishment of a Lead Teacher position to manage social studies instruction across the schools. Jessica described this system as a “well-oiled machine” designed to produce test scores and graduates. The hierarchical, bureaucratic, business-like organizational structure tightens regulation of teachers by “collecting test-score data for students” and using the data as quality control of teacher performance (Hess, 2008, p. 17). Therefore, Jessica’s context was a bureaucratic system using test score data to control teachers.

Understanding that Fairview One’s hierarchical, bureaucratic nature is critical to understanding Jessica’s masculine leadership style. First, Jessica supported the district’s philosophy of standardization through common curriculum and benchmarking. Jessica explained that standardization is “something that is meaningful” and that the “we need these benchmark tests.” While Jessica’s beliefs aligned with some concepts of teacher leadership focused on data (Harrison & Killion, 2009; Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium, 2011), it also aligned with the business-like practices of the accountability movement (Gergen & Vanourek, 2008; Hess, 2008). Jessica’s adherence to the masculine bureaucracy manifested in her reliance on Patrick Lencioni’s (2002) advice to business leaders to focus on data-driven outcomes and accountability as a path to success. If business self-help books perpetuate masculine leadership characteristics (Ferguson, 1984), then Jessica’s use of Lencioni (2002) to development her leadership philosophy indicated an alignment to masculine leadership qualities. Additionally, Jessica developed her leadership philosophy by “observing good leadership” in the school system. Observing leadership in a hierarchical bureaucracy meant that Jessica observed and

adapted masculine leadership characteristics (Brenner, Tomkiewicz, & Schein, 1989; Cabrera, Sauer, & Thomas-Hunt, 2009; Ferguson, 1984, Koegnig, Mitchell, Eagly, & Ristikari, 2011; Powell & Butterfield, 1979; Schein, 1973; Schein, 1975; Shinar, 1975).

Additionally, Jessica aligned with masculine leadership character because of her position in the hierarchy. Although Jessica attempted to craft an image of being in the trenches with her peers by stating “I am right along with you,” her organizational role as a Lead Teacher and attitude that she is a “manager” of teachers indicated otherwise. The use of the word “manage” suggested that Jessica perceived herself as positioned above teachers in the hierarchy and aligned with masculine ascriptions of leadership (Eagly, Wood, & Diekmann, 2000). It is long-held that, through hierarchical and bureaucratic development, an aristocratic class develops in the organization as people are “divided into a minority of directors and a majority of directed” (Michels, 1911, p. 26). Likewise, masculine bureaucracies perceive workers lower in the hierarchy as “objects to be manipulated and directed” (Ferguson, 1984, p. 68), which Jessica exhibited in her definition of teacher leadership as “pressure steadily applied” to move teachers to change. While Jessica’s beliefs on leadership aligned with some concepts of teacher leadership (Harrison & Killian, 2009; Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium, 2011), her beliefs did not align with Steel and Craig’s (2006) critique of the “industrial model of education” (p. 677). Additionally, her attitude countered calls for the reorganization of the school system to empower teachers (Darling-Hammond, Bullmaster, & Cobb, 1995; Holmes Group, 1986; Smylie & Denny, 1990; York-Barr & Duke, 2004) and countered advocacy among researchers of teacher leadership to challenge the status quo



(Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009; Lieberman & Miller, 2004; Miles, Saxl, & Lieberman, 1988; Scribner & Bradley-Levine, 2010.)

Masculine leadership characteristics emerged as a theme in the actions Jessica discussed in her interview. When selected to serve on the district benchmark and curriculum committees, Jessica took time to study current trends related curriculum and standardized testing because she did not “want to look like an idiot.” While her mentor, Mrs. Turner, advised her to prepare, Jessica leaned on her father’s advice. Jessica discussed how her father’s “mantra” of the “five Ps: Prior Planning Prevents Poor Performance” affected her preparation for working on the benchmark and curriculum committees. Jessica acknowledged that her father, an attorney, instilled in her an understanding that, when you prepare, “you perform well and that gets you more attention” from career advancement. Given the scenario, Jessica’s actions, based on her father’s advice, aligned with Eagly, Wood, and Diekmann’s (2000) observation that agentic behaviors, such as problem-solving, taking action, and speaking with knowledge and authority, are designed to gain attention. Jessica’s concept of the importance of preparation in career advancement was significant given the masculinized bureaucratic (Ferguson, 1984) context of the Fairview One school district.

In addition, Jessica’s interactions with people above her in the hierarchy and below her in the hierarchy appeared similar. Jessica frequently discussed her use of the phrase “help me understand” as a means of entering difficult conversation. This approach suggested as alignment with Goleman’s advocacy of emotional intelligence as a critical leadership skill (1995) and his belief “emotional aptitudes” are critical because “[l]eadership is not domination” (p. 38). Likewise, this approach aligned with the

communal attributes of women as interpersonally sensitive, kind, and compassionate (Eagly, Wood, Diekman, (2000). However, research on educational leaders demonstrates that male leaders are becoming more communal and female leaders are becoming more agentic (Coder & Spiller, 2013). Although Jessica claimed to use the phrase “help me understand” as a strategy for connecting with students, teachers, and administrators, her overall actions were masculine because women in a hierarchy must “present the appropriate image... colleagues and superiors” (Ferguson, 1984, p. 186).

Jessica’s actions countered the feminine “help me understand” phrase and represented a masculine leadership style when interacting with teachers and administrators. Jessica recalled an interaction with a teacher over her use of the Bell Curve for grading. In this case, she utilized “pressure steadily applied” and a direct confrontation in the guise of a conversation to change the grading practices of the teacher. She spoke with the teacher in with insistence, confidence, and determination, which are agentic attributes ascribed to males (Eagly, Wood & Diekman, 2000). Additionally when speaking with district-level leaders, Jessica admitted she had the confidence to disagree with administrators over policies that may be burdensome for teachers. When speaking with people above her in the hierarchy, Jessica spoke with aggression, determination, confidence, and insistence, which are also agentic attributes ascribed to males (Eagly, Wood & Diekman, 2000). This is not surprising given that women in a bureaucratic hierarchy such as Fairview One adopt masculine leadership traits (Brenner, Tomkiewicz, & Schein, 1989; Cabrera, Sauer, & Thomas-Hunt, 2009; Ferguson, 1984, Koegnig, Mitchell, Eagly, & Ristikari, 2011; Powell & Butterfield, 1979; Schein, 1973; Schein, 1975; Shinar, 1975).

Jessica's case, however, is inconclusive for the purpose of generating theory. Because she did not complete the study, Jessica's case is not an information rich case (Glesne, 2011; Maxwell, 2013; Patton, 2002; Roulston, 2010). Without explanation, Jessica did not complete the participant-generated documents (Glesne, 2011; Merriam, 2009), did not take part in the follow-up interviews (Glesne, 2011; Roulston, 2010) or take part in the member check (Creswell & Miler, 2000; Maxwell, 2013; Roulston, 2010). While evidence exists to discuss how Jessica defined the concept of leadership and demonstrated the characteristics of teacher leadership, the significant absence of data related to her negotiation of masculine contexts is limiting. Charmaz (2006) noted that rich data is critical to research conducted using grounded theory because rich data allows the researcher to develop theory by exploring beyond superficial characteristics. Although the alignment of Jessica with masculine leadership traits is appears evident, data for her case is not strong enough to draw theory from the data using grounded methods.

#### **Amanda: Purposeful Utilization of Masculine and Feminine Leadership Styles**

I studied how female teacher leaders serving as department chairs negotiate leading teachers in a potentially masculine department within schools as a third sub-question in my study. I conducted the study from February to May 2016 with a member check session in September 2016. During this time, Amanda participated in the phenomenological interviews (Roulston, 2010), produced participant-generated documents such as the reflection journal my study required and additional documents she wrote (Glesne, 2011; Merriam, 2009), and reflected with me in during a member check session (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Maxwell, 2013; Roulston, 2010). Consequently,

descriptive narrative of Amanda's experience was documented as a single case (Glesne, 2011). Amanda's experience provided rich data to generate theory (Charmaz, 2006). In this case, Amanda's station in the hierarchy is that of department chair. Amanda utilized feminine communal characteristics when leading people at or below her station in the hierarchy; but utilized masculine agentic characteristics when interacting with people above her station in the hierarchy.

### **Amanda's General Context**

Amanda worked in a social studies department at a small rural school for a male principal in a traditional hierarchical structure. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), in 2014 the School District of Jackson County operated on a \$63,753,000 budget, employed 427 teachers, and served 6,071 children. NCES also categorized the Jackson School District schools as either rural-distant or rural-remote. Although the chamber of commerce touted the agriculture economy of the county, forty-two percent of Dayton High School's students specialized in vocational courses such as cosmetology, machine tool technology, welding, carpentry, health science, automotive technology, and agriculture according to the school's AdvancedEd report. Given the rural nature of the district, research suggests that community involvement is important to the operation of the school (Bauch, 2001; Collins et al., 2001; Kannapel & DeYoung, 1999; Herzog & Pittman, 2003; Howley, et al., 1996; Kemmis, 1990; Lane & Dorfman, 1997; Seal & Harmon, 1995; Stern, 1994). Therefore, school-level leaders must create strong bonds with community members (Ashton & Duncan, 2012; Kaden, Patterson, & Healy, 2014; Preston, Jakubiec & Kooymans, 2013). Documenting the small, rural nature of the

school, district, and county was critical to understanding how Amanda negotiated her role as a department chair.

In addition, the principal of Dayton High School represented an agentic school-level leader. Amanda often noted that Michael was data-driven, did not listen to teachers, and that “Michael is going to do what Michael wants to do.” While this aligned with Goleman’s (2000) *coercive* leader concept, it also aligned with literature on masculine leadership. Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen (2003) determined that a male leader typically exhibited transactional leadership characteristics such as focusing solely on a system rewards and punishments based on performance standards. Likewise, Michael’s leadership style aligned with the agentic characteristics Eagly, Wood & Diekman, (2000). Furthermore, Freie and Eppley (2014) found that rural principals often function in an unchecked authoritarian style with excessive “disciplinary power” (p. 666), a characteristic Amanda agreed Michael aligned with during the member check session. Michael’s actions counter Ashton and Duncan’s (2012) advocacy for rural principals to listen to, understand, and acknowledge teacher suggestions and concerns. While Michael’s leadership style will be further discussed, acknowledging the overall context is important to understanding Amanda’s leadership.

Finally, Amanda’s context is also that of a traditional department chair in the school system bureaucracy. Dayton High School operated in a larger bureaucratic hierarchy as described by Lortie (1975) and criticized for masculine characteristics (Ferguson, 1984). As a department chair, Amanda noted that she has “no real authority” and basically functions “the go-between” who serves to “disseminate information” to teachers. The lack of authority among department chairs is common in the existing

literature (Kelley & Salisbury, 2013; Weller, 2001; Zepeda & Kruskamp, 2007) because of the absence of a formal definition or job description for the position (DeRoche, Kujawa & Hunsaker, 1988; Kelley & Salisbury, 2013; Zepeda & Kruskamp, 2007). In addition, the department chair position fits in the “cliques and sub-classes” identified by Michels (1911, p. 6). However, the position at Dayton High School lacked power as authority at the school is centralized in the principal position (Freie & Eppley, 2014). Because Amanda aligned with Fessler and Ungaretti’s (1994) teacher leadership options, she was critical of the “top-down view of leadership and change” (p. 211). In this sense, Amanda aligned with Weinstein’s (1979) concepts of *bureaucratic oppositions* as she worked to change bureaucratic operations from within the system.

Overall, Amanda worked in a masculine context identified through a principal with agentic and transactional characteristics and a traditional, masculine hierarchical organization. However, Amanda also worked within a social studies department that was masculine as well. At the time of my study, half of the social studies department were male. Because of personnel changes, two-thirds of the department were male at the completion of my study. This aligned with research demonstrating that social studies is a male-dominated discipline (Fitchett, 2010). Additionally, half of the teachers also served as athletic coaches. This, too, aligned with literature on the relationship between social studies and athletic coaches (Chiodo, Martin & Rowan, 2002; Fitchett & Van Fossen, 2012; Stacey, 2014; Weller, 2002). Consequently, Amanda held a position of being led by a male while simultaneously leading mostly males. However, this is not surprising considering that the majority of high school administrators are male (Bitterman, Goldring, & Gray, 2013) and the majority social studies teachers a male (Fitchett, 2010),

her case is unique because mathematics, English, and science departments are largely female (Fitchett, 2010).

### **Attitude Regarding Athletic Coaches**

Amanda's attitude regarding athletic coaches is important to consider as a characteristic of her leadership style. Amanda demonstrated an oscillating opinion on coaching. First, she stated "I want to coach tennis" because "[t]hat's what I played [in high school] and I love it." In addition, she related to Joshua, the head baseball coach, because they were "both athlete and the smart kid in high school." For Amanda, athletics was personally important. As a communal leader, athletics served as an additional means of connecting with Joshua on a personal level (Eagly, Wood & Diekman, 2000). However, she described the coaches at Dayton High School as "goofing off" and "hanging out." In addition, when Joshua was named the Teacher of the Month, Amanda noted, "So I lose to the coach." In this, Amanda identified Joshua as a coach, despite referring to him as intellectual and bookish at other times. Amanda's concept of coaches aligned with Rog's (1984) concepts of Coaches and Coach Teachers who are focused more on coaching athletics than teaching. Although she enjoyed sports personally, Amanda held a bias against athletic coaches.

Amanda's perception of athletic coaches manifest in how she discussed them while serving as a teacher leader. First, Amanda discussed the frustration she experienced when Joshua lacked time to devote to improving classroom practice. Although Fouts (1989) concluded that athletic coaches tend to be less innovative in the classroom, Kaden, Patterson, and Healy (2014) noted that rural teachers face longer hours as a result of extra-curricular activities. While Amanda defined the coaches as "goofing off," Joshua

represented a coach who lacked time to grow as a teacher because of the extra commitment of coaching. Amanda advocated for a change in Joshua's schedule to no avail, demonstrating that Michael was not going to alter Joshua's position in the school. Michael's actions as principal counter Ashton and Duncan's (2012) suggestion that rural principals hear, understand, and acknowledge teach anxieties. However, by listening to Joshua, Amanda demonstrated a positive rural leadership characteristic as identified by Ashton and Duncan. Amanda's advocacy failed because of Michael's agentic leadership style (Eagly, Wood & Diekman, 2000) and the bureaucratic structure that prevents change (Lortie, 1975; Weinstein, 1979).

Amanda's opinions of athletic coaching also became evident in the hiring of social studies teachers. Amanda discussed the hiring of Sarah, Justin, and Robert. In the hiring of the three teachers, Amanda recalled only two females were interviewed. Likewise, when hiring Sarah, three of the candidates were coaches who learned of the vacancy on the State High School League website. In most cases, the athletic director sat in on the interviews. Amanda advocated in each case for a "good teacher" to be hired. Amanda's frustration over the hiring social studies teachers to fill athletic department needs is rooted in the literature over the relationship between the two departments (Chiodo, Martin & Rowan, 2002; Fitchett & Van Fossen, 2012; Stacey, 2014; Weller, 2002). However, Amanda noted that the administrators often cited a need to hire a "hometown favorite." Sarah, Justin, and Robert had connections to Jackson County. Administration considered Lauren, as social studies candidate they interviewed, because she "fit right in" as "a small town girl" who "[t]alked real country." While athletic needs were considered, the hiring of people with connections to the rural community aligned



with research on teachers working in schools and communities similar to their own (Boyd, Lankford, Susanna, & Wyckoff, 2005; Yeager, Marshall, & Madsen, 2003). Hiring from within the community or school system in rural areas produced clear “Grow-Your-Own” strategy utilized by rural districts to develop and retain talent (Beesley, Atwill, Blair, & Barley, 2008; Gagnon, & Mattingly, 2015; Mahan, 2010; Versland, 2013). Consequently, while Amanda understood the dynamics of social studies teachers, athletic coaching, and the hiring process, she misunderstood the dynamics of hiring to retain teachers in rural areas.

### **Utilization of Communal Leadership**

Unlike Jessica, who was influenced by her father’s advice and career as an attorney, Amanda was influenced by her mother’s career as a teacher. Amanda spoke about wanting to be a teacher because her mother was a teacher. This influenced her initial decision to teach elementary school and her continued desire to be at home with her sons in the summer because “my mom home with me in the summer.” Amanda also recalled emotional discussions with her mother when her mother expressed disbelief and excitement over Amanda teaching in a single-gender context her first year and when they cried together after Amanda was named Teacher of the Year at Dayton High School. It was an indication that Amanda drew influence from her mother. It also demonstrated communal attributes such as sensitivity and compassion (Eagly, Wood & Diekman, 2000). The data also suggested that Amanda was attuned to her emotional intelligence, which serves her as a leader (Goleman, 1995; Goleman 1998a).

When Amanda led teachers at or below her station in the hierarchy, she led in a feminine communal style. Amanda demonstrated this in her work with conducting action

research, leading book studies, mentoring Sarah, and crafting a department vision. First, the theory was evident in the action research she conducted on African American students in advanced courses. By engaging in action research, Amanda demonstrated teacher leadership. Action research prompts teachers to develop reflect on improving instruction (Mills, 2013), which is a critical aspect of teacher leadership (Darling-Hammond, Bullmaster & Cobb, 1995). Likewise, being an action researcher demonstrates a reconceptualization of the role of a teacher (Kennedy-Lewis, 2012; Labaree, 2003), which is also a characteristics of a teacher leader (Steel & Craig, 2006; York-Barr & Duke, 2004). In this case, Amanda led as a teacher leader by challenging the status quo (Scribner & Bradley-Levine, 2010; Smylie & Brownlee-Conyers, 1992; Smylie & Denny, 1990; Steel & Craig, 2006) given that the exclusion of African American students is a trend nationwide (Davis, Davis & Mobley, 2013; Ford, 2010; Ford & Whiting, 2007). Using evidence from her coursework as a graduate student and strategies for developing inclusion programs (Lindahl, 2015), Amanda led an effort in her department to recruit African American students into the department AP offerings.

This leadership took the form of feminine characteristics with the social studies department and with the guidance department. First, the project was targeted at creating social change in the school. Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, and van Engen (2003) noted that women tend to lead in a transformational approach, which is grounded in working collaboratively to produce change. Amanda noted that she discussed the issue with the department. By discussing the problem as a means to developing agreement instead of demanding the department members conform, Amanda led with a feminine communal

Style (Eagly, Wood & Diekman, 2000). Additionally, this approach aligned with Goleman's (1998b) belief that effective leaders produce results through motivating people, not dictating orders of workers. Amanda's work with the action research project "opened my eyes" to the faults of the school system as she listened and learned from African American students and colleagues. The openness to learn from others and express the learning passionately fell within the communal ascriptions of female leaders (Eagly, Wood & Diekman, 2000). Consequently, Amanda's work with the action research project demonstrated that she led the department, those at or below her station, with communal attributes.

In addition, to the action research project, Amanda also demonstrated communal leadership characteristics through the book study. Research found that school and district level administrators should organize professional learning communities (PLC) centered on book studies (Thessin & Star, 2011), meaning that Amanda's organization of the book study countered the suggestion. Current research suggests that books studies are an effective form of professional development (Burbank, Kauchak, & Bates, 2010; Smith & Galbraith, 2011). In fact, Flood and Lapp (1994) concluded that book studies are "an intellectual social forum where people can share ideas, thoughts, feelings and reactions" to issues (p. 574). Thus, the purpose of the book study PLC is to learn and grow as professionals through discussion. Amanda organized the book study to be discussion-based as a means of changing classroom practice. In this, Amanda led her peers with transformational and communal styles (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt & van Engen, 2003; Eagly, Wood & Diekman, 2000). Consequently, the findings in Amanda's case demonstrated that she led teachers using feminine leadership practices.

An additional area in which Amanda demonstrated communal leadership is in the mentoring of Sarah. During the member check session, Amanda explained that she was assigned as Sarah's mentor because she was department chair. As a mentor, Amanda served a critical leadership function. Carroll & Foster (2010) noted that 30% of teachers leave teaching in the first five years because they have not learned to be "proficient educators who know how to work with their colleagues to improve student learning" (p. 4). However, Cook (2009) found that strong mentoring inspires first-year teachers to develop "important habit of mind" as a teacher (p. 289). As Sarah's mentor, Amanda frequently engaged Sarah in reflective discussions and served as a source of emotional and practical support. By the end of my study, Amanda referred to their relationship as sisterly. First, by working closely with Sarah, Amanda served as a leader in teacher retention. This is important in Amanda's case because middle and high school first-year teachers tend to have a more negative impression of teacher than elementary school teachers at the end of the first year (Womack-Wynne, Dees, Leech, LaPlant, Brockmeier, & Gobson, 2011). Sarah, however, was "excited about next year." Amanda accomplished this through building a strong, trusting relationship with Sarah. However, Amanda admitted, too, that their relationship is a result of her being "the only other female in the department." Amanda utilized communal leadership characteristics to lead Sarah as her first-year mentor (Eagly, Wood & Diekman, 2000).

Finally, Amanda demonstrated communal leadership characteristics in her desire to create a more congenial department. Amanda noted, "I want us to be more close-knit." Amanda's goal is to create a collaborative department. She noted, "It is one of those things in the department that if I don't like you, I won't work with you and just my own

thing.” Following Stephanie’s passing, Amanda realized the department did not know each other well. By focusing on building relationships, Amanda embraced communal leadership (Eagly, Wood & Diekman, 2000). However, she also aligned with transformational leadership (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt & van Engen, 2003) as she expressed a desire to conceptualize the department as collaborative. With a common planning period for the department in the 2016-2017 school year, Amanda liked this because “the Social Studies department has so many coaches, we will be able to meet as a full department.” This was a reference to coaches working with student athletes after school, and consequently, not having time to meet and collaborate (Kaden, Patterson, and Healy, 2014). The desire to establish of a collegial and collaborative department also challenged the hierarchy of the school (Lortie, 1975) as Amanda attempted to use a form of distributed leadership (Harris, 2003; Spillane, 2005; Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2004). By challenging the hierarchy of the school system, Amanda challenged masculine hegemony (Ferguson, 1984). Consequently, Amanda’s vision of a collaborative and close department demonstrated feminine leadership characteristics. Like the action research project, the book study, and mentoring Sarah, the vision of the department represents the theory that Amanda utilized feminine leadership styles with teachers at or below her station in the hierarchy.

### **Utilization of Agentic Leadership**

When Amanda led teachers above her station in the hierarchy, she led in a masculine agentic style. Amanda demonstrated this in her work with conducting action research, advocating for hiring “teachers,” and enacting the policies from above. First, the theory was evident in the action research she conducted on African American inclusion in

AP courses. The exclusion of African American student in advanced courses is a national trend in the United States (Davis, Davis & Mobley, 2013; Ford, 2010; Ford & Whiting, 2007) and Amanda observed it at Dayton High School. During the project, Amanda interacted with Michael when attempting to expand the program presenting the AP option to student in social studies classes at Dayton Middle School. By shifting from one branch of the district bureaucracy to another, Amanda both challenged the order of the hierarchy (Michels, 1911; Weinstein, 1979) and challenged the masculine hegemony of the hierarchy (Ferguson, 1984). Michael's response to Amanda was, "There is nothing we can do. That is at the middle school level." First, this decisive answer is agentic in nature (Eagly, Wood & Diekman, 2000). In addition, Michael demonstrated an "[i]nflexible adherence to rules" that keeps order in the system (Weinstein, 1979, p. 22) and demonstrated how bureaucracies "minimize uncertainty" by discouraging "innovation" and closing "access to the decision-making levels" (Ferguson, 1984, p. 109). Therefore, Michael's response that the high school cannot interfere with the middle school is both masculine in characteristic and supportive of the district's bureaucratic system.

Amanda's response to Michael is noteworthy for its agentic qualities. Amanda retaliated by telling Michael that he was "passing the buck" and, as a result, he was responsible for arranging students "into this line that they think they have to stay in." By standing up to Michael with confidence and authority, Amanda utilized agentic behavior (Eagly, Wood & Diekman, 2000). As a result, Amanda led the organization of an informational booth for AP courses freshman orientation. Though not a complete success, she gained early access to incoming freshmen by standing up to Michael. Amanda aligned with research that concluded that women tend to lead with masculine traits even

when defining leadership with feminine traits (Brenner, Tomkiewicz & Schein, 1989). Additionally, she found success by adopting a masculine leadership style and demonstrated to Michael she can behave correctly in the masculine hierarchy (Ferguson, 1984). Therefore, when she interacted with Michael she utilized a masculine agentic leadership style.

In addition to the action research project, Amanda's use of agentic behavior manifested during the hiring of Sarah, Justin, and Robert as new members of the social studies department. As noted above, Amanda experienced frustration over the hiring social studies teachers to fill athletic department needs (Chiodo, Martin & Rowan, 2002; Fitchett & Van Fossen, 2012; Stacey, 2014; Weller, 2002). However, she did not understand the trend of teachers working in schools and communities similar to their own (Boyd, Lankford, Susanna, & Wyckoff, 2005; Yeager, Marshall, & Madsen, 2003) or the needs of rural school to hire from within the rural community develop and retain talent (Beesley, Atwill, Blair, & Barley, 2008; Gagnon, & Mattingly, 2015; Mahan, 2010; Versland, 2013). Amanda focused on hiring someone who fills the need for a social studies teacher, not the need for a coach.

In the hiring process, Amanda's bias against coaches and her agentic leadership style emerged when interacting with Eric, one of the assistant principals. Amanda referred to Eric as a "P.E. teacher" who cannot provide her with constructive instructional feedback. When recounting the hiring of Justin and Robert, Amanda recalled combative exchanges she had with Eric. When Eric argued that "athletics are very important," Amanda countered, "we are a school and a school is here to teach." When Eric questioned why a candidate did not return to Boston by stating, "Something's going

on,” Amanda countered, “You’re from Georgia. You didn’t go home.” These exchanges occurred in the presence of Michael and Ashley, meaning that Amanda was the only teacher on the hiring committee. A feminine approach in these situations would be a discussion based on legitimate pros and cons of candidates as aligned with transformational leadership theory (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt & van Engen, 2003). Instead, Amanda interacted in a masculine style with Eric, aggressive, combative, and competitive (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt & van Engen, 2003). Again, Amanda aligned with research indicating that women lean on masculine traits to lead (Brenner, Tomkiewicz & Schein, 1989). Amanda adopted a masculine leadership style to demonstrate her ability to perform properly in the masculine hierarchy (Ferguson, 1984). Therefore, when Amanda interacted with Eric she utilized a masculine agentic leadership style.

### **Enacting Policies from Above**

Amanda demonstrated masculine leadership characteristics when enacting the policies from above her station in the hierarchy. Specifically, this was evident when Amanda focused on test scores, a desired for authority within the department, and avoided of James’s schedule issues. Amanda noted that Michael aligned with Goleman’s (2000) *pacesetter* leadership style because he was focused on “extremely high performance standards” (p.86). Amanda described Michael’s data-driven mentality as “a ‘we-have-to-do-this-to-get-our-scores-up’ type of thing.” This aligned with the accountability movement’s production of business-like practices in education (Gergen & Vanourek, 2008; Hess, 2008). These business-like practices align with bureaucratic hierarchies in terms of efficiency as a structural goal (Weinstein, 1979). Amanda



discussed the importance of state standardized tests at Dayton High School. After being “angry” at producing low scores on the EOC, Amanda specifically led the restructuring of the United States History curriculum and expressed excitement when “the scores shot up.” Like Jessica, Amanda focused on the hierarchical bureaucratic goal of producing high scores on state standardized exams. Amanda responded to low scores in a masculine style by being competitive (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt & van Engen, 2003; Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000) and by serving the bureaucratic goals (Ferguson, 1984). As such, by focusing on achieving standardized test score, Amanda demonstrated utilization of masculine leadership characteristics.

In addition, Amanda exhibited a masculine leadership style when supporting Michael’s stance on not changing James’s schedule. James was a gay male working in a small, rural school in a conservative county. Amanda observed that some parents will not allow their child to “take his class or participate in [the] Academic Challenge [Club] because he is gay.” Additionally, because of topics taught in the sociology and psychology curriculum, James expressed a desire to change his schedule over concerns of what parents may think. Michael determined that “I cannot say that you cannot teach this class because it makes you uncomfortable because of your lifestyle.” Amanda agreed, though admitted, “I see both sides.” In this, Amanda, who stood up from African American students, did not stand up for a gay colleague.

Community involvement and relationships are critical for the success of rural principals in rural communities must work closely with and with (Ashton & Duncan, 2012; Bauch, 2001; Collins et al., 2001; Kannapel & DeYoung, 1999; Kaden, Patterson, & Healy, 2014; Herzog & Pittman, 2003; Howley, et al., 1996; Kemmis, 1990; Lane &

Dorfman, 1997; Preston, Jakubiec & Kooymans, 2013; Seal & Harmon, 1995; Stern, 1994) and rural schools are perceived as an extension of the rural community (Collins et al., 2001; Herzog & Pittman, 2003; Kannapel & DeYoung, 1999; Lane & Dorfman, 1997; Seal & Harmon, 1995; Stern, 1994). It is possible that Michael was acting on the perceived pulse of the conservative community when making a decision about a gay employee. However, by supporting Michael's position, Amanda followed the "bureaucratic ideal in which orders flow down the hierarchy of authority and obedience follows" (Weinstein, 1979, p. 4) and abandoned her "commitment to... moral principles" in favor of bureaucratic "effectiveness or efficiency" (Weinstein, 1979, p. 32). Additionally, by following orders, she adhered to masculine leadership constructs (Eagly, Wood & Diekmann, 2000) and supported the ideals of the masculine bureaucracy (Ferguson, 1984). Ultimately this aspect of Amanda's case demonstrated her use of masculine agentic characteristics when enacting the decision from above.

Finally, Amanda demonstrated masculine characteristics by supporting policies from above and desiring greater authority as a department chair. Michels (1911) argued that organizations gradually become "divided into a minority of directors and a majority of directed" (p. 26). According to Michel's theory Iron Law of Oligarchies, "Man as individual is by nature predestined to be guided... To an enormously greater degree is guidance necessary for the social group." (p. 243). When noting how James went above her to Michael to ask questions, Amanda pondered, "I don't know if James really respects me as a department head." By wanting power and authority, Amanda aligned with agentic leadership characteristics (Eagly, Wood & Diekmann, 2000) and aligned with the concept that masculine leadership is the accepted form of leadership (Koenig, Mitchell,

Eagly & Ristikari, 2011; Powell & Butterfield, 1979; Schein, 1973; Schein, 1975; Shinar, 1975). Amanda also noted, “I would love to be able to actually observe my teachers in the department and give them feedback, working with them and helping them develop their skills better.” Research suggests that the department chair should be regarded as an instructional leader (Feeney, 2009; Wettersten, 1992), but department chairs are stuck in an ambiguous, quasi-administrative position with no formal power (DeRoche, Kujawa & Hunsaker, 1988; Kelley & Salisbury, 2013; Zepeda & Kruskamp, 2007).

During the member check session, Amanda confirmed this aspect of the data and admitted that she would like more power as a department chair. Like Jessica, Amanda’s desire for power in the formal department chair position countered calls for the reorganization of the school system to empower teachers (Darling-Hammond, Bullmaster, & Cobb, 1995; Holmes Group, 1986; Smylie & Denny, 1990; York-Barr & Duke, 2004) and countered encouragement from researchers to challenge the status quo (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009; Lieberman & Miller, 2004; Miles, Saxl, & Lieberman, 1988; Scribner & Bradley-Levine, 2010.) By backing the masculine bureaucratic system (Ferguson, 1984) and seeking authority (Eagly, Wood & Diekman, 2000), Amanda demonstrated masculine leadership by seeking to integrate into the hierarchy.

### **Member Check Addendum**

Amanda and I met three months after our final interview for a member check session when my analysis of the data was complete. During the session, Amanda agreed that she utilized agentic traits when working with administrators and communal traits when working with teachers. Although she acknowledged that she was unaware of theory behind the agentic and communal styles (Eagly, Wood & Diekman, 2000), she noted that

her actions were intentional. However, she added that she used communal styles when working with Ashley, but she used agentic styles when working with James.

Amanda's member check reflection was evident in existing data. Communal leadership is characterized by compassion, sensitivity, and collaboration (Eagly, Wood & Diekman, 2000). Although Ashley, Dayton High School's API, held a position above Amanda in the hierarchy, their relationship centered on discussions and relationship development. Amanda and Ashley "taught together for three years" prior to Ashley becoming an promotion to assistant principal at Dayton High School. Ashley's elevation from classroom teacher to assistant principal with in the same school represented the "Grow-Your-Own" strategy of rural schools (Beesley, Atwill, Blair, & Barley, 2008; Gagnon, & Mattingly, 2015; Mahan, 2010; Versland, 2013). This benefited Amanda because Ashley "was able to see me as an equal." For example, Amanda noted that Ashley "keeps candy in her office for me so I go down and talk to her" and the Ashley "came to me for a lot" for advice.

Additionally, during the EOC testing window, Ashley leaned on Amanda to create schedules. In this, Ashley learned from Amanda "how important that organization was for the teachers." Interestingly, Amanda's command of the testing schedule represented bureaucratic efficiency (Weinstein, 1979), which was a masculine bureaucratic trait (Ferguson, 1984) and leadership style (Eagly, Wood & Diekman, 2000). Yet the scheduling for efficiency within the system simultaneously represented a characteristic of teacher leadership (Wasley, 1991). Nevertheless, the relationship between the Amanda and Ashley was mutual and did not conform to the general theory that Amanda used agentic leadership characteristics to work with administrators. Yet in

the member check session, Amanda acknowledged that Ashely being a female made the relationship different.

In contrast, Amanda utilized agentic leadership characteristics with James. Agentic leadership characteristics include confidence, aggression, independence, and authoritative (Eagly, Wood & Diekman, 2000). During the study, Amanda described James “arrogant,” “cocky,” and “very high strung.” In addition, Amanda admitted perceiving that James does not “really respects me as a department head” or regard her as “an authority figure.” For example, Amanda noted that James “came in thinking he knew everything” during his first year teaching and, as a result, she had to “put him in his place.” Leading in this style aligned with decades of research on masculine leadership (Eagly, Wood & Diekman, 2000; Koehnig, Mitchell, Eagly & Ristikari, 2011; Powell & Butterfield, 1979; Schein, 1973; Shinar, 1975). Although Amanda admitted that she did not converse much with James, she “continued to work with James” when he took over the AP European History course to help him understand the expectations of the College Board. Amanda in this, Amanda aligned with Fessler and Ungaretti’s (1994) *Teacher as Mentor to New Teachers* teacher leadership option. However, this was largely a result of students “having a hard time with it.” When it came to the overall needs James had regarding his schedule and the stress related to teaching in a conservative environment, Amanda noted, “It is just time for him to settle into it.” The lack of sensitivity represented both masculine leadership traits (Eagly, Wood & Diekman, 2000) and a lack of attunement to the emotions and feelings of workers under her charge (Goleman, 1995; Goleman 1998a). However, based on the member check session, Amanda led in this style because of how she perceived James’s lack of respect for her and his general demeanor.

## **Considerations of Validity, Implications, and Future Research**

I selected female teacher leadership in social studies because it was unexplored and, thus, lent itself to grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The study of female social studies leaders is important because of the disproportionate number of men in a high school social studies departments (Fitchett, 2010), the masculine nature of the social studies curricula (Engebretson, 2014), and the masculine nature of social studies department (Stacy, 2014). In addition, leadership is often ascribed with masculine qualities (Koegnig, Mitchell, Eagly & Ristikari, 2011) and males tend to lead in a top-down governing style (Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000). However, teacher leadership aligns with concepts of distributed leadership (Harris, 2004; Spillane, 2005; Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2004) and communal feminine leadership characteristics (Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000), which counter concepts of top-down authority. Thus, a comparative case study offered the potential to generate theory about teacher leadership, gender, and social studies. The findings of the study indicate how female social studies department chairs in high schools navigate their roles as leaders in a masculine context. While there are significant implications produced by the study, the question of validity also allowed for the generation of future areas of research.

### **Validity Concerns**

Given the lack of data related to Jessica's case, a question of validity is evident. Because I used grounded theory, I structured my study as a comparative case study. Jessica leaving my study resulted in compromised validity. First, the study lacked richness of data. Rich descriptions of cases allow the reader to understand the lived experiences of the participants (Cresswell & Miller, 2000) and provide an additional

layer of validity (Tracey, 2010). Because Jessica completed one interview and did not complete the journals and follow-up interviews or submit additional documents, her case lacks rich detail. In addition, Jessica did not take part in the member check process, which affected the validity of the research (Creswell & Miller, 2000). A comparative case study should be balanced between cases to allow for corroboration of data, themes, and interpretations across cases could not be achieved (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Maxwell, 2013). Therefore, the strength of the interpretation is weaker because the richness of the data is not stronger (Merriam, 2009).

However, the data collected in Amanda's case through interviews, participant-generated documents, and supporting documents represented a case study (Glesne, 2011; Maxwell, 2013; Merriam, 2009). With Amanda, I was able to conduct interviews under my research design (Roulston, 2010; Seidman, 2006). Additionally I was able to use in vivo coding, descriptive coding, and narrative coding (Saldaña, 2013) to identify themes in Amanda's perceived experience and, subsequently, demonstrate her data in "the form of stories" (p. 131). Furthermore, I was able to conduct a member check session with Amanda, which builds validity in the research (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Maxwell, 2013; Roulston, 2010). Roulston (2010) noted that member checking serves as an opportunity for researchers to validate interpretation of the phenomenon at the center of a study. Lastly, Maxwell (2013) described member checking as "the single most important way of ruling out the possibility of misinterpreting the meaning of what participants say and do and the perspective they have on what is going on" (p. 126-127). Therefore, Amanda's data and participation met the characteristics of sound qualitative methodology.

## Implications

The absence of data for Jessica complicated the degree of impact the study may have on education policy, education system organization, or leadership practice. The significance of this study is that the intersection of social studies teacher leadership, gender roles and leadership styles, and the role high school department chairs was explored for the first time. The comparison of Jessica and Amanda's lived experiences demonstrated that female teacher leaders in social studies construct a concept of leadership within the confines of their context. Given the rigid hierarchy of the school system (Lortie, 1975) and hierarchies in general (Ferguson, 1984; Goulter, 1978; Michels, 1911; Weinstein, 1979), school systems should heed the calls of education researchers to reorganize (Smylie & Denny, 1990; Steel & Craig, 2006; York-Barr & Duke, 2004; Steel & Craig, 2006). Although teacher leaders are often defined as change agents (Harrison & Killion, 2009; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009; Lieberman & Miller, 2004), Jessica demonstrated how teacher leadership is becoming aligned with a data-driven focus on efficiency (Harrison & Killion, 2009; Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium, 2011) similar to that of a data-driven business model (Gergen & Vanourek, 2008; Hess, 2008). While Amanda demonstrated alignment with a more theoretical concept of teacher leadership (Fessler & Ungaretti, 1994), she aligned with the masculine bureaucracy (Ferguson, 1984) by demonstrating agentic leadership traits and wanting additional authority (Koegnig, Mitchell, Eagly & Ristikari, 2011; Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000). Thus an implication of the study is that it further demonstrates the power of organizational structures and the need to reorganize the current system.



In addition, my study demonstrated how the context within which a teacher develops as a teacher leader influences how the teacher leader leads. While Jessica's case demonstrated the efficiency-focused data-driven business model (Gergen & Vanourek, 2008; Hess, 2008), Amanda's case demonstrated the influence of rural contexts (Armstrong, 1993; Bauch, 2001; Beeson & Strange, 2003; Collins et al., 2001; Hammer, 2001; Harmon & Branham, 1999; Herzog & Pittman, 2003; Hodgkinson, 1994; Howley, et al., 1996; Kannapel & DeYoung, 1999; Kemmis, 1990; Nadel & Sagawa, 2002; Lane & Dorfman, 1997; Seal & Harmon, 1995; Sherwood, 2000; Smith, 2003; Stern, 1994) and graduate courses on teacher leadership (University of Cincinnati, 2016). The implications of the findings are stronger in the area of rural schools where, as evidenced by Amada, the department chair position remains underutilized (Weller, 2001). Rural administrators may find it to their advantage to develop department chairs as stronger leaders with their schools. Additionally, Amanda's demonstration of teacher leadership hinged on her involvement in a graduate program with a teacher leadership strand (University of Cincinnati, 2016). The findings indicate the states should adopt policies similar to Iowa and Ohio to bolster school reform through developing and legitimizing teacher leadership (Iowa Department of Education, 2016; Ohio Department of Education, 2016).

The lack of evidence from Jessica means that a theory regarding how female social studies department chair negotiate their role as leaders in a masculine context could not properly be developed using grounded theory (Glasser & Strauss, 1967) and comparative case study method (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Maxwell, 2013). From Amanda's lived experience, it is evident that she used communal leadership practices

(Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000) when working with people at her station in the hierarchy or lower and used agentic leadership practices (Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000) when working with people above her station in the hierarchy. This finding aligns with long-standing research on the masculinity of leadership (Koehnig, Mitchell, Eagly & Ristikari, 2011; Powell & Butterfield, 1979; Schein, 1973; Shinar, 1975) and the masculine nature of bureaucratic hierarchies (Ferguson, 1984). However, this study is significant because it is the first documentation of the phenomena in the literature on female teacher leaders in social studies. The implications of the study on administrative procedures are that the school system must be open to communal leadership styles. Finally, Lincoln and Guba (2002) noted that case studies are “open and problematic” in that case studies are subject to “negotiation and reconstruction” (p. 209), especially when the case explores the male and female interpretation of events. This means that, while the results are not conclusive enough to develop theory (Glasser & Strauss, 1967), the most important impact of my study is that it opens the door for further research in the area of female teacher leadership in social studies.

### **Future Research**

The significance of my study is that it represents an initial study on intersection of social studies teacher leadership, gender roles and leadership styles, and the role high school department chairs. However, I observed during the study the importance of nature of organizational hierarchy and the culture of rural schools, particularly in connection to Amanda’s case. The findings of my study demonstrated how female teacher leaders in social studies possess a concept of leadership and teacher leadership shaped by their contexts. The findings also demonstrated how context shapes the experience the teachers

have as social studies teacher leaders. Finally, the findings indicated that female department chairs in social studies utilize communal and agentic leadership characteristics depending on the level of the school's hierarchy with which they interact. In the end, the study raised more questions than it answered and, as a result, point toward additional areas of research in this area.

To begin with, this the validity issues related to my study offer opportunity to further explore the research questions I proposed for the study. First, a replication of the study should be considered. Although a true replication is difficult, if not impossible, to achieved in qualitative research (Schofield, 2002), a replication study with balanced participation from both participants can provide the validity needed to advance resulting theories from the study (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Maxwell, 2013). Second, conducting this study with the same or modified questions, as a true single case study would be important for generating theory with greater validity (Glesne, 2011; Maxwell, 2013; Merriam, 2009). Although my study contained strong observations of female teacher leadership within one of the cases, it did not align with my initial research design. I based my research design on establishing validity through comparing cases to identify corroborating and disconfirming evidence (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Therefore, a single case study with proper validity controls is needed. Conducting a replication of this study in one of these two approaches in critical to understanding how female social studies teacher leaders serve as leaders in a masculine context.

In addition, this study points to the need for two new broad evaluations of teacher leadership. First, there is a need for a new review of the literature on teacher leadership. In the decade since York-Barr and Duke (2004), the data-driven business model has been

applied to schooling (Gergen & Vanourek, 2008; Hess, 2008) and teacher leadership has been defined by data-use (Harrison & Killion, 2009; Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium , 2011). Given Jessica's alignment with data-based teacher leadership characteristics, it is time to consider how teacher leadership has changed in the wake of NCLB (2001) through a substantial review of the literature to update York-Barr and Duke (2004). Second, there is a need for a meta-analysis of the research on teacher leadership. Meta-analysis is a quantitative research method used to synthesize the findings of existing research (Durlak, 1995; Hedges and Olkin,1985; Wolf, 1986). In particular, a meta-analysis of who has been studied – in terms of gender, race, academic content, and school context – as teacher leaders since the 1980s is needed. Writing a new review of the literature and creating a meta-analysis would better situate future studies of teacher leadership in general and in specific areas of study.

Furthermore, the findings of my study point to couching a future study in the context of ruralness. Although rural communities are diverse and unique places (Herzog & Pittman, 2003; Lewis, 2003; Sherwood, 2000), rural schools face similar challenges (Armstrong, 1993; Bauch, 2001; Beeson & Strange, 2003; Collins et al., 2001; Hammer, 2001; Harmon & Branham, 1999; Herzog & Pittman, 2003; Hodgkinson, 1994; Howley, et al., 1996; Kannapel & DeYoung, 1999; Kemmis, 1990; Nadel & Sagawa, 2002; Lane & Dorfman, 1997; Seal & Harmon, 1995; Sherwood, 2000; Smith, 2003; Stern, 1994). Potential areas for study for rural teacher leadership exist. Given the changing concept of masculinity in rural areas due largely to economic changes and globalization (Bell, Hullinger & Brislen, 2015; Filteau, 2015), an investigation of female teacher leaders in rural areas effected by economic downturns. Additionally, considering the Grow-Your-

Own strategies for administrator development and teacher hiring (Beesley, Atwill, Blair, & Barley, 2008; Gagnon, & Mattingly, 2015; Mahan, 2010; Versland, 2013), a study on internal development of teacher leadership in rural schools is an area for further understanding. Also, given the conservative nature of rural schools and leadership (Vaughn & Saul, 2013), exploring female teacher leaders as change agents in rural schools is suitable for additional investigation. Finally, given the strong connection between social studies and athletics (Chiodo, Martin, & Rowan, 2002; Fitchett & Van Fossen, 2012; Stacy, 2014; Weller, 2002) and the challenges of rural teacher recruitment and retention (Burke, 2000; Hellsten, McIntyre & Prytula, 2011; Monk, 2007), a study specifically the hiring practices of social studies teachers and on female social studies department chairs in the hiring process is needed. These studies would contribute to a better understanding of rural schools and rural teacher leadership.

Finally, my study uncovered two issues that require further study to gain a deeper understanding. First, Amanda spoke often of the challenges that Joshua faced as a male social studies teacher torn between his desire to improve as a classroom teacher and his obligations as an athletic coach. Given the intertwining of social studies departments and athletic departments (Chiodo, Martin, & Rowan, 2002; Fitchett & Van Fossen, 2012; Stacy, 2014; Weller, 2002) and the observation that coaching culture places priority on coaching over teaching (Rog (1984), a study of male social studies teacher who desire to improve as academic teachers would be a new area of exploration in the literature. Finally, two of the signature actions Amanda undertook as a teacher leader – the book study and the action research project – were conducted in tandem with her coursework for the teacher leadership strand in Masters of Education in Curriculum and Instruction at

the University of Cincinnati (University of Cincinnati, 2016). During the member check session, Amanda and I discussed the degree to which the study would be different if she were not enrolled in those classes. Amanda acknowledged that it would be different, but she could not determine how different. Consequently, an investigation of rural teacher leaders in a teacher leadership-focused degree program is needed. Perhaps a study on the reach and effect of the University of Cincinnati's online program is warranted as well. Further exploration into the culture of social studies departments and teacher leadership programs will add depth and knowledge to the current body of literature.

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APPENDIX A  
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL



OFFICE OF RESEARCH COMPLIANCE

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD FOR HUMAN RESEARCH  
DECLARATION of NOT RESEARCH

This is to certify that research proposal: **Pro00051639**

Entitled: *How Female Social Studies Department Chairs Navigate Their Role as Leaders*

Submitted by:

Principal Investigator: Jeffrey Eargle  
College/Department: Education  
Instruction & Teacher Education  
Wardlaw  
Columbia, SC 29208

was reviewed on **1/14/2016** by the Office of Research Compliance, an administrative office that supports the University of South Carolina Institutional Review Board (USC IRB), and has determined that the referenced research study is not subject to the Protection of Human Subject Regulations in accordance with 45 CFR 46 et. seq.

No further oversight by the USC IRB is required; however, the investigator should inform the Office of Research Compliance prior to making any substantive changes in the research methods, as this may alter the status of the project.

If you have questions, contact Arlene McWhorter at [arlenem@sc.edu](mailto:arlenem@sc.edu) or (803) 777-7095.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Lisa M. Johnson".

Lisa M. Johnson  
IRB Manager

## APPENDIX B

### INTERVIEW 1 PROTOCOL

#### Interview Guide

#### Interview #1

1. Tell me what prompted you to become a teacher. What was your path to becoming a teacher?
2. Tell me about your school (location, students, staff)?
3. Let's divide your career into three periods. (Both participants are AP History teachers as teach periodization as a historical thinking skill)
  - a. How would you describe the first period?
    - i. What is a story from that time that stands out?
  - b. Middle period?
    - i. What events during this time serve as turning points for you as a teacher?
  - c. The last period?
    - i. Where do you see yourself going from this point forward? Why?
4. How do you define "teacher leadership"?
5. Tell me your growth/development as a teacher leader.

## APPENDIX C

### STUDY OVERVIEW AND CONSENT LETTER

Dear Participant:

My name is Jeffrey C. Eargle. I am a doctoral student at the University of South Carolina in the College of Education under the supervision of Dr. David Virtue. You are invited to participate in a research project focusing on the development of teacher leadership among social studies teachers. This study has been approved by Institutional Review Board at the University of South Carolina.

The comparative case study of the present research project is a study developed to learn about how female high school social studies teachers serve as teacher leaders. It is my hope that this information will better inform social studies teachers, department chairs, administrators, district personnel, and policymakers about the importance of teacher leadership in school reform. There are no identified risks from participating in this research.

The participation in the current study is confidential or anonymous. Participation in this research is completely voluntary and you may refuse to participate at any time without consequence. As a participant, you will be interviewed at least twice, once at the onset of the study and again at the end. Interviews will take between 40 and 60 minutes and will be recorded. Interviews will be used to gather qualitative information about your experience as a teacher leader. Additionally, a weekly journal will be submitted via Google Docs that will prompt you to reflect on your role as a teacher leader in your school. You will be given a pseudonym to protect your identity. At no time will your administrators or other school personnel be given access to the raw data, to ensure that there are no repercussions for your honesty. There is no financial compensation for participating in the study and you may withdraw as a participant at any time.

Thank you for your consideration. Your help is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey C. Eargle  
Doctoral Student, Teaching & Learning  
University of South Carolina

Your signature below indicates that you have read the above information, are at least 18 years of age and agree to participate in the study described above.

---

Printed Name

---

Signature

Date

## APPENDIX D

### DEPARTMENT AND ADMINISTRATION PROFILE CHART

	Name (First and Last)	Position (i.e. Teacher, Principal, API, Etc.)	Gender	Classes Taught (or Previous Area for Administra- tion)	Extra- Curricular (Club Sponsor, Athletic Coach)	Location (If The Person is Not in Your School)
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